



Smoke Signal



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

April 2003

Editor: Zena Thorpe

As the Chatsworth Historical Society approaches its 40th birthday Linda and I are proud of our association with a growing and energetic group. It seems that the society has picked up interest within the community recently because of newspaper articles associated with The Munch Box. We say energetic because it appears that the publicity has given all of us a renewed "second wind" and appreciation of our community.

The Munch Box was named a Historical Cultural Landmark last month as a result of our initial contact with the owner Ed "Buck" Barker, the community and Councilman Hal Bernson. The PBS TV show "California Gold" with Huell Howser did a half hour show on The Munch Box, which allowed us to share some of the Historical Society's past achievements. Mr. Howser has indicated that he will produce a future program on Chatsworth's other Historical Landmarks.

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Linda & Andre

Chatsworth Historical Society Board 2002-2003

Co-Pres.....Linda & Andre van der Valk 882-3661
Programs.....John Thorpe 882-3572
Rec. Secretary.....Elaine Campbell 341-4954
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 Jacobson

Gardens Director..Jim & Betty Summers341-2714
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

PROGRAM MEETING

April 15th, 2003 7pm

We will be celebrating the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Chatsworth Historical Society at this meeting with reminiscences of the saving of the Pioneer Church which was the prime purpose for the formation of the society.

We will show a film made by Keith Watts in 1963 of the moving of the church building and Bill Schepler, who was part of the team that actually organized the move, will speak about the trials and tribulations of that event.

Come and hear the history of the little church that Chatsworth saved from demolition.

Refreshments will be served.

CHATSWORTH HISTORY - VIGNETTE

By Virginia Watson

At the April meeting we will be celebrating the 40th anniversary of the founding of our Chatsworth Historical Society. It has been a long and interesting 40 years, full of ups and downs, but we finally have reached a point where we are accepted by the community as a creditable organization offering the public glimpses into our past. At first people were skeptical of our facts. There was not much written about Chatsworth and until we presented pictures and proof of our information they weren't sure. And there were those who thought we were crazy to save a 60-year old church building. They were the ones who named us "The Hysterical Society."

But they came to our "Appreciation Reception" held at the Roy Rogers' and Dale Evans Rogers' ranch in 1964 only a year after we had organized and had saved the church. We had low periods when we had to pay \$200 a year just to pay to destroy the church building in case we didn't get it finished. Times when our treasury was so low we had only a few dollars and were unable to do many things. Times when we needed money for plumbing for the church and electricity. But it all got done.

We worked for Stoney Point to become a city monument and park and we took on a second project --the Minnie Hill Palmer Homestead house and garden, finally having a place for our museum.

Our Rose and Garden Festivals caught on and our Pioneer Day grew and was successful, we began being open the first Sunday of the month for tours. Many new members joined.

But the core of our membership has remained. We have a loyal group of members and friends who help us every time and many new ones who weren't here when we started. But there are still the early 40-year members: Lila and Bill Schepler, Keith Watts, Lillian Schepler and Virginia.

We have a long list of people who helped us along the way, most notable were Katharine and Kelly Johnson who had worked to help organize the group and Chuck Janess, our first president, and his wife Eileen Janess who was our treasurer through a lot of our tough times. Lila Schepler took over Chuck's first term of office and then served an additional term. She was president when we moved the church and still volunteers. Bill Schepler was an integral part of moving the church-- he and his brother actually moved fences and helped physically to move the building. Lila and Bill still show our slides today. Mr. and Mrs. Frank Schepler, Sr. helped us over many a slow spot and their son and Lillian's husband Frank, Jr. (Bill's brother) who physically did a lot of the work on the church building. We named our library after him.

Rosalie and Garvin Aulepp were very active and we had huge installation dinners when Garvin was president. Milton and Collette Parsons are remembered for their creativity. Collette was editor of the Smoke

Signal and Milton was also a board member. Later there was Celia and Jim Woodman-Celia edited our Smoke Signal and brought many new members into the Society

Ioline Cleveland was president of the Society for four years and contributed so much through her yard sales while Everett fixed our electricity, and repaired our antiques

Jane Matthews was president when we acquired The Minnie Hill Palmer Homestead Acre and she did a lot of work arranging for grants and repairs plus she did a lot of the inside painting herself.

Marian and Ralph Hyland moved away after working many years for the Society and we lost Pauline Aue, and Candy and Dean Craig recently. Betty and Jim

Summers are long-time members who are now in charge of the gardens.

Each person who accepts an office on the board or volunteers as a docent or who bakes for our bake sales, helps us on our way and we have MANY PEOPLE TO THANK for our success today.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

April 15th - General meeting celebrating the 40th anniversary of the founding of the society.

April 22nd - **Earth Day** at The Acre with Santa Susana School.

April 27th - Garden Festival 11am - 4pm

President's Message..... continued from first page

Virginia Watson will provide a key role in this show establishing the society's proud heritage and the dedication of our members. Linda and I would like to thank all members, especially our present founding members on the board, for their past hard work in getting to where we are today. We are especially proud of participating in saving The Munch Box and this part of our fond memories we share of the simplistic life of the 50s.

The garden Festival is coming up and we can use all the help we can get. The Garden Festival is one of our two fundraisers that help us to raise the money required to run The Acre.

In case you get this in time there will be another showing of the Huell Howser show on April 10th at 7:30pm on KCET.

GARDEN FESTIVAL

It's all systems go for our annual Garden Festival, Sunday, April 27th at The Homestead Acre from 11:00am to 4:00pm. Come and enjoy an afternoon of fun. Enjoy our delicious lunch, be entertained by the Chatsworth Dance Center, meet Marty Bell, Arts and Crafts Booths, Bake Sale, White Elephant Sale, Plants and Roses for sale, Museum Exhibits and much more. If you have items for the white elephant sale or if you would like to bake, please call me at 341-5449.

Looking forward to seeing you on the 27th

Bea Berman - Chairman