

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

November 2023, Issue #5

Editor: Ann Vincent

Co-Presidents' Message

By Linda & André van der Valk

We want to start out with everyone that attended our Pioneer Day. The day was perfect and everyone seemed to have a lot of fun. The kids love making horseshoes, gold panning, leather making and seeing fossils along with all the other activities that they were able to do.

A big thanks goes to Ann Vincent as the event chair and her team that helped make it a great day. I know Ann will be thanking everyone in her column about Pioneer Day.

Another big thank you goes to our resident film historian and cowboy Jerry England. Jerry donated all of his digital and movie stills to us. Jerry spent years documenting the movies that were filmed at Iverson Ranch and other locations in Chatsworth and it is a priceless collection of our film history. Jerry also authored two books documenting the movie industry here. Jerry also is dedicated to preserving our Equestrian history in the area. Jerry founded the Chatsworth Equine Cultural Heritage Organization that was responsible for placing a plaque in the Garden of the Gods honoring Iverson Ranch and the Hollywood cowboys. Jerry at one time was the Chair of the Land Use and Equestrian committees for the Chatsworth Neighborhood Council. Again, thank you Jerry for your very generous donation.

We hope everyone has a great holiday season.
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

November 21, Tuesday 6:30pm

Standing on the Corner – Early Businesses through the years in Chatsworth.



Take a trip through time to the past and present business establishments in our community.

Please join us as we review photos of how our business community has grown over the years.

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

OPEN HOUSE

December 3, 2023 1-4pm

January 7, 2024 1-4pm

Have fun learning the history of the Homestead Acre and the Chatsworth Museum

General Meeting

January 16, Tuesday 6:30pm

How Chatsworth Got Its Name

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 always need pruning to keep them at their best. Everything is growing now and the garden is beautiful!



IN THE MUSEUM: Our docents continue to reorganize and catalog our early photograph collections. We have displays set up that we look forward to sharing with you, 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 visitors. Come join us!

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

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, 2024

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.

- **Pioneer Day**
- **Gray Family Program**
- **1893-1903 Rock Art at Momonga**
- **Chatsworth Baseball World Series**

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING OPEN HOUSE

Our Open House events on the first Sunday of each month continue to bring new people to the Acre. This month the museum displays were updated to include early Chatsworth Business photos. The weather was perfect.

Guests on hand this month included Carolyn and Chris Carradine along with their daughter and granddaughter. Chris is the son of famous character actor John Carradine, who was in 1929 Stagecoach and 1940 Grapes of Wrath, both filmed in Chatsworth. Chris is also the brother of David Carradine of the 1972-1975 Kung Fu series. Chris described himself as the “black sheep of the family” since he didn’t become an actor.

Chris was an architect at Walt Disney studios, and planned Disney Parks around the world. As a retired Vice President of Walt Disney Imagineering, he had some great stories, and confirmed to Ann that Disney did buy some property in Chatsworth for their planned Disneyland. However, they chose to be near the new 5 freeway in Anaheim with an offramp on Harbor Blvd. So... they bought all four corners of the freeway off ramp and Disneyland opened in 1955.

Accessibility to Disneyland was the priority...

Come join us for our next event!

Photo of Ann & Dottie courtesy of SFV Rocks



The Gray Family of Chatsworth

The Nelson and Minerva (Minnie) Gray family were important members of our early Chatsworth History. They arrived in 1893 and lived on an 80-acre ranch north of Lassen to Devonshire, west of Topanga to Farralone.

Our program on October 17, was held at the Acre with a full house in attendance along with 31 on-line through Zoom. The exciting part of the meeting was that 25 members of the Gray family were included.

The PowerPoint Presentation can be found at <https://www.chatsworthhistory.com/Presentations.html> Use the PDF download for the best quality version.

In addition to the members visiting online, we



received a package of photos from Marcia Martyn that included a gathering of six of Nelson and Minnie Gray's great-granddaughters, all granddaughters of Ida Gray Urton. The 1990 photo above shows standing Marcia Martyn, Polly Pastre, Sherrill Pfeiffer and seated Janet Rodriguez, Peggy Edwards and Debbie Weller.

A biography of Nelson Allison Gray was published in 1887 (when he was 30), he and his parents owned a 485 acre ranch in Rantoul, Illinois called "Willow Glen".

Nelson was born in Wayne, Pennsylvania in 1857; as was his father William A. Gray. His grandfather Mathew A. Gray (1796-1877) secured a tract of timber in Wayne Township, cut down trees and established a home, married Esther Smith and had eleven children.

Nelson's father William married Sarah Mead in 1845, continued clearing land and farming 260 acres. In 1859 (when Nelson was 2) he sold out and bought a half-interest in a flouring and woolen mill in Kentucky. Two years later he traded the Kentucky property for 80 acres in Kansas and 320 acres of wild prairie in Rantoul, Illinois. By the 1870 census William, Sarah, and Nelson (age 13) were living on a \$14,000 estate with a servant.

Nelson's father died in August 1880, so it was just his mother and him (aged 21) on the farm. In June 1883, Nelson graduated from Illinois Industrial University (in 1885 it was renamed the University of Illinois). Nelson was a Captain of the University Battalion, pictured in the yearbook (photo below).

In the April 1880 census, just up the road was the Collins family, with parents Charles and Mary, and children "Minnie" Minerva (age 15), Anna, Eugene and Bessie.



Nelson and Minerva "Minnie" are married on Feb 11, 1885.



Minerva moved onto the Gray farm with Nelson and his mother Sarah. Per his 1887 biography, Nelson and Minerva were members in good standing of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Gray's School-house.

Of their 9 children, the first 4 were born in Illinois, the next 2 in Pasadena, two in Chatsworth, and the last one in Pasadena.



Family members in 1909, with birth year included
Back Row: Edith-1889, George-1887, Ida-1889, Clarence-1891

Front Row: Stanley-1901, Sadie-1885, Gladys-1903, Nelson-1857, Minerva-1864, Helen-1908 (on Minerva's lap), Myrtle-1891

Ida and Edith were twins born in 1889, followed in 1891 by twins Myrtle and Clarence. In 1891 they had a household of six children all under six years of age.

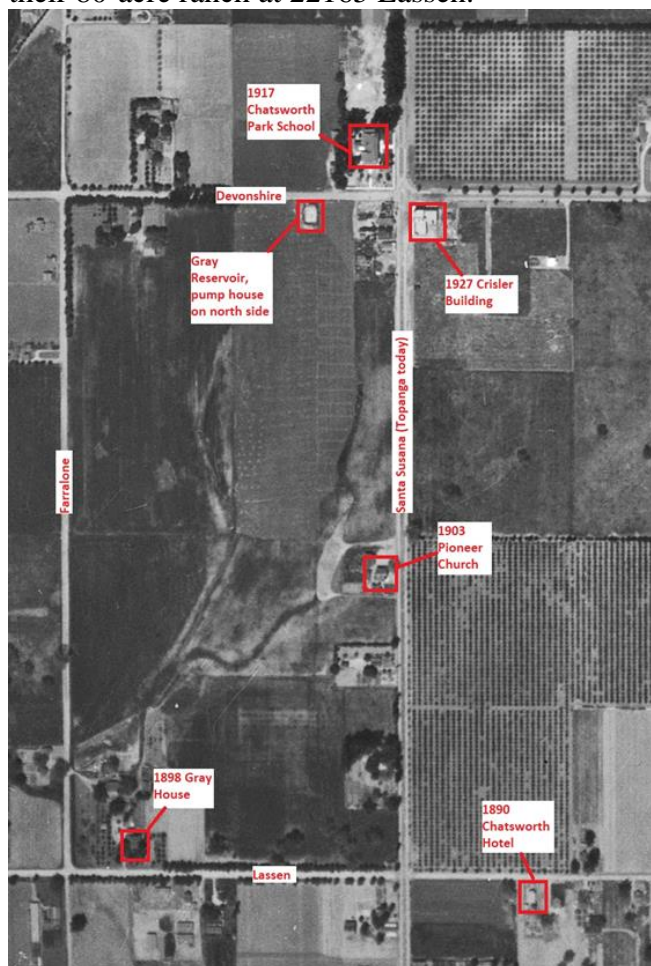
Moving from Illinois to Pasadena:

Seven months after moving to Pasadena in March 1890, and active in Real Estate, Nelson Gray buys 24.5 acres in Pasadena for \$5,000 on San Pasqual St. in Nov. 1890.

Five months later in 1891, Nelson Gray sells the same property (less 4 acres) to W.B. Barber for \$5,000. William B. Barber was president of the San Fernando Valley Improvement Company, which founded Chatsworth Park in 1888. No doubt W.B. Barber told rancher Nelson Gray about property in his new development in Chatsworth.

Moving from Pasadena to Chatsworth:

In Oct 1982 Nelson buys land from W.B. Barber in Chatsworth for \$16,000. One year later, in 1893, the Gray family moves to Chatsworth, living on their 80-acre ranch at 22165 Lassen.



The 1928 aerial photograph above shows the 80-acre ranch. There was an artesian well at the top of the parcel. Nelson built a reservoir next to it, and irrigation channels would irrigate the fields south, which were all downhill. The Gray House was at the lower left corner of the parcel.

The Gray's were a prosperous and influential family in the early development of Chatsworth. Chatsworth was founded in 1888; in 1890 the first elementary school at Topanga and Devonshire was built, as was the Chatsworth Hotel; in 1893 the first railroad station was at Marilla and Topanga.

A side note, Nelson's uncle Darius Mead and wife Kate ran the Chatsworth Hotel from 1895-1901.

We are fortunate that their fourth child, Edith Gray, shared her experiences in Chatsworth in the book, *Pigtails to Silver-Grey*.

The family has shared many pictures with us, and much has been written and remembered in our Chatsworth Historical Society archives.



1962 *Pigtails to Silver-Grey*
Privately printed in 1962 - 25 copies only

*"Papa had large apricot and peach orchards, we all helped cut and dry the fruit for market. Our season for cutting apricots extended over a period of about four or five weeks. A few weeks later the peaches came in and would run for another three weeks. On the last day there was little cutting -- just finishing up in the morning. After lunch we all piled into the lumber wagon and were off for a swim in Papa's reservoir." Pg 29, 1962 *Pigtails to Silver-Grey**



*"As for our vacations, which came after the fruit season, we went to the beaches. We traveled by way of the old lumber wagon, as we had so much to take along for a month's outing. Our hired man would take the wagon back home and return whenever we were ready to leave." Pg16, 1962 *Pigtails to Silver-Grey**

(Around 1896) "By now Papa had purchased 750 acres of land" Pg9, 1962 *Pigtails to Silver-Grey*

To understand Nelsons land purchases, we used 1903 property tax maps to compile a list of Chatsworth Parcels and Homesteads that equaled 557 acres. Nelson no doubt had purchased other lots or homesteads that had been sold by 1903 to equal his 750 acres in 1896... See map at right. Nelson purchased two homesteads that had water on them (in addition to his 80-acre ranch that had an artesian well)

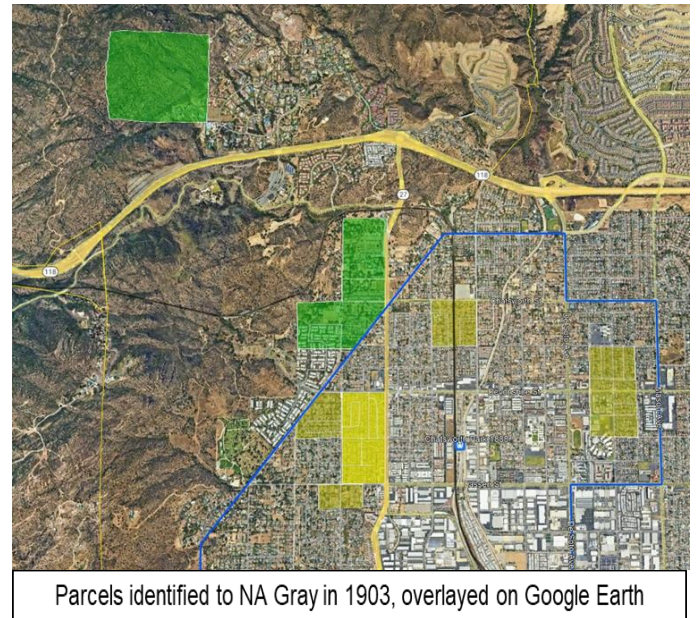
The upper left green 160 acres is the Fred Graves homestead that includes Hialeah Springs. The middle green 145 acre "L" shaped parcel was the Dejeremias homestead that includes the Santa Susana Creek. Around 1906 Gray piped water from Hialeah Springs to his reservoir. The pressure from the pipe drove a belting wheel that pumped water out of his artesian well into his reservoir. It is 2.5 miles from Hialeah Springs to the reservoir, and a 700-foot gain.

The Hialeah Springs story is in the [Nov 2017 Smoke Signal](#)

In 1898 they built a second home at 22165 Lassen
Their new home was built a little to the north of the first house, within a few feet of the milk house. A cellar and pit were dug for the new acetylene light system. The two-story home with its 14 rooms cost \$1,200; the 24'x24' central "court" living room had an 18' ceiling. The house at 22165 Lassen faced south, photo below looking north.



1898 Gray Estate Home "Rancho de Los Robles"



In 1903 the Pioneer Church was built on their 80 acres, on land donated by them

"By now more families were coming into our little valley and there was a growing need for a church. The school house no longer seemed adequate. Papa being President of the Official Board called a meeting at which time the question of where they would build came up. That was just what he wanted.

He smiled and said quietly, Well folks, I have a fine piece of property I would like to give you for a building site. There are 2 1/2 acres (ed. note: only one acre) on the east side of my 80-acre section along the highway. The Board accepted with much appreciation and began to lay plans for building. The deed was given to the church for the property as well as the privilege of water rights from Papa's artesian well." Pg38, 1962 Pigtails to Silver-Grey

In 1906 they moved back to Pasadena, then returned to Chatsworth by 1911.

Sadie, Ida and Edith attended Pasadena High, living with Grandpa Collins at 1272 Summit Ave. (Charles Collins was their mother's father)

- 1906 - One year later, Nelson buys a large house at 1320 Summit Ave, 4 houses north of Grandpa Collins. The family keeps the Chatsworth ranch, but moves to Pasadena.
- 1908 - Their ninth and last child, Helen Gray, is born in Pasadena.
- 1908 - Sadie marries Chester Shadwick. Their daughter Alice is born in Pasadena.

- 1909 - Nelson's mother Sarah Mead dies, and before that Sarah signed all the papers and the big farm back in Illinois over to Nelson.
- 1910 - the Pasadena census lists Nelson Gray as a miner, owning a mine.
- 1911 - In February Nelson announces he will run for Councilman in Pasadena
- 1911 - *"Within a few months a good-sized fortune was lost in a gold mine swindle--the sharks had taken him for a ride to the tune of \$100,000 spot cash" (per Edith in Pigtails to Silver-Grey)*

The family returns to Chatsworth

Sadie and Chester Shadwick move back to the Chatsworth Ranch house first in 1910. Edith mentions that the first thing she and her mother did was to clean the upstairs rooms, as they hadn't been cleaned since the family left in '06. The men brought up the bedsprings and mattresses, the furniture and heavy goods had been shipped ahead on the train. And within a few days they were all busy harvesting summer crops.

"That fall after we returned home, Sadie and Chester moved to a little house up across from the creek at the foot of the hills to the west (where we heard the doves cooing years before) among large shady trees."

The Shadwicks had moved to a 7-acre parcel where the Rockpointe clubhouse is today. They had 7 children and lived there for more than 20 years.

[May 2021 Smoke Signal](#)

- 1915 Nelson A. Gray is one of the founders, and the 2nd president of the Chatsworth Chamber of Commerce. Nelson is president eight times in the first 14 terms.
- 1917 Nelson Gray had an active part in the planning and building of the new schoolhouse, as he was a trustee for nine years. N.A. Gray, president of the Chatsworth Chamber of Commerce, acts as chairman of the evening during the opening dedication and exercises.
For more information visit our presentation at [Chatsworth Park Elementary School](#)
- 1918, Jan 1 Stanley Gray (age 16) dies in Chatsworth unhitching a team of horses with his cousin Eugene Collins. The horses became unmanageable and dragged the boys for some distance.

"He was crushed between the wagon wheels and the corncrib when the team of horses were running

away and was in the throes of lock-jaw and was dying. It was a heavy trial for those of the family who stood around his bedside. I had not known of the accident until we returned home that night. He died that next morning before we could reach home. The folks were grief-stricken. The day of the funeral the grammar school and high school were both closed as well as all the stores, honoring his memory. His two brothers and four brothers-in-law bore his body in the casket tenderly to its resting place." Pg96, 1962 Pigtails to Silver-Grey
Note: His cousin Eugene Collins (18) died 4 months later.

Christmas was held every other year at the Gray House. 35 grandkids, big two-story house,



Christmas was potluck. Grandma had a big turkey. Grandpa Gray would cut two or three trees

down and tie them together, and they would go to the top of the stairs.

They had a Christmas program at the church. Grandma Gray served buckwheat pancakes (which is a tradition passed on to this day).

Grandpa Gray had a barrel of home-cured olives, with a dipper for the kids so they wouldn't get their hands wet. 2012 Memories from Myrtle Shadwick Gray (1917-2014)

They sold their property in 1927 to the Spinks estate.

"They sold their home in 1927 to the interests that have it today, known as the Spinks Estate, which now comprises 55 acres.

The Giddings first managed the property (parents of Mrs. Failor, 10116 Topanga); then Alex Summers managed the interest for 13 years during which time Mr. Summers put in the 30 acres of lemons, 10 acres of oranges and 15 in alfalfa.

In 1948 the Bob Werrens took over its management and are still there, loving every inch of the old home and its grounds." ([The Grapevine 1956-02-01](#))

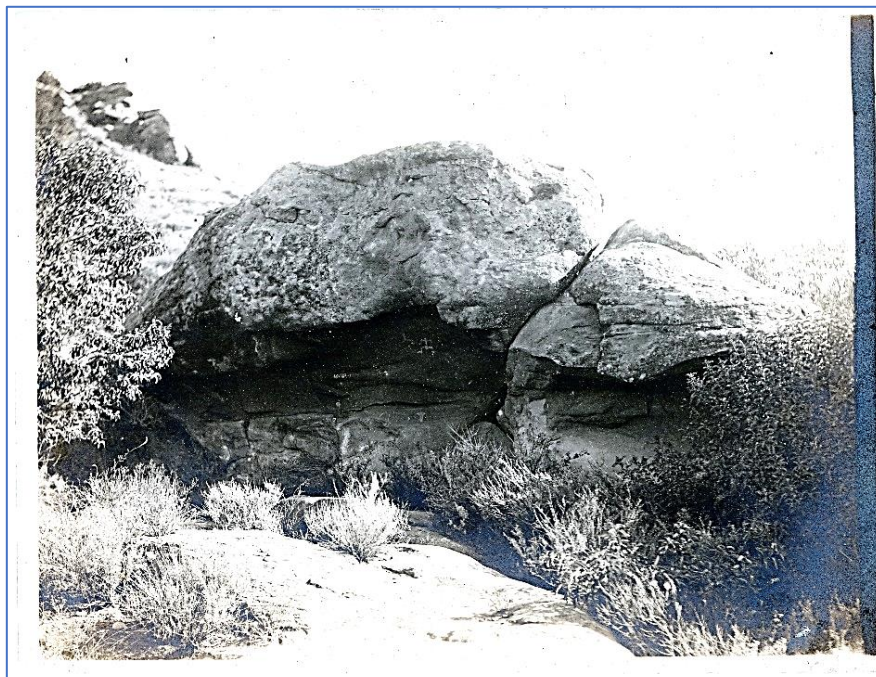
The church was moved to the Cemetery in 1965, and the property was developed in 1977-1978 (a few homes north of Mayall at Farralone were built in 1956-59).

1893-1903 Rock Art at Momonga (Stoney Point)

The photo at right from the Gray family album was titled *"Rock with character inscriptions Chatsworth Park on old Indian Village"*

The photo is exciting to find because it represents the oldest photographic record of this site taken over 120 years ago by the Gray family as they explored Chatsworth.

Momonga is the Native American name for the village and ceremonial site near Stoney Point. Momonga Rock Art has been well documented by archaeologists, and was recently included in the justification for Chatsworth's most recent 2019 Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument, [The Apeta Momonga Mission Trail](#).



The photo enlargement at right outlines two pictograph areas on the photo above. The rectangular one is well documented, and the circled one a “new” find as seen only on the 1893-1903 photo above.

The 2012 photo below (corresponding to the rectangular area at right) is a small section of the rock shelter main panel that has been enhanced with Dstretch by an archeologist to bring out the colors embedded in the rock. The paintings are located in the very shallow sandstone rock shelter that is not well-protected from the elements, and most of the panel has eroded away and is difficult to see.

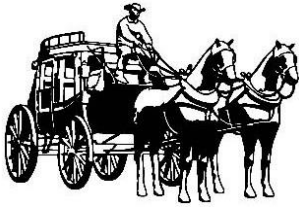


When it was new and fresh, the main panel may have been as impressive as the main panel at Burro Flats Painted Cave, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. [Three Chumash-Style Pictograph sites in Fernandeno Territory](#)

If you zoom in and look at the upper right of the 1893-1903 Gray family photo of the main panel area (circled in yellow), you can see a stick figure of a deer and a man (our interpretation).

We recently visited the site (on private property) and confirmed that the rock formation is the same as in the photo. We saw only faint traces of white today where the deer and man were, perhaps remnants of that image.

You never know what can be found in old family albums....



PIONEER DAY THANK YOU to everyone!

Each year our Pioneer Day becomes an excellent adventure that all the community groups pull together to create.

This year we once again thank Councilman Lee's office for his support providing not only the shuttle service to and from the Acre and the Train Depot, but also for the Portable Bathrooms and wash station.

Having the State Park Stagecoach at our entrance provided a wonderful opportunity to envision time travel back to the early 1870's and experience travel as it once was through our park. There are so many groups that help us put this together, I thought I would just list them this year...but first some history!

This was our 31st annual Pioneer Day. We started in 1992 with our rock chippers, displays of barbed wire, branding irons and quilts including our quilt craft. Admission was only \$1.00. In 1999 blacksmithing (Gary Standke) and gold panning (Keene Engineering) became part of our event. Over the years we added our leather craft with Standing Bear and Bee Keeping with The Valley Hive. Back in the day...yes, I like that phrase...we even included a Chili cookoff and old Time Jail. Huell Howser advertised our Pioneer Day and we had record crowds show up. The last few years have brought record crowds as we reach out to more families through schools than ever before. Our admission/donation is still low (only \$5 for adults, \$1 for students and free for kids under 5) to help families enjoy the event. The expenses for the events are mostly donated by members or the organizations that run them...so please know that it is appreciated! All proceeds from the event go to maintain and preserve the Homestead Acre and our Virginia Watston Chatsworth Museum.

The participant names have changed over the years, but the goal continues to provide an opportunity to share the skills and commitment to early pioneer activities with our families today.



We have been fortunate to have the Los Angeles Spinning Guild participate for many years, but this year they were joined by the Weaving Association.



New this year was the Equestrian Group ETI with Jan Eddy teaching the skill of roping.

The Quilters for Others group donated this beautiful Halloween quit and raffled it to a participant in their quilting craft. (Serenity age 5 was the proud winner.) Quilters for Others have been running this exact craft since our first Pioneer Day in 1992.



A special thank you goes to all of the members who stepped up to run our snack booth: Ed Buck Barker, Gary Bercow, Hunter Petretti, Kathy Underwood, Andre van der Valk and Bryce van der Valk. Our Bake sale was supervised by Bonnie Cross and Sue O'Connor with baked goods supplied by members of the Chatsworth Womens Club. Our Information booth included Jelena Cysani, Nancy Nicoloro-Tanner and Ann LaManna. The museum tours were provided by Linda van der Valk, Jennifer Romero and Ann Hughes with cottage tours by Dottie Acker, Gloria DeMuri and Sheryl Levine. Donna Nachtrab and Rebecca Canady worked the craft tables all day! Donna Boswell and Wendi Gladstone handled the gate while Bill Dushman and Ray Vincent made sure the parking lot was well managed with the ROTC students.

Chatsworth Pioneer



We could not have done this without the following organizations that provided their time, manpower and resources to make this a fun filled day. Before we opened the event, over 175 volunteers were already on hand to run the activities and our parking lot was mostly full. So...we really appreciate the shuttle service to and from the train depot from Councilman Lee's office. The NJROTC from El Camino helped us set up and take down along with Lawrence Middle School Leadership students and teachers. Both this year and last year, we had over 1,000 people in attendance.

Thank you to:

The Valley Hive – Bee keeping
Standing Bear Trading Station -Leatherwork
Panning for Gold -Keene Engineering
Blacksmith – Gary Standke
Baking & Butter Churning – Nita Standke
Spinners - Los Angeles Spinning Guild
Southern California Handweavers Guild
Quilters 4 Others - Kids quilt craft
Woodland Hills Rock Chippers
ETI - Equestrian roping –Jan Eddy
Boy Scouts - knot tying and lashing
Pioneer Church -St. Mary's the Virgin Church
Santa Susana Mountain Park Association
Foundation for the Preservation of the SS Mountains
Sky Valley Volunteers
Daughters of the American Revolution
Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War
Chatsworth Chamber of Commerce- Est 1914
Chatsworth Neighborhood Council- Est 2003
Archeology Adventure – Duke Mulholland
Little House on the Prairie - (promoting the 50th year anniversary of TV Show)
Chatsworth Women's Club
Chores and Games of Yore - Lawrence Middle School teachers and students managed events: Cornhusk Dolls, Paper dolls, Paper flowers, Rock Painting, Telegraph display, Music, Sack races, Hoop Rolling, Tug of War, Washboard laundry, Fishing, and Weaving.
NJROTC – students from El Camino Real HS
Councilman John Lee and staff

We distribute these cards on the right to students when they enter, to guide them through the educational activities at the event.

PIONEER DAY CHALLENGE



- Blacksmith
- Baking
- Butter Churning
- Gold Panning
- Spinning Wheels
- Oak Tree Seedlings
- Fossils
- Quilting
- Trace your family tree
- Fishing game
- Amish Buggy
- Bean bag game
- Sack Races
- Washboard Laundry
- Music & Rhythm
- The Telegraph
- Leatherwork
- Darning Socks
- Cornhusk Dolls
- Braiding & Weaving
- Seeds & Plants
- Rock Painting
- Knot Tying
- Bee Keeping
- Roping
- Stagecoach
- Museum & Cottage

Return this card to your teachers at school to show how much you learned!
Chatsworth Historical Society

1908 Chatsworth Park School and Calabasas School met in Valley's Little World's Series

Valley 'Little World's Series' of 1908 Recalled

2023 was a tough year for the Dodgers, but 1908 was tough for our Chatsworth Park team too!

On Oct 2, 1947, the 1908 Chatsworth Baseball Team was remembered in the Valley News and Greensheet.

Included in the article was a reprint of the 1908 Chatsworth Team, posed in front of the 1890 School, seen below.



Calabasas Curveball Chucker Handcuffed Chatsworth Park Nine in Pioneer Diamond Series Played When Van Nuys Was Wheat Field

By ERNIE KLANN

Current World's Series has nothing on the Valley. Even before Van Nuys was founded Chatsworth Park School and Calabasas School met in 1908 to decide the Valley's Little World's Series. When the Calabasas nine came up with a pitcher who threw a curve ball it was curtains for the valiant Chatsworth Park squad, and they were shut out. Chatsworth players had never seen a curve ball before.

The entire populace of Chatsworth (some 200) turned out for the game only to see their favorite sons go down in defeat to the cagy Calabasas crew.

Playing Was Sharp

Some folks are inclined to sneer at early day sports, albeit these pioneer players in the Valley played heads up baseball. Good evidence. Kelly Johnson, who was on the 1908 team has played first base for the Chatsworth softball entrant in the West Valley League for the last two years. A brother, Les, who was a year too young to play on the 1908 club, now plays second base for the Chatsworth team.

Kelly and Les both played in the 2nd Annual Van Nuys News Martin vs. McCoys Brothers Softball Game last summer. Chuck Johnson, Kelly's son, caught for the 1947 Chatsworth team as well.

(Article continued on next page)

[Click here](#) to see the enlarged photo.

Caption to the 1908 photo from the 1947 article follows:

Colorful Chatsworth Park Baseball Club of 1908 – Dressed up for the “big day” players of Chatsworth Park’s public school baseball nine struck a determined pose and then held “dead-still” for a few seconds while the cameraman preserved Valley sports history. Padded pants of bright red color, white socks with a red band, and neat little red caps with letters - CP for Chatsworth Park made smart looking uniforms. Ties, and the shirt sleeve “garters” seen on a few team members, were not game equipment. Players had been warned not to forget their caps on picture day. Ray L. (Kelly) Johnson, last boy on the right, sits frowning, because of stern rebuke by Principal Maltby – some dresser, eh! kiddo.

Notice Old Glory posted at right. Banana tree is in center of picture.

Standing (L-R) Dick Williams, Harold Johnson, Maltby, Ed Tetzlaff, Ernest Johnson and Eric Day. Seated: Herman Ackerman, George Schweikhard, Jess Graves and “Kelly” Johnson.

As we research all of the families in our town, the names and faces in the photo mean a lot to us.

Of the Chatsworth Nine, eight of the players were from Homestead Families.

The Williams homesteaded 160 acres. The JR Williams family lived in Chatsworth for 3 generations.

The Johnsons homesteaded 160 acres and have been here for many generations. Charles Johnson is the father of Harold, Ernest and Kelly. Johnson family members are still living in Chatworth. In later years Kelly earned a scholarship to play baseball, but gave it up to stay home close to family.

Ferdinand Tetzlaff, father of Ed, homesteaded 42 acres, and was justice of the peace in 1903. They lived on Devonshire until 1923.

Frank Ackerman, father of Herman, homesteaded 42 acres next to the Hill family.

August Schweikhard, father of George, homesteaded 36 acres that eventually were sold to DWP north of the Nature preserve, and became Chatsworth Oaks Park.

Fred Graves homesteaded 160 acres, and was Constable of Chatsworth from 1903-1910. He went into partnership with Lovell Hill, another homesteading family, to run the Graves & Hill General Merchandise store. He married Emma Johnson, they were the parents of Jess Graves. They lived in the house near Chatsworth Park North where the Big Oak Theater is now on Chatsworth Street.

When the new school building was built in 1917, the original 1890 school building shown was moved across the street, to the southwest corner of Devonshire and Topanga, becoming part of the Maxwell House.

Three brothers were on the 1908 squad. Besides young Kelly, Ernie and Harold were first-string players on Principal Maltby's nine. The school was a county project. It is thought that Maltby is now deceased. Adding to the kinship, Jess Graves of the team was a cousin of the Johnson boys. The Johnson boys' father, Charles Wilden, who died in 1943, was known as the first citizen of Chatsworth. The kindly gentlemen was much mourned. Jess Graves' mother was the first white child born in the Valley. Well over seventy, she is hale and hearty. Almost any day she can be seen riding horseback over familiar trails in West Valley. Her horse is 23 years old and still a stout and trim steed much admired by Valley horsemen.

Tying in the old and new generation, Chuck Pogue, candidate for this year's Hunter varsity football team as quarterback, is a nephew of the Johnsons.

Pioneering Johnsons

The team picture arouses interest in what the players are doing today. Dick Williams is retired and still lives in Chatsworth. He is a nephew of Carl Iverson, who owned the famed Iverson Ranch, and passed away a few weeks ago. Harold Johnson is a Valley rancher. Ed Tetzlaff managed the team besides playing. He has an active insurance business in Ventura. Ernest Johnson is ranching in Lancaster. Eric Day was killed in a powerline accident in the "twenties."

Whereabouts of Herman Ackerman is not known. He is a nephew of Lovell Hill, mentioned in the Overell case in regards to the Trojan Powder Mine at Chatsworth. George Sweighart (spelling unverified) is lost in the worldly shuffle, but efforts are being made by The News to trace his whereabouts. Jess Graves is forestry captain in charge of Northern divisions of the State. Kelly Johnson is with the postoffice dept. in Chatsworth. Nearly all served in World War I.

Equipment and diamonds early Valley teams played on were well up to par. The old school building pictured later became a part of the "Maxwell House" in Chatsworth.

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 45 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.

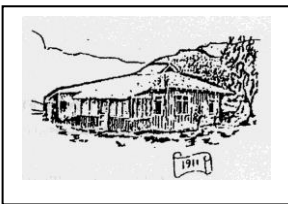


CHATSWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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: New Member Renewal
 Individual \$15.00 Family \$20.00 Organization \$20.00
Life Membership: \$ 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!