

Chatsworth Historical Society

Box 102, Chatsworth, California

Smoke Signal

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Editor: Celia Woodman (347-8569)

February 1984

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2nd V.P. (membership)
Marian Hyland-882-1852

3rd V.P. (financial)
Lillian Schepler

4th V.P. (hospitality)
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341-4461

THE FEBRUARY MEETING OF THE CHATSWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

will be Tuesday - February 21st ... 7:30 P.M.
at Glendale Federal Savings and Loan.....

An excellent program has again been planned by Bill Schepler

Dan Hoie will speak and show his historic slides
on "Old Mill" days of the Ranchos

specifically, El Molino Viejo.....
this interesting place has been restored, little
by little, and is now finished for tours. It is
in Pasadena.

This is the El Molino Viejo of Southern Calif.,
the other is Sutters Mill in Northern California.

He will be giving history of Spanish times and as
the Americanos came. Students interested in the
history of Calif. should come.

Mr. Hoie is the Director of Wilshire Blvd.
Photography Center at the Museum, which is a
facility of the California Historical Society.
The museum is the Headquarters of the Calif.
Historical Society at the present time.

Keep this date on your calendar for the MARCH
meeting - March 20th.....

Bill Meyer will give us the Story of the
Pacific Electric Street Cars in our area.
He is a leading author from Alhambra and has
written 8 or 10 books on the history of street cars.

If you have any OLD valentines, bring them Tues. 21st.

OPEN HOUSE at the MUSEUM and MINNIE PALMER HOUSE every 1st SUNDAY of month-
between 1 & 4 PM. Feb. 5th and March 4th (1 to 4) Location: 10385 Shadow Oak Drive
Chatsworth Park South, in Chatsworth..... Docents this month will be:

Lila Schepler, Betty Summers, Tricia Plucknett and Carol Overton.

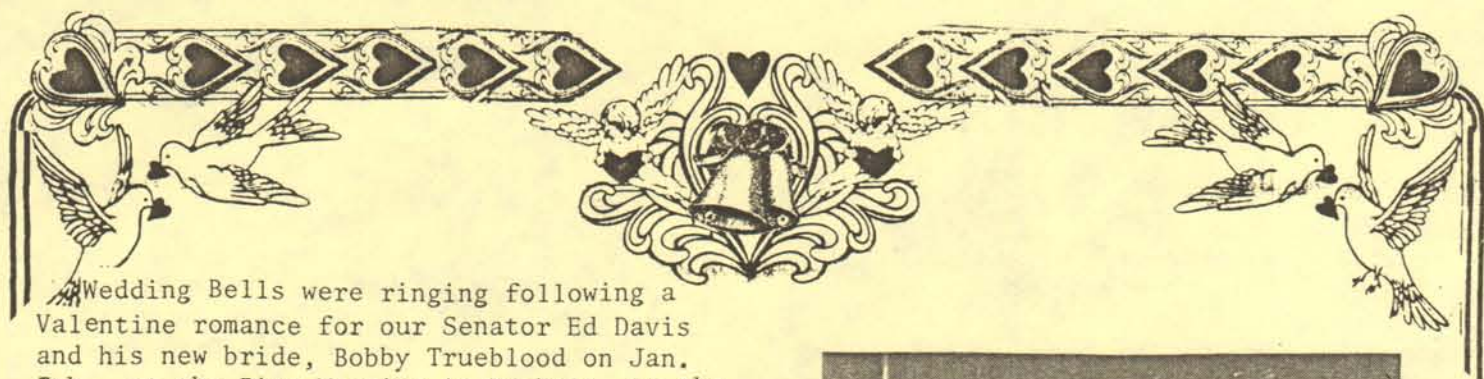
The Pioneer Church is located in Oakwood Memorial Park - 22601 Lassen Chats.

Reg. meeting is held the 3rd Tues. of the
month at 7:30 PM at the Glendale Federal
Savings & Loan-21821 Devonshire, Chatsworth

\$10.00 per person per year
\$15.00 Dual membership
\$ 1.00 Students
\$100.00 Life Membership



At our March 21st meeting we will celebrate Chatsworth's 96th Birthday!
As always this will be a very special evening - we hope to have some of
our V.I.P.s there as well as another great program by Bill Schepler and
a Hobby Corner, featuring "HATS". Keep this date - bring new friends...



Wedding Bells were ringing following a Valentine romance for our Senator Ed Davis and his new bride, Bobby Trueblood on Jan. 7th. at the Piru Mansion in Newhall, at the lovely home of Fred and Ruth Newhall. It has recently been restored and they were happy to have their friends, Ed and Bobby be the first ones to have a wedding there.

Bobby was Chatsworth's Honorary Sheriff last year and was Senator Davis' Field Rep.

Ed's children, except for Mary Ellen, who was in New Jersey, were members of the wedding party - Michael Davis, Christine Hart and grandson, Jonathon, who proudly carried the ring.

In addition to the host and hostess, our former Mayor Yorty, Chief Daryl Gates, Councilman, Hal Bernson, Assemblyman Tom McClintock, and many others, were there.

We extend our congratulations for a very happy, even though busy, life.



A lovely letter was received by Lila Schepler from Councilman Hal Bernson, commending us on the fine work we have done with the help of the Oat Mountain Calif. Conservation Corps. "Your new brochure is attractive and most interesting. All of you can be proud of the results of your many years of work to save the Acre and the other sites in Chats."

We are still asking begging and praying for a storage place at the Acre, but in the meantime - for the next 6 months, do you have or does anyone you know have a storage place or a garage that we could use?

If you have not received one of our new brochures or you need another one to show your friends, please contact one of us or come to the Acre on one of our Open Houses on the first Sunday of each month.

Elva Meline, from the San Fernando Valley Historical Society was a guest at our last meeting. She brought many new brochures put out by the Santa Clarita National Bank. It is a Guide to all the San Fernando Valley Historical Landmarks. If you were not at the meeting to receive yours, you may get one from the Andres Pico Adobe or any Santa Clarita Bank.

Don't forget (as announced in the last ^{*****} Smoke Signal) to come to the Dedication of the Olaque at the Pioneer Church, given by the D.A.R. on Feb. 22 - 10:30 AM followed by a luncheon Calabasas Inn - 12:30 PM. Call for reservations: Connie Warwich 385-9837.

We have received gifts for two more names on our Memorial Plaque: \$100.00 from Rosalie Aulepp and her sisters, Arline Dahlman and Janis Petta in loving memory of their mother, Pauline Dahlman. \$50.00 was also received from Pauline's sister, Charlotte Praete, who lives in S. Carolina. The gifts are to be used for our Rose Garden - their mother loved living things. This is a sweet tribute. The other \$100.00 was sent in memory of our Rosemary Johnston by sister, Helen and her husband, Jesse BECK. Thanks to you, too.

We are happy to have Bill and Doreen Rusen as new members this month. Doreen was our Woman of the Year. This makes everyone that has been selected for the last 5 years as a member of our Chatsworth Historical Society. We know they will enjoy our activities as much as the numerous things they are now doing.

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS - CONGRATULATIONS!

***** Bill is just in time for our Feb. Birthday as well as Patricia Rudolph, who joined last month, other birthdays are: Betty Summers, Mil Steeves, Helen Thomas, Thelma Ewalt, Bill Lanzendorf John Thorpe, Barbara Sirkus, Chas. Choate, Jim Woodman, Laurie Dager, Myrtle Johnson, Abe Lincoln and George Washington.

***** Speaking of Abe Lincoln - this is 175 years since his birth and there are many special activities to celebrate this event. Some museums are having special displays. Historians are delving into not well known events in his life and more and more are agreeing that he was probably our GREATEST President.

We have had many friends coming and going, two special ones were Bill and Gladys Hillman from Mt. Clemens, Michigan. Gladys and Eileen Janess were girl-hood friends and have always kept in touch. They arrived on the morning of Jan. 14th, just in time to be guests for the Chamber of Commerce Dinner. Nice to keep in touch.

There have been many, many of our members, too many to put their names in the paper, who have been very ill lately with viruses, pneumonia, and other severe illnesses - Lila Schepler couldn't even go to the fantastic display of Human Hair ornaments by Carmelita Johnson. So many people were disappointed in missing this antique collection that she will bring some of them to our Hobby Corner at one of our regular meetings. But we are happy to announce that Linn Stuckenbruck is improving daily following his heart surgery.



CHATSWORTH MAN & WOMAN OF THE YEAR

DOREEN RUSEN was chosen WOMAN of the YEAR by the Chatsworth Chamber of Commerce at their lovely Installation dinner -- January 14, 1984..... Her greatest civic work was the 12 years she has given to support the Chats Jr. Baseball League. Her interest began when her sons Hart and Tony were members, but her devotion continues. She was the League President for 2 yrs. and in charge of their snack bar for 3 years....



DR. JOSEPH SCHURTER was the name suggested by the Chatsworth Coordinating Council and was selected to be THE MAN of the YEAR by the C.C.C. for his outstanding accomplishments. He is truly our Man of the Years, not only for his professional (having done orthodontic care for most of our children), but for his humanistic care and services for the less fortunate, when many times he has paid the rent or cared for a destitute family and other unsung acts.

She was also active in the Booster Club at Chatsworth High School, working in the Snack Bar there and as Corresponding Sec.. In this capacity she helped to raise over \$100,000 for equipment, which included uniforms for the drill team, academic decathlons, etc.

She and her husband, Bill, are our newest members of the Chatsworth Historical Society. We welcome them and know they will be as active in preserving our past for the future of our young people as they have in the development of the present physical and spiritual growth of our youth. More about Joe Schurter:

One of his greatest loves is doing things for our Rancho San Antonio, in Chatsworth -- he donated equipment for their Print Shop and the equipment for their Dental Clinic and assists in any of their needs and other projects. He was one of the first to work with the program for Battered Women of Los Angeles, since its real beginning 30 years ago. He has been on the budgeting committee for United Crusade 25 or 30 years and contributes to the Casa de Los Hermanos Abandoned Boys Home at 1027 S. Gramercy Pl. in Los Angeles.

He and his lovely wife, Rose, have been long-time members of the Chatsworth Historical Soc., not always active because of their many other priorities, but always supportive.

Other members of the C.H.S. seen at the C.C.C.s Installation in their "Salute to the 1984 Olympics" were: The Janesses, Woodmans, Bill Scheplers, Pampalones, Mr. & Mrs. Sirkus, Geneva Coulter, the Alwads & Sen. Ed Davis, and guests of Janesses - Bill & Gladys Hillman.

~~The Los Angeles Times had a beautiful story about our Catherine Mulholland - Jan. 5 1984.~~

For those of you who did not see the story, I have permission to use important parts of the article: We all know that she is the granddaughter of the famous William Mulholland who is the person credited with bringing water to our "desert" valley "making it bloom!"

He was also the inspiration for the controversial movie "Chinatown," the 1974 film which presented a dark view of the Valley's development in the 1930s. She says the story is steeped in fictional conspiracies and political corruption, but people like to believe in these conspiracies. She is often called Mrs. Mulwray, which was the family's name in the film.

Born in 1923, Mulholland remembers the Valley when it was still mostly farmland, and she grew up during the beginning of its transition to an urban area.

She has mined her own and her family's past—researching not only her well-known grandfather but other ancestors going back to the gold rush—for book and play material.

Her first play, "A Wedding in the Valley," written in the mid-1950s, won a Phelan Award, given annually to an artistic work by a native Californian.

She wrote a book, "Calabasas Girls," based on her mother, grandmother and great grandmother, "about homesteading in Calabasas, the squatters' wars and so forth, using family letters and documents."

She is working on a sequel, "Owensmouth Ladies," that approaches some of the same territory as "Chinatown," but from a much different point of view.

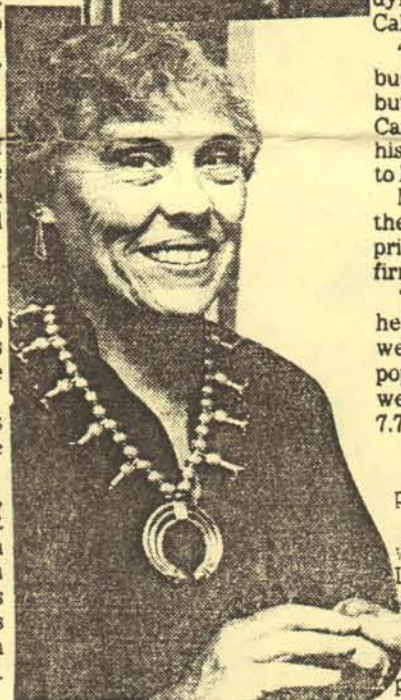
"It's about the founding of the small market towns of the Valley when the Los Angeles Syndicate, with the promise of water coming, bought the south half of the Valley from Isaac Van Nuys and Isaac Lankershim and founded the towns," in the decade after 1910.

'We'll Call It Van Nuys'

"I mean founded—they just decided, 'This is going to be a town here and we'll call it Van Nuys, and this is going to be Owensmouth.' That's Canoga Park now. The third town was Marion, which is Reseda now."

Town by town, she recalled, those farming centers voted to be annexed by Los Angeles to get access to the water her grandfather brought flowing from the Sierra.

She also has written "about 2,000 pages" of fiction, trying to develop a story about that land development era in the Valley. The central figure is based on a composite of several men who played important roles in the Valley's growth, including Gen. Harrison Gray Otis and Harry Chandler of the family that owns The Los Angeles Times, Moses Hazeltine Sherman (after whom both Sherman Way and Sherman Oaks are named), O.F. Brant, H.J. Whitley and W.P. Whitsett.



One room of her sizable home is dominated by a fierce-looking portrait of her grandfather, and she relishes telling the tale of the hard-knock odyssey that brought him to California.

"Grampa came from Ireland, from Dublin, and spent two years before the mast as an ordinary seaman on ships in the North Sea, just the roughest kind of life.

"He landed in the New World in Nova Scotia, made his way West and worked in a lumber camp in Michigan. His mother had relatives in Pittsburgh, and the story goes that he showed up on the doorstep just as they were dying of tuberculosis and deciding that Southern California would be a healthy place to go:

"He stowed away on a boat going around Cape Horn but got caught. Being a sailor, he could work his way, but the captain dumped him ashore in Panama, on the Caribbean side. He walked across the isthmus, worked his way on a ship to San Francisco and then came south to Los Angeles in 1879."

Mulholland the ex-sailor got a job as a ditch tender for the city waterworks and by 1886 was chief engineer of a private water company. When the city took over the firm in 1902, he stayed on.

"If he could come back and see what he did, I'm sure he'd feel vindicated. He'd say, 'Yeah, I predicted that if we got the water, Los Angeles County could have a population as big as 2.5 million.' How many million do we have now?" (The county's population is now almost 7.7 million.)

"He was a man of his time, and he really believed in progress, where we're not so happy with it.

"But one thing he'd be appalled by—the way people waste water. He hated to see one drop of water wasted. If he could see the runoff in the streets from people washing off their sidewalks with hoses just to get rid of a few leaves, that would shock his Victorian soul.

"He'd probably be mad at me for having a swimming pool."