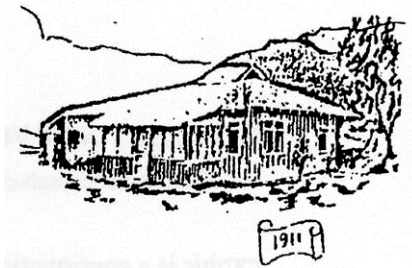


# Smoke Signal

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

June 2016, Issue #3

Editor: Ann Vincent

## Co-Presidents' Message

By Linda & André van der Valk

The Garden Festival was a big success thanks to Ann Vincent for coordinating the event, Martina Turner and her tea committee and Jelena Csanyi and her docent committee. On the day of the event we always try to guess if we are doing well or not as well as last year. To our surprise we raised a little more than last year. Thank you to everyone who worked and supported our event.

The Chatsworth Neighborhood Council gave the Chatsworth Historical Society a grant last month. We are going to use the money to buy a small energy efficient refrigerator for the cottage and we are going to put in a new linoleum floor in the kitchen, pantry and the bathroom. The rest will be used for archival materials or whatever else the acre needs. Our thanks to the CNC for the donation.

ETI Corral 54 has donated a White Oak tree to the Acre in memory of Mary Kaufman. It will be a great shade tree in the area and a wonderful way to remember Mary who passed away in March. We have also received several donations to the acre on behalf of Mary. The family had requested donations be made to the Historical Society or to a charity of their choice. Our thanks to ETI Corral 54.

We will not be having Open House in July or September because of the holidays. We have found that the turnout is low or no one at all.

We hope you all have a great summer and look forward to seeing everyone at the September meeting when Tommy from Valley Relics comes to the acre for a presentation.

Linda and André



Chatsworth Historical Society  
Board of Directors 2016-2017

Co-Presidents .....	Linda & André van der Valk
Treasurer.....	Jim Van Gundy
Secretary.....	Donna Nachtrab
Hospitality.....	Jelena Csanyi
Smoke Signal Editor.....	Ann Vincent
Museum Curator.....	Virginia Watson
Cottage Curator.....	Betty Summers
Research Director.....	Ray Vincent
Garden Director.....	Annette Campbell
Director-at-Large.....	Connie Ager
Director-at-Large.....	Linda Dunham
Honorary Member.....	Bea Berman
Honorary Member.....	Elaine Campbell

## Upcoming Events

June – July – August

No Programs over the summer, however our museum and garden docents will continue to work on projects.

### OPEN HOUSE

The Homestead Acre is open to the public the first Sunday of each month from 1 to 4 pm.

Sunday, June 5 OPEN HOUSE 1-4 pm

Sunday, July 3 - Cancelled (Holiday weekend)

Sunday, August 7 OPEN HOUSE 1-4 pm

Sunday, Sept 4 – Cancelled (Holiday Weekend)

### Tuesday, Sept 20 General Meeting – 7:00 pm

Tommy Gelinis, curator and founder of The Valley Relics Museum, will present a slideshow of some of the collections in the Museum.

### Sunday Oct. 2 – Pioneer Day 11-3 pm

### Tuesday, Oct. 18 General Meeting – 7:00 pm

Author Bronwyn Ralph will join us to discuss her book "Off The Beaten Path ", a guide to exploring Cultural Landmarks, Historic Monuments and other points of interest in the San Fernando Valley.



**OWENSMOUTH GAZETTE**  
**Excerpt from 1917 May 4<sup>th</sup> article**  
**The History of the Chatsworth School**  
**from its Beginning**

Thirty-eight years ago, in the year 1879, when little was known of California, and the San Fernando Valley was one carpet of wild flowers, a few pioneers drifted from other parts into the extreme northwest end of the valley. One of these men was Bernardo Don Letchi, his wife and two children. He realized that children should have an education and so he made the suggestion that a school be started. There were only seven pupils, but that was enough to start with, and Chatsworth is honored today to have two of those pupils as residents of the community: Messrs. William and Charles Johnson.

Los Angeles was willing to furnish a teacher, but it was unable to build a school house. It was decided to elect a Board of Trustees, which was done, and the first Board of Trustees for the Chatsworth School was Mrs. Ann Johnson, the mother of Charles and William; Mr. Brown, for whom Brown's Canyon was named, and Mr. Joseph Lowry. The trustees decided to have school at the home of Mrs. Jeremias, in her adobe house. This house stood in the same location that Mr. Fred Graves residence is now.

The following year a little schoolhouse was built on the property of Mrs. Jeremias that held twenty seats. School was held in this building until the year 1890, and some of the residents of Chatsworth remember going to school in this little building, namely, Mr. Lovell Hill and Mrs. Emma Graves.

The last teacher to teach in this schoolhouse was Mr. William Sheldon, at present the secretary of the Board of Education.

In 1890 a new schoolhouse was built, the main room holding fifty seats. This building had anterooms and a library room. In the next ten years the school grew very rapidly and in the year 1900 the Board of Trustees found that they needed more room; so it was decided to build an addition; when this was completed it was said that Chatsworth had one of the best buildings in the county.

Mr. N. A. Gray had an active part in the planning and the building of this schoolhouse, as he was a trustee for nine years during this time. This building served the purpose nicely until the time

that the people realized that they needed some place to meet as a community center. It was decided by the trustees to ask the people to vote on a bond of eight thousand dollars to build a hall in connection with the school. As the day of the election drew near the trustees began to realize that the people did not want this hall, but wanted something more up-to-date, -- a new schoolhouse with a large auditorium. On the day of the election the trustees voted against their own proposition as well as did

*1917 Chatsworth Grammar School*



most of the people. The trustees, Mrs. Minnie Gray, Mrs. Emily Johnson and Mr. Fred Tezlaff, met and considered plans for a new building, and it was also decided to vote all the bonds that could be voted for this new building. The result was that the people voted without hardly a dissenting vote to bond themselves for \$34,500 for the cost for this new school.

After all the contracts were let for the construction of the building, Chatsworth was annexed to the Great City of Los Angeles, and the managing of the school affairs went into the hands of the Board of Education. The Board of Education took hold of the matter with an interest, and when the building was completed the people had something to be proud of. The building contains eight classrooms, a large auditorium, a sloyd room, a domestic science room, library room, teachers' rest room, as well as all equipment that goes with an up-to-date school building.

*Editor's Note: A "sloyd" room incorporated the late 19th-century Swedish system of learning woodworking and handicraft-based education. It was intended to develop skilled, industrious and morally upstanding citizens. (The concept of a trade school)*

## DOCENT DOINGS at the ACRE:

Our docents keep busy with projects throughout the year; we meet every Wednesday morning 9-noon.

**OUT IN THE GARDEN:** Annette and Karyne 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.

**IN THE COTTAGE:** An inventory project is underway to confirm and learn more about the items on display and their history so we can provide more information on our tours.

**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](mailto:chatsworthhistory@gmail.com).

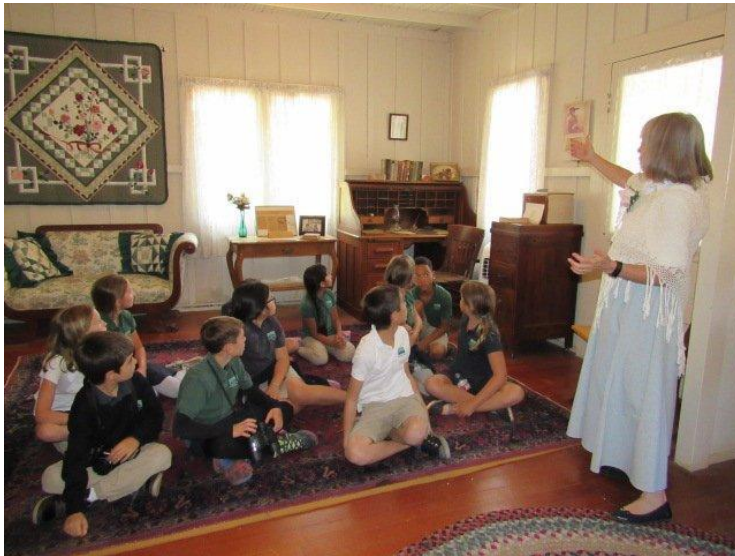
## SCHOOL TOURS at the ACRE



Students from Berkeley School

On Wednesday, May 18, we enjoyed a visit from 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students from Berkeley School. Dottie Acker and Linda Dunham were on hand to give tours of the cottage while Linda van der Valk and Ann Vincent discussed the early history of Chatsworth with the students. This was our second 3<sup>rd</sup> grade tour this year. We enjoyed a visit from Chatsworth Park Elementary School on February 24, which is always convenient for their school since the students can walk the distance and not have to worry about the additional cost of transportation.

We always enjoy scheduling student tours!  
*Photos by Linda Dunham*



## COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS

We would like to congratulate Judi Daniels who received recognition as the 2016 Citizen of the Year at the Chatsworth Community Coordinating Council Awards dinner held on May 13. It was a wonderful evening with awards presented to members of the community for all levels of community service.

Community Service Awards were presented to Chatsworth Historical Society members Karyne Ventris and Linda Dunham, who are both outstanding individuals making a difference with their continuing support and assistance at the Homestead Acre.



## GARDEN FESTIVAL 2016 THANK YOU



We would like to extend a big thank you to all who made this year's Garden Festival so successful. It takes so many to make it all come together smoothly and every job is important and appreciated. Behind the scenes we had some great help.

This year we were fortunate to have the help of El Camino Real High School JNROTC working with us to set up and tear down.

Jim van Gundy, Dale King, Matt Weintrab, Donna and Tom Nachtrab all worked together with Ray Vincent overseeing the setup and teardown activities.



On Sunday morning, the Kiwanis Key Club from various high schools in the valley helped us this year. They worked with Ray Vincent and Tom Nachtrab to coordinate parking and our shuttle bus. They also assisted the vendors with unloading and transporting their wares. Boy Scout Leader Richard Anderson and his scouts were on hand to help with our recycling and trash, but stepped up and helped wherever needed as they have in the past.

Donna Nachtrab and Wendi Gladstone assisted our vendors and non-profit groups in checking in and locating their booths.

Once again, a special thanks for the shuttle bus provided by Councilman Englander's office, which allows for offsite parking at the Train Depot. We appreciate their participation and support to help our event run smoothly.

Each of our Historical Society venues (Bake Sale, Plant Sale, Information, Museum, Cottage and Food Booth) were staffed by volunteers throughout the day. The Cottage was also staffed by Docents Gloria Benedetti, Dottie Acker and Jan Gruenwald sharing the Hill Palmer story with our guests. In the museum assisting our guests were Jelena Csanyi, Carol Lucas and Karine Panichi. Our members volunteering at the front gate were Irene Nalbandian and Janis Heiden.

The Food Booth involved Linda and Andre van der Valk with their family and grandchildren. We appreciate the time and supplies donated to our fundraising.

Our Bake Sale was a big success with delicious donations by Pam Perram and Beverly Manasse, Bea Berman, Barbara Pampalone and additional members of the Womens Club. Due to a last minute situation, Pam Peram stepped in and baked all night to help provide enough goods to sell...and then came and helped sell them, donating all the cost and profit to the Historical Society. Thank you to all of



Gloria, Dottie and Jan providing tours of the cottage at Garden Festival

the bakers that help continue this traditional bake sale.

Our Garden was in full bloom with Annette Campbell and Karyne Ventris selling the plants propagated at the acre. Nadia Harding donated her own plants and helped sell additional native plants donated for the event, while Randy and Becky Mineo (Chatsworth Landscape) brought a truckload (or two) of flowering and drought tolerant plants to sell and donated all the proceeds to the Historical Society. Their participation gives our Garden Festival that extra boost with a great variety of plants on hand.

The Iris Society was on hand with plenty of plants to purchase, while the Cherry Blossom Society (a group that Minnie Hill Palmer was a founding member of) was also on hand to share their activities. We were fortunate to have representatives of the San Fernando Valley Historical Society to share history of the valley. We also enjoyed the participation of the Santa Susana



Mountains Park Association (SSMPA) and the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park volunteers (SSPSHP) providing more history to our guests about our state park. The DAR Daughters of the American Revolution were on hand to represent the history of our Country.

Our information booth welcomed our visitors with a display of Chatsworth History books for sale, Tea from Chatsworth House in England (courtesy of Zena and John Thorpe) and information on the Historical Society hosted by Elaine Campbell.

We want to thank everyone that helped to make the tea go so smoothly. Our Duchess Tea was chaired this year by Martina Turner with help that day from a hard working crew including Kris Fuess,



Our Red Hat guests had a wonderful

Linda Dunham, Ursula Janovsky, Diane Stewart, Katie McMahon & her Mom, Rumpa and Roshan Mishra, Elizabeth de Sosa, Jamie Santellano, Taylor Myers, Gabe Matar, Danielle Ortiz, Katelyn Almario, Nicole Bezerra, Jasmine Moheb, and Carla Espana. Linda Dunham also gets credit for coordinating all of the Red Hat groups that joined us this year for the tea. And when not working in the kitchen, Linda took these fabulous photos to document our event.

We want to thank the bakers and sandwich makers, for without them there would not be a tea. Linda Dunham gets credit for the tuna sandwiches, Martina Turner for making the cucumber sandwiches and lemon cake, Ann Vincent for her egg salad sandwiches, Donna Nachtrab for the chicken salad sandwiches, and Jelena Csanyi for making the scones. Linda van der Valk donated all the fresh fruit. Thanks

also to Zena Thorpe who was our cashier for the tea tickets; since she was born in England and has had tea with the Duke of Devonshire, she is our perfect choice to welcome our guests to tea.

Our vendors this year were excellent and displayed a variety of quality hand crafted goods for sale, making the entire event a success. There was a little bit of everything. Our guests coming in at the gate had a wonderful time exploring the event and enjoying our Garden Festival. My sincere apologies to anyone I forgot to mention... Ann Vincent



Zena Thorpe greeting Dorthia and Duana Ulyate

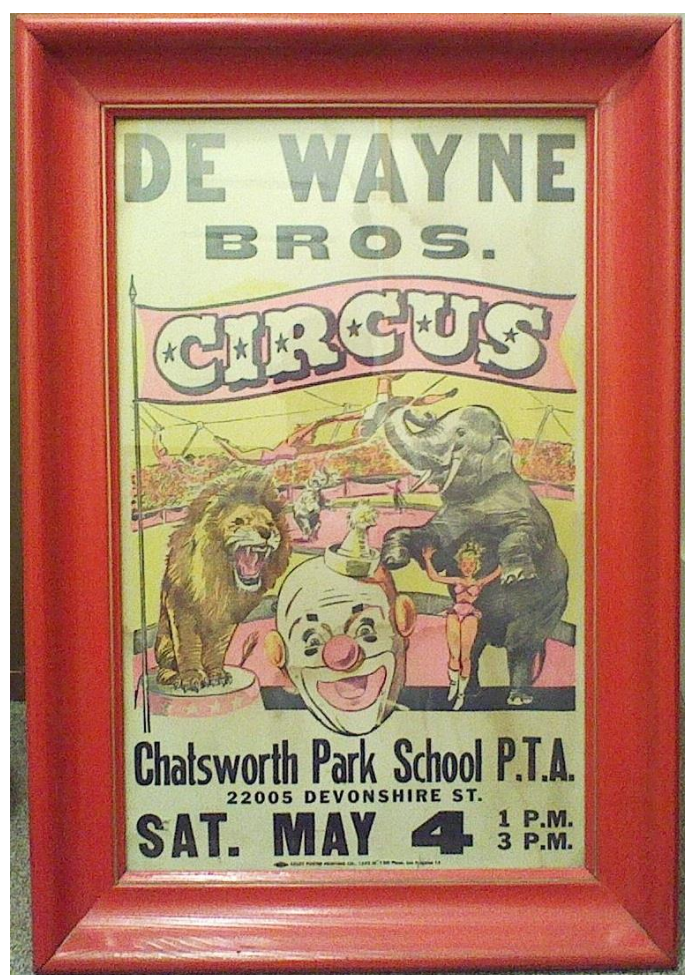
## CHATSWORTH MEMORIES from the Wangsgard family



We were delighted to hear from Kathy King Wangsgard, who offered to share some family photos and history with us. I thought you would enjoy this one regarding the 1949 snow that blanketed Chatsworth. We have received some over the years from residents showing snow covered buildings and streets, but this one was unique. The snow was obviously a surprise to all that day because June Wangsgard is seen here out by the clothes line in snow up over her ankles with frozen snow covered clothes.

Learning more about June and her family, we have this poster advertising a Circus in 1957 at Chatsworth Park Elementary School. June's father J. King Ross did animal performances, poodles mostly. He was an animal trainer.

June passed away in August of 2013. June was an active member of the Chatsworth Historical Society, the PTA and Boy Scouts for many years. She was also known for her talented French poodles. Her husband Val served as a Los Angeles Police Officer.



Shown at left are Chris Wangsgard age 7, Bob Merritt age 6, and Lance Wangsgard age 5 on Stoney Point in 1956 with Andora behind them. (looking south).

We are delighted to have Chris and his wife Kathy joins us as life members of the Chatsworth Historical Society.



## Chatsworth Historical Society Virginia Watson Museum & Gift Shop

The following items are available for sale during Open Houses on the first Sunday of the month. To arrange to purchase items at other times, email [chatsworthhistory@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:chatsworthhistory@gmail.com) to stop future newsletter mailings and save us some money. And also please email us to provide your email address. Thanks!

### Wondering if your Dues are Due?

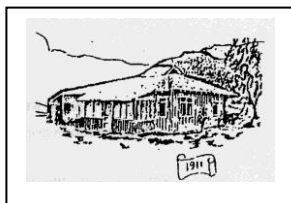
For those receiving email only newsletters, we will advise you by email when your dues are due.

For snail mail, if you have an asterisk at the end of your name on the mailing label, your dues are due.

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.



### 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](mailto:chatsworthhistory@gmail.com) 818-882-5614 [www.historicalsocieties.net](http://www.historicalsocieties.net)

- |                         |   |   |   |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|
|                         | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>New Member</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Renewal</b> |   |
| <b>Yearly:</b>          | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$15.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$20.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Organization \$20.00 |
| <b>Life Membership:</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 125.00          |   |   |

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

STREET ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY / STATE / ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Special Interest / Expertise: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reminder: If you got this mailed to you, an asterisk on your label means your dues are due!**