

Smoke Signal

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

April 2015, Issue #2

Editor: Ann Vincent

Co-Presidents' Message

By Linda & André van der Valk

This year is flying by and it is Garden Festival time again. Everyone has been busy getting ready. The museum display is being changed to reflect the past and present of our Equestrian Heritage in Chatsworth. Ann Vincent has compiled a great collection of pictures. We have pictures from the National Palomino Association that was associated with Harvester Farms which is located on Devonshire (the big red barn with Barney). Jelena Csanyi did a great job changing our bear from a business man to a cowboy. If you come to the Garden Festival make sure you stop in the museum to see the new display.

We have had problems with a pressure valve in the sprinkler system which has made it difficult to water the lawns. Annette Campbell and Trini Sanchez have been hand watering the roses and the plants but it is a lot of work. The city plumbers have been working on the problem and hopefully we will have the problem fixed before the Garden Festival. We are adhering to all of the watering regulations that the City set.

Our deepest condolences to the family of Lila Schepler, who passed away April 8th. Lila and Bill Schepler were founding members of the Historical Society and instrumental in getting the Historical Society to the point that it is today.

Linda and Andre.



Fond memories of our 2004 Garden Festival Docents with Huell Howser. Lillian, Lila and Bill Schepler.

Chatsworth Historical Society
Board of Directors 2014-2015

| | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Co-Presidents | Linda & André van der Valk |
| Programs | Linda Dunham |
| Ways & Means..... | open |
| Membership..... | Keith Watts |
| Treasurer..... | Jim Van Gundy |
| Recording Secretary..... | Elaine Campbell |
| Smoke Signal..... | Ann Vincent |
| Museum Curator..... | Virginia Watson |
| Cottage Curator..... | Betty Summers |
| Hospitality..... | Jelena Csanyi |
| Garden Director..... | Annette Campbell |
| Director-at-Large..... | Beverly King |
| Director-at-Large..... | Connie Ager |
| Honorary Member..... | Bea Berman |

Upcoming Events

MILTON PARSONS...

The Cookie Jar Theatre

Tuesday, April 21st, 7:00 pm

Our April 21 Tuesday General Meeting will feature the 1950's Chatsworth Cookie Jar Theatre. We will also show a short documentary "The Face is Familiar - Milton Parsons" (2014). Milton Parsons was a film and TV character actor who lived in Chatsworth and directed the Cookie Jar Theatre with his wife Collette. The Parsons were active members of the Chatsworth Historical Society. If you were one of the cast members of the Cookie Jar Theatre, please contact us, and also please attend, we would love to have you share your memories.

GARDEN FESTIVAL & TEA

Sunday, April 26th 11-3 pm

We have a great turn out of vendors to enjoy, Garden activities and plant sales.

Be sure you join us for the Duchess Tea in the Rose Gardens.

Put this on your calendar...share the date with Friends and Family....Come Join Us!

Chatsworth Historical Society Presents...

A GARDEN FESTIVAL SUNDAY APRIL 26th

**11:00 AM to 3:00 PM
HOMESTEAD ACRE**

Located just inside Chatsworth Park South
(West End of Devonshire Street)
10385 Shadow Oak Drive, Chatsworth, CA 91311

Make plans to attend a beautiful day in the garden. Admission is \$5 per adult, Children \$1 and those under 5 years are free. All proceeds go the preservation of the Homestead Acre and Museum.

Highlights of the day include our Duchess High Tea served from 11:30-1:30 pm. You can purchase your \$10 ticket for the Tea in the Garden. If you have a group of 10 or more you are encouraged to make reservations by emailing chatsworthhistory@gmail.com.

A large selection of vendors with outstanding handmade and specialty items will be present to delight you with their wares.

Garden Clubs and Community Groups will also be providing information. We will have the wonderful Veteran's Quilt Display. A homemade bake sale, live plant sale and arts and crafts are all part of the event.

Tours of the Minnie Hill-Palmer Cottage and the Virginia Watson Chatsworth Museum will be available.

Parking is limited at Chatsworth Park South. Park your car at the Chatsworth Train Depot (10038 Old Depot Plaza Rd) and use our free shuttle service, every 15 minutes from 11:00am to 3:00pm.

ENJOY THE ROSES!

For more information contact chatsworthhistory@gmail.com



Enjoy our
Duchess Tea
in the Garden



Tours of the
Museum and
Cottage

Drought tolerant and Native
Plants will be available



A large
selection of
vendors with
outstanding
handmade
and
specialty
items

Group seating reservations for 10 or more



ALEXANDER BUTLER HOMESTEAD PALM TREES

This is how a new research project gets started.....

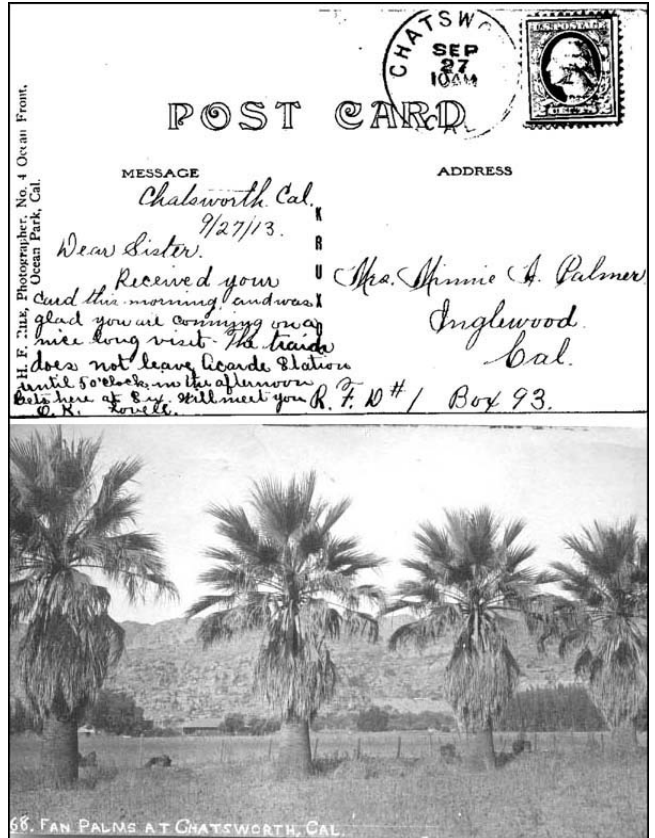
At the Highway Patrol program in March, a view of the palm trees on Andora at Farralone (see photo below -- "Fake Cop" Episode, 1957 notice palm trees upper center) brought instant reactions from both Reid Bogert and Linda van der Valk. Reid recalled he had seen those palm trees as young trees in a 1913 postcard sent to Minnie Hill Palmer by her brother Lovell, while Minnie was living in Inglewood, CA in 1913 (photo at right).



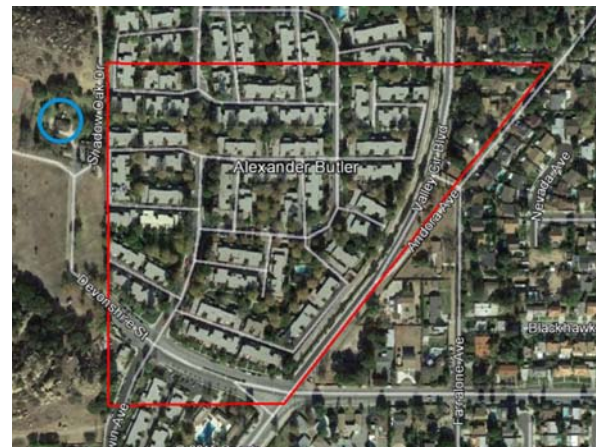
Linda van der Valk and Virginia Watson had prepared the large Minnie Hill Palmer display case in the museum, and Linda knew exactly where it was on display.

Those tall palm trees are still there today. We did a little research to find out who planted those palm trees. From an analysis of the photos below, we now realize that the palm trees lined the entrance to the 1901 Butler homestead on Andora at Farralone.

If you look real close at the post card photo, the Hill-Palmer cottage is between the left two palm trees.



In the 1959 aerial photo above, the 33 acre Butler homestead is outlined in red. The Butler home is in the upper-mid right corner, and is the only home on the parcel. The Hill homestead is circled in blue on the left. The center photo above is a close-up of the Butler home, and you can see the 12 palm trees. The photo was taken in the morning, seen by the



long shadows of the trees. Notice the Santa Susana creek runs just left of the home. By 1961 the majority of the original Butler homestead (except for the upper right corner including the home) became a golf course. By 1969 the property is part of Rockpointe Condominiums, shown in the 2015 Google Earth photo above.

CHATSWORTH PAST & PRESENT

By Ann & Ray Vincent

April 2015

Highway Patrol Episodes Filmed in Chatsworth

Our interest in the Highway Patrol episodes filmed in Chatsworth is based on film footage that reveals the community between 1955 and 1959. They include photos of street corners, buildings and rural areas long gone.

The 1955-59 "Highway Patrol" television show lasted for 4 seasons of 39 episodes each for a total of 156 episodes. Each episode of the series was filmed in a maximum of 2 to 3 days – 1 day in the studio and 1 to 2 days on location.

In reviewing the 2014 book, "Highway Patrol Locations Then and Now" by Jerry Schneider, we have identified 14 episodes that were filmed in Chatsworth.

Our March 2015 meeting featured **Episode 27, "Motorcycle A"**, with a 25 year old Clint Eastwood, who was paid \$80.00. Most of the filming was done at the Town and Country Café at the southwest corner of Devonshire and Topanga (now USA Gas).



Reid Bogert remembers that the cafe was run by the Jetton family. The Chatsworth Market to the south was run by the McElveins. Just south of the market is a tiny gas station. Reid pumped gas there one summer.

Photos from other episodes follow:



Topanga just south of Mayall, Pioneer Church the 1957 episode, "The Safecracker".



"This is Chatsworth" sign, in front of Chatsworth Park Elementary, Devonshire and Topanga. Clint Eastwood on second motorcycle, "Motorcycle A", 1956



Canoga and Devonshire -- the Shopping Cart in 1957 Episode "Fake Cop", Food Roundup & Sunset Liquors in 1965, today's Karate Studio.



Chatsworth St. and Topanga in 1957 Episode "Female Hitchhiker"

The car is driving east on Chatsworth St. towards Topanga. The white Vellone vegetable stand is seen center left, and still exists today.

Thank you to everyone who helped identify these photos.

We don't have room to share all of the Highway Patrol episode photos with you in our newsletter. Visit chatsworthhistory.com, Presentations, and view the March presentation online. And if you happen to notice any other episodes that we missed, send us an email at chatsworthhistory@gmail.com. Many of the Highway Patrol episodes are available on YouTube...

Chatsworth Historical Society



LILA SCHEPLER, founding member of the Chatsworth Historical Society passed away on April 8 at the age of 98.

The following article was written by Virginia Watson following Lila Schepler's 94th birthday.

Mrs. Schepler has been a local leader since she came to the area as a 14-year-old girl and worked in many different fields after graduating from Canoga Park High School at 16 and later USC majoring in recreation and the arts. She came to the Chatsworth area on a Monday in September, 1931, and the next Sunday she and her father began attending services at the local Methodist Church where she has held every office including that of steward and was one of the first women to serve as trustee.

When asked about her personal history, Mrs. Schepler reports that she was born in Bashaw, Alberta, Canada in 1917. She and her family later lived in Venice, Calif., before moving to Chatsworth in 1931. When they first moved here the family lived in a little house on the northwest corner of Devonshire Street at De Soto Avenue. The area was raised in a little hill and she remembers lots of Kadota fig trees in the area. That was not surprising because the Docia Conley Co. was across the street but farther west--nearer Variel Avenue. The front of the property was a gift shop where they served tea and jam to the public and in the rear was a plant where the owners made jams and jellies, pickled watermelon and specialized in candied Kadota figs. The teen-age Lila was artistic and admired the beautiful packages all wrapped in cellophane with the bright ribbons covering the jams and jellies and it wasn't long until she was working in the shop helping to wrap the food and decorate the baskets. She remembers the shop fondly.

The Great Depression was at its worst during 1931 and '32 and Chatsworth was a small agricultural town with very few businesses, in fact there were very few stores in the area at that time. It wasn't long until the ambitious Lila was also working with "Grandpa Johnson" as **C. W. Johnson** the Bee King was known. He had two booths in different parts of the San Fernando Valley and kept them supplied with honey which took a lot of bees. Mr. Johnson taught Lila all about bees and their culture and she learned for herself about being stung. It was her job to "smoke" the bees to keep them calm so that Mr. Johnson could work with them. She remembers the hardest part was wearing a hot sweater with long sleeves in the summer and putting rubber bands on the long sleeves to keep the bees from crawling up her arm.

Lila was also an accomplished babysitter with lots of experience already with her own brothers and sisters. And she often cared for the children of the ministers of the Methodist Church when the going rate for "sitting" was 25 cents for the entire evening. She was often able to provide information about former pastors and their families in Chatsworth for the Historical Society research.

Over the years Lila Schepler has volunteered uncounted hundreds of hours to the local historical society. She initiated the Docent Program and trained the first docents. Most recently she presented her collection of books and pamphlets about California History to the **William "Bill" Schepler** Memorial Library at The Homestead Acre.

But what a life she's had. She is a retired executive in the field of recreation and has been honored many times by the Los Angeles City Department of Recreation and Parks and the California State Park and Recreation as well as her own sorority, Chi Kappa Rho. She was named Woman of the Year by the Chatsworth Chamber of Commerce in 1976 and Outstanding Citizen by the Chatsworth Community Coordinating Council. She originated programs such as the Folklorico in Los Angeles and The Young Historians for the Conference of Historical Societies, and was a founding member of the Arts Council. She is one of the founding members of the Chatsworth Historical Society and has served as president seven times, filling out the founding president's term after he had a heart attack.

She is a Life Member of the PTA, has worked on the executive board for the Girl Scouts and has been honored by them. She worked with the members of the 51st Agricultural Fair and was honored by the 51st Agricultural District. She was a member of the "Destination 90" program that planned for the development of the San Fernando Valley and worked with the Welfare Planning Council. Her work in the field of recreation and the arts is immeasurable and extends beyond her community into the whole San Fernando Valley. She

works with seemingly effortless charm and accomplishes what others say is impossible. Lila opened the playground at Lanark Park when it was Orcutt Park and remembers working with as many as 300 children in Los Angeles for a May Day program.

In her later years her vision failed and now she has to rely on voices to remember acquaintances and friends. She misses reading as she was an avid reader. She spends a lot of time with her four great grandchildren, three girls and a boy who live nearby.

She is still active in the Chatsworth Historical Society, The Chatsworth West Methodist Church and the Chi Kappa Rho when the meetings are nearby.

Lila has had a really active life and when asked about how she managed to do so many things and do them so well she modestly says, "It is just that I've lived here so long!"

VALERIE BUTLER JENKINS Granddaughter of Minnie Hill Palmer

Our condolences to the family on the loss of their mother and grandmother. Valerie's mother was Edith Palmer Butler, the daughter of Minnie Hill Palmer. Valerie Mae Butler Jenkins was born on November 10, 1931 and passed away on Thursday, March 19, 2015.

Can we Email our newsletter to you?

In an effort to reduce costs, save paper, and provide you with a color copy, we now email newsletters to those of you that have given us an email address. However, we also continue to send you a snail-mail copy until you advise us not to. Please email us at chatsworthhistory@gmail.com to stop future newsletter mailings and save us some money. And also please email us to provide your email address. Thanks!

Please use the form below to renew your Membership. And if your neighbor is not a member yet, pass this newsletter on to them and invite them to join.

Wondering if your Dues are Due?

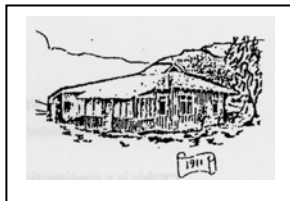
For those receiving email only newsletters, we will advise you by email when your dues are due. With a life membership there is no code on your address label. If there is a code on your address label, then this is what it means:

- The first digit represents membership type, 1 – individual and 2 – family/organization.
- The next two digits represent the month that you last paid your dues.
- The last two digits represent the year that you last paid your dues.
- If the month and year on your address label is over one year old, then your dues are due!



CHATSWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Membership Form



Your membership helps support our Homestead Acre and the educational and historical programs we provide for our community. Members receive our quarterly newsletters, and receive invitation reminders regarding our monthly programs and annual events – Rose Pruning, the Garden Festival, Membership Roundup, and Pioneer Day. Please mail this form with your annual membership dues and/or contribution made payable to:

Chatsworth Historical Society, 10385 Shadow Oak Drive, Chatsworth, CA 91311
chatsworthhistory@gmail.com 818-882-5614 www.historicalsocieties.net

Yearly: New Member Renewal
Life Membership: Individual \$15.00 Family \$20.00 Organization \$20.00
 \$ 125.00

NAME _____ **Phone:** _____

STREET ADDRESS: _____ **Email:** _____

CITY / STATE / ZIP: _____

Special Interest / Expertise: _____