

ADDENDUM TO:  
FORTY ACRES, RODRIGO TERRONEZ MEMORIAL CLINIC  
(Rodrigo Terronez Clinic)  
30172 Garces Highway  
Delano  
Kern County  
California

HABS CA-2878-C  
*HABS CA-2878-C*

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS  
FIELD RECORDS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240-0001

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

### Addendum to FORTY ACRES, RODRIGO TERRONEZ MEMORIAL CLINIC

HABS No. CA-2878-C

**Location:** The Rodrigo Terronez Memorial Clinic is located at 30172 Garces Highway, Delano, Kern County, California.

Forty Acres (the property within which the Rodrigo Terronez Memorial Clinic sits) is located at latitude: 35.764956, longitude: -119.285283. The coordinate represents the northeast corner of the property. The coordinate was obtained in 2006 and the datum is North American Datum 1983. There is no restriction on the release of the locational data to the public.

**Significance:** The Rodrigo Terronez Memorial Clinic is one of four buildings at Forty Acres, a property closely associated with the life of Cesar Chavez and the history of the farm worker movement he led from 1962 until his death in 1993. Located on the outskirts of Delano, California, Forty Acres served as the headquarters of the United Farm Workers (UFW) from 1969 to 1972. The property also served as the farm worker movement's flagship "service center," under the auspices of the National Farm Workers Service Center, Inc. (NFWSC), from the late 1960s to the late 1970s. Forty Acres was the site of several significant events between 1968 and 1993, and it continues to serve as an important locus of collective memory. Forty Acres was designated a National Historic Landmark in 2008.

The Terronez Clinic was the third building constructed at Forty Acres— and the first building constructed with support from the Martin Luther King, Jr., Farm Workers Fund established through the signing of contracts with Delano grape growers in 1970. One of several services managed by the NFWSC, the Terronez Clinic sprang from Cesar Chavez's recognition that collective action encompassed more than just collective bargaining with employers. The Terronez Clinic and the services it housed reflected the comprehensive vision of self-empowerment that defined the farm worker movement.

Like the NFWSC's automobile service station, the health clinic itself predates the development of Forty Acres. In November 1965, two nurses began providing free medical services to striking farm workers and their families, most of whom found it difficult to secure the medical attention they needed even before the strike. The nurses used a room in a rented house and later acquired a trailer home and a larger mobile home, both of which were relocated to Forty Acres in 1969. Around the same time, the Kern County Welfare Department donated a surplus building to the NFWSC. The NFWSC decided to convert this county building into a clinic building in 1971.

The Terronez Clinic's architectural style and method of construction reflected its close association with the farm worker movement. Cesar Chavez and his brother, Richard Chavez, had chosen mission revival as the guiding architectural style for Forty Acres, so the contractor, Molly Malouf, secured

barrel roof tiles, adobe block, and heavy timber beams for the Clinic. He also imported ceramic floor tiles from Mexico and purchased large plate glass windows for the waiting room—additional expenses justified by the desire to make the waiting room a comfortable space for clinic patients. Still, the acquisition and repurposing of the old county building and the reliance on a volunteer construction crew reflected a continuing spirit of resourcefulness that defined the farm worker movement.

The clinic building was completed in September 1971 and named in honor of Rodrigo Terronez, one of the union's first vice presidents. Upon completion, the Terronez Clinic became an important symbol of the farm worker movement's purpose, growth, and achievements. For Senator Ted Kennedy, a champion of universal access to health care, the Terronez Clinic was an inspiration and source of hope, especially for families whose access to medical services was severely limited. For farm workers themselves, the Terronez Clinic was a product of self-empowerment.

**Description:** The Rodrigo Terronez Memorial Clinic was designed and constructed as a rectangular, single story building with a gable roof. The structure originally was a barracks-like building owned by the Kern County Welfare Department. When the NFWSC acquired the surplus building in 1969, a crew of volunteers cut the building in half and relocated both sections to Forty Acres. When the NFWSC began to convert the structure into a clinic building, the two sections were aligned but spaced apart, creating a north wing and a south wing. A central connector was constructed to provide a waiting room and other functional spaces

The Terronez Clinic was sited in the northwest quadrant of Forty Acres, with the façade facing east toward a recreational field (and the future site of the Paulo Agbayani Retirement Village). The building measures 149' wide. The north wing measures 52'-5" wide and 26'-3" deep. The south wing measures 72'-7" wide and 26'-3" deep. The L-shaped central connector measures 23'-4" wide between the north and south wings, 42'4" wide at the rear of the building, and 42'-3" deep.

The north and south wings of the Terronez Clinic sit on raised foundations. The central connector sits on a low, concrete foundation. The building has a wood-frame structural system. The exterior walls are covered with an adobe block veneer, painted white.

A slightly raised porch paved with light brown clay tiles spans the width of the east façade and measures 10' deep. The roof of the porch is supported by heavy timber beams and thirteen posts and finished with barrel clay tiles. A substantial portico supported by a heavy timber beam and four posts and finished with barrel clay tiles shelters a raised concrete porch and double doorway on the south wall. This porch is accessed by concrete risers on the east and west and a concrete ramp on the south, all of which are enclosed by plain metal handrails. The original porch, risers, and ramp (which facilitated the arrival of patients on gurneys) were constructed of wood and replaced in the early 1990s. A smaller portico supported by two posts and finished with barrel clay tiles shelters a small wood stoop and doorway on the north wall.

The east façade of the Terronez Clinic has a double doorway with glass doors. Located near the center of the building, this main entrance provides access to the former waiting room. The south wall has a double doorway with metal doors. The north wall has a doorway with a metal door. The rear of the building has two doorways with metal doors, both of which provide direct access to the rear portion of the central connector.

The east façade of the Terronez Clinic has seventeen windows, two of which are large plate glass windows flanking the double doors of the main entrance. The south wall and north walls each have two windows, the rear wall has thirteen windows, and the north wall of the central connector has one window. All of the windows (except the two plate glass windows) are double hung, uniformly sized, and horizontally aligned with wood trim, modest sills, and decorative wood lintels.

The Terronez Clinic has a gable roof supported by four heavy timber beams and exposed rafters. The roof has shallow eaves and is finished with barrel clay tiles.

The interior of the Terronez Clinic was divided into three usage areas. The north wing served the administrative functions of the clinic, with offices and a records room located along a narrow double-loaded corridor. The south wing was the primary medical area, with five examination rooms, a two-bed ward, two restrooms, and a combined reception office and pharmacy located along a narrow double-loaded corridor. The central connector provided space for a waiting room, records room, and X-ray room.

The waiting room was the most distinctive space in the Terronez Clinic. The waiting room floor and the sets of two risers leading to the north and south corridors were paved with brown ceramic tiles. The waiting room also had brown brick walls on three sides, with round arches framing the doorways to the north and south corridors, the doorway to the records room and X-ray room at the rear of the building, and the window to the combined reception office and pharmacy. Five lanternesque light fixtures suspended from the ceiling combined with the glass doors and plate glass windows provided abundant light.

The Terronez Clinic has been well maintained, and the condition of the fabric is good. The conversion of the building for office use required the removal of several partition walls in the north and south wings and the rear of the central connector, but other alterations and additions to the building have been minimal.

History: For a full discussion of the history of the Rodrigo Terronez Memorial Clinic and Forty Acres as a whole see Overview Historical Context, HABS No. CA-2878.

Construction of the Rodrigo Terronez Memorial Clinic began in February 1971, with Molly Malouf of Marin County, California, serving as the architect and contractor. The building was completed in September 1971. The building was dedicated the same month and named in honor of Rodrigo Terronez, a union vice president who died when he was unable to receive emergency treatment at the Delano hospital.

The Terronez Clinic was designed and constructed as a health clinic. When the clinic opened in October 1971, it began offering full ambulatory service in medicine, pediatrics, surgery, and obstetrics-gynecology as well as laboratory work, x-rays, social services, and counseling services to farm workers who belonged to the National Farm Workers Health Group. These services were provided by a staff of four physicians, three nurses, and three medical assistants, with support from an x-ray technician, lab technician, receptionist, bookkeeper, medical records keeper, administrator, and administrative assistant. The clinic provided twenty-four-hour emergency care and regular services Thursdays through Mondays.

By the end of 1972, the Terronez Clinic had served more than 5,000 farm workers and family members making more than 23,000 separate visits. Roughly 30 percent of all visits to the clinic were made by women between the ages of 21 and 50. Men over 50 years old (the majority of whom were Filipinos) made roughly 20 percent of all visits, as did children under 10 years old. These patients sought and received curative treatment, but the clinic staff emphasized preventative medicine and routine screening—all of which improved the lives of farm workers and their families.

The Terronez Clinic retained its original function into the early 1980s. At that point, the NFWSC board of directors transferred management of the Terronez Clinic to the National Health Service Corps, which operated the clinic until the NFWSC decided to close it at the end of the decade. During the early 1990s, the building was converted to office space for the Delano field office of the United Farm Workers.

The NFWSC owned the Terronez Clinic continuously from 1971 to 2011. The Cesar Chavez Foundation, which merged with the NFWSC in 2011, has owned the building since this merger.

Sources: For a full list of sources see Overview Historical Context, HABS No. CA- 2878.

Bardacke, Frank. *Trampling Out the Vintage: Cesar Chavez and the Two Souls of the United Farm Workers*. New York: Verso, 2011.

Chatfield, LeRoy. "Forty Acres, Delano: United Farm Worker Facilities." <https://libraries.ucsd.edu/farmworkermovement/category/commentary> (accessed May 15, 2014).

———. "LeRoy Chatfield, 1963–1973." <https://libraries.ucsd.edu/farmworker/movement/essay/essays-by-author> (accessed May 15, 2014).

Chavez, Richard, and Rudy Delgado, interview by author, Delano, CA, September 16, 2004.

Farmworker Movement Documentation Project, UC San Diego Library, San Diego, CA.

Ferriss, Susan, and Ricardo Sandoval. *The Fight in the Fields: Cesar Chavez and the Farmworkers Movement*. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1997.

Greenfield, Julie. "Julie Greenfield, 1968–1971." <https://libraries.ucsd.edu/farmworker/movement/essay/essays-by-author> (accessed May 15, 2014).

Griswold del Castillo, Richard, and Richard A. García. *César Chávez: A Triumph of Spirit*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995.

Levy, Jacques E. *Cesar Chavez: Autobiography of La Causa*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1975.

Matthiessen, Peter. *Sal Si Puedes: Cesar Chavez and the New American Revolution*. Rev. ed. New York: Random House, 1973.

Pearl McGivney, "Horizons of Hope." 1972. [https://libraries.ucsd.edu/farmworker/movement/ufwarchives/RogeroPitt/01/RFK%20Health%20Plan\\_005.pdf](https://libraries.ucsd.edu/farmworker/movement/ufwarchives/RogeroPitt/01/RFK%20Health%20Plan_005.pdf) (accessed May 15, 2014).

Pawel, Miriam. *The Crusades of Cesar Chavez: A Biography*. New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2014.

———. *The Union of Their Dreams: Power, Hope, and Struggle in Cesar Chavez's Farm Worker Movement*. New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2009.

Rast, Raymond W., and Gail L. Dubrow. "Cesar Chavez and the Farm Worker Movement in the American West." Theme Study. Draft ms., 2009. Copy in author's possession.

Rast, Raymond W., Gail L. Dubrow, and Brian Casserly. "Forty Acres." National Historic Landmark Nomination. Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, National Historic Landmarks Program, 2008.

Rudd, Peter. "The United Farm Workers Clinic in Delano, Calif.: A Study of the Rural Poor." *Rural Health* 90 (July-August 1975): 331-39.

United Farm Workers Collections, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI.

Historian: Raymond W. Rast, Ph.D., Department of History, Gonzaga University

Project

Information: The documentation of Forty Acres was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), Heritage Documentation Programs (HDP) of the National Park Service, and California State Polytechnic University, Pomona; Richard O'Connor, Chief of HDP; and Catherine C. Lavoie, Chief of HABS. Funding was provided the Cultural Resources Directorate of the National Park Service in Washington, D.C. and utilized by the university through a cooperative agreement with the Cal Poly Pomona Foundation, Inc., G. Paul Storey, Executive Director, an auxiliary organization of California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. The measured drawings were produced by students Sabrina Blackman, Allyson Bradford, Frank Chang, Cynthia Garcia, Chance Jackson, and Leah Schoelles, under the direction of Luis G. Hoyos RA, Professor; Department of Architecture, and Principal Investigator for the Forty Acres project. Robert R. Arzola, HABS Architect of the Washington DC office supervised the project, also providing review and guidance, and assistance in the development of the scope of work in conjunction with Luis G. Hoyos. The written historical reports of Forty Acres were produced by Raymond W. Rast, Ph.D., Department of History, Gonzaga University, under contract for HABS. Supervision of the HABS historical reports was provided by Catherine C. Lavoie. Large-format photography was undertaken by James W. Rosenthal, working for HABS, in 2012. HABS would like to acknowledge and thank the following individuals and organizations for their assistance in the completion of the documentation of Forty Acres: Dennis Dahlin, Landscape Architect, Dahlin and Essex, Inc., Davis California; The Cesar E. Chavez Foundation; Paul Chavez and the Cesar Chavez Family; Delano Field Office, United Farm Workers; and Sheila Geivet, Property Manager of the Agbayani Village; and at California State Polytechnic University, Michael Woo, Dean, College of Environmental Design; and Sarah Lorenzen, RA, Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Architecture.