



#### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members and Friends:

The dedication of Homestead Acre will take place at 2:30 p.m. on Sunday, May 4. Watch the Smoke Signal for further announcements concerning the box lunch and installation of newly elected officers which will precede the ceremony. April will be a busy month of preparation and there will be much to do around the grounds after the heavy rains. There will be no regular meeting in May.

Sincerely,

Jane Matthews



COLETTE PARSONS



Our dear friend, Colette, is gone and we miss her. The memorial service was held at St. Martin-in-the Fields in Canoga Park on March 3 at 8:30 p.m. (that is curtain time). Father Murray gave the eulogy, Milton read two Shakespeare sonnets and Jane Matthews sang several selections. The service closed with their favorite song, "I'll Be Seeing You." Interment was at sea.

Colette attended Boston University where she met Milton. They went on together to perform in many stage productions across the country and on cruise ships, and finally came to the West Coast where Colette worked in films. She is remembered in our town for her readings for local organizations, for the Cookie Jar Theatre, other productions on Farralone Street, her roles in "Anastasia" and "The Solid Gold Cadillac" for the Drama Guild at St. Martin's and for her involvement in 8 Lenten play productions there. She was an editor for the Smoke Signal and famous for her "Mini-Puffs."

The Society has established a memorial fund in her name. Contributions will go toward furnishing the Hill-Palmer House.

#### MARCH MEETING

We will celebrate Chatsworth's birthday at noon on Saturday, March 22 following the lecture. If the rain persists, we will have to continue the series at the Glendale Federal Savings & Loan. A Luncheon will be served-call Lillian for details. Beverages will be provided. Of course we will have the traditional cake. If you can come, please call Lillian Schepler at 341-2010. Plan to come to the lecture.

#### SATURDAY MORNING SEMINARS

MARCH 22 - THE MEXICAN WAY Elva Meline will discuss the Rancho Period.

MARCH 29 - THE PIONEERS A panel discussion with Catherine Mulholland, Mary Jane Petit and Lila Schepler. Ernest Marquez will display panels of early post cards of the Valley.

For further information, call 881-7523.

RED CROSS MONTH	Sat. Series - The Mexican Way by
World Day of Prayer, March 7	Elva Meline - followed by Luncheon
International Women's Day, March 8	honoring Minnie Palmer Birthday---
Girl Scouts Founded March 12, 1912	(Note: no Tues. regular Historical
Sat. Series - The Spanish Influence	(Society Meeting this month)-----
by Francis S. Edwards - March 15	-----Saturday March 22nd 10 A.M.--
St. Patrick's Day----- March 17	Sat. Series - The Pioneers by Lila
Swallows return to San Juan	Schepler, Catherine Mulholland and
Capistrano ----- March 19	Mary Jane Petit-----March 29
Spring Begins ----- March 20	Palm Sunday-----March 30

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From your Editor:

How could you have missed them, if you did? The four Sunday lectures were great, but the two Saturday Series that we have already seen and heard, are even more fantastic! You must not miss the rest of the Series.....

All about our Bill Schepler :

Bill set the stage for the first of our Saturday Series with slides and a talk about our Chatsworth area. Some of these pictures are real treasures. If you have, or if you know anyone who has, any pictures of our town or country that we could have to make a copy of, please contact Bill 341-3447 or Linn Stuckenbruck 341-1854.

William Schepler has had a life-long love affair with our town-Chatsworth and the West Valley. From the time his parents purchased a Citrus Ranch here in 1929 (we had a population of approximately 500 and were "way out in the country") until 1980 ( where the population is near 50,000 and is very suburban).

He attended Canoga Park High School in the 1930's and upon graduation matriculated at the CALIFORNIA MARITIME ACADEMY. He holds a 1st Assist. Engineer's license and is a Lt. Commander in the U.S. Maritime Service. This became his professional career. But- -

His life long avocation has been an interest in phases of history: ANTIQUE AUTOS, DIRIGIBLES, EDGED WEAPONS OF WAR, TRAINS ETC ETC. And He is an avid reader - and this with his own clear memories of what happened "then" adds zest to his telling the story.

He writes the "WINDOW INTO THE PAST" for the Society-serves on the ORAL HISTORY COMMITTEE -with his brother, Frank, served as co-chairman of the project to move the old Pioneer church when the Society decided to preserve it for future generations- was responsible for the naming of the Historic Olive Trees on Lassen St. which later preserved them from destruction when a housing development went in- and if STONEY POINT ever becomes a Mountain Climbing Park, it will be because of his work- and Virginia Watsons- that created the climate which would make it possible to have it as a Park.

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And this about Virginia Watson - Speaker March 8 (Films shown and produced by Linn Stuckenbruck):

Virginia has had a life-long interest in books, reading and writing. As a little girl she was a member of "Friends of the Library" and was head-for life as a librarian - but her folks moved the family to California. After growing up here and marrying her "Movie Man", Henry, they moved to Chatsworth when it was really "country". She fell in love with the area and began an abiding interest in all the stories she had heard about the early days.

She has been an active Civic worker in our town: Coordinating Council, Women's Club, P.T.A., Park functions, such as being Founder of "Halloween at the Park", Historiographer/Curator and one of the Founders of the Chatsworth Historical Society, Member of the Mayor's Advisory Committee and the 4-H Club.

She has received numerous honors: Citation from the County Bd. of Supervisors for her work as President of the Coordinating Council; Business and Professional Women's Citation for having contributed the most to civic affairs; Honary Life Member of P.T.A.; Woman of the Year by Chatsworth Chamber of Commerce and was nominated for the Prestigious Hourglass Award.

She was a long-time columnist of "Out Our Way" and still occasionally writes for local news columns. She has written many special interest stories; has been widely published in all our local newspapers. Whenever public relations' releases or stories are needed, all clubs turn to Virginia.

She is well known as the author of the book "A CHILD'S HISTORY of CHATSWORTH" which demonstrates her ability to write so well. She did her research at Santa Barbara Mission, Title Insurance and Trust Co., the Huntington Library and wherever her search for historical data could be found.

From Virginia Watson:

There are two small by-laws changes to be voted on at the next meeting. The executive board voted to include the editor of the Smoke Signal as a member, so that Article V, Section 1 will read. "The Elective Officers of this organization shall be: President, 4 Vice Presidents, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer, Editor of the Smoke Signal, and 2 Directors at large."

The second change is in the wording of the second paragraph of the same section and changes the word Historiographer to Curator. So it will read: "These members will serve as the Executive Board along with the Honorary Life Board Member, Chuck Janess; the Curator, Virginia Watson; and the Parliamentarian.

Also under Article V, Section 10, the name change from Historiographer to Curator and will read: "The Curator shall be in charge of all items of historical value, their care and evaluation of their authenticity."

Be sure to come and vote.

The following names have been submitted by the Nominating Committee for the new officers for next year. Please plan to be at the next meeting so you can vote. In addition to the names presented other names may be suggested from the floor if they have prior consent. The nominating committee is Tricia Plucknett, chairman, Chuck Janess and Bill Schepler.

PRESIDENT	Sheila Watts
1st VICE PRESIDENT (Program chairman)	Adrienne Gudin
2nd VICE PRESIDENT (Membership chairman)	Lillian Schepler
3rd VICE PRESIDENT (Ways and Means)	Ioline Cleveland
HOSPITALITY CHAIRMAN	Fern Jack
RECORDING SECRETARY	Betty Selvidge
TREASURER	Marian Hyland
CORRESPONDING SEC. & MAILING EDITOR	Tricia Plucknett
CURATOR	Virginia Watson
FOUNDING PRESIDENT & HONORARY BOARD MEMBER -	Chuck Janess
MEMBER-AT-LARGE	Dennis Moran
MEMBER-AT-LARGE	Jane Matthews
EDITOR	Celia Woodman
HOBBY CHAIRMAN	Ralene Rubin
DISPLAY CHAIRMAN	Betty Summers

Chatsworth Historical Society

P.O. Box 102

Chatsworth, Calif. 91311

Correction of address requested:

cont. from page 2 --

She has overthrown some myths and authenticated other -- and has written a fascinating account of our development. She was at one time editor of our Smoke Signal. She now has an adult History Book on "the back burner", but we may have to wait until she retires from the "Valley" for its production. -- Her Child's History of Chatsworth is a valuable resource book at our Chatsworth Library and in each of our local schools.....

**THE CHATSWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Presents a Series of Lectures  
on West Valley History

10 a.m. - Free - Homestead Acre  
Museum Chatsworth Park South

MARCH 1 - SET THE STAGE  
William Schelper

MARCH 8 - THE INDIANS  
Virginia Watson

MARCH 15 - THE SPANISH  
INFLUENCE  
Francis S. Edwards

MARCH 22 - THE MEXICAN WAY -  
Elva Meline

MARCH 29 - THE PIONEERS  
Catherine Mulholland,  
Mary Jane Petit, Lila  
Schepler

APRIL 12 - THIS MODERN WORLD  
Lila Schepler

Funded by a Grant From:  
The California Council For The Humanities.

Our newest member is Winifred Maclay Widney from Santa Susana Pass. We will be happy to hear more about this interesting lady whose great-uncle was, Robt. S Maclay, the developer of San Fernando and she is a descendant of the Widney family, who were co-founders of U.S.C.

We had a lovely time at our Valentine-Birthday-Meeting -- The Super-decor by Mary Avila was coordinated with the delicious refreshments of cherry red punch and other goodies. She was assisted by her handsome husband, Ramon. Mary brought some -- China dolls dressed in red velvet, from her doll collection. There were hearts and cupids every where. We enjoyed the talk by Ioline about Valentine Hx. Lillian Schepler was "tops" in her surprise entry as a living valentine. Jane Matthews won a prize for Most Modern and Lila Schepler for Best Display. Oh! that old-tyme lovers note on the first valentine given to Eileen by Chuck Janess was ooh Betty Summers had the oldest-- a tiny 1" heart-shaped candy box from the eighteen-100ds... Did you miss it?

We have had great write-ups in several of our local papers with big headlines like "WEST VALLEY HISTORY SEMINARS SET" by Jean Evans of the Valley News.

We have had from 40 to 75 people attending these lectures - more than one half of these people were not members -- their interest was knowing more about our community. And quite a number have shown their concern by joining our Society.....

Our newest Life-member is ..... Gertrude Cook - 22222 Lassen, Chats. Her Membership was given as a Love-Gift by her daughter, Anita DelVecchio.

Other new regular memberships are: Maria Johnson - 10837 Farralone, Chats. Polly Vickers - 20941 Chats. St. Chats. Margaret R. Gasson - 20457 Halsted, Chatsworth

Olga Bay - 22032 Lassen, Chatsworth Georgia Cooper - 24012 Archwood, Canoga Park

Jeffery and Helene Halter - 20649 Celtic, Chatsworth

Harmon and Ruby Swan - 22340-1 Germain Chatsworth

Marcia McCall and daughter, Linda Liliashook - 5726 Newcastle, Encino.

We are sorry for the wrong address given for Connie Martins, in the last Smoke Signal. The correct address is: 9583 Geysler, Northridge.....

We welcome the above new members and look forward to their interest and added leadership.....

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A BIG THANK YOU!

We are grateful for contributions recently received -- especially the one from the Tarzana Woman's Club. We could not complete the Homestead Acre without this generous support.

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If the weather permits, a group from Pierce College, under the leadership of Malcolm Sears, are planning a work-day in the garden at our Homestead Acre.

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Have you signed up for what YOU can do to help in anyway, at any time? Return Tear-off, please..

I will work in:	1 hour	2 hours	3 hours	once a week	once a month
Housekeeping - cottage					
Housekeeping - museum					
Gardening					
Telephoning					
Docent					
other					

## THE LEGEND OF THE SHAMROCK

There is an honored legend  
from Ireland's ancient lore  
Of how St. Patrick drove the snakes  
from Erin's lovely shore.  
The wee folk were in danger  
from the serpents all around  
That hid beneath the rocks  
and always moved without a sound.  
But then when good St. Patrick came  
to preach and labor there,  
He brought the shamrock with him  
which he planted everywhere.



And as the shamrocks flourished,  
all the snakes began to flee  
Until they reached the shore,  
where they were swallowed by the sea.  
Sure an' the wee folk marveled,  
and they asked St. Patrick why.  
"The shamrock represents The Trinity,"  
was his reply.  
"Just as three shamrock leaves are joined  
onto a single stem,  
The Trinity is three in one,  
and God is all of them.  
The serpents learned its sacred power  
in Eden long ago  
And cannot bear to stay here now  
because they fear it so."  
And ever since St. Patrick  
drove the serpents all away,  
They've ne'er come back to Ireland's shores,  
not to this very day.

More about our beloved Colette:

I remember her when she took over the leadership of the Blue Birds from me - then, later as daughter, Sally Ann "flew up" Camp Fire Girls her mother became their leader. She was also active in P.T.A. and The Jr. Women's Club, but most of all I remember her as she and Milton directing and acting in the Chatsworth Summer Theatre - the Outdoor Theatre held at their home for 4 seasons. Sally Ann was the scenic designer and as their petite and talented little daughter would have a part in the play as well. Many of our friends and local talent were also members of the cast.

She was born Colette Rosseel Humphrey in Philadelphia in Nov. 1902 and passed away Feb. 26, 1980. In addition to Milton, she is survived by daughter, Sally Ann and son-in-law, Jim Meares and a brother, Laning Humphrey of Waban, Mass.

Milton is very alone now that Sally Ann and Jim have returned to New York. He would welcome your visit or cards - send to: 10801 Farralone Ave. Chatsworth Calif. 91311

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Brian Hayes, the young man who received his Eagle Scout Award following all the work he had done at our Pioneer Church, has now been nominated by our Historical Society for Student of the Year. The Awards are given by the Coordinating Council.

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Our Society is delighted to accept the exciting book, Land of the West Valley by Laura Gage for our library. The book was donated by Eleanor Schepler.

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Birthday Congratulations for March are:  
Our Town Chatsworth Mar. 8, 1888  
Wanda Daugherty  
Henry Watson  
Virginia Watson  
Brian Mitchell  
Cheryl Quintana  
Jane Matthews  
Eleanor Schepler  
Marlys Stuckenbruck  
Megan Cleveland  
Marshall Berman  
Arnold Hanson  
Jan Hingston  
(Have you forgotten to give me your name?)