

Smoke Signal

CHATSWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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www.historicalsocieties.net

Co-Presidents: Andre & Linda van der Valk

September 2002

Editor: Zena Thorpe

We can't believe it is already November. It seems like once Pioneer Day is over with the holidays are just around the corner. We are planning for a busy holiday season with a holiday fund-raiser and holiday party at which we hope you will join us.

The cooler weather is making it a lot easier for Betty Summers as far as the watering. We were in the garden last week and everything looked beautiful. We realized how much time is spent and how much work Betty and Jim are doing in the garden. Sometimes we see that things are done and don't realize that someone has put a lot of effort into doing them. The same thing goes for the museum. How many of us stop and think of all the time and work Virginia does for us. Any time anyone wants some Chatsworth history they go to Virginia Watson who sets aside what she is doing and starts researching for them. She keeps track of our collection and writes down all of our history for us. Right now we are redoing the photographs for the museum and guess who will be writing all the details for the pictures. With Thanksgiving Day approaching we want to say how thankful we are for having Virginia, Betty and Jim.

Linda & Andre

Chatsworth Historical Society Board 2002-2003

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.....	Keli Jacobsen	
Gardens Director.....	Jim & Betty Summers	341-2714
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

PROGRAM MEETING November 19th, 2002, 7pm

The program for November will feature Society member and Chatsworth resident, **Zena Thorpe**.

She will share her experiences as co-creator and designer of the **California Sesquicentennial Quilt** and will show a video about the quilt produced by "Simply Quilts" for HGTV. The quilt is now on permanent display in the Golden State Museum in Sacramento.

Refreshments will be served.

VALLEY VIGNETTES

By Virginia Watson

Chatsworth has had many celebrities who lived in the community, but I think the family that left the most lasting impression was the Roy Rogers' family.

On Sundays when we hold Open House many people ask about the Rogers, wanting to know where they lived and other facts about them. Telling us they are still fans or repeating stories about them.

That usually starts a conversation and we talk about when their family lived here.

They came to Chatsworth in the early 1950's and settled on a 300-acre ranch just west of Oakwood Memorial Park on Lassen Street. The area is known today as The Roy Rogers' Estates. The ranch house is still there but the acreage where Buttermilk (Dale's horse) roamed is all developed with houses and streets. Trigger Street and Dale Court are two of the reminders of the past.

Soon after arriving, the family joined the small community of about 4000 people their every day activities. The family attended church services in the Methodist Church.

The children attended public school and joined the scouting program.

Dale joined the PTA and often attended school conferences like all the other mothers. She spoke for the Chatsworth Women's Club and helped out with the primary children at the Sunday School. I remember one Sunday morning going to pick up my young daughter. I stepped up on the porch of the little house behind the church where the little children met and listened to Dale playing the piano and belting out a chorus of "Jesus Loves The Little Children." In fact I think she also wrote that song. She did write many songs for children as well as the theme song, "Happy Trails" used on their television programs.

Roy went to Rotary Club and Chatsworth Chamber meetings and social events. He had an interest in the Roy Rogers' Sport Club located where Chatsworth Park South is today. The Rogers became patrons of our newly formed

Chatsworth Historical Society and wrote a letter sent out to the community endorsing our new society. That helped us get new members.

Later after the Methodist congregation had moved up Santa Susana Pass to a new church and we were involved in the process of saving the building, we held our Appreciation Reception at the Rogers' ranch. The reception was to thank the many people who had helped us and who had given money. It was also to thank Mr. Spinks who had finally given us the church building if we agreed to move it off his property. But we didn't get a clear message to Roy. He arrived late and thought it was a fund raiser and began asking people for donations. At our request Dale stopped him and board members have been sorry ever since that we didn't let him go on and collect a lot of money.

That same day we were outside with chairs set up in rows with an aisle. Dale was seated on the aisle and during the eventful program Bullet came trotting up to her near the front to offer her a field mouse he had caught and brought to her!

Much later, after we were ready to move the building three of our members, Lila Schepler, Celia Woodman and I, went up to talk to Dale about moving the building. It was not long after Debbie had been killed in a tragic bus accident. Dale said that she had been wondering what to do with the money left in Debbie's bank account and she gave us the \$1000 to start our moving fund.

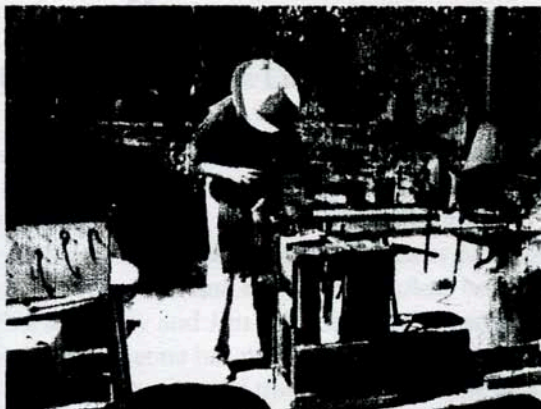
Our Chatsworth Historical Society started on April 17, 1963 and we are now 39 years old; Over the years we have collected a lot of memories but those memories of when we first started and when the Rogers were our patrons are among my favorite stories.

TRIP TO ROY ROGERS MUSEUM

We are planning a trip to the Roy Rogers Museum in Victorville. The museum is scheduled to move to Branson, Missouri in February 2003 and we would like to make one last trip there to reconnect with a bit of Chatsworth history. The trip will be January 11th and we will leave via bus from the museum at 9 A.M. The cost of \$10 will include the

bus fare and entrance to the museum. There will be a lunch stop at a restaurant in Victorville for which you are on your own.

Dr. Gary Standke demonstrates the craft of the blacksmith at Pioneer Day, Oct.6th



I must apologize for a late thank you, but being out of town for Pioneer Day, I didn't get home in time to submit an article for last month's Smoke Signal.

I handled all the preliminary planning and left the finishing touches to our co-presidents and all the workers and volunteers. I was thrilled to hear of the wonderful success and couldn't have done it without the support of everyone. My heartfelt thanks go to all who helped make it such a success: the board, docents, participants and everyone who helped. A special thank you goes to Andy Gump for the deluxe Portapotties.

Bea Berman, Chairman

DECEMBER 11th FUND-RAISER

We are having a fund-raiser at the home of Rick & Jerry, the owners of Chatsworth Florist. They have graciously invited us to have a holiday home tour of their house. We will be charging \$10 a ticket which must be purchased in advance. Their home has nine Christmas trees decorated plus a lot more.

Their home is a beautiful showplace for the holidays and it really puts you in the holiday spirit. The time is from 6 P.M. to 9 P.M. on Wednesday, December 11th. This is a wonderful opportunity for a fund-raiser for us and we are hoping to bring in at least \$1,000. All money from the ticket sales go to Chatsworth Historical Society and the proceeds have been earmarked for a much-needed new sprinkler system for The Acre. For more information call Linda at 882-3661. Chatsworth Florist also has tickets for sale. Thank you Rick & Jerry for this opportunity.

HOLIDAY PARTY

We will be having our annual Chatsworth Historical Society Holiday Party on Thursday, December 19th at 7:00 P.M. at the home of Andre & Linda van der Valk. The address is 10524 Eton Avenue, Chatsworth. Please RSVP 882-5614 and leave a message. This invitation is open to all members of the Society. Please note that the party is on a Thursday and not a Tuesday like our regular meetings.

NOTES FROM THE BOARD MEETING

Keli Jacobsen was welcomed as the newest board member. Keli will take over the job of hospitality.

There will be a school class tour of The Acre from Chatsworth Park Elementary Dec.4th.

The January 21st, 2003 meeting will feature Craig Howell who will tell about his discoveries at Zanja Madre.

The society will have an entry in the Chatsworth Parade, December 15th. The parade starts at the Topanga end of Devonshire St. at 1 P.M. and goes to Mason Park. Grand Marshal for the parade is Channel 5 TV personality Mark Kristi