

Smoke Signal

CHATSWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
10385 Shadow Oak Drive, Chatsworth, CA 91311
(818) 882-5614
www.historicalsocieties.net



Co-Presidents: André & Linda van der Valk

April 2011, Issue #2

Editor: Ann Vincent

Co-Presidents' Message

By Linda & André van der Valk

The Acre has been very busy the last month or so getting ready for The Garden Festival. We are hoping for some great weather. The gardens are looking beautiful thanks to all the rains we have been having. Jim, Betty and Beverly have been busy dead heading the roses and working in the gardens. We are very fortunate to have the help that we have. Our docents pitch in and do a lot of work for the Festival. Jelena is already making sure that everything in the kitchen is ready to serve the tea. The Tea is 100% homemade, from sandwiches to the date nut bread made by Bea and scones by Betty. It is a bargain for \$8.00 and you get to enjoy it in the beautiful gardens. We do need volunteers to help with set up on Saturday April 30th at 9:00 A.M. and take down after the Festival.

We also would like to thank Councilman Smith for getting us the shuttle to transport our guests from the Train Depot to the Festival and back. This is the easiest way to park and be dropped off right at the gate.

Councilman Smith is retiring at the end of his term and he will truly be missed by The Chatsworth Historical Society. Greig has championed many causes for us and if it was not for him and Councilman Elect Mitch Englander the acre would not be open right now. It would be closed like the rest of Chatsworth Park South. Greig has arranged for us to have a sprinkler system, alarm system and even found the funds for lead abatement for the cottage. Greig also was involved in the renaming of the Chatsworth Museum to the Virginia Watson Chatsworth Museum and was on hand to surprise Virginia with the name change. The Historical Society wants to extend a sincere thank you to the Councilman for all he has done for us and hope that he will remain a friend to the Historical Society and visit us often.

Hope to see everyone on May 1st for the Garden Festival.

Linda and André

Chatsworth Historical Society
Board of Directors 2010-2011

Co-Presidents	Linda & André van der Valk
Programs, Ways & Means.....	Bea Berman
Membership.....	Keith Watts
Treasurer.....	Ray Vincent
Recording Secretary.....	Elaine Campbell
Smoke Signal.....	Ann Vincent
Museum Curator.....	Virginia Watson
Cottage Curator.....	Betty Summers
Hospitality.....	Jelena Csanyi
Garden Director.....	Jim & Betty Summers
Director-at-Large.....	Beverly King
Director-at-Large.....	Evelyn Hutcheson
Permanent Member.....	Lila Schepler

Upcoming Events

April 19, 2011, Tuesday 7 PM – Pepper Davis

Pepper, a member of the 1944 All American Girls Professional Baseball League, will share her memories of Baseball during World War 2, it's challenges, adventures and the filming of "A League of Their Own". Plan to join us for this event.

May 1, 2011 Sunday Garden Festival 11-4 pm

The Historical Society Fundraiser featuring the Duchess Tea in the Rose Garden, tours of the Cottage and Museum. Garden Clubs and vendors along with a large assortment of plants for sale. Mark the date and be here to enjoy our Historic Acre.

May 17, 2011, Tues 7 PM Installation of Officers

This is the month that we install our officers for the next term from May 2011 to May 2012. Please join us for the installation of officers. In addition we will have a presentation regarding our current collection of Chatsworth History related videos and digital photo collection.

Sunday June 5, and July 3, 2011, Historic Acre Open House

Open 1-4 pm on the first Sunday of every month. Please join us for tours of the cottage, grounds and museum.

Movie Personalities Lived in Chatsworth

These are the people in front of the camera who called our community home.

By Virginia Watson, published on www.chatsworth.patch.com
CHATSWORTH THEN AND NOW

Additional photo boxes and comments added by Ann Vincent

In addition to the large number of Hollywood movies made in Chatsworth, there were also many actors, actresses and movie personnel who settled in the area, at least for a while.

Possibly the most remembered couple, due to the huge success of their television program was **Lucille Ball** and **Desi Arnaz**. Shortly after they were married in 1940, they bought a small, not-quite-finished ranch, with a surrounding white fence on five-acres in Chatsworth at the corner of Corbin Avenue and Devonshire Street. In her posthumously published autobiography, Lucy tells of celebrating her 30th birthday in the house and of how Desi enjoyed building the fireplace for the patio and the bath house and how much they loved rural life with the dogs, chickens and orange groves. Both of their children were born while they lived in Chatsworth and the couple was a familiar sight in the community. They shopped at a locally owned "supermarket" nearby on Devonshire Street near Canoga Avenue owned by the **Vellone family**. At first, the couple spent a lot of time in Chatsworth commuting the 25 miles to the studio, but in the spring of 1950 they formed the Desilu Company and soon their responsibilities escalated. Finally they sold the ranch to **Jane Withers** and moved to Beverly Hills.



Jane Withers was a friendly addition to the community. Her daughter attended Chatsworth Park Elementary School and Jane participated in the PTA and the Mother's March of Dimes. She even stayed late to help with the dishes after a fund-raiser and the new Security Pacific Bank opened up especially to accept the money collected that needed to be counted and deposited.



Lots of people in the community have stories to tell about **Roy Rogers** and **Dale Evans Rogers** who moved to Chatsworth in the early 1950s and lived on a 300-acre ranch up next to



Oakwood Memorial Park where Trigger Lane is still the name of the street. The family was an integral part of the community. Roy went to the Rotary Club meetings and the Chamber of Commerce events. He was also a part-owner of the golf course and skeet shooting range that existed before Chatsworth Park South was created at the west end of Devonshire Street. Dale was a busy mother with all the children, but she attended PTA meetings, school events and spoke at the Women's Club meetings. Both she and Roy attended the Chatsworth United Methodist Church (now The Pioneer Church relocated in Oakwood Memorial Park, 22601 Lassen St.). Dale often played the piano and sang with the children in the Sunday School that was held in a little house in back of the church. And the Methodist Youth Fellowship teenage members often ended up in the Rogers' family room on Sunday nights after the meeting, playing games and singing. The Roger's children grew up in Chatsworth but one of the reasons they moved to Apple Valley, Roy said once in a speech, was the bus tragedy that took the life of **Debbie**, the little girl they had adopted from Korea.

Many other movie actors and actresses lived in Chatsworth. **Mae Marsh** was Honorary Mayor of Chatsworth and lived on a ranch there in the 1930s. **Lionel Barrymore** served as Honorary Mayor in the '40s and early '50s and lived on a ranch where Sierra Canyon School is now.

Ginny Simms had a ranch on the east side of Corbin Avenue below Devonshire Street and **Louella Parsons**, the well-known Hollywood syndicated movie columnist, also lived on Corbin Avenue on the west side of the street. Some movie magazines listed them as living in Northridge but locals remember that it was Chatsworth.

Ayn Rand's well-known Richard J. Neutra designed home is no longer standing but it was on Tampa at Lassen Street on what is now partly a gated community called "Running Springs" and partly Nobel Middle School. Rand bought her 13-acre ranch with part of the money from her novel, "The Fountainhead."

2011 GARDEN FESTIVAL

Bea Berman, Chairman

Other movie personalities are **Victor Borge** who lived locally in the 1950s and his children attended Chatsworth Park Elementary School. **Barbara Hale** and **Bill Williams** owned commercial property in Chatsworth during the '50s, '60s and '70s. **Kirk Cameron**, a teenage idol and television star attended Chatsworth High School and was the grand marshal of the local parade one year. His sister, **Candace Cameron**, also attended schools in Chatsworth and is well-known today.

Brandy, Melissa and Traci Gold were three young talented sisters who appeared regularly on television while living in Chatsworth in the 1980s.

Milton and Collette Parsons lived in



Milt Parsons was known for his roles as butlers, undertakers and Morticians.

Chatsworth for many years and devoted volunteer hours to the community through their work with "The Cookie Jar Theatre," a children's theater group, and other drama groups they started with

the Canoga Park Episcopal Church. Their lovely home on Farralone in Chatsworth was often called into service for a play or theater-oriented event. The Parsons also were members of the Chatsworth Historical Society in its early years.

Many other actors and actresses have touched the community, interacting with local people and enriching community life. Among them are: **Keith Andes, Fred Astaire, Warren Berlinger, James Brolin, Dan Dailey, Buddy Ebsen, Barbara Eden, Chad Everett, Paul Kelley** and his daughter **Paula Kelly, Val Kilmer, Dale Robertson, Sabu the Elephant Boy, Kevin Spacey, and Mare Whittingham.**

Chatsworth has benefited from its association with the public personalities of the movie and television world and is a better community for it embracing and enjoying the make-believe world along with every day down-to-earth community life.

It's almost here. Before we know it, May 1st will be upon us and it will be time for our wonderful GARDEN FESTIVAL. Please mark your calendars and tell your friends about it.

We still could use baked goods and new or like new items for our white elephant booth. We also need your help. There is still room for vendors if you know anyone who might be interested. Of course, our wonderful Duchass Tea is always a treat and remember, everything is homemade.

The various Garden Clubs will be there and tours of the museum and the cottage are certainly worthwhile.

Remember, due to lack of parking in the park, a shuttle bus will be available at the north end of the train depot from 11:00-4:00 PM running every fifteen minutes.

Any questions, I can be reached at (818) 341-5449. We are looking forward to seeing you on May 1st.

Watch for the Huell Howser replay of the Historic Acre and his announcement of the 2011 Garden Festival on April 25th at 7:30 PM on KCET

INSTALLATION OF 2011-2012 OFFICERS

As reported at the Business meeting held on April 5, 2011, the slate of proposed officers are as follows.

Co-Presidents	Linda & André van der Valk
Programs, Ways & Means	Bea Berman
Membership	Keith Watts
Treasurer	Ray Vincent
Recording Secretary	Elaine Campbell
Smoke Signal	Ann Vincent
Museum Curator	Virginia Watson
Cottage Curator	Betty Summers
Hospitality	Jelena Csanyi
Garden Director	Jim & Betty Summers
Director-at-Large	Beverly King
Director-at-Large	Connie Ager
Permanent Member	Lila Schepler

These officers will be officially elected and installed at the May 17th General Meeting.



Over 300 Rose Bushes in Bloom

Chatsworth Historical Society Presents

A GARDEN FESTIVAL

Featuring Roses and Crafts

The Duchess Tea Room
Afternoon Tea

- \$8 per person
- 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.



Museum Exhibits

Featuring Chatsworth Pioneer Families

Tours of Minnie's Cottage
(11 - 4 p.m.)



Blooming Rose Gardens

Quilt Display from the
Veteran's Quilt Project

Arts & Crafts

White Elephant Sale

Garden Clubs

Bake Sale

Live Plant Sale

Hot Dogs and Sodas

Note: Parking is limited at Chatsworth Park South

Park your car at the Chatsworth Train Depot (10038 Old Depot Plaza Road) and use our free shuttle service, every 15 minutes from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sunday, May 1, 2011

11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

\$5 Admission Donation – Children \$1

Kids under 5 Free

THE HOMESTEAD ACRE

At the First Stop Sign in **Chatsworth Park South**

(West End of Devonshire Street)

10385 Shadow Oak Drive, Chatsworth, CA 91311

Information: 818-882-5614

All Proceeds go to the Chatsworth Historical Society for the preservation of the Minnie Hill Palmer Homestead Acre and the Virginia Watson Chatsworth Museum

Wondering if your Dues are Due?

There is a code on the last line of your address label (if you are a life member, there is no 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!

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...

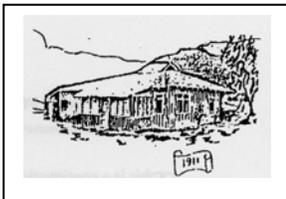
San Fernando Valley Historical Society has scheduled a field trip to Skirball Cultural Center on Saturday, May 14 and has extended the offer to the members and friends of the Chatsworth Historical Society at their member price of only \$18.00. This includes the bus trip. There are only so many seats available, so time's a wasting!

www.chatsworthpatch.com is now featuring "Chatsworth Then and Now" history articles written by our own Chatsworth Historian, Virginia Watson as seen on page 2. These articles are listed in The Neighborhood Files Section of the Chatsworth Patch.com website. Please check it out. To find all of them, type in Virginia Watson in the search box.



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
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: _____

Janice Hinkston Memorial Service

By Virginia Watson

A memorial service was held at The Homestead Acre for Janice Hinkston, founder and devoted advocate for the Santa Susana Mountain Park Association and for the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park on Friday, March 25, 2011. Mrs. Hinkston was also a member of the Chatsworth Historical Society. She lived in the Los Angeles area for many years attending Fairfax High School and graduating from Los Angeles City College where she received training to be a teacher. She spent many years teaching kindergarten classes at Chatsworth Park Elementary School.

Mrs. Hinkston, who had moved to Madison, Wisconsin, died September 28, 2010, and her daughter Julie Zimmer had invited friends and SSMPA members to attend and share memories about "Jan". Also attending were Mark Zimmer, Stephen Zimmer and J. D. Liotto from Wisconsin.

Julie Zimmer provided a video that told the story of Mrs. Hinkston's earlier life and Nancy Razanski provided a short program that showed the dedication of the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park in June 1998. Speakers included Mrs. Zimmer, Stephen Jaxton, Linda Stone, Al Knight, Ted Dent, Nancy Razanski, Glenn Bailey, Pearl Turbush, Diane Dixon Davis, Barbara Pampalone, Loretta Ditlow, a former teacher from Chatsworth High School and Dan Preece, retired former State Park Superintendent.

Members of the CHS attending were Mrs. Linda van der Valk, Jelena Csyanski, Bea Berman and Ann Vincent.

Following the service a group of friends took Mrs. Hinkston's ashes to a special area in the state park to be scattered under a huge oak tree.

**Monthly - Museum Open House the first Sunday of each month
from 1 to 4 pm.**

Chatsworth Historical Society

10385 Shadow Oak Drive
Chatsworth, Ca 91311

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Check the code below your mailing label ...is it time to pay your dues? (See page 5 for details)