

Chatsworth Historical Society

Box 102, Chatsworth, California 91311

January 1983
Smoke Signal

From your President --

A Very
Happy New Year

Ioline

PRESIDENT
Ioline Cleveland

1st. V.P. (PROGRAM)
Laurie Dager

2nd V.P. (FINANCIAL)
Lillian Schepler

3rd V.P. (MEMBERSHIP)
Marian Hyland

4th V.P. (HOSPITALITY)
Eileen Janess

TREASURER
Chuck Janess

RECORDING SECRETARY
Sheelagh Watts

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY)
Tricia Plucknett

MEMBER-AT-LARGE
Bill Schepler

MEMBER-AT-LARGE
Betty Summers

SMOKE SIGNAL EDITOR
Celia Woodman-347-8569

CHAIRMEN OF GROUND COMM.
Candy and Dean Craig

Director of Docents
Lila Schepler

REGULAR MEETING OF THE CHATSWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Tuesday - January 18th

7:30 P.M.

PROGRAM: Candy Craig will bring an interesting report on our Homestead Acre Gardens. She will give a history of the Acre and bring a scale drawing to explain the areas that have been completed and the ones currently being worked on. She will also bring samples of herbs and potpourri, and will show us what we have to look forward to in April, May and June. Please come, bring a friend!

REMINDER: Last call for past dues - if you aren't sure if you are paid-up, call Marian Hyland-882-1852.

Also last call for YOUR help and YOUR books and magazines for the Annual Book Sale at Topanga Plaza-

Friday-Jan. 27, Saturday-Jan.28, Sunday-Jan.29

Have you asked your friends and neighbors to come and buy (for themselves and their doctor, dentist or beauty shop) and to give their old books and magazines to you?

The Pioneer Church is located in Oakwood Memorial Park - 22601 Lassen
Our Museum and Minnie-Hill Palmer House are on the Homestead Acre ---
10385 Shadow Oak Drive (Chatsworth Park South) in Chatsworth.....

DUES

Meetings are held the third Tuesday of the month at 7:30 PM at the Glendale Federal Savings & Loan Association -- 21821 Devonshire St. Chatsworth	\$10.00 Per person per year
	\$15.00 Dual membership
	\$ 1.00 Students
	\$100.00 Life Membership
	\$100.00 Organizational

CANDY'S CORNER:

WHAT'S BLOOMING IN THE HOMESTEAD GARDEN?

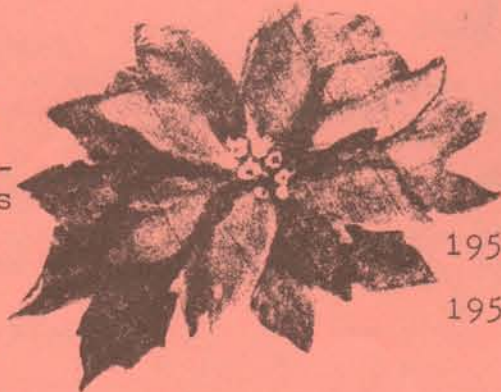
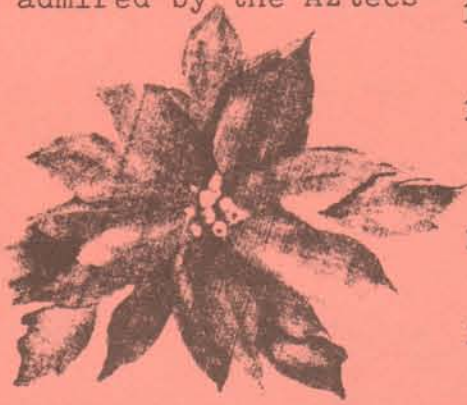
Just to the west of the screened entrance porch is the Bird of Paradise. (*Strelitzia Reginae*) This brilliant orange and blue birdlike flower, a native of So. Africa, is the official floral emblem of the City of Los Angeles. A relative of the banana, the plant was named in honor of Queen Charlotte, plant loving consort of King George III of England. She came from the German principality of Mecklenburg-Strelitz (*Reginae* is Latin for "of the Queen"). Favorite florist flowers, strelitzias are long lasting when cut. Our plant has grown to about four feet in diameter and will be in bloom for several months.



Strelitzia reginae

Planted along the east side of the house are two 6' tall Poinsettias (*Euphorbia Pulcherrima*) (Latin: pulcherrema, most beautiful). Classed botanically with our vegetable garden Gopher Plant the poinsettia is named for Joel Robert Poinsett (1779-1851) gardener, amateur botanist & diplomat from Charleston, So. Carolina, who was the first American Ambassador to Mexico following its independence from Spain in 1821. Serving in Mexico from 1825 to 1829, Poinsett sent plants of this spectacular winter-blooming euphorbia back to friends in Charleston. Native to the southwestern Mexican states of Chiapas, Oaxaca and Querrero, the poinsettia was admired by the Aztecs who called it

cuitlixochitl meaning, "glowing flower". It requires short days to bloom & is identified with the winter solstice & Christmas. Its Spanish name is "flor de noche buena". The colorful display comes not from the tiny yellow flowers but from the brilliant red bracts surrounding the flowers. The 60 mi-an-hour wind gusts that we suffered recently tore many of the bracts, but the new ones are coming on.



Candy Craig - Dean & Candy Craig, Chairmen of Ground Committee @ The Acre

Betty Summer's Corner:

You won't want to miss our new display in Glendale Federal Sav. & Loan---- Bill Schepler helped me arrange an interesting display of part of his keepsakes, artifacts, letters, of his hobby (one of his hobbies) of his Zeppelin Collection. Do you have something to show?

HISTORICALLY SPEAKING-THIS MONTH:

From Lawrence Junior High School:
by Reggie Smith, Jr.

COMMEMORATION OF:
DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.'S BIRTHDAY

Our state of California was the 18th state to proclaim Dr. King's birthday a state holiday - Jan. 16th in 1981. Schools will be closed on Friday, 15th. Dr. King is remembered as a remarkable, peaceful man who dedicated his life to gaining justice & dignity for people through non-violence. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 for his unceasing efforts to achieve social justice.

As we commemorate Dr. King, we think of other American winners of the award- Theodore Roosevelt in 1906, Woodrow Wilson in 1919, Jane Addams in 1931, Ralph Bunche in 1950, George Marshall in 1953, Linus Pauling in 1962, and Henry Kissinger in 1973. They were all people who had a purpose and the determination to achieve it. In commemorating his birthday, we salute not only him but also the many men and women in all of the nation's cultures who have given so much to so many.

History records the following events in his life:

- 1929 Jan. 15. Martin Luther King Jr. born in Atlanta, Ga.
- 1947 Became assistant to his father Rev. King Sr. at Ebenezer Baptist Church, Atlanta, Ga.
- 1948 Received BA in sociology through a special program for the gifted from Morehouse College, Atlanta.
- 1951 Given the Pearl Plafkner Award for scholarship. Graduated from Crozer with a B.D. degree.
- 1953 Married Coretta Scott in Marion, Alabama. Mrs. King was a student at the New England Conservatory of music.
- 1954 Installed by Dr. King Sr. as the 20th pastor of Dexter Ave. Church Montgomery, Alabama.
- 1955 Received the Ph.D. degree in Systemic Theology from Boston Univ. Yolanda Denise, the first King child born in Montgomery. In Dec. King began his role as leader of large groups of people. The 381-day boycott of buses involved 50,000 people and ended on Dec. 21, 1956, in success for Dr. King and the people.
- 1956 Montgomery buses were integrated on December 21.
- 1957 Elected Pres. of the So. Christian Conf. at its organization meeting at Ebenezer Baptist Church. The second child, Martin Luther King III, born.
- 1958 STRIDE TOWARD FREEDOM: THE MONTGOMERY STORY published.
- 1959 Visited Ghana and India. Studied Gandhi's techniques of nonviolence in India for one month. Dr. and Mrs. King were guests of Prime Minister Nehru.
- 1960 Conferred with John F. Kennedy, candidate for president, about racial matters in the U.S.A.

MORE EXCITING NEWS!

Two more of our Chatsworth Historical Society members have received the honor of having been chosen by the Chatsworth Chamber of Commerce to be the "Man of the Community" and the "Woman of the Community" for 1982.

The presentations were given at the luncheon at the Porter Valley Country Club on October 28th. Leonard Chenard, Life Member of the Chatsworth Historical Society was presented by Bill Schepler, a member of the Society and of the Chamber of Commerce, as well as a long-time friend. All the accomplishments of our past-president, Sheelagh Watts was given by our Vice President, Laurie Dager. The pictures were not ready for the Smoke Signal, therefore they will be shown in the next issue.

It is not possible to recall ALL of the things these two people have done for Chatsworth, but I will give an overview of many of their accomplishments:

Leonard Chenard

Sheelagh Watts

Should have been a recipient many years ago, but has been on the Award's Committee for this even for the Chamber of Commerce and "it just wouldn't have been ethical."

Life Member of Chatsworth Historical Society and active in any of our projects.

He started the Chatsworth Jr. Baseball Team in 1957 and has been not only the coach, a counselor and a "great guy" the boys could look up to. Several of "his" boys have gone on to the Major Leagues.

He is active in the Rotarians and the American Legion, always showing leadership and guidance.

He is a Charter Member of the Chats. Rotary Club - on Park Committee to get Chatsworth Park North.

He was active in getting our Chatsworth Library Building and starting the Chatsworth Youth Foundation. Athletic Awards are given to Jr. High and Senior each year. He received such an award when he was at Canoga Park High and realized the importance of giving it to one of our students each year.

He was a member of the committee to complete the Master Plan for zoning for Chatsworth and was the chairman for the Bicentennial Committee here.

And much, much more.....

Sheelagh is Past President (2 years) of Chatsworth Historical Society. She has held many offices including Smoke Signal Editor and is currently our Recording Secretary. She was one of the 5 founders of the Chatsworth Historical Society and is active in all our Fund Raising activities, even though she is very busy with her own florist business. And even then she is sharing her bouquets with all her organizations.

She was a member of the Chatsworth Jr. Women's Club for 5 years and one of their presidents.

She then became a member of the Senior Women's Club and was active in that. She was named "Junior Woman of the Year" by the Sierra Cahuenga District.

She served as counselor for the Chatsworth Youth Employment.

She wrote the column "Out Our Way" for the local paper for 10 years.

She was Managing Sec. for the Chats. Chamber of Commerce for 4 years.

She worked in the P.T.A. for 10 years. She was not only a Brownie leader, but also a Blue Bird leader.

And much, much more.....

Tuning in to Travel

We were happy to learn of the safe return and the happy vacation that Virgil and Ruth Heumann have recently returned after having been gone a month. We really missed them, and are glad that nothing happened to our Homestead Acre, that is always under their watchful eye, while they were gone. They passed by many historical sites, but because of time and weather they did not have time to take any of the tours. They started Sept. 25th and stopped in Phoenix to see old-time friends then to Sedona, Ariz. where they were able to find Jane Matthews, our Life Member and former President of the Chatsworth Historical Society. They had a lovely visit and were able to see her beautiful new home. Jane sends her love and greetings to all her friends here. They visited in Topeka, Kan. where an Aunt was celebrating her 90th birthday. Then to St. Joseph, MO., their hometown (but where they could find no one they knew). When they got to Omaha, Neb. it was snowing-time to come home to sun.

Keith and Sheelagh Watts went to Wash. D.C. to see Heather when she was in a performance at the Kennedy Center - October 10-13. They were delighted to have daughter, Jennifer, who lives in New York there at the same time, as well her sister, Joy and brother-in-law Morris Broyles, who live in Newport News, VA

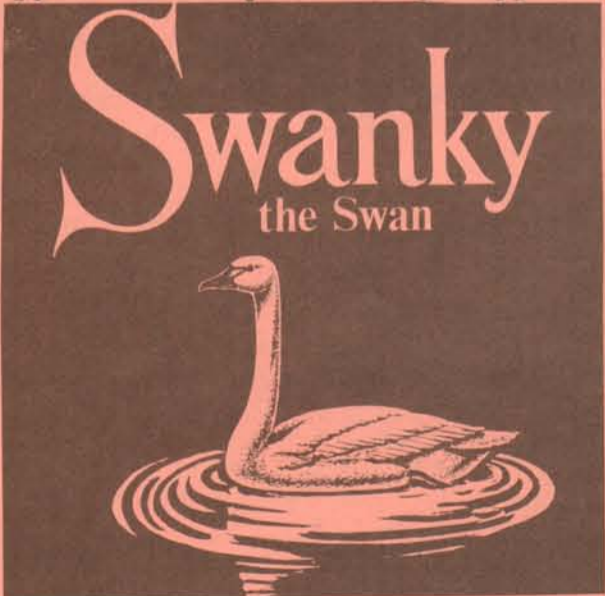
ATTENTION! Please come to the regular meeting, or call Lillian Schepler, to sign up for the times you can work at the book sale. 341-2010 (evenings) On the next page is the proposal for improvement and further development of the Chatsworth Historical Society Museum at the Homestead Acre. Please let us know which one, or more, of the projects you would like to do.....

News

WE ARE SO PROUD!

Two of our members have had their books published recently..... Winifred Maclay Widney, who lived in Santa Susana and was quite active in our Chatsworth Historical Society, until her illness forced her to move. She is now living with her niece in Gresham, Oregon, as reported in our last Smoke Signal. Her beautiful book of poems is called "Wayside Wanderings" and in order to give you a preview of her life, I have copied the forward in her book across the page. I have one of these lovely copies that I will share with anyone and if you are interested, we can find out how to obtain more copies.

Nancy Razanski has copies available of her delightful children's book called "Swanky the Swan". This hard back book not only has beautiful pictures painted by her father, William but a beautiful story with a message. The story is about a swan (Whistling Swan; Cygninae O'lor Columbianus) named Swanky, who migrates from Alaska to Mexico, stopping at various places along the way; one of which is our Chatsworth Reservoir. Nancy has lived in Chatsworth for the past 12 years and not only loves the beauty of our area, but has a great interest and desire in further preservation of our wildlife and our trees and everything the the Chatsworth Historical Society, the Santa Susana Park Mt. Assoc. and the Audubon Society are trying to save. Many of us have done our Christmas shopping for a child, 2-8, by staying at home and ordering an autographed copy from Nancy. Call 341-3512 eve.



A great, great great grandson of pioneer Chatsworth settlers, Neils & Ann (Willden) Johnson, was born Oct. 15 in Seattle, Washington. The new arrival is Ryan Lawrence Asher, first child & son of Ann (Johnson) & Larry. Maternal grandparents are Ed Johnson of Chats. & Joanne Watson of Laguna Hills. Our Myrtle Johnson, widow of the late Harold Johnson, is great grandmother. Young Ryan is Myrtle's 14th great grandchild; she has 12 grandchildren,

Winifred Maclay Widney, youngest daughter of Samuel A. and Anna E. Widney, was born in Los Angeles, December 29, 1894. The Widneys, as a prominent pioneer California family, along with the Maclays, were instrumental in developing the area and founding the University of Southern California.

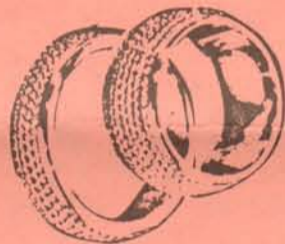
Winifred's life centered around her love of music. Professionally she was a teacher of piano, voice, organ, guitar and accordion. She interrupted her musical activities to drive truck as a civilian for the U.S. Army during World War II at Camp Cooke.

She fell in love with Simi Valley, California, acquiring her foothills 'retreat' in 1936. She made the valley her permanent home in 1963; once again teaching music to many valley residents - until 1979.

Winifred became involved with the San Fernando Valley and Chatsworth Historical Societies. This interest stemmed from the Maclays - her great uncle, State Senator Charles Maclay founded the City of San Fernando and his brother, Robert Samuel Maclay headed the Maclay College of Theology, which later was transferred to the University of So. California; thence to Claremont, California. These men were brothers of Arabella Maclay, who married Wilson Widney. Arabella and Wilson Widney were Winifred's grandparents and great-grandparents of Mary Opray Peterson of Gresham, Oregon.

Winifred started writing poetry and music as a young woman. Her poetry was always very private with her and it was only after considerable urging, that she allowed this volume to be published while residing with her niece in Gresham during the summer of 1982.

Rings were exchanged at the lovely wedding of Anita Delvecchio and Joe Weidenfeld at the Lindley Ave. Baptist Church in Tarzana on October 16th. The Bride, daughter of Gertrude Cook, wore a beige chiffon gown. She wore a spray of rose buds & carnations in her hair. The groom wore a dark blue suit with a boutonniere of a pink rosebud and stalk. Joe is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Weidenfeld of Friendly Valley.



Ralph Wilson, the pastor, officiated at this beautiful service with God and Jesus Christ as the motivating factor. It seemed the Holy Spirit was over all present. Anita's son, Tom, gave the bride away.

A luncheon reception followed in the Fireside Room.

They traveled to northern California for their honeymoon and are now at home 22222 Lassen, Chatsworth, California...

Birthday Congratulations for November are: Fred Clark, Dennis Moran, Milo Johnson Jr. Olga Bay, Violet Wilson, Maureen Cates, Betty Selvidge, Lewis Holliday.

A part of Winifred's poem "DEATH VALLEY"

Did you ever go to Death Valley
And ride up to Dante's View
With salt beds stretched out before you
And Mt. Whitney against the blue?
Did you ever see Scotty's Castle
And heave an envious sigh
As the sun lowered swiftly in glory
To rest on the edge of the sky?
Did you see the Shoshone Indians
And their modern Glamorous Maids
A far cry from '73
Ah! how the dim past fades.

