

# Chatsworth Historical Society

Box 102, Chatsworth, California

March, 1987.

## Smoke Signal

Lila Schepler, president. 341-3447  
Sheila Watts, acting editor. 341-4489.

### 99th Birthday Celebration!

For this giant step forward toward our 100th birthday celebration next year, we need your enthusiastic support! We need lots of people to help blow out 99 candles and you'll never know unless you're there whether we have 99 candles - or 98!

The St. Patrick's Day event will be held March 17th at 7:30 p.m. at the faculty center at CalState University, Northridge when a delicious Chicken Kiev dinner will be served with all the trimmings and the dessert will be a delectable birthday cake. The decorations will be in keeping with the date - green, green, green and the leprechauns will be in evidence!

The program will be a video film of the highlights of the history of the San Fernando Valley for the last two hundred years.

This visual history of the valley was produced for our country's bicentennial in 1976 by Dr. Del Stelock, for many years professor of history at CSUN. Among the narrators and contributors is Cathleen Mulholland, noted author and member of the Chatsworth Historical Society.

The dinner cost is \$15 and checks should be mailed to Lillian Schepler, 10323 Larwin Ave., Chatsworth, CA 91311 and the deadline for reservations is March 10.

PLEASE COME and join this great celebration - a special day when we start the countdown to March 18, 1988, our town's centennial celebration.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Nominating Committee

Betty Summers is chairman of the nominating committee and she is asking for assistance in selecting the slate of officers for this coming year. Call her at 341-2714 if there is some suggestion you would like to make.

\*\*\*\*\*

### CORRECTION ON THE YARD SALE!

The first mistake I've made this year turned out to be a big one:

The annual yard sale will not be moved to the Acre this year but will be held as usual at the home of Everett & Iolene Cleveland. So - we still need your help in the way of cast-off treasures, paper bags, volunteers for both the sale and the pre-sale to price goods.

Circle the date: the weekend of June 13/14

\*\*\*\*\*

HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT

A lot of hard work has been accomplished by the museum and cottage committee. They've been meeting Monday, Thursday and Friday from 10 am to 1 pm and so far they've numbered the costume collection, renovating some items; they've catalogued the hundreds of artifacts that have been donated through the years. Other projects they're working on include the Frank Schepler Jr., library; building shelves in the various storage areas at the museum; a cast iron stove c. 1895 is being purchased and the love seat is to be re-upholstered in a fabric suitable for 1912.

Acid free storage containers for papers and photographs are being purchased, the photographs used in the museum are being cleaned and an inventory of the gift shop has been taken.

More needs to be done and your assistance would be appreciated. If you feel you can contribute an hour or so, visit the acre during the hours listed above. Re-opening date for the museum and cottage is April 5th and we'd like to have everything in top shape for that event.

Members of this committee include Chuck and Eileen Janess, Ruby Swan, Mary Kitchens, Milly Goff, Bette Butler, Virginia Watson, Lillian, Lila and Bill Schepler, Ramon Avilla and Dean Craig.

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*  
WATTS WHAT: The newsletter is much briefer this month because we needed to get it in the mail earlier than usual so that all would receive it before the March 10 deadline for dinner reservations for the celebration of our 99th birthday.

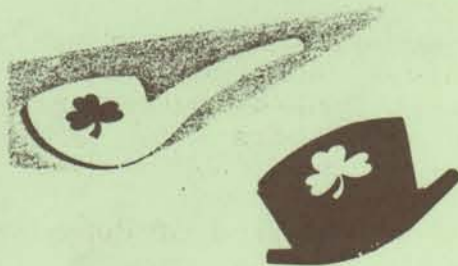
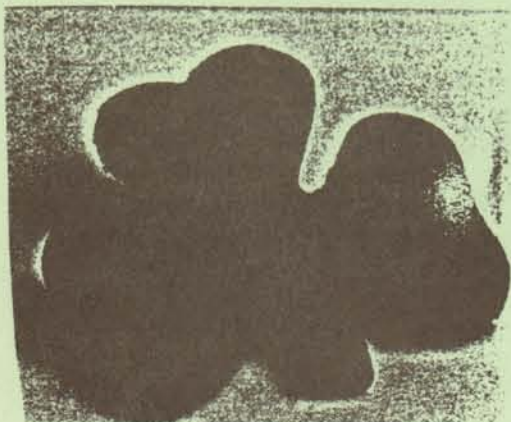
It will continue to be brief until I find the opportunity to call people and ask for news. If you have news of interest to the Society and its members, don't be shy - give me a call, 341-4489.

I have not had access to materials that Celia had, i.e., members birthdays so that part of the newsletter will not appear until I've organized a list. Perhaps there is someone out there who would love to call all the members and ask for their birthdates - dates not years.

Thanks to Eileen Janess for helping kick off a new section called Peeping through the Keyhole with her interesting story of the formation of the first Girl Scout troop in Chatsworth. The title, Peeping Through the Keyhole is Eileens and she plans on contributing other stories from out of the past.

It was great to see Helen Fladwed, Marlys Stuckenbruck, Margaret Sears and Ruby and John Campbell at the 1987 Founders Day program at Chatsworth Park Elementary School. The event was great, good food, good company - and did you know that PTSA (formerly PTA) is celebrating its 90th birthday this year.

Remember to send in your reservation IMMEDIATELY for dinner on March 17. In addition to the outstanding program, delicious meal and tasty cake, there'll be a door prize (known only to the editor.)



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 3103 Chatsworth Ca. 91313

A tribute to Celia Woodman.....

Celia Abby Jellison Woodman died on January 31, 1987. Celia had served as editor of the Smoke Signal for over a decade - but to all who knew her in the Society, Celia was much more than an editor. Celia was probably our most enthusiastic public relations person - a one-woman committee to expand the membership of the Chatsworth Historical Society. A tireless worker for any cause she espoused including the Chatsworth United Methodist Church for many years, and more recently the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints.

Celia was born August 3, 1911, to Frances Franklin Jellison and Alva Jellison in Lakewood, Col., a suburb of Denver. She remained in that area during her growing-up years. However, when Celia was 12 years old her father died. Her mother returned to work to support Celia and her siblings, Eleanor and Alva. Responsibility for mothering the other two children became Celia's and possibly for this reason she spent the rest of her life helping others.

In 1933, Celia was graduated from the Mercy Hospital in Denver as a registered nurse. On July 4, 1934, Celia and Jim were married at the South Broadway Christian Church in Denver. Her Christian belief in helping others allowed her to open her home to all those in need - cousins, friends, neighbors. In 1949, Celia and Jim became foster parents, 2 brothers became part of the family that already included Jim and Celia's two children James Peter and Willa "Jeanne"

In 1950, Celia returned to nursing, first at Valley Presbyterian Hospital and then at Northridge Hospital. On learning that there were openings in the City Schools for nurses, Celia applied but was told she'd never make it - a teaching credential was required. Undaunted, Celia went back to school, this time to the new San Fernando State college - and was the first to receive a health education degree! She served as nurse at Chatsworth Park Elementary School, Sequoia Junior High and Taft High School.

Throughout her life, Celia had need to provide service to others and one example came about when neighbor Bill's wife died and he was in need of someone to look out for him. For two years she gave him round the clock care - and this while she was already in her seventies.

A memorial service was held at the Chatsworth Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints on February 7 when Bishop M. Reed McPhie officiated and the eulogy given by Roger S. Garrik, president. The hymn, "Nearer My God to Thee," was sung by Lana Smith, Ardyth Larsen and Eileen Yoder.

In addition to her husband, Jim, Celia is survived by her sister, Eleanor, of Washington; brother, Alva, of Colorado and her two children, James and Jeanne; grandchildren Derek, Kelly, Shelly, Kimberly, Frank, Peter and Beth and great grandchildren, Blake, Jessie, Luke, Joshua, Cory and Deidre.

In an open letter to the congregation of her church, Celia asked that in lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the church missions to ensure help for those who help others. To date a sum of \$2000 has been donated in her memory. The family has tried to send personal thank you notes to all of these people but may have missed some - the list seems incomplete. In that case, Jim sends his sincere thanks to all who contributed in memory of Celia.

Celia will always hold a special place in the hearts of her friends in the Chatsworth Historical Society.

\*\*\*\*\*

## PEEKING THROUGH



THE KEYHOLE

An invitation to a PTA meeting started it all.

We, my husband and I and our three children, arrived in California in late June. How it happened that we were living in our trailer on property we had purchased, through Frank Schepler Sr., here in Chatsworth less than three weeks later is another story. Let's say that we felt drawn here and were never sorry. Perhaps being a bit homesick and wanting to get acquainted with Chatsworth folks, I happily accepted Collette Parsons friendly invitation to that meeting.

Gordon Watts spoke that day, pleading for Den Mothers for the Cub Scouts. With one son nearly finished with Cubbing and one son ready to start - and having been a Den Mother for two years for #1 son, I had hoped to find a place in a Den here for #2 son. Guess who became a Den Mother on the spot. This was definitely not in my plan.

Then I asked if there was a Girl Scout Troop in Chatsworth. Having been in scouting since 1922, first as a Girl Scout, then a leader for 12 years and committee member for 8 years in Michigan, I thought it would be fun visiting a California troop. My daughter was only 5-1/2 so I couldn't get involved in that, right? Wrong. "No, we don't have," was the quick reply, "but we want one." I was immediately taken across the room to meet Dorothy Watts and the next day we met Mary Lowery up at Twin Lakes. Both women had daughters of scout age who wanted to be Girl Scouts.

On October 25th the first meeting of Pine Cone Troop 81 was held in an empty store building called the Civic Hall, on the S.E. corner of Devonshire St., and Owensmouth Ave., with the American Legion Auxiliary, Mrs. Virginia Somerville, their representative, and the Civic Club, who gave us our meeting place, as co-sponsors, Mrs. Mary Lowery, neighborhood chairman, and with Dorothy Watts, Co-leader and as Leader, you know who.

The troop was registered in December and in January 1947 we had our first Investiture Ceremony. Fifteen girls, Co-Leader and Leader and five mothers who formed the Troop Committee took part.

Three large scrap books packed full of stories, publicity, pictures, records etc., tell of Troop 81's seventeen glorious years of growing, learning, serving and enjoying good times. All this was possible because of the dedication of many adults who gave of their time. There were loyal co-leaders, mothers who served in many ways, on or off the committee, mothers and dads who provided transportation, shared their skills, instructed in various fields - the list is endless.

Some of the members of the Historical Society were involved in the troop long before there was a Society, Lila and Bill Schepler, Virginia Watson, Helen Fladwed and Felicia Robinson to name a few. Without the help of all of these supporters who so tirelessly gave of themselves, the loving support of my husband, Chuck, who was always ready to pitch in when needed and the cooperation of our three children, Don, Bill and Charleen (a Scout in the troop when she was old enough, of course), I couldn't have had the joy of being the leader over all these years and I am ever so grateful to each and everyone who had a part in it but the very best part of all were the very special girls who were in the troop, many who are now grandmothers. It is always a joy to hear from them and especially to hear about things many are doing in Scouting now.

This was the first troop in Chatsworth and now there are 32 Troops here. A girl can get into the program from age 4-1/2, the Daisy age, through Senior Scouts, Mariners. This was only the beginning. Perhaps someday, if you're interested, I can give you another, "Peek Through the Keyhole" for there's a lot to share.

GIRL SCOUTING IS 75 YEARS OLD MARCH 12, 1987.

Eileen Janess  
March, 1987