

# Smoke Signal

www.historicalsocieties.net

Co-Presidents: Andre & Linda van der Valk

January 2002

Editor: Zena Thorpe

Happy New Year from the board of the Historical Society Hope everyone had a great holiday season. We certainly did, spending a lot of time with our two granddaughters.

The cottage is starting the new year right. The termites have been sprayed. We are waiting a few days before we go in and give everything a thorough cleaning. Any volunteers?

We had a visit today from Chuck Richman from the Rec. & Parks and he is starting the testing for the cottage to be painted. It is possible that there is lead paint somewhere under the older layers of paint.

Chuck has been wonderful in getting things done for us. He is responsible for the heater/air conditioner being installed. All the docents and especially Virginia are pleased with it since they spend so much time up there.

We are also in the process of having new blinds installed in the museum. The blinds are up and the valance is coming in a couple of days. The shades are black-out to keep the light from the collection. This is an expense that the board saw as a necessity. Thank you to John Thorpe for finding Shutter World and getting us a good deal.

Linda & Andre

Chatsworth Historical Society  
Board 2001-2002

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Gardens Director..... Candy Craig 341-4461  
Director-at-large.....Betty Summers 341-2714  
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Director-at-large.....Ruth Grant 882-3990  
Photog. materials.....Bill Schepler 341-3447  
Permanent member.....Lila Schepler 341-3447

**MEMBERSHIP MEETING**  
**February 19th, 2001-**

**Chatsworth Neighborhood Council**  
**Formation Committee**

The concept of neighborhood councils is a new one for the US. The councils are springing up throughout Los Angeles and Chatsworth Historical Society member, Jon Lauritzen, is the coordinator for the formation of the local Chatsworth Council. He will speak about the goals, and requirements of the council and how it will impact the community and groups such as the Historical Society.

The meeting will be held in the museum at 7pm.

## WHAT'S NEW AT THE ACRE

By Virginia Watson, curator

There has been a lot of activity at the Hill-Palmer Homestead Acre recently, starting with the changing of the items in the display cases. We took out the wonderful toy soldiers that Candy had loaned us and the other items we had borrowed to use for December and returned them to Candy. Then we decided to add our World War II displays.

It has been 60 years since Pearl Harbor was bombed on a peaceful Sunday morning in December 1941, signaling the United States' entry into World War II. Many of the members of the Chatsworth Historical Society lived through that wartime era and have stories to tell and memorabilia they have saved. It was a good time to bring it out and display it, especially since the September 11th attack brought back so many memories. So, we kept in our 101st Airborne Division Collection given to us by Anna Combs. Her husband, Weldon E. "Red" Combs, was president of the "Screaming Eagles" support group and collected the memorabilia which she presented to us after his death. One of our treasured artifacts within this collection is a little metal "cricket" that we tell the school children was our "secret weapon" of World War II. It is a little-known story which demonstrates our American ingenuity and the children love it. In America in the 1930s we got prizes in a box of Crackerjacks. One of the common prizes one often received was a little metal "cricket" which you could use to make a cricket-like noise and was an item known to most Americans.

When the American G.I.s parachuted down into The Netherlands during World War II they carried little metal "crickets", (much

better made than our little toy crickets in the Crackerjack boxes), to identify themselves to each other in the foreign country.

We have one of those crickets in our collection and the children who come on school tours or the ones who came recently from the Chatsworth Park South holiday camp love it and the story the docents tell explaining how they were used.. One young child remarked that they don't get "good" prizes like that in Crackerjack today. Another hit with the Sunday museum guests was Betty Summers' "Rosie the Riveter" charm bracelet. Some of the guests had never heard of Rosie the Riveter and, lucky for us, we had a drawing of her from the old Saturday Evening Post rendition by Norman Rockwell. Betty Summers worked at Lockheed during World War II and was a riveter. She made a beautiful charm bracelet out of the rivets that she was putting on an airplane. Betty also brought up some old "V Mail" letters from her brother and her ration books with stamps for getting shoes, sugar etc.

Elaine Campbell's husband, Owen W. Campbell, was a hero in World War II and won a Silver Star. Elaine framed the letter and the attached medal for her walls at home. She loaned them to us for our display along with a snapshot of Benito Mussolini strung up by his heels for all the world to see at the close of World War II.

We have many visitors on our Open Houses the first Sunday of every month. We keep a log asking people to sign in so that we can see where they come from. It is surprising how many people we have that come from far away. In January we had a group from Pacific Palisades and we have had people from out-of-state and quite often from outside the United States. We rarely have people who are

not enthusiastic about our little cottage, museum and gardens. More often they say how charming it is or how it is "just like my grandmother's old house" or "I lived in a house just like this when I was young". But they all seem pleased with our little piece of the past.

In December we participated in the Annual Chatsworth Parade on December 12th. Bea Berman was chairman of the float committee and did a fantastic job arranging everything and then she and Elaine Campbell rode on the float. John Thorpe arranged for and drove the flat bed truck we borrowed and I helped decorate using our old signs from last year and some from the year before.

Our scene was an old-fashioned Christmas and we used the wringer and the old galvanized wash tubs and our old ironing board plus the "sad iron" made of heavy iron. There were winter long johns hanging from a rope on the back of the truck. We were well represented in the parade.

### NOTES FROM THE BOARD MEETING

The cottage has been tented and the termites are gone.

We have a new garden volunteer, Mary Harrington, who, to our good fortune, is "mad for roses" and is going to help out with pruning etc.

New blinds have been ordered for the museum and should be installed by the time of publication of this newsletter.

The Chatsworth Branch Library will be closing January 26th to allow for building of a new library which should be completed some time in 2003. The Friends of

Chatsworth Library have donated their used book storage shed to the Historical Society and it will be moved onto The Acre to be used for miscellaneous storage.

### GARDEN FESTIVAL

Spring is just around the corner and the date is set for our ever-popular **Garden Festival, April 28th.**

There will be many and varied displays of garden-related arts and crafts and, of course, **the Duchess of Devonshire's Tearoom.** Watch for further information but save the date.

### CHATSWORTH NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL FORMATION GROUP

There will be a meeting to discuss the formation of the new Chatsworth Neighborhood Council at Lawrence Middle School on January 23rd at 7pm in the school library. All interested persons are invited.

### WORD SEARCH

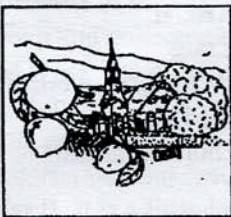
by Candy Craig

Can you find these words in the grid overleaf of things associated with the Homestead Acre? Words run vertical, horizontal and diagonal.

Acorn	Dynamite	Peach
Aere	<del>Fig</del>	<del>Pioneer</del>
Apple	Homestead	Poppy
Apricot	<del>Iris</del>	<del>Quince</del>
<del>Black Walnut</del>	<del>Lemon</del>	<del>Redwood</del>
Bonnet	Minnie Hill Palmer	<u>Roses</u>
Chatsworth	Museum	<u>Spirea</u>
Citrus	<del>Oak</del>	Time Capsule
<del>Crows</del>	<del>Olive</del>	<del>Willow</del>
Ditch	<u>Orange</u>	<u>Plum</u>

U	T	E	D	S	A	Z	B	D	O	O	W	D	E	R	O	E
T	O	C	I	R	P	A	A	U	Z	A	P	P	L	U	M	B
P	A	R	T	I	M	E	C	A	P	S	U	L	E	I	U	O
E	I	L	C	A	T	X	R	C	O	P	B	O	N	N	E	T
S	U	Z	H	S	P	L	E	O	Z	L	R	N	H	A	S	T
B	E	J	E	C	I	T	R	U	S	N	I	A	U	F	U	L
E	W	M	B	L	O	B	U	P	T	E	R	V	E	N	M	I
Q	O	I	L	A	Y	E	P	L	H	Q	S	L	E	X	H	L
H	L	U	A	P	P	L	E	I	Q	U	F	I	G	K	T	T
F	L	M	C	I	P	I	L	B	O	I	Z	A	N	B	R	A
D	I	U	K	Y	O	L	E	M	O	N	L	H	A	L	O	S
E	W	S	W	S	P	U	R	U	N	C	E	Z	R	A	W	I
X	F	E	A	A	L	S	P	I	R	E	A	E	O	O	S	T
N	S	U	L	C	V	S	X	E	U	R	L	M	R	X	T	B
T	I	M	N	B	O	N	S	O	A	K	E	C	O	H	A	R
C	E	G	U	R	L	R	O	W	I	C	T	O	Z	R	H	S
R	R	E	T	I	M	A	N	Y	D	Q	H	N	L	A	C	T

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