



Smoke Signal

CHATSWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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Co-Presidents: Andre & Linda van der Valk

March 2001

Editor: Zena Thorpe

March is upon us and we will be celebrating the 113th birthday of Chatsworth. Bill Schepler will be presenting his wonderful slide presentation at our next general meeting to celebrate. We also will be having birthday cake, another good reason for coming to the March 20th general meeting.

Chatsworth has seen many changes in the past 113 years. Some of them have been good and some have not. One thing that has stayed consistent is our Minnie Hill Palmer Homestead Acre thanks to the hard-working people who put their time and effort into the Historical Society. We will be having the Garden & Craft Festival on May 6th. We are looking for people who are interested in selling their crafts at the festival. We have a few tables available for anyone who is interested. We are excited to have our members, Rick & Jerry, from Chatsworth Florist selling Marty Bell paintings and arranging for Marty to be there to sign those purchased at The Acre. This is all happening in time for Mother' Day.

Linda & Andre

Chatsworth Historical Society Board 1999-2000

Co-Pres.....	Linda & Andre van der Valk	882-3661
Programs.....	John Thorpe	882-3572
Rec. Secretary.....	Bea Berman	341-5449
Treasurer.....	Lillian Schepler	341-2697
Membership.....	Keith Watts	341-4489
Smoke Signal.....	Zena Thorpe	882-3572
Museum Curator.....	Virginia Watson	341-3053
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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

BIRTHDAY PARTY

You are cordially invited to attend a party to honor Chatsworth on our town's 113th birthday. There will be entertainment befitting the occasion, namely Bill Schepler's slide show and his memories stretching back over many years. (We are not saying exactly how many!)

Zena Thorpe will also unveil her newest quilt, "Kells: Magnum Opus"

The festivities begin at 7pm in the museum

WHAT'S NEW AT THE ACRE

By Virginia Watson, curator

Docents have been meeting on Wednesdays to learn more about the history of The Acre and to assist in the work in the museum, cottage and the gardens. Lila Schepler, who is Director of Docents, recently gave a lecture on the history of the early residents in Chatsworth with special emphasis on our first English-speaking pioneers Ann & Neils Johnson. Attending were Elaine Campbell, Candy Craig, Marilyn Frump and granddaughter Amy, Keli Jacobson, Evelyn Kanouse, Kathy Reynolds, Lillian Schepler, Betty Summers, Virginia Watson who has been assisting Lila with the docent program and our president, Linda van der Valk. Mrs. Schepler will be speaking again on March 28th at 9.30am in the museum. She will continue her talk with emphasis on the N.A. Gray family who lived on Lassen St. between Topanga Cyn. Blvd. and Farralone Ave.

We received an e-mail from Chatsworth resident and new member of the Chatsworth Historical Society, Charlene "Charlie" Vincent who gave us news of former resident **Phoebe Chenard**. Mrs. Chenard was the owner of the Paradise Gift Shoppe formerly located on Devonshire St. near Variel Ave. Her son, Leonard Chenard carried on the business in the later years. During the 1920s the shop was a tea room and famous for its jellies and jams and watermelon pickles as well as the figs grown in the area. According to an old newspaper article people often "motored" out to Chatsworth from Los Angeles for tea. Mrs. Vincent received a Christmas card from Joy, Mrs. Chenard's granddaughter, who said, "Grandma fell and

broke her hip this year. Unfortunately she is now living in a nursing home. She is alert but unable to walk now. Jodi, (Joy's sister and Leonard Chenard's other daughter), and I are able to see her almost every day. She is a trooper at 99 1/2."

Mail can be addressed to Joy -- Mrs. David Hankowski, 7822 Paso Robles Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91401-1626.

Docent **Gerry Ager** is home following his surgery at west Hills Hospital in January. He is a possible candidate for a heart transplant according to his wife Connie and they are scheduled for a visit to UCLA Medical Center in March. The couple was our only docent team and a valuable addition to our volunteer staff. Connie grew up in Chatsworth and is familiar with our historical society. Our prayers are with them. If you would like to send them a card their address is: 21001 Plummer St., Space 65, Chatsworth, CA 91311.

The Sesquicentennial Exhibit that was arranged by Robert Marshall and Lara Bickell and started in our museum last March traveled to Burbank and the Sunland/Tujunga and closed March 4th. My daughter Kelley and I attended the final reception and picked up the artifacts we had on loan.

We have had a lot of rain this year and our grounds at The Acre are very lush and green. We have had lots of water in the creek but the house and museum have been dry and safe. It has been very cold and we only have the one little heater in the museum but there is a possibility that the Dept. of Recreation & Parks may get us a new heater with a reverse pump for air conditioning for our wall. More about that next month.

Steve Bylin is the new ranger for our Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park and he stopped by the museum recently to introduce himself. He will be coming back to get a real tour of our facility.

The letter campaign to get brighter lighting in Chatsworth Park South was successful thanks to our Councilman Hal Bernson and Sandy Clydesdale. At our request the Chatsworth Women's Club and Chatsworth Community Coordinating Council also wrote letters and we have been notified that lights will be placed on the existing Dept. of Water & Power poles making the park a much safer area. This will be especially appreciated by the historical society because of our night meetings and events.

BOARD MEETING NOTES

At the February board meeting it was proposed that the present executive board members remain in the same positions for one more year. All members agreed. The bylaws Review committee has recommended that the bylaws be changed to require that all board member terms be for a two year period. The proposed changes to the bylaws will be presented at the annual meeting in May.

Welcome to new members:

Ann & Ray Vincent - life members
Charlene Vincent

We have a new docent training session in progress. For anyone interested in becoming a docent it is not too late to join the training program.

A piece of the old railroad has been donated to the museum by member **Dan Huffman** who was a contractor involved in the laying of new tracks in the Chatsworth tunnels. The large chunk of metal is stamped

CARNEGIE 1899.

Thank you Dan for this valuable addition to the museum.

The Acre fence that was blown over by the winds has been repaired.

We are going to get a better heating system installed in the museum so, if you have been reluctant to come to meetings when the weather is cold, you can now come and enjoy our great programs in comfort.

The budget committee has met and we now have a budget for 2001-2002.

There will be no Open House in April because of the usual overcrowding at the park on that first Sunday In April.

EDITOR'S NOTES

SAVE THE DATE

Plans are being finalised for the Garden Festival on May 6th. In addition to the beautiful display of our rose gardens there will be an elegant "Tea", a special display of Millennium Quilts, china painting, garden care demonstrations and much more.