

Chatsworth Historical Society

Box 102, Chatsworth, California

February, 1987.

Smoke Signal

LILA SCHEPLER, President, 341-3447
22335 Devonshire St., Chatsworth, CA 91311

Sheila Watts, Acting Editor, 341-4489

Program Meeting, February 17th
Glendale Federal Savings,
21821 Devonshire Street
Chatsworth

Refreshments at 7:30, program at 8, and the program will feature Lynn Gamble, a doctorate applicant at the University of California at Santa Barbara. Her subject will be, "Caves to Wickiups," with slides and a talk on the Chumash Indians.

Linn Stuckenbruck will show slides of two recent activities of the Society, the 1986 Chatsworth Parade and the rose pruning day at the Acre in January.

The Hobby Corner will be under the care of Eileen & Chuck Janess and delicious refreshments will be provided by our hostesses, Betty Summers and Millie Goff.

A line from Lila:

Celia Woodman has been editor of this paper for more than a decade. She made a valiant fight against her illness but passed away last week. Our Society will terribly miss her creative ideas, her drive, her interest in history, her capacity for caring for others. And most of all, her lovely self. Our sympathy goes out to Jim and the family.

Lila

Acting editor's note:

Celia Abby Woodman was born August 3, 1911 and passed away on January 31, 1987. A memorial service was held on Saturday, February 7.

The writer has not yet had the time to research the life of this fine and caring woman and a memorial will appear in the March issue of the Smoke Signal.

A memorial fund has been set up for Celia Woodman. Those wishing to contribute should send a check to the: Chatsworth Historical Society, P.O. Box 3102 Chatsworth Ca. 91313

WANTED!

Stories of human interest - happy, poignant, humorous: similar to the interesting yarns that Bill Schepler features in his Window into the Past.

We'd love to have such stories for future issues of the Smoke Signal so if you have such an anecdote about Chatsworth, either ancient or modern, please give me a call at 341-0430, tell me the story and I'll do the rest. Thanks, Sheila.

The Acre, including both the cottage and the museum, is closed to the public at the present time, continuing until April 5th. The reason for the closure is to give the Society an opportunity to renovate, clean, and refurbish the museum in particular. It has been seven years since the Acre was opened to the public. Many new artifacts have been donated and books have been added to the library, the costume collection has grown.

In the meantime, our hard working docents are meeting there three times each week for planning, cleaning and general work sessions each Monday, Thursday and Friday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The group needs any help you'd care to offer - this is truly an enormous undertaking. Ideas are needed regarding the remodeling of the Gift Shop, the storage of the costume collection, changing the display cases and other important decisions. Call Lila or Lillian and volunteer your help!



This has been a year of change - and that change includes a new location for the annual, fund raising yard sale. After a decade of holding the sale at the home of Iolene and Everett Cleveland, we've shifted the locale to the Acre.

We now have a storage container that allows us to store cast-off treasures all year round without bothering people at their homes.

This year the sale will be held the weekend of June 13/14 and already we need your help

1. Save your discards - nice reusable clothing, small working appliances, jewelry, tools, furnishings, curtains - you name it; and
2. Save grocery sacks; and
3. Call Lillian and volunteer to help set up, sell and clean up; and
4. Come to the sale and spend, spend, spend.

Memorial Bench Dedicated.

The bench that will serve as a lasting memorial to Virgil Heumann and purchased by friends and Society members in his honor was dedicated in ceremonies on Sunday, February 2nd at the large walnut tree at the Acre. The Reverend Myron White officiated, using water from the River Jordan in the rites.

Those attending the ceremony included Virgil's widow, Ruth; his son and daughter-in-law, Kevin and Karen; his brother and sister-in-law, Richard and Edna Heumann; Charles and Virginia Kaelson of Kansas City; Ruth's brother, Robert Schreck and his adopted daughter, Harrita Gregorczyk.

Nicole, Virgil's granddaughter, age eleven-and-a-half, summed up the thoughts of those present in a letter that said in part, "Grandpa, you were the best man I've ever met."

Chatsworth Historical
Society

VICTORIAN ARCHITECTURE, AN EXHIBIT!

The Victorian architecture of brothers Joseph and Samuel Newsome (1878-1908) is the subject of a 3 month exhibit at the Los Angeles Architectural Center, 1314 W. 25th Street, L.A.

Eleven samples of their Queen Ann influenced designs are still to be found in the southland including two in the valley, one at 13204 Judd St., in Pacoima and the second at 17410 Mayerling St., in Mission Hills. Several are located close to downtown Los Angeles.

In addition to the exhibit, lectures will be held regarding the brothers and their unique design styles including one at Harris Hall, USC on March 14.

Admission to the exhibit is \$3.50 for adults and \$2.50 for seniors and students.

We extend our condolences to member Louella Clark whose husband, Fred, died on January 27. The funeral service was held at Oakwood on February 2nd.

Trish Pluknett is suffering from a broken shoulder and we wish her a speedy recovery

Reminder on dates - next open house at the Acre, April 4; the Rose Festival will be May 9; the next meeting is next week, February 17; birthday meeting, March 17; nominations are coming up and voting will be held in April with installation in May.

We have received a \$100 donation from Lorna Ahlstrom, in memory of Ruben Ahlstrom, and this will be used to improve the Acre or the museum.

CONGRATULATIONS to the Chatsworth Woman's Club on 66 years of service to the community of Chatsworth. The group was organized on February 14, 1921 and is still going strong. What an interesting history that organization has - the writer remembers researching for an article in Out Our Way (mine and Virginia's former column in the old Green Sheet) sixteen years ago when the Woman's Club was to celebrate its 50th anniversary. That day was memorable - the day of the 1971 earth quake.

CONFERENCE OF CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETIES
SOUTHERN SYMPOSIUM

February 27 & 28, 1987
Ramona, California

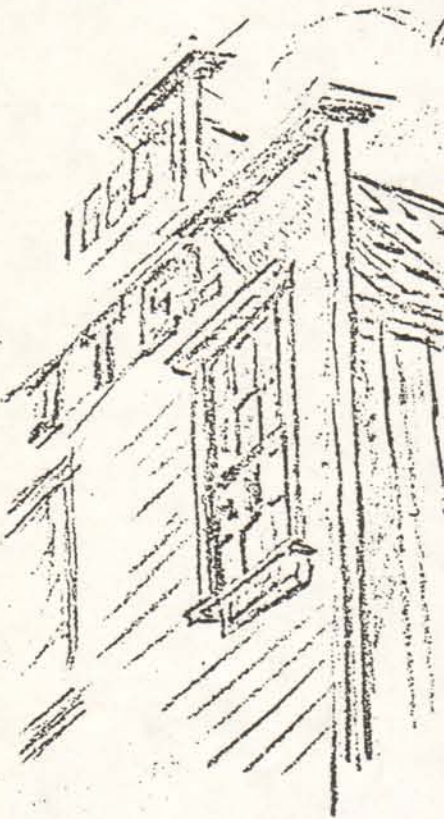
Hosted by: Ramona Pioneer Historical Society

Make your reservations now for the CCHS Southern Symposium in Ramona. The two-day agenda includes lectures, tours, music, dinners, and ample social opportunities to meet and mingle with CCHS members from across the state. Meetings of the Conference Board and Committees will also take place. Mr. Guy Woodward will be on hand to share stories about early Ramona history and introduce participants to the museum that bears his name. The San Diego area will also offer tourist opportunities such as the San Diego Wild Animal Park, the Historical Mining Town of Julian, and Palomar Observatory.

RESERVATION DEADLINE: February 15, 1987

For more information, contact Geneva Woodward, President of the Ramona Pioneer Historical Society, (619) 789-1062.

DIRT-CHEAP IN CHATSWORTH ?



In the modern sense of the word, Chatsworth was just about the last Community in the Valley to be subdivided. So late, in fact, that zoning and rezoning is still going on. But the fact is that Chatsworth was really one of the first communities to be subdivided. Lots and small farms were being sold here, in the 1880's, when most of the rest of the Valley was a vast grain field.

We even had the promoters selling land in the area to the eastern buyers before this century began- and not at give-away prices. Or, at any rate, not give-away prices compared to what it was being sold for in the 1930's.

In the thirties we had at least four real estate brokers who were active in the area. One of these still lives in the community, though he has been retired for a number of years. He is Frank Schepler Sr., who sold Chatsworth land for almost 40 years. Some of that land sold many times over. Recently he was cleaning out his files where he had copies of almost all of the escrows he had closed through those years. He was prevailed upon to give them to the Chatsworth Historical Soc. They make very interesting reading, especially some of the early ones which closed in the 1930's.

But before you read these figures try to think back to those days when we were in the midst of a deep depression throughout our country, as well as in Chatsworth. At that time we were a farming community; jobs were hard to come by- men made \$.20 to \$.30 per hour; child labor in the fields was not unknown and they were lucky to make \$.10 per hour picking up potatoes; or \$.10 a field box for picking tomatoes; or lots of people did piece work, such as \$.10 a lug for cutting and pitting apricots for drying.

So, when you hear that commercial half acres on De Soto St. with bearing Kadota figs were bringing \$300.00 each, you may not be surprised. Some lots without the figs sold for as little as \$200.00. If you were well fixed you could have bought the land where the lumber yards are on Marilla St., between Owensmouth and Topanga, for \$200.00 per acre from the Southern Pacific Railroad. The land was never sold as no one had that kind of money. But across the street to the South over 50 acres sold for \$250.00 per acre.

An interesting deal involved 20 acres north of Chatsworth Street and west of Canoga Ave. It was involved because it was owned jointly by a large family; and to make it even more complicated two of the family members were legally incompetent and their interest had to be cleared by court action. So by the time the broker found three buyers (who between themselves were willing to assume an obligation of \$7000.00) and cleared the title through all of the sellers he really earned his commission of \$350.00. But what made it even more interesting was when he got all of the papers together it was found the same family had owned the property from the 1890's and had paid taxes on it for over forty years. They received just about one third of what they had paid when it was originally purchased.

About those promoters selling Chatsworth land in the east to easterners- well, that is another story and a good one.

William Frederick Schepler
Oct.4,1972

Marian Hyland, Membership Chairman, reports:

On the membership roster mailed to each member, an omission was made that must be rectified - please add the following names to your list:

Charles and Betty Grill
9660 Delco Avenue
Chatsworth, CA 91311; 349-4440

Sincere apologies for this omission.

Welcome to Charlotte Brodie, a new member;
15043 Tuba St.,
Mission Hills, Ca 91345; 892-3862

And thank you to Suzanne Fenton for renewing her membership
9900 Gierson Ave
Chatsworth, CA 91311; 341-8422

USED BOOK SALE A GREAT SUCCESS!

Congratulations to Lillian Schepler, Ways and Means, and to her devoted helpers:

The grand total of \$958.10 was raised in three days at the annual sale of books and magazines at Topanga Plaza on Super Bowl weekend!

The committee included, Everett, Bill and Dave who helped deliver the books then reloaded them on Sunday with help from others that included Bill Schepler, Dean Craig, Ramon Avila, Lila Schepler, Jane Matthews, Virginia Watson, Marian Hyland, Millie Goff, George Meltzer, Eileen Janess, Candy Craig, Iolene Cleveland, Chuck Janess and Betty Summers. More are Felicia Robinson, Lucille Clements, Pauline Aue, Marlys Stuckenbruck, Sheila Watts and Sally Pollock.

Lillian says thanks to all!

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99 YEARS YOUNG!.....THAT'S CHATSWORTH!



On Tuesday, March 17th, at 7:30 p.m., in the faculty center at California State University, Northridge the annual birthday dinner of the Society will be held at which time the wearing of the green (or the orange) will be smiled upon! Cost of the dinner is \$15 per person and a tear-off coupon will be found elsewhere in the Smoke Signal to be returned to Lillian Schepler. We urge you to make your reservation soon so that you won't be disappointed and the deadline is March 10.!

Dr. Del Stelck will present a special showing of his multi-media program "San Fernando Valley, Crossroads of the Future," that he prepared in 1976 at the time of this country's bicentennial.

Plan to attend this program that will start the countdown to the really big celebration in 1988 of Chatsworth's 100th birthday!

TEAR OFF RESERVATION FORM

Please make _____ number of reservations for the dinner on March 17 at CSUN faculty center for:

Mr., Mrs., Ms., _____

Enclosed find \$15.00 per dinner; Amount \$ _____

(Please mail to Lillian Schepler, 10323 Larwin Ave., Chatsworth, 91311)
