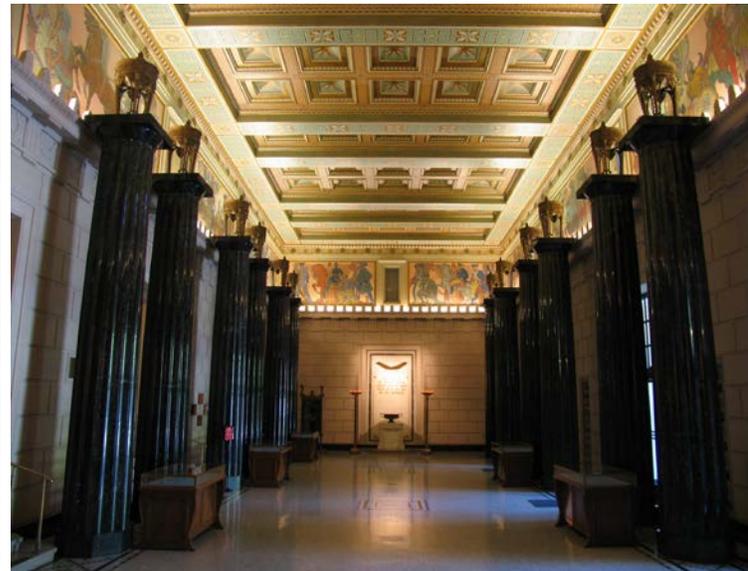


## Fact Sheet

# Stanley Mosk State Library & Courts Building Renovation



**Main Entrance on Capitol Circle**



**Memorial Vestibule**

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### Introduction

Since its completion in 1928, the Stanley Mosk State Library and Courts Building has provided functional space for the services of California's state library and court system. Due to the age of the facility, much of the building's infrastructure and some of its architectural features were deteriorating and in need of repair. The Department of General Services Real Estate Services Division has completed renovations to the building to repair age-related damage that has occurred within the past 80 years; re-established some of the historic value of

the building lost during renovations in the 1950s and 1970s; extended the building's life, by bringing the structure into fire and life safety compliance; and increased the general comfort level of building tenants and visitors. The majority of this renovation focused on the interior of the building, although some renovations took place on the building exterior and upon the building grounds. A priority of the renovation project was to protect the building's historically significant art and architecture during renovation activities.

### **Building History**

The Library and Courts Building, as well as the Jesse Unruh Building to the north, were designed by the renowned California architectural firm of Weeks & Day, which also designed other notable structures in California, such as the Sainte Claire Hotel in San Jose, and Oakland's Fox Theater. Construction of the Library and Courts Building began in 1922 and was completed in 1928 to accommodate the state library's growing historic and literary collections and functions, as well as the California Supreme Court Chambers and offices. The building retains these original uses even today, and also accommodates state library services, the Third District Court of Appeal and, for six days a year, the California Supreme Court. The building became a state landmark in 1977, was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1984, and in 2002 was renamed the *Stanley Mosk Library and Courts Building* to honor the late state Supreme Court Justice Stanley Mosk (1912–2001). The historic importance of the building derives from its association with the expansion at the Capitol and from the building's architecture and decorative arts. The building exterior features works by sculptor Edward Field Sanford Jr., and interior art was the work of muralists Maynard Dixon and Frank Van Sloun. The building has undergone renovation since it was constructed. Significant architectural changes to the building took place in 1954 and again in the 1970s.

### **Building Description**

The Library and Courts Building is five stories, approximately 80 feet tall, has a total of 188,600 gross square feet, and includes a basement. The exterior of the Library and Courts building is composed of white granite originating from Madera County and granitex architectural terra cotta originating from western Placer County. Wide granite steps lead to the main, north facing entrance of the building on the first floor. Above the north façade entry doors are columns and behind the columns, windows to the monumental memorial vestibule and James L. Gilles Hall library. The triangular portion of the front pediment displays 17 human figures designed by Sanford; these central figures are 12 feet in height. The main entrance on the north facade of the building includes three grand portals atop a ceremonial granite stair. Symmetrical side entrances on the east and west façade serve as secondary entrances to the building. The east entrance includes a wheelchair-accessible ramp, which may also be used for public access, while the west entrance is restricted as an "employee only" entrance. A significant portion of the interior renovation involved installation of new building infrastructure (e.g., fire detection, sprinkler and security systems)

as well as refurbishment of the historic finishes throughout the building.

Many of the architectural elements and interior decorations on each floor of the building have historical and cultural relevance. Significant examples include the memorial entrance vestibule on the first floor dedicated to honor the California military veterans who died in World War I. Dominating features of the lobby include sixteen black Italian marble columns and a mural by Frank Van Sloan entitled "War Through the Ages" (1929), which illustrates the history of warfare from Neolithic times through World War I. Murals, such as those created by the Sunset magazine and Hearst publications' artist Maynard Dixon, depict California's historical progress; others characterize significant California landscape as well as portrait paintings. Bronze metalwork, including two large bronze statues by Edward Field Sanford, Jr. decorate the corridors and offices of the second, third and fourth floors. Many ceilings on all levels are ornamented and/or include paintings, such as those of mythological creatures on the second floor. Like the building itself, much of the artwork dates from the late 1920s.

Additional areas of note of architectural and historic value within the building include the first floor Superior Court of Appeal courtroom; the main hallway of the second floor which highlights four Maynard Dixon murals dating to the late 1920s; the third floor state law library; the two book circulation rooms that include detailed historic stenciled ceilings, with nine large inset panels about 30 feet from the floor; the main-reference room, Gilles Hall, which features a mural by Maynard Dixon along its south wall and the third floor north hallway which has a coffered plaster ceiling and facial busts accompanied by carved inscriptions of prominent authors, including Bunyan, Dickens, Browning, Hugo, and Tolstoy.

### **Project Objectives**

The overall objective was to upgrade the Library and Courts Building infrastructure and fire protection systems to enable the building to meet the needs of the state library and judiciary, and extend the usable life of the building well into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The majority of the planned upgrades focused on the interior of the building, with a few improvements planned for the building exterior. During the undertaking of this project, of primary importance was the consideration of the building's distinction as a component of the historically significant State Capital Extension Group. The specific objectives of the project included:

- Upgrade mechanical and electrical systems to extend the building life an additional 50 years.
- Restore original light wells.
- Upgrade to ADA standards.
- Upgrade fire and life safety systems.
- Upgrade restroom facilities.
- Stack electrical and data closets.

- Repair exterior masonry that is in deteriorated condition.
- Replace roof.
- Upgrade elevators.
- Install new mechanical system, including new penthouses.
- Obtain Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED™) Silver rating.

The renovation work was done in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office in order to ensure that the removal or alteration of historic materials was done in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's standards for the treatment of historic properties.

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