

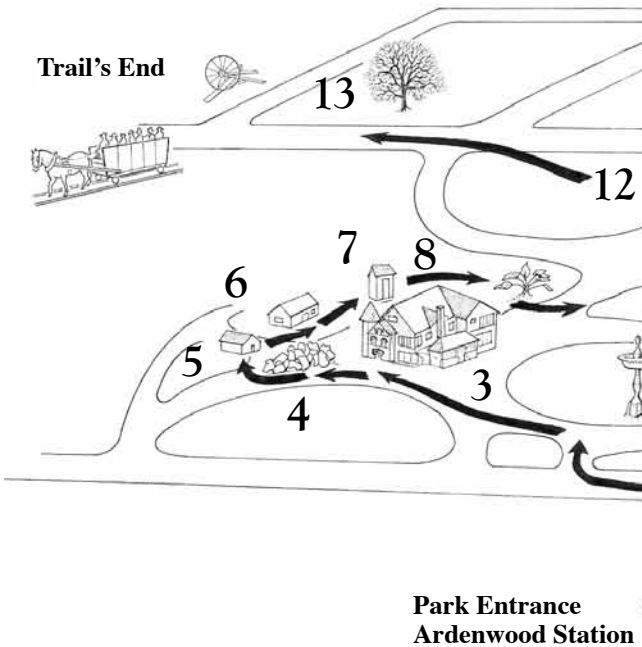
# ARDENWOOD HISTORIC FARM



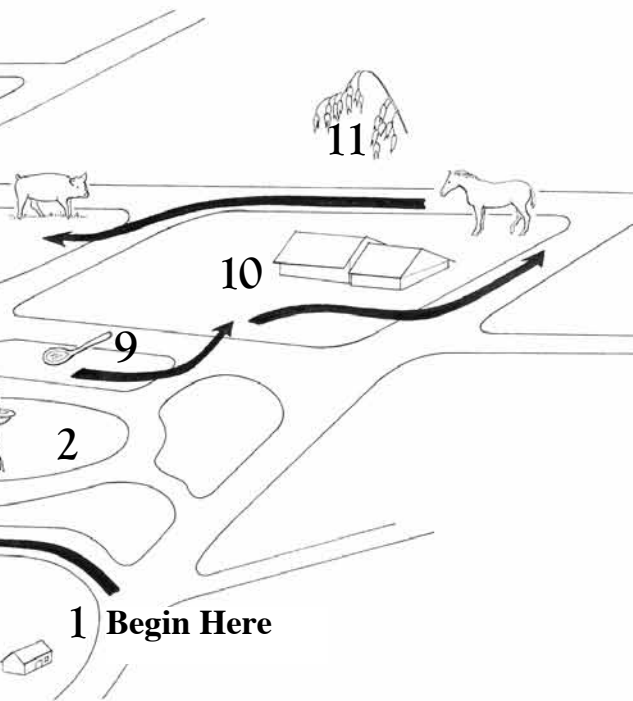
## Tour



East Bay   
Regional Park District



1. OHLONE INDIANS
2. VICTORIAN GARDEN
3. PATTERSON HOUSE
4. GRANITE PILE
5. MILK HOUSE
6. COOK'S HOUSE
7. OUTHOUSE



8. KITCHEN GARDEN

9. TENNIS COURT

10. FARMYARD

11. CROP FIELDS

12. FARM ANIMALS

13. WALNUT ORCHARD

TRAIL'S END

## INTRODUCTION

The wares of the late 19th century are more than mere curiosities or unique home decorations—they are evidence of the customs and attitudes of life in another era. Everyday objects from the turn of the century may appear quaint to us, but to the people of the time, they were an integral part of farm and family life.

On this ½ mile walk, you will have a chance to see how the buildings and artifacts here at Ardenwood relate to the customs and attitudes of those who lived 100 years ago.

The route will lead you through the peacefulness of the Victorian garden, past the hustle and bustle of the farmyard, to the orchards and farm fields where every season brings something new.

Your walk begins just past the Train Station at the Ohlone Indian wayside panel.

In 1894 George W. Patterson, lured by the promise of gold, left his home in Indiana and set out for California. By 1889 he had made his fortune, not in gold fields, but through farming the fertile land of the East Bay.

Three generations later, much remains at Ardenwood that speaks clearly about the life and times of Victorian Americans.

On this walk you will have the chance to investigate the tangible remains of life on this farm a century ago.



## 1. OHLONE INDIANS

Neither the Pattersons nor previous farmers were the first to inhabit the East Bay. Indeed, the first inhabitants, the Ohlone Indians, were not farmers at all, but hunter-gatherers. Hunting wild game and gathering edible and other useful plants, the Ohlones maintained a lifestyle of peaceful dependence upon the land for 2,000 years.

To your left, a small mound of earth is all that remains to remind us of those first inhabitants of what was to become the Ardenwood estate. On this site they built houses of tules and cattails, ground acorns, played games, and raised families.

*Turn left toward Deer Park, then right at the first intersection. Your next stop is the garden area near the fountain.*



## 2. VICTORIAN GARDEN

The Ohlone people had lived for centuries with a deep and abiding respect for the land. Nineteenth century Americans, on the other hand, had to be reminded of their dependence upon nature by moralists, educators, and through work in their gardens.

Victorian gardens were visual reminders of the social status of the family and a place of beauty and relaxation. They were also important because of what they symbolized. Moral lessons were drawn from the processes of growth, renewal, and decay. Gardening was thought to be a safeguard against a life of political agitation and a protection from the enticements of evil.

*Make your way to the front of the Patterson House.*



### 3. PATTERSON HOUSE

Before you stands the Patterson house, once the home of George and Clara Patterson. Within this house, Clara attempted to create an atmosphere opposite that of her husband's world of agriculture and commerce. Her responsibility was to transform the interior of the house into a place of culture, education, and restfulness, as well as one which would display her family's status.

Clara, like most Victorian women, was measured by the state of her home. It was generally agreed that a family's morality and prosperity were in part determined by how carefully the wife maintained the home.

*Facing the front porch, walk around to the left side of the house.*



#### 4. GRANITE PILE

This pile of unused foundation granite became the site for many of the Patterson's family portraits.

Just as the home was a measure of status, a family portrait displayed that status as well. Fashionable clothing was a must for such portraits, which for ladies included a corset, bustle, and several petticoats. These articles of clothing, a sign of affluence in a society that valued display, made movement difficult. Confining clothing demonstrated that there was no need for a woman to participate in the arduous labor of housework because her husband was wealthy enough to hire domestic help.

*Walk past the granite pile on the path and notice the stone milk house on your left.*



## 5. MILK HOUSE

The milk house was a cool place to store dairy products in an era before refrigeration. The thick stone walls helped to maintain a cool, even temperature year round, while breezes blowing through wet burlap over the windows provided additional cooling in the summer.

On smaller, less prosperous farms, the contents of the milk house were often the housewife's responsibility. With a schedule that made an outside job impossible, marketing dairy products provided the housewife with spending money. She might save for a sewing machine, an invention that reduced the time required to make a shirt from 14 ½ hours to 1¼ hours.

*Just ahead is the small white cook's house.*



## 6. COOK'S HOUSE

In this small building lived the Chinese cook employed by the Patterson family. They also employed Chinese laborers in their fields.

By the 1890s, the Chinese had become 75% of the agricultural work force in California. Said one merchant, "Without Chinese labor, I do not think there would be one half the material wealth in the state."

Despite this, Chinese laborers were resented and finally forced to leave. One Chinese immigrant expressed it this way: "...he did work that no one else would or could do, and when it was completed the American laborer...demanded that the Chinese be 'thrown out' and 'kept out.'"

*Across the paved path from the Cook's house, look for the outhouse under the big redwood tree.*



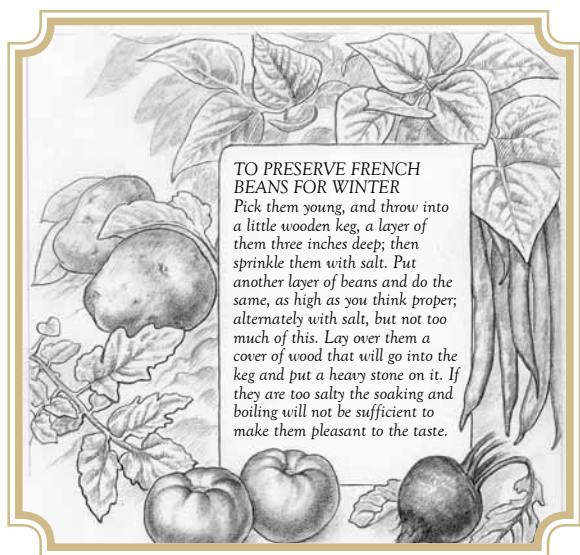
## 7. OUTHOUSE

On most farms of the 19th century, an outhouse served as the main toilet somewhere near the house. At night and during bad weather chamber pots were used inside the house.

Outhouses often depicted either a sun or moon on their doors. A sun indicated the men's outhouse, a moon the ladies'. Since an outhouse was more of a necessity for a lady toiling in the house than for a man laboring in the fields, the moon eventually became a generic outhouse symbol.

It was not until the early 20th century that bathrooms, as we know them today, became viewed as "necessities" by many.

*Your next stop is directly behind the outhouse and around the redwood tree.*



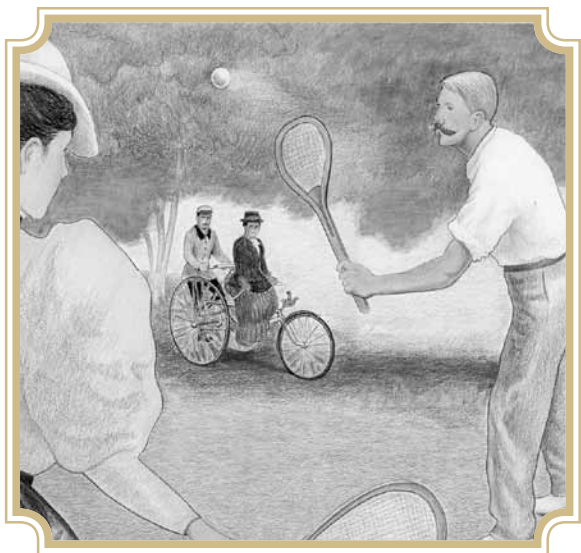
## 8. KITCHEN GARDEN

The Patterson's kitchen garden was probably about an acre in size, supplying the family and resident farmhands with vegetables for most of the year.

The vegetables here are the same varieties gardeners planted in the 19th century. Sadly, many of the varieties popular in the 1890s have been lost. Since these vegetables can tell us much about Victorian life, each lost variety has become a missing piece in the puzzle of the past.

Farm families concentrated on vegetables that could be pickled, dried, canned, or preserved in root cellars. What do you see growing in these garden beds?

*Stop #9 is the asphalted area to your right near the tall palm tree.*



## 9. TENNIS COURT

Once clay-covered, this tennis court represents one of the popular leisure activities near the turn of the century. Although the benefits of exercise began to be recognized as the century waned, sports, such as tennis, were significant for other reasons as well.

These new leisure activities in the late 19th century became valuable opportunities for courtship. Roller skating gave young couples a chance to hold hands in public, and bicycles gave couples a chance to be alone together. In addition, sports helped bring about a change in women's roles by allowing them to discard the corset and other purely ornamental status symbols.

*Walk across the tennis court to the edge of the lawn. The path to the left will take you to the farmyard.*



## 10. FARMYARD

The buildings around you—the granary, blacksmith shop, equipment shed, and barn—were important for reasons other than the functions they fulfilled in the operation of the farm.

The status of a rural family was measured not only by the elegance of their home, but by their barn, outbuildings, and farming techniques as well. A family was viewed as hardworking and successful if their barn was large and well cared for, their farm machinery was of high quality, and their fields were well tended. Often, expensive home furnishings were coveted less than successful farming practices.

*Continue past the Blacksmith and equipment sheds and corrals to the gravel road along the fields and turn left. Your next stop is at the edge of the fields.*



## 11. CROP FIELDS

These fields are planted in the types of crops George Patterson cultivated 100 years ago. By the late 1880s, his crops included oats, barley, wheat, potatoes, cabbage, onions, garlic, turnips, carrots, tomatoes, corn, beans, squash, sugar beets, peas, and rhubarb. Most of these crops were developed outside North America.

Immigrants to this country brought their plants with them—corn from Mexico, tomatoes from Peru, carrots from Holland, peas from France, onions from Portugal, cabbage from Germany.

By cultivating crops such as these, the East Bay became the breadbasket of San Francisco during the late 19th century.

*Continue on the gravel road along the fields to the first intersection. The corrals and small buildings to your left are your next stop.*



## 12. FARM ANIMALS

Domestic animals, like sheep, chickens, and pigs originated from wild animals that were tamed thousands of years ago.

Farm animals were not generally viewed as pets. They were thought of as one might think of a crop—as a commodity to be tended and cared for until ready to sell for cash or to be used by the family.

Tending took many forms, with the entire family becoming involved. Slaughtering of large animals typically fell to the men of the family. Killing and dressing of poultry was usually done by the women. Children were often responsible for feeding, watering, and milking.

*Walk back toward the central field and continue northward along the wagon road until reaching a four-way intersection at the walnut orchard.*



### 13. WALNUT ORCHARD

The orchard to your right consists primarily of English walnuts grafted onto black walnut rootstock. This combination makes a more vigorous tree. However, these walnuts are fighting for survival, because water pumped from the aquifers for farming and domestic use has been replaced by salty water from the Bay. Over the years, farmers have continued to use this salty water to irrigate their crops, gradually increasing the salt content of the soil. A new, deeper well has now been dug and it is hoped that the fresher water it provides will reverse this trend and improve productivity.



## TRAIL'S END

For hundreds of years the land here has been home to a variety of people living different lifestyles. From a simple mound of earth to an elaborate Victorian farmhouse, the remnants of the past indicate how those people thought and behaved. Without the artifacts from each time period, the past is hard to understand.

The pace of life on the farm changes throughout the year. Visit Ardenwood again in another season to get a fuller picture of life near the turn-of-the-last-century.

If you have questions or would like more information, please speak to any of the Ardenwood staff. They will be glad to help you.

Thank you for visiting Ardenwood Historic Farm.



## CREDITS

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## QUESTIONS:

If you have any questions about Ardenwood Historic Farm, contact a Park District Naturalist at:

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Photo by Ira Bletz

The Park District is a special district operating over 100,000 acres of parkland in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. The East Bay Regional Park District is chartered to preserve open space and provide educational and recreational opportunities to area residents.

This brochure is provided as a public service of the Interpretive and Recreation Services Department of the East Bay Regional Park District.



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