Thatsworth, California 1888 - 1988 smoke signal April, 1988

Chatsworth Historical Society Chatsworth, California Volume 25, No. 4B Virginia Watson, President Sheila Watts, Editor

Chatsworth Historical Society celebrates 25th Anniversary!

There will be a general program meeting on Tuesday, April 19 at 7:30 p.m. in the community room of Glendale Fedeal Savings, 21821 Devonshire Street, Chatsworth.

Jane Matthews, program director, will introduce the speaker for the evening - Dr. David Hornbeck, Professor of Geography and Director of Business Research at Calif.State University, Northridge. Dr. Horbeck's topic will be the economics and growth in the San Fernando Valley - this is another lecture in our Centennial series.

The meeting is an important one and we hope you will attend and bring a friend.

Let's Celebrate!

For the Society's 25th anniversary, a trip to the Getty Museum in Malibu has been planned. We'll travel by double decker bus from the Homestead Acre, visit the Getty and eat lunch in the lovely tearoom. Here are the details:

We'll meet at the Acre at 12:30 p.m. on Sunday, April 24th (parking on the grassey area reserved for the Society); the bus will leave at 1 p.m. sharp - cost of riding the bus is a minimal \$5 per seat. Lunch will also be inexpensive but must be purchased there (no brown bagging).

The J. Paul Getty Museum is one of seven programs of the J. Paul Getty Trust a private operating foundation devoted to the visual arts. The museum houses permanent collections of Greek & Roman antiquities, pre-twentieth century Western European paintings, drawings, sculpture, illuminated manuscripts, decorative arts, and ninetheenth-and twentieth century European and American photographs. The building itself is a re-creation of a first century—A.D. Roman Country Villa, with interior and exterior gardens.

The setting is high above the Pacific Ocean and offers a panoramic view of the Channel Islands.

There are 43 seats on the upper deck of the bus and 31 on the lower deck. Your reservations are a MUST - please call Zena Thorpe at 882-3572 or Sheila Watts, 341-4489 and request upper or lower deck.

President's Message:

Not only are we celebrating the Chatsworth Centennial this year, we are also celebrating the Silver Anniversary of the Chatsworth Historical Society. Maybe you will remember that that is where we got the theme for our installation last May.

Our Smoke Signal editor, Sheila Watts, has spent a lot of time and work preparing for this special edition of our newsletter to make note of our Silver Anniversary. We are also celebrating with a bus tour which you will read about elsewhere in this issue.

The past 25 years have been crammed with activity—naming monuments, saving and rehabilitating the church and the Hill-Palmer cottage, lecture series, developing docent tours, keeping up the Homestead Acre and many other events.

All these events were made possible because we are a unique group with varied skills. As you read the highlights of these 25 years you will see the different skills that contributed to the success of each event.

We have been a group of diverse people with a single purpose, there has been a unity of spirit that allowed us to accomplish the impossible. We have had people willing to sacrifice their own pleasures, their own vacations and other personal onals for the oned of the Society. We have had people who were not out to gain any personal glory nor to build any personal monuments, just a group of people who wanted to preserve a little bit of the past so that their children, grandchildren and others could learn from the past.

learn from the past.
This issue of the Smoke Signal is dedicated to all those members who have helped us to reach this point in our history.

This issue also looks forward to the next year and the years beyond. Like most organizations today the social changes in our community life have affected the membership in the Chatsworth Historical Society.

President's message continued:

There are more demands on everyone's time, many of our members have passed away and those who were there in the beginning are 25 years older. We are not attracting new members with the same unselfish dedication to a purpose.

It is time to think of revitalizing our group!

One of the ways that Jane Matthews and I propose to do this is to cut down on the numbers of program and board meetings to take care of business. There could be four program meetings a year and four formal board meetings to take care of business. Special board meetings could be called at will. Docents could have daytime meetings to discuss the problems involved in showing the Acre. In that way we can have more school children tours because many of our docents are also board members and have regular duties for each meeting. Fewer meetings would free them to be docents more often.

We have completed almost all the planning details for having weddings at The Acre and will begin in June having ceremonies which will also take more member participation. The Department of Recreation & Parks has been most helpful in assisting with our grounds and maintenance and with the planning of our wedding program.

All these events will take changes in the by-laws and the changes will be published in the May issue of the Smoke Signal so that they can be voted upon in June to take effect immediately. If they are agreed upon, we will meet in March, May, September and November of next year.

From the beginning the Chatsworth Historical Society members have been a forward-thinking group. We smiled when they called us "The Hysterical Society" and kept on with our plans and completed them. Hopefully, the next few years will be filled with the same dedicated purpose we have had in the past—to save a little bit of the past for the future.

Vorgen

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MEMBERSHIP REPORT!
An important
message about
Membership & Fees
from Marian Hyland,
Membership Vice
President:

No! Our fees are not being raised. We hope you will continue to support us in this way making it possible for us to continue with our present dues, as follows:

LIFE MEMBERSHIP	\$100.00
SINGLE YEARLY MEMBERSHIP	\$10.00
DUAL YEARLY MEMBERSHIP	\$15.00
STUDENT YEARLY MEMBERSHIP	\$1.00

These dues are payable by June 1st of each year and become delinquent October 1st. However, if you join our Society after March 1st your dues are paid up to June

of the following year. At the present time we have 8 Honorary Members, 55 Life Members and 93 annual members and of these 51 are paid up to June 1988 and 42 are in arrears.



We do realize how time flies and perhaps you would like to have a little reminder that could

like to have a little reminder that could be filled out and returned with your dues.

We want to put together an updated roster to include all the new members and we hope we can still include YOU.

Our mailing address is:

Chatsworth Historical Society P.O. Box 3102 Chatsworth, CA 91313 Attention: Marian Hyland, Membership

Better yet, meet me at our next meeting or at any other coming event and I shall be delighted to give you a new, updated membership card.

Looking forward to hearing from you - or seeing you, real soon -

A note from the editor:

A few weeks ago, the writer offered to publish a special 25th anniversary issue of the Smoke Signal without realizing the amount of research this would call for - let alone the amount of typing involved. The reality is now - so instead of producing the very ambitious newsletter promised, this month you will receive a few highlights from the 25 year span of our Society and in subsequent issues more of the highlights will be recounted.

The research started in the Frank Schepler, Jr. library with the collection of Smoke Signals available there and continued with some historian's files loaned by Virginia Watson. At least 3 former presidents responded to a letter I wrote asking for memories of their years in office. Lila Schepler who held the presidency more than any other individual was unable to write because of her recent surgery and the death of Eleanor. I think it unfair to leave out the information from the valuable former presidents who need more time so the deadline is extended.

First we'll hear from our first president, Charles Janess who helped us with our first project, saving the church - next we'll touch on highlights through the years then we'll hear from Jane Matthews who headed the Society when we tackled the preservation of the Acre.

DOWN MEMORY LANE.....

From Charles Janess:

In 1962 the Chatsworth Methodist Church needing more room and parking sold the property south of Devonshire St., on Topanga Canyon Blvd to John Spinks, a developer, then leased that property from him until the congregation moved to the new location north of Chatsworth Street on Topanga in May, 1963.

As soon as the old church was sold in 1962, Katharine Johnson, history & landmarks chairman of the Chatsworth Woman's Club, and devoted member of the Methodist Church, began checking on the possibility of moving the church to preserve it. Mr. Spinks planned to demolish it to make way for a development.

When Katharine learned that the only way to preserve the church was to have it declared an historic monument she enlisted the aid of others including Virginia Watson and a small group of church members including the writer. I was asked to chair the committee, Virginia was secretary and Katharine was the dynamo that kept us in action.

Our sole purpose was to save the church. After numerous trips into Los Angeles and tons of paper work, the building was declared an historical monument in March of '63. (Los Angeles Historic Monument #14.)

I had the honor of being the the founding president with a fine board of directors. In November of that year, Oakwood Memorial Park Association offered a suitable site for the church - then in April of 1964, John Spinks gave us the building. Fund raising to move it was the next project but in May of '64 my presidency ended abruptly due to a heart attack. Vice President, Lila Schepler, stepped in to finish my term. In reality I did more founding than serving as president but I am glad I had a part in it.



Thanks, Chuck we enjoyed your view of our early days.

In going over our files from those days, the writer found the poig nant photograph from the front page of the Los Angeles Times for January 31, 1965. There is the church just seconds after it rolled a few feet onto Topanga Canyon Boulevard, a youthful Frank Schepler, Jr., is standing in the west lane of the boulevard, watching for traffic but smiling widely; standing on the traffic island are ten year old Heather Watts and her brother Kevin (9).

Frank and Bill Schepler put so much time and effort into the moving of the church - taking down fences, helping wherever needed and looking back, we know that the project would have been nearly impossible without their very able assistance.

In 1964 we hosted a really lovely reception at the home of Roy and Dale Evans to thank the Spinks family for giving us the edifice. Klara Spinks Fleming represented the family and there were numerous dignitaries on hand for the festivities.

We have not only had a number of wonderful people serve as president we've had a number of different people serve as newsletter editor, some on a temporary basis and some on a quite permanent basis. I was an early scribe and I had this really old IBM electric typewriter — it qualified for the Smithsonian, I'm sure. I also had the advantage of owning a mimeograph machine — we bought it by secret bid from the Methodist Church when the church acquired a new one.

Looking through the Smoke Signals during recent research I think Leuise Mitchell's typewriter had the prettiest print and Colette Parsons had the funniest contributions—she claimed that all the typographical errors in one issue were caused by a streaker she viewed on Farralone Avenue while typing.

Virginia Watson took her turn at chronicling our monthly concerns and it was from Virginia that I found mention that in 1966 we held a Kentucky Fried chicken picnic in the church that was dark and gloomy as there was neither water nor lights. We made light of this but I wonder how we would have felt if we'd known that we wouldn't have lights until 1981!

In 1967 Garvin Aulepp was president and a highlight of his term was a tour of valley historic sites ending with a climb up the stage ocach trail.

In 1968 Lila was installed as president at the Canoga park Motor Inn while the following year saw Lillian being installed as president at theRocket Bowl and Rosalie Aulepp was in charge of the festivities.

June of 1969 we toured the Iverson ranch and museum-something we did not repeat for another decade.

We hasd a dinner at the Frank Schepler, Jrs., in 1970 for which we charged \$2 per person - so that we could make a few dollars to paint the church. One can't help wondering what we paid for the food! Ginny Craig entertained with guitar music.

In 1971 when Lila was president, Chatsworth Park South was dedicated and we raised \$515.55 with the Clevelan's yard sale.

When wwe celebrated Chatsworth's 85th birthday in 1973 the population of our town was 27,800.

Colette Parsons was newsletter editor in 1974 and she and Milton were busy with of "Abraham & Isaac" for St. Martin's in the Field. On our birthday in March, Security Pacific held a week long Pioneer Days to coincide with our festivities.

From Jane Matthews, 1979-1980 president

During my term, the CHS began restoration of the HIll-Palmer House on what is now known as the Homestead Acre. Minnie was now living in a retirement home. I suddenly found myself in charge of a large project which seemed a bit overpowering with our limited resources - both finanaces and bodies - and with not much assistance from the city. We were fortunate enough to have Ed Miller, Director of the California Conservation Corps on Oat Mountain, bring in his crew (between brush fires), to strip & paint the exterior of the house and what we now call the Chatsworth Museum. This was the former golf pro shop moved in from the course when it became Chatsworth Park South. It was used for storage.

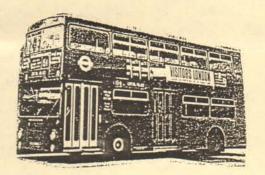
The CCC washed the walls and, after the carpet was installed, helped move in the diaplay cases. Ramon Avila supervised them in Other CHS members the assembling of a small storage shed. assisted with carpentering, painting, masonry, electrical work, etc. Several Boy Scouts did extensive weeding, stripped the old linoleum from the house floor, and helped paint the interior. The work was begun in July. One challenge was ridding the space under the house of a family of five skunks, who were loathe to go. One was trapped and the others left. By September we were Among those who able to have a pot luck luncheon in the museum. attended were Carl Dentzel and his son, Paul. Carl had long been a friend of the Society. The house is Los Angeles Historic monument No. 133. During the year Virginia Watson and I went to meetings which resulted in the house being listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

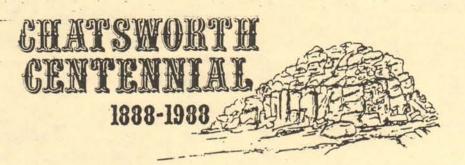
In the Fall I applied for and was awarded a small grant from the California Council for the Humanities for a series of four lectures - A Sunday Afternoon of Southern California History-which began on February 3. This featured four professors who spoke about Valley history. This was followed by six Saturday Morning Seminars with programs supplied by Lila Schepler, with assistance from husband Bill, which concluded with a field trip to various historical sites in Chatsworth. These were very well attended. On May 4, Minnie was able to attend the dedication of the homestead and was pleased with what she saw. What an exciting year.



HILL-PALMER HOUSE, CHATSWORTH, CALIFORNIA

Don't forget: to make reservations for the bus trip to pay your dues, if they're due to attend the April 19 meeting & vote!





CHATSWORTH CENTENNIAL 1888 - 1988 Calendar of Events for 1988 Issue No:1

	Issue No:1
April 9	Chatsworth Chamber of Commerce, Day at the Races at Santa Anita. Bus leaves Chamber office at 9:15 a.m. Info. 341-2428.
April 8,9,10	Chatsworth High School's 25th anniversary carnival, school football field; info Donna Wyatt, 341-6211.
April 19	Chatsworth Historical Society's 25th anniversary; Glendale Federal, 7:30 P.m., guest speaker.
April 21	Chamber of Commerce Youth Business Day; info 341-2428.
April 24	Historical Society Silver Jubilee - double-decker bus trip to Getty Museum; info 882-3572.
April 24	Santa Susana Mountain Pk Assn; Centennial Saunter (hike) meet at Chatsworth Park South at 9 am.
May 14	Chatsworth Historical Society "Pioneer Days," at Homestead Acre, Chatsworth Park South, 11a.m. to 3 p.m.
May 21	Chamber of Commerce Western Days at Rancho San Antonio, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Chili cook-off and entertainment.
May 22	S.S.M.P.Assn., Centennial hike; meet at Chatsworth
1147 22	Park South at 9 a.m.
June 3	Chatsworth Community Coordinating Council Awards Dinner; Porter Valley Country Club; 7:30 p.m.; info 882-3572
June 26	S.S.M.P.Assn; Centennial Hike; meet at Chatsworth
	Park South at 9 a.m.
July 4	Park South at 9 a.m. Happy Birthday America! Tri Chamber Fireworks spectacular, Devonshire Downs at 5:00 p.m.
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Eleanor Declements Schepler -

My mother, Eleanor DeClements Schepler, was born March 15, 1894 in Detroit Michigan. A city very much in the shadow of Chicago; where two years before had been staged the greatest World's Fair ever held. Henry Ford was the Chief Engineer of the Edison Company that had just brought electric power to town (power for street cars and street lighting). Two years were to pass before Mr. Ford was to build the first motor car.

Chatsworth Park had been a recorded sub-division for six years - one of the last recorded sub - divisions of the boom of the eighties in Southern California. Both Minnie Hill Palmer and Emma Johnson were young girls in this very small community (about 20 people). All three of these women were destined to be next door neighbors for many years.

Eleanor attended school in Detroit and graduated from High School, as Detroit became famous as Eleanor attended school in Detroit and graduated from High School, as Detroit became famous as the Motor Capital of the World. She soon met my father and they entered married life with a motorcycle and side car. That had to go after I was bounced out into a big mud puddle. Their first car had the luxury of an added-on electric starter. With that feature my mother taught herself to drive and was seen all over town (no driver's license was required then). Speaking of driver's licenses, Eleanor was quite proud of the fact that she still had one. In fact, she passed the written test just last year with a perfect score.

There were three sons born to them, one of whom died in infancy. They had heard of Southern California so at the end of World War I they took a train trip out here where they toured most of the area. They even spoke of Sherman Way with the Pacific Electric Railroad and the young palm trees.

There was no question: this was the place to be! So, in 1921, with two sons, a maid, a police dog (and his dog house), the train pulled into Los Angeles. For the first couple of weeks they lived in a hotel on the east side of Pershing Square. I remember there was a nice new hotel being built across the Park, It is still there with the same name, "The Biltmore". ing built across the Park,

My mother encouraged my father to enter the Real Estate business and they settled at the end of the street car line at Los Angeles High School. It was open fields and farms west of them. Wilshire Blvd. was a tree lined, two lane country road running through oil fields, dairies and farms all the way to Santa Monica. That was the raw material Dad helped sub-divide and sell.

In 1929 they bought their They later built out near La Brea Tar Pits (where I dug for bones). In 1929 they bought the citrus ranch here in Chatsworth. It was about 48 acres. Most of the people north of Devonshire in Rock Pointe live on part of that land; and most of Chatsworth Park North was at one time their land.

As the depression intensified they were forced to move out here, arriving in the spring of 1932. A very different Chatsworth from today; population of 500, 4 paved streets, maybe half a dozen houses on city sized lots, dozens of orchards, both citrus and walnuts, even hundreds of acres in dry farming. My mother was a city girl and she didn't like it one bit. Her family in Detroit had the first electric lights on the block (backed up by gas of course!). They had telephones both in their home and her father's business for awhile when it was brand new. They took it out later as there were really very few people to talk to and it looked as if telephones would not "catch on". But I do remember I collected and ate bits of ice off the daily ice wagon, long after we had a built-in electric refrigerator in our home.

What I am saying, she was a pioneer, but not the kind we usually speak of. She was always active in Club work wherever she lived. She belonged to the Ebell Club in Los Angeles, the Presbyterian Hospital Guild in the Valley. She was President of the Chatsworth Woman's Club. In fact my Father and Mother gave the land on Topanga where the Chamber of Commerce and the Woman's Club later built their Clubhouse.

She was what we would now call a "Women's Libber". She was very much a member of the Roaring Twenties. She usually belonged to the Republican Women's Club - not that she always agreed.

Think of what she has seen! When she was a girl one of her uncles drove a stagecoach in the West. That same Uncle died seeking gold in the Klondike. The Indian Wars were still taking place. Our Country was not yet a World Power. Some people were still moving West in covered wagons. No motor cars, no airplanes, no radios, no computers, no television, no men in Space. It has been an exciting age.

She leaves one son William, two daughters-in-law Lila and Lillian and four grand children; Leuise Mitchell and husband Eddie, Grandson Edward and wife Ruth, Carolyn Grimm and husband Kurt, Grandson Frank William and wife Gail. She was fortunate to enjoy three great-grandchildren: Christina and Matthew Mitchell and Jeffrey Grimm.

She was also lucky to share over 60 years of happy marriage with her husband Frank, who left her about a decade ago.

When she was born there was an axiom "What goes up must come down". It is no longer true and I like to think she helps prove it. She has "Gone Up" but she won't be back, she will be greatly

William Frederick Schepler

In Loving Memory of Hildur Marie Berkemeyer.

Hildur Marie Peterson was born September 28, 1891 in Holdrege, Neb., the second of 10 children. She came to California in 1910 to visit the Iversons and moved out here in 1911. Mrs. Iverson was Hildur's aunt. Auguste Iverson & Joe Iverson's mother were cousins. Hildur would tell of riding into Los Angeles with the Iversons to sell eggs & fruits and confided in her daughter, Betty Summers, that she hated to drive by Stoney Point for fear a rock would fall on her.

When a newcomer to Los Angeles she worked and lived at a family hotel at 6th & Figueroa where she met Henry. They were married in May 1915 at Los Angeles City Hall.

They paid \$15 a month rent and lived in a 3rd floor flat. Their income was \$15 a month. They shopped at the Ralph's Grooery in downtown L.A. and used the street cars for transportation. They lived in several houses in Los Angeles and on a chicken ranch in Reseda in 1925. Then they moved to Glendale and finally to Chatsworth in 1943.

Hilkur was president of the American Legion Auxiliary in 1951 and belonged to the Civic Club and a sewing circle that Lila's mother, Mrs. Swartz, belonged to.

In addition to Betty, survivorsw include Henry Berkemeyer, a son, Bill; grandchildren Terry Berkemeyer and Trudy Thackston; Jeff Berkhart and Joyce Ower, and Jane Summers Gerding. Betty & Jim's younger daughter, Judy, died in 1968.

In Memory of AUGUSTINE HOLANBEK ENDERLE, born March 21, 1912 in Vienna, Austria. Mrs. Enderle died on her birthday, March 21, 1988, in Canoga Park.

Funeral Services were held on April 12 in the little Chapel of the Oaks, Oakwood Memorial Park.

Mrs. Enderle's husband, Frank, predeceased her by a decade. The two of them were good friends of the Chatsworth Historical Society having offered a home for the church when we were in need of a nice location. Then later they paid the moving company to turn the church so that it is now in a more picturesque position.

Mrs. Enderle is survived by a son, Kent, and his wife Joan and five grandchildren.

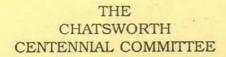
CHATSWORTH CENTENNIA

You are invited to attend 1888-1988

Chatsworth's 100th Birthday Party

Thursday, March 10, 1988 at 1:00 p.m.

Chatsworth Park South Recreation Building 22360 Devenshire Street Chatsworth

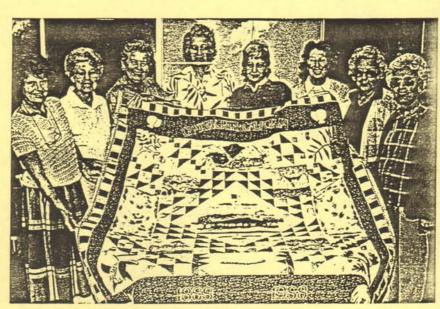


Presents

CHATSWORTH's 100th BIRTHDAY PARTY



Thursday, March 10, 1988 Chatsworth Park South Recreation Building 22360 Devonshire Street, Chatsworth



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

PROGRAM

Welcome	Bea Berman,	Chairperson,	Chatsworth	Centennial
	Committe.			

Mistress of Ceremonies Catherine Mulholland Presenting the Colors

Patriotic Medley

Time Capsule

Boy Scout Troop 226, Chatsworth's oldest Boy Scout Troop. Cluis Dubin, Bob Hayes, Jeremy Hirsch, Chris Horton and Matt Kobata.

Egremont Upper Grade Chorus Led by Craig Gruenberg

Gruenberg
The Chatsworth Historical Society and Students from
the Lawrence Junior High School Drama Group,
Sandra Radashaw, teacher, Students: Courtney
Edwards, Stephanle Hickman, Hyon Kim, Dustin
Kleinschmidt and Mario Sirit.

"A California Triptych" The Inspirations, a choral group from Chatsworth High School, under the direction of David Dalsass. Agnes Kim. piano. Presentation of the Chatsworth Centennial Quilt

Ruth Grant, Chair person. Accepted by Virginia Watson, 1987-88 President, Chatsworth Historical Society

Chatsworth Historical Society

Donna Afflerbach, school coordinator, Chatsworth
Centennial Committee and Sheila Watts, sponsor,
Judges: Michael Knapp, Mariys Stuckenbruck, and
Mary Tartaglia. Winners: Laura Gordon, Emily
Carpenter, Becky Mann, Eric Berger, Katle Ricci,
Felicity Wheeler, Chris Mitchell, Elizabeth Shaheen,
John Pope, Jr., Jeffrey Koga, Grace Park, Jennifer
Suzanne Perry, Jenna Friedenberg and Pritt Gagneja.

Lillian Schepler, Time Capsule Content Chairperson, and Porter Hudshon, chairperson, Time Capsule

Congratulations Mayor Tom Bradley Messages From:

President Ronald Regan and Governor George Deukmejian - Read by Bea Berman

Read by Zena Thorpe

Duke of Devonshire "Chatsworth" A new Chatsworth song presented by The Natural High Group led by Lester Smith, Jr., composer.

Elected Officials and neighboring Chambers of Commerce Introductions and Proclamations

Cake Cutting Ceremony

Mayor Tom Bradley, William Bill Schepler and Valeta Butler Koller.



Catherine Mulholland, Mistress of Ceremonies

The photographs were provided by Ralph Samuels, retired head of the photography department of the Daily News. Ralph also made the photographic collages that were on display at area banks during the month of March, outlining the events sponsored by the Centennial Committee.

The four cakes were donated by Ralph's Grocery Store and were enjoyed by the four hundred guests.





Mayor Bradley & Bea Berman.

Centennial Committee

chairperson

Mayor Tom Bradley, Valeta Butler Koller, William "Bill Schepler" and Bonnie Jean Lakey cutting the cake.