

## THE LEGION HALL

The Veterans Memorial – or Legion Hall as old timers call it – is one of the Valley's "VIBs," Very Important Buildings. It has served veterans and the entire community for over 80 years.

Contra Costa County was in the forefront of governments throughout the nation when the Board of Supervisors committed to build a Veterans Hall in each town with an American Legion Post. Designed by architect James T. Narbett and constructed by Dinnie Construction for \$18,000, the Hall was completed in 1925.

When it was dedicated on April 2, 1925, the Danville Improvement Club donated a piano and the China Club provided a large American flag. Soon after that, monthly "dollar dances" were held. Today many people remember the monthly dances, with Mabel Christianson and her band teaching people how to dance the two-step, schottische, mazurka and polka.

From the start the veterans created a community hall. They provided a meeting place for patriotic, welfare and civic organizations. Plays were performed by different groups. From 1926 to 1961 the Valley's library was housed in the building, with Edith Clark, Myrtle Osborn and Grace Warren serving as librarians. After World War II the Legion Follies were the most popular event of the year.

In 1978, after getting Community Development Block Grants, R-7 funds and other donations, the Hall was renovated as the Senior Citizen's Center. Dave Stegman and the Community Center spearheaded this effort. A complete kitchen, handicapped restrooms, a disabled ramp and upgraded electric and plumbing systems were installed. The Grand Opening brought 500 people to the celebration, including Congressman George Miller.

Today the Legion Hall continues to serve the community. The handsome brick monument on the corner reminds us of sacrifices made for our country. It is included on all of the Museum's Old Town Danville walking tours.



*The entrance to Danville's Veteran's Memorial Building at 400 Hartz Avenue.*



### McCamley Diaries Are Complete

A major project of the Museum's collections volunteers is now complete. **Arni Habiger** scanned the farm diaries of George McCamley covering the years 1861-1891 (with a few years missing).

The Museum has produced 10 sets of books and archival CDs which allow researchers to read the diaries without touching the originals. Each set has six bound books and six CDs. Sets have been given to the Bancroft Library, the Contra Costa History Center, Forest Home Farms Historic Park and to families related to McCamley. Visitors to the Museum can look at the books in the research library.

CDs are available at the Museum Store for \$20.

Volunteers who worked on the project include: **Arni and Jan Habiger, Vic Georgiou, Kathy Fitzpatrick and Beverly Lane. Claudia Mauzy Nemir** contributed these diaries to the Museum and **Mary Ann Sonnichsen and Linda Sonnichsen Gosset** underwrote the McCamley Diary Project. Many thanks for the donation and support.

