

CHATSWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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Smoke Signal

Co-Presidents: Andre & Linda van der Valk

Editor pro-tem: Keith Watts

September 2001

FROM THE CO-PRESIDENTS:

We have been busy at the Acre. We just had Membership Round-Up and it was a great success. Everyone had a good time talking to old friends and making new ones. Music and lots of good food.

Pioneer Day is coming up on October 7th. We hope everyone will come out and join us for what should be a great day full of fun things to do. Bea has been working very hard to make this a special day. If you make a great chili, contact Bea and enter our Chili Cook-off.

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
Cottage Curator.....Betty Summers 341-2714
Hospitality.....
Gardens Directors.Dean & Candy Craig 341-4461
Director-at-large.....Betty Summers 341-2714
Director-at-large.....Barbara Pampalone882-2395
Director-at-large.....Ruth Grant 882-3990
Photog. materials.....Bill Schepler 341-3447
Permanent member.....Lila Schepler 341-3447

CALENDAR DATES

- Sept. 22-23 Wild, Wild West Days,
Iverson Movie Ranch
- Sept. 23 Celebrate rededication of L.A. City Hall,
11 am-6 pm 200 N. Spring St., L.A.
For info call (213)-978-0269
- Oct. 5,6,12,13 An Evening on the Conejo,
1900 Living History, Theater and Dining,
Stage Coach Museum. \$40 per person.
- Oct. 7 PIONEER DAY at the Acre, 11 am-4 pm.
- Oct. 10-11 Heritage Valley Festival, Fillmore
Historical train to/from Santa Paula and
quilt show.info: call (805) 5524-1500x216

WHAT'S NEW AT THE ACRE

By Virginia Watson

Cowboy music set the tone for the Annual Membership Potluck Dinner held in the Centennial area of the Homestead Acre. Tri Tip steak, barbecued by our co-president Andre van der Valk, sent a cloud of tangy smoke up in the air as members and prospective members chose their tables. The Centennial willow tree provided a graceful green curtain for the activities. The weather cooperated with a slightly cooler temperature but lots of welcome sunshine. The sun was setting and the sunshine poured down over the tree tops in the Centennial area and provided shade for our festivities. The sunset also covered where the still battered (from

the vandalism) Time Capsule sits, awaiting attention by the Department of Recreation and Parks. The Police report was made and the City-required reports were filled out, but, although covered by insurance, nothing has been done and the contents are exposed to the weather.

Co-president Linda van der Valk presided over the chuck wagon activities which she and her assistants Henriette Sharpsteen (Linda's mother), Betty Summers, Marilyn Frump, Bea Berman, Vivian Sontag, Lillian Schepler, and Bill and Lila Schepler, filled the table to overflowing with delicious food and drink.

Arriving early and helping to set up were: Bill & Lila Schepler, Jim and Betty Summers, Andre and Linda van der Valk, Ramon Avila, plus Dave and Marilyn Frump.

John Thorpe was in charge of the program with Ralph Lee Moss the featured entertainer. Known locally as "Rattlin" Ralph, Moss assisted us with our Sesquicentennial celebration and has gone on to be in charge of the "Anza en Calabasas" pageant. A multi-talented young man, Moss strummed his guitar and played his harmonica at the same time, serenading the group with cowboy music. The audience joined Moss with a community sing during "Home on the Range" and "The Green Grass Grows All Around."

A special guest of Dr. Barbara Pampalone was Mrs. Hennie Westlake, a property owner of Twin Lakes for over forty years. Recently the CHS conducted an oral interview with Mrs. Westlake when she recounted memories of living in the area soon to be so drastically altered by progress. She brought a fabulous gift for our collection—three stone gaming balls from the Indians who inhabited the area and some fossils, all found in the stream bed near her house. The artifacts have been authenticated by the Los Angeles County Museum!

Dan Huffman and his lovely wife, Kim, also presented the group with a small spike that actually came from the Santa Susana Tunnels. The spike came from the tracks where the first little engine helped carry the blasted-out limestone from the center of the tunnel. Also accompanying the Huffmans were their two children, John and Kerry

and Dan's mother Mrs. Huffman.

Bea Berman had six guests including her granddaughter, Jessica. There were six new members who signed up at the event and four renewals of membership. New members are: Jo Anna Thomas; Marcia Henry; Linda Williams, Suzanne Nalbandian; Norma & Jerry Klein; and Hennie Westlake. Suzanne Nalbandian is now 16 and her grandmother gave her a membership in the society. She has helped with Pioneer Day and other events along with her grandmother almost every year and will now be a member on her own.

Renewing their memberships are Lila and Bill Schepler and their daughter Leuse and her husband Ed Mitchell. The Mitchells were not present at the event because of the planned heart surgery for Eddie. Since our Roundup he has had the surgery and is now at home recuperating. Dan Huffman and family renewed their membership and gave a large donation. Michon Rickman and her husband Craig Radden attended the Roundup. Michon renewed her membership and her husband joined for the first time. Michon is the Recreation Coordinator at Chatsworth Park South and serves as our vice president in charge of Hospitality.

A surprise guest was Mrs. Thelma Ewalt, daughter of Katharine and Ray L. (Kelly) Johnson, two of the founders of our society. Mrs. Ewalt lives in Rogue River, Oregon and was visiting long-time friend Barbara Todd.

Our new computer is an E-Machine obtained for us by our Vice President in charge of membership, Keith Watts. He installed the computer and the new printer, got it up and running. We also bought a scanner so that we can scan our photos and preserve them.

Alex Daily, my 16-year old grandson, has put in the telephone line so that we can go online and we are in the process of signing up with America Online. We received a disk for 45 days of free online service and are using that up now.

Bea Berman's son-in-law Gary is going to investigate a new outlet for the computer so that the line does not have to be left across the doorway into the office.

The docs are learning or getting used to the new machine and will soon be working on inputting

material. The money for the computer was donated in the memory of the late Gerry Ager, our docent who died earlier this year. We are in the process of getting a plaque for the computer announcing the memorial gift

The horrendous events of the last few days have shocked and saddened all of us in the Historical Society and I think the events make us want more than ever to preserve the history of the people who lived here before us.

FROM THE PROGRAM CHAIRMAN

Well, it has taken more than a year to organize and produce the San Fernando Valley History Digital Library .This project was organized by a group of hard-working staff at the California State University Northridge.

They started by contacting all of the Historical Societies and other such groups in the San Fernando Valley. Members from each group met every month to help select artifacts, photos etc. that would be suitable for the digital display. The project is now completed, so you can check it out at their web site, <http://digital-library.csun.edu>.

On October 15th there will be a grand opening 12pm to 3pm. Kevin Starr, the State Librarian, will be there plus everyone who has been involved in the project. The public is invited. During the evening there will be a banquet, which will cost \$40.00 per person.

Due to this event there will not be a program in October at the Homestead Acre, so everyone is invited to the celebration at CSUN .

John Thorpe

READY FOR PIONEER DAY?

Just a reminder about our annual Pioneer Day, Sunday, October 7th at the Homestead Acre in Chatsworth Park South from 11:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.

There will be many activities for children as well as displays and entertainment for the adults. An added attraction is the mini chili cook-off. There

are still some spaces available. It's a lot of fun to compete with amateur cooks to see who has the best chili. We will have local judges judging the competition.

Mark your calendar for October 7th to enjoy a day of fun. Any questions, please call 341-5449

Bea Berman

COMMUNITY MEETING - OCTOBER 22

The Chatsworth Community Coordinating Council will be having their October meeting at the Rockpointe Clubhouse, 22300 Devonshire, Monday, October 22nd.

Business meeting at 11:30 a.m.

Program at 12:30 P.M.

Speaker will be Paula Boland speaking on the break-up of the Los Angeles Unified School District. All are welcome.

Bea Berman, Program Chairman, CCCC.
(818) 341-5449
