

# CHATSWORTH PAST & PRESENT

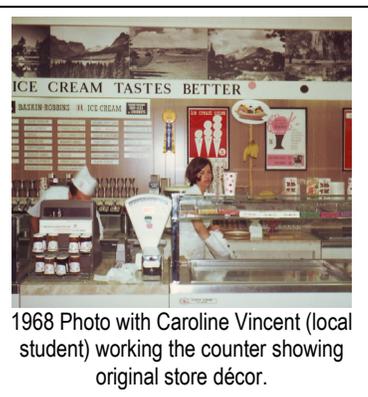
By Ann Vincent

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Baskin Robbins 31 Flavors Ice Cream stores had their beginning in Glendale and Pasadena California in 1945. Store #123 is in Chatsworth and Baskin Robbins now has over 2,600 stores nationwide. The Chatsworth store, now owned and operated by Barbara and Peter Laspina, is located at 20445 Devonshire. This family operated business goes back 43 years to the Ditto family, who first opened the store in 1967.



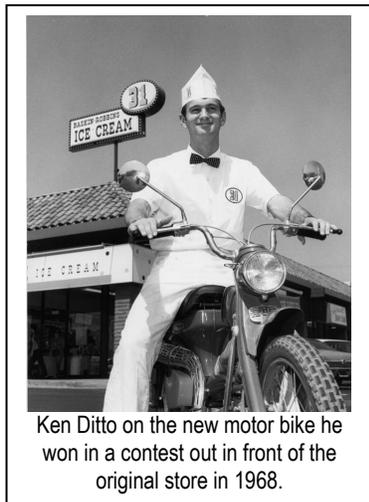
Virginia Graves Ditto, a Chatsworth native descended from the Chatsworth pioneer Graves family, owned her first store in Panorama City in 1963, but jumped at the chance to own one locally when a new plaza was under construction on the corner of Mason and Devonshire in 1967. The price of a scoop of ice cream when the store opened was just 15 cents. For Virginia, a young widower with five children, the new store continued to be the center of family life. She had no need to dole out allowances...if the kids wanted money, they had to work. Frank, Ken, and Bill each mentioned that they developed strong right arms from scooping ice cream.



1968 Photo with Caroline Vincent (local student) working the counter showing original store décor.

Ken says that the Baskin Robbins company was more like a family business; it was nothing to go to work and have the company owners Burt or Irv sitting in a chair in the store just having a conversation with his mother on matters of the business. Ken also

remembers movie stars dropping by, especially Roy Rogers and William Shatner. Frank Ditto remembers that the family car at the time was an off-white VW Bug with brown and pink dots and the 31 flavors logo on the side. Under the back window was a sign displaying the flavor of the month. Ken had fun entering contests every year to promote new items, and in 1968 he won 1<sup>st</sup> place for his Ice Cream Parfait recipe. In 1970, Virginia decided it was time to sell. However Bill, still in his senior year of high school, continued working for the new



Ken Ditto on the new motor bike he won in a contest out in front of the original store in 1968.

store owner, Mr. Davis, who only owned the store a short time. Stuart and Gloria Rosenbloom owned the store from 1972 to 1977. The store changed hands one last time in 1977 to current owners Barbara and Peter Laspina, who have operated it the last 33 years.



Peter and Barbara Laspina at the Chatsworth Baskin Robbins

Barbara also participates in the corporate contests, and invented a new flavor. Quarterback Crunch has been a seasonal flavor for 32 years now, introduced each year during the football season. A proud inventor, Barbara sports license plates that say "QB CRNCH".

The "31 flavors logo" originally indicated that you could treat yourself to a different flavor each day of the month. Today, there is no limit to the number of flavors that are available. The new logo still carries the 31, but you have to look for it.



Barbara and Peter have always been involved in the community through fundraising activities and personal support for some of their student employees. Barbara got involved and volunteered as a cheerleading coach with Chaminade for nine years. Looking back at 33 years as owners of the Chatsworth Store they proudly informed me that they are ranked 28<sup>th</sup> out of 2,600 Baskin Robbins stores in the United States, quite an accomplishment. When you visit the bright colorful festive store, and see the spectacular display of ice cream toppings and desserts, you truly feel as though you have stepped in to Candyland. Be sure to stop by and select your favorite flavor!



2010 Chatsworth Baskin Robbins

Chatsworth Historical Society