

# Smoke Signal

CHATSWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Co-Presidents: Linda & André van der Valk

November 2019, Issue #5

Editor: Ann Vincent

## Co-Presidents' Message

By Linda & André van der Valk

I want to start off thanking everyone who volunteered for Pioneer Day. We had a successful day thanks to everyone and their hard work. It was a little hot but the dreaded wind waited for a couple of weeks to wreak havoc upon us. Our special thanks to Ann and Ray Vincent for organizing and managing the event.

I would like to thank Dottie Acker for purchasing the material and making curtains for some of our windows in the cottage. They look great and Dottie was able to find material that looked like something Minnie would have had in the cottage. Thank you Dottie.

We had Open House on the first Sunday of this month and it was nice to see how our attendance is increasing. There is a lot of interest in our history and that makes us happy that people are interested. Thank you to our new docent Anne Hughes that worked all day with us. She is also a docent at the Adamson House in Malibu. Anne brings a lot of docent experience to us.

I know this will reach everyone later than Veteran's Day but I would like to say Happy Veteran's Day to all of our veterans.

Happy Thanksgiving

Linda and André

P.S. For those of you that keep reminding me that you want to order a brick, now is a good time. It would make a perfect Christmas gift! See the order form and link on page 2, order it, and it will be installed by Garden Festival.

Chatsworth Historical Society  
Board of Directors 2019-2020

Co-Presidents .....	Linda & André van der Valk
Treasurer.....	Jim Van Gundy
Secretary.....	Donna Nachtrab
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## Upcoming Events

**November 19, 2019 Tuesday 7:00 PM  
General Meeting**

### Chatsworth LA88 Nike Missile Base



Join us as we discuss the history of the LA88 Nike Missile Base on Oat Mountain. We will also show a 1961 Lassie episode that was filmed at

the base, where Lassie trains a German Shepard to be a good guard dog.

**December 10, 2019 Tuesday 6:30 PM  
Christmas Party - Members Only**

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 21, 2020 Tuesday 7:00 PM  
General Meeting – Movie Night**

Join us for a CLIFF HANGER  
1942 Perils of Nyoka episode 7- Monster's Clutch

## 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:

If you need some outdoor fresh air therapy, come join our gardening team on Wednesday mornings 9-noon.



**IN THE MUSEUM:** We will be sharing photos and information on the Stagecoach Trail. We will continue to have open house scheduled for the first Sunday of each month from 1-4pm except on Holidays.

**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](mailto: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>

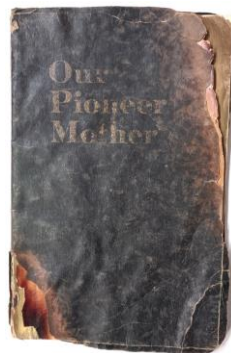
Bricks that are ordered before March 1<sup>st</sup> will be in place for our April 26 Garden Festival.

For more information, send an email to [chatsworthhistory@gmail.com](mailto:chatsworthhistory@gmail.com) or call 818-882-5614.

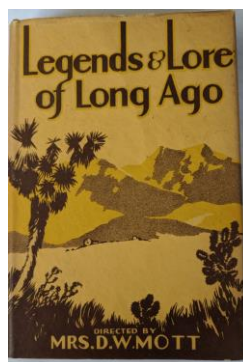
## RARE PIONEER BOOKS

Recently Polly Pastre, the great-grand-daughter of Minerva and Nelson Gray, visited the Acre at our August Open House and donated a selection of pages of Edith Gray McFarland's (1889-1969) book "**Pigtails to Silver-Gray**" private printing 1962. Edith was the daughter of Minerva and Nelson Gray. With luck, Ray was able to track down an original copy of the book from a private bookseller for our archives. The book was self-published and only 25 copies were made, distributed mostly to family. The bookseller's book included an original letter from Edith, addressed to a close friend she sent the book to.

The book covers Edith's life from her early childhood in Chatsworth. She describes the first home they lived in on the new property her father bought, and the construction of the new house she described as "13 rooms under two magnificent oak trees". She talks about living in Chatsworth until she was married and what it was like to live in that time period. The Gray House was located on the NE corner of Lassen at Farralone.



This new book is very similar to the book from the Johnson Family "**Our Pioneer Mother**"; Ann Johnson's life story as told to her daughter Lenora Johnson MacDonald. The original book was a leather bound book self-published for the family. The Historical Society was provided a copy by Katharine Johnson, and the family gave permission to have it republished by the Historical Society. We sell a republished copy for \$10.00 in the museum.



**Legends and Lore of Long Ago**, compiled by Mrs. D. W. Mott – by the Womens Club of Ventura County in 1929. It is another book recently found that is written as short stories describing the early ranches, travel, bandits, missions and other stories. Page 29 shares an 1874 story of Tiburcio Vasquez at Larry's Station in Simi Valley, travelling the Old Stagecoach Road to Chatsworth.



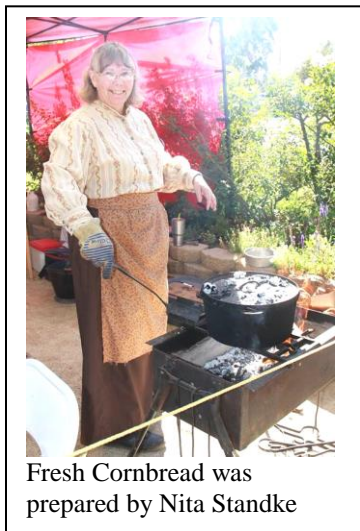
PIONEER DAY 2019

## October 2019 Pioneer Day was a wonderful success!

This year was very successful...and we have so many people to thank that made this a fun family community event.

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 Dottie Acker, Jan Gruenwald, Daphneleah Schneider, Jelena Csanyi, Anne Hughes, Carol Lucas, Georgia Altmeyer, Linda van der Valk, and Marcia Chopp. At our information table ready to answer historical and general question were our experts Bea Berman, John and Zena Thorpe and Connie Ager. All of these wonderful volunteers share the stories told that keep our Chatsworth history alive.

Starting with set-up, our thanks go out to Bill Dushman, Annette Campbell, Bob Dager, Dale King, Jelena Csanyi along with Ray and Ann Vincent who helped get everything set up on Saturday morning. Early Saturday morning, the JNROTC cadets from El Camino Real High School and Reseda High School arrived to help setup tables, chairs and canopies. On Sunday, Reseda High School cadets worked all day managing our parking lot under the supervision of Bill Dushman, Tom Nachtrab and Ray Vincent. They also arrived early enough to help us get our canopies raised and help vendors transport their goods from their cars. Both groups also were there at shut down to help clear the area and pack everything away. We also had the help at tear-down of the Lawrence Middle School Students, who worked all day Sunday.

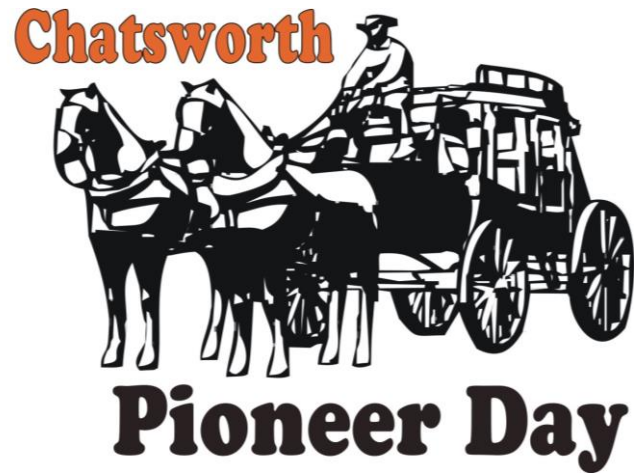


Fresh Cornbread was prepared by Nita Standke

We have a great support group from Lawrence Middle School. It is very special to have the opportunity to watch our older students teach our younger kids. What a great experience for all of them.

Ms. Pena from Lawrence Middle School arrived early Sunday to supervise the students who run our games and chores of yore. The students started their day helping vendors and then worked with us to prepare each of the chores and game displays they would manage. They

did a great job; I am not sure how we could do this activity without them and their teachers. First, they had to learn the activity, and then determine how they would teach it to children and parents learning about the chores. A special thanks goes to the students and parents who helped throughout the day including Martina Turner and Marina and Jeff Mackie who stayed to clean up. Both Pat and Bill UpdeGraph came to help with our Games of Yore throughout the day...check out the energetic sack races.



The telegraph station is always a great place to practice Texting 1880's style



Sack races and tug of war were included In Games of Yore (Great photo by Diana Sprout.)

## PIONEER DAY CHALLENGE



- Blacksmithing
- Baking
- Butter Churning
- Gold Panning
- Spinning Wheels
- Reptiles
- Oak Tree Seedlings
- Quilting
- Trace your family tree
- Fishing game
- Bean bag game
- Sack Races
- Darning Socks
- Paper Dolls
- Cornhusk Dolls
- Braiding
- Weaving
- Sand Painting
- Seed Collecting
- Washboard Laundry
- The Telegraph
- Coffee Grinding
- Leatherwork
- Knot Tying
- Bee Keeping
- Stagecoach
- Antique Buggy
- Museum & Cottage

*Chatsworth Historical Society*

This year we actually used a counter to determine how many people came through the gate...So after 11:00 am, we had over 800 guests including a full staff of volunteers who arrived early to set up and run the event, not to mention all the vendors. Always a big draw is the Standke family at the blacksmith/baking station. Dr. Standke had the help of blacksmith Dylan Sprout to help.

Gold panning is always one of the most popular events, sponsored by Keene Engineering of Chatsworth, who donates the gold dust -- each child takes home a small vial of real gold.

Our Snack Bar is courtesy of the van der Valk family, who purchase and then donate all the proceeds to the Homestead Acre. They have plenty of friends and family to run the food booth including Gary Bercow and Buck Barker. Thank you to all of them.

Chatsworth is such a close-knit community, almost every volunteer group that comes to display or provide activities are also members of the Chatsworth Historical Society.

The Quilter-4-Others group that runs our children's quilting booth is sponsored by the San Fernando Quilting Association. Over 100 children's activity quilts were created with each child receiving a raffle ticket for the giveaway quilt donated. The SSMVA was represented by Warren Stone and Sky Valley Volunteers was on hand with John Luker spreading the word about Acorn planting. Cub Scout Troop 226 joined us for the day, teaching knot tying and much more.

Sharon Shingai provided reptiles for all to see and the Valley Hive brought bees. Also, members of our very own Pioneer Church were on hand, The Standing Bear Trading Post teaching leatherwork, and the Foundation for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mountains were there with their Stagecoach used for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade hikes in the State Park. This

was fun for all. Thank you to Bob Dager and all the FPSSM volunteers that shared that history with us during the day.

All of our vendors did a great job showing their crafts. Other activities included the CNC distributing Poppy Seeds to the community. Nadia Harding was on hand to show off the Butterfly Garden and provided milkweed plants to sell, while Annette Campbell and Janine Bergez were selling plants donated by volunteers. Our Bake Sale volunteer Rhumpa Mishra and Thuy Pham did an amazing job selling the wonderful selection of baked goods donated, while Pam Perram volunteered to have coffee on hand for our guests.

Special thanks goes to Donna Boswell & Wendy Gladstone at the front gate. This year we handed out our Chatsworth Pioneer Stickers to all children and adults as they came through the gate declaring them a "CHATSWORTH PIONEER" and then handed them a Pioneer Day Challenge card they could use to learn the ways of the Pioneer.

Fun Photos courtesy of Diana Sprout are posted on our Facebook page. I'm sure I have forgotten so many wonderful people, please forgive me.



Our wash station is always fun for kids of all ages...now if they only had to do their own laundry this way.

# Chatsworth Pioneer





## Filming The Roy Rogers Show on Roy & Dale's Chatsworth Ranch

We had a great turnout for our Roy Rogers program on October 15 here at the museum.



The inspiration for the presentation was a recent blog post by Chatsworth film historian Dennis Liff. The presentation included a discussion of:

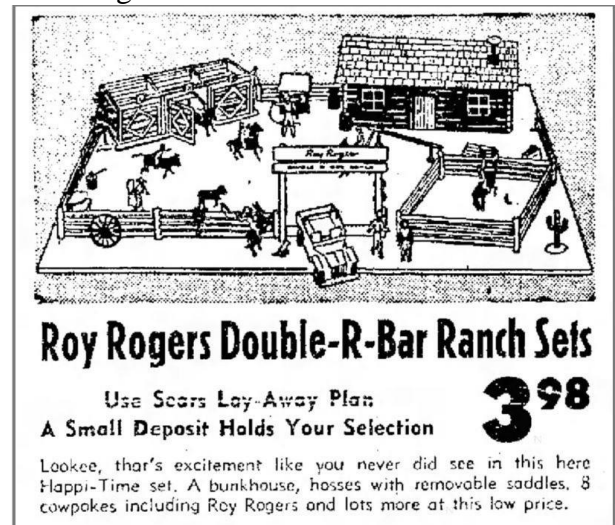
- Roy & Dale's 137 acre Chatsworth Ranch at 9839 Andora
- The location of the "Double R Bar Ranch" (which was not where Roy and Dale lived).
- A fun look at Double R Bar Ranch merchandising.
- Filming locations at the Chatsworth Ranch, that will soon be developed into 33 homes at the end of Andora.

"The Roy Rogers Show" ran for six seasons on NBC, from 1951-1957, 100 episodes.

- Most of its location footage was shot on the Iverson Movie Ranch in Chatsworth.
- Another filming location was Corriganville in Simi Valley.
- The famous Double R Bar Ranch gate from the TV show was set up at still another filming location — Disney's Golden Oak Ranch in Placerita Canyon, Newhall.
- Roy and Dale moved to their Chatsworth Ranch in 1955, and filming for a few episodes of seasons 5 and 6 of "The Roy Rogers Show" was at their new Chatsworth Ranch.

## Promotional Items of the Roy Rogers Show

By the mid-1950s, Roy Rogers and his TV ranch had become the focus of a massive merchandising operation, much of it based on the Double R Bar Ranch logo.



Items included playsets featuring Roy Rogers and Dale Evans, lunch boxes, and even mechanical horses that you could ride as long as you had a spare quarter.



## Development of the 137 acre Roy Rogers Chatsworth Ranch

In 1964, a new tract was announced, Roy Rogers Ranchos, 33 acres, 54 homes.

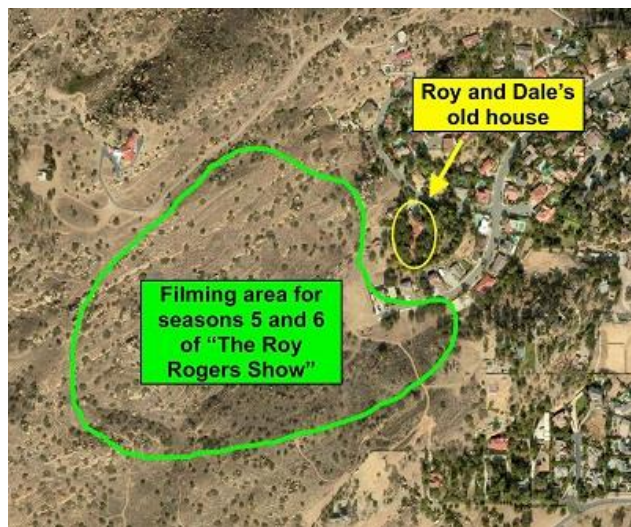
- Originally announced in 1963, the project was to include a natural lake-type swimming pool, tennis courts, and play area.
- The project also announced fully equipped barns and boarding facilities for horses, and that Rogers would maintain his family home on a seven acre estate in the heart of the project.
- The project was kicked off with roping ceremonies in April, 1964.
- In August 1964, tragedy befell the Rogers, as their 12 year old daughter Debbie was killed in a bus accident. In 1965, Roy and Dale sold the remainder of their ranch and moved to Apple Valley, Ca. near Victorville.

In 1986, a second tract was created when Eugene Kilmer subdivided the Rogers Estate property that included Roy Roger's house -- 7 acres, 7 homes.

In 2017, the LA City Council approved the third and final subdivision, Andora Estates, 91 acres, 33 homes. The 33 home subdivision will be on 28 acres, with 63 acres as an open space conservation easement/wildlife corridor. Development has not yet begun.

### Filming Locations at the Chatsworth Ranch

Filming of the few episodes of seasons 5 and 6 was just west of the Rogers Ranch home.



The filming area includes not only stunning rock formations, but a meadow just west of their home, and a small lake/water feature area that existed at that time.



Hill south of the meadow seen in the episode "Horse Crazy"



This rock formation is seen in 1956 "Paleface Justice," towering over passing riders.

We then showed a few scenes from the 1956 episode "False Faces", comparing those scenes to pictures of the rock formations that still exist today.

We ended the presentation with the viewing of the 22 minute episode of "False Faces", filmed at the Roy Rogers Chatsworth Ranch.

The presentation can be found at [chatsworthhistory.com](http://chatsworthhistory.com), Digital Archives, Presentations, "Filming the Roy Rogers Show on Roy & Dale's Chatsworth Ranch". Don't forget to look at the detailed history that Dennis Liff captures in his blog post at [iversonmovieranch.blogspot.com/2019/05/filming-roy-rogers-show-on-roy-and.html](http://iversonmovieranch.blogspot.com/2019/05/filming-roy-rogers-show-on-roy-and.html)



And yes, at the end of the episode, the group sang along to the ending tune,

**"Happy Trails to You"**



# Gavilán (The Hawk in the Hills)

## A Native American Story

Below is a GoogleEarth screen capture of an outline in black of Gavilán (the Hawk) overlooking his subjects, **as he climbed into the mountains and sat down and turned into stone.**

If you drive west on Plummer, Lassen or Devonshire, and look at the outline of the hills against the sky, particularly at sunset, you will see a hawk, with his wings lifted slightly higher than his head, his head in the middle. “Gavilán” in Spanish translates to Kestrel (Sparrow Hawk). Kestrel is also the title of a mid-level chief...as in this story.



### MYTHS AND PLACES ON THE LANDSCAPE

In 1917, John and Carobeth Harrington recorded several traditions about places on the landscape between El Escorpión and Santa Susana during their work with Juan and Juana Menéndez.

Juan was the son of Espíritu, who was the daughter of Odón Chihuya, a Chumash Native American born in Humaliwo (Malibu) who later lived at the San Fernando Mission.

**Gavilán and the Land of the Dead** (paraphrased from *Ethnohistoric Overview for the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park, Cultural Resources Inventory Project June 2006. Prepared by John R. Johnson, Ph.D., Department of Anthropology, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, pg 46*)



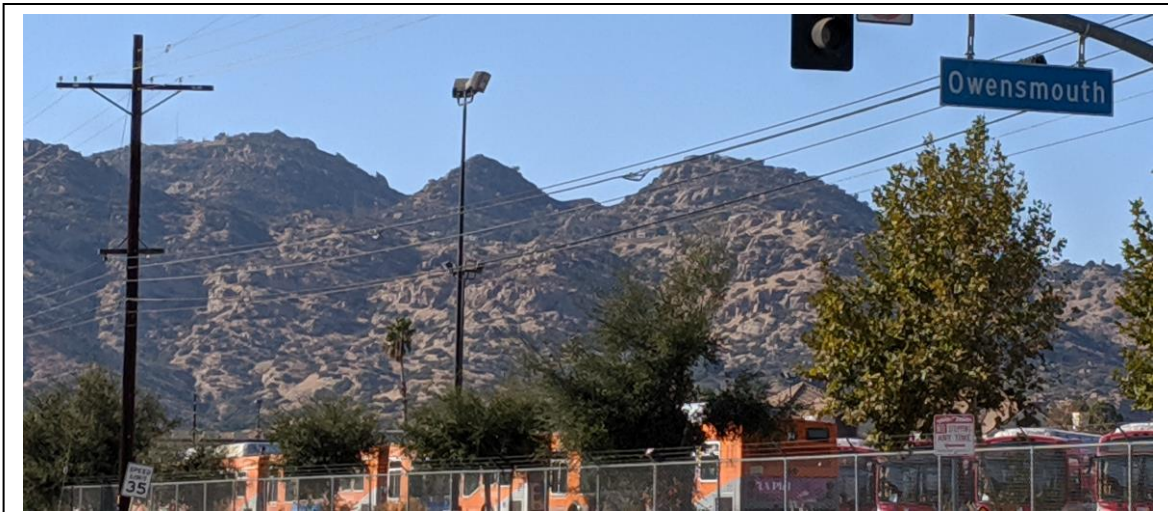
View from Plummer and Topanga

“One narrative pertains to the area encompassed by the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park. This story has parallel versions throughout much of Native California that are commonly referred to as variations of the “Orpheus” myth.

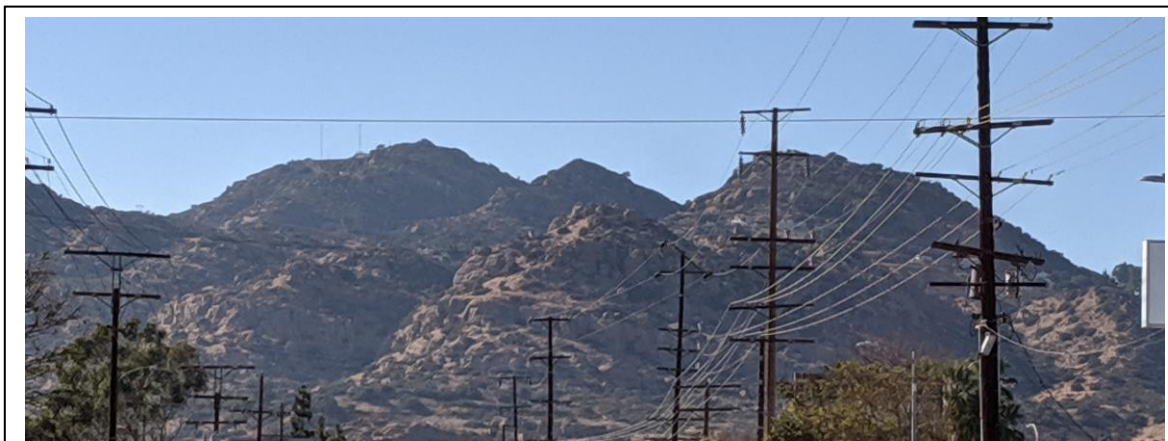


View from Plummer and Topanga (zoomed in)

In the Fernandeano account, the wife of Gavilán (Hawk) died, and he traveled to the Land of the Dead to retrieve her. She was able to return with him only if he would agree not to touch her for nine days. His self-discipline held for eight days, even though they slept together. Finally temptation got the best of Gavilán, and on the ninth day, he weakened and tried to cohabit with his wife. As a result, she began her return journey to the Land of the Dead. He followed and followed. Then she disappeared, and he was so sad at losing her that he climbed into the mountains and sat down and turned into stone.”

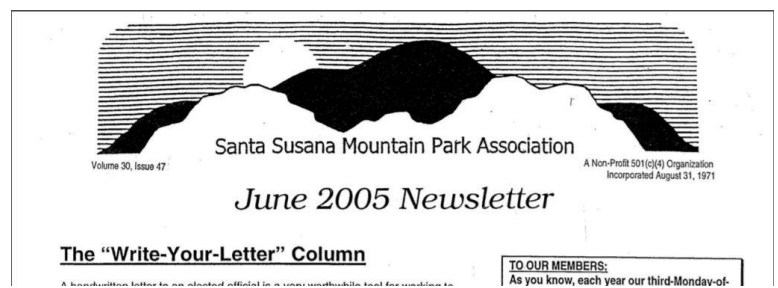
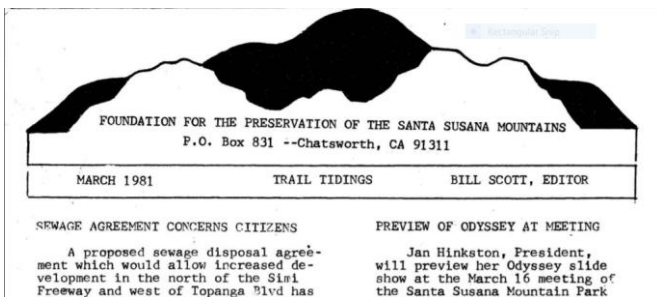


View from Owensmouth and Marilla



View from Devonshire and Jordan

Albert Knight mentioned, that perhaps by accident, the old SSMPA newsletters included the Gavilán as a part of the letterhead:



Different interpretations exist of the images we see in the outline of our western hills... In 1970 my father told me he saw a woman laying down, her head and hair to the right. This story was heard by others as well -- looking west from Devonshire, there is an indian woman lying on her back resting. She is pregnant. Her head and chin are depicted by the first rise on the right, with her hair flowing behind her. Her breast by the next rise, then her pregnant belly, with her legs and feet on the left.



## 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



### DIGITAL ARCHIVES online at

<http://www.chatsworthhistory.com>

facebook

### CHS FACEBOOK PAGE

[www.facebook.com/HomesteadAcre](http://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. We now have a total of 29 PowerPoint presentations posted. Enjoy!

### Can we email our newsletter to you?

Please email us to provide your email address. Thanks! [chatsworthhistory@gmail.com](mailto: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.

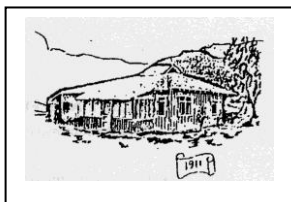


## CHATSWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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



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: \_\_\_\_\_

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