

Smoke Signal

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

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Editor: Ann Vincent

Co-Presidents' Message

By Linda & André van der Valk

Now that the holidays are behind us we are starting to plan for the Garden Festival on April 24th. Ann Vincent is our Event Chair for the event and she is already starting to contact the vendors and sending out information for our Duchess Tea. This year our Duchess Tea will be chaired by Martina Turner a new member of the Historical Society and Linda Dunham will again coordinate the reservations for the Red Hat ladies.

The mediation of the park is scheduled to begin in April. The work will go on for approximately one year and then hopefully we will have our park back. Not as we knew it before but at least it will be open to the public once again. The program for this month's meeting will show us what the land looked like before the Park when it was known as the Aqua Sierra Sportsmans Club and Roy Rogers Sports Center.

Last year we had over 2000 visitors to the Acre. Our goal for 2016 is to introduce the Acre to more people. We have Open House on the first Sunday of the month from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM. Tell your friends or come yourself and visit us.

Linda and André



SPRING IS HERE....Just around the corner. Plan to come to our Garden Festival! Who knows what wonderful plants and items you may find to carry away.

Chatsworth Historical Society
Board of Directors 2015-2016

| | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Co-Presidents | Linda & André van der Valk |
| Programs | Linda Dunham |
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| Honorary Member..... | Elaine Campbell |

Upcoming Events

General Meeting

Tuesday, February 16, 2016 7pm

GUN CLUB & GOLF COURSES

Chatsworth Park South has a fascinating local history. Originally part of the Hill Homestead, it later became the Aqua Sierra Sportsman Club. Boasting celebrity club members, it grew to include a trout fishing lake and four golf courses and was called the Roy Rogers Sports Center. Join us to learn the history of how the club evolved, see video footage filmed on site and share 20 years of memories of our community growing up and having fun!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY CHATSWORTH

128 years old March 8, 1888

March 15 Meeting: Showing of Huell Howser – Chatsworth Episode and Birthday Cake!

April 24: GARDEN FESTIVAL and Duchess Tea

OPEN HOUSE

The Homestead Acre is open to the public the first Sunday of each month from 1 to 4 pm.
Sunday, March 6, and April 3, 2016

Docent Doings at the ACRE:

Our docents keep busy with projects throughout the year.

OUT IN THE GARDEN: Annette and Karyin can be found dead-heading roses and hand watering plants as needed every Wednesday morning. If you need some outdoor fresh air therapy, come join them.

IN THE MUSEUM: Linda van der Valk is continuously working with the items donated to the museum by our members. This time of year plans are underway with the next display theme for our Museum to be unveiled at our annual Garden Festival to be held April 24, 2016.

IN THE COTTAGE: An inventory project is underway to confirm and learn more about the display items and their history.

DOCENTS ARE NEEDED: Help guide guests through the museum and cottage. If you would like to learn the history of our community and help share it with others, then contact us for more information at chatsworthhistory@gmail.com

GARDEN FESTIVAL 2016: Our next major community event will be The Garden Festival on Sunday, April 24, 2016. It will feature our Duchess Tea in the Garden along with a large selection of vendors, Garden clubs and experts. In addition there will be arts and crafts for the children and adults too!



Plan to join us for the Duchess Tea in the Garden!

BEVERLY KING 1930-2015

Passed away December 18, 2015 at the age of 85.



Beverly was a devoted volunteer who enjoyed giving tours of our Hill-Palmer Cottage. She specialized in the kitchen and knew all the details of our turn of the century appliances, the Hoosier cabinet, butter churns, washing and ironing, and so much more. She brought excitement to her tours.

With 25 years of experience as an elementary school teacher, she naturally commanded a position of authority when children arrived she masterfully got them sitting and ready to listen. We are fortunate to have some of her tours on video that can be viewed by new docents learning the ropes.

When Beverly was not in the cottage giving tours, she enjoyed being out in the garden providing tender loving care to the roses. Cleaning and filling the bird fountain was a high priority. She loved the birds.

Beverly King was a gracious, stylish, generous, intelligent and strong woman who shall be dearly missed by all of us.

1933 Civilian Conservation Corps in Santa Susanna

Written by Joanie Price Brown, daughter of John E. Price



My father, John Edward Price was born in Chicago, Illinois in 1913. His Dutch values consisted of hard work and a quiet determination with a dry wit. He left his hometown of Aurora, Illinois and joined the Civilian Conservation Corps on October 13, 1933 where he worked on road construction and building. Conditioning and training took place at Fort Sheridan, Illinois. He told me he always felt bad that he couldn't serve his country in the war like his brothers, but I think he did serve his country building roads and digging ditches in the Santa Susanna CCC's. He worked on project #P 230, Co# 3330 during 1934-35. He left the CCC's because he obtained a job. I don't recall my dad ever being without a job. When he got laid off, he had another job within the same day as a tool and dye man.

John weighed in at 138 lbs. when he left Fort Sheridan CCC's. In addition to serving in the Simi Valley area (Santa Susanna) John served in Camp Heywood S-271 in Pierce, Idaho, in May 1934. His last paid day with the camp was May 9, 1934 where Navy Lieutenant, RM Gerth, honorably discharged him.

The following is from a taped interview I recorded of my daddy talking about his

CCC experience:

"I left for the CCC's in 1933 and came back in 1934, I was there 7 months. Well you got \$30.00 a month, and I sent \$25.00 home, got to keep \$5.00 and live a wild life. The Army ran it all and Navy and we had a retired Navy lieutenant in charge. We had regulations with calisthenics first thing at 6 am, breakfast, then off to work. We built firebreaks and roads with a pick and shovel mostly near Chatsworth. I lived in Illinois at the time, it was a big deal in the Roosevelt administration to provide help during the depression--the government works project. It was good healthy work and there wasn't anything else to do. Everybody gained an average of 7 lbs. I was in good shape, about 160 lbs. We worked with shorts on. I left in October from Illinois to sunny California. Weekends I used to hitchhike to Pasadena, LA. We wandered all over California. People would give us a ride. We wore the uniform. Trucks would take us every once in a while for something special like church. There wasn't much around Chatsworth then, mostly fruit trees, farmland, grape orchards and walnut groves. It was on Los Angeles Street in Santa Susana Pass area."

He told me, "I got a job in a furniture factory for \$20.00 a week. The refrigerator was \$110.00 and the stove was \$65.00 for a tabletop stove. My wife was working and she made \$14.00 a week about 48 hours a week." Later he told me, "When I moved to California on a Friday and had a job by Monday in 1951."



San Fernando, California. Hitch-hiking.

This Civilian Conservation Corps boy is returning to camp about thirty miles away after a weekend visit to his family in Los Angeles.

The **Conservation Corps State Museum** is located in four barracks buildings on the grounds of Camp San Luis Obispo. Opened in 1995, the museum exhibits the works of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in California. One building is a replica of a 1930s CCC barracks, including tools, uniforms and other artifacts. The museum is open by appointment. It contains the library and research center of the National Association of Civilian Conservation Corps Alumni Buildings.

A sample of what they accomplished:

Number of Trees Planted: Between 2 and 3 billion

State Parks Developed: 800

Public Campground Development: 52,000 acres

Miles of Roads Built: 125,000

Miles of Telephone Lines Strung: 89,000

Miles of Foot Trails Built: 13,100

Farmlands Benefited from Erosion Control Projects: 40 million acres

Stream and Lake Bank Protection: 154 million square yards

Range Re-vegetation: 814,000 acres

Fire fighting Days: More than 8 million

NOTE: According to Al Knight, Anthropologist and expert on the Simi Hills, the CCC built the road known as Black Canyon Rd., from the Sage ranch north to Simi.

Early Chatsworth Memories Captured

Beverly Hill sent the Chatsworth Historical Society an email to ask for help remembering the names of a few areas from her childhood. With that inquiry she shared her memories of Chatsworth.

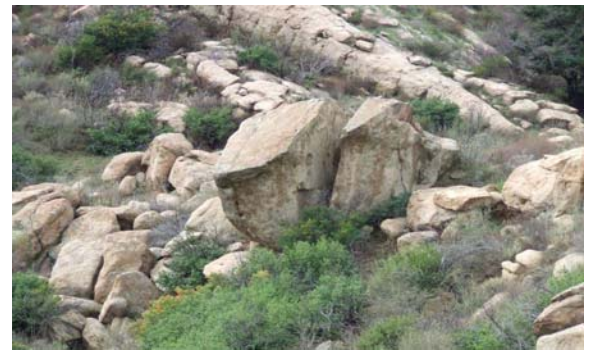
The area with armed guards mentioned below is the Santa Susana Field Lab.

I am Beverly Stone Hill, 88 years old and spent a number of years at the RX80 ranch at the corner of Plummer and Valley Circle Drive. My father, R.B. Stone bought the 10 acres for “\$10 down and \$10 when you can catch me”. That was actually the way things were done at that time and legal forms came about later. He built the house we lived in from real estate shacks that were no longer being used and he assembled them and connected them and gradually added on. We did not have electricity for quite a while and I studied by kerosene light and did our wash at my fathers dental office in Canoga Park. It was a beautiful place, we raised goats, rabbits etc. My brother and I each had a horse and traveled all over the hills at will. I remember the fires coming down to the back of the house. One of the ways I met my future husband was he came over and rescued my horses while we were in Canada on vacation.

I remember there was a road going back into the hills alongside the park. I remember it as going to a huge ranch that was developing war materials and one day my brother and I were met by an armed guard and told never to come back. Needless to say we stayed far away after that. I also remember riding our horses through a movie being filmed at the Iverson ranch.

I remember Lionel Barrymore living in Chatsworth and yelling something at us as we left the hills and found a street that led us back to civilization.

My brother was Rexford K. Stone 1931-2014. He graduated from Van Nuys Grammar School and entered Van Nuys Junior High when we moved from Van Nuys to RX80 ranch in Chatsworth. Like the typical big sister I teased him about having to go back to grammar school, Chatsworth Grammar School where he graduated in 1945. We had ridden our horses from Van Nuys along the track on Sherman Way to Topanga Canyon Blvd, and then Plummer to Valley Circle Drive and home.



Everyone remembers our majestic Chatsworth boulders

My husband’s parents were Vernon A Hill (1896-1970) and Myrtle B. Hill. They lived on Baden just around the corner from my home. She taught English at Canoga Park High School and raised Nubian goats. The Al Rakim herd. He worked for the Garmen Dairy.

The lake was the big attraction and we loved it. It was always fenced off and we could see the deer and other wildlife. Once the lake was drained the beauty was lessened and we continually griped about it. We have a lot of beautiful memories – the goats jumping around on the cliffs, having my girl scout troop up for camping experiences, shooting or jumping over rattlesnakes curled up on our doorstep or under the rabbit cages. My mother was a perfectionist and as she got older could not do or hire anyone to do the outside upkeep. Roy Rogers was not an asset. He was trying to build a development and one day my husband and I walked up to the top of our hill to find he had destroyed some huge boulders etc. that were on our property. The man we talked to about it was pretty nasty, but they did get off our land and sort of restored it but not adequately.

My mom sold the property and moved to a trailer court for a few years before moving to Arizona to be near my brother. I know we have pictures somewhere and as I downsize if I find some good ones I will send them on to you. Again thank you so much you helped bring back a lot of beautiful memories.

My husband taught at Taft High School for 30 years and then we tried to recapture our youth by moving to Bear Valley Springs, Tehachapi. When our health dictated being near doctors we moved up here to Sequim, WA., to be near doctors and our daughter.

Best, Beverly Hill

The Chatsworth Hotel from 1901 to 1904

The Chatsworth Hotel started in 1890, and went through various owners up to 1958. The Hotel has lots of fascinating stories, but this one was new to us. It was researched by William Flower at the West San Fernando Valley Then and Now Facebook site, with contributions from Keith Hart and Rich Krugel.

The story provides a view of Chatsworth during the railroad boomtown years, when hundreds of men were working on the railroad tunnels from Chatsworth to Simi, and the Chatsworth Park Quarry was supplying up to 50 railroad flatcars of sandstone a day to form the core of the San Pedro Breakwater.

The Chatsworth Hotel was located at the site of today's Staybridge Suites, off of Lassen just north of the 1894 Railroad Depot.

Darius Mead owned the Hotel with his wife Kate in 1895. Darius was the younger brother of Nelson Gray's mother. And Nelson Gray was one of the prominent leaders of Chatsworth during that time. Darius died in Dec 1901 at the age of 78.

Within 3 three months of Darius' death, his widow Kate had rented the Chatsworth Hotel to Peter Lopez, who was the constable of San Fernando Township, of which Chatsworth was a part of. Lopez's plan was to establish a social drinking club furnishing hard drinks.

Per the LATimes March 14, 1902, *"The citizens of Chatsworth have headed off a saloon license a half dozen times, with their protests, but will find it difficult to thwart these new tactics to establish a drinking resort in the community."*

On November 29th 1902 the "social club" at the Hotel is raided, and Robert Daniels, Constable of Chatsworth, served a search warrant and loaded the beer and other liquors into a wagon and hauled it away.

On Dec 11th Pete Lopez is sued for misconduct in office, claiming he was running illegal stud poker gambling and was selling liquor illegally. His term of office expires Jan. 1, 1903.

On Dec 21, 1902 The LATimes states *"Booze was the paramount issue of last week here. "Social Club" liquor occupied so many of the workmen after pay day last Monday that operations at the quarries were almost suspended until the men went broke and sobered up. Pete Lopez has tendered his resignation as constable of San Fernando Township."*

A little over a year later, in January of 1904, the battle continues. The town had voted in a recent election 33 to 11 against having a saloon in town. But the Board of Supervisors on June 8th 1903 granted a hotel liquor license to Mrs. C. H. Beckel, who happens to be Pete's mother-in-law. Supervisor Patterson states that on that date no one was on hand to oppose the granting of the liquor license, and the application was granted.

A final article on this matter was written in February 26, 1904, which reports that Mrs. Beckel has been arrested for serving drinks without a meal. The reporter described the situation as *"...many of her patrons were not able to get away with a meal every time they took a drink, and that rather than disoblige good friends the hostess cut short on the meals and long on the drinks."*



PETE LOPEZ AND HIS RESORT.

Chatsworth Historical Society

Virginia Watson Museum & Gift Shop

The following items are available for sale at our Gift Shop during Open Houses on the first Sunday of the month. To arrange to purchase items at other times, email chatsworthhistory@gmail.com to make arrangements for payment and shipping, if necessary.

| | |
|--|---------|
| CHATSWORTH HISTORY by Virginia Watson | \$10.00 |
| CHATSWORTH PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL The First 100 Years by Ioline Cleveland | \$10.00 |
| WINDOW INTO THE PAST by William Schepler | \$10.00 |
| QUIET ON THE SET by Robert Sherman | \$25.00 |
| OUR PIONEER MOTHER As told to Lenora Johnson MacDonald | \$10.00 |

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. For snail mail, if there is a code on your address label, this is what it means (life memberships do not have a code):

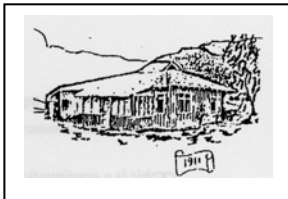
The first digit represents membership type,

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:

Life Membership:

New Member

Individual \$15.00

\$ 125.00

Renewal

Family \$20.00

Organization \$20.00

NAME _____ Phone: _____

STREET ADDRESS: _____ Email: _____

CITY / STATE / ZIP: _____

Special Interest / Expertise: _____