



# Smoke Signal

CHATSWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OCTOBER, 1989  
Chatsworth, California Volume 27, No. 4  
Sheila Watts, President, Editor

Semi Annual Yard Sale; October 27 & 28  
At the Homestead Acre, Chatsworth Park  
South. 8am to 4 pm

Once again we're asking for your discarded treasures to help make the Friday and Saturday yard sale the most successful ever! According to Lillian Schepler, chairman, we have quite a collection of household items from pictures to lamps, from glasses to radios. Throw in some ski equipment, headboards for beds, yarn and toys and we're on our way to a successful sale.

We'll have quite a few books both paperback and hardback, clothing and notions.

Call Sheila, 341-4489, Lillian, 341-2697 or Donna, 882-0485 to arrange for pick up or drop your treasures off at the Acre, Thursday, October 26. Also call if you would like to volunteer to help with the sale. We're supplying sandwiches and coffee for the workers on both days so come and join us for an interesting hour or two.

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## NEW LIFE MEMBER

We are very happy to welcome a new life member into our Society - Colleen Briggs of the Devonshire Division of L.A. P.D., and an active member of the Chatsworth Chamber of Commerce. Colleen first visited the Homestead Acre with a committee of the Chamber that is planning the 75th anniversary of the Chatsworth Chamber. We are happy to have an enthusiastic new member.

At the present time, plans for the 75th anniversary celebration include a luncheon to be held at Porter Valley Country Club on Thursday, November 16. Members of the docent committee have been invited to attend and bring early-day photographs of Chatsworth. Entertainment will include a presentation of 20 slides from the Society's collection presented by Bill Schepler.

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AND THE DOCENTS REPORT.....having had a busy few weeks showing visitors around the museum, cottage and grounds. We were happy to have the Calabasas Historical Society as our guests as well as the 65 members of the fourth grade of Sierra Canyon School. It was a challenge to the docents to change the usual format for presenting the museum & its artificats for the busy 4th graders. The West Valley Bible Institue also took a tour.

CIRCLE THE DATE FOR THIS IMPORTANT & INFORMATIVE MEETING, Thursday, Nov.21st!

Our second general meeting of the year will be held at Glendale Federal Bank, 21821 Devonshire St., Chatsworth at 7:30pm

The speaker will be Dr. Thomas Andrews and he is the executive director of the California Conference of Historical Societies. Dr. Andrews' topic is "The Role of Historical Society's in the 1990's."

Because of the importance of the speaker and the meeting, the board of directors would like to add some extra touches to the event. Please come and bring a friend and enjoy the delicious home made pumpkin pies, the apple cider, the companionship and we hope you'll win one of the three door prizes to be awarded.

Instead of having one or two members share their hobby or collection, we're asking that everyone who attends the meeting bring one item from his or her collection - in other words, Sheila will bring one swan!

This should prove to be an interesting and stimulating evening and we look forward to seeing you there.

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## REMEMBER THE SECOND CENTENNIAL QUILT?

Ruth Grant and Zena Thorpe made a second, rose encrusted quilt to help raise funds for the Centennial Committee. When raffled, the quilt made \$1200. The winner is taking a sabbatical and has asked the Society to take care of the quilt in her absence so we will have the quilt on display for the next two months, possibly at the November general meeting.

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## Yesterday's Anecdote!

When Kevin Watts was about eight years old he came racing home from school one afternoon yelling loudly that he needed a bucket. While helping him decide what size bucket would do, I asked the reason for the bucket and received the excited reply, "Palmer's Trout Lake overflowed, the water got into the sewer and the water and scores of little trout are swimming around in the parking lot of Security Pacific Bank." I don't believe he caught a trout but it was an exciting event for Chatsworth at that time. (Palmer's Trout Lake was just south of the stage coach trail and what used to be Security Bank is now Hooper's Camera.)

AN EDITORIAL.

As the president of the Society and editor of the Smoke Signal, I have wondered recently if the members ever realize how few active members we now have. The board of directors used to number 17 and we're lucky now if we number 12. Most board members wear two hats, i.e. Lillian is treasurer and ways & means chairman, Donna is both recording secretary and corresponding secretary and the writer holds two positions. Personally I would love to find an enthusiastic member who would like to become editor of the Smoke Signal but the few time we asked for even a volunteer reporter, there was no response. In addition, most of the female members of the board of directors are also members of the docent committee.

Last year we reduced the number of general meetings from nine to four and this helped reduce the work load but brought complaints.....some people wanted more meetings.

We realize we cannot suit all of the people all of the time - but there's more.

Two years ago we were approached by the city to possibly host weddings at the Acre as a fund raiser. During the next 20 months we spent a great deal of time, effort and money in making the Acre suitable for weddings and finally announced that we were ready to roll - and we did hold two weddings and a reception and have one more wedding planned. The city came back and said we must reduce the number in attendance at weddings to 50 which made the Acre less attractive as a wedding site. And at that, some members disagreed with us about using the Acre for weddings even though it's an easy fund raiser.

I would like to ask all of you who live within 10 miles of Chatsworth to respond to the above comments by writing and letting us know if you would be interested in working on any of our projects or if you have any ideas that might help produce more active members. Different programs might help and perhaps you have expertise from different organizations that may help us make the Society more attractive to volunteers.

We were founded 27 years ago to save the Pioneer Church and other artifacts. We have succeeded in preserving a large slice of the history of the West Valley. I hope we can continue to be a strong force in preservation and education. To attain these goals, we need your help.

Sheila Watts, President.  
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WATTS WHAT.....Eleven members of the Chatsworth Historical Society joined 70 members of the SFU Historical Society for a great day at San Juan Capistrano. We gathered at the Chatsworth Amtrak Station for the 9:30am southbound train. We went first to Glendale and then to Los Angeles Union Station where there was a change of crew. With stops along the way at Fullerton and Anaheim, we arrived around noon at San Juan. The Chatsworth group

headed for lunch at the historic El Adobe where a great lunch of Mexican food was served. First we visited the Mission which is charming and has a most elaborate altar which was brought from Spain. The mission includes a 300 year old room that was the site of a mass by Father Junipero Serra now the only remaining such site in the state. The San Juan Historical Society was open especially to accomodate the tour group so between 2 and 4 p.m. we visited the O'Neill House museum. This is a home that was derelict when the society relocated it and refurbished it. It's one of those lovely small homes with a veranda almost all the way around, with oak floors and samples of its original wallpaper preserved.

We reversed the procedure and came back to Chatsworth about 9:30 p.m.

Chuck & Eileen Janess were the recipients of a beautiful quilted lap robe, given to them by their family on the occasion of their 54th wedding anniversary. The unique quilt was made by their children, grandchildren and great grandchildren and included one square for each family member and personally made by that person. Definitely a "one of a kind" quilt that they will cherish.

Philip Avila, an Air Force mechanic who repairs airplane engines, is currently based at Lakenheath, England and he and his wife, Deborah, are enjoying sight seeing around the south of England on weekends.

Jennifer Watts, who was graduated from the New York Chiropractic College on Long Island in April and subsequently passed her state boards, is now practicing at the Manhattan Chiropractic Clinic in Manhattan.

We hope that Violet Wilson is feeling better than she has for a month or more. Violet is the mother of Virginia Watson and we sincerely wish her well.

As we're ready to go to press we've just learned that Cathy Cleveland and her fiance will be married in Las Vegas next weekend. Cathy is the only daughter of Everett and the late Ioline Cleveland. (I promise more details for the next issue.)

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TIMELY REMINDER!

One month ago we mailed membership renewal notices to all general members (not Life Members.) Some members have responded so this will serve as a reminder to others that the annual dues are now payable.

Single Membership \$10; dual or family, \$20  
Single Life Membership \$100; student, \$2

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ADDRESS CHANGE

The most recent address for the Historical Society is :  
P.O. Box 3413, Chatsworth, CA 91313-3413  
Telephone at the Acre (818) 882-5614