



# Smoke Signal



CHATSWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
10385 Shadow Oak Drive, Chatsworth, CA 91311  
(818)-882-5614 www.historicalsocieties.net

Co-Presidents: Andre & Linda van der Valk

Editor : Keith Watts

NOVEMBER, 2004



## CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

**H**appy Thanksgiving and Holiday Greetings to all!  
We have been trying to catch up on things that

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Permanent Member.....	Lila Schepler	341-3447

slipped by while preparing for Pioneer Day. Virginia and I have finally sat down and started to order much needed archival supplies. Ann Vincent has been busy putting the books Lila Schepler donated to our library. We now have three shelves of the Lila and Bill Schepler collection. Ray Vincent has put our by-laws on the computer. Jim, Betty and Beverly are always busy in the gardens.

Our docents are meeting on Wednesday mornings, so if you would like to join them please come by. They are there from 9 to 12. We are also contemplating having a float in the Chatsworth Holiday Parade but we need help. The theme for the parade is *Letters From Home*

and we thought we might have a float with some of our members wearing some of our old uniforms. If you are interested in helping please let us know.

Linda and Andre

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**PROGRAM MEETING - Tuesday, Nov. 16<sup>th</sup>**

Program Chair Bea Berman has arranged for another interesting and informative program. Miriam Sprankling, a member of the Conejo Valley Historical Society, will speak and show a slide presentation on the history of the Conejo Valley. So be sure to mark your calendars for Tuesday, November 16<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 p.m. at the Homestead Acre. The public is invited.

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**FUNDRAISER EVENTS**

HEART DISEASE: Wednesday, December 1<sup>st</sup>, actress Kate Jackson will be present at Chatsworth Florist for a signing of The Red Dress ornament which benefits the American Heart Association. The Red Dress is the national symbol of Women's Heart Disease which is the number one killer of women in America. The event is from 6:00 p.m. -8:00 p.m.

HOLIDAY HOME TOUR: we are having a holiday home tour at Rick and Jerry's (the owners of Chatsworth Florist) on Thursday, December 9<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. They have put up twenty trees this year at their home. The tickets are \$10.00 and the proceeds go to the Historical Society. The tickets are available from Linda or Chatsworth Florist. We also will have some at The Acre. We are limited to 150 tickets so, if you are interested, please purchase them early. We want to thank Rick and Jerry for this opportunity, I am sure not too many of us want 150 people going through our home! Please note the date since there will be no December Smoke Signal.

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**NOVEMBER:** This month we celebrate two holidays: Veterans Day and Thanksgiving..Elaine

VETERANS DAY: On November 11, 1918 an

armistice ended the fighting in WW1. On November 11, 1921 the body of an American unknown soldier was laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery, attended by President and others. In 1926 congress adopted a resolution directing the president to issue a proclamation calling on citizens to observe the day. It did not become a federal holiday until 1938, (during which time it was known as Armistice Day.) In 1954 congress and President Eisenhower signed a bill to make it known as Veterans Day. In 1971 an effort was made to change the date to the 4th Monday of October, but this caused much confusion and in 1975 congress passed legislation that made Veterans Day revert to November 11, to be effective in 1978.

THANKSGIVING DAY: Every year on the 4th Thursday of November the people of the United States, it's territories and Puerto Rico pause to express gratitude for the bounty and good fortune they enjoy. All through history people had special festivals to give thanks. Since most settlers who came to America had known some form of thanksgiving in their homelands, it is not surprising they continued this custom.

The first Thanksgiving in what was to become the United States was held on August 9, 1607 by colonists in Maine. Reverend Richard Seymour led the prayers of thanks for safe arrival in the new land. A Thanksgiving ceremony and feast, that took place in Plymouth Colony in 1621, set the pattern for our present day observance. It probably occurred sometime in the middle of October, attended by Indians from a neighboring tribe. Over the years many days in November and December were celebrated as days of thanksgiving.

The establishment of a national thanksgiving was largely the work of Sarah Josepha Hale. Beginning in 1827 she began writing to members of congress, arguing for a uniform day to give thanks. She was editor of Godeys magazine and wrote editorials on the subject from 1827 through 1863. This dedication

helped spur President Lincoln to issue the proclamation that the last Thursday in November would be the national Thanksgiving Day. This was in 1863. It took until Dec. 1941 for congress to formalize this observance with a resolution that permanently placed the holiday on the 4th Thursday of November. Happy Thanksgiving!

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**GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN.....Linda**

We finished the street name origins and now we are going to feature some sites from the Gone but Not Forgotten articles from the book *The San Fernando Valley: America's Suburb* by Kevin Roderick.

**ADOHR DAIRY FARMS** A large Adohr Farms dairy opened in 1916 between Reseda Boulevard. and Lindley Avenue, adjacent to the ranch of Gen. Harrison Gray Otis that in 1919 became the Tarzana Ranch of author Edgar Rice Burroughs. The dairy survived World War II until the expanding suburbs squeezed it out.

**AIR RAID SIRENS** Throughout the Cold War years residents of the Valley and Los Angeles heard the mournful wail of air raid sirens once a month. The tests were conducted at 10:00 A.M. on the last Friday of the month.

**BELLY ACRES** The estate of comic actor Edward Everett Horton, who also served as honorary governor of the Valley in the 1940's, was in Encino at 5521 Amestoy Avenue. Horton hosted many social and community events at Belly Acres. The writer F. Scott Fitzgerald rented a guest cottage for a time in 1938-39. Horton had to make way in the late 1950's for the Ventura Freeway, which cut right through his property .A short street called Edward Everett Horton Lane off of Burbank Boulevard commemorates the actor.

**BETHLEHEM STAR PARADE** This Christian-themed parade on Van Nuys Boulevard ended its run in 1970 after 21 years, due to waning public interest.

**BIRD OF PARADISE TEA ROOM** Biscuits baked to order, steamed Kadota figs and farm-fresh vegetables were featured on the menu in this Devonshire Street

establishment listed in a 1935 guide book, "Curious California Customs". Exotic birds strolling the grounds helped to lure weekend motorists out to Chatsworth for a stop over at Docia Conley's tea room. (Editor's Note: It was located on a slight hill where the eastern part of the new library and the adjoining strip mall are now. The fig orchard was across Devonshire St. Gifts, dried fruits, etc., were advertised and shipped all over the the USA.)

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**LIBRARY OPENING**

The long-awaited opening of the Chatsworth Branch Library is scheduled for Monday, November 15<sup>th</sup> , 2004 as announced by the Board of Library Commissioers, Mayor James Hahn, and Greig Smith, Councilman, 12 District. A grand opening ceremony will be held at 10 a.m. in the library parking area. The Friends of the Chatsworth Library organization mailed invitations and will assist with refreshments.

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**CHS HOLIDAY PARTY - Tuesday, Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> .**

The CHS annual Holiday Party will be held at the van der Valk's home, 10524 Eton Ave., at 7:00 p.m., on Tuesday, December 14<sup>th</sup>. Come join us for a festive evening to celebrate the holidays. Please note the date since there will be no December Smoke Signal to remind you. RSVP (818)882-5614 or (818)882 3661.

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**DECEMBER EVENTS**

Dec. 1 Actress Kate Jackson at Chatsworth Florist for Heart Assn., 6 to 8 p. m.

Dec. 5 Open House at the Acre, 1 to 4 p.m.

Dec. 9 Fundraiser at Rick and Jerry's (Chatsworth Florists), 6 to 9 p.m.

Dec. 11 Sycamore Grove -Highland Park Victorian home tour

Dec. 12 Chatsworth Holiday parade "Letters from home"

Dec. 14 Christmas party at van der Valks, 7 p.m.

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**PIONEER DAY REDUX** - Thanks from the Chairperson

All the work and anticipation for Pioneer Day is over and there are so many people to thank that I don't know where to begin. Without all the help of the wonderful board and many volunteers, this event would never come to pass. It was a huge success and I owe it all to the many who gave me the support and labor.

A special thanks to Andy Gump for donating the Porta Pottys, Trader Joe's, Ralphs', Donut King, Magic World for the balloons and helium tanks, Carol Weston and Eva for face painting and caricatures, Pat Keene and his gold-

panning staff, Dr. Gary Standke for his blacksmithing, Linda Menary for her wonderful petting zoo, and DaveStorm and the Thundercreek Band for the wonderful entertainment, Leon Brown for his Origami, the Woodcarvers and Rock Chippers, and Spinning Jennies.

If I missed anyone, please forgive me. All these people contributed to make this event so great. Of course I can't forget the chili cooks. Our board really worked to help me and I couldn't have done it without them.

Bea Berman

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