

Smoke Signal

CHATSWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

10385 Shadow Oak Drive, Chatsworth, CA 91311

(818) 882-5614

chatsworthhistory@gmail.com

www.chatsworthhistory.com



Co-Presidents: Linda & André van der Valk

November 2017, Issue #5

Editor: Ann Vincent

Co-Presidents' Message

By Linda & André van der Valk

I would like to start by thanking Ann Vincent, our event coordinator, for heading up our very successful Pioneer Day. This Pioneer Day was our most successful fundraiser ever. The weather was great and I think many people were happy to come and see the park now that it is opened again. Councilmember Mitchell Englander arranged for us to have two busses this year and it made a great difference in getting our guests to and from the event. Thank you Councilmember Englander.

Our garden docents led by Annette Campbell have been very busy in the garden. The gardens looked great when the memorial service for Jim Summers was held. Jim and Betty Summers had spent many years taking care of the gardens. I was telling someone just the other day how Jim and Betty would come almost every day to water the gardens by hand because we did not have sprinklers. That was true dedication and thousands of volunteer hours. One of our favorite stories about Jim was the squirrel that he used to feed by hand that would climb up his pants leg (on the outside) to get the peanut that he had in his hand. Ironically when stories about Jim were being told at the service a squirrel ran up and down the Black Walnut tree and then ran across the lawn. That gave me goosebumps. Jim will be truly missed by his family and friends.

Our Eagle Scout project being done by Jared Strauss in the front of the acre is coming along. A tree has been planted and the planned dry creek bed has been dug out. Jared is having fundraisers to raise funds for the plants, rocks and other items he needs. Jared is only 13 years old and he really is very dedicated to getting this project done. When it is done it will be a great addition to the acre and shows the appreciation by the young and old for the Acre.

We hope to see everyone at the Christmas Party at our house. The date is December 12th. We are going to start a little earlier this year. We will begin the party at 6:30 PM.

Happy Thanksgiving
Linda and Andre

Chatsworth Historical Society
Board of Directors 2017-2018

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
Honorary Member.....	Bea Berman
Honorary Member.....	Elaine Campbell

Upcoming Events

November 21, 2017 Tuesday 7:00 PM

General Meeting

The History of the

Chatsworth Historical Society

Join us as we look back at the accomplishments of the Chatsworth Historical Society since it was founded in 1963. This is in recognition of the pioneers who personally shared their history with the Society, and to the docents who continue to display, record and share the old and current history of our community.

Christmas Party - Members Only

December 12, 6:30 PM – Tuesday

Please join us as we celebrate the holidays at the home of André and Linda van der Valk.

10524 Eton Avenue, Chatsworth

the Christmas Party is limited to MEMBERS ONLY.

January 16, 2017 Tuesday 7:00 PM

General Meeting

This is your Life – Roy Rogers

Join us to see the 1953 film footage of this show honoring Roy Rogers.

Rose Pruning-Sat Jan 27th 2018 9am – Noon

Help is needed to prune over 300 roses and additional plants. Watch for the date and join us!

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 Campbell, Karyne Ventris and Terry Valdez (our newest Garden Docent) 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!

Our front entrance just outside the gate is an Eagle Project activity for Troop 777, Scout Jared Strauss.

IN THE MUSEUM: Linda van der Valk is continuously working with the items donated to the museum by our members and the community. Marcia Chopp has volunteered and is working hard to create an inventory of all of our movies on hand (DVD, VHS and more). This is a big project that will be a great asset to our archives.

IN THE COTTAGE: An inventory project is still underway to confirm and learn more about the items on display and their history so we can provide more information on our tours. Welcome to new docent Judy Lyttle who has volunteered to assist us with tours.

DOCENTS ARE NEEDED: Help guide guests through the museum and cottage during our Open Houses and Special Events. 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.



Brownie Holiday Flash Camera 1953-1962

HISTORY PROGRAMS at the ACRE

If you missed the October 17th program, you can find it posted at chatsworthhistory.com under Presentations.

We had lots of fun covering the history of slide shows featuring our Glass Lantern Slides originally used by the Chatsworth Park Elementary School. There was a Magic Lantern on hand complete with its tiny oil lamp. We also pulled out some of the museum's antique cameras to have on display for the program. Also on display were some of the slides used by Bill Schepler and Virginia Watson for their Chatsworth History slideshows.



Display of Glass Lantern slide boxes, projectors and cameras



Seneca Trio Folding Camera



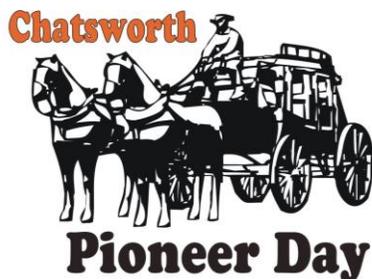
Anso Shur Shot
Binghamton New York
1943



Kodak Carousel 4400 projector

The Kodak Carousel Projector shown here, donated by the Schepler family has been replaced by PowerPoint and digital photos. Presentations are now given using a laptop computer and projector.

October 2017 Pioneer Day was a wonderful success!



This year was even more successful than last year...and we have so many people to thank that made this happen.

We are very fortunate to have Chatsworth Park South open again which has led to many more people becoming aware of our Homestead Acre. Councilmember Englander's office and staff were here in force to make sure that the two shuttle buses he generously provided arrived on time and kept the day running smoothly for all of the visitors using the Train Depot for parking. Thank you again Councilmember Englander and staff!

The purpose of the Pioneer Day event is to educate our community about the history of Chatsworth. Our museum was staffed with docents guiding guests through the timeline of photos and artifacts on display. Our Hill-Palmer Cottage tours gave a glimpse of early pioneer life here on the Hill Family Homestead. Our docents providing tours for the day included Jelena Csanyi, Judy Lyttle, Gloria DeMuri, Jan Gruenwald and Dottie Acker. These wonderful volunteers share the stories told that keep our Chatsworth history alive.

Starting with set-up, our thanks go out to John Luker, Wendi Gladstone, Bill Dushman, Tom and Donna Nachtrab, Annette Campbell, Eric Pampalone, Jelena Csanyi, Donna Boswell, Dale Chaloukian, Dale King, along with Ray and Ann Vincent who helped get everything set up on Saturday morning. We appreciated the help of a group of young men from Rancho San Antonio Boys Town. They worked with Sheriff George to set up his western display and assemble his jail. The Charityville Jail and its group of period dressed western volunteers are always a wonderful addition to our Pioneer Day event. All the money raised by them at the event goes to the Chatsworth Historical Society. Early Saturday morning, the El Camino Real High School NJROTC cadets arrived to help setup tables, chairs and canopies. Cadets from both El Camino and Reseda High School returned Sunday morning and then in the afternoon to help teardown and put everything away. Starting the day out with everything in place makes it so much easier when we open the gates to the vendors on Sunday morning.

Wendi Gladstone and Donna Nachtrab greeted our vendors while the NJROTC cadets from Reseda High arrived to help us set up canopies with John Luker, Jim Van Gundy and Matt Weintraub to get things started. Our parking lot was already busy with our vendors and non-profit groups arriving. This year our parking lot volunteers and our team of cadets helping the vendors unload their wares, were all provided by Reseda NJROTC. Tom Nachtrab took on the challenge of coordinating the buses with a banner and balloons at the train depot to make sure everyone could find their way to the Acre. Ray Vincent, Bill Dushman and Tom Nachtrab were in charge of the parking lot and traffic control. The NJROTC cadets did a great service loading push carts and carrying items for the vendors. The vendors at the end of the day are always quick to praise the students that have helped them in and out of the event.

Our front entrance looked very historic with the Dr's Buggy provided by Kay Elder, and the new addition of the Stagecoach provided by the Foundation for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mountains, used for interpretative hikes in the State Park. State Park docent Teena Takata shared the history of stagecoaches and our stagecoach trail.



Reseda NJROTC ready to help Sunday Morning standing in front of the Stagecoach

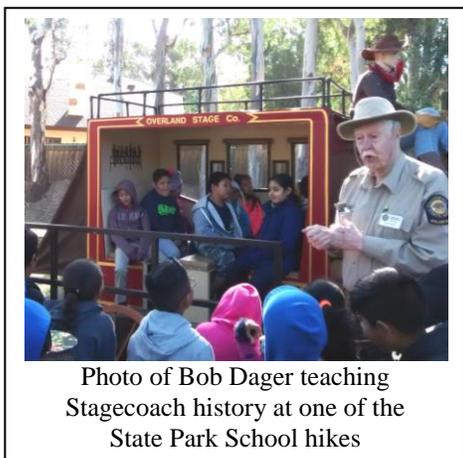


Photo of Bob Dager teaching Stagecoach history at one of the State Park School hikes



Doctor's Buggy provided by Kay Elder with Sylvia Johnson's grandson Nick

Our Chores and Games of Yore were managed by the Lawrence Middle School Leadership and History class. Crafts and activities are donated by members of the community for this event and the students do a great job learning and teaching the skills. Martina Turner took on the challenge of set up, training and supervising all of the Chores of Yore. Bill Updegraff was on hand to lead the Games of Yore activities including the three-legged race and more. Thank you to Marilu Pigliopoco, Principal at Lawrence Middle School, for being there all day to support the students.

We had a few new additions to the activities available this year. Our Lawrence students along with volunteer Valarie Barsky (member of the California Native Plant society) provided three types of native plant seeds for our guests to identify and take home. The Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) offered charts to help create your own family tree. The Daughters of the Union Veterans organization was on hand with information about the Civil War. Note: David Hill, who homesteaded the land here on our Acre, was a Union Veteran of the Civil War.



Quilting Square craft project

The Veteran Quilt Association had a variety of beautiful handmade quilts on display and the Quilting 4 Others organization hosted the children's quilt activity. Two beautiful Halloween Quilts were made and donated to be raffled off to those that participated in the quilting craft. We brought out our coffee grinders and found that grinding coffee was a hit along with our telegraph station texting 1890s style.

Our longest running participants in our Pioneer Day included our blacksmith and our gold panners. Dr. Standke, our blacksmith donates supplies and materials to help the children make their own miniature horse shoes. His wife Nita bakes cornbread for everyone to try with their freshly churned butter. The gold dust for the Gold Panning is donated by Keene Engineering. The volunteers at that booth include Pat Keene and members of the San Fernando Valley Chapter of the Gold Prospecting Association of America.

Leather working was represented by Wayne Christensen who spent the day demonstrating tooling a leather saddle while other volunteers from Standing Bear's Trading Post helped our guests learn how to stamp leather key chains.

Rock chippers were there in force teaching about the rocks and their uses. Cliff Cox, our local wood carver, brought several carved birds along with other items and had one in progress on display to show how it is done.



Lawrence Middle School Students showing how laundry was done in the past



Lawrence Students teaching weaving and sock darning



Gold Panning for real gold!

The Valley Hive was on hand to show their amazing display of bees, honey samples, and more. They also provide information on bee keeping. Bee keeping was a standard homesteading activity.

Boy Scouts (Richard Anderson and his scouts) also joined us to manage our recycling, setting out the trash and collection containers. Richard also spent the day teaching the skill of knot tying.

We were delighted to have representatives from The Pioneer Church, located in Oakwood Cemetery on hand to greet guests and tell the story of our historical church.

Our vendors are fantastic, sharing their wares which include many of the skills developed by pioneer women such as candles, knitting, pottery, sewing and more.

Our Pioneer Day always includes our plant sale and bake sale. This year Annette Campbell, Karyne Ventris and Nadia Harding ran the plant sale. Loretta and Rod Sandoval managed the Bake Sale bringing a huge selection of baked goods as they have for many years. Pam Perram and her husband, Eric provided coffee at the bake sale along with Pam's own selection of baked goods. Jamie De Rosa and her daughter enjoyed helping at the sale. Since we always ask our members for additional items to donate, this year Martina Turner reached out and found bakers and volunteers to assist us with donations. A large variety of items were donated from local bakers, which turned out well since almost everything at the table sold out. Some of our additional bakers included Bea Berman, Suzy Rozman, Ellen Zuckerman, Annie Pinkney, Jamie De Rosa, Francesca Marcos, Martina Turner and David Aaron.

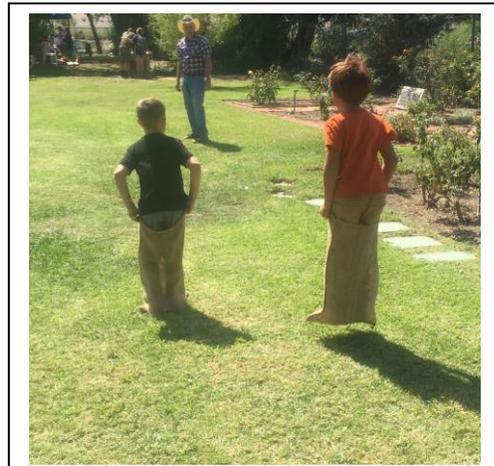
This year the van der Valk family (all generations) managed the Snack Bar as they have done for over seventeen years. The van der Valk family generously donates the food and supplies for the Snack Bar to help raise money for the society.

Our information booth just inside the front gate was hosted by past presidents Zena and John Thorpe, along with Bea Berman, previous event chair, who has participated in all 27 annual Pioneer Days. Our White elephant sale was managed by Donna Boswell with the assistance of Lori Summer and Rebecca Cannaday. Janis Heiden and Irene Nalbandian spent the day running the entrance gate where we managed to bring in a new record entry based on receipts.

We had over 60 organizations, vendors and craft stations that participated creating activities and interests for everyone. Our event continues to grow and we owe it all to the various groups who make it fun and exciting for the kids and adults to participate, and thanks again to all of our wonderful Chatsworth volunteers. It was a busy day, so if I have forgotten anyone please forgive me.

Oh...yes, I should mention just for the record that the weather was perfect!

Thank You all for your support.
Ann Vincent
Event Chairman



Sack Races



Bake sale



Jelena Csanyi with museum display on rocket testing history

The Pioneer Gray Family Artesian Well and Reservoir

We were recently pleased to “re-discover” a slide from the Schepler slide collection, that identifies a unique structure that benefited many of the early residents of Chatsworth.



The circa 1930's photo above is viewing northwest, at the Gray Family reservoir (pump house at right)

In 1892, four years after Chatsworth's founding, The Gray family (Nelson, Minerva (Minnie) and their four children) purchased \$16,000 of land in Chatsworth, amounting to hundreds of acres. At the time they were living in Pasadena, after having sold the family farm in Illinois in 1889.

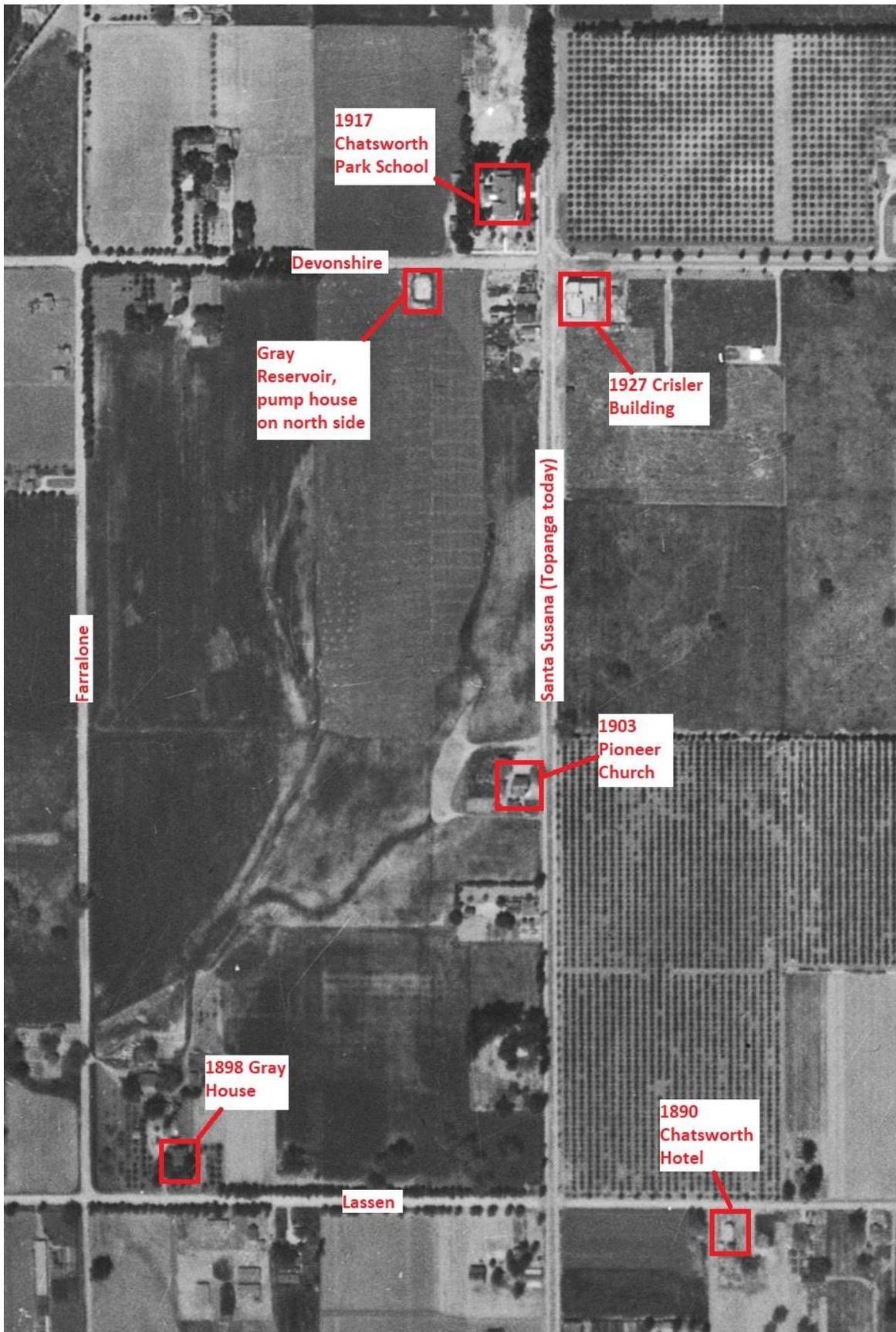
Nelson's uncle, Darius Mead, purchased the Chatsworth Hotel in 1895. And in 1898 the Gray family moved in to their new home at 22165 Lassen, on the northeast corner of Lassen and Farralone. The two story home with its 14 rooms cost \$1200 and was built on 200 acres; the 24' x 24' central “court” living room had an 18' ceiling, and was the first home in the valley to have gas lights.

Nelson was a farmer, and he took advantage of an artesian well that existed on the southwest corner of Devonshire and Topanga to irrigate his property (An artesian well is where water reaches the ground surface under natural pressure). The photo above identifies the pump house and reservoir. Stories from residents (see below) conclude that in 1906 Nelson ran a pipeline 2.5 miles from Hialeah Springs in the hills above Chatsworth all the way to Devonshire and Topanga to drive his belting-wheel pump that pulled water out of the artesian well to fill the reservoir. The 670ft drop in elevation would have provided plenty of water pressure. And the reservoir was huge, we estimate 50' x 90' based on the aerial photo below. Nelson used the artesian well water to irrigate his property and also to provide water to other residents of Chatsworth.



In the 1930's and 40's, the Alex Summers family lived at and farmed the Gray property. The circa 1940 photo to the right shows son Jim Summers inside the reservoir as it is being filled.

The 1928 aerial photograph below shows the reservoir and Chatsworth at that time. Gray pretty much farmed the whole block from Devonshire and Topanga to Lassen and Farralone.



A more detailed view of the 1928 aerial photo and reservoir:



The stories below from homesteading families will attest to the creativity and the benefit of the structure.

1. From Jess Graves (the son of Chatsworth Homesteader Fred Graves):
"Dad (Fred Graves) traded his property up there (north of today's 118 fwy at Hialeah Springs) for some property down in the Valley. He traded it with Mr. Gray. He [Gray] wanted the property up on the hill for the water. There was a big spring on the place and he wanted to move that water down to Chatsworth, which he did. He run a

pipeline from the homestead, clear down to his property there where the old school used to be just across the street. He had a reservoir there and with this spring, the pressure, he drove a beltin' wheel and that pumped the water out of this well so he didn't have to have a pump or anything."

2. From Katherine Johnson in a 1963 article in *The Chatsworth Citizen*: *"After the erection of the church in 1903 (southwest of today's Mayall and Topanga), there was no water on the grounds until N.A. Gray, who gave the property for the church, piped water from Hialeah Springs in the hills north of Chatsworth, about 1906. The nearest water was the artesian well, on Devonshire just west of Santa Susana (today's Topanga), and the well at the Chatsworth Park School (on the northwest corner of today's Topanga and Devonshire)."*

3. From Minnie Hill Palmer's children Edith and Leroy growing up in the 1920's-30's: *"There was also a large redwood water tank mounted on a flatbed trailer in front of the house. It was refilled at a water tap on Devonshire St. and held water for drinking and washing."*

4. From Myrtle Shadwick (granddaughter of Nelson and Minerva): *"Grays had a well across from the school. There was a swimming pool (used as such), which was big, dangerous, and kids would swim close to the edge. One high school girl was watching a fire, and slipped and drowned. There was an irrigation pool on property and would have to go downstairs and under water which was creepy. Grandpa Gray furnished water to others."*

Editor's note: The word *artesian* comes from the town of Artois in France, the old Roman city of Artesium, where the best known flowing artesian wells were drilled in the Middle Ages.

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 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



DIGITAL RECORDS online at
<http://www.chatsworthhistory.com>

facebook CHS FACEBOOK PAGE
www.facebook.com/HomesteadAcre

SLIDESHARE.NET
<https://www.slideshare.net/ChatsworthHistory/presentations>

Slideshare has a listing of our CHS presentations that can easily be watched online. Enjoy!

Can we Email our newsletter to you?

Please email us to provide your email address.
Thanks! chatsworthhistory@gmail.com

Wondering if your Dues are Due?

Your dues are due one year after the last time you paid your dues.

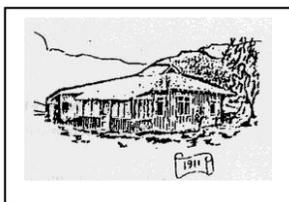
For those receiving email only newsletters, we will advise you by email when your dues are due.

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 818-882-5614 www.chatsworthhistory.com

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