

# Smoke Signal



CHATSWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
10385 Shadow Oak Drive, Chatsworth CA 91311  
(818)-882-5614

President: Sheila Watts

Volume 32, No. 01 Editor: Virginia Watson

June, 1984

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I would like to thank Bea Berman for leading us through one of the more difficult periods in the Society's history. We're calling this the year of new beginnings, so from the start, I'd like to encourage local members to become more active and to be generous with donations. The 12-member executive board is kept busy caring for the cottage, museum and grounds and also raising funds for the upkeep.

We have applied through the Historical Society of Southern California for a grant of \$500 - we'll be in competition for these funds with many other local historical groups. The winner will be announced in October at an Historical Fair to be held in Los Angeles.

Sincere congratulations to Donna Afflerbach, who was named Citizen of the Year by the Chatsworth Community Coordinating Council. (Editorial Note...She was nominated by the Chatsworth Historical Society.) Donna has contributed untold hours to the community starting with

the Centennial Committee in 1988 and she is currently CHS Director of Docents as well as Special Events chairperson.

Through the newsletter we'll keep you informed on coming events and I hope to see you at the open houses and quarterly meetings.

Sheila Watts

## ANNUAL MEETING

The California Conference of Historical Societies held its annual meeting in Arcadia the first weekend in June; the 3-day event was hosted by the Arcadia Historical Society. Many interesting sites were visited and programs concerning historic preservation were presented. On Saturday, June 4th, the annual awards luncheon was held when several individuals from throughout the state were honored for their roles in the perpetuation of the past.

continued on page 2

Jane Matthews, past president, had nominated Virginia Watson for an Award of Merit on behalf of CCHS and to local members present at the luncheon it was a pleasure to find that Virginia was the first to win the distinctive award.

Those of you who have known Virginia for any length of time will know that this award was well-deserved. From her first years in Chatsworth she spent hours researching the town's early days going back before it was named Chatsworth Park to the days of the Indians and Spaniards and up through the first land use to the Homesteaders. Her research enabled her to write first, "A Child's History of Chatsworth," and two decades later for its third printing, the book was updated and is again in print as, "Chatsworth History."

Virginia was one of the founders of the Chatsworth Historical Society in 1963 and served for the first fifteen years as historiographer. For the past sixteen years her position on the Society's board has been curator.

For twenty years she served as the Chatsworth Community correspondent for the Valley News & Green Sheet (later the Daily News) and has published articles in the Los Angeles Times as well as in magazines.

Virginia is currently hard at work with the committee that will oversee the establishment of an historic district to encompass many of the sites in the West Valley and the Santa Susana Mountains.

Through these years she has worked tirelessly on every project undertaken by the CHS all the while raising a family, working at Chatsworth Park Elementary School and more recently at Lawrence Middle School.

Needless to say we are very proud of these accomplishments.

Another proud moment at the event came when our own Regional Vice President, Chuck Tichenor, received the prestigious R. Coke Wood Memorial Award. Chuck has been a very active representative of the Conference, graciously attending many of our local events with his charming wife. We were very happy to have been present to see him so honored.

Present for the ceremony were Bea Berman, Sheila Watts, Betty Gunnels (Virginia's sister), Lila and Bill Schepler, Jan Hinkston and James Riley.

Sheila Watts

\* \* \* \* \*

#### SOCIETY NEWS

Four members of CHS traveled to El Alisal, the home of Charles Lummis, for a brunch hosted by the Historical Society of Southern California.

Information on a soon-to-be-announced contest about local history was given and the Chatsworth Historical Society submitted a packet of information describing our society and what we do for a possible prize.

Those attending included Bea Berman, Sheila and Keith Watts, Donna Afflerbach and Virginia Watson.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Oil Factory Film Company rented the Homestead Acre on Saturday, March 13, for three hours. They had planned to film within Chatsworth Park South and wanted a house with a bedroom landscape view for their documentary on preventing violence.

Sheila and Keith Watts met with the executives and set the time and cost. (First they asked for 7 a.m. to 10 a.m., then they changed it to 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. They arrived about 5:30 p.m. and the last truck left at 7:450 p.m., according to Keith Watts.

The story was about two young black children playing in their parent's bedroom without permission to be in there with the door shut. They find a cardboard box with a gun in it and that is all we know.

Bea Berman, 1993-94 president, said, "It was a lot of work having them, they spread their equipment all over the house, tracked in dirt, moved the furniture without permission, and had lots of trucks using our driveway. They set up their kitchen on the asphalt in front of the museum and brought a Park Ranger and a security person along. Bea said the food was good--they offered her dinner.

There was a lot of confusion and noise, lots of people milling around etc. They seemed happy with the house and their production and we have an extra \$300 in our treasury.

Whether or not there is a next time depends on a lot of conditions.

\* \* \* \*

TRAVEL NEWS

Candy and Dean Craig (to whom we are indebted for our lovely rose collection) are again this year spending their summer in Colorado where they go every summer. They said they would write and keep us posted of their activities. They are members of the local historical society so they can tell us what is happening there.

Jim and Betty Summers visited them while they were on their extended travels which included Alaska and the east coast. More about them when they get back--they are gone again so the editor can't check.

Ken and Lois Levy are on the move again. They "wintered" in Chatsworth and they also promised to write and tell of their travels.

Mike and Donna Afflerbach and their family took their boat and motorhome up to the Sacramento Delta as they do almost every year meeting a group of friends.

They reported having a good time, however they had a little bad luck with their boat--maybe more than a little bad luck seems like the boat was "totaled."

Lillian Schepler is back from a trip to England. She has relatives there and visits often.

\* \* \*

FROM THE EDITOR

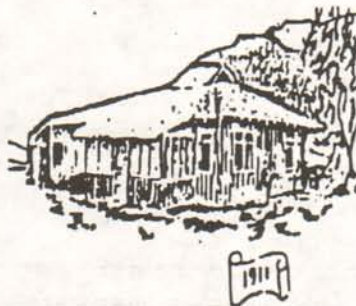
This is my first Smoke Signal in a long time. Sheila Watts has been editor for many years and has set an example I hope to continue.

Let me know what you like and don't like and I'll try to improve.

I hope to receive stories and articles from the readers and to print them. I promise not to do too much editing and to keep the flavor and details of what is submitted.

This month we are privileged to have another "WINDOW INTO THE PAST" from Bill Schepler. I hope you enjoy reading it.

\* \* \*



The Homestead Acre will be open for tours on Sunday, Aug. 7, 1994 from 1-4 p.m. "In the Good Old Summertime" is the theme with old tyme bathing suits and sunbonnets featured.

Our next event is our annual potluck membership afternoon. It is to be held on Sunday, Sept. 18. Details aren't available this early but there will be another Smoke Signal before then. Save the day. It is also going to be the day we dedicate the new costume case donated by Valeta in memory of Louise.

Lots of exciting programs are being planned so be sure and plan to come and hear all about the coming year.

\* \* \* \* \*



1903 PIONEER CHURCH, CHATSWORTH, CALIFORNIA

DUES ARE DUE!!

PLEASE FILL IN THE BLANKS, TEAR OFF, ENCLOSE YOUR CHECK AND MAIL IT IN FOR 1994-95.

\*\*\*\*\*

Yes, I would like to (continue) (rejoin) membership in the Chatsworth Historical Society in order to participate and enjoy the activities and programs planned for the coming year.

Here are my dues in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (Individual \$15, Family \$20).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail to: Chatsworth Historical Society, 10358 Shadow Oak Drive, Chatsworth, CA 91311. Thank You!