

Casa Grande Region Branding Irons



When a rancher decides on the type of brand he wants to use the legal procedure is to register his mark. **Arizona Brand Laws: 3-1261.**

Adoption and recording of brand and earmark; brand as property right; sale or transfer. Every person owning range livestock in this state shall

adopt and record a brand with the division with which to brand such livestock...

RC - Ramon Cruz The American custom of cattle branding was adopted from Mexico. The Ramon Cruz brand is the oldest brand represented on the door and is presumed to have come from Mexico. Ramon Cruz, Sr. migrated to the Arizona frontier with his parents in the 1870s. The Cruz Trading Post, located at 200 W. Main, is on the Local & National Register of Historic Places and was operated by the family until 1955. The brand is embedded at the curb in front of the Cruz Trading Post building.

Half Mill Iron Upside Down T - Earl Thode Born in 1900, Thode remains a legend today in rodeo circles. In 1929 he won the very first World Champion All-Around Cowboy title of professional rodeo. Earl and his wife "Bodie" moved to Casa Grande in 1934 where they homesteaded a 320 acre farm and ranch near Eleven Mile Corner. By 1941 he ran cattle and raised cotton on 1,100 plus acres west of Casa Grande on Midway Road.

2 T Bar - Don Trekell This was one of seven brands Don A. Trekell used from 1916 to the mid 1950's in Toltec and Casa Grande. A replica of the Trekell hay barn is located at the Casa Grande Historical Society Museum.

Flying B - Benedict Family Originally this was a Don A. Trekell brand. The Trekell and Benedict families were friends and on a special occasion the Flying B was gifted to Brett Benedict. It was used at the Benedict Feed Lot for a short while and is treasured family keepsake.

JAV - Jean A. Vallette The son of an aristocratic German family, Jean resided in Casa Grande with his wife for 27 years prior to his death in 1944. He was a prominent business leader and collector of cacti, antiques, and Hohokam artifacts. The branding iron was used by a local family for years and was later returned to its original site at what is now BeDillon's restaurant and cactus garden built by Vallette in 1917.

26 Bar - John Wayne This brand was originally owned by Gunnar Thude a member of an old pioneer family in Mesa, Arizona. It is reported to be the 99th registered brand in Arizona. The brand came with the 26 Bar Ranch purchased by John Wayne with local cotton rancher Louie Johnson in 1914. The brand was used until 1980 and was passed on with the ranch when it was sold to the Red Hill Ranch Corporation & the Hopi Tribe.

Heart X - Thomas Poor In 1986 gun toting livestock inspectors strongly suggested that Thom acquire his own branding iron or face possible jail time. They reminded him that when branded-cows are purchased they need to be rebranded by the new owner. And so the "heartache" branding iron was born.

Spear B - Debb Stephens Selected by Debb Stephens as the Stephens' family brand in the mid-1950s. The Stephens farmed on Burris Road just west of town. The brand has been retired but remains in the Stephens' family as a keepsake.

Spear, Horseshoes, Barbed Wire, and Rope Molding frame the brands. In 2007-08 iconic brands were embedded in concrete on Main Street, the curved sidewalk on the west side of the 2nd Street roundabout, in the 2nd Street Alleyway and at the Casa Grande Valley Historical Museum.



To learn more about local agriculture, ranching, farming, and branding irons visit the Casa Grande Valley Historical Society Museum. Visitors can explore a replica of the Trekell family hay barn and tack room including a display of tools, equipment, and additional branding iron impressions.