

Smoke Signal

CHATSWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Co-Presidents: Linda & André van der Valk

February 2021, Issue #1

Editor: Ann Vincent

Co-Presidents' Message

By Linda & André van der Valk

It is with great sadness that we announce that Bea Berman has passed away. Bea was our Queen Bea, our Miss Chatsworth, our Busy Bea, and in her last years the Station Mom for Fire Station 96. Bea was a great contributor to the Historical Society and the community of Chatsworth. She was our event coordinator for many years and did a tremendous job of raising funds for the Historical Society. Bea always carried her clipboard before computers were commonplace at the events and knew exactly where everyone should be and what they should be doing. She started the Chili cook-off and always managed to get the fire and police departments to participate. You just did not say no to Bea. She was very active for many years in the Chatsworth Community Coordinating Council making sure that it continued to thrive. Bea will truly be missed and our condolences go out to her family.

We are hoping for the days when we can invite everyone back to the Acre. While we cannot have The Garden Festival this year, we are hopeful there will be a Pioneer Day in October. Ann and I have been working on the museum displays to get ready for the day when guests can come back on the first Sunday of the month.

Annette and Karen have been working hard pruning all the roses. Not an easy job considering how many roses we have at the Acre. Everything is looking good just waiting for people to be able to come back to enjoy.

Don't forget our fundraising brick program!

Happy Spring
Linda and Andre

Chatsworth Historical Society Board of Directors 2020-2021

Co-Presidents	Linda & André van der Valk
Treasurer.....	Jim Van Gundy
Secretary.....	Donna Nachtrab
Hospitality.....	Jelena Csanyi
Smoke Signal Editor.....	Ann Vincent
Cottage Curator Emeritus.....	Betty Summers
Research Director.....	Ray Vincent
Garden Director.....	Annette Campbell
Director-at-Large.....	Connie Ager

Upcoming Events

General Meetings

3rd Tuesday 7:00 PM

TBD

The program “**The History of Twin Lakes and Deerlake Highlands**” remains postponed until we can have a meeting in person. We continue to create new programs for future meetings.

Chatsworth Women's Club

Celebrating 100 Years

Founded Valentine's Day Feb 14, 1921

Visit the website and visit their history page.

<http://chatsworthwomensclub.org/>

Instead of Zoom...

We have selected a previous program for you to enjoy: The Bells of El Camino Real. It includes a YouTube clip of Huell Howser.

<https://www.slideshare.net/ChatsworthHistory/the-bells-of-el-camino-real>

Since we have been unable to host our annual fundraisers, please consider donating to the Historical Society. Your continued support is appreciated.

DOCENT DOINGS at the ACRE:

Our docents keep busy with projects throughout the year.

OUT IN THE GARDEN:

If you need some outdoor fresh air therapy, come join our gardening team.



IN THE MUSEUM: We have new displays that are available to share when we open again.

Open houses are normally scheduled for the first Sunday of each month from 1-4pm, except on Holidays. We look forward to resuming that when the city gives us permission.

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.

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

Memorial Brick Plaza



Click the link below for the Memorial Brick Order Form, \$100 per brick.

<http://www.chatsworthhistory.com/CHS-BrickOrderForm.pdf>

Our next brick order will be March 1st 2021

For more information, send an email to chatsworthhistory@gmail.com or call 818-882-5614.

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

Over the last few months while we have been social distancing at home, the ACRE has had the ability to monitor calls made to the Museum with questions. In addition we have received emails from individuals with ties to Chatsworth who would like to continue to learn more about their own history.

Some of the questions have taken us down paths of research that we can easily do from home offices. So, we have a variety of fun stories that we will share in upcoming newsletters and presentations.

Valeta Koller - Family Donations

In January, as the Koller house was emptied, the family graciously allowed the caretakers to gift us several boxes and suitcases full of items for our collection. This included a wedding dress with photos of her in it and her Navy uniforms from 1945. Valeta was in Times Square in 1945 for the celebration of the end of WWII. In addition, several photograph albums of the family and some records of the California Farm Bureau of which her father was president.

Philese Selden Donation

Philese contacted us with four school yearbooks from the area -- **1980, 1981 & 1982 Yearbook** from **Lawrence Jr. High** plus the **1979 Yearbook** from **Richard E Byrd High**, where Chatsworth Park Elementary students were bussed during integration. These have been added to our School collection here at the museum. Thank you!

Rockpointe History continued....

Ray continued his Rockpointe History research, helping them to prepare an article for the Rockpointe Courier Newsletter, issued a few days ago. As a part of that effort, Roberta Sweat of the Rockpointe Board of Directors was able to share with us a copy of the original sales brochure, which included all of the models and their floor plans. This is a fun addition to our collection.

Ray was fortunate to locate previous residents of Rim Rock Ranch and talked to them about their memories of Chatsworth. Plus they shared some amazing photos of the ranch. (See page 4)



In Memory of Bea Berman

Chatsworth lost a beloved member of and champion for the community with the passing of Bea Berman on January 23, 2021. She was 94.

Bea's extensive volunteerism dates to her move to the West San Fernando Valley in the 1960s when her late husband, Marshall, got a job transfer from their hometown of Chicago. In a new city with four kids and no family connections, she began volunteering at her younger kids' schools and joined many local organizations. She quickly made new friends, and never looked back.



1988 - Bea Berman, LA County Supervisor Michael Antonovich and Ca. State Assembly member Cathie Wright at the Chatsworth Centennial Time Capsule dedication at the Homestead Acre, to be opened in 2088.

Over the years, even while running the office of Marshall's CPA practice in Chatsworth, Bea stayed active in volunteer activities, always bringing her famous homemade chocolate chip peanut butter cookies to events and meetings.

She was the President of the Chatsworth Community Coordinating Council (CCCC) for 12 years; also served as its Membership Director and Scholarship Chair; and for several years ran the organization's annual banquet. For the Chatsworth Historical Society, she served as President and a Board member, chaired the annual Garden Festival,



launched the annual Pioneer Day, and chaired Chatsworth's centennial celebration in 1988. She also was a docent for the Historical Society, providing tours of the Homestead Acre at Chatsworth Park South.



Among her extensive additional volunteer work, she served on the Boards of the Rockpointe HOA and the Friends of the Library, and on the Chatsworth Neighborhood Council; chaired two of the Chamber of Commerce's annual Holiday Parades (in the 1980s); and participated in the library's "Grandparents and Books" program.

For approximately 10 years she held her cherished role as "Station Mom" for L.A. Fire Department Station 96, regularly baking for and visiting the firefighters, plus helping coordinate the local "Spark of Love" holiday toy drive with them.

For her commitment to Chatsworth, Bea received numerous well-deserved acknowledgements, including the CCCC's Citizen of the Year Award, President's Award and Lifetime Achievement Award; the Chamber's Heroes and Legends Award; and recognitions from numerous elected officials.

Bea's beloved husband, Marshall, passed away in 2012. She is survived by son Jeff (Nancy); daughters Adie (Rico), Randi (Gary) and Mindy; granddaughters Sammie (Josh), Kellie and Jessica; and great-grandson Dylan.

Rim Rock Ranch History – Haberfeld 1956 to 1963

Background – The 40-acre Rim Rock Ranch, which was almost the entire 42-acre Frank Ackerman Homestead Parcel, was sold in 1963 and developed as a part of the Rockpointe condominiums (south of Devonshire) in 1967.

In 1964, as the 92-acre Rockpointe Development was proposed, it was characterized as being on the 40-acre Rim Rock Ranch property, but the 52-acre development north of Devonshire was on Schepler property.

We were fortunate to have a Jan 2021 interview with previous Rim Rock Ranch resident Peter Haberfeld. Per Peter, they always talked about 40 acres as the ranch. Peter shared that his father, Paul (born in Vienna, Austria in 1912) escaped Nazi Germany and immigrated to America in 1939. Paul landed in New York, married his wife Susan, and in 1940 moved to Portland, Oregon. In 1941 their twin boys Peter and Steve were born.

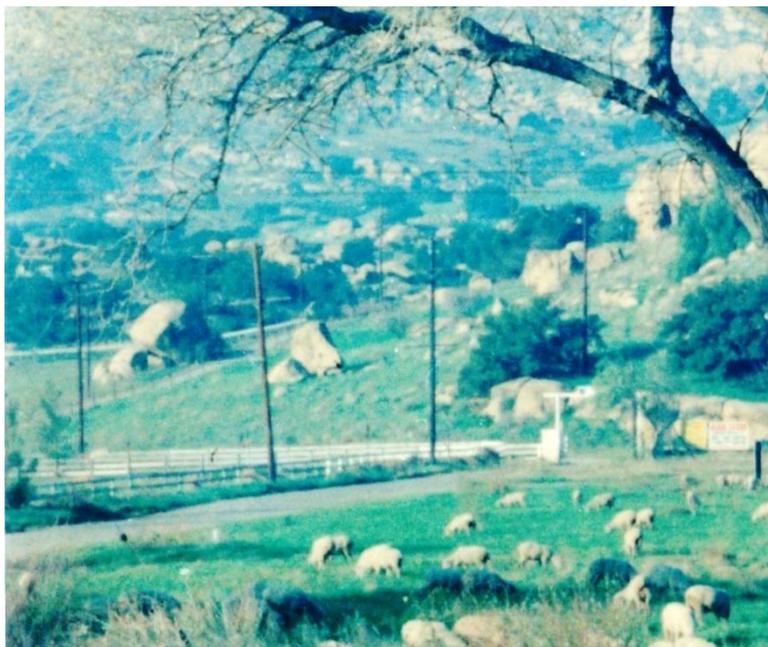
Rim Rock Ranch History

In 1911, seven of the Ackerman acres to the east next to the creek became the Shadwick ranch. The Shadwicks lived there, at 22322 Devonshire (today's Rockpointe clubhouse), for 25 years (until the early 30's) with their seven children. The Shadwick house at 22322 Devonshire is gone in a 1944 aerial.

In the 1920's, 32 of the western portion of the Ackerman acres became the Longview Poultry Ranch. That story is told here [Smoke Signal 2020-12](#). In a 1943 aerial, only two of the seven chicken laying houses remained, all were gone by 1956. The two bungalows up on the ridge, and a few outbuildings, remained during the Rim Rock Ranch years.

The first mention of Rim Rock Ranch in newspapers was in 1955, address 22400 Devonshire; and it was reported that Rim Rock Ranch was sold in 1963.

Mimi, Peter's younger sister, recalls *"I think we had the property from 1956 to 1963. It's my understanding that it was a business venture between my father and Frank Kessler who he worked with at Rose Marie Reid the bathing suit manufacturer where Dad was president. Our house (Dad was an architect by hobby) was remodeled by Dad and was on that rise overlooking the ranch."* Mimi attended Chatsworth Park Elementary, and was in Mrs. Hughes 1959 first grade class with Debbie Rogers and Ray Vincent.



Left – Crop and enlargement of 1953 Muehlenbach photo

The Rim Rock Ranch, south of Devonshire, was accessed by turning left as Devonshire dead ended, and taking a quick right turn up to the ranch. We shared a circa 1953 Dennis Muehlenbach photo with Peter and Mimi, her comments: *"The picture you sent is familiar as well as beautiful. The white fence is indeed part of Rim Rock; Devonshire dead-ended at our gate, and the road went a bit further veering to the right into what became Roy Roger's Gun Club. Our driveway made a sharp left turn and then a right, you can see the driveway winding up the hill to the right of that huge lone boulder. I was 4 when we moved to the ranch and 11 when we left."*

The circa 1962 aerial photo of Rim Rock Ranch below was shared with us by Peter Haberfeld. It is viewing west; Devonshire St. is seen at the lower right. Andora (today's Valley Circle) is the diagonal road. At the Devonshire dead end, you turned left, then right up the hill to the circular driveway and the Haberfeld home.

Peter mentioned that at one point they had 100 head of cattle, a registered Angus herd. He remembers that the property/cattle were purchased from Dr. Fifield. Fifield Farms in Monteria Estates also raised Angus cattle (see last page of this article). Since our 2021 interview with Peter we learned that Hutchinson owned Rim Rock from 1947 to 1955. Rim Rock Ranch was purchased by Kessler/Haberfeld as a partnership (they both were managing the Rose Marie Reid swimsuit company). Kessler was a silent partner. Paul and his wife Susan were committed to improving the quality of the herd and bred the cows paying close attention to pedigrees.

The triangular section just south of Devonshire and west of Andora was the old Schadwick place, now converted to pasture.



Newspaper articles and Ancestry.com research identified that the twin boys Peter and Steven Haberfeld (1941-) were involved with 1957-8 4-H activities at Rim Rock Ranch. They attended Canoga High School, and per the 1958 yearbook were active with the newsletter staff that included other notable Chatsworth residents of that time Susan Pettibone and Sally Ann Parsons.

In 1957, the Valley Times reported that the 1957 Valley Fair Grand Champion was Chester, an 855- pound Aberdeen Angus, owned by Steve Haberfeld of Chatsworth.

In 1958, the 40-member Winnetka 4-H Club began their annual project tour at the Rim Rock Ranch, home of Steve and Pete Haberfeld. In 1960, Paul Haberfeld entered 10 Aberdeen-Angus animals in the beef-cattle division at the San Diego County Fair.



The photo at left (l-r Steven, Paul, Susan and Peter Haberfeld, and Howard Brown who worked at Rim Rock for a number of years is holding the bull)

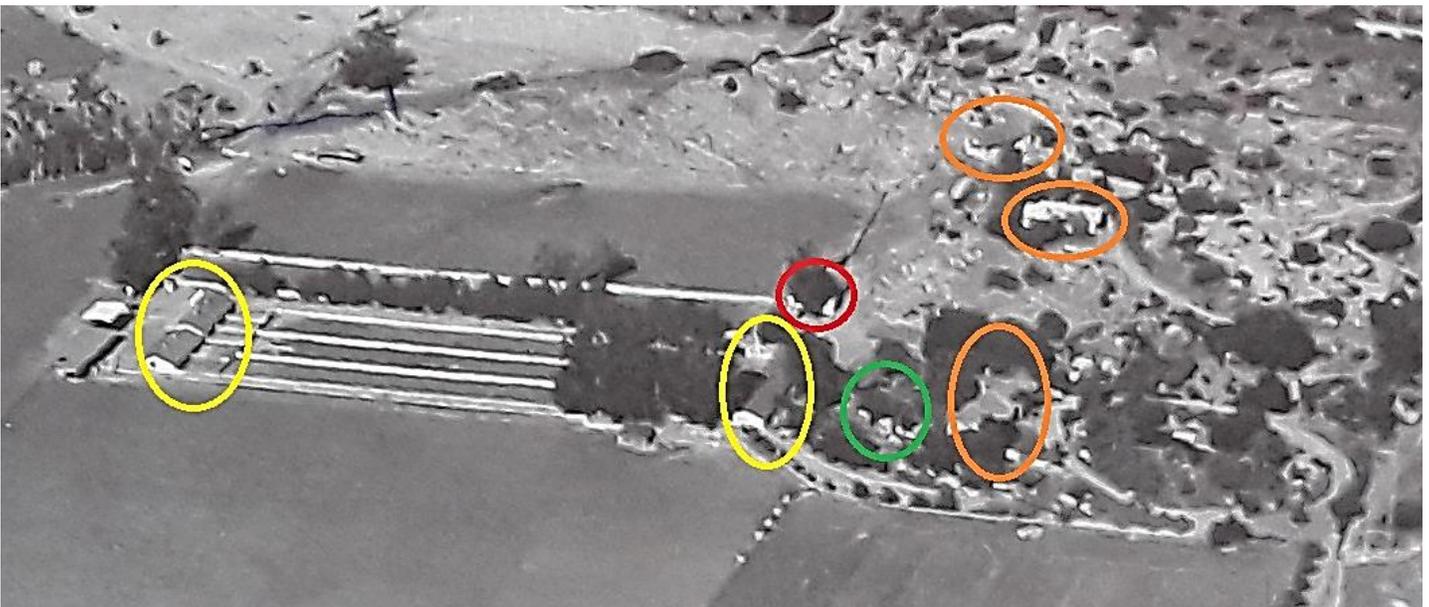
The photo below identifies the buildings at Rim Rock Ranch. The orange ovals are three houses, the lower one is the Haberfeld home, the upper two were rented to people that were employed at the ranch.

The yellow ovals are the two barns. Peter describes them, "They consisted of stalls that were built for horses, very

substantially constructed. The fences around the stalls were higher than necessary for cattle, but appropriate for horses. I assumed that Fifield raised horses but have no evidence. I read that Fifield raised Angus, but I wonder whether that occurred at Rim Rock as opposed to his other property. There may have been some Angus on the property when my parents bought it."

"Cows were for the most part out of doors during the year. The show cattle were fed a special diet, that varied according to the age of the animal, and they were kept in the lower barn (at the left). Steven and I raised our 4H animals in the upper barn. The two structures to the left of the lower barn were 1) a milking barn with several stanchions (large rectangular roof) and 2) a roof where a few tons of hay (bales) were kept until needed to feed the cattle (square white roof)."

The green oval is a tool shed and open shed for a tractor. The red oval is the creamery, a building that remained from the Longview Poultry Ranch. The three homes also remained from the Longview Poultry Ranch.



Fifield Farms History, 11000 Winnetka, Monteria Estates (had cattle at Rim Rock Ranch)

An interesting side story relates to Dr. Fifield (1899-1977), an influential Protestant leader and minister of the First Congregational Church of Los Angeles. When Fifield took over the First Congregational Church in 1934, it was \$750,000 in debt with a declining membership. At Fifield's retirement, the church had the largest congregation of its persuasion in the world and \$17 million in assets.

Newspaper research on the Fifields found a 1950 presence in the San Fernando valley at Fifield Farm, 20553 Sherman Way, advertising Extra Fine Turkeys, weaner pigs, and a Palomino brood mare and colt by **Harvester**. And a registered Hereford boar (male pig for breeding). A Dec. 16 article included: *Those that live alone are invited to the Christmas Sunday Dinner Dec 24th following the service; Turkeys from Dr. Fifield's farm will be served.*

In 1952, the 15-acre Fifield Farms, including a 9,000 sq ft barn, at Sherman Way and Mason (just east of Brown's Canyon Wash) was up for sale, with Paul Anderson as Manager.

By 1953, Fifield Farms had moved to 24 acres at 11000 Winnetka in Monteria Estates, Chatsworth, and they are advertising Angus cattle for sale. Another ad is for Angus baby beef for your lockers or proven cows with heifer calves at side for starting a herd.

A quick sidenote on 11000 Winnetka availability: in 1946, Hollywood couple Veronica Lake and Andre de Toth built a home at 11000 Winnetka, but tax delinquencies forced the 1951 sale of their 34-acre, \$120,000 rambling ranch house of Spanish design with redwood interior, six fireplaces, ballroom, a bar and several baths.

IT WILL be happy birthday for Northridge Junior High School PTA at a luncheon for the board tomorrow in the home of Mrs. Helen Fifield, 11000 Winnetka Ave., Chatsworth. Meeting begins at 9:30 a.m. Mrs. LeVerle Caligiuri, girls' vice principal, is lucky winner of this year's life membership.

In 1952 James and Helen Fifield file a building permit for a swimming pool at 11000 Winnetka.

In 1955 Fifield Farms advertises they are moving their major Angus operations to Barstow, and in another article Mrs. Helen Fifield holds a Northridge Junior High PTA luncheon at her home at 11000 Winnetka. Her two daughters, Helen and Mary, are 14 and 12 years old.

In 1956 Paul Anderson is still the manager of Fifield Farms, still selling choice quality bulls, cows and calves (no steer calves).

In April 1957, Fifield Farms announces they are selling their farm herd of 33 Angus, after eight years of operations. Seven months later, Dr. Fifield's wife Helen dies at the age of 53. One month later, the 24-acre Winnetka estate is listed for lease -- or might sell.

FOR LEASE - OR MIGHT SELL
24 Acre Chatsworth Estate
in exclusive Northridge Estates area, unique house, pool, guest house, underground sprinkling system, fenced and cross-fenced, subdivision possibilities later. Will lease for one or two years.
FIFIELD FARMS, 2617 WILSHIRE BLVD. WE. 4-5176
Courtesy to Brokers

Two years later in 1959, 4-H'er Walter Palmer of 11000 Winnetka is showing three Angus cows and three Angus bulls at the Great Western Exposition and Livestock Show in Santa Ana.

A New Discovery - The Oakwood Stone Mausoleum built by Frank Knapp Sr in 1926-27

Background: Ed Hall (who grew up in Burro Flats and helped us tell the story of [Burro Flats-Rocketdyne-SSFL History](#)) recently shared some photos of his grandfather Frank Knapp Sr., with researcher Albert Knight.

Ed's comments on the photo at right were, "*Frank Knapp Sr as a younger man, at work. Perhaps the mountain in background offers clues to location.*"

Al, John Luker and Wendi Gladstone went on a hike near the Miranda Adobe and Oakwood Cemetery, as the skyline in the doorway to the picture matched up.

They contacted Ann and me. Ann said, "I think I have seen that before.", and found the photo below in our archives, with the description "Stone Building at Oakwood Cemetery". Our guess is it was circa 1969 (see confirming photo on next page).

A close look at the photo below shows rusted pieces of metal at the front doorway, for perhaps a metal gate, and in the back maybe a wrought iron window.

A newspaper search of Knapp and Oakwood in the 1920's uncovered four articles documenting the project.



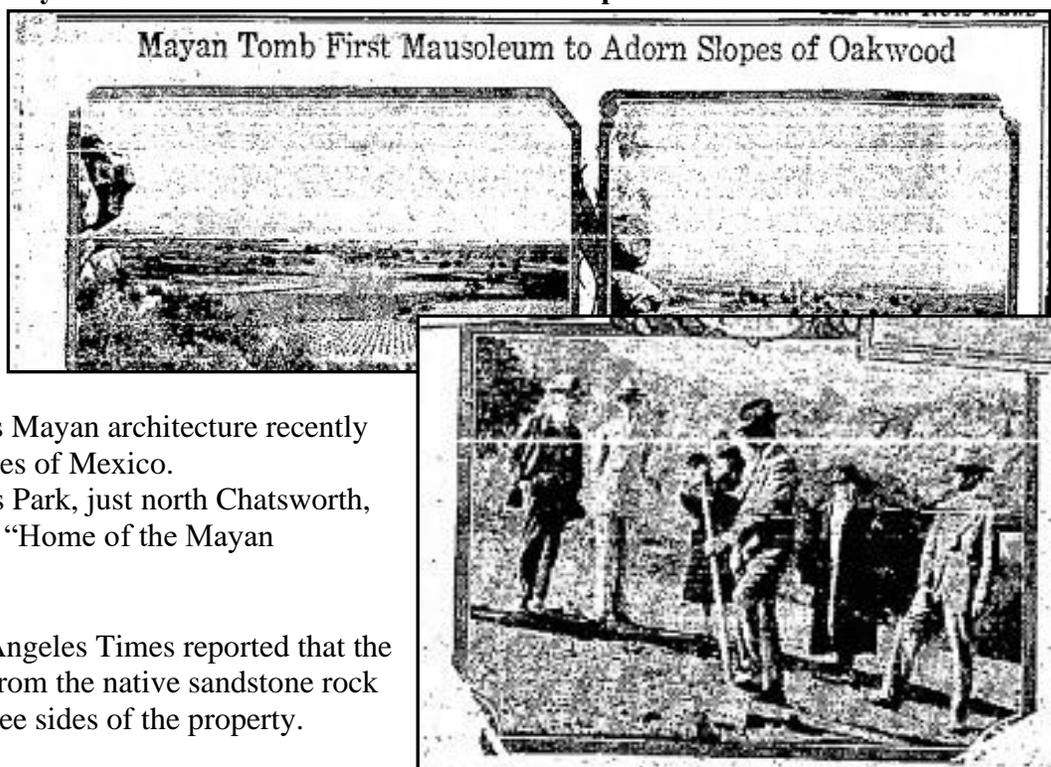
The Oakwood Memorial Park Cemetery in Chatsworth, once a part of the Miranda Homestead, opened in July 1924.

A Sept. 3, 1926 article quoted Oakwood President Charles Rachal, who told of plans at Oakwood to “open a new section comprising rugged sandstone crags that will form natural mausoleums overlooking the San Fernando Valley...Oakwood embodies many unusual features. Great cliffs form stern bulwarks against encroachment on three sides and in their sandstone faces natural mausoleums will be created as everlasting as the hills.”

He continued, “Oakwood Cemetery uses only a plain bronze marker of uniform size, set in everlasting concrete, flush to the ground. The eye sees only a great green meadow, unmarred by monuments or headstones. However, one section has been set aside amongst the oak trees and flowering canyons where private mausoleums may be erected.

A Dec. 10, 1926 article in the Van Nuys News announced the “First Mausoleum at Oakwood Starts”. The full page article was titled **“Mayan Tomb First Mausoleum to Adorn Slopes of Oakwood”**

The article included a photograph of *Frank Knapp, sculptor and stone mason, well known in the west end of the valley for his construction work, breaking ground for the new mausoleum of Mayan architecture.*



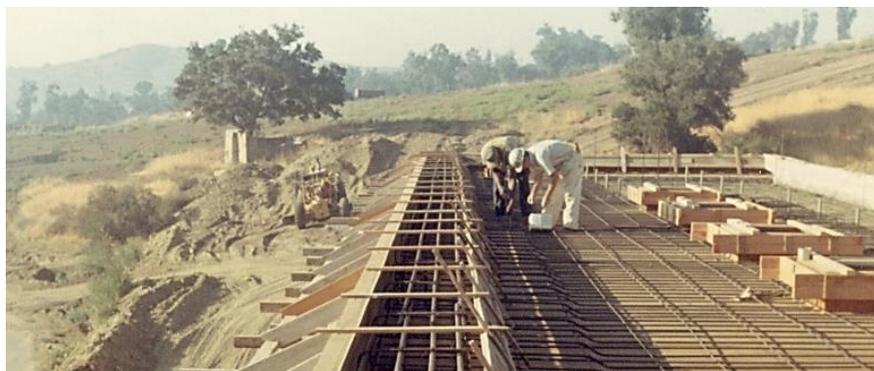
Another paragraph mentions Mayan architecture recently uncovered in the ancient cities of Mexico. (Coincidentally, Twin Lakes Park, just north Chatsworth, named their 1927 Brochure, “Home of the Mayan Village”)

On Dec. 15, 1926, the Los Angeles Times reported that the mausoleum would be built from the native sandstone rock that forms steep cliffs on three sides of the property.

On Jan 14, 1927, the Oakwood annual report noted progress, including the opening and development of a half dozen new units and the family mausoleum section. It was reported that Frank Knapp, sculptor and stone contractor, was already erecting a six-cript family mausoleum in a new unit.

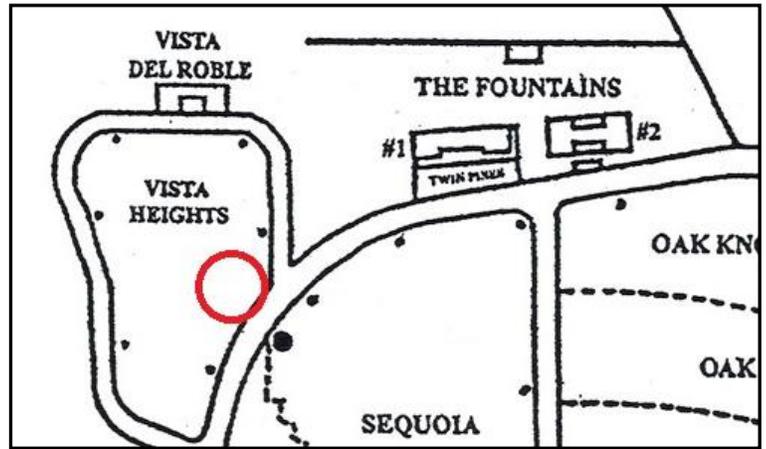
We could find no further published records of the 1927 Oakwood mausoleum. We checked with the Oakwood office, and they had no knowledge of the 1927 mausoleum.

Our research of photographs, shared with us by the Enderle family, previous owners of Oakwood, found the 1927 Mayan mausoleum in a photograph as they were constructing their first mausoleum named “Twin Pines” at the north end of the cemetery in 1969. Photo facing south.



The partial map of Oakwood, at right, includes our approximation of the location of the 1927 mausoleum circled in red. Aerial photos show that the hillside was graded and the mausoleum was removed before 1977.

Lucinda Michele Knapp, great-granddaughter of Frank Knapp Sr., shared some other photographs of Frank Sr. building the Mausoleum.



Background on Frank Knapp Sr. – Frank Sr. built one of the first houses in Canoga Park, completed in 1912 (located at Owensmouth Avenue and Cohasset Street). It was later demolished in 1926.

In 1925, Frank Sr. built a new family home at 7511 Owensmouth Avenue on the same lot, featuring elaborate rock work constructed in the style of historic castles from his home country in Tyrol, Austria. Knapp



senior was a skilled stone mason. "The front and back yards were filled with Knapp's artistic masonry including jolly monks, a sundial, detailed nativity shrines, and an eight-foot-winged cement butterfly inlaid with colorful tiles." The locals referred to it as "Knapp Castle". The building was severely damaged by the 1994 Northridge earthquake and was demolished. Pictures of the first and second homes are above.

In 1934 Frank Knapp Sr was hired by the Orcutt family to build the lovely stone statues that remain in the gardens at Orcutt Ranch at 23600 Roscoe Blvd. West Hills.

Frank's son Max (Lucinda's grandfather) built the 1934 stone house (at right) that exists today at 23529 Lake Manor Dr., Chatsworth.



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 ARCHIVES online at
<http://www.chatsworthhistory.com>

facebook CHS FACEBOOK PAGE
www.facebook.com/HomesteadAcre

CHS YOUTUBE Channel
youtube.com/chatsworthhistory1/videos

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

Slideshare has a listing of our CHS presentations that can easily be watched online. We now have a total of 33 PowerPoint presentations posted. 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.

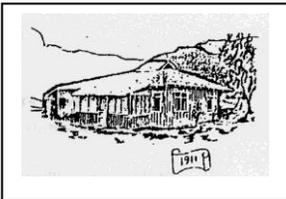
For those receiving email only newsletters, we will advise you by email when your dues are due.

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

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