

Chatsworth Historical Society

Box 3102, Chatsworth, California

Virginia Watson President
 Sheila Watts Editor
 December 1987

Smoke Signal

Christmas Party!



The party will be held in the cottage starting at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, December 15. As we have in the past, each member will bring a small plate of cookies or tiny

sandwiches to share for refreshments. The society will provide punch, tea and coffee. Wear your holiday finery and enjoy the social atmosphere. This year we will bring presents for a teenage boy or girl, unwrapped. These gifts are in lieu of exchanging gifts ourselves and will be given to FISH.

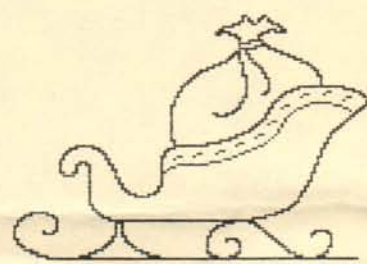
From the President:

The holiday season is upon us, a time for family and friends and a time for us to enjoy Christmas at the Homestead Acre. The docents have decorated the house and museum with the treasures we have salvaged from the yard sales and the lovely antiques and collectibles given to us by members and supporters. It is lovely as usual and each year reflects the character of those who decorate. It is also a time for enjoying the fruits of our labors. Each and every one of us has contributed to the success of our almost twenty five years of historical society ventures - and some of our adventures! Everyone has worked to make the Homestead Acre what it is today--a bit of the past to save for our children and grand children to show them how people used to live.

The Chamber of Commerce Christmas Parade is Sunday, December 13 at 1 p.m. The route is Devonshire Street from Topanga Canyon to Mason Avenue.

We have rented a surrey and the theme is, "Going Home for Christmas, Chatsworth, 1888." Lila and Bill, Millie Goff, Betty Summers and Marian Hyland will ride in the surrey wearing their costumes plus scarves and stoles etc. They'll have

packages and be on their way to Grandmother's house to celebrate Christmas. Many, many thanks to Louise Roberts for her \$200 donation so that we could



have a float in the parade.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS - Virginia.

 We have a new part time gardener; his



name is Albert Redondo and he lives in Canoga Park. He will be working approximately two Wednesdays each month for the present. He also

works part time at Orcutt Park and we are very lucky to have him. Candy and Dean have been working with him, showing him what needs to be done.

 Wedding Bells.....

Gail Lombardi and Bill Schepler were married in a recent ceremony in Granada Hills with a reception immediately following at the Porter Valley Country Club. Ed Schepler served as his brother's best man.

It was a beautiful wedding with the bridesmaids wearing formal red dresses,

Wedding Bells continued.....

and the men wearing black tuxedos with red accessories.

Proud mother, Lillian, looked beautiful in grey silk complimented with a red rose corsage.

The reception included a delicious luncheon enjoyed by two hundred people. The young couple will make their home in Northridge.

We have quite a number of society members to keep in our thoughts and prayers:

Ed Mitchell was hospitalized Thanksgiving Day for what was believed to be a heart attack. Eddie has helped the society in so many ways through the years and his help is appreciated. He has had tests made and is now home, reportedly feeling much better.

Eleanor Schepler has been ill recently though she was able to attend our October meeting. She must take it easy for a while and is on oxygen.

Marian Hyland has been ill with an ear problem.

Ioline and Everett Cleveland are back in town from Nebraska but Ioline is still not well. Now she has an ulcer and will have to be very careful - however, she is still diligently working on the history of the elementary school and is gathering material for the February program.

Louise Roberts is to have knee surgery on December 3 to relieve an athritic condition

and we are praying for the success of this surgery.

Ruth Heumann will have foot surgery on December 10 but feels sure she'll be at the Christmas party.

Centennial plans are coming along but we need you to PLEASE submit the names and addresses of former residents, young or old, who can be contacted to join the 100th birthday celebration. Submit this information to:

Sheila Watts
Nature's Flower Garden
21000 Devonshire St
Chatsworth, CA 91311 or:
Phone 341-0480

USED BOOK SALE!

The annual book sale will be held as usual at Topanga Plaza on the weekend of January 22, 23 and 24. Please call me to arrange for pick up of used books; to arrange to work on the sale days.

We need your books, your help at the sale and your support in anyway for this great fundraiser.

Lillian Schepler,
Chairman, 341-2697

Docents.....

January 3rd will be the first open house of the birthday year and the docents on duty will be:

Virginia Watson, Zena Thorpe, Marlys Stuckenbruck and Nancy Razanski.

SWAN SONG.....

The editor was taken to task by a concerned member for illustrating the November issue with a swan - misleading readers into believing that swan would be included in the Thanksgiving dinner fare fare at the Watts. Sorry but much as your editor loves swans - it's from afar!

Several centuries ago in England, all manner of fowl was served - usually as a delicacy and these included swans, pea hens and peacocks. The custom then was to make a pie of the fowl, shape the crust to form the bird and then replace the feathers to simulate the original bird - the swan was usually depicted sleeping to avoid baking the long graceful neck. These were culinary triumphs on a par to serving a piglet with an apple in its mouth.

P.S. The Watts served the traditional American fowl - a turkey.

On Sunday, November 29th, Billand Lila Schepler observed the first anniversary of the fire that destroyed their kitchen by hosting a neighborhood get together to say thank you to the great neighbors who pitched in to help them when they were in need of help and support.

AN ELIZABETHAN POMANDER

These fragrant orange pomanders were a sign of good luck and were given to friends to bring good luck to the New Year.

You'll need an ounce of whole cloves for each medium sized orange. Make small holes about a quarter of an inch deep with a darning needle or strong tooth pick all over an orange. Place a clove in each hole, as close together as possible.

Take a large teaspoon of orris root and a teaspoon of powdered cinnamon, sprinkle on a sheet of wax paper. Roll the orange over and over, thread a satin ribbon through the orange from end to end. Wrap the be-ribboned orange tightly in the wax paper and leave it in a dark closet for two weeks so that it can absorb the fragrance. Turn once or twice.

Renew its fragrance at any time for replacing it in wax paper for a week or so with the orris root and cinnamon powders.

From the December issue of British Heritage.

Historical Society-sponsored quilt illustrates Chatsworth's early years

Ruth Grant and 10 talented needlewomen from the West Valley are stitching 100 years of Chatsworth history into the community's centennial quilt.

A project sponsored by the Chatsworth Historical Society, the quilt will be exhibited for the first time at the centennial birthday party on March 10 at Chatsworth Park South. Subsequently, it will be entered in the San Fernando Valley Quilter's show, then hung permanently in the Chatsworth Museum at the Homestead Acre in Chatsworth Park South.

Measuring 68 by 76 inches, the coverlet is done in greens and browns with accents of pink and orange and other lighter colors. The six large appliqued and embroidered squares are artistic renditions of photographs in the Chatsworth Historical Society collection. The centerpiece, in a diamond shape surrounded by patchwork, is an interpretation of the Hill-Palmer cottage, named to the National Register of Historic Places as the only remaining homestead cottage with surrounding gardens and fruit trees left in the San Fernando Valley.

The pioneer theme is further carried out in the two patchwork patterns used to integrate the squares and link the designs together. The quilters chose "The Road to California," a pattern popular in the 1880s when the town of Chatsworth was founded, and "Northwind," used because the winter winds are so much a part of life in the area.

"Everything on the quilt has significance," said Grant who was appointed chairwoman of the quilt committee by Lila Schepler, 1986-87 president of the society. A well-known needlewoman, Grant also worked on the celebrity quilt authorized by Los Angeles County for the United State's bicentennial.

At its first meeting, the committee compiled a long list of what the women thought was important to include in the design.

"One person would suggest something — and another person would add on to that . . . and it just developed," said Grant who put the ideas together into the design. She and Carmelita Johnson made the drawings and each woman chose a drawing and took it home to create a square.

Grant chose to make the square with the likeness of the first school applied on it because her mother was a Valley schoolteacher whose first teaching assignment back in 1922-23 was at the Chatsworth Park Elementary School. The scene used in the quilt is the school built in 1890; however Grant's mother, Ruth Cullen, taught in the building constructed in 1917. Her family had lived in Van Nuys and it was too far to commute so she lived in the living quarters upstairs over the classrooms.

"The four corners of the quilt are a botanical profile of the area," she said, with walnut, olive, oak and orange trees represented. The border is made to look like film to symbolize the many movies made in the vicinity.

Other squares represent Stoney Point, a unique rock formation rich in archeological information that is now a city park; the Pioneer Church built in 1903, nearly demolished in 1963 but saved and restored by the Chatsworth Historical Society; a stagecoach that went through the Santa Susana Pass and a movie scene.

There are roses scattered around the quilt, a reminder of the many roses at the Homestead Acre and there are horses to signify the big horse ranches that were so much a part of the area's most recent history. Sunbonnets symbolize the historical society members who wear pioneer costumes when they give tours at the acre and talk about Chatsworth's history. And there is a big birthday cake with candles.

Jan Formanek, a local resident and a long-time friend of Grant's, assisted with the quilt. Formanek is a National Quilting Association certified teacher and certified judge who teaches at the Simi Valley Adult School and Mission College in San Fernando. She has served as a judge at the San Fernando Valley Fair for the past two years.

Margaret Perkins, who also worked on the quilt, is a member of the San Fernando Valley Quilter's Association.

Zena Thorpe, who appliqued the center square, "was born with a silver needle in her hand," said Grant admiringly, while praising the work of all the quilters. Other

women who worked on the quilt are Millie Goff, Marian Hyland, Dorothy Sammartano, Betty Summers and Jackie Sylvestre. Roberta Weinstein, well-known in Chatsworth for knitting tablecloths to be raffled for local causes, knit a tiny tablecloth that was sewn under the birthday cake in the square on the bottom of the quilt.

A tiny pink-costumed ballerina is the personal touch of the chairwoman. Grant was in Copenhagen, Denmark, when Heather Watts, a local dancer now with the New York City Ballet, was acclaimed for her outstanding performance. Grant experienced such personal pride in seeing a hometown artist performing in a foreign land that she added a little detail to symbolize all the young people who grew up in the area and went on to national recognition.

The final piece to be added is a modified version of the coat-of-arms of the Duke of Devonshire. The Chatsworth Chamber of Commerce uses the coat-of-arms with the permission of the 10th Duke of Devonshire because the area is believed to have been named for his home in Derbyshire, England, called Chatsworth House.

The reverse side of the quilt is as unique as the front. Throughout the summer the muslin backing was made available to the public for signatures. Adults paid \$1 and children paid 50 cents for the privilege of signing their names in India ink. Money collected was used to help defray costs.

Now, after the last stitch has been put in place and everyone is satisfied that nothing more should be added, each quilter will embroider her name, finalizing the quilt for display.

By VIRGINIA WATSON
Daily News Community Correspondent

-NEIGHBORS / WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1987 / DAILY NEWS



CENTENNIAL QUILT Committee *from left:*
Zena Thorpe, Margaret Perkins, Carmelita Johnson, Millie Goff
Ruth Grant, Chairman, Jan Formanek, Ruth Ball and Marian Hyland.