Joseph Silviera Leal and Julia Perry Leal built this tank house on their ranch in the Mission San Jose area of Fremont in 1925. The lower floor was a storage room and the upper floor a bedroom. The tank on top stored 5,000 gallons of water pumped from a 100-foot-deep well. It was the only source of water for the Leal home and livestock for 57 years.

A tank house similar to this one, once supplied all the water for the Patterson House, gardens and other nearby buildings.

The tank house on Leal Ranch.

The tank house was reconstructed at Ardenwood in 2004 by community volunteers from local Rotary Clubs and spearheaded by members of Mission San Jose Rotary. It is dedicated to the memory of Charles “Skip” Domville who initiated this project as part of his efforts to preserve local history.

Bernie Leal (grandson of Julia and Joseph) donated the tank house to the city of Fremont.

All photos courtesy of Bernie Leal.