



Smoke Signal

CHATSWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Co-Presidents: Linda & André van der Valk

February 2022, Issue #1

Editor: Ann Vincent

Co-Presidents' Message

By Linda & André van der Valk

The New Year is still finding us in the same situation as we were at the end of the year. Sadly, the Garden Festival will not be held again this year. It is very disappointing to us and to a lot of people that we have heard from. Vendors are anxious to sell their wares and we are anxious to show off the Acre.

We have been having some of the most successful Open Houses that we have ever had and the attendance at our General Meetings are setting records. Ann and Ray have worked out all of the kinks, and they can do Zoom and live meetings at the same time. For someone like myself that is not a computer whiz I find that quite impressive. Thank you, Ann and Ray, for all the work and research that you do to make our meetings interesting and successful.

Ann wrote an article on the George Washington Rock, a part of our homestead history. Andre and I were lucky enough to accompany Ann, Ray, Dennis Liff and Scott Trimble to see the rock. This rock has fascinated me since I joined the Historical Society and saw the pictures. After that I collected postcards and the 1914 Sunset magazine with the picture of the rock on the cover. It was one of my bucket list items to see in person. Ann and I posed with our hand on the chin of the George Washington Rock like Lenora Johnson did in the early 1900's. That was very exciting for me. The owner of the property was very accommodating and kind enough to let us on the property to see it. He has taken good care of the rock and it looks great. Thank you to our newest life member Scott Trimble for arranging the visit.

Here is hoping for a warmer and less windy Spring.
Linda and Andre

Chatsworth Historical Society Board of Directors 2021-2022

Co-Presidents	Linda & André van der Valk
Treasurer	Jim Van Gundy
Secretary	Donna Nachtrab
Hospitality	Jelena Csanyi
Smoke Signal Editor	Ann Vincent
Research Director	Ray Vincent
Garden Director	Annette Campbell
Director-at-Large	Connie Ager

Upcoming Events

Open House

March 6, 2022 1-4 pm

April 3, 2022 1-4 pm

Subject to LA City Covid Rules and Regulations

General Meeting

February 15th, Tuesday 6:30pm

The Chatsworth Park Quarry



William Bannon
and his family
homesteaded 160
acres in part of
today's Santa
Susana Pass State
Historic Park.
Starting in 1892

the Bannon Quarry supplied dimension stone for
buildings and roads, and in 1901-1907 supplied rip-
rap sandstone for the San Pedro breakwater.

Program will be available at the Homestead ACRE and on Zoom

Go to: [www.Zoom.us](https://www.zoom.us) or Dial In: (669) 900 9128
Meeting ID: 848 4323 4310 Passcode: 100200

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84843234310?pwd=SDhMbnFkYkpBMzQvemRDYtSSWlrUT09>

DOCENT DOINGS at the ACRE:

Our docents keep busy with projects throughout the year.

OUT IN THE GARDEN:

If you need some outdoor fresh air therapy, come join our gardening team. Roses need their winter pruning to keep them at their best.



IN THE MUSEUM: Our docents continue to reorganize and catalog our early photograph collections. We have new displays set up that are available to share; come check them out.

OPEN HOUSE is scheduled for the first Sunday of each month from 1-4pm. Our volunteers enjoy greeting guests and have fun sharing the history of the Homestead Acre with new visitors.

IN THE COTTAGE: An inventory project is still underway to confirm and learn more about the history of the items on display so we can provide more information on our tours.

DOCENTS ARE NEEDED: Help organize, research or guide guests through the museum and cottage during our Open Houses, Tours and Special Events. If you would like to learn the history of our community and help share it with others, please contact us for more information at chatsworthhistory@gmail.com.

Memorial Brick Plaza



Click the link below for the Memorial Brick Order Form, \$100 per brick.

<http://www.chatsworthhistory.com/CHS-BrickOrderForm.pdf>

Our next brick order will be March 15, 2022

For more information, send an email to chatsworthhistory@gmail.com or call 818-882-5614.

Included in this newsletter:

NOTE: Watch for links in our articles that allow easy access to more information.

- **George Washington Rock**
- **Oakwood Cemetery Recap**
- **Twin Lakes painting**
- **Cottage Corner - Cookbooks**
- **Chatsworth 134 Year Birthday**
March 10, 1888 - 2022

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

Our big event last month was the Oakwood Cemetery Presentation held on January 18, 2021. This was done at the Museum but also on Zoom reaching over 75 visitors in total. It was fun to learn that many of us have a connection to Oakwood Cemetery through family and to be able to share its history. See page 6 for a recap of the program and links to download the presentation.

A display in our museum case has always included photographs of George Washington Rock. What fun to have a new member view the case and offer to help us visit this historic sandstone feature. See page 3.

As a heads up, for our upcoming February 15 general meeting presentation on the Chatsworth Park Quarry, we have new information to share on the original spur line that carried rock from the quarry and how that was done. We realized that although we had helped provide historical training for the State Park volunteers, we had never presented it or posted it for our membership. I hope you will enjoy this history about our amazing Chatsworth Sandstone.

134th Birthday of Chatsworth

A subdivision map for a town called Chatsworth Park was filed with the Los Angeles County Recorder's Office on March 10th. We have come a long way...

Chatsworth was originally planned as a farming community with the land divided into five and ten-acre parcels. Only three roads were identified: Ben Porter Avenue (Chatsworth St.), Devonshire Avenue and Fernando Avenue (Lassen). You will notice that our main street is Devonshire. It was named after the Duke of Devonshire's estate "Chatsworth House" in England.

George Washington Rock Adventure January 20, 2022

In July of 1901 an article was printed in the San Francisco Call newspaper that highlighted a rock formation they referred to as a sphinx. “The rock is on Chatsworth Park Rancho, the property of Mrs. Johnson.” It all started back in 1874 when the Johnson family homesteaded their 160 acre property in the hills above Chatsworth.

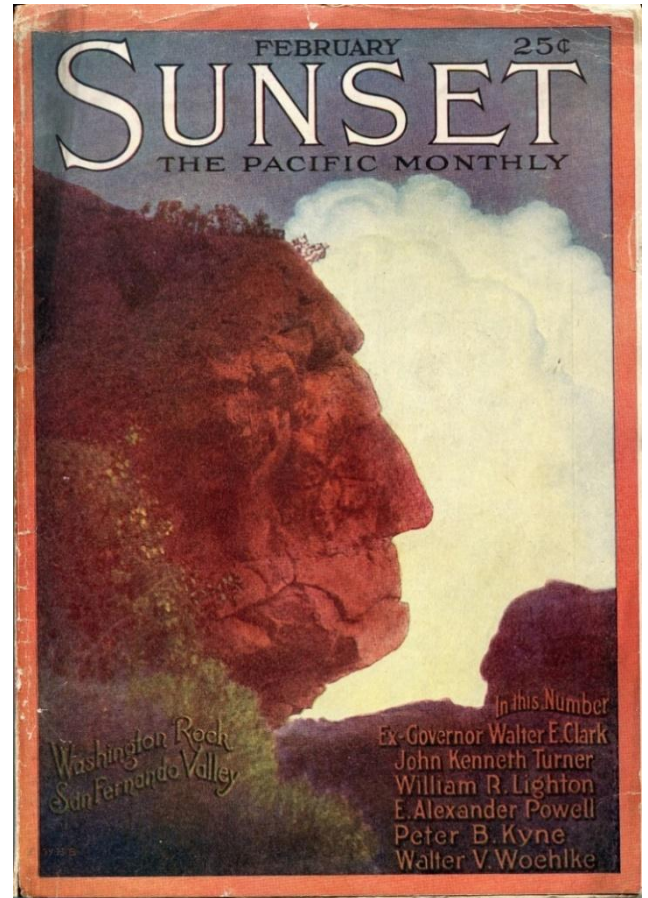


In February of 1914 Sunset magazine featured a color photo of the George Washington Rock on the cover of their magazine.

The Rock has been featured in many newspaper articles and books over the years.

The Johnson family has made many visits to the rock for photo opportunities. Perhaps the best photo is of Lenora Johnson, in the photo below. Lenora wrote the

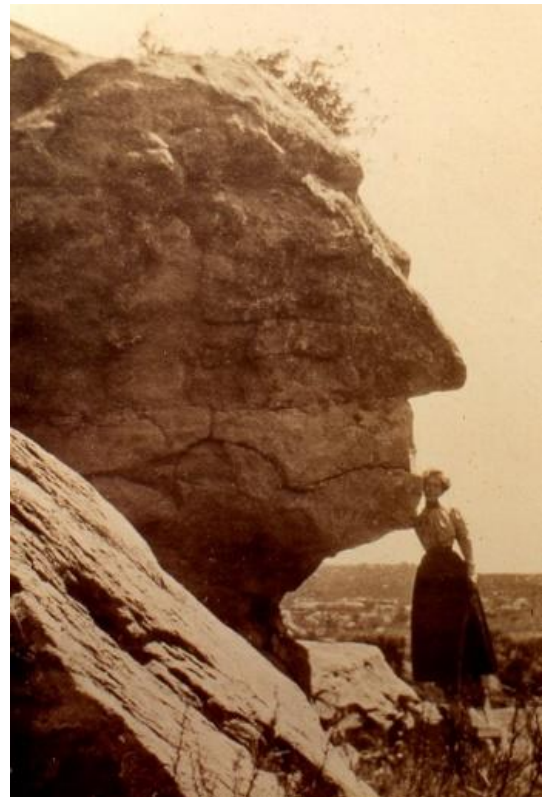
1931 Johnson memoir “Our Pioneer Mother”, where they referred to the rock as “The Old Man of the Mountains”.

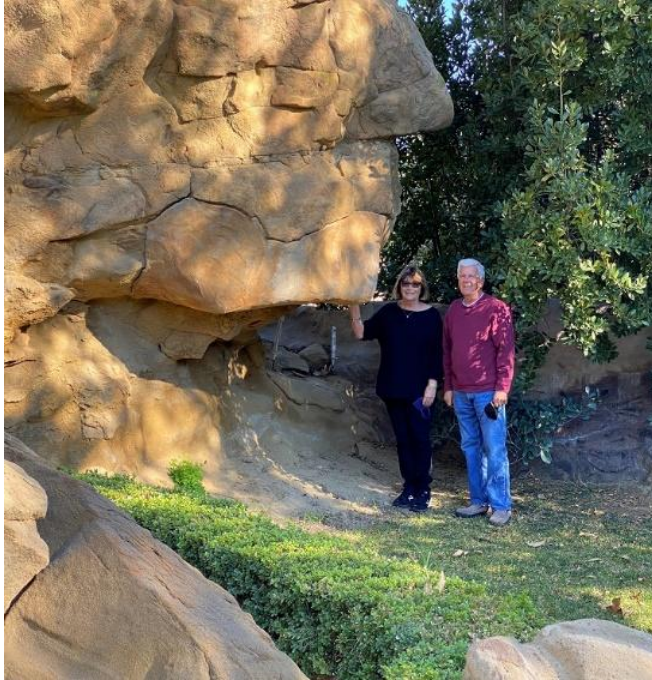


Scott Trimble, a new member of the Chatsworth Historical Society, who is a movie location scout, mentioned that he knew where the George Washington Rock was and offered to set up a photo opportunity for us.

Linda, who has been collecting George Washington Rock memorabilia for many years, considered visiting the rock high on her bucket list, as neither her or Virginia Watson had ever seen it in person.

In January, Linda and Andre van der Valk, Ray and Ann Vincent, movie historian Dennis Liff and Scott Trimble met with Pat Romano on his property in Indian Springs Estates and took some photos. Pat graciously provided a tour of his property and the magnificent way he has incorporated the rock formations into his landscaping. We all decided that he has been a good caretaker of the famous rock.

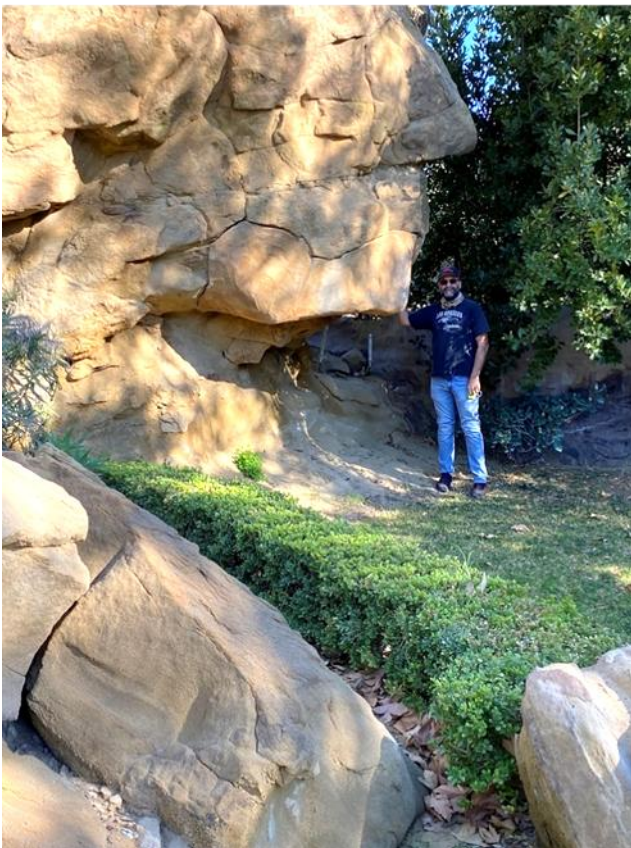




Linda and Andre van der Valk

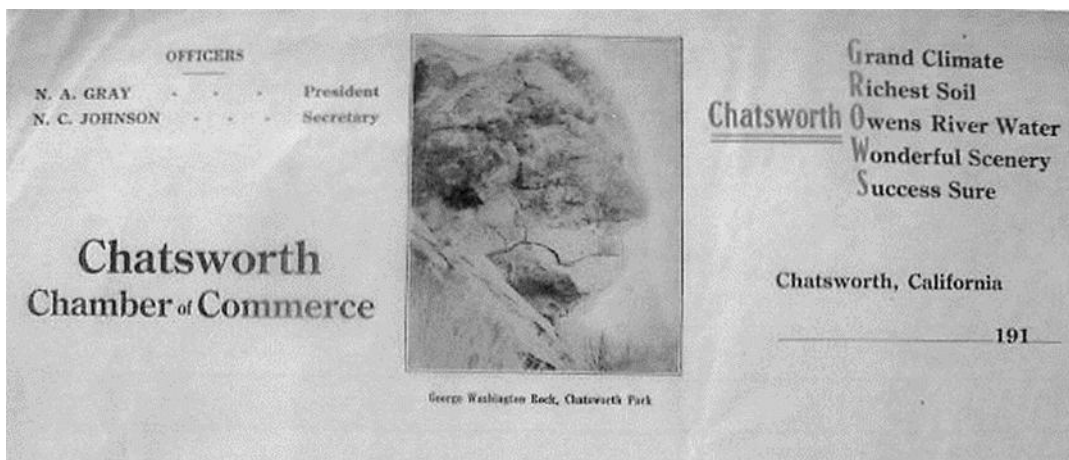


Ann and Ray Vincent



Scott Trimble

In the 1910's The Chatsworth Chamber of Commerce featured the rock on its letterhead. Note that the president of the Chamber of Commerce was N.A Gray and the secretary was Norman C. Johnson the son of Neils and Ann Johnson, the owners of the property where the George Washington Rock was located.



BELIEVE IT OR NOT By Robert L. Ripley

George Washington Rock
AT TWIN LAKES PARK
-near Chatsworth, Calif.

**A DOLLAR IS
TEN THOUSAND PER CENT
OF ONE CENT.**

**VIEW ST.
(BLIND ST.)**

**VIEW STREET
IS A
BLIND STREET
in Oakland, Calif.**

Mesa-Shira the Shulbreaker
(Gives Mexicans more & Dry Good stuff)
Genuine and this too, especially
Happy Coat
\$2.25

This coat is wrong on top, but
the suit was not. This coat is
also also dried out, water very strong
flap, coat reaching best place of leg
the shouldest for shouldest, every
time according to you, correct at least
for here. I was only explain it, shouldest
picture back, shouldest hump coat, also
why wearing down the back, not new
and reasons were not good time
Japan.

Directed finding - If you directed
finding Mesa-Shira, Shouldest pass
away in 1000' famous Fish Market
until 175 North King Street, half past
noon. My Shouldest shouldest
place his 175 North Street, shouldest
look ace sign say to Mesa-Shira,
the Shouldest, 175 175, also my name
on foot shouldest shouldest.

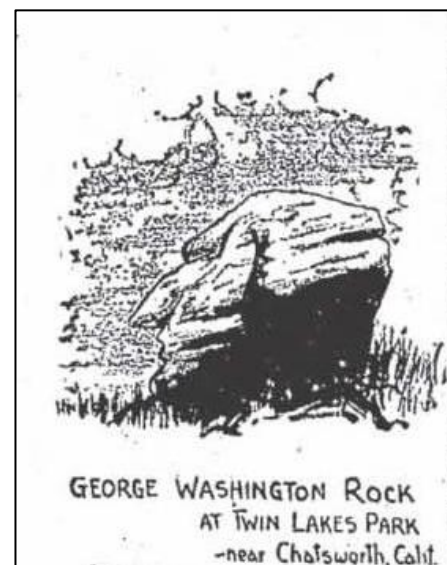
PARNELLA
THE MONK WHO
COULD PERSPIRE
AT WILL

VIRGINIA HOLLAND
LIVES ON
VIRGINIA AVENUE
AT
VIRGINIA BEACH
IN
VIRGINIA

J. M. EDWARDS and his 3 SONS, JOHN, JOE AND WILL
ARE ALL 6 FT. 1 IN. TALL

STERLING CITY, TEXAS

In a 1933 Ripley's Believe It Or Not article, the rock is shown in the upper left corner.



OAKWOOD MEMORIAL PARK

If you missed our Oakwood Memorial Park Cemetery presentation, you can still download it. It contains many newspaper articles and documentation for you to read. [Oakwood Memorial Park and Cemetery Chatsworth.pdf](#)

Here is a short recap of the program.

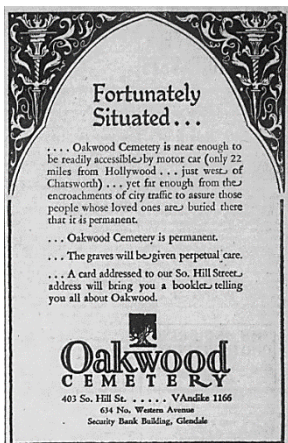


In 1923, Merrick and Ruddick, a real estate subdivider, purchased the Miranda Homestead and a portion of the Bannon Homestead, totaling 200 acres.

In 1924, N.A. Gray, president of the Chatsworth Chamber of Commerce, and other citizens protested the permit request and Mayor Cryer vetoed the Cemetery Bill. However, the City Council, over the veto of the mayor, passed the ordinance establishing Oakwood Cemetery near Chatsworth.

The Oakwood Cemetery Syndicate explained that Oakwood would be different from the usual cemetery in many ways. Tombstones, monuments and raised graves would be prohibited.

A Memorial Park would be developed from the natural beauty of the surrounding area enhanced by trees and shrubs. Bronze plates placed on concrete would be laid on the ground over the graves.



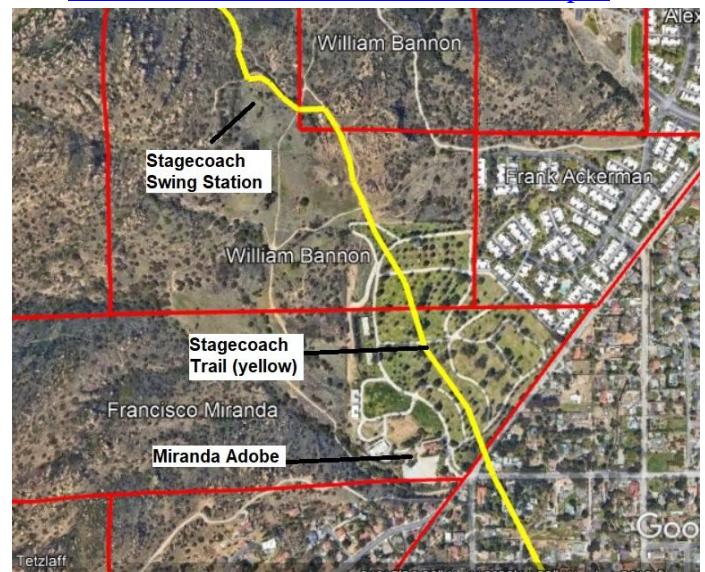
Their office was run from Glendale. It would be nine years before offices and additional buildings were built on site. For information you would contact the Glendale office to receive a beautifully illustrated brochure of the peaceful surroundings.

Some background on the Miranda Homestead family: The 1870 Census listed Gabriel and Ignacio Miranda, both 60 years old, in Chatsworth. They were living next to Fabricio De la Ossa (Stagecoach swing station) and Alfred Workman (at today's Baden and Lassen, on the 1859 Stagecoach Trail). Alfred Workman was a dryland wheat farmer who would live at Shadow Ranch in West Hills, today's Historic-Cultural Monument #9.

The 1880 Census listed 29-year-old Francisco and his wife Antonia Miranda next to the De la Ossa Stagecoach Swing Station.

For more on the Mirandas, see

[Chatsworth Hills Homesteaders Part 2.pdf](#)



The map above is today's Google Earth. The red lines are homesteader boundaries; the angled line to the right is Andora/Valley Circle; and the Stagecoach Trail is the yellow line.

The location of the 1870/1880 Miranda Adobe (which still exists) is next to a creek and just west of the Stagecoach Trail.



Photo in 2006 from Gerri Mares, a Miranda descendant.



In this 1924 photo you can see the newly constructed entrance to the property with the Miranda Adobe at center with crops still planted. The archway stood until 1994, when it was destroyed by the 1994 Northridge earthquake.

The entrance was redone to what you see today.



By 1928, the lower right section of the cemetery had been established, with the Miranda Adobe circled in yellow at the bottom of this photo.



The remaining acreage had been maintained as orchard or crops.

The Memorial Park was a good neighbor to the community.

The first annual Valley-wide Memorial Day services brought more than a thousand persons to Oakwood Cemetery in 1926.

There was an impressive speaking and musical program, with selections from the Owensmouth High School band, the Chatsworth quartet and songs by local talent. N.A. Gray, pioneer resident of the west end, was one of the speakers. A song by Miss Gladys and Mrs. Myrtle Gray Gilliman provided another feature of the program.

By 1927, it grew...and several thousand people attended the largest gathering of its kind in the history of the Valley. More than 500 members of various patriotic bodies in the Valley marched in the parade, and formed a great square around the flagpole and field artillery piece/cannon that marks the veterans' section at Oakwood. Eight Civil War (1861-1865) veterans marched in the parade and Mark Brennan, Spanish-American War (1898) veteran, was grand marshal of the day.

In 1928 there were gun salutes and a biplane bomber that flew over dropping flowers. The cannon is still in place in Section B although the wheels have been replaced with concrete stands.

It is referred to in the published articles as the

"World War Cannon"

at that time, when who would have thought there would ever be more than one World War.

See the full presentation to read the articles published and all the photographs on these celebrations. They are very inspiring and patriotic.



In 1927 the cemetery arranged for Frank Knapp to build the first Mausoleum.



Robert Stacy-Judd was the Architect for the Oakwood Cemetery Association, and Stacy-Judd was the architect for 1927 Twin Lakes, which had a Mayan-Aztec theme. The mausoleum stood for many years, but was never used. It was still visible in the background of a 1969 construction photo of the “Twin Pines” Mausoleum built at Oakwood, but was eventually removed.

On March 7, 1928 the **St Francis Dam** failed, sending a 100-ft high wall of water down the canyon. It took 5 hours and 27 minutes to travel 54 miles from the dam site through the Santa Clara River to the ocean at Ventura. It was later determined that the eastern abutment was anchored to an ancient landslide, which gave way once saturated with water.

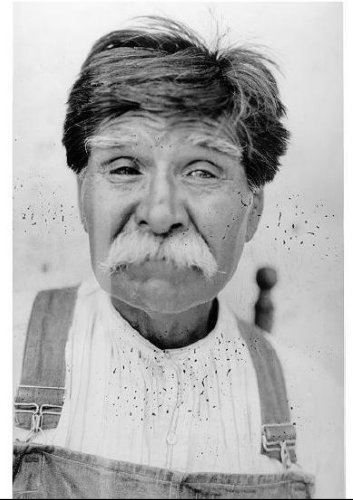
411 People were killed in the flood. Dispersed throughout the flood zone, 173 victims are interred in six cemeteries; half of these graves remain unmarked. Another 135 victims are buried in 58 cemeteries around Southern California and across the United States, and many victim’s bodies were never recovered.

Thirty-one victims are buried at Oakwood Cemetery, including at least 8 families and their children.

A Memorial Plaque was placed next to the Cannon and a tree planted in the honor of the Ely family by the Van Nuys Post 193 and Auxiliary American Legion.

In 1930, a notable Native American in our Chatsworth History was laid to rest in the oldest section of Oakwood, Section A. Fernando Septimo Lopez Moraga was interviewed in 1916 by the linguist and ethnographer John P. Harrington.

He was Harrington’s most knowledgeable consultant regarding Fernandeno placenames for rancherias and many other sites.



Sétimo Moraga López in 1916
Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, 91-31239.

In 1933 the Oakwood Office, Chapel and Crematorium were built. The office is located just inside the front gate on the west side.

The small office building was later modified with a larger one in 1964.



Oakwood grounds were watered with well water from existing wells. In 1947, expansion to adjacent areas called for another well to handle the area. Evidence of that well can be seen while hiking in the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park.

In 1965, the 1903 Pioneer Church was moved to Oakwood. Originally it was called the Chatsworth Community Church and was located at 10051 Topanga Canyon Blvd. The Church was built in 1903 with volunteer labor.

In 1963 the Chatsworth Historical Society was formed to raise the money to save the Church. The then current church members had purchased land further up Topanga to build a new church and the old church property had been sold. In 1965 it was moved to Oakwood Memorial Park and is L.A. Historic-Cultural Monument #14.



On Wednesday, January 27, 1965 the Church rolled out on to Topanga to start the two-day journey on back roads, across fields and creeks to Oakwood Cemetery.



Since many earlier structures were built on raised foundations, it was challenging but not impossible to lift it and have it towed by trucks to its new location. It took several years to raise money to restore it, and it can be visited today.

Church services continue every Sunday at 10 am by the St. Mary the Virgin Anglican Rite Catholic Parish.



Above, Huell Howser and Virginia Watson are with Father Anthony Rasch and Linda and Andre van der Valk.

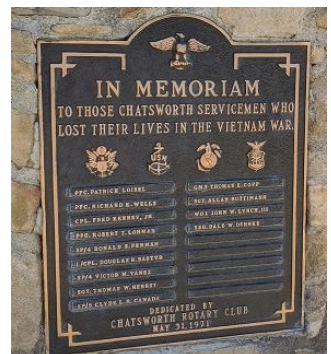
There is a 2003, 6-minute video of Huell interviewing Virginia about the Pioneer Church, from the Huell Howser show “Chatsworth”

[2003 Huell Howser Chatsworth Pioneer Church clip](#)

For more information on the history of the church, see our presentation at

[The Chatsworth Pioneer Church.pdf](#)

In 1971 a Memorial Marker was placed near the front entrance to Oakwood by the Chatsworth Rotary Club commemorating the Chatsworth servicemen lost in the Vietnam War.



Oakwood wishes to protect the privacy of its residents and considers burial locations and information to be available only on a need-to-know basis. There are organizations such as Find a Grave, with genealogists who volunteer to post relevant information to honor loved ones and provide research information for their ancestry. Usually, a head stone photo is included if requested.

Link below to Oakwood, not all burials are listed.

[Search Memorials in Oakwood Memorial Park](#)

For those interested in Celebrities buried at Oakwood, we have found this video to be your guide.

Available on YouTube as
 “FAMOUS GRAVE TOUR - Oakwood”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hg6D0x-7BO0&t=481s>

TWIN LAKES PAINTING Donation by Tyler Marriott

The painting at the right is 21871 W. Mojave Trail in Twin Lakes. It was the home of Paul and Billie Marriott. The house still stands today, alongside the 118 freeway. Their son, Tyler, told us that it shared his childhood memories of caves, forts, rock formations, sage brush and snakes.

The house depicted is the original footprint of approximately 900 sq. ft. It had three bedrooms, one bath, living room and kitchen. An oil furnace furnished heat during the cooler times of Southern California winters. A garage was built in the late 1950's and Dad added on to the living room expanding it to the south 12'x24' in approximately 1960.

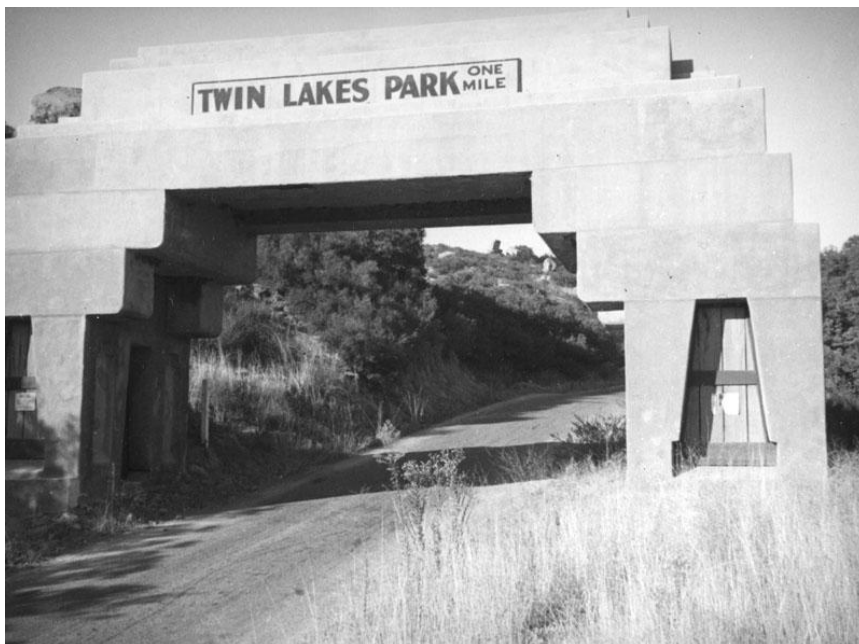


“As to the painting itself, Dad saw a guy up on the hill behind, where the “Dome House” is today, sitting on a rock and doing the painting. Dad walked up there to see what he was doing. The artist said he was just practicing and showed him what he had done. When Dad asked him what he was going to do with it, he said, “Oh probably just throw it away.” My Dad asked “Can I have it?” The reply was “Sure” at which point he simply handed over the painting, got in his car and drove away. Dad never got his name. This painting hung in my bedroom as I grew up.”

Tyler also shared memories of his family's involvement with Chatsworth: My mom worked at the “Dime Store” owned by Mr. Brain. Minnie Palmer was my baby sitter when Mom was at work. Mom was also very involved in the Cub Scouts, the Canteen Club and began her knitting club right there in Twin Lakes. Dad was part of the Local VFW Post and they went to all the dances provided by just about anyone! They loved to dance.

However, one major memory is my daily walk to the bus stop down at the “Arch” on Topanga. It was a half mile both ways, but only “uphill” on my way home! I made that walk every school day until I got my first motorcycle in 1965.

To learn more about the Twin Lake Arch and community see our presentation at [Twin Lakes & Deer Lake Highlands History.pdf](#)



COTTAGE CORNER

These fun cookbooks are displayed in our cottage kitchen.

The Story of Crisco – 615 Tested Recipes and a Calendar of Dinners

by Marion Harris Neil - 1915

Crisco was introduced in June 1911 by Procter & Gamble; it was the first shortening to be made entirely of vegetable oil, originally cottonseed oil.

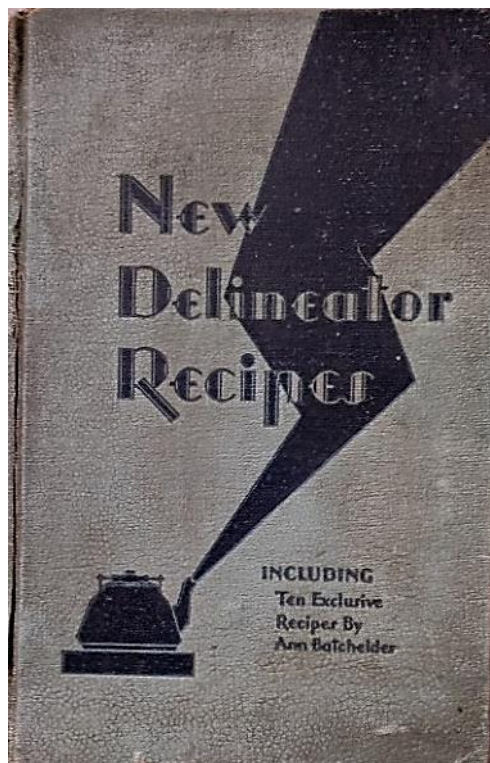
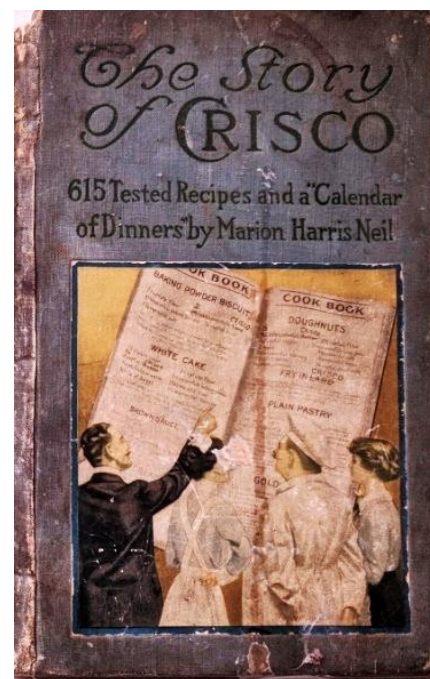
Their initial intent was to completely harden oils for use as raw material for making soap. Procter & Gamble called the product Crisco, a modification of the phrase "crystallized cottonseed oil".



Clad in pristine white-paper overwrap, Crisco was seen as a "purer" and more economical alternative to animal fat and butter. Soon after the first print and radio ads debuted, products flew off of the shelves. The first Crisco cookbook

taught Americans all of the innovative ways Crisco could be used – from baking to frying. And so, a cooking revolution was born.

<https://crisco.com/our-heritage/>



New Delineator Recipes Cook Book

Antique Vintage 222 Page Butterick 1929

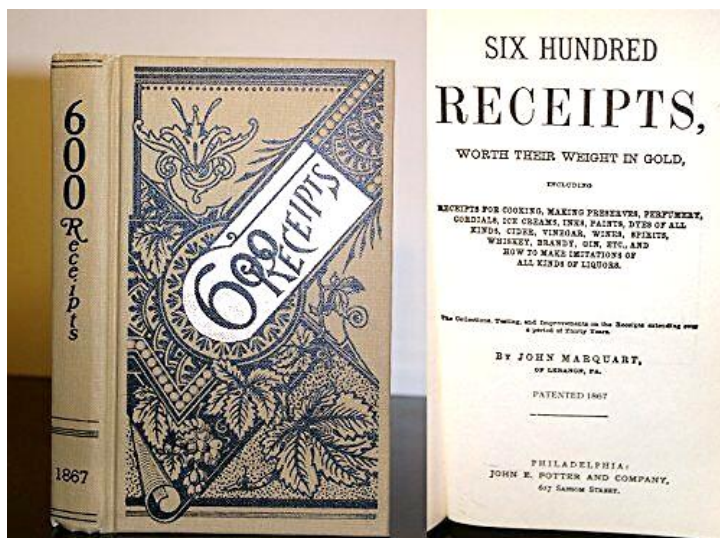
The Delineator was an American women's magazine of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, founded by the Butterick Publishing Company in 1869 as The Metropolitan Monthly until the name changed in 1875. The magazine featured the Butterick sewing patterns and provided an in-depth look at the fashion of the day.

Six Hundred Receipts, Worth Their Weight in Gold 1967

An uncommon book of recipes for various necessities such as preserves, perfumery, ice creams, inks, dyes, etc. which seems

rather preoccupied with alcohol production, including 25 recipes for Brandy (cherry, cognac, French, Peach, Rochelle, etc.), various beverages including Cottage Beer, Cream Beer, Ginger Beer, Mead, Spruce Beer, Pineapple-ade, Silver top, nine varieties of Cordials, Spirits for beverages, five variants of Holland Gin, seven variants of Rum (Jamaica, New England, St. Croix), eighteen different types of wine, and seven types of Whiskey (Apple, Bourbon, Irish, Monongahela, Scotch, Wheat).

Note: "Receipts" is the old-fashioned word for Recipes.



Virginia Watson Museum & Gift Shop

The following items are available for sale during Open Houses on the first Sunday of the month. To arrange to purchase items at other times, email chatsworthhistory@gmail.com to make arrangements for payment and shipping, if necessary.

CHATSWORTH HISTORY by Virginia Watson	\$10.00
CHATSWORTH PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL The First 100 Years by Ioline Cleveland	\$10.00
WINDOW INTO THE PAST by William Schepler	\$10.00
QUIET ON THE SET by Robert Sherman	\$25.00
OUR PIONEER MOTHER As told to Lenora Johnson MacDonald	\$10.00



DIGITAL ARCHIVES online at
<http://www.chatsworthhistory.com>

facebook **CHS FACEBOOK PAGE**
www.facebook.com/HomesteadAcre

CHS YOUTUBE Channel
youtube.com/chatsworthhistory1/videos

SLIDESHARE.NET
<https://www.slideshare.net/ChatsworthHistory/presentations>

Slideshare has a listing of our CHS presentations that can easily be watched online. We now have a total of 36 PowerPoint presentations posted. Enjoy!

Can we email our newsletter to you?

Please email us to provide your email address.
Thanks! chatsworthhistory@gmail.com

Wondering if your Dues are Due?

Your dues are due one year after the last time you paid your dues.

For those receiving email only newsletters, we will advise you by email when your dues are due.

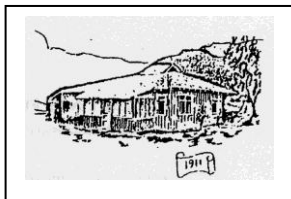
For snail mail, if you have an asterisk at the end of your name on the mailing label, your dues are due.

Please use the form below to renew your Membership. And if your neighbor is not a member yet, pass this newsletter on to them and invite them to join.



CHATSWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Membership Form



Your membership helps support our Homestead Acre and the educational and historical programs we provide for our community. Members receive our quarterly newsletters, and receive invitation reminders regarding our monthly programs and annual events – Rose Pruning, the Garden Festival, Membership Roundup, and Pioneer Day. Please mail this form with your annual membership dues and/or contribution made payable to:

Chatsworth Historical Society, 10385 Shadow Oak Drive, Chatsworth, CA 91311
chatsworthhistory@gmail.com 818-882-5614 www.chatsworthhistory.com

Yearly:	<input type="checkbox"/> New Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal	
Life Membership:	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$15.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Family \$20.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Organization \$20.00
	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 125.00		

NAME _____ Phone: _____

STREET ADDRESS: _____ Email: _____

CITY / STATE / ZIP: _____

Special Interest / Expertise: _____

Reminder: If you got this mailed to you, an asterisk on your label means your dues are due!