

**HABS No. CA-2710-Z**

Agnews State Hospital, Dining Hall  
(Agnews State Hospital, Trust Office)  
(Building No. 39)  
Between Avenue A and End of Palm Drive  
Santa Clara  
Santa Clara County  
California

HABS  
CAL  
43-SANCLA,  
6Z-

**PHOTOGRAPHS**

**WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA**

**Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Western Region  
Department of the Interior  
San Francisco, California 94107**

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
AGNEWS STATE HOSPITAL, DINING HALL  
(Trust Office, Building No. 39)

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**Location:**

The Agnews State Hospital Dining Hall is located in the center of the campus between the Treatment Building (to the west) and the Bakery/Kitchen/Commissary (to the east); Agnews State Hospital, 4000 Lafayette Road, Santa Clara, California 95050.

U.S.G.S. Milpitas Quadrangle (7.5'), Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: Zone 3; E 591805; N 4138860

**Significance:**

Building 39 is significant during the period from 1908 to 1941 as an integral component of the reconstruction of Agnews State Hospital in a pavilion plan. The 1907 design for the hospital symbolized not only a reconfiguration of buildings into smaller structures in a park-like setting, but an important change in the perspectives on and the treatment of patients. Agnews was the first mental facility in California to switch from the confinement and permanent housing of patients to humane treatment (including exposure to clean air and sunlight) with the hope of release. Building 39 represents the food service portion of the plan. In keeping with the pavilion model, Building 39 was constructed as a small, specialized unit surrounded by grass and trees, with ample windows.

In addition, Building 39 and the other structures from the 1907 plan are important as early attempts to use reinforced concrete as an earthquake and fire-resistant material.

**Description:**

Building 39 is a two-story structure with a shallow "C" shaped plan. The Dining Hall measures 130 feet 8 inches across the west (front) and east facades and 34 feet across the north and south facades. The recession in the center of the west facade steps back approximately 10 feet and is 50 feet 8 inches across.<sup>1</sup> The building has a total area of 13,677 square feet. It is connected by an enclosed passage to the kitchen building to the east. Aside from the wooden trusses of the roof, the structural elements of Building 39 are made almost entirely of reinforced concrete: including the foundation, exterior walls, and floor slabs. The building has a hipped roof covered in red clay tile. Most windows, including those with semi-circular arched tops, are the original, wooden, casement windows.

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Like other buildings constructed as part of the 1907 plan, the Dining Hall is a blend of several styles. Its buttressed walls, arched windows, inset red brick details, and red tile roof are typical of the Mediterranean Revival Style. Many of the buildings constructed at Agnews from 1907 to 1920 also have decorative elements identified with the Arts and Craft movement. However, more than any other building at Agnews, Building 39 has more Arts and Crafts features such as wide overhanging eaves, a porch with wooden beams, rough stucco walls with smooth stucco above, large paired wooden brackets, second story coursing, and iron balconets.

All facades of the building are symmetrical. In the central, recessed portion of the west (front) facade, underneath the one-story porch there are wooden doors bordered by windows. The back wall of the porch is bowed, and wooden beams support the shed roof. Above the porch, there are four sets of paired casement windows. On each of the wings of this facade, there are three sets of four casement windows topped by divided-light semi-circular arched transoms. On the second floor, there are three sets of coupled casement windows with iron balconets underneath the central windows.

Plant Operations lists show that the building was renovated (or built) in 1926, but specifics on what changes were made are not given. From the 1956 renovation plans, it appears that the first floor of Building 39 was originally divided into three large rooms. After the remodeling, the space was partitioned into numerous smaller rooms. The original interior walls are made of hollow clay tile covered with plaster, and the new divisions were made of wood studs covered in gyp board. A central corridor encircles a core of rooms and provides access to the ring of rooms on the outside of the corridor. The only interior stairway is located in the central core of rooms directly across from the west entrance.

The second floor was little altered in the remodeling, and for the most part retains its original floor plan. A central corridor runs from the south wall of the building to the north wall, and there are rooms on both sides. In the 1956 remodeling, closets were added to the bedrooms, and bathroom and laundry facilities were created. In addition, a wall between two rooms was removed to make a larger "Community Room."<sup>2</sup> Probably at this time, the original hardwood floors were replaced with linoleum, and acoustical tiles were applied to the ceiling. At an unknown date, a handicap ramp was built on the

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west side of the building, and metal fire escapes were constructed on the north and south ends.

**Historical Context:**

Drawings for the "Large Dining Hall" were created by Sellon and Hemmings, State Architects, in October and November of 1907 as part of the general plan for the reconstruction of Agnews State Hospital. The new plan was created after the original 1886 hospital buildings were destroyed in the 1906 earthquake. The Advisory Board adopted the plans for Building 39 in 1908.<sup>3</sup> Plant Operations lists give contradictory construction dates for the building--1908 and 1926. Building 39 was called "Building 11- Dining Hall" in the 1915 revised plans for the grounds.

At the time of the redesign of Agnews State Hospital, the pavilion plan was a new idea; instead of large buildings housing all functions, pavilion plan hospitals separated uses such as housing, administration, and treatment into buildings designed specifically for each purpose. The new buildings were smaller with numerous windows to allow in fresh air and light. The Dining Hall is an excellent example of a specialized building. It was detached not only from the residential facilities of the patients it served but was also distinct (although connected by a covered passage) from the kitchen to the east.

Sometime before 1956, the Dining Hall was renamed Building 222 and along with the Kitchen/Bakery/Commissary was called the "Food Service Center."<sup>4</sup> Between 1956 and 1958 the building was remodeled to become the "Medical Office Building and Student Nurses Quarters" and was called Building 39. As described above, the first floor was divided into smaller rooms, which were used for physician, stenographer, social worker, and psychologist's offices. There were also restrooms and a medical records room. The second floor was used to house nurses. By 1994 Building 39 functioned as the Trust Office.

**Endnotes:**

<sup>1</sup> Shomate, "Medical Office Building and Student Nurses Quarters," State Department of Public Works, Division of Architecture, Sacramento, California, 15 March 1956, sheet 3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

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<sup>3</sup> Sellon and Hemmings, State Architect, "Large Dining Hall: Agnews State Hospital." Department of Engineering, Sacramento: California, October/November 1907.

<sup>4</sup> "West Area: Agnews State Hospital", map, no date. On file at Plant Operations, Agnews Developmental Center.

**Sources:**

"Agnews Developmental Center: Buildings of the West Campus," On file at Plant Operations, Agnews Developmental Center, July, 1994.

"Agnews Developmental Center: West Area", no date. On file at Plant Operations, Agnews Developmental Center.

"Agnews Developmental Center: West Area Site Plan," On file at Plant Operations, Agnews Developmental Center, 7/95.

"Agnews Developmental Center: West Campus Building Data," On file at Plant Operations, Agnews Developmental Center, no date.

Boyd, Anson, State Architect. "Master Plan of Agnew State Hospital: West Area." California State Division of Architecture, July 27, 1953.

Sellon and Hemmings, State Architects. "Large Dining Hall: Agnews State Hospital." Department of Engineering, Sacramento: California, October/November 1907.

Shomate. "Medical Office Building and Student Nurses' Quarters." State Department of Public Works, Division of Architecture, Sacramento: CA.

"West Area: Agnews State Hospital", map, no date. On file at Plant Operations, Agnews Developmental Center.

**Project Information:**

Building 39 is being documented as a contributing feature to the Agnews State Hospital historic district. The Agnews State Hospital (west campus) historic district was determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 1996 and was listed on the NRHP in listed 1997.

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Sun Microsystems purchased the historic Agnews State Hospital West site in Santa Clara, California for the development of an office and research complex. Their Agnews Development Center project resulted in the demolition of all but four of the existing structures. Building 39 was demolished in 1998. An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to assess the impacts of this project.

Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) recordation was prepared by Page & Turnbull, Inc. and Dames & Moore, Inc. for Jones Lang LaSalle Development, Inc. and Sun Microsystems to comply with mitigation measures required by the EIR and agreed upon by Sun Microsystems, the City of Santa Clara, the National Park Service, and the State Office of Historic Preservation. This HABS recordation includes this report on the Agnews State Hospital West historic district in narrative format, written reports on the individual buildings with the historic district in outline or architectural data form format, supporting drawings of the historic district, large format photographs, and a photographic index.

This written report on Building 39 was prepared by Jody Stock and Michael Corbett, architectural historians for Dames & Moore.