

Chatsworth Timeline

**Celebrating
Chatsworth's
134th Birthday,
March 10, 1888 to
March 10, 2022....**

Sign at the northwest corner of Devonshire and Topanga, in front of Chatsworth Park Elementary – circa 1940s-50s

Note that the Duke of Devonshire Shield is shown on the sign, representing Chatsworth England



Topics Covered

This Presentation covers the Timeline of Chatsworth, California.

Included are our nine Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monuments.

If the topic is included in one of our Presentations or Articles, it will be highlighted with a link.

Our Presentations and Articles are available at chatsworthhistory.com, Digital Archives.

Our Smoke Signal newsletters are also available on our website, as are many other research documents relative to Chatsworth.

Chatsworth Geology

Our massive boulders and weathered rock outcrops are known to Geologists as the Chatsworth Formation.

It was created 68 million years ago, 5,000 feet below sea level. Massive landslides and quiet periods of silt molded our sandstone boulders. At some point the formation was lifted above sea level, and the upper portion of the formation eroded away. Today, it is 1,000 feet above sea level.



Chatsworth is part of the North Pacific Plate, which is colliding with the North American Plate along the San Andreas Fault. As a result, the margin of the North Pacific Plate has been uplifted and tilted to the northwest.

Stoney Point

- Native American tribes that lived in the valley included the Tataviam (north), Tongva (south east) and the Chumash (west).
- The Spanish documented a village named **Momonga**, also known as Ranchería de las Piedras (Village of the Stones)
- It was located somewhere near Stoney Point and the eastern slope of the Simi Hills, in the vicinity of the Santa Susana Pass.

*Los Angeles
Historic-Cultural
Monument # 132 in 1974*



The Apeta Momonga Mission Trail

Our most recent Historic-Cultural Monument, approved in 2019

- The trail began at least 3,000 years ago to travel from Achoicominga (San Fernando) to the village of Momonga (Santa Susana Pass/Stoney Point). It later became a part of the El Camino Real along the north end of the San Fernando Valley, offering safe passage to travelers along its route.
- The 2 mile trail runs from De Soto to Tampa, following a path parallel and just south of the 118 freeway. The trail remains a simple equestrian and hiking trail, with a view of the broad San Fernando Valley to the south.

Los Angeles
Historic-Cultural
Monument #1177 in 2019

Presentation: [The Apeta
Momonga Mission Trail](#)



1987 Old Mission Trail Dedication
Jerome C. (Jerry) Daniel, SMMC Chairperson
John Conser, staff

The 1797 San Fernando Mission

- The San Fernando Mission was established in 1797, the 17th of 21 Missions.
- In 1821 Mexico declared independence from Spain, and in 1833, all Mission lands were secularized, allowing Mission lands to be granted to individuals.
- In **1833**, the San Fernando Mission was the most prosperous of all missions, with **26,000 cattle, sheep**, horses, mules, goats and pigs.



Presentation:

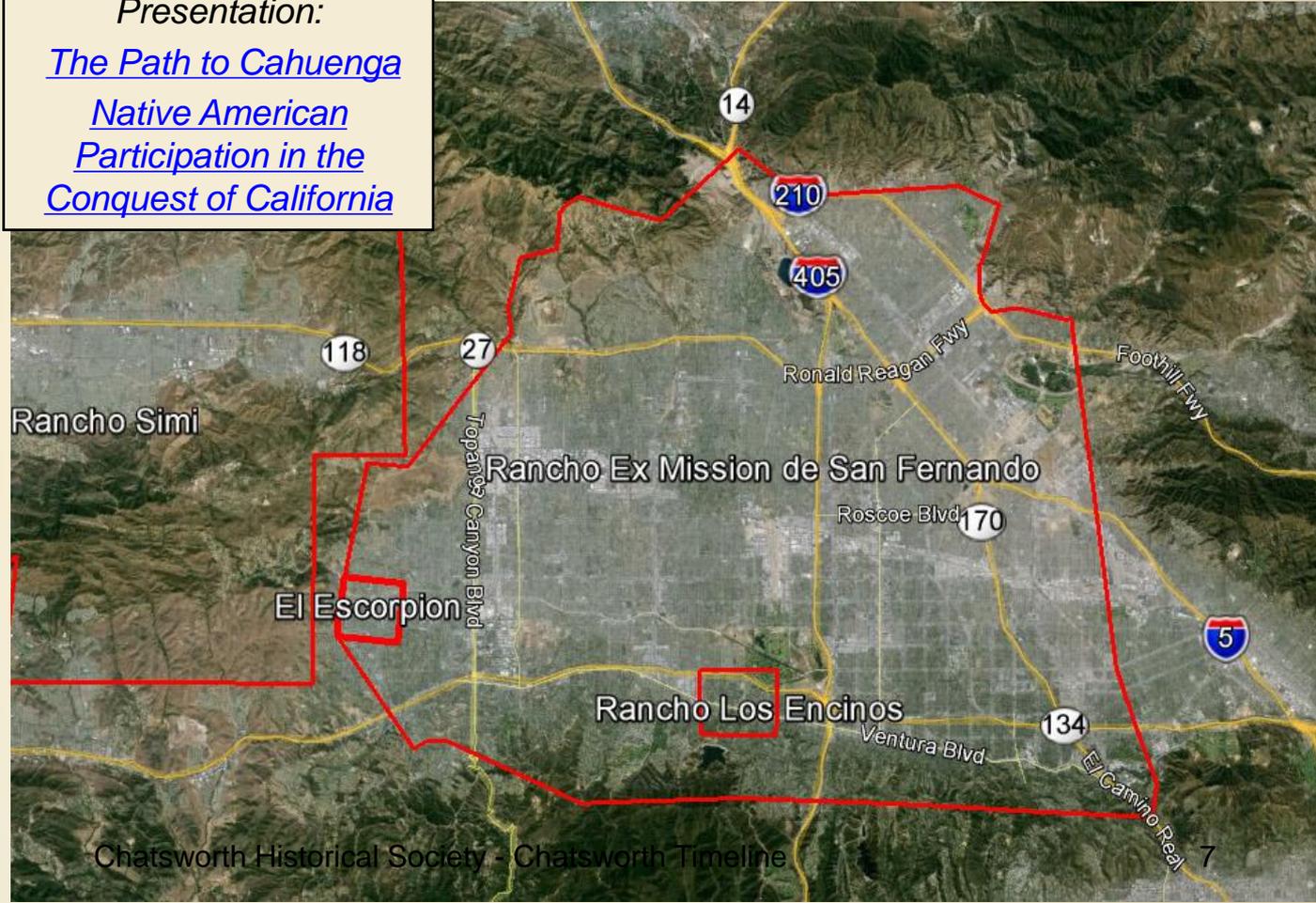
[*The Bells of El Camino Real*](#)

Mission San Fernando Rey de España circa 1870

The Rancho Period 1846-1873

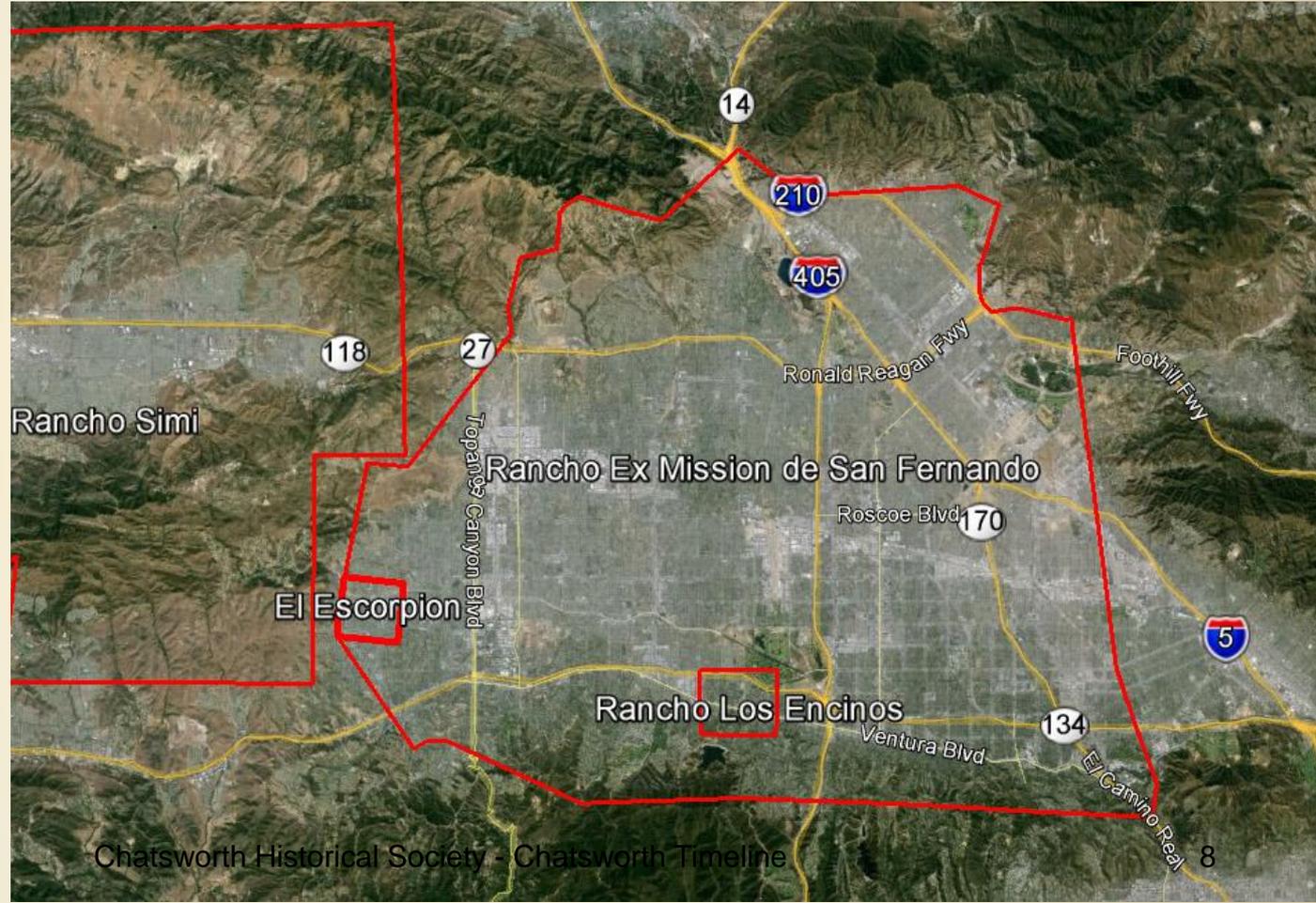
- In **1846**, to raise funds for the Mexican-American War, San Fernando Mission lands were sold to Eulogio de Celis, managed by Andres Pico.
- **1848** – the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ends the Mexican-American war, **and provides that land grants will be honored.**
- Andres Pico had his headquarters at the San Fernando Mission. In **1854** Pico purchased the southern half of the Rancho from Eulogio de Celis.

Presentation:
[The Path to Cahuenga](#)
[Native American](#)
[Participation in the](#)
[Conquest of California](#)



The Rancho Period 1846-1873

- In **1869** Pico sold the southern half of Rancho Ex Mission de San Fernando to Lankershim and Van Nuys.
- In **1873** the de Celis family sold the northern half to Charles Maclay, George Porter, and Benjamin F. Porter.



Chatsworth Limekiln

Pierre Domec and other Frenchmen operated limekilns at El Escorpion in the 1850s-60s. Lime had a ready market in Los Angeles, for mortar in brick construction, for the process of tanning cowhides, and in sanitation.

The limekiln can be seen today looking east at the intersection of Woolsey Canyon and Valley Circle



*Los Angeles
Historic-Cultural
Monument #141*

*Presentations: [Chatsworth Lake Manor](#)
[The West San Fernando Valley Lime Industry and Native American History](#)*

Devil's Slide Stagecoach Road

Used from 1861 –
1895...followed by
the 1895 Chatsworth
Grade Road... and
the 1917 Santa
Susana Pass Road

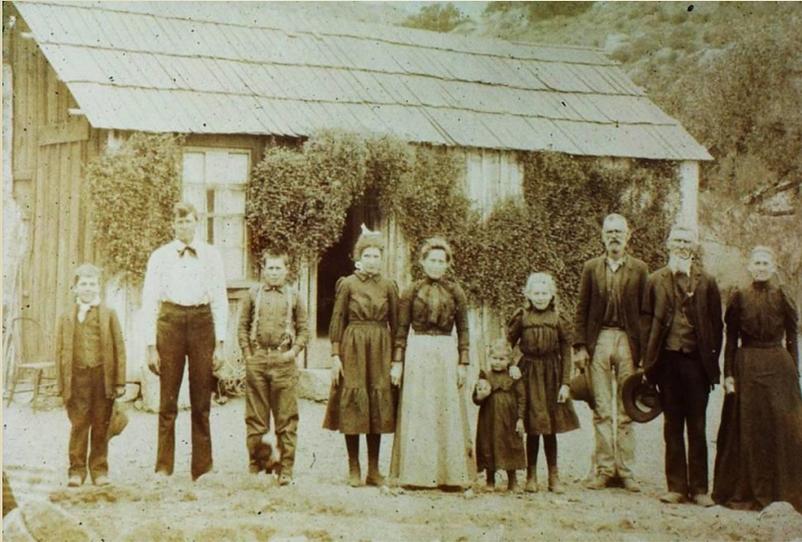
*Los Angeles
Historic-Cultural
Monument #92 in
1972*

*Presentation:
[Chatsworth
Stagecoach Trail](#)*

3/15/2022



The 1862 Homestead Act required living on the land for 5 years to “prove up” and own up to ¼ section, or 160 acres.



Hill family homestead

Three Presentations (45 Homesteaders):
[Chatsworth Hills Homesteaders – Part 1](#)
[Chatsworth Hills Homesteaders - Part 2](#)
[Chatsworth Hills Homesteaders - Part 3](#)



Ann & Neils Johnson homestead

Dry Wheat Farming Period 1873 - 1888

- In 1872, Lankershim planted wheat in the southern San Fernando Valley. Though the first two crops were not successful, wheat quickly became the cash crop of the valley. The landscape of the valley changed from sheep and cattle range land to golden wheat fields.
- The San Fernando Valley was divided into thirteen ranches, seven of which were located in the southern half of the valley and six in the northern half. **The Granger Ranch, owned by Benjamin F. Porter, became Chatsworth Park.**



Homesteader J.R. Williams farm crew, part of the Hubbard/Wright farming operation that did much of the work in the northwest San Fernando Valley. Man on right J.R. Williams

MAP of CHATSWORTH PARK

Los Angeles Co., Cal.

Surrendered by Charles T. Hedy & Thos. P. Sargent

1887

Scale 20 chs. to 1 inch.

Areas of all lots are computed to center of streets
at corners which are all 60' wide, except
Devonshire Avenue which is 100' wide.



March 10, 1888

- George R. Crow filed this map of a subdivision called Chatsworth Park with the LA County Recorder's office.
- Chatsworth Park was named after the Duke of Devonshire's estate "Chatsworth House" in England.
- Chatsworth was originally planned as a farming community with the land divided into ten acre family plots. Only three roads were identified: Ben Porter Avenue (Chatsworth St.), Devonshire Avenue and Fernando Avenue (Lassen).

The boundaries of Chatsworth Park in 1888

on today's Google Earth Map



Boundaries of Chatsworth Park 1888 in blue, Rancho Ex-Mission de San Fernando in red

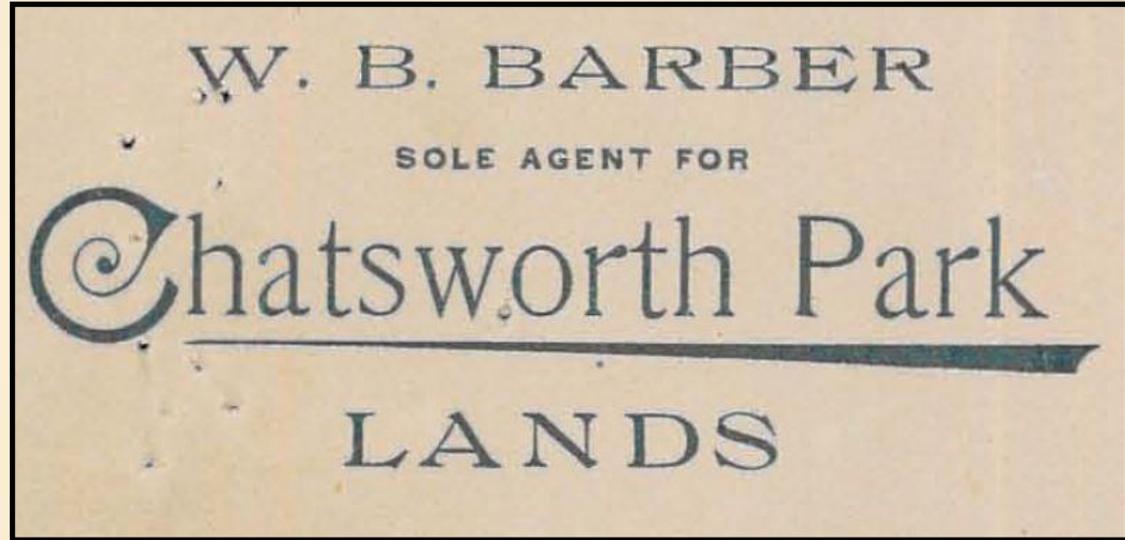
Chatsworth Beginnings

- In **1887**, Benjamin F. Porter contracts to sell 19,417 acres to F.C. Howes, William Booth Barber, W.F. Barber and George R. Crow for \$500,000.
- The new purchasers conveyed their interest to the San Fernando Valley Improvement Company.
- In **1889**, The San Fernando Valley Improvement Co. builds a water-storage earthen dam in the Mormon Cañon, today's Browns Canyon. This dam failed 3 times (the first two were earthen dams), was rebuilt in **1896**, and can still be seen today at the very north end of DeSoto. (it silted up in the 1940's)



Chatsworth Beginnings

- **William Booth Barber** (1819-1901) was the **President** of the San Fernando Valley Improvement Company, and in 1888 he was 69 years old. His son-in-law was Vice President, and his son was Secretary.
- William immigrated to the United States from England with his wife in 1841 at the age of 22.
- **William grew up in Eckington, which is 10 miles from Chatsworth House in Chatsworth Park, England.**



W. B Barber letterhead from an 1895 court case regarding the 3rd failure of the Chatsworth Park Dam (Huntington Library)

1890 Santa Susana School

pictured below

In 1879, Los Angeles County created the Santa Susana School District.

In 1880, a small school was built at the northwest corner of Topanga and Chatsworth St.

In 1890, the Santa Susana School was built at the northwest corner of Devonshire and Topanga.

In 1902, the name was changed to Chatsworth Park School.

The current elementary school is still located at the same location.

Presentation: [Chatsworth Park Elementary School](#)

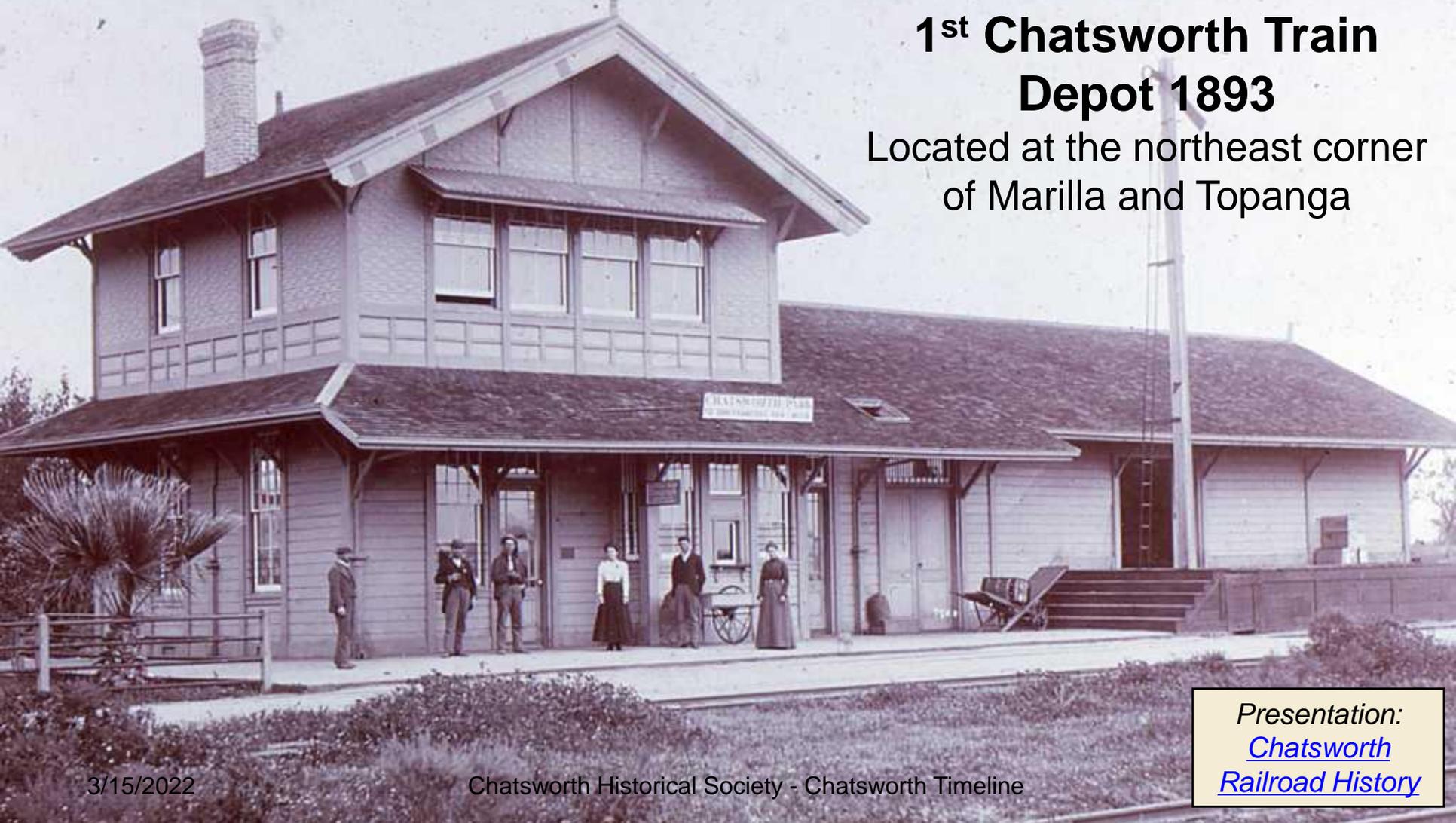


The Chatsworth Hotel/Inn 1890-1958

The site of today's
Sonesta ES Suites
off of Lassen,
it was just north of the
1893 Depot

Article: [The Chatsworth
Hotel from 1901 to 1904](#),
describing selling liquor to
the railroad and quarry men
without a license.





1st Chatsworth Train Depot 1893

Located at the northeast corner of Marilla and Topanga

Presentation:
[Chatsworth](#)
[Railroad History](#)

Chatsworth Park Quarry 1892-1907

- Homesteader William Bannon purchased the Stagecoach waystation in 1891 and began quarrying operations in 1892, one year before the Southern Pacific Railroad arrived in Chatsworth.
- In 1901, SPRR extended the track one mile into the quarry. From 1901 to 1907, 50 men blasted, hauled and deposited 600 tons of sandstone rock on 50 flatcars, every day, to form the core of the San Pedro Breakwater.

Presentation:

[*The Chatsworth Park Quarry*](#)



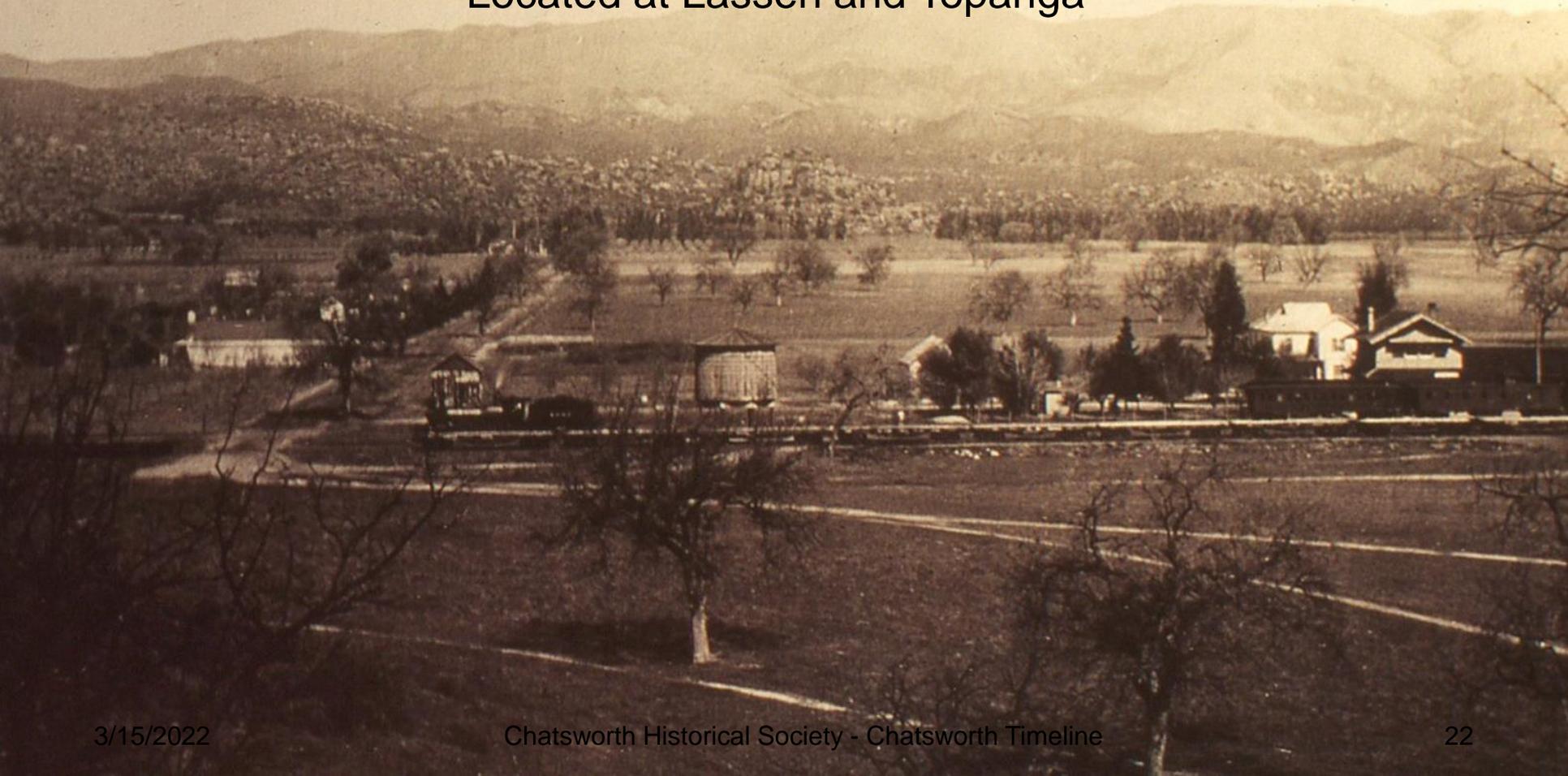
LA County 1898 Map

This shows the railroad at Marilla south of Lassen entering the Bannon quarry. The Southern Pacific Railroad came to Chatsworth in 1893.



Downtown Chatsworth 1898

Located at Lassen and Topanga





1898 – The Gray Family

builds a stately home on Lassen, lining the street with olive tree cuttings from the San Fernando Mission.

22165 Lassen Street

The home with 14 rooms cost \$1,200, and was built on 200 acres.

The 24'x24' central court entry had an 18' tall ceiling. It was the first home in the valley to have gas lights.

*The 76 Olive Trees on Lassen
Los Angeles Historic-Cultural
Monument #49 in 1967*

Chatsworth Railroad Grading Crew 1899

The three tunnels
were completed in
1904

Presentation:
[Chatsworth
Railroad History](#)



Working the inside of the Tunnel

3-level
platform
on rails



1903 Chatsworth Community Church

The Gray Family donated the land for the church which included a community room.

The church was moved to Oakwood Cemetery in 1965.

*Los Angeles
Historic-Cultural
Monument #14 in 1963*

*Presentation:
[The Chatsworth Pioneer Church](#)*



Graves & Hill General Store and Post Office

Southwest corner of Lassen and Topanga



The Graves & Hill General Store was on Topanga at Lassen from 1906 to 1915. They bought the store after the death of Mr. and Mrs. Jackson, the previous owners.

Presentation:
[Chatsworth](#)
[Postcards 1912](#)

A new Chatsworth Park School was built in 1917

Replaced with the current school building in 1935 on the same site



Chatsworth School

19

Chatsworth Lake / Reservoir 1918

- 1913 - Los Angeles Aqueduct opening day celebration Nov. 5, 1913.
- 1918 – Chatsworth Reservoir is built, and is in service from 1919 to 1969.
- It was drained and expanded in 1969, but the 1971 Sylmar earthquake resulted in the closure of this reservoir with an earthen-filled dam.

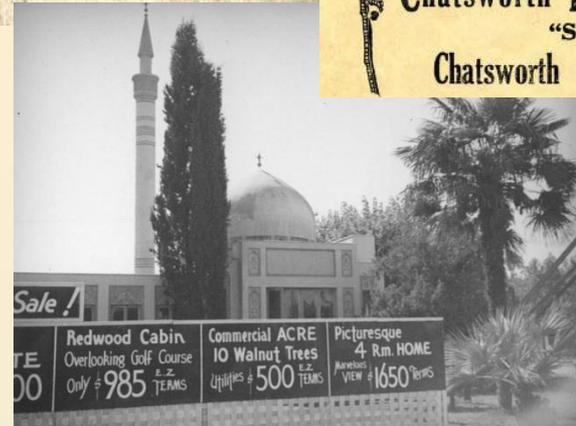
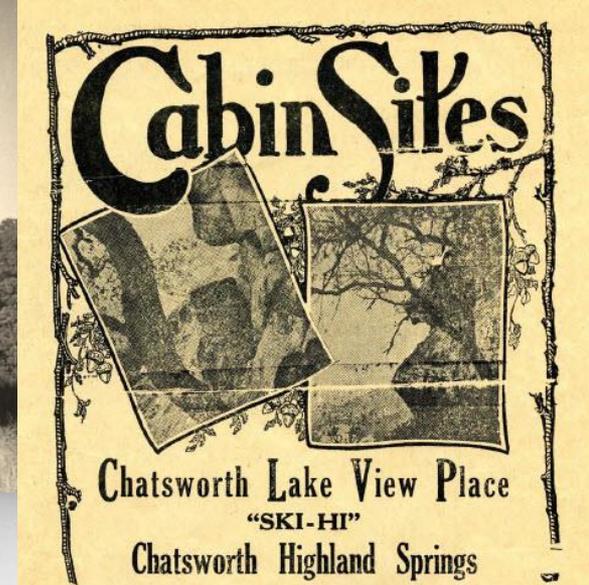
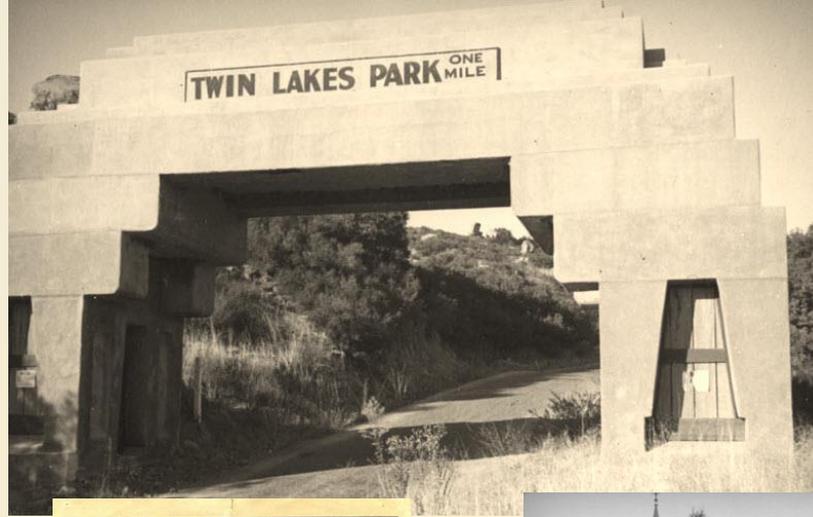
Article:

[Chatsworth Nature Preserve / Chatsworth Reservoir Timeline](#)



Local Real Estate Developments in the Roaring 20's

- **Twin Lakes Park**,
Mayan/Aztec Theme
- **Cabin Sites**, now Lake
Manor and Box Canyon
- **Santa Susana Hills**
Cabin Sites, near
Corriganville
- **Girard**, Middle
Eastern/Turkish
Theme, now Woodland
Hills



Presentation:
[Twin Lakes Park & Deer Lake Highlands History](#)

1930's Paradise Gift Shop Docia A. Conley

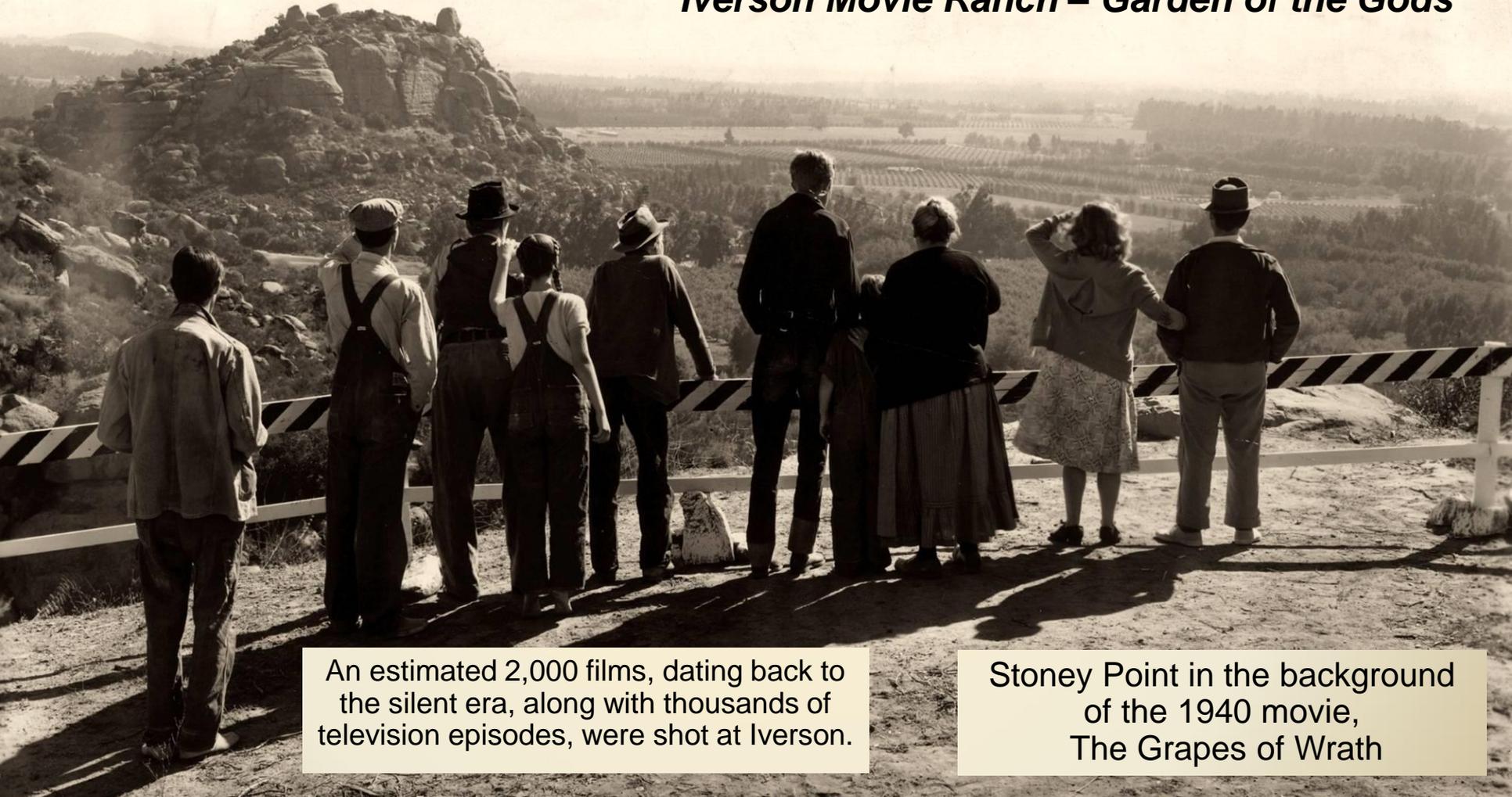
The Tea Room was the place to stop when you motored out to Chatsworth

***A great place to
get a seasonal job!***

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



Iverson Movie Ranch – Garden of the Gods

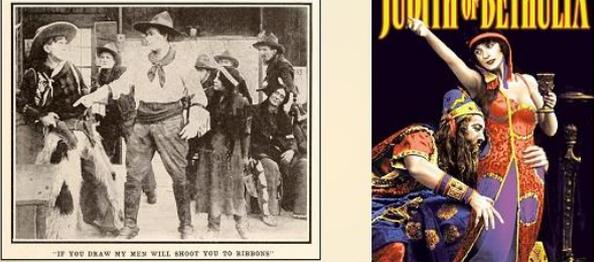


An estimated 2,000 films, dating back to the silent era, along with thousands of television episodes, were shot at Iverson.

Stoney Point in the background of the 1940 movie, *The Grapes of Wrath*

Presentations on Film History in Chatsworth

1914 Feature Films in Chatsworth

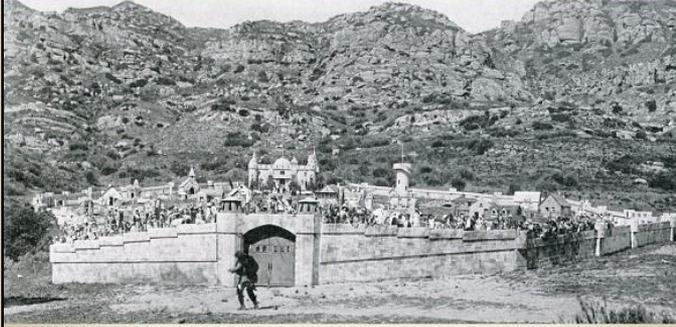


"The Squaw Man"
(Cecil B. DeMille, released Feb 1914)
1hr 12min

"Judith of Bethulia"
(D.W. Griffith, released March 1914)
1hr 12min

2/18/2020 1914 Feature Films in Chatsworth 1

Jack and the Beanstalk 1917 Silent Movie in Chatsworth



02/20/2018 Chatsworth Historical Society - Jack and the Beanstalk 1917 Silent Movie in Chatsworth 1

Presentation: [1914 Feature Films in Chatsworth](#)

Presentation: [Jack and the Beanstalk 1917 Silent Movie in Chatsworth](#)

Presentation: [Silent Movie Sets at the Iverson Ranch](#)

Silent Movie Sets at the Iverson Ranch

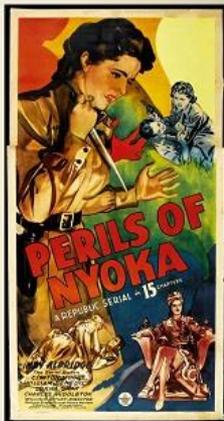
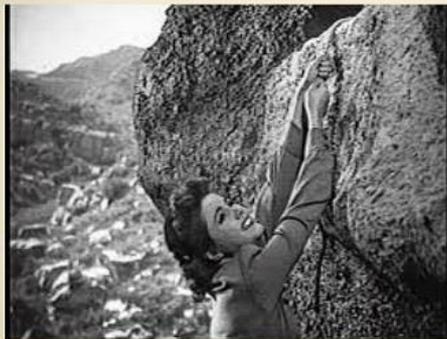


1923 1921 1926

05/23/2017 Chatsworth Historical Society - Iverson Ranch Silent Movie Sets 1

Presentations on Film History in Chatsworth

1942 Perils of Nyoka Movie Serials Filmed at Iverson Movie Ranch



1/21/2020

Perils of Nyoka Cliffhangers - Chatsworth

1

Presentation: [Perils of Nyoka Cliffhangers - Chatsworth](#)

Highway Patrol Episodes Filmed in Chatsworth

- The 1955-59 "Highway Patrol" television show lasted for 4 seasons of 39 episodes each for a total of 156 episodes.
- Each episode generally used multiple locations.
- Each episode of the series was filmed in a maximum of 2 to 3 days – 1 day in the studio and 1 to 2 days on location.



1956 scene from "Motorcycle A" at the "This is Chatsworth" sign, in front of Chatsworth Park Elementary

10/11/2020

Chatsworth Historical Society - Highway Patrol Episodes Filmed in Chatsworth

1

Presentation: [Highway Patrol Episodes Filmed in Chatsworth](#)

Presentations on Film History in Chatsworth

Roy Rogers – 1953 “This is Your Life”



1/16/2018

Chatsworth Historical Society - Roy Rogers 1953 This is Your Life

1

Presentation: [Roy Rogers – 1953 “This is Your Life”](#)

Filming The Roy Rogers Show on Roy & Dale's Chatsworth Ranch



10/15/2019

Filming the Roy Rogers Show on Roy & Dale's Chatsworth Ranch

1



Presentation: [Filming The Roy Rogers Show on Roy & Dale's Chatsworth Ranch](#)



*Los Angeles
Historic-Cultural
Monument #645 in 1997*

1940's - Harvester Farms

Headquarters of the
Palomino Horse
Association of America

Harvester was the
father of Mr. Ed – the
talking horse, a 1958-
66 TV Series

*Presentation:
[Harvester Farms](#)*

North American Aviation, Rocketdyne, Atomics International

- 1949 Rocket engine testing begins at Burro Flats at the top of Woolsey Canyon Road.
- In 1955 Rocketdyne is established, and develops and tests rockets that powered the space program in the 1960's:
- 1962 John Glenn first American to orbit Earth
- 1969 Neil Armstrong first man on the moon



Presentation:
[*The History of Burro Flats,
Rocketdyne and the SSFL*](#)

2 minute
video clip

“1989 SSFL
Rocketdyne
History of
Tomorrow
clip”

YouTube
link at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pCdfy0s1cvU&t=2s>

3/15/2022



1956-1974 Nike Missile Site LA88 - Chatsworth

- In 1956 Nike Missile Site LA88 on Oat Mountain was completed. It was the last of the scheduled 16 Los Angeles Nike sites to be completed in what was known as the “Ring of Steel”.
- During the cold war, Nike Missile bases provided a defense against a nuclear attack. They were initially equipped with anti-aircraft missiles (Nike-Ajax in 1953), followed by the Nike-Hercules in 1958, which was armed with nuclear warheads and could intercept ballistic missiles.
- It was decommissioned in 1974 as one of the last sites covering the Los Angeles area.



Los Angeles
Historic-Cultural
Monument #750 in 2003

The Munch Box

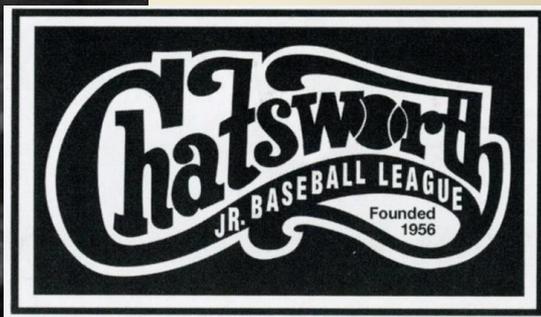
Classic 1950's style hamburger
stand built in 1956





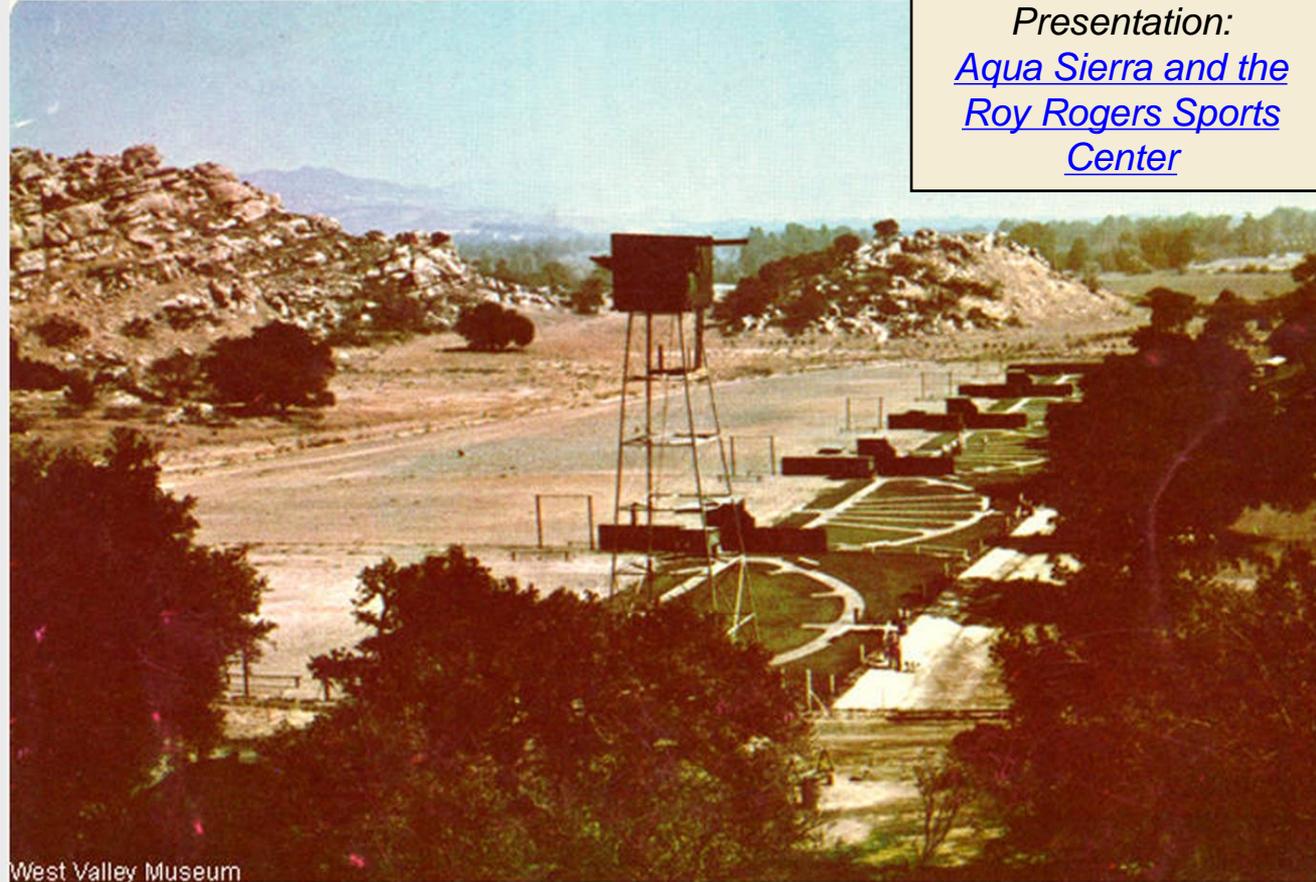
**CJBL –
Opening
Day 1957,
Wilkens Field**

Looking east, the
south side of
Devonshire
between
Owensmouth and
the Munch Box,
Ken Ditto at bat



1949 to 1968 - Aqua Sierra Sportsman's Club and Roy Rogers Sports Center

- Located in today's Chatsworth Park South.
- By 1959, there were five skeet and trap stations, a 90 foot hi-tower, one nine-hole golf course, a driving range, and two trout lakes.
- In 1959 it is advertised as the Roy Rogers Sports Center.
- In 1961, three additional nine-hole golf courses were added on the adjacent 48 acre Butler homestead parcel.



Presentation:
[Aqua Sierra and the Roy Rogers Sports Center](#)

2 minute

Skeet Shooting
at Gun Club

“1959
Chevrolet
Truck
Commercial
Roy Rogers”

YouTube link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rBhqFjyLwbc&t=3s>

3/15/2022



The Chatsworth Parade

Roy Rogers &
Dale Evans,
Honorary Mayors
circa 1958



Pioneer Church in Oakwood Cemetery 1965



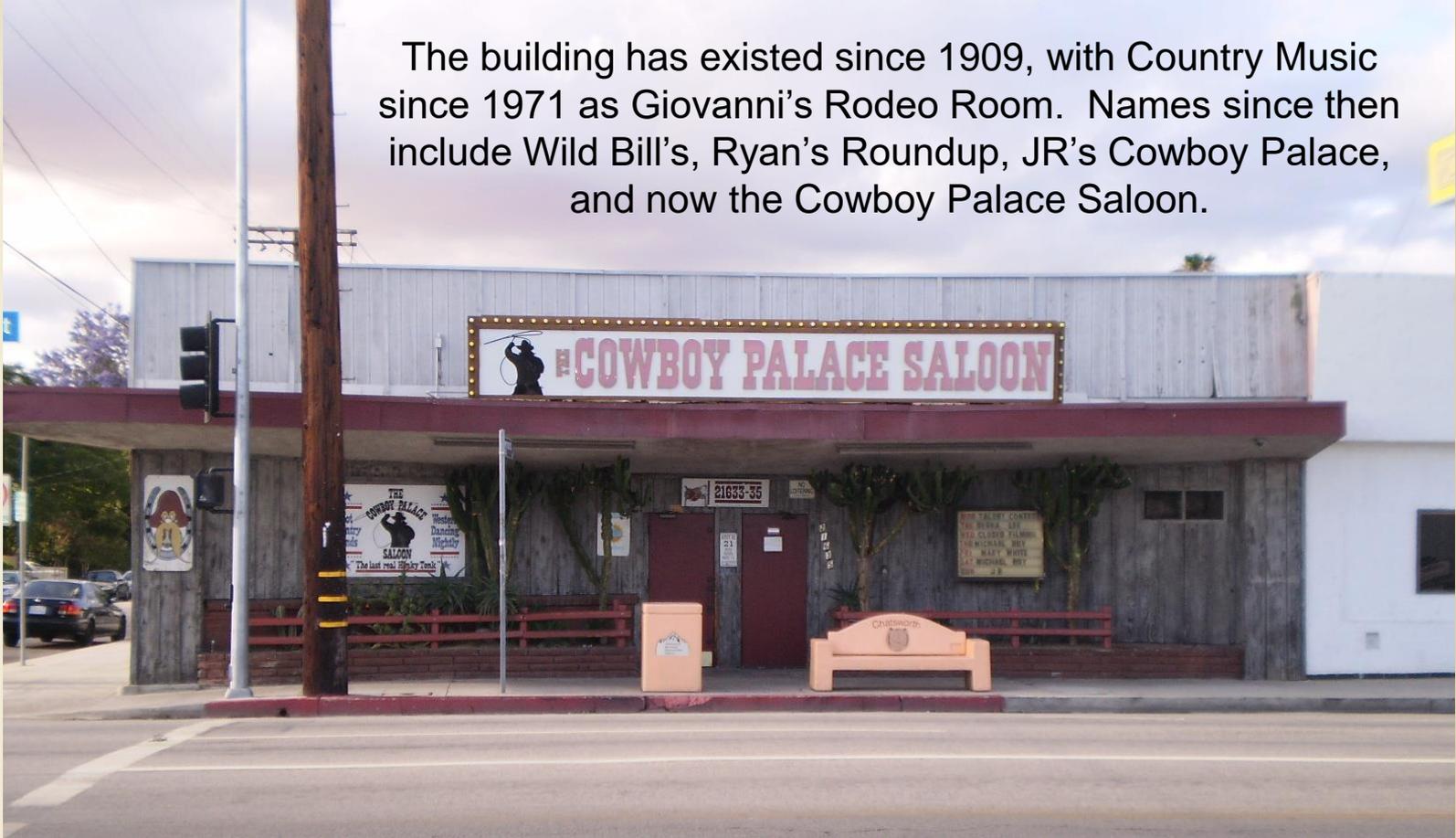
*Los Angeles
Historic-Cultural
Monument #14 in
1963*

**Established
in 1967**

Article:
[Los Toros Restaurant](#)



The building has existed since 1909, with Country Music since 1971 as Giovanni's Rodeo Room. Names since then include Wild Bill's, Ryan's Roundup, JR's Cowboy Palace, and now the Cowboy Palace Saloon.

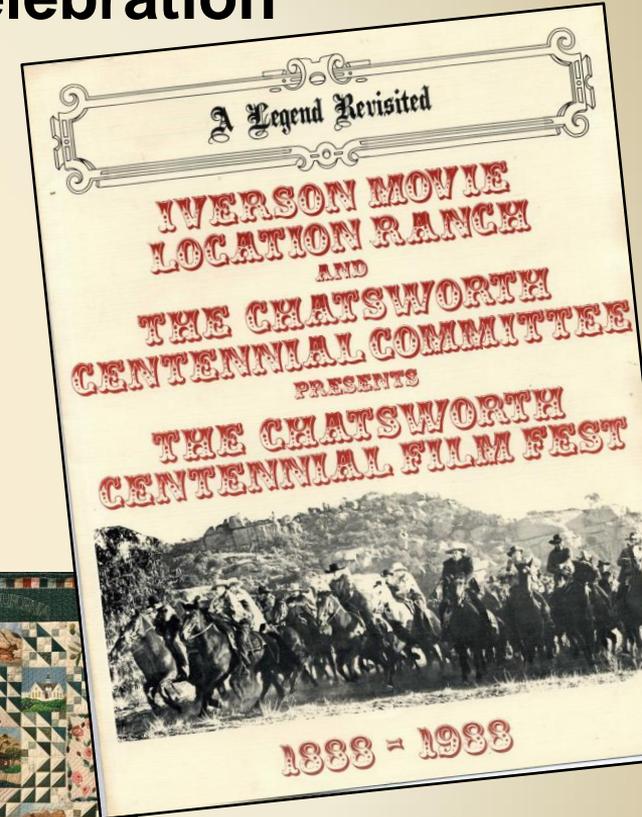
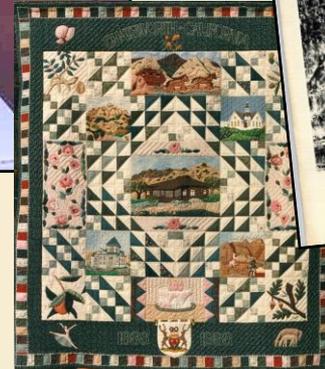


Article: [The Cowboy Palace Saloon](#)

1988 Chatsworth Centennial Celebration

Events included:

- A Time Capsule
- Film Festival at Iverson Ranch
- A Centennial Quilt
- Chatsworth Centennial Song
- A celebration at the Recreation Center with invited guests including Mayor Tom Bradley.



1998 Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park

- In 1970, Jan Hinkston founded the Santa Susana Mountain Park Association, which led to today's State Historic Park.
- Dedicated in 1998, today the 670 acre State Park hosts interpretive hikes for 3rd grade school children through a cooperative effort with trained volunteers and California State Parks.



2003 Huell Howser visits Chatsworth

*KCET YouTube
Video:
[Visiting with Huell
Howser: Munch Box](#)*



In 2003, Huell Howser visited the Munch Box.

He had such a good time, he came back that year to visit other Historic-Cultural Monuments with Virginia Watson and Linda and Andre van der Valk.

*KCET YouTube
Video:
[Visiting with Huell
Howser: Chatsworth](#)*



The Minnie Hill Palmer Homestead Acre

- The 1911 cottage, built by the Hill family, is of board and batten construction, and replaced the original homestead structure built in 1886.
- The Virginia Watson Museum is also located at the Homestead Acre.
- Tours are available on the 1st Sunday of each month from 1-4 pm.

*Los Angeles
Historic-Cultural
Monument #133 in 1974*

*It was placed on the
National Register of
Historic Places in 1979*



*Presentation:
[The Minnie Hill Palmer Story](#)*

Sources/Acknowledgements

- Bruce Petty, Montalvo to Burbank presentation and archives, including USC Doheny Library.
- Chatsworth Historical Society archives, photographs and presentations.
- “Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park Cultural Resources Inventory Historic Overview”, Alexander Bevil, 2007
- Many thanks to many Chatsworth residents, past and present, for their contributions to this presentation.
- Prepared by Ann and Ray Vincent, Chatsworth Historical Society, March 2013, updated July 2015, May 2018, Mar 2022

To view this presentation and learn more about our
Chatsworth History, go to
chatsworthhistory.com, or
[slideshare/chatsworthhistory](https://www.slideshare.net/chatsworthhistory)

And now, a 4 minute music video:

The Chatsworth Song

Written and performed in 1988, for the
Chatsworth Centennial Celebration

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pza97IRVIBI>



**Chatsworth
Song Performed
by
The Natural
High Group
1988**