



Chatsworth Street Corner History



This presentation was inspired by some long time residents of Chatsworth, the Janess Family. They took picture of street corners in Chatsworth in 1949 and 1963.

We have added additional photos of some of the corners that are from our historical archives, so you can see how Chatsworth has changed over the years.

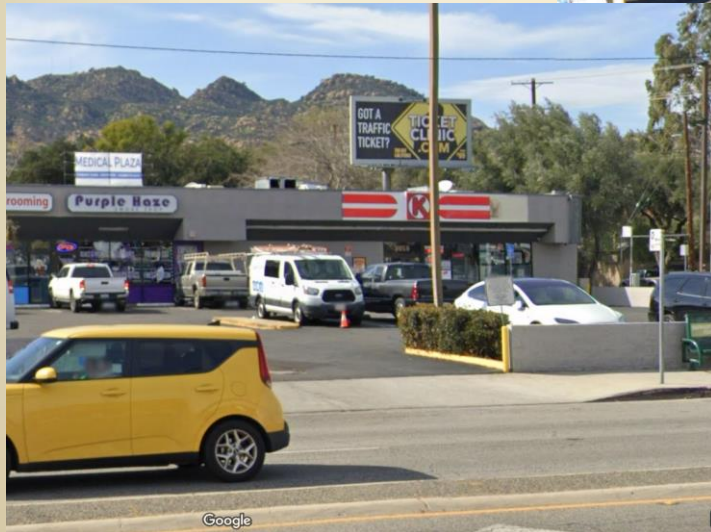
The format of the presentation is to show a current picture of a street corner, and then to step back in time to see what businesses were on those corners in previous years.

Links to articles/presentations published by the Chatsworth Historical Society are in blue.

Our tour starts here...

2023, the southwest corner of
Lassen and Topanga, the
Chatsworth Village shopping
center.

Notice the "[Hawk in the Hills](#)"
skyline in the photo below..



1912, Early
Downtown
Chatsworth

The southwest
corner of Lassen
and Topanga, at
the Graves & Hill
General Store

Looking north on
Topanga (then
Santa Susana
Pass Rd) , about
150 ft south of
Lassen

Residents are
posing for a [1912
postcard](#)

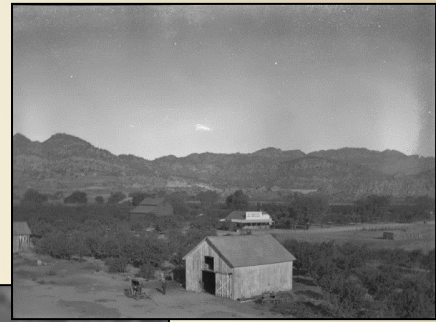


This building served as the Post Office from 1898 to 1915.

An earlier view, 1905-1908, Downtown Chatsworth

View west probably taken from the 2nd story of the 1890 Chatsworth Hotel.

The southwest corner of Lassen and Topanga, the General Store, 150 ft south of Lassen. Looking west.
(enlarged crop of photo below)



A man stands next to a buggy in front of a barn, probably a part of early Chatsworth transportation to and from the Hotel and Train Depot. The barn is just west and a little north of the hotel, and was probably used to store buggies, horses, wagons, etc.

Behind the barn is the General Store.

Fred Graves and Lovell Hill bought the store in 1906 after the death of Mr. and Mrs. Jackson, the previous owners.

[May 2021 Smoke Signal](#)



View north

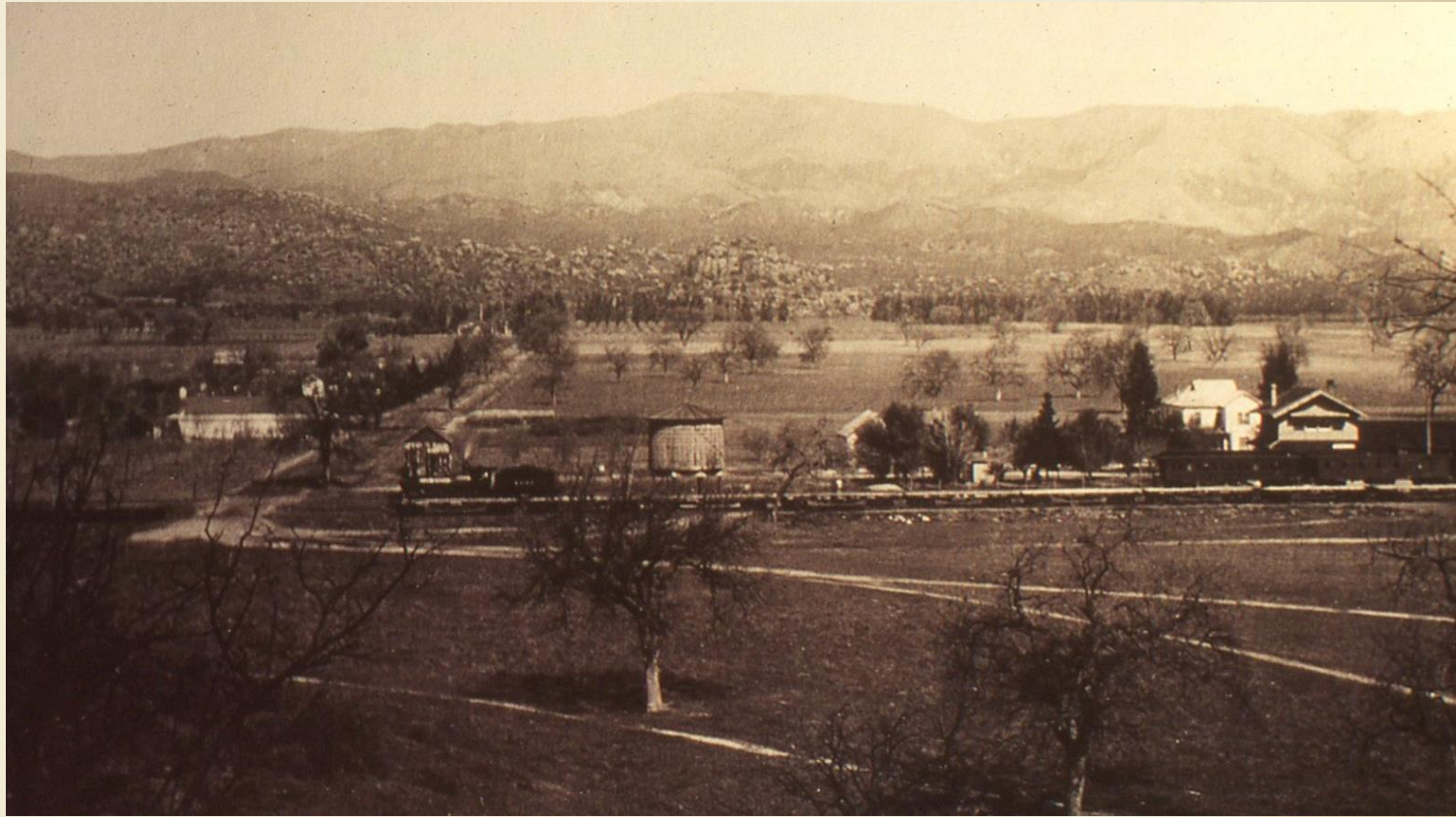
The General Store is on the west side of Topanga (then Santa Susana), about 150 ft south of Lassen.

The train is just north of today's Marilla St.

The 1893 Train Depot is at the right, with the 1890 Chatsworth Hotel behind it.

The 1890 Chatsworth Park School, and Stoney Point, can be seen in the distance.

An earlier view, 1898, Downtown Chatsworth



Looking North on
Topanga at Mayall

2007

Taken in front of
shopping center



Looking North on
Topanga (Mayall
did not exist)

1949

Photo taken
across the street
from the Pioneer
Church



Southwest corner
Topanga and
Mayall St.

2017

(Previous location
of 1903 Pioneer
Church, moved to
Oakwood in 1965)



Southwest corner
Topanga and
Mayall St.

1949

1903 Pioneer
Church

(Mayall did not
exist then, it would
be just to the right
of the eucalyptus
trees)

[The Chatsworth
Pioneer Church](#)



Northwest corner
Topanga &
Devonshire

2007

1935
Chatsworth Park
Elementary
School....



Northwest corner
Topanga &
Devonshire

1963

1935

Chatsworth Park
Elementary School



Northwest corner
Topanga &
Devonshire

1949

1935

Chatsworth Park
Elementary School

behind the
Chatsworth sign
on the corner



Northwest corner
Topanga &
Devonshire

1949

Closeup of The
Chatsworth Sign

Also seen in the 1956
Highway Patrol
Episode Motorcycle A
with Clint Eastwood



Northwest corner
Topanga &
Devonshire

1920

1917

Chatsworth Park
Elementary School

with 1890 School
moved to
southwest corner

1920 Chatsworth Chamber
of Commerce Photo

11/21/2023



Chatsworth Historical Society - Chatsworth Street Corner History

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Northwest corner Topanga & Devonshire

The 1917 Chatsworth Park Elementary School

In 1913, the Owens Valley aqueduct brought water to Los Angeles. Chatsworth voted to become a part of the city and share in the water supply in 1915.

As soon as the school became a part of the LA City School system, plans were made for a new school building to be erected on the same location, which was completed in 1917. [Chatsworth Park Elementary School](#)

1920 Chatsworth Chamber of Commerce Photo



Before the new 1917 school was built, the 1890 school was moved to the southwest corner of Topanga and Devonshire.

Later, the bell tower was removed, it was given a second floor and otherwise enlarged to become a rooming house and restaurant. It was known in 1926 as the Maxwell House. The 1890 School would remain at the southwest corner until 1945. Source: 1950-10-05 Historic Timbers going to Legion Clubhouse The Van Nuys News

Northwest corner
Topanga &
Devonshire

1900

The 1890
Chatsworth Park
Elementary School

showing the 1900
addition to the
1890 School



Northwest corner
Topanga & Devonshire

1894

The 1890
Chatsworth Park
Elementary School

Minnie Hill Palmer is in
the front row with an
"X" on the bottom of
her dress

Notice some of the
children are barefoot



Southeast corner
of Devonshire &
Topanga

2023
76 Station

Front corner says
“Welcome to
Chatsworth”



2007
Gas Station
under
construction



Southeast corner
of Devonshire &
Topanga

1963

The 1927 Crisler
Building
after remodeling

Chatsworth
Pharmacy



Southeast corner
of Devonshire &
Topanga

1949

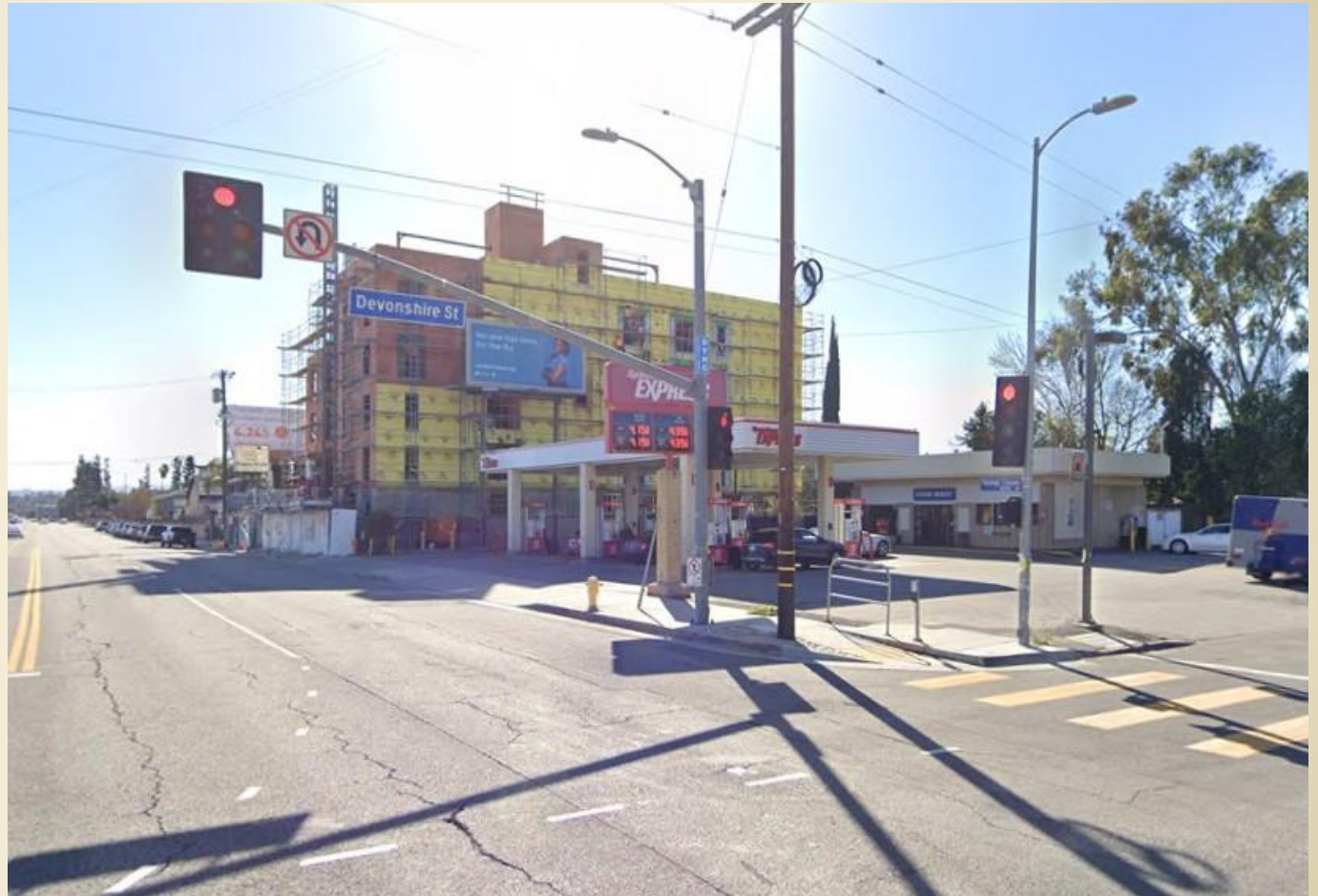
The 1927 Crisler
Building

Corner Drug Store
with Post Office on
the right



Southwest corner
Topanga &
Devonshire

2023
Speedway
Express



11/21/2023

Chatsworth Historical Society - Chatsworth Street Corner History

22

Southwest corner
Topanga &
Devonshire

2007
Arco Gas Station



1962
Gas Station



Southwest corner
Topanga &
Devonshire,
looking southwest

1949

Town & Country
Cafe
featured in [1956
Highway Patrol
Episode](#)

also the
Chatsworth Market
and Shell Station



Southwest corner of
Topanga and Devonshire,
looking northwest

1942 photo of Chatsworth
Parade, Maxwell House in
background

The Maxwell House was
the old 1890 schoolhouse.

After it was moved in 1917,
it was given a second floor
and otherwise enlarged to
become a rooming house
and restaurant.

The 1926 Chatsworth
Directory lists Wayne &
Carrie Maxwell at the
Maxwell House



Southwest corner of
Topanga and Devonshire,
looking northwest

Second 1942 photo of
Chatsworth Parade,
Maxwell House in
background

In 1945 the Maxwell
House, at 10253 Topanga,
was moved to the south
side of Devonshire
midway between Canoga
and Eton.

In 1950 the American
Legion demolished the old
building and used its
historic timbers from 1890
to build a new Legion Hall.



Southwest corner of
Topanga and Devonshire,
looking northwest

Third 1942 photo of
Chatsworth Parade, a
restaurant just north of the
Maxwell House (with a
Maxwell House sign on
the top)

This restaurant would be
expanded by Frank
Schepler in 1945 to
become the Town and
Country Cafe, at 10255
Topanga.



Southwest corner of
Topanga and Devonshire,
looking northwest

1. The 1942 photo has
the restaurant building
north of the Maxwell
House with a Maxwell
House sign on
the top)



1942 photo of
Chatsworth
Parade, a
restaurant just
north of the
Maxwell House
(with a Maxwell
House sign on
the top)

2. The 1939 photo has
the same building as the
Chatsworth Cafe.

This restaurant would be
expanded by Frank
Schepler in 1945 to
become the Town and
Country Cafe, at 10255
Topanga.

Circa 1939.
The Chatsworth Cafe is
listed in the 1937-38
Chatsworth Directory at
10255 Topanga Canyon.
Advertising Turkey
Sandwiches for 15 cents,
the same price as the 1942
picture above.



Sharing the Oct 5, 1950 newspaper article on the history of the Maxwell House

The Van Nuys News

The Maxwell house was moved in 1945 to Devonshire east of Canoga, the eventual site of the 1951 American Legion Clubhouse.

We researched building permits to determine Frank Schepler as owner of the restaurant just north of the Maxwell House.

Frank expanded that restaurant in 1945 and it became the Town & Country Cafe.

Editors Note: This article implies the Santa Susana School was built in 1880, but it was built in 1890.

[Chatsworth Park Elementary School](#)

Historic Chatsworth Timbers Going Into Legion Clubhouse

Timbers that went into construction of the first school house in Chatsworth 70 years ago are now being used in erection of a clubhouse for Chatsworth Post 622, American Legion, on Devonshire St. east of Canoga Ave.

The school house was erected 20 years before the turn of the century on the north-west corner of Devonshire St. and Santa Susanna Ave., where the Chatsworth Elementary School stands today.

It served the West Valley as the "Santa Susanna School" until the citizens of what then was known as Chatsworth Park formed a school district, floated some \$30,000 worth of bonds and erected a new building which eventually was taken over by the Los Angeles School district which erected the existing building some 15 years ago.

Had Varied Owners

When moved from the school site to a lot on the west side of Santa Susanna Ave. south of Devonshire St., the original school house was given a second floor and was otherwise enlarged to become a rooming house and restaurant known as the "Maxwell House."

About five years ago, the building was moved to the south side of Devonshire St. midway between Canoga Ave. and Eton Ave. where

a glib promoter had it set on a foundation above a commodious basement after announcing plans for an elaborate night club to be operated there, and then departed with money received from sale of stock in the venture.

From that day, the "Maxwell House" became neglected and unoccupied except as a rendezvous of hoboes.

They Made Switch

Legionnaires, viewing the disreputable old building as a challenge and an opportunity, proceeded to negotiate a deal whereby Post 622 traded a clubhouse site on the east side of Santa Susanna Ave., south of Devonshire St. for the time-worn structure and five lots on Devonshire St.

The former clubhouse site was lacking in space sufficient for parking whereas the newly-acquired property has a frontage of 150 feet and a depth of 230 feet.

Contributed labor and financial assistance has enabled the post to demolish the old building and to utilize the sturdy old timbers in

erecting the framework of their new clubhouse which measures 54x66 feet, and will have an assembly room measuring 50x53 feet. Facilities will include a kitchen, 15x20 feet.

Named by Briton

Commander Jack Allen said today that uninterrupted work on the structure depends largely on the generosity of friends, in and out of the Legion, who may assist the post financially. Chatsworth Legion members and their friends are liberally contributing labor evenings and during week ends to erect the building, he reported.

Design of the clubhouse is in keeping with the Chatsworth tradition as one of the Valley's oldest communities in which names recall mapping of the "Chatsworth Park" subdivision in 1888 by a man from the British Isles to whom such names as Chatsworth, Devonshire and Eton were among the most worthy to indicate his vision of a new town in a new land.

Scouts Can Meet

Members of Legion Post 622 are planning a building not only for use of Legionnaires but with a view also of making the big basement, originally designed for night club revelries, a place where Boy Scouts can meet and carry on their work to best advantage.

Northeast corner
Topanga &
Devonshire

2007

7 Eleven strip
mall



Northeast corner
Topanga &
Devonshire

1949

Frank H. Schepler
Real Estate Office



North of the
Northeast corner
Topanga &
Devonshire

2007

Location of Old
Post Office
Building before
new one was
dedicated in 1970



North of the Northeast corner
Topanga & Devonshire

1963

The 1959 US Post Office with a
dedicated building (moved here
from Crisler Building)

North of the Post Office is the
1949 Chatsworth Center

It was co-owned by the
Chatsworth Chamber of
Commerce and the Chatsworth
Women's Club.

Frank Schepler belonged to the
Chatsworth Chamber
and his wife Eleanor belonged to
the Chatsworth Women's Club,
and they donated the land
to build the building.



Northwest corner
Vassar &
Devonshire

2023

Sporting Goods

Deadly Wax



Northwest corner
Vassar &
Devonshire

2017
UBER
Canyoneering
Adventures



2007
Dot Copy and
Print Center



Northwest
corner Vassar &
Devonshire

1949

El Patio owned
by the Schepler
family, and
managed by
Lillian Schepler



Southwest corner
Vassar &
Devonshire

2023

Angel Smile
Dental Specialties



Southwest corner
Vassar &
Devonshire

2007
Hooper Camera



1960-62
Security First
National Bank



Southwest corner
Vassar &
Devonshire

1949

Volunteer Fire
Station

L.A. Fire Dept.

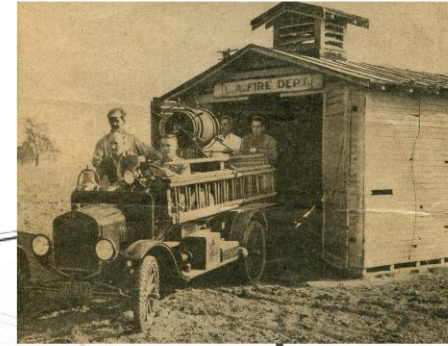
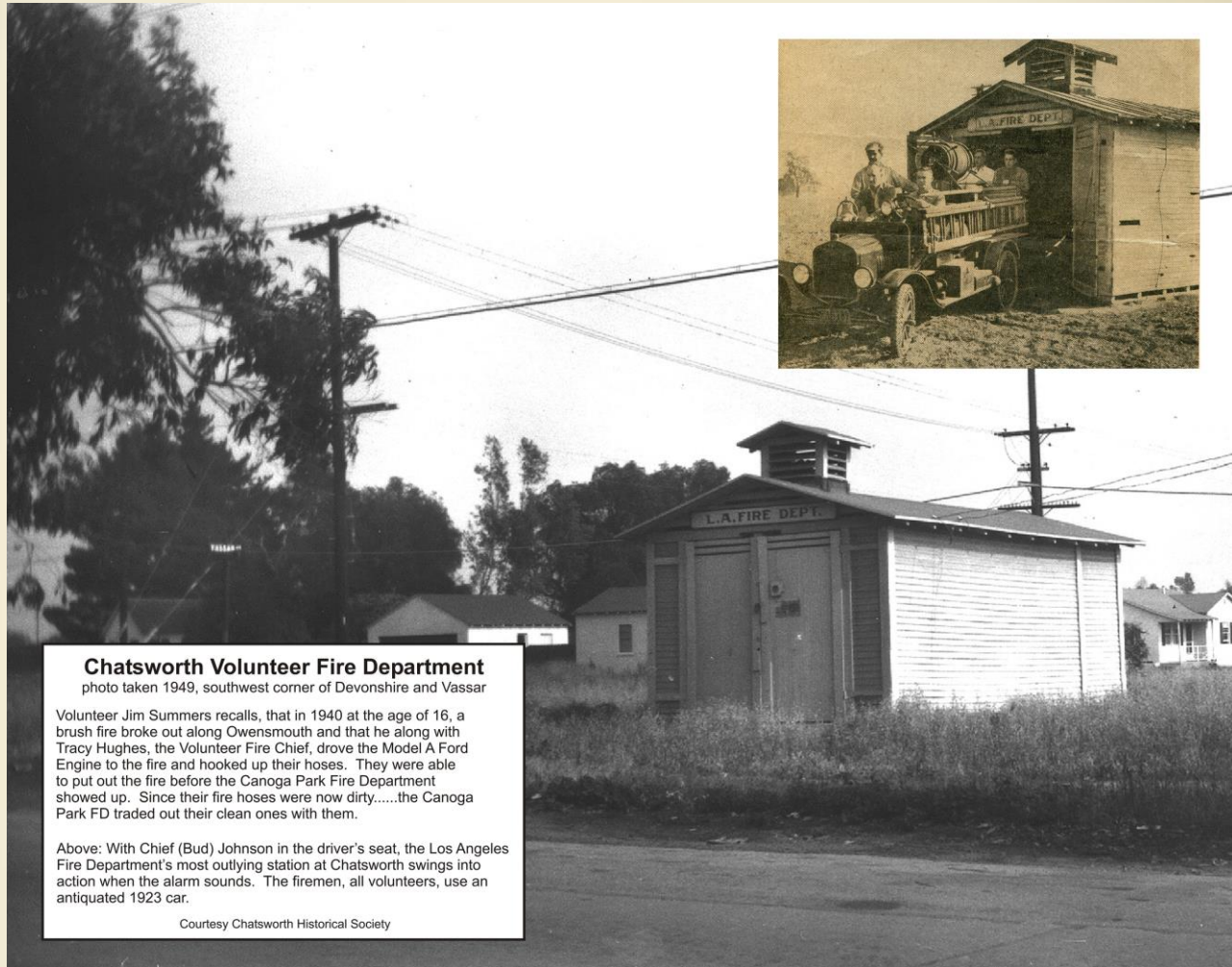


Southwest corner
Vassar &
Devonshire

A side story, we
presented this
poster in 2012 to

Fire Dept 96 on
Marilla

and Fire Dept 107
on Devonshire



Southwest corner
Jordan &
Devonshire

2023

Chatsworth
Dental Group

and
Naya Spa

This building has
remained a dental
office since 1949.

History is at
[Pampalone-Schurter
Building](#)



Southwest corner
Jordan &
Devonshire

2007

Chatsworth
Dental Group – Dr.
Pampalone's
Office



Southwest corner
Jordan &
Devonshire

1949

In 1949, Dr. Joe Schurter, a dentist, built this building, which included his office and living quarters. He had previously been in the Crisler Building.

This building has remained a dental office since 1949.



Northwest corner
Hillview &
Devonshire

Los Toros
Mexican
Restaurant

Founded in 1967

History article
[Los Toros](#)



11/21/2023

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Northeast corner
Hillview &
Devonshire

Chatsworth
Florist



Game
n'
Grounds



South of Hillview &
Devonshire

Silver King

Founded
1975



Southeast corner
Owensmouth &
Devonshire

2023

Chatsworth Auto
Repair & Auto
Body



2007

Chatsworth Auto
Repair & Auto
Body



Southeast corner
Owensmouth &
Devonshire

1963

Union Gas Station

Notice the large
oak tree at the
right, it died and
was removed after
2007



Southeast corner
Owensmouth &
Devonshire

1949

Left to right: Real
Estate Office and
Wilkin's Building
Civic Club Meeting
Room

This building once
was Clements'
Grocery &
General
Merchandise Store



Southeast corner Owensmouth &
Devonshire

View looking east
Building under construction is on
the southwest
corner of
Devonshire and Owensmouth

1922

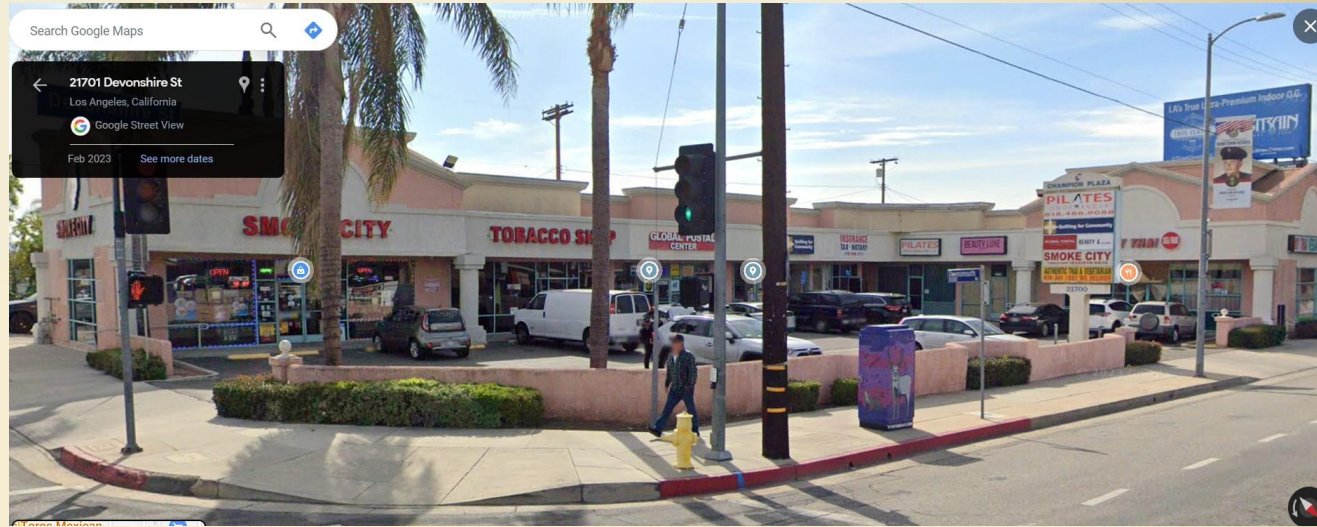
Clements'
Grocery &
General Merchandise

Albert Clements became the
Postmaster in 1915



Southwest corner
Owensmouth &
Devonshire

2023
Champion Plaza
Strip Mall



2007
Champion Plaza
Strip Mall



Southwest corner
Owensmouth &
Devonshire

1963

Lombardi Building,
looking south,
Auto Parts is on
the corner, the
Beauty Shop, and
the 5 & 10¢ Store,
and Ted's Hay and
Grain



Southwest corner
Owensmouth &
Devonshire

1949

Lombardi Building,
looking west,
a Real Estate
Office on the
corner. And the
public library and a
radio repair shop.



Southwest corner of
Devonshire and
Owensmouth

1922

The Chatsworth
Community Building was
co-owned by the
Chamber of Commerce
and the Chatsworth
Women's Club.

Space was also
provided for Boy Scouts
and Girl Scouts, and the
Red Cross.

The Post Office was at
this building in 1926.



[Chatsworth Women's Club Centennial](#)

Northwest corner
Owensmouth &
Devonshire

2017

Pho Saigon
Country Squire Liquor



2007

Sergio's Pizza
Country Squire Liquor



Northwest corner
Owensmouth &
Devonshire

1963

Standard Gas
Station
&
George Vincent
Real Estate
&
Country Squire
Liquor



Northwest corner
Owensmouth &
Devonshire

1950

Loman Real Estate
and Pony Rides

Today this is Country
Squire Liquor.

The "old-time" façade
is still on the top of the
building.

The Pony Rides were
west of this building

[July 2022 Smoke Signal](#)



Northwest corner
Owensmouth &
Devonshire

1949

Chevron Gas
Station



Northeast corner
Owensmouth & Devonshire

2023

The Cowboy Palace Saloon

Strain
Caregivers

Toby Keith sings ["I Love
This Bar"](#) in 2003 at the
[Cowboy Palace](#)

previously there was a
Smorgasbord where Strain
is today



Northeast corner
Owensmouth &
Devonshire

2017
Cowboy Palace Saloon
PRE- ICO
medical marijuana
dispensary



2007
Cowboy Palace Saloon
&
Groove Walkers



Northeast corner
Owensmouth &
Devonshire

1971
Giovanni's Rodeo
Room

1964
Morigi's Pizza



Northeast corner
Owensmouth &
Devonshire

1962

Chatsworth Inn
Chatsworth
Cleaners
unknown
Blue Hills Liquor



Northeast corner Owensmouth
& Devonshire

1959

Al Brain's
Horn In
Restaurant



The photos at right are screenshots
from the 1959 Movie "Nike Hercules,
a Reality" filmed in Chatsworth
[Nike Missile Base - LA88 Chatsworth](#)

The Rotary Club met at the Horn In.
Al Brain's wife Strausie ran the 5 &
10¢ Store on Devonshire
[1955-03-15 The Chatsworth Grapevine](#)



Northeast corner
Owensmouth &
Devonshire

1955

Chatsworth Inn
Chatsworth
Cleaners
House of Hanlon
Glass
Chicken Pie Shop
Blue Hills Liquor



Northeast corner
Owensmouth &
Devonshire

1949

Building for Rent
Remodeled



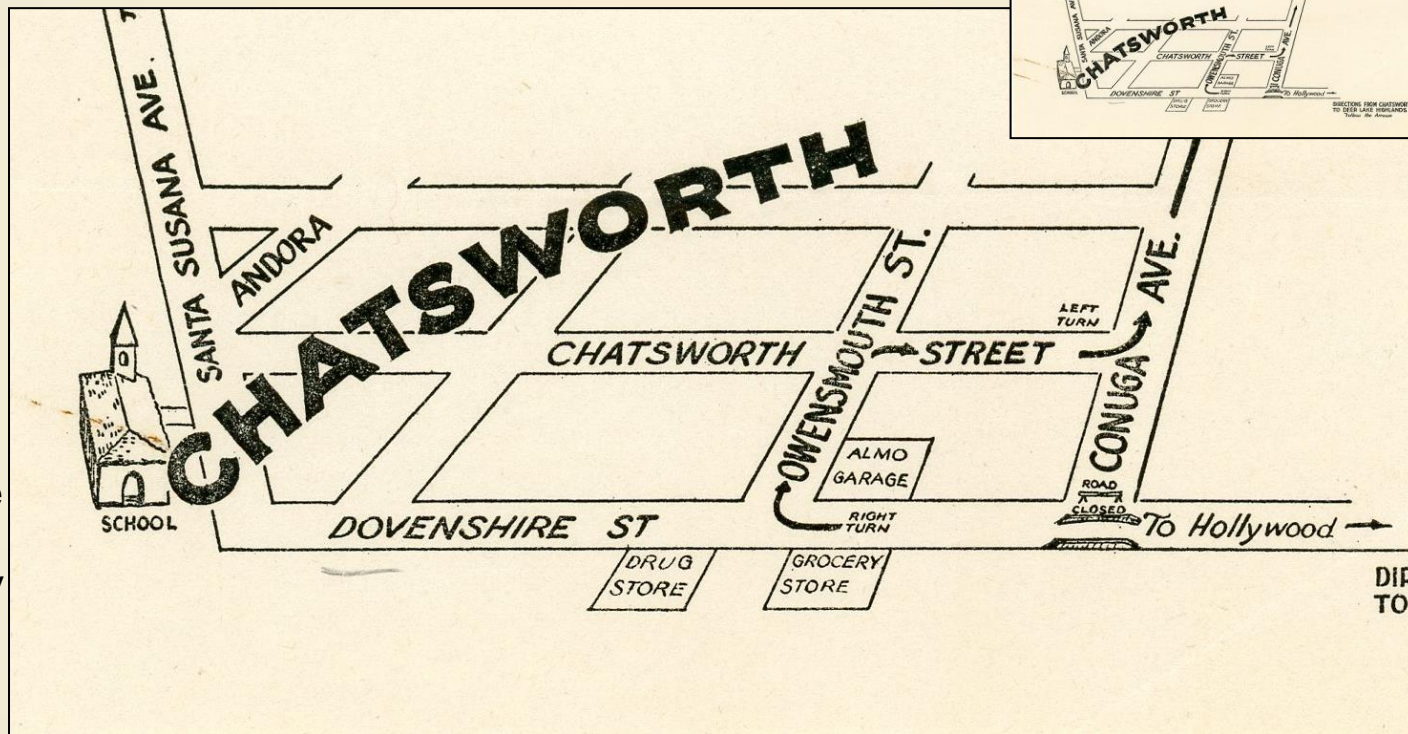
Northeast corner
Owensmouth &
Devonshire

1927

a map from [Deer Lake Highlands](#)

Alamo Garage
(misspelled on
map)

The Grocery Store
would have been
Clements' Grocery



Northeast corner
Owensmouth &
Devonshire

1909

Douglas Products
and
C & R Garage

This location was
formally the
Blacksmith shop



Between Owensmouth
and Canoga, just west of
the railroad track,
south of Devonshire

Opened 1956

Los Angeles
Historic-Cultural
Monument # 750

[History of The Munch Box](#)

[2003 Huell Howser visits
the Munch Box](#)

[2003 Huell Howser visits
Chatsworth](#)



Northwest corner
Devonshire & Canoga

2023 Ralphs Market



2001 Hughes Market

In 1938 James Butler
lived in a stone house on
this property

[Sept 2020 Smoke Signal](#)



11/21/2023

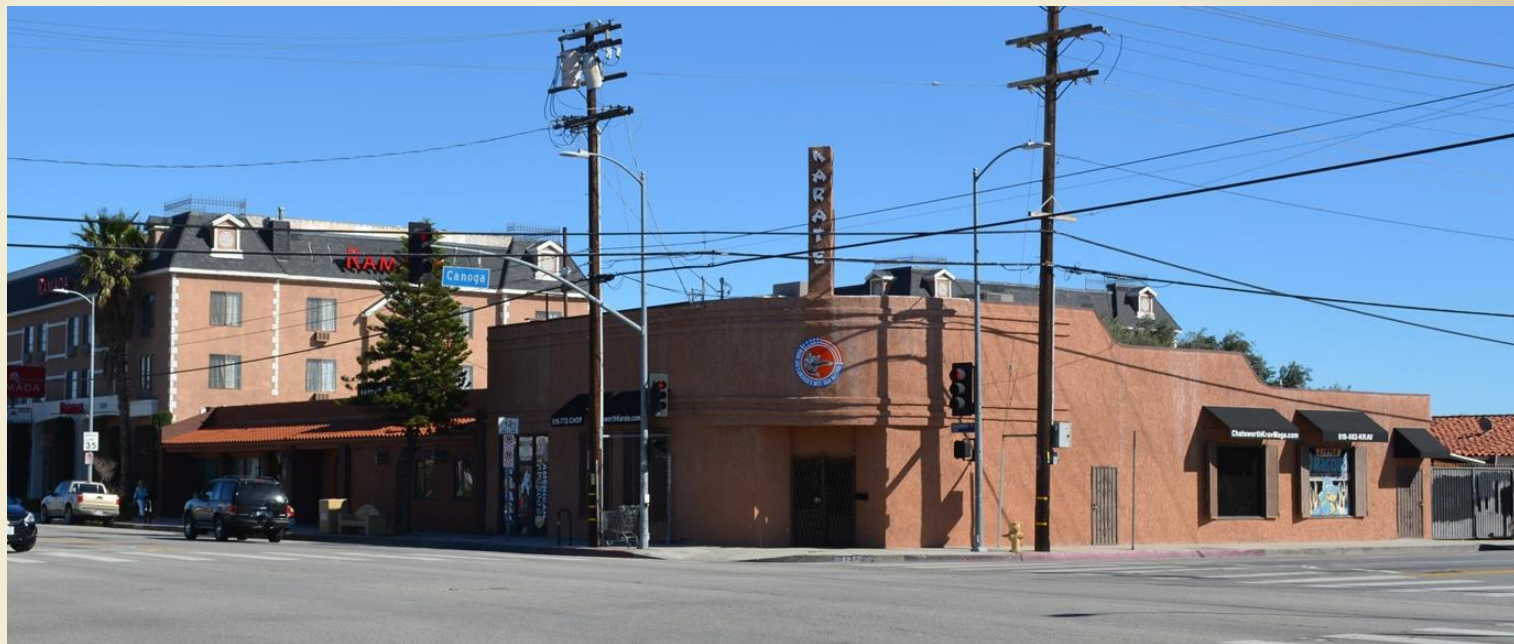
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Southeast corner
Devonshire and
Canoga

2017

Chatsworth
Karate



Southeast corner
Devonshire and
Canoga
looking east

1957

Shopping
Cart



Scenes at right from
1957 Highway Patrol
Episode, "Fake Cop"
[Highway Patrol Episodes
filmed in Chatsworth](#)



Notice the marquee
structure is still the
same today



Southeast corner
Devonshire and
Canoga
looking east

1957

Timbers from the 1890 schoolhouse were used in the construction of the Hall source: Oct 5, 1950 Van Nuys News

The building was 54x66 feet and contained an assembly room measuring 50x53 feet with a stage, a kitchen, offices, and a basement.

Events included Little League/[CJBL](#) award dinners in the late 50s, Scout Blue and Gold dinners, and performances of the [Cookie Jar Theatre](#) group.



1951 American
Legion Hall at 21340
Devonshire, just east
of the Shopping Cart
(where the Holiday
Inn is today)

Scene at right from
1957 Highway Patrol
Episode, "Fake Cop"

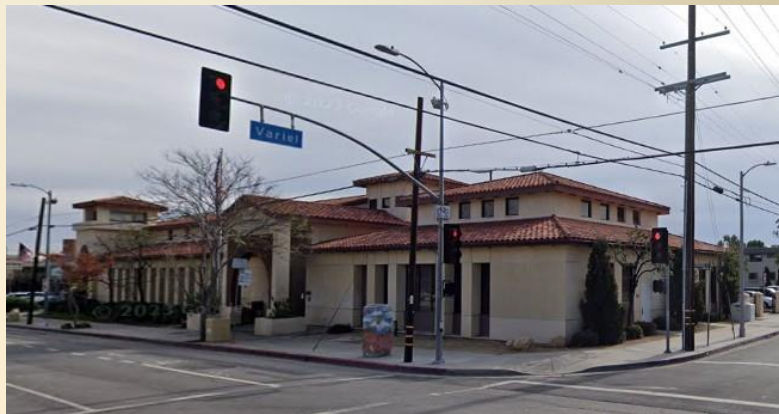


Southeast corner
Devonshire and
Variel

2023

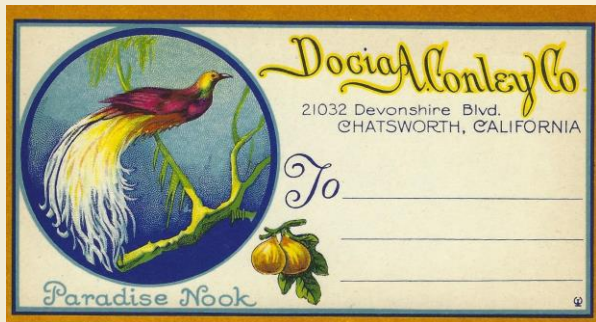
The Chatsworth Library was built in 2003, it replaced a [1963 Library](#) on the same corner.

The Devonshire Center Strip Mall just east of the Library was once the Paradise Gift Shoppe, aka Docia Conley.



Southeast corner
Devonshire and
Variel

The Paradise Gift
Shoppe



The Paradise Gift Shoppe, Docia Conley and Kadota Figs, 21032 Devonshire

In 1924, Real Estate subdivider William George Loomis creates the Kadota Fig Farms in Chatsworth and plants 148 acres of figs at Devonshire and DeSoto

In 1926, Docia and George Conley buy a 2 acre fig farm in Chatsworth, and build The Paradise Tea Room and Gift Shoppe, and a fruit preserving plant on their 2 acre fig farm.

In the 20's and 30's events are held, including hosting visitors at the 1932 Summer Olympics. Private labeled fruit is made for Roy Rogers and Major Dept Stores.

In 1979 the Paradise Gift shop closes and the land is developed.

Southeast corner
Devonshire and
Variel

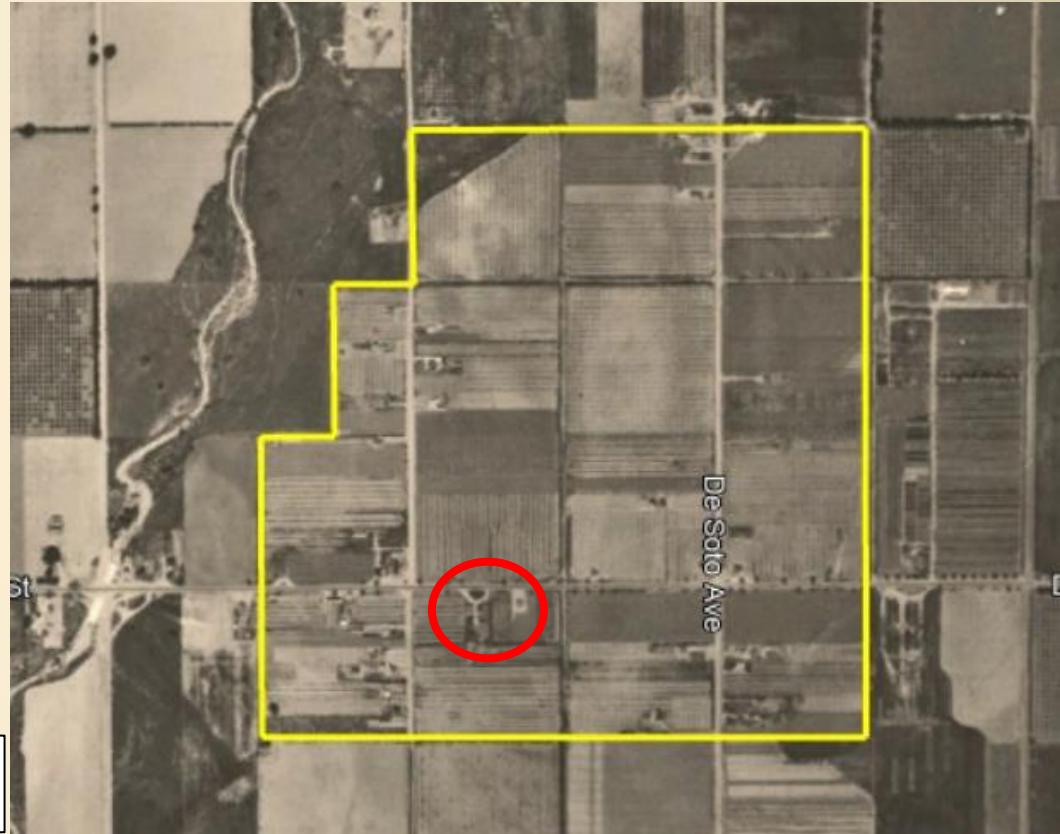
Tract No. 7754 was approved by the City Council in Feb 1924, outlined in Yellow
148 acres of fig orchards, bordered by Germain on the north, Oklahoma on the east, Lemarsh on the South, Eton/Milwood/San Jose/Variel on the West

The Docia Conley Paradise Gift Shoppe is circled in Red, on the south side of Devonshire

See the presentation at

[Docia Conley, Kadota Figs, Paradise Gift Shoppe](#)

1928 ucsbaerial overlay
on 2020 GoogleEarth



Southeast
corner
De Soto &
Devonshire

2023

Shell
Station



Southeast
corner
De Soto &
Devonshire

Cabin Cafe

1950's Betty
Summers
(blonde) and
Janet Summers

A Note from Betty:

*"I worked at the Cabin Cafe at the
corner of Devonshire and De Soto for
Bud Rasmussen.*

*Janet helped out sometimes and Jim
stopped in for a snack on the way
home from work.*

Betty and Janet ready for work."



Southeast
corner
De Soto &
Devonshire

Cabin Cafe



1957 "Narcotics"

[Highway Patrol
Episodes Filmed
in Chatsworth](#)

1958 "Revenge"



1956 "The Search"



Southeast corner
Mason and
Devonshire

2023

In the Vons
shopping center,
south end is
Fitness 19

This once was
Chatsworth
Cinema



Southeast corner
Mason and
Devonshire

1966
Chatsworth
Cinema

Photo below 1975



CHATSWORTH CINEMA, 1966.
This was the gala opening
of the Cinema Chatsworth
Theatre in July 1966. The
theater opened with the
premiere of the Universal
Studios film *Arabesque*,
which starred Gregory
Peck and Sophia Loren. It
was arranged to have Peck
and Loren make a personal
appearance at the new
theater. The Chatsworth
High School Marching
Band and Majorettes
were the entertainment
in a street parade.

Northeast corner
Mason and Devonshire

2023

Arco and Trader Joe's
Shopping Center

Mason Park is north



Northeast corner
Mason and Devonshire

2023

Baskin Robins
Ice Cream
31 Flavors

Baskin Robins was a first
tenant in the new 1967
plaza.

A history article of that
Chatsworth business at
[Baskin & Robins](#)



Northeast corner Mason and Devonshire

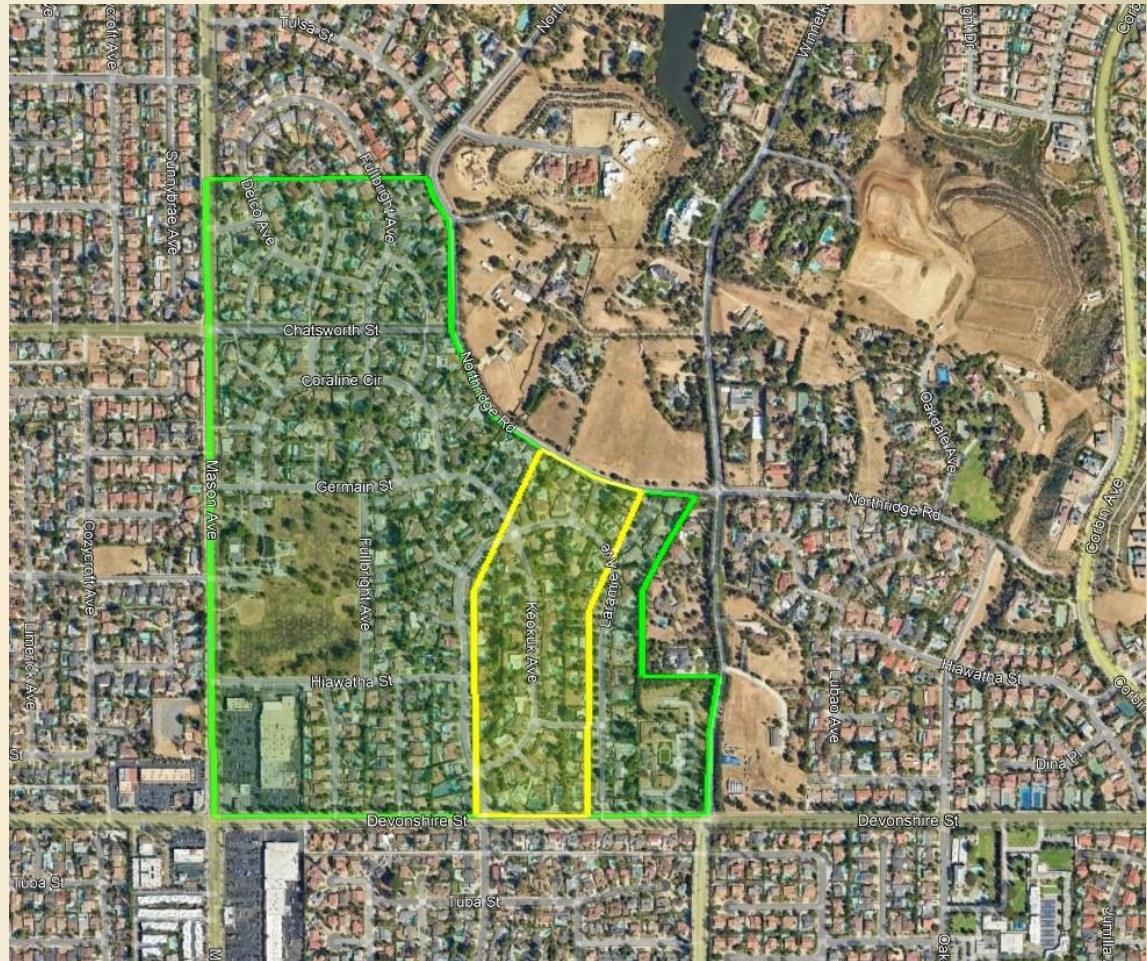
In 1937, Robert Taylor built a house on a hill on 27 acres (highlighted in yellow)

By 1943, Walter McCarty purchased Robert Taylor's house and property, and more acreage totaling 160 acres. (highlighted in green)

The property was subdivided in 1957.

Robert Taylor's house still exists at 10521 Laramie.

The property borders Mason on the west, Devonshire on the south, and Monteria/Winnetka Estates on the east.

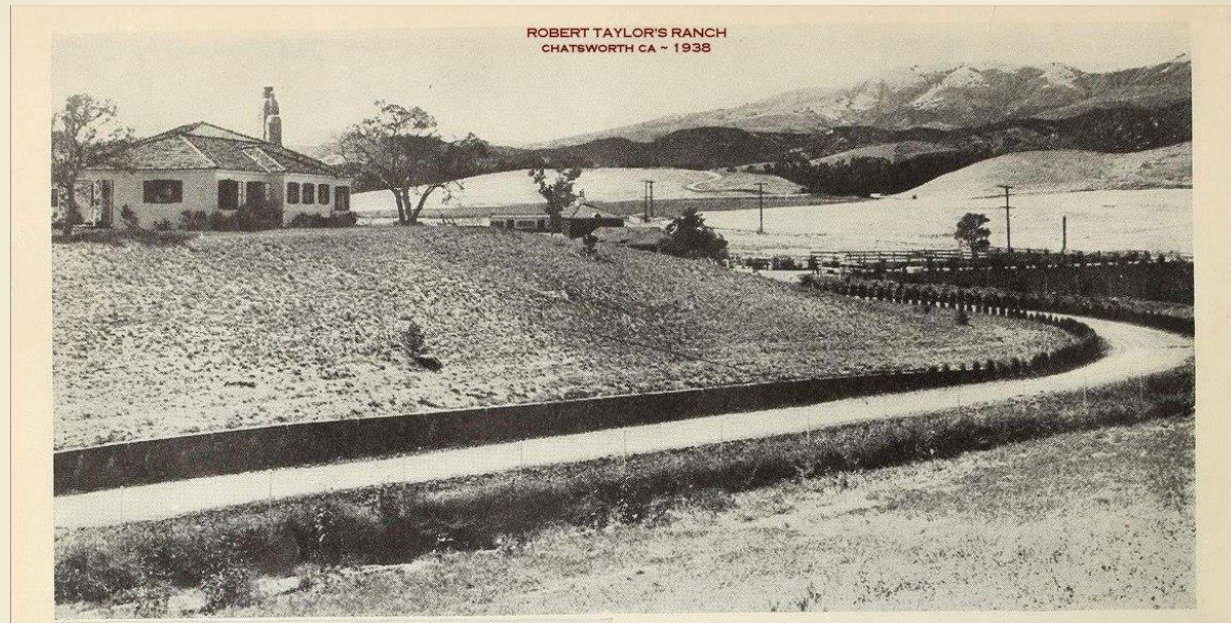


Google Earth overlay of
Taylor/McCarty properties

Northeast corner
Mason and
Devonshire

1937
Robert Taylor

The house still
exists at
10521 Laramie



Robert Taylor (actor) Ranch Site

Soon after and during the time Barbara Stanwyck was building her Estate about 2 miles east on Devonshire, Robert was having his built.

Originally his Ranch had an address of 20245 Devonshire St and was roughly 27 acres.

Entering from Devonshire St, a long driveway cut through the property passing through the center of a 10acre Orange Grove and finally reached his Ranch House that sat about 25' higher, on top of a knoll towards the rear. The front entrance of the house faced north while its wings spread SW and SE. At the bottom of the drive up to his house, the Barn/Stable sat which took up about the same ground space as the house did.

Here is a relatively good view of his House & Barn viewing from the east end of his property ... pulled from a 1938 magazine.

Source: Facebook San Fernando Valley Then and Now, Rich Krugel

Northeast corner
Mason and
Devonshire

A 1938 Photo
Shoot of Robert
Taylor and
Barbara Stanwyck
at his ranch



Left, house in background.

Right, Barbara sitting on driveway wall with
barn in background

Northeast corner
Mason and
Devonshire

A 1938 Photo
Shoot of Robert
Taylor and
Barbara Stanwyck
at his ranch

By the 1940
census Robert
Taylor was living in
Beverly Hills with
his wife Barbara
Stanwyck.



Top, house in background.

Right, posing on top of Barn / Stable.



Northeast corner
Mason and
Devonshire

1955
McCarty



Walter G. McCarty's Rolling Hills Farm at 20245 Devonshire

Records show that McCarty purchased Robert Taylor's house by 1943, and began to expand the ranch, building a training track, horse barn, hay shed, machine shed, and sleeping quarters. In 1943 it was 80 acres, and by 1948 it was 160 acres.

McCarty once owned one fourth of all land in Beverly Hills, California. He was one of the first subdividers of that area and was the builder of the Beverly Wilshire Hotel in 1928, where he lived until his death. He was a member of the Board of Directors of Hollywood Park Race Track, one of the original stockholders and the first president of it's Turf Club. He operated a horse farm in Chatsworth where he was the breeder of many champion thoroughbreds.

McCarty died in 1956. In 1957, his 160-acre farm sold for \$919,250 to Ralph G. Sutro Co., a Beverly Hills investment firm, who subdivided the land for residential use. Source: Facebook San Fernando Valley Then and Now, Dean Fields

Northeast corner
Mason and
Devonshire

1947 aerial 160
acres

McCarty
Rolling Hills Farm



Northeast corner
Mason and
Devonshire

1954 aerial 160
acres

McCarty
Rolling Hills Farm

Building Permit
Plot Plans
identified the Alfalfa,
Lemons and
Oranges, and
Training Track



Northeast corner
Mason and
Devonshire

1930 aerial
Empty Fields

This aerial shows that
when Robert Taylor
built his house in
1937, the entire
property that would
eventually become
the McCarty property
was empty fields



A History of the Crisler Building

In 1927, at the age of 65, James C. Crisler built the “Crisler Building” on the southeast corner of Devonshire and Topanga Canyon.

In its heyday in the 30’s and 40’s, it sported the corner drug store and malt shop, doctor’s and barber’s office, post office and hardware store.



1939, the earliest known photograph of the 1927 “Crisler Building” (looking south, the southeast corner of Topanga and Devonshire).
Notice there are no curbs north of Devonshire.

A History of the Crisler Building

Crisler was a real estate salesman and investor.

On March 14, 1926 he advertised in the Los Angeles Times his 10 acres on the southeast corner for \$5,500.

Two weeks later year he wrote an article in the LATimes about using fire and water to invigorate his 10 acre alfalfa field the previous year.

He first burnt the alfalfa stubble, then “flooded the furrows and killed 73 gophers with his shovel on the first watering. On the second watering he killed 27; at the third 14, and at the fourth, 11.

In just a week the first green leaves shot up, and sometime later he returned to find the alfalfa four feet high, and the yield was so large he realized more than one cutting.”



The 1927 Crisler building taken at an unknown date.

A History of the Crisler Building

The Crisler Building boasted 7 stores, 3-4-5 room apartments, and 3 offices. Per voter registration and Census records, Crisler lived at the building from 1928 to 1939.

By 1940 James Crisler left Chatsworth and passed away in 1942 in Los Angeles.

In December 1926 the Los Angeles Times published a poem by James Crisler, "Sunset in Chatsworth Hills"



The 1927 Crisler building taken in 1949.

Have you ever watched a sunset
Through the gorgeous
Chatsworth Hills,
When a flame of gold is flung
Across the west,
When young hearts are all aglow
With the joy young lovers know,
When an hour of dreamy slumber
Seems to hover o'er the world?

Have you seen the snow upon the
Mountains when the valley's
Starred with flowers,
When a sheen of gold and amaranth
Is flaming overhead?
Ne'er was told in song or story,
Such an hour of waning glory,
Of the smile of heaven beaming,
Through the notches of the hills.

Sunset in Chatsworth Hills

a poem by **James C. Crisler**



A March 2017 sunset taken from
Owensmouth looking west on
Devonshire.

Have you seen the hand of nature
When she's painting at her best,
And the fleeting shadows creeping
Down the cooling canyon walls,
And the sun in splendor sinking,
As you stand in wonder drinking
In the glory of a sunset through
The gorgeous Chatsworth Hills?

J. C. Crisler
Dec. 13, 1926
Los Angeles Times

Sources/Acknowledgements

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Facebook posts at San Fernando Valley Then and Now by Rich Krugel and Dean Fields

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