

Smoke Signal

CHATSWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

10385 Shadow Oak Drive, Chatsworth, CA 91311

(818) 882-5614

chatsworthhistory@gmail.com

www.chatsworthhistory.com



Co-Presidents: Linda & André van der Valk

February 2023, Issue #1

Editor: Ann Vincent

Co-Presidents' Message

By Linda & André van der Valk

I would like to start off by thanking the San Fernando Valley Rose Society for coming last month to help us prune roses. Our roses are beautiful but they do take a lot of work to be cut back in the winter. With all the rain we have received they should be beautiful when they start blooming.

The rain was great for the garden but not so good for the roof on the museum. The roof is leaking, and we need a new roof. Luckily the damage inside the museum was kept to a minimum. Only two cases had water damage. We lost a few books in one case, but the other case contained things that were found in the hills, so I am sure those items have been wet before. Everything is drying out.

Recreation and Parks says that they are not responsible for putting on a new roof so the Historical Society will have to foot the bill. It is good that we literally have a rainy-day fund and now everyone knows what their generous donations go to at the Acre.

Ann and Donna are making plans for our new Garden Party and Fashion Show, which is going to replace the Garden Festival. We are excited to try something new and Ann is gathering vintage clothing. It sounds like fun and something you don't want to miss.

Our General Meetings have been a great success thanks to Ann and Ray. Their research has made for some interesting meetings; the last one in January was about the Superman serials in 1948 and 1950. The footage of the outcroppings of Chatsworth are really impressive and watching one of the old serials is fun, especially with the cliff-hanger endings. Check it out on our website or on our YouTube channel.

If you haven't been to the Acre for a while, come to our Open Houses on the first Sunday of the month, from 1-4 pm. Linda and Andre

Chatsworth Historical Society Board of Directors 2022-2023

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

Upcoming Events

General Meeting

February 21, 2023

The History of the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park

It is the 25th anniversary of the dedication of the Park. We will share the story of how volunteers with a vision created and continue to support our 670-acre Park.

Program will be available at the Homestead ACRE and on Zoom; [Zoom Meeting Link](#)

Or go to: www.Zoom.us/join

or Dial: (669) 900 9128

Meeting ID: 848 4323 4310 Passcode: 100200

General Meeting

March 21, Tuesday 6:30 PM TBD

Watch for Postcard mailing for details

Additional Events

Open House Sunday, March 5, 2023 1-4 pm

Sunday, April 2, 2023 1-4 pm

Garden Party and Vintage Fashion Show

April 30th 12:30 – 3:00pm

prepaid tickets only see page 3

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 pruning to keep them at their best. See page 4 about our recent Rose Pruning Event.



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. We will feature our train history and tunnels this year for Pioneer Day.

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 visitors.

IN THE COTTAGE: An inventory project is in process 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.

[Brick Order Form.pdf](#)

Our next brick order will be March 1, 2023

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. Right click with your mouse to open the link in a new window, so you can easily get back to the original newsletter.

- **Garden Party & Vintage Fashion Show**
- **Rose Pruning Event Success**
- **Superman Episodes in Chatsworth**
- **Gwen Romani painting**

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

On Feb. 15th, Docent Jelena Csanyi hosted the family of Eugene Natoli, who passed away in November, for a short tour and opportunity to view bricks purchased on display in our Memorial Plaza.



Steve and Joanne (Natoli) Allen who have sponsored several bricks in our Memorial Brick Plaza, brought the entire family to see our Acre and learn more about our history.

Garden Party & Vintage Fashion Show

We are excited about our upcoming event for April 30th. Previously held as our Garden Festival which included a Duchess Tea, this year we will have a fashion show featuring vintage clothing from our museum collection.

We will not be serving our traditional tea, but instead will have a buffet of desserts, tea and beverages for our guests to enjoy.

Attendance will be limited to 100 guests, with a \$30 prepaid ticket required for entrance. We have set up PayPal to make your purchase convenient.

Come join us!!



Garden Party & Fashion Show
Sunday April 30, 2023
12:30 to 3:00 pm

Pre-Paid Admission/Donation \$30 per person by April 15
Gates open at 12:30 pm; come enjoy a harpist in the Garden and smell the roses.

At 1pm, a vintage Fashion Show with desserts & tea
will be held under our spectacular walnut tree.

Prepaid Tickets are available at <https://www.chatsworthhistory.com/Events.html>
Seating is limited.

The cottage and museum will be used for staging the Fashion Show
and will not be available for tours.

HOMESTEAD ACRE 10385 Shadow Oak Drive, Chatsworth, CA 91311
Located just inside the entrance to Chatsworth Park South.

Parking available at Chatsworth Park South,
please carpool as space is limited.

For more information contact: chatsworthhistory@gmail.com
818-822-5614

Gwendolyn Romani Painting Donation – Burro Flats Painted Cave

In December, Albert Knight donated a lithograph from the Estate of Gwen Romani, an accomplished archeologist. Gwen had carefully photographed the cave at Burro Flats back in 1981 and used those photographs to create the lithograph below.



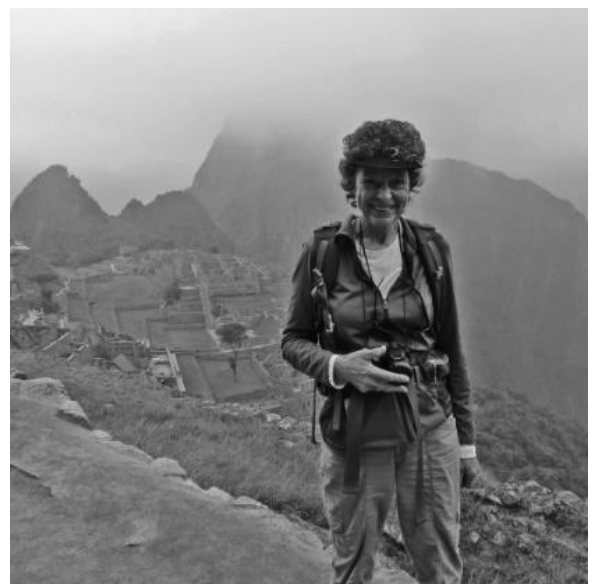
Burro Flats Painted Cave - The painting is an artistic depiction of the sacred rock art at the Burro Flats site, located in the Simi Hills. It is a famous and important site, because it was designed and used by local Native Americans as an astronomical site to define the Winter Solstice.

Gwendolyn Romani, one of the archaeologists who studied the site, is the artist who created the painting. Although she passed away in 2018, the Gwendolyn Roxanne Romani Trust now owns the copyright to the original art and the digital file of the photograph taken of her original painting.

We are honored to have this artwork, and are planning to have it framed for display in the Museum.

Gwen and her husband, John, also introduced Dr. Edwin C. Krupp, Director of the Griffith Park Observatory in Los Angeles, to the site.

Photo at right:
Gwen at the entrance to Machu Picchu, Peru, September 2012.



Superman Episodes Filmed in Chatsworth

This program was presented on January 17th and has now been posted on our website at

<https://www.chatsworthhistory.com/Presentations.html>

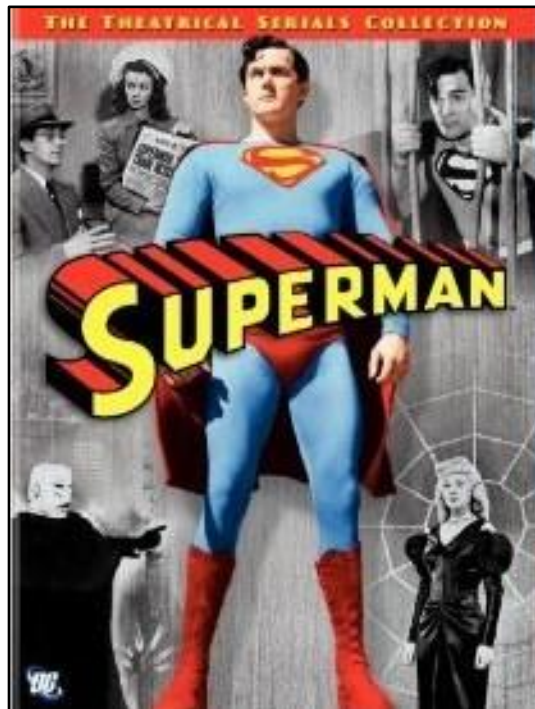
Movie Serial History

Movie serials date back to the silent era, with *The Perils of Pauline* (1914), *The Exploits of Elaine*, and *The Hazards of Helen* (119 12-minute episodes from 1914-17).

Flash Gordon was a 1936 movie serial with 13 episodes, featuring Buster Crabbe on the Planet Mongo. It was reissued as *Rocketship* in 1949.

The movie serial, or chapter play, was a popular motion picture form during the 1930s to 1950s.

Each chapter was screened at a movie theater for one week, and ended with a **cliffhanger**, in which characters found themselves in perilous situations with little apparent chance of escape.



History of Superman

Superman is a superhero who first appeared in DC Comics, *Action Comics* #1, in 1938

Radio - From 1940 to 1951 the radio show *Adventures of Superman* ran for 2,088 episodes, a five-a-week, 15-minute series.

Film, *Animated Shorts* – From 1941 to 1943, 17 animated episodes were made, each 8 to 10 minutes long. The episodes are on [YouTube](#). The first episode begins with the well-known phrase, “Up in the sky, look! It’s a bird, it’s a plane, it’s Superman!”

Film, *Live Action Movie Serials* – 1948 and 1950, **Kirk Alyn as Superman**, 15 chapters each year totaling 30.

Television, *Adventures of Superman* – 1952 to 1958, George Reeves as Superman, a total of 104 episodes.

Big-budget movies – 1978 to 1987, Superman, Superman II, III and IV, Christopher Reeve as Superman

Episodes Filmed in Chatsworth

The 1948 movie serial Superman portrayed Kirk Alyn as the first actor to portray Superman on the screen. It was the most profitable movie serial in history.

In 1950, a sequel serial *Atom Man vs. Superman* was released. Each serial had 15 chapters for a total of 30 chapters. 29 of the 30 movie serial chapters have scenes filmed in Chatsworth. We have published those scenes on a [YouTube Playlist](#) on our YouTube channel.



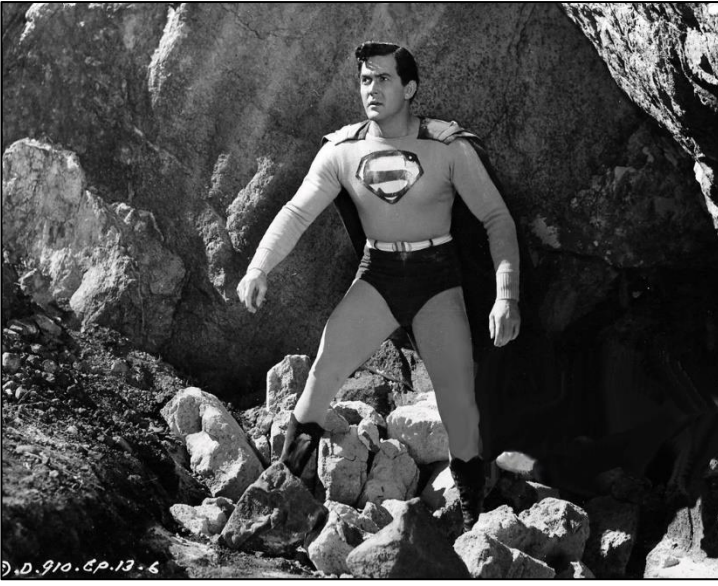


Kirk Alyn in a promotional photo
At Saddlehorn Rock Iverson Ranch

Over the years, the many unique rock formations of Iverson Ranch have been “named” by the Iverson family and subsequent movie historians, for either the descriptive nature of the feature, or the famous actor or movie that is associated with it. Examples are the Tower and the Sphinx, and Lone Ranger Rock.

Many thanks to Dennis Liff who provided details of the rock structures and shooting locations identified in each scene. Our PowerPoint presentation identifies further filming information and location for each scene, with links to Dennis’ website.

Kirk Alyn Photographs from the Jerry England Collection



1953 Adventures of Superman Screenshots in Chatsworth

The 1952 to 1958 Adventures of Superman television show had six episodes with scenes filmed in Chatsworth. All of the scenes were in Season 2, originally airing in 1953.

The scenes were not as extensive as the scenes in the 1948 and 1950 movie serials, but are also included at the end of the [YouTube Playlist](#)

Episodes can be purchased from Amazon or Prime Video, links again in our PowerPoint presentation.

1948 Superman Serial Screenshots in Chatsworth – Chapter 1 and 2

We all know that Superman came from the planet Krypton and was adopted by the Kent family, but did you know that his rocket ship actually landed in Chatsworth. In the first Episode, Chapter 1, he rescues his father from a dangerous tornado in Upper Iverson Ranch.



Chapter 1 - Rocket near big rock, probably the “Molar”, which is still there near Kanaina Ct. Looking north. Johnson Motorway on the hillside in the background.



Chapter 1 –Taken nearby the Rocket shot, on the Upper Iverson, looking northwest. The rocky bluffs on the left are above Fern Ann Falls neighborhood

After growing up in Chatsworth, he leaves home for the ATSWORTH train station to head to Metropolis, but finds that the train will derail unless Superman saves the day.



Chapter 1 – Our Train Depot at that time was located on west side of the tracks from today’s Train Depot



Chapter 2 – Train tracks looking north from Depot. Water tank is upper center at Devonshire.



Yes...this looks like a job for SUPERMAN

Research on State Parks property- another piece to the puzzle!

Our February General meeting will feature the History of the Santa Susana Pass Historic State Park (SSPSHP). While looking through the many boxes of materials regarding the land acquired, we found a missing piece of our Chatsworth history puzzle. We had read stories by Bob Turner about a famous white horse in Chatsworth in the Stoney Point area, but finally learned the story and who owned him.

The first land purchase for the State Park was the 265-acre Nichols property in 1977. This land was once a part of Charles and Florence Mattingly's combined 320-acre homestead, which included land that is a part of the 1895 Chatsworth Grade Road, named El Camino Nuevo in the Park.

In the SSPSHP Nichols property folder, Elizabeth Nichols (the daughter of Charles and Florence Mattingly), in a letter of March 1, 1974, spoke of her childhood in Chatsworth. *"We are enjoying perfect weather here in Alamos (Sonora, Mexico). Alamos is surrounded by very beautiful mountains, and reminds me a little of my early experience on the ranch in the Santa Susana Mountains. When we were children our father owned, in addition to the land we now hold, all of the property bought by Mr. Retz, as well as over one hundred acres, on the other side of the road which is now owned by John Brandeis and is the west end of his ranch. Papa sold all of this property to a cowboy actor named Fred Thomson, who had a famous white horse. It has changed hands several times since. I hope the Brandeis ranch is still intact. It is very beautiful property too."*

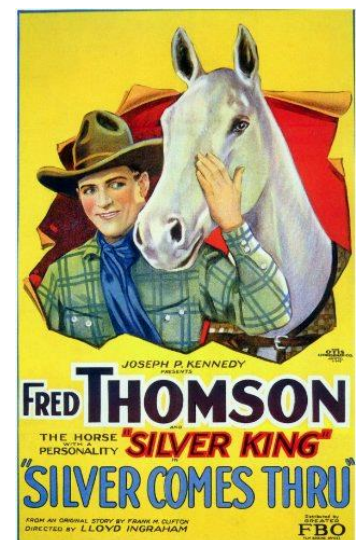
Fred Thomson (1890-1928) was an American silent film cowboy who rivaled Tom Mix in popularity before dying at age 38 of tetanus. And Fred Thomson was the owner of Silver King.

Silver King the Wonder Horse, "The Horse with a Personality", was a white Palomino of seventeen hands height. He performed at major rodeos and headlined as the equine star of western movies between 1924 and 1937.

In addition to the standard duties assigned stunt horses, Silver King was also capable of winking with one eye, nodding or shaking his head for yes or no, lifting bars, undoing knots and jumping from moving railway carriages.

Fred Thomson is interred in Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Glendale. The pallbearers at his funeral included Harold Lloyd, Charles Ferrell, Douglas Fairbanks, and George W Hill. Honorary pallbearers included Buster Keaton and movie mogul Joseph M. Schenck.

Editor's Note: Buster Keaton filmed in Chatsworth ([train depot water tank](#)) in 1924 Sherlock Holmes Jr, and jumped off of [parachute rock](#) (just east of the Mattingly Homestead) in 1922 Paleface. Harold Lloyd [decorated his estate in Beverly Hills](#) with 3,500 tons of Chatsworth Sandstone. Perhaps they were introduced/visited at Chatsworth with their friend Fred Thomson?



Rose Pruning Event held January 28th



We were delighted to invite the Rose Society and their members to assist us in the Garden with our annual maintenance of over 100 rose bushes. David Bassani, president of the association, stepped up to the task of helping us improve our display by heading out to Green Thumb and returning with a new climbing rose bush to replace one on our arch trellis that was not doing well. On Friday a week later, he donated two more roses which have now been planted in front of the museum. For those of you (including myself) not versed in rose bushes...they each have names. The climbing rose is a “Colette”, it is pink with a strong citrus scent and should grow to cover the full side of the arch. The two additional roses donated included a beautiful yellow rose named “Gina Lollobrigida” and a pink by the name of “Perfume Delight”.

Each of the main rose gardens were skillfully pruned by expert rose pruners while the rest of us, not so skilled...picked up cuttings and cleaned up. Thank you to everyone who participated!!



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 41 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 to renew by mail or the link below to renew by **PayPal or Credit Card:**

<https://www.chatsworthhistory.com/membership.html>

And if your neighbor is not a member yet, pass this newsletter on to them and invite them to join.

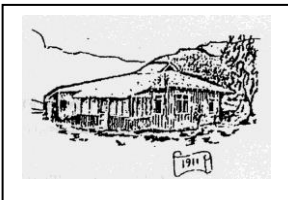


CHATSWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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!