



Smoke Signal



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

Editor : Keith Watts

JANUARY, 2005

CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

Andre and I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season. We had a great Christmas spending time with our family and especially the grandchildren. The New Year will bring us our fourth grandchild and we are thrilled. December was a great month for The Historical Society. The fundraiser at the home of Rick and Jerry (from Chatsworth Florist) grossed us \$2,970.00. We added another night because the first night had sold out so quickly. We are very fortunate to have members like Rick and Jerry who have helped us so much over the last few years with fundraisers. We sold 297 tickets for the two tours of their home and they sold more than half of them at the shop. They also held a fundraiser for The Simi Valley Historical Society. That was another 160 people who went through their home.

We are all appreciative to Rick and Jerry for allowing us to show their home for this fundraising opportunity and their community involvement.

I also want to thank Bea, Betty, Loretta, Rod , Elaine, Virginia and my mother Henriette for helping out those two nights. They baked cookies, served drinks and helped with clean up. We really appreciate the help. Finally, a special thanks to Mindy Berman who designed our tickets for us and had them printed. The tickets looked great! Thank you Mindy!

Happy New Year,

Linda and Andre

PROGRAM MEETING - Tuesday, Jan. 18th ..

Program Chair Bea Berman has announced that the program for the January general meeting on the 18th will be a little different. We are going to have a *Night at the Movies*, with popcorn, drinks, and a Roy Rogers film!

So be sure to mark your calendars for Tuesday, Jan. 18th at the Homestead Acre, at 7:00 p.m.

Come and cheer the good guys and boo the bad guys! The public is invited.

Chatsworth Historical Society
Board of Directors 2004-2005

Co-Presidents.....	Linda & Andre van der Valk	882-3661
Programs, Ways & Means.....	Bea Berman	341-5449
Membership.....	Keith Watts	341-4489
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Rec. Secretary.....	Elaine Campbell	341-4954
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Cottage Curator.....	Betty Summers	341-2714
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Garden Director.....	Jim & Betty Summers	341-2714
Director-at-Large.....	Barbara Pampalone	882-2395
Director-at-Large.....	Dianne Kartiala	886-5210 (Bus.)
Permanent Member.....	Lila Schepler	341-3447

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN in the Valley

(From Americansuburbs.com)....Linda

This is a continuation of former places and things in the Valley that were widely known or esteemed by residents of the San Fernando Valley and environs:

BIRD WONDERLAND

One acre compound with tropical birds and exotic animals such as pythons on sale. Located at 15640 Ventura Blvd. in Encino in the 1930s.

BIRMINGHAM ARMY HOSPITAL

The hospital for World War II paraplegics opened in 1944 at Vanowen Street and Balboa Blvd. Named for Brig. General Henry Partick Birmingham, it held more than 1,000 patients in wards connected by wheelchair ramps. Some original buildings remain on the campus of Birmingham High, which shares the hospital site with Mulholland Junior High. Until it closed in 1950, it was sometimes dubbed "Birmingham Country Club" due to all the Hollywood stars who visited patients. Footage of the hospital circa 1950 is prominent in *The Men*, Marlon Brando's first film.

BOB'S BIG BOY DRIVE-INS

In the Valley postwar car culture Bob's Big Boy reigned supreme. Bob's was the busiest cruising

spot on Van Nuys Blvd. The last original Bob's drive-in is on Riverside Drive at the border between Burbank and Toluca Lake.

BUSCH GARDENS

The beer garden with boat rides and exotic bird shows opened in 1966 at the Anheuser-Busch brewery in Van Nuys. Adults were offered free beer and visitors of all ages could tour the brewery by aerial gondola. In 1976 the name changed to the Busch Bird Sanctuary and in 1986 the park closed for good. Parrots and parakeets traced to the park's flocks still roam the Valley's skies. (Dan Huffman sees them at his Ranch in the mornings still).

CADDO FIELD

Caddo was the entire air field built by Howard Hughes for his film *Hell's Angels*, shot in the Valley in

1928-29.

The field, named for his family company, was in the vicinity of Balboa and Roscoe Blvds.

CANOGA AVENUE PEPPER TREES

The rows of older trees were registered as a cultural historical monument, but were torn down anyway for new construction in Woodland Hills in 1986.

ATTENTION GARDENERS AND ROSE LOVERS

Help us keep our Homestead Acre gardens looking beautiful this summer

**Join us for a morning of rose pruning!
Saturday, February 5th - 9a.m. to noon**

**Homestead Acre, within Chatsworth Park So.
(West end of Devonshire St.)**

Bring pruning shears and gloves.
We will provide coffee and doughnuts.
Pruning instructions given at 9:30 a.m.
For more information, call (818) 882-3053

GARDEN FESTIVAL DATE SET

Plans are underway for the annual Garden Festival which will be held on Sunday, May 1st, 2005 at the CHS Homestead Acre. More later.

CHATSWORTH LIBRARY

As announced previously, the long-awaited opening of the Chatsworth Branch Library took place as scheduled on Monday, November 15th, 2004. The Grand Opening ceremony featured several L.A. city and library dignitaries as speakers. Among them were Mayor James Hahn, Greig Smith, Councilman (12 District) and L.A.'s new City Librarian, Fontayne Holmes. Kudos were expressed to those who participated in the design and construction of the building. The Chatsworth community also participated, with a color guard, two grade school classes, and a large audience, anxious to see and use the new library

HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS...Elaine

Campo de Cahuenga will have their yearly re-enactment of the signing of the articles of capitulation on Sunday, January 16th at 1 p.m. The address is 3919 Lankershim Blvd., North Hollywood. They will feature fiesta dancers, tours of the archeological dig, San Fernando Valley Garden Club dedication of heritage garden, memorial wreath presentation, 12 flags over California, refreshments and a taco bar.

The **Grier Musser Museum**, at 403 South Bonnie

Brae Street, houses a fascinating collection of antiques in a historic house. Built in 1898 this fanciful Queen Anne style home has been restored and houses many valuable heirlooms of Anna Grier Musser. January 12th thru February 26th features Chinese artifacts and "Elvis Remembered." Sunday February 6th at 1-4 p.m. there will be a Victorian Valentine tour. Admission is \$10.00 and reservations are needed: (213) 413-1814.

Canoga-Owensmouth Historical Society is having a fundraiser at the Madrid Theatre on February 11 at 8 p.m. They will be presenting Studs Terkel's play "*Working*" The admission is \$15.00. The theater is at 21622 Sherman Way, Canoga Park. For reservations call Joe Lecce (818) 883-7698.

I had never heard of **Gopher Canyon**, but there is such a place and it is now in the news. It is a parcel of land recently acquired by the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority. It is located North of the 118 freeway off of DeSoto Ave. and Browns Canyon Road. The current look of the canyon is dominated by destruction left after gravel mining.

There is a proposed plan to restore and develop the site., which would include repairing existing stream beds, revegetating the area, adding hiking, biking and equestrian trails. In addition, the site would accommodate over night camping and have day use picnic areas, as well as a ranger station and an interpretive center. All this is in the future - but would be a wonderful addition to our area.
