

NEWS FROM THE SANTA YNEZ VALLEY HISTORICAL MUSEUM

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www.santaynezmuseum.org

Santa Ynez Valley Historical Museum

Unveils “The Evolution of the California Stock Saddle” exhibit

A comprehensive study of the Vaquero saddle from the mid 1800’s to the present

Santa Ynez, Santa Barbara County, California

When asked what kind of saddles there are, many might respond “English and Western” and that would be it. But of course, there are many types of “supportive structures for riders of animals”, and along with each comes history and improvement. Here on the Central Coast, we depend upon the Stock Saddle for work, play ... and display!

When the Spanish began colonizing California, their government established ranchos for grazing cattle near the presidios which became a major enterprise. With that, a new breed of stock tender emerged - the Vaquero, whose style of saddlery came mostly from the provinces in the north of Mexico.

After Mexico won its independence from Spain, the Mexican government distributed lands that had been under the control of the missions to private individuals through a process of land grants from the territorial government in Alta California. This was the beginning of California’s Rancho period, when horse and rider were the essence of this time in Central Coast history.

Most of the saddles in this exhibit represent a moment in time when the horse played an equal role with the rider and were more important than form just following function. Visitors will be able to trace the evolution of the stock saddle from the early and simple ‘mochila’ saddle of the 1800’s through the elaborate silver- adorned parade and trophy saddles of today.

The exhibit will open Saturday, April 8th with a reception featuring museum historian John Copeland and experts Bill Reynolds and Tom Peterson. All will be all be on hand to talk about the details of each saddle and the history of the saddle makers. James Ontiveros, whose ancestor Tomas Ontiveros’ saddle is included in the exhibit will also be here pouring his acclaimed Native9 wines and relaying the history of his rancho family.

Tickets to the reception are \$10 for the general public and \$5 for members of the museum. To RSVP and purchase, please contact the museum at 805.688.7889. For additional information, email info@santaynezmuseum.org.

The Evolution of the California Stock Saddle exhibit has been generously sponsored by the Noblitt Family and Cactus Saddles.

Founded in 1961, the Museum is the official caretaker of the Valley’s rich cultural history, housing one of the finest collections of antique, horse-drawn carriages and wagons in the Western United States. In addition, examples of finely crafted horse saddlery and tack from days gone by and Western sculptures, paintings, books and handicrafts are on display. The Santa Ynez Valley Historical Museum is a 501c-3 organization.