

# THE BARN BURNER

## SAN RAMON HISTORIC FOUNDATION

The San Ramon Historic Foundation is a 501c3 non-profit Organization who is dedicated to the preservation of San Ramon's early farms and homesteads. They have partnered with the City of San Ramon in the restoration of Forest Home Farms Historic Park including the David Glass House.

The Foundation has taken on the very large task of fundraising for the restoration of one of the oldest remaining structures in the San Ramon Valley, The Ole 1850s Barn that is located at Forest Home Farms Historic Park. The preliminary estimate for restoration and renovation of the barn is \$756,000.

Be a part of history! The San Ramon Historic foundation is accepting donations for the Ole 1850's Barn on their website [www.SRHF.org](http://www.SRHF.org). While there, learn about their many upcoming evens and opportunities!

Enjoy interactive exhibits, the tractor museum, the beautiful grounds and free activities centered around a different theme each month. Travel back in time to the early days of the San Ramon Valley as you tour the Glass House Museum with a docent or explore the farm on a self-guided tour. Visit the Welcome Center to view exhibits and purchase old-fashioned toys and gifts at the Gift Shoppe.

*(Glass House Tours are \$5.00 per person)*

### September 13 Spinning Wheels

Today the wheels and gears will be turning on different peices of equipment from days gone by. Discover how contraptions with moving parts made the work go faster. Try spinning wool by hand and then see it being spun into yarn on a spinning wheel. Try carding (combing wool) by hand then see it roll through a drum carder. See how the wheels and belts powered by hit-and-miss engines helped pump water and grind grain. You can also turn

the handle to make rope.

### October 11 Seeds We Munch

We don't graze in the fields like horses and cows do, but most of us eat grass seeds every day. Come discover how corn, wheat and other grains make it into your daily diet. Try processing some grains the old fashioned way as you shell corn by hand, grind wheat and sift flour. You can also learn a song about grain and use part of the plant we don't eat to make a corn husk doll.

### November 8 Walnuts and Woodworking

After harvest, the hull (the green layer that covers the shell) of the walnut needs to be removed. See our antique huller in action doing this job and learn more about this nut that was an important crop in the San Ramon Valley. Next, take a look at how wood is worked to make everything from toys to buildings. Try your hand at drilling with a hand-powered drill and make a wooden top to take home.

### October 16

#### Homeschool Day

9:00am-3:00pm

#### Forest Home Farms Historic Park

Ages 5-15;

\$12 Per Person Act#92490

Join other home school friends for a special day of hands-on activities and learning adventures at Forest Home Farms Historic Park. The program will highlight the agricultural history of the San Ramon Valley as well as daily life in Victorian Era. The day will include tours of the farm property, the tractor museum, the Glass House Museum as well as interactive activities including tending the chickens, farm chores and Victorian era games. One adult chaperone required for every 5 children, but only the child must register. Younger siblings who wish to attend may register for Homeschool Day for Preschoolers. Participants should dress in clothing appropriate for outdoor activities i.e closed toe shoes and jacket. Please bring a sack lunch.

# Transforming Rusty Wrecks into



# Polished Perfection

You may have seen them rolling along in Danville's Fourth of July parade, Dublin's St. Patrick's Day parade, or staffing a display at San Ramon's own annual Art and Wind Festival. They have driven their way to accolades and awards in the antique vehicle category participating in local parades and events throughout the Tri-Valley.

The tractor guys, as they are affectionately known, have volunteered their skills and know-how to restore over twenty antique tractors and other farm equipment to their original glory in the fifteen years since the tractor restoration project at Forest Home Farms began. Bob McCoy, Tony Hurt, Vern Kalepp, Pat Sorensen, Tom Slingerland, Mike Storms, Ron Frye, Joe Krueger, Jim Donohoe, Roy Ginochio, Ron Simmons, and Dan Foster make up the team that gather at the Farm two days each week.



Ron Frye, Tom Slingerland, and Mike Storms

The project started in the late 1990s, shortly after the City

of San Ramon acquired the Forest Home Farms property from the owner, Ruth Quayle Boone. The brainchild of City Maintenance Supervisor, Ron McClean, the program was funded by the City for the first year. Since that time, it has relied on donations from tractor rides at park events and contributions from local businesses, including Clorox and Chevron. They even sell scrap metal to keep the coffers full.



Tony Hurt with the John Deere Model H

The bone yard, the patch of land where the rusted historic vehicles wait for restoration, has contained tractors and other farm equipment from across the country. The current work-in-progress is a 1940 John

Deere Model H, acquired by McClean all the way from Oklahoma. Their oldest restoration is the 1935 Caterpillar 22, which they outfitted with seats for rides at park events.

Most of the vehicles are donated from local valley farms. One exception was the 1941 Oliver. As the preferred model of Travis Boone, the last owner who farmed the property, it was decided that the collection would not be complete without it. A challenge to get the Oliver running, the tractor guys turned to their mentor, 89 year-old Roy Ginochio. Roy owned a farm in the Contra Costa foothills before joining the tractor crew. Most days you can find him working alongside the other much younger volunteers.

The restoration work is done in the machine shop, built around the turn of the 20th century, where Travis once stored his 1915 Pierce Arrow and Studebakers. Once restored, the tractors are put on display in the upper barn on the property.

With no room left for more tractors, the guys have broadened their reach to other antique machinery. They have restored a variety of vintage equipment and appliances including a Maytag washing machine, a corn sheller, and even a manure spreader.

Next time you visit Forest Home Farms for an event, stop by the machine shop and thank the dedicated tractor troop for their tireless work restoring vintage treasures that remind us of a bygone era in valley farming.

*Many thanks to Jim Donohoe and Mary Ann Wilkman for their assistance with this article.*

# Youth Nature Camps

## AT FOREST HOME FARMS HISTORIC PARK

BY BECKY ADAMS

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT [WWW.CI.SAN-RAMON.CA.US/PARKS/PROGRAMS/HISTORIC/FORESTUPDATE.HTM](http://WWW.CI.SAN-RAMON.CA.US/PARKS/PROGRAMS/HISTORIC/FORESTUPDATE.HTM)

This summer brought changes to the City of San Ramon's camp program. Nature themed camps that were previously held at Crow Canyon Gardens were relocated to Forest Home Farms Historic Park. In total, there were seven weeks of camp held at the site with just under 100 campers coming through during the summer.

The majority of the campers had never been to Forest Home Farms Historic Park before, so it was a wonderful introduction to the history of San Ramon, as well

as a great opportunity to share this great site with new San Ramon families! The camps were designed for children ages 4-10 and featured special weekly themes including Fun on the Farm, California Discovery, Forces of Nature and Let's Fly! The camp curriculum changed each week based on the theme and the Parks and Community Services staff worked with the tractor volunteers, sheep co-op and volunteer docents to bring their expertise to the camps. Also a first for the nature programs, the City of San Ramon partnered with Sienna Ranch, LLC who owns and operates a ranch in Lafayette, CA.



The Sienna Ranch staff brought a new dynamic to the nature camps in San Ramon by focusing on nature education while encouraging the campers to explore the park site learning about gardening, animal tracking, naturalist skills and more in the "Discovering the Natural World" camp. The grand finale for the week included a three hour hike through Bishop Ranch Regional Preserve just north of Forest Home Farms Historic Park. Sienna Ranch also offered an archery camp during the afternoon hours. The City of San Ramon staff had been trying to bring archery to the community for a number of years, but an appropriate instructor and location could not be found. With the history



and background of Sienna Ranch, staff thought it was the perfect opportunity to see this goal come to fruition and the archery camp kicked off during the middle of July. A temporary archery range was constructed in the

area directly behind the Walnut Barn. In addition to learning how to shoot, the archers also created a variety of archery crafts including handmade leather arm guards, personalized arrows and more! Overall, the summer at Forest Home Farms Historic Park was a great success and the staff looks forward to offering more programs onsite in the future.

August 9, 2014 was a beautiful day enjoyed by many families at the Ice Cream Social. There were ice cream sundaes, chocolate chip cookies, ice cream sandwiches and root beer floats... YUM! YUM!

The children enjoyed various crafts and old fashion games like hopscotch, jump rope, drop the clothes pin in the milk bottle, and bean-bag-toss. Many had fun trying to see how far they could spit a watermelon seed!

The Bay Area Banjo Band presented an entertaining program throughout the day. Proceeds from this event were donated to the renovation fund of the "Ole 1850's Barn".



WWW.SRHF.ORG

# Oktoberfest



**October 11, 2014 11:00am - 4:00pm**

**Forest Home Farms Historic Park  
19953 San Ramon Valley Blvd., San Ramon**



*Presented by:*

*San Ramon Historic Foundation & Schubros Brewery*



Enjoy live music and dancing, and beer available for purchase from Schubros Brewery.

Featuring:

- Blow Musik!
- Olympia Fields Brass Band
- Golden Gate Bavarian Dancers



\$30/adult Includes Beer Stein, One Beer & Lunch  
 \$30/ages 13-20 Includes Stein w/Root Beer & Lunch  
 \$20/ages 6-12 Includes Root Beer & Lunch  
 Under 6 years of age FREE

Tickets available online through PayPal  
Visit [SRHF.org](http://SRHF.org)



## Follow Us

WEB: <http://www.srhf.org>

FACEBOOK: San Ramon Historic Foundation

TWITTER: @srhforg

EMAIL: [sanramonhf@gmail.com](mailto:sanramonhf@gmail.com)

### Board of Directors

Chairman: Paul Truschke  
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