

Goleta Valley Historical Society
Stewards of Rancho La Patera & Stow House
Est. 1872

Self-Guided Ranch Yard Tour

The arrangement of farm equipment from left to right in the ranch yard is intended to reflect the annual crop cycle, from preparing the ground through to harvest. The equipment on display was used from the late 1800s to the mid-1900s.

STATION #1 – PLOWS

In the spring, plows were used to turn over the soil as an early step in preparing the seedbed. In the machine age, the plow became a large machine with five blades, called a five-bottom plow. Today, farmers often use disks that do not penetrate the soil as deeply as a plow. This helps prevent soil erosion.



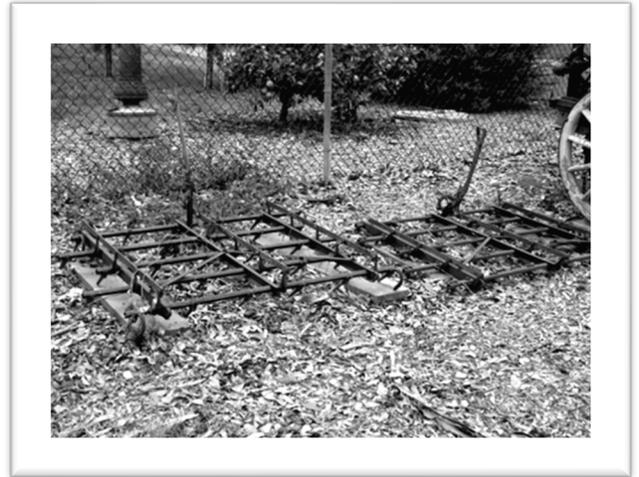
STATION #2 – DISK PLOW

Disk plows turned over the dirt, but left the soil connected. The disk's blades cut the soil into chunks the size of a person's fist. This disk plow was used locally on the Pomatto Ranch.



STATION #3 – HARROW

With its many tines, the harrow left the soil fully broken up and smooth. This would result in a desirable seedbed. This harrow was also used locally on the Pomatto Ranch.



STATION #4 - CULTIPACKER

The cultipacker is the last implement used before planting seeds. It is used when the soil tends to be clay and the harrow does

not completely break down the clods of dirt. If the soil is pulverized and packed, the cultipacker allows seeds to make a better connection to the soil. It also allows water to contact the seed through capillary action. This increases the chance of germination.

STATION #5 – BEAN SEEDER

With the soil prepared for seeding, the next machine used depended on which crops were to be planted. In our display, a lima bean planter is shown. There were also seeders for corn, hay, and oats.



STATION # 6 – RAKE

After the crops were cut, the rake was used to make long piles of hay or grain. The rows of hay or grain were then loaded onto a wagon. In later years crops were taken up by a baler. This machine picked up the hay and made bales in one operation. Once the crops were loaded onto a wagon, they were driven to a thresher where the beans were removed from the dried pod and stalk.



STATION #7 – BEAN THRESHER

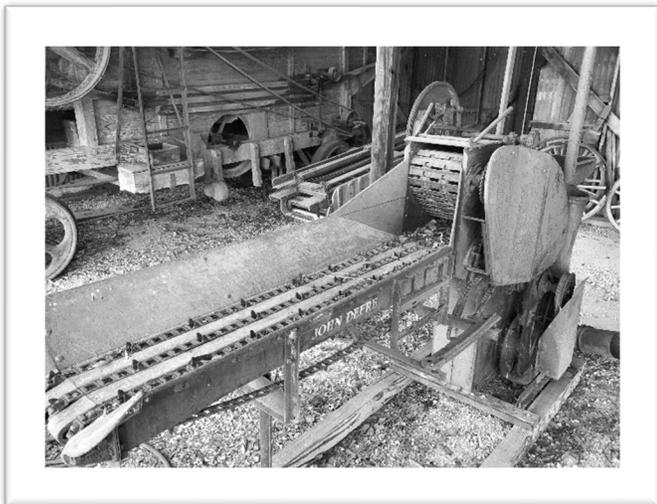
The job of the threshing machine was to separate the beans or grain from the stalk and pod. The thresher in our display is set up for beans. The threshing operation produced grain and chaff. The chaff was used for animal bedding. It was spread around the animals' pens and stables and absorbed the animal waste. It was

then gathered, and the manure was used in the fields as fertilizer. The re-use of the animal waste products was an example of conservation by the farmers. This thresher was manufactured by Ventura Manufacturing Co and was used on the Miratti Ranch until 1958.



STATION #8 – LOADER

This machine was used to load beans onto the wagons so they could be taken from the field to the thresher.



STATION #9 – ROUGHAGE GRINDER

This machine was used to produce feed for animals, usually cattle. Grain and hay were shoveled into the machine which ground them into a high protein mix. The output was sacked and stored, then used to feed the animals.



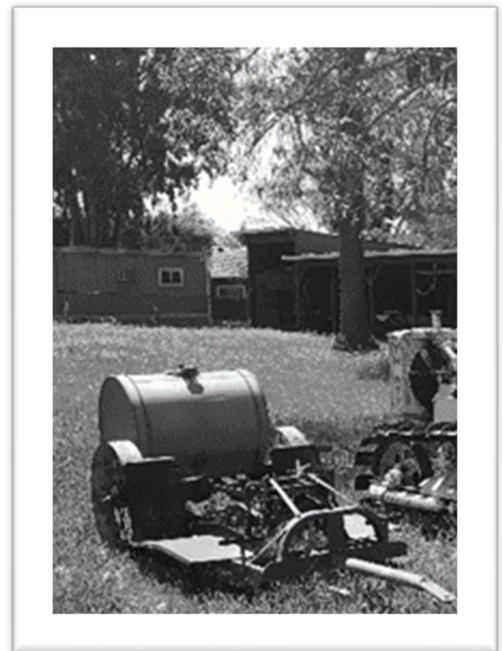
STATION #10 – MANURE SPREADER

Because manure spreaders were used in the fall, manure was able to soak into the soil during the rainy season. Spreaders allowed farmers to fertilize the soil with the year's accumulated animal waste. This recycling process returned soil nutrients to the land which otherwise would be lost. Modern farms often use commercial fertilizer instead of animal waste, thus depriving the soil of some of the benefits of recycling the waste.



STATION #11 – SEED PLANTER

These GEM seed sowers were used to distribute seed evenly into the tilled soil. They were able to distribute the seed in straight rows, which made harvesting much easier.





STATION #12 – ADDITIONAL PLOWS

Here there are an assortment of various plows including a single bottom plow, a hillside plow, a gang plow, and a multiple bottom plow.

STATION #13 – SAWS

There are also a number of different saws, including drag saws which were used to clear fields and could be taken into the field to cut trees and logs. There is also a left-handed belt driven table saw for cutting wood for various uses. There are several hand saws as well as a saw filing machine, used to sharpen the saws.



STATION #14 – SPRAYERS

There is a 250-gallon bean spray rig and a smaller sprayer made by the Niagara Sprayer Co.

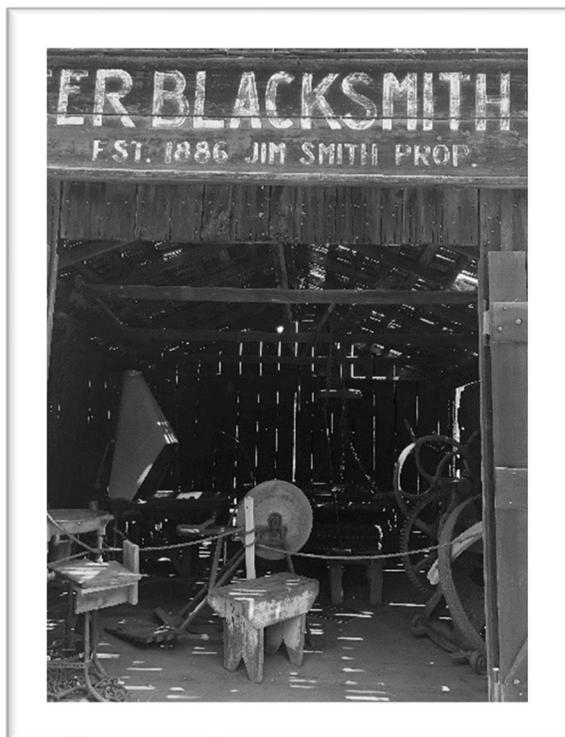


STATION #15 – WALNUT HULLER

There are a number of walnut hullers. The Maiers Huller was produced in Goleta and patented in 1903. There are two small hullers and one larger huller. The hullers could do the work of at least 35 men hulling by hand. There is also a huller made by Grace Bros.

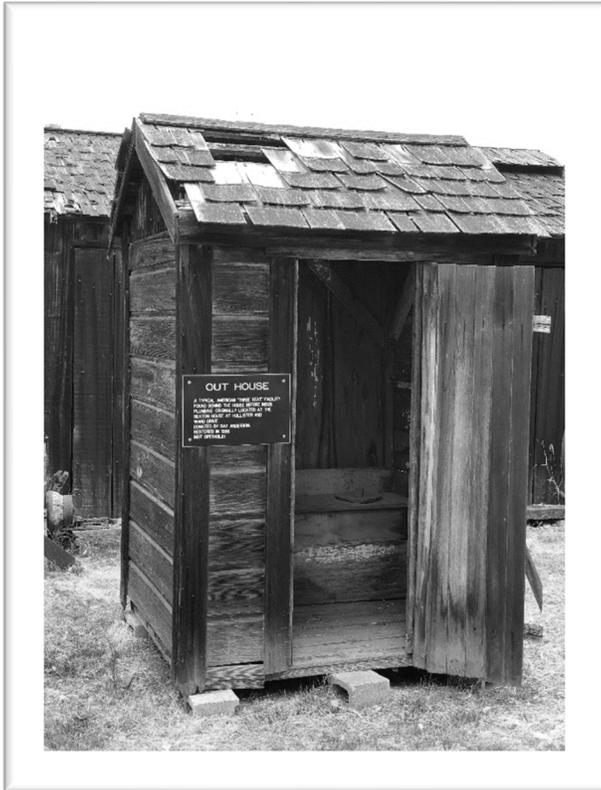


STATION #16 – TRACTORS AND WAGONS Throughout the yard there are several tractors and wagons on display. These were used throughout the farm for a variety of hauling and other heavy work.



STATION #17 – BLACKSMITH SHOP On the East side of the yard, you will see the Pioneer Blacksmith shop, where tools were made, and equipment was repaired.





STATION #18 – OUTHOUSE

You will also see the outhouse. Prior to indoor plumbing the entire ranch would use the outhouse.



Sign made by GVHS Blacksmith, c. 1980



STATION #19 – WINDMILL

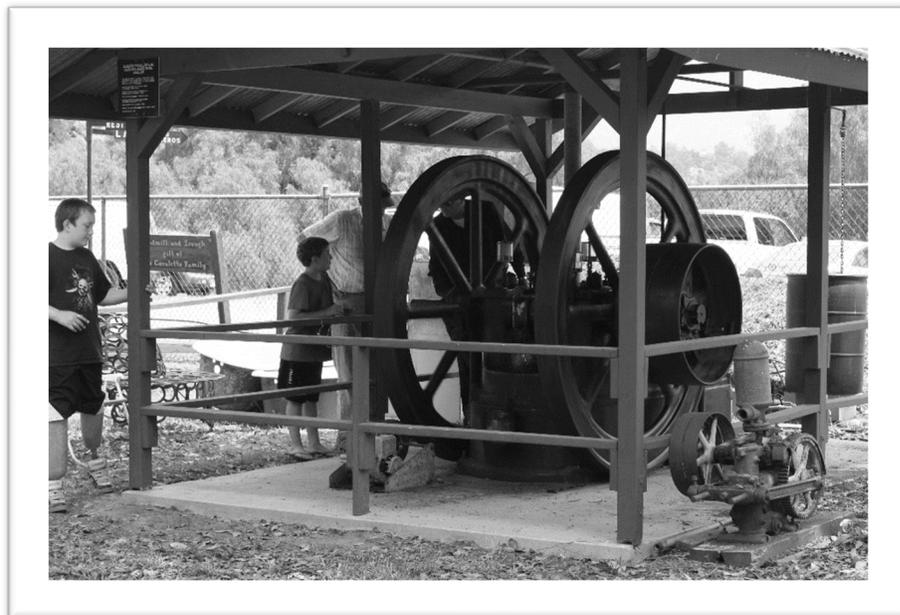
This is a windmill made by the Aermotor Co. Windmills were used to pump ground water in order to pipe it through an irrigation system to the crops.



STATION #20 – ONE LUNG ENGINE

Farm powerhouses in the 1880s...

When they slowed down, they would cause a spark that would fire the engine up again. They could run all day on a quart of gasoline and were used for everything from cutting wood to making ice cream.





STATION #21 – HAY PRESS

Just as ancient man came up with the idea for the wheel, it was only a matter of time before someone devised the idea of squeezing loose hay into a package that could be tied, handled, and transported. But until the mid-1800s, hay that was harvested for livestock was simply piled into stacks or moved into the barn for use during the winter. Moving the crop involved pitching it onto a wagon and pitching it back off at the destination.

STATION #22 – DITCHER

The Stow Family's Buckeye ditcher from the 1920s is along the East fence. There were many times this could be used, from digging ditches for planting to laying irrigation pipes.



STATION #23 – SMUDGE POT



Before leaving the yard, you will notice several smudge pots. These were placed in the fields near the lemon trees to keep them warm on nights when the temperature would dip too low for the trees and fruit. Now most ranchers use gas-powered wind machines to drive up the temperatures on cold nights.



THANK YOU FOR VISITING OUR RANCH YARD!

