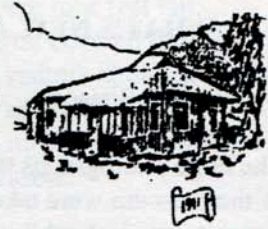


Smoke Signal

CHATSWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
10385 Shadow Oak Drive, Chatsworth CA 91311
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Co-Presidents: Linda & Andre van der Valk

November 2000

Editor: Zena Thorpe

October was a busy month at the Acre. Pioneer Day was a great success and fun for everyone. We would like to thank everyone who worked and made the day a success. We would especially like to thank Bea Berman for, without her, there would not have been a Pioneer Day. Bea worked long and hard to make sure Pioneer Day was a big success.

In November Abe Lincoln is visiting the Acre for our general meeting. We also will be celebrating Lila and Bill Schepler's 60th wedding anniversary. Please join us for a special evening.

In December we are planning a trip to the Banning House to see all the Christmas decorations and the house. We are also planning a Christmas party at our home for all our members on December 19th. Hope you can join us.

Linda & Andre

Chatsworth Historical Society Board 1999-2000

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Rec. Secretary.....	Bea Berman	341-5449
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Director-at-large.....	Betty Summers	341-2714
Director-at-large.....	Barbara Pampalone	882-2395
Director-at-large.....	Ruth Grant	882-3990
Photog. materials.....	Bill Schepler	341-3447
Permanent member.....	Lila Schepler	341-3447

Abe Lincoln Comes To Chatsworth November 21st, 7pm

The date is November 21st, 1864. Ol' Abe, (alias Warren R. Palmquist), will stop by to thank you for your vote in the recent election and comment on why the election was so important during this insurrection. He will present highlights of the insurrection Union victories to date and will take questions from the audience.

Come and step back in time with us for this informative date with the 16th US president.

WHAT'S NEW AT THE ACRE

By Virginia Watson

The large photographs that hung on the walls of the museum were taken down for our Sesquicentennial exhibit and our walls have been bare for a while. We finally got them put back up although they are in different order and are still only temporary until we arrange for a new display. Our president, Linda van der Valk, arranged them and they are in clusters each having a relationship to the group.

We are planning a trip for a holiday treat for ourselves to attend the Open House at the Phineas Banning Residence Museum in Wilmington. The two-story mansion will be decorated for the holidays and there is no charge for admission this one weekend. We will be collecting \$1 per person for the bus driver as a tip and we plan to stop somewhere for lunch on the way. We can take 47 people altogether and I have reserved two seats for me and my companion, (my sister from Oceanside), and so there are 45 reservations left. Please call me to let me know if you want to go, 341-3053. It will be Saturday, Dec. 2nd and we will meet at the Homestead Acre at 10a.m. and return at 4 p.m.

Recently we have been given several memorial gifts. We received money from Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Sammartano in memory of her recently deceased mother. We also received a generous gift in memory of the late Mrs. Eileen Janess. The gift was from her family. Mrs. Janess was a founding member of our society and an Honorary Board member.

Betty Summers has found an oak sideboard for the dining room at the cottage. It is very similar to the one that Minnie had and we would like to purchase it. It is on sale at Mrs. Noah's Ark on Mason Ave. at Lassen St. Board members will be voting about it at the next board meeting. If they think it is suitable for the house then the money from the two gifts will be used to purchase the lovely piece of furniture.

We received a second gift from Frank & Phyllis Barber recently, too late for last month's Smoke Signal. They gave us the rest of the chairs and tables from their Whistle Stop Coffee Shop at the Metrolink Station. They had already given us three tables and twelve chairs. We were able to use the lawn furniture for our Old Timers Reunion at our recently held Pioneer Day. Thank You Two.

We also received a donation from Mr. & Mrs. Dan Huffman who live not far from the Acre on Devonshire St. They have saved the barn where Mr. Ed, the talking horse of television fame, was born. Thank You Three for the donation! (The third member of their family is little John, their four-year old son, who will soon have a new little brother to come with him to visit the Homestead Acre)

Another recent donation was a large photocopy of the San Fernando Valley map from 1879 given to us by Mike Mancici, one of our newer members. It needs to be framed before we display it but watch for it. Thank You Mike.

The docents will be decorating the house for the holidays on Wednesday, November 29th. If you would like to help come by anytime

after 9 a.m. and help us put up the Christmas tree and other festive ornaments.

IN THE NOVEMBER GARDEN 2000

From Candy Craig

Twenty years ago this month I ordered the first antique roses for the Acre. Sixteen were delivered, Dean dug the holes and I began planting in late December. President Sheila Watts encouraged us and we began watering and tending various plants. Little did we realize what we had taken on, but beginning with Ioline Cleveland's terms of office in 1982, we were off and running. Ioline asked me to be garden director.. During her four terms as president, Ioline and her husband Everett raised a great deal of money for many things to improve the society but the most important at the time, for Dean and me, was the ride-on mower. It meant we could mow the weeds and try to turn the unkempt grounds into gardens we could be proud of.

We were lucky that legacies from Minnie Palmer, such as the fruit trees, a few shrubs and a few walnut trees, were still alive. Since 1978, when the society became conservator of the Homestead Acre, attempts had been made by outside groups and members to add plants and improve the grounds but without regular watering, planning and maintenance many plants had not survived or were in the wrong locations. Passers-by thought the Acre was deserted except for Virgil and Ruth Heumann's trailer. All the hard work of fixing and furnishing the cottage was not appreciated as it might have been because the grounds looked so bad. In June of 1980, after a wet

winter, the weeds were four feet tall, impenetrable chaparral covered the northeast slope and very few visitors attended Sunday Open House. The Park Dept.'s only contribution was to mow everything flat once a year before fire season.

Dean and I and the Alan Taylors had vegetable gardens at first on the west side of the Acre but, in my spare time, I kept discovering the remnants of a rose bush or an interesting shrub or bulb that bloomed. I began watering, weeding, cutting back and identifying plants and planning gardens. Dean secured a grant from RCA to purchase automatic sprinklers for the rose gardens we had added and I installed them. The Huntington Botanical Gardens had donated almost forty antique and rare polyantha, hybrid-tea and bourbon roses and these were placed in front of the cottage where the remains of a few of Minnie's 1950s roses were still growing. One of those roses was 'Will Rogers', named for the famous humorist and performer. Jim Summers, always willing and able to help, rototilled the oval garden in front of the cottage. The Chatsworth Women's Club donated five yellow floribunda roses for the corner of the cottage and the City of LA came through with twelve 'Olympiad' rose bushes in honor of the Olympic Games.

A redwood bridge over the ditch was designed and built by Dean aided by a Boy Scout troop's fathers and sons and the iron arbor to the main rose garden was welded together by a CSUN fraternity student and planted with the fabulously scented 1850 'Sombreuil' climbing rose.

The three most exciting events of 1983-84 were the first docent-guided garden tours at the Acre, the first Rose Festival in May '84

and my discovery that the so-called "baby bath", located in the large sandstone boulder behind the house was, in reality, an Indian acorn leaching basin.

Last month Zena spoke of unsung heroes in our society and I would like to mention two.

Betty Summers has been a long-time member of the society and has helped in many positions for many years. She is currently assistant curator in charge of the cottage, but Betty is also a gardener. She is genetically incapable of walking up the Acre driveway without deadheading a spent blossom, pulling a weed or tidying a plant and she is the only person to take on the responsibility of the enormous bird of paradise plant that dwarfs the cottage entry porch. Betty always helps.

This year we were fortunate to have a new docent who is interested in gardening. Keli Jacobson has spent many hours this summer deadheading roses, weeding and neatening plants. She has a natural facility and the garden looks much prettier because of her efforts.

The two California native plant areas that I began planting in 1998 and added to over the past two years were proposed in the first, (1978), application for conservatorship of the Acre. Twenty-two years later they are a reality and show a small example of the grassland community of the San Fernando Valley that existed for hundreds of years before the pioneers.

Note: Next month, (Dec.): The Sheila M. Watts Memorial Garden

PIONEER DAY WRAP-UP

A special thanks to all who made our annual Pioneer Day such a success. My job as chairman was made so much easier because of all the board members who pitched in and all the volunteers who worked the day of the event.

I'm happy to say it was one of our best fund raisers. I hope everyone enjoyed themselves. Again, thank you.

Bea Berman, Chairman

NOTES FROM THE BOARD MEETING HELD NOVEMBER 7TH

A committee has been appointed to review the by-laws in the near future.

The society will have an entry in the Chatsworth Parade, Dec. 10th.

Spending was approved for the refurbishment and re-hanging of all the museum pictures.

Spending was approved for the purchase of an antique sideboard for the cottage.

NOTES OF INTEREST

November 21st at 7pm in the museum Abraham Lincoln Living History presentation by Warren Palmquist.

The Chatsworth Parade, December 10th, will start at Devonshire & Topanga at 1p.m. Watch for the society's entry of a bicycle built for two.

There is a special display in the museum of WWII memorabilia including that of Weldon "Red" Combs, late husband of member Anna Combs. He was the president of 101st Airborne Division.

The Chatsworth Community Coordinating Council general meeting on Nov. 27th will include a presentation by AAA on the new driving rules. The meeting starts at 11:30a.m., program at 12:30p.m., at Rockpointe Clubhouse.

Don't forget decorating day at the cottage, Nov. 29th at 9a.m.

CONGRATULATIONS BILL & LILA

Bill and Lila Schepler recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary and we will remember them at our November 21st meeting at the Homestead Acre.

Lila & Bill's names are synonymous with Chatsworth and the historical society. Both long-time residents, they have provided many personal recollections for our local history. Bill moved to Chatsworth with his family in 1932. They came from the Beverly Hills area where Bill's dad was a real estate developer who helped plan the "Miracle Mile". Bill attended Canoga Park High School graduating in 1935. He has lots of memories of helping on the family ranch including interesting stories he tells about smudge pots and other stories in his new book, "Window Into The Past".

Lila's family lived in Venice and they moved to Chatsworth in 1931. Lila also graduated

from Canoga Park High School and later from USC. The Southern Pacific trains stopped in Chatsworth if they were flagged down and Lila came home for weekends and went back to college via the Southern Pacific.

The Scheplers were married Oct. 11th, 1940 in the Magnolia Methodist Church, (our little Pioneer Church was not quite big enough to hold all the guests), but they had their reception in our own little church's White Oak Hall. They spent their honeymoon in the historic and romantic Mission Inn in Riverside and returned there last month to celebrate their 60th.

We had a ceremony in 1990 for their 50th wedding anniversary and planted the big redwood tree at the Homestead Acre. They are both founding members of the Chatsworth Historical Society and Lila finished out the term of founding president, Chuck Janess, following his heart attack during his first year. She subsequently served as president seven more times.

Perhaps they will share more of their Chatsworth memories at our November meeting.

NO DUES, NO NEWS!!

This is your last issue of the Smoke Signal if you have not renewed your membership. Please check the date on your address label.