It was 1849 when George Patterson joined the stream of young men leaving the Midwest for California’s gold fields. His dreams left little room for failure, but after a year and a half of mining he was ill and broke, so he turned to work he knew well: farming. George gradually bought land with the money he earned by working for farmers near Mission San Jose. By the time he married Clara Hawley in 1877, he was on his way to acquiring nearly 6,000 acres of land and was one of the wealthiest and most well-respected men in the area. At last he had struck “gold” — not in the hills, but through farming the fertile plains of the East Bay.

Today, Patterson’s original house and land are part of Ardenwood Historic Farm. We invite you to come and experience farm life as it was near the turn of the 20th Century.

A farmer’s legacy...

...is your key to the past

Cattle still graze in the pastures. The land still grows the kind of crops George Patterson tended 150 years ago, and the farmyard is still full of animals. Staff and volunteers attired in Victorian clothing are on hand to show you through the Patterson family home, demonstrate farm chores, explain the social graces of the Victorian era, and guide you around the 205-acre farm.

The East Bay Regional Park District and the City of Fremont invite you to come often to Ardenwood; to picnic, play, and see for yourself what life was like at the turn of the 20th Century. It’s a way of life nearly forgotten in the East Bay.

A tremendous community and Park District effort has brought the farm to this point, but it is far from complete. We are busy restoring antique pieces of farm equipment and adding some things that weren’t here 150 years ago. So don’t make this your only visit! Come back soon to see how things are coming along.
1 Visitor Center and Arden Station
At the train station pick up the latest program information, enjoy exhibits highlighting Ardenwood’s history or board the farm’s railroad for Deer Park Station (#3 on map).

2 Pool Site (reservable)
This was the first concrete swimming pool built in the county. Now covered, it is used for special activities and weddings.

3 Deer Park Station
For a ride to Arden Station (#1 on map), board the farm’s railway here.

4 Kitchen Garden
The heirloom vegetable garden once provided the family with fresh produce.

5 Patterson House
Home to three generations of the Patterson family. It began as George Patterson’s bachelor farmhouse built in 1857. The house was expanded with a Queen Anne addition in 1889 as the family, the farm, and their place in East Bay society grew. Check schedule for tours.

6 Greenhouse
In this small glass house, seedlings and plants are protected from harsh weather year-round.

7 E-I-O Picnic Area (reservable)
A great place for family picnics, birthday parties, and gatherings for groups up to 50. BBQ available with reservation. Call 1-888-327-2757, option 2.

8 Chicken Coop and Farm Animals
You’ll see chickens, turkeys, and pigs.

9 Tennis Court (circa 1900)
A clay tennis court was a real luxury back then. It’s been covered with asphalt for the time being.

10 Gazebo (re-created)
A common feature on many Victorian-Era estates.

11 Farmyard Picnic Area
Picnic tables available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

12 Granary (re-created)
Naturalist programs and demonstrations happen here. Check the current issue of Regional in Nature Activity Guide for a listing of activities.

13 Country Kitchen
Check schedule for cooking demonstrations on our wood-burning stove. (April to mid-November)

14 Haybarn (circa 1910)
Equipment and tack are stored in the barn. Corn Room programs meet here.

15 Blacksmith Shop and Equipment Shed (circa 1850) Found here are the forge and various tools needed for making and fixing equipment on the farm.

16 Farm Animals
Here you’ll find farm animals including rabbits, sheep, and goats.

17 Tractor Shed
The farm’s antique tractor collection is here.

18 Milk House (mid 19th Century)
Discover how foods were preserved and stored in this very cool spot on the farm.

19 Deer Park Picnic Area
Large groups enjoy using the tables and play field.

20 Cook’s House (late 19th Century)
The cook’s house is now the Patterson House office.

21 Walnut Orchard (early 20th Century)

22 Pasture
Watch for the farm’s sheep and cows when they’re not in the farmyard.

23 Tankhouse (reconstructed)
Powered by a windmill, a tankhouse once provided the farm with water for the family and the crops. Step inside to explore our “Water Museum”.

24 Ardenwood Historic Farm Park Operations Office