



## **Novato History Museum**

### **Guide to Exhibits**

Exh. 1 Mortar & pestle from Miwok period found at the Trumbull Ranch. (Miwok civilization in this area dates back approximately 3600 years.)

Exh. 2 Branding irons similar to those used by Novato cattle ranchers.

Exh. 3 Portrait of Ignacio (Ygnacio in Spanish) Pacheco Ygnacio was born in 1808 at the Pueblo de San Jose and was the son of the alcalde, or mayor. He joined the San Francisco Presidio garrison as a teenager and was eventually promoted to sergeant. Upon his retirement, Ygnacio was given a land grant by the California Gov. Juan Bautista Alvarado north of Sonoma called Rancho Agua Caliente. However, he found the land there unsuitable for his agricultural and ranching needs, and in 1840 was given the Rancho San Jose grant of 6,600 acres north of San Rafael that ran from the San Pablo Bay west to Nicasio. The Pacheco family raised cattle and horses for stock and racing. Ygnacio is credited with planting the first vineyards in Marin County, along with numerous fruit orchards. He had nine children by three wives: Maria Josefa Higuera, Maria Guadalupe Duarte and Maria Loreto Duarte, the younger sister of his second wife. The Pachecos revered education and built a schoolroom in the original adobe house for their children and neighbors' children. In later years, the family donated nearby land for a schoolhouse that would eventually become the first school of the San Jose School District of Novato. Ygnacio was an influential and respected rancher, and was noted for being a crack shot and fine swordsman. His great-great grandson Herb Rowland tells a story of Ygnacio challenging John C. Fremont to a duel when Fremont, on his way to Sonoma just before the Bear Flag Rebellion, demanded that Ygnacio deliver up his finest horses. Ygnacio had sent his best horses north and pointed at some broken-down, sway back nags, saying, "There they are." Fremont became furious and called him "a liar". Ygnacio challenged him to a duel, but Fremont backed down when his guide and interpreter Kit Carson revealed that Ygnacio was known as one of the best shot and swordsmen in California. On Nov. 29, 1864, he died, leaving his wife and children his entire estate. He is buried at Mt. Olivet Cemetery in San Rafael, along with his third wife, Maria Loreto. She lived until 1891 and married twice more, including to West Marin pioneer and land owner James Black. Over the years, family members sold off most of the land except for the Ignacio home site. However, the Pacheco family is still remembered in the winery, shopping center, creek, neighborhoods and numerous street names that bear their first and last names. Today, the Pacheco Valley winery sits on 70 acres of the original San Jose land grant, just west of Highway 101. It is managed by Rowland, who is a fifth-generation Novato resident and seventh-generation Californian. He and his wife, Debbie, live on the property and run the family business from the same house that his great grandfather

built in 1876." (Fletcher, Scott, Marin IJ, 1/25/21); see also, <http://www.novatohistory.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/The-Pacheco-Ranch-Vol23-No1.pdf> (Novato Historian) <https://www.novatohistory.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Historian-Vol-39-No-4-Feature.pdf> (Novato Historian)

Exh. 4 Maria Loreta Duarte (See Exh. 3.) After her husband died, Maria married widower James Black in 1866. "According to all accounts, the marriage was not a happy one." Black allegedly made a new will shortly before his death in 1870, leaving everything to Maria and nothing to his daughter, Mary Burdell. Mary Burdell successfully challenged the will, claiming alcohol and undue influence by her father's wife. She was eventually awarded half of her father's estate. (pp. 202-203, Mary Rodgers Ungemach, Novato Township Land Grant to World War II (1989), Michigan, Thomson-Shore, Inc.) Exh. 5 Plat or Survey Map of Rancho de Novato completed in Nov. 1859. Exh. 6 Painting of what the early Mexican settlement looked like (more info on back of painting.). NB: the cattle pictured were used principally for their hides and their fat from under the cattle's hide known as "tallow" was used to make soap and candles. There were no fences - hence the use of branding. Dairy and beef ranching came later.

Exh. 7 Map of early Marin showing all the original land grants.

Exh. 8 Photo of Joseph Sweetser - one of the early settlers/entrepreneurs of Novato. Together with Francis DeLong, he purchased Rancho Novato in 1856. Sweetser and DeLong planted orchards of apple, pear, apricot, cherry, peach, and almond trees, as well as a vineyard. The two also built a one-room school, a church, and a cemetery on their property. In 1870, they allowed a public highway to be built across their ranch. After his wife's death, Sweetser moved to Florida with his second wife to raise oranges, selling all but the square mile that is now downtown Novato to DeLong. He died at age 72 from blood poisoning which he contracted from the colored dye in his socks leeching into a foot blister. After Sweetser died, his body was shipped back to Novato for burial. DeLong, who stayed in Novato, died of a stroke at the age of 77 and is buried in New York. (pp. 255-259, 432, Ungemach, Novato Township Land Grant to World War II, *supra*.)

Exh. 9 Photo of Francis DeLong (see Exh. 8)

Exh. 10 Original Lithograph showing Rancho Novato when owned and operated by Sweetser and DeLong. It also shows the home built by Sweetser and DeLong.

Exh. 11 Display of items from the operation of Novato's apple orchards. Novato once had the largest apple orchards in the world, some 20,000 trees, as well as plums, olives, grapes, etc. (See Exh. 8.) (Notice all the street names reflecting the city's historical orchards: Peach, Cherry, Olive, etc.) Also on display is a "Gunter's chain" - folded metal pieces which once served as a distance-measuring device used in surveying land.

Exh. 12 Early map of Novato, circa early 1900s (goes with Exh. 13)

Exh. 13 1889 newsprint ad selling lots in Novato and advertising a 75 cent round trip railroad ride from S.F. (via ferry) (goes with Exh. 12)

Exh. 14 Apple press

Exh. 15 Railroad exhibit. Track from Grant Ave. Top left are train horn bellows – pull chain to activate. Photos on wall are self-explanatory. RR gage (distance between rails) was not standardized until the Civil War.

Exh. 16 Victorian hair wreath. Custom from early 1900s to remember a departed loved-one by making a wreath from their hair. Hair wreaths could be made from hair from either living or dead family members.

Exh. 17 Table with household items: irons, small replica of a milk can, etc. The 4-sided metal device with clamps is a toaster as is the long metal pole with a clasp at the end.

Exh. 18 Novato Fire Department exhibit which continues to opposite wall – self-explanatory.

Exh. 19 Ralph Weseman, M.D., medical kit. He had an office in Novato on Grant Ave. Dr. Weseman was a Seventh Day Adventist whose faith generally kept him from working on Saturdays (when he would attend church) but he would often open his office on Sundays.

Exh. 20 Victorian formal dress, circa late 1800s.

Exh. 21 Howe Treadle Sewing Machine, circa 1870s.

Exh. 22 Group of items from a typical 1906 house. Items 1-13 explained. A picture of the Sweetser DeLong home is on top of this display along with a picture of Robert Trumbull and his wife who occupied the home for many years.

Exh. 23 the doll house is a replica of the Sweetser DeLong home. The home is still standing today in west Novato and is owned by a Christian organization called Opus Dei. Items in Exh. 22 (rug beater, chamber pot, shoes, etc.) can be found in the doll house in miniature and it's fun for kids to find them.

Exh. 24 Saddle

Exh. 25 Chicken and dairy display. The Novato dairy was on Grant Ave. by 7th Street. Small bottles in display likely used for milk in schools. The egg sitting on the red container is on a bulb so they could see if a little chick was inside.

Exh. 26 Photo of DeBorba Ranch at Deer Island, circa 1920. Exh. 27 Photo of Redmond Ranch which had been located at current site of Stafford Lake.

Exh. 28 Photo of milkers with dairy cows using a 3-legged stool to sit on. Taken near San Antonio Rd. This was before milk barns.

Exh. 29 Dairy exhibit. The oblong-shaped magnet at the forefront was fed to cows to collect nails or other harmful metal they may have ingested. It would remain in the cows until they were slaughtered and then reused with other cows. The three-legged stool was what milkers sat on as depicted in Exh. 28. The "adz" also known as an "adze" is a woodworking tool and likely the type of tool used in the making of the three-legged stool.

Exh. 30 School exhibit in hallway under stairs. Lu Sutton School was named for LuLu Sutton (photo in display) as an honor when she retired after a long career as an educator in Novato. The first Novato school is located where McDonald's currently is today on Old Redwood.

Exh. 31 Back porch. Horse hobbles kept horses from running – they could walk but could not run. The yokes were used by people to carry water on each side. The elk horns in the rear of the buggy may have come from the Stafford Lake area as elks were in that area at one time. Sample tallow in plastic bags used for soap/candles (see Exh. 6.) Hay fork near door. Oxen holder (see photos/infoon wall shelf next to door for more info.)