



Smoke Signal

www.historicalsocieties.net

Co-Presidents: Andre & Linda van der Valk

May 2001

Editor: Zena Thorpe

As we enter our second year as co-presidents it is ironic that we are spending more and more time at The Acre and loving it! Obviously, our fellow board members knew that would happen. At this time we have started the process of applying for a beautification matching grant from the city. We have chosen the installation of a complete sprinkler system for The Acre as our project. The name of the project is, "Too Old to Water by Hand Anymore!" They said we needed a name that would attract attention. We are hoping to get the grant and look forward to installing the sprinklers before the "Hot August Nights".

We are still looking for help for the Garden Festival. We are looking for baked goods, white elephants and volunteers. The festival is on May 6, 11-4 p.m. We have a Marty Bell and Catherine Mulholland signing planned. It will be a great opportunity to meet these two talented ladies. Hope to see you there.

Linda & Andre

Chatsworth Historical Society Board 2000-2001

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SAN FERNANDO VALLEY HISTORY DIGITAL LIBRARY PROJECT

The San Fernando Valley Digital History Library Project, funded by a \$153,000 Library Services Technology Act grant, has been formed by CSUN Urban Archives Center to assemble, digitize and make globally available historically significant documents, graphic materials etc. from the collections of Valley historical societies.

Charla Bench, Project Archivist will explain the project at the next general meeting,

May 15th, 7 p.m. at the museum.

Don't miss this exciting trip into the digital age!!

Refreshments served.

WHAT'S NEW AT THE ACRE

By Virginia Watson, curator

There is usually some kind of activity going on at The Acre each week. Sometimes it is visitors, old timers who stop by, often members are there deadheading the roses, sometimes just work that needs to be done in the museum, cottage or grounds. Recently we have been collecting and pricing the white elephants being donated to the garden festival. Also a week ago, the garden tractor or lawnmower had to be taken over to Canoga Park for repairs. Andre van der Valk and Jim Summers took it over.

Another constant happening are the tours that are requested, mostly school children but also retirement homes and community groups.

On Friday, April 13th, at 10:30a.m. and again at 1:30 p.m. the docents will host two groups of 14 persons. They are developmentally disabled people from a local school. Allison Medrano is the group leader.

On Tuesday, April 17th, at 10:30a.m. Maggie Nichols from Capistrano Elementary School, will bring about 20 third grade students for a tour. Docents working will be Betty Summers, Elaine Campbell, Evelyn Kanouse, Marilyn Frump and Virginia Watson.

Not long ago there were three of us docents left at The Acre on Wednesday around 11 a.m. and we decided to take a little tour of Chatsworth. We had been talking about how the old timers mention places and things that the newer members aren't familiar with. Keli is a newer member and she was wishing she could know some of the places we were talking about. Keli had never been to the Metrolink Station so we said, "Why not go today?" So the three of us, Keli, Elaine and I, started out. We spent a little time there

because we have good CHS friends there. Phyllis and John Barber who run the Whistle Stop have befriended us many times. He found the picture of the second railroad station and gave it to us and Phyllis sold many of our Sesquicentennial souvenirs from her counter. Dan Huffman, who gave us our latest railroad artifact - a piece of the rail from the tunnel dated 1899 and stamped Carnegie - was having a cool drink at the Whistle Stop and we visited a while with him. Then we drove up to the Santa Monica Conservancy parcel on Red Mesa Drive and the old Santa Susana Pass Road. We climbed up to see the Garden of the Gods that was part of the old Iverson Ranch. We stopped a while enjoying the view from the spot where the old camera tracks have been left. We were looking out and imagining a wagon going over the cliff on the other side, like it used to in the movies. It was such an enjoyable trip we decided to repeat it. A long time ago when Lila was president we had maps and did a caravan trip. We are going to modify that and take the new archivist for our CSUN Project and the artist for our new library on a quick tour of Chatsworth history as soon as we can arrange it.

Gerry Ager is back at home again following another serious bout in the hospital at West Hills. There is a possibility that he will need a heart transplant. Our prayers are with him and Connie.

Donna and Mike Afflerbach were down this way from Porterville last week. They were delivering Mike's monthly business papers. Mike's hand was in a cast, he had hurt his finger, so Donna was driving. We had a nice visit and caught up with the local news before they had to hurry on their way.

Bea Berman informed me that Bob Turner had had a stroke so I e-mailed him. He replied

and sends "Best wishes to all of you folks in Chatsworth and my love to all of you".

DEAN CRAIG

We are extremely saddened by the death on April 10th of Dean Craig, co-director with his wife, Candy, of the Acre gardens. Dean was a long-serving member of the society and his contributions to Chatsworth and this organization will be sorely missed. Even after the onset of his illness Dean continued to serve by spending countless hours on the telephone with city officials etc. taking care of any society business that could be done in that way.

Dean didn't quite make it to his golden wedding anniversary on April 22nd. We send our condolences to Candy but we are sure that she is grateful for very, very close to 50 years with Dean.

GARDEN FESTIVAL

May 6th will be our annual **Garden Festival**. Mark your calendar for that date if you would like an afternoon of entertainment. It will be from 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. at the Homestead Acre.

Featured will be our delicious Duchess Tearoom, beautiful blooming rose gardens, besides other plants for sale, fantastic Millennium quilt display in the museum, Polynesian dance revue by the Chatsworth Dance Centre, arts & crafts booths, white elephant sale and bake sale. A featured attraction will be paintings and signing by Marty Bell and book signing by Catherine Mulholland.

If you have any white elephant merchandise you would like to donate please call Bea Berman at 341-5449 for pick-up. Also, if you would like to bake we would appreciate it. Remember, May 6th - hope to see you there.

Bea Berman

EDITOR'S NOTES

We are thankful that Jim Gulbranson, vice president of the San Fernando Valley Historical Society and recent speaker at our general meeting, spotted the old Lankershim Reading Room that was about to be demolished. The 1904 building was originally on the Lankershim Ranch that once covered most of the South Valley but was moved to Chatsworth in the 1950s to the Chapel of the Canyon at Topanga and Nordhoff. Jim negotiated with the new owners of the church property and the historic building will be saved and relocated to the Andres Pico Adobe site on Sepulveda Blvd. When restorations are completed the Reading Room will be opened to the public.

I hope you will come to the next program meeting to hear all about the exciting project planned by the Urban Archives Center at CSUN. The project is expected to be an important link between the university and all local historical societies. The digital library database will bring together, for the first time, significant historical photographs, illustrations, maps, manuscripts, documents and related graphic materials. We will be loaning a number of our images from our collection to be digitized