



Santa Susana Mountain Park Association

A Non-Profit Organization, Incorporated 1971

December 1997

Volume 27, Number 6

General Membership Meeting:

Third Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m.
Glendale Fed. Bank Community Room,
21821 Devonshire Street, Chatsworth
(one block east of Topanga Cyn. Blvd.)
Next meeting - January 19, 1998
Come to our Meeting! Bring a Friend!

Stagecoach Trail Hikes

SSMPA hikes are conducted every Sunday, October - June (except fifth Sundays of the month & rain-outs are occasionally a problem) from the parking lot of Chatsworth Park South Recreation Building, which is located at the western terminus of Devonshire Street, about one mile west of Topanga Canyon Boulevard.

Hikers meet at 9:00 a.m. with the hike leader for the four mile (700 ft. gain) loop up the Stagecoach Trail, which is in the hills west of the park. Hikers are advised to bring water and a snack in hiker's back pack or hip pack. Lug sole shoes or sturdy, closed shoes are advised as is the wearing of a hat. All hike leaders are knowledgeable and experienced.

Barbara Coffman is the hike leader for the first Sundays of the month; Judy Garris on the second Sundays; Lindsay Wilhelm on the third Sundays; and Lee Baum on the fourth Sundays

NOTICE!

Members are needed now to run for the Executive Board of the Santa Susana Mountain Park Association. The election will be held at the April 1998 General Membership Meeting. The officers of the Association are President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, and Treasurer, plus five Members-At-Large. Term of office is one year. The responsibilities include attendance at two meetings per month, for approximately two hours, each. Benefits include increased self-esteem from achieving great goals, a connectedness to an improved community, and interaction with a great group of committed individuals.

You may not get many chances in life to be involved in this kind of dynamic change of society and chance for trusteeship of our heritage. Future generations may sing your praises!

Call Nomination Chair Al Knight for more information at 818-252-3466.

Archives

Much of SSMPA's archives are available at the CSUN Urban Archives Center at the Oviatt Library, Room 4, 18111 Nordhoff Street, Northridge CA 91330-8326, or by phone: Robert Marshall, Archivist at 818-677-2832.

ARE YOU A MEMBER OF THE SIERRA CLUB?

by Judy Garris

The Santa Susana Mountain Park Association (SSMPA) works closely with the Sierra Club in the joint goals of preserving parks and open spaces. The Santa Susana Mountain Task Force (SSMTF) is the liaison between these two organizations. The task force meets once or twice a year as needed and lists hikes for SSMPA in the Sierra Club's activities schedule. Members of the task force voice the concerns of Santa Susana Mountain Park Association at important Sierra Club meetings. Presently the SSMTF has only a few members. If you are a Sierra Club member and are interested in preserving the open spaces of the Santa Susanas and Simi Hills, we need you. Your commitment can be as little as attending yearly meetings, or if you can contribute more time, we need members to attend occasional Sierra Club committee meetings. With more visibility and exposure, a stronger voice may help to preserve our open space. ("Where are the Santa-Susanas?" I often hear.) Please give us a call and attend our membership Pot Luck. Contact Dorian Keyser at 819-345-3795 or Judy Garris at 818-340-0469.

More Hikes

Rancho Simi Trail Blazers offers a comprehensive hike schedule, including strenuous five mile hikes on Sunday evenings at 5:00 from Rocky Peak trail-head. For information call, Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District at 805-584-4400.

The El Camino Real Crossing of the Arroyo Simi

*(from Rancho Simi Trail Blazers
newsletter - October 1997)*

by Mike Kuhn

Simi Valley got the railroad (now the Union Pacific), so Thousand Oaks got the State Route 101. With it went the bells generally making the route of the El Camino Real, or "King's Highway." The only trouble with that picture is that the El Camino Real actually came over what we now call Lilac Lane, down the canyon over the railroad tunnel, across northern Simi Valley to a crossing of the Arroyo Simi in the area where Erringer Road now crosses, then westerly and out the Tierra Rajada (now Rejada) Valley...

Happy 10th Birthday City of Santa Clarita

SSMPA congratulates the City on its tenth birthday. The official birthday celebration was scheduled for December 13, 1997. On the brochure we received, the first accomplishment listed under the City Manager's Office was: "Effected the demise of a plan to build a 190-million ton dump in Elsmere Canyon, preserving the National Forest land for the public." This alone is something to celebrate.

I recently had the chance to thank Congressman Buck McKeon, who, from the insight and guidance of many people, was instrumental in stopping the dump. He noted that it was something he was "very proud of."

With our work, we can make other politicians proud of what they're doing!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! FPSSM IS A WINNER!

From The Foundation for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mountains. Note: The Foundation is dedicated to the preservation of the Simi Hills and Santa Susana Mountains.

Submitted by Lindsay Wilhelm
Fundraising Director, Foundation for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mountains (815) 348-9682

The Los Angeles Urban Resources Partnership Grant Program has informed the Foundation that they are one of several awardees for a grant applied for in June, 1997. \$1,400 will be awarded to the Foundation for a four week decent training program in early spring 1998, and for improvement of displays at the Foundation's Visitor Center at Chatsworth Park South. Docents are needed to staff the Visitor Center on Sundays, for hike leaders and for natural history educators for the elementary school program. Training will consist of specialist speakers on geology, local history, Native Peoples, mammals, birds and reptiles, plants and trees. For more information contact Lindsay, (818) 348-9682.

Rocketdyne

For more information on issues related to Rocketdyne, the epidemiological report, what each of us can do, and other questions, please call Barbara Johnson at 805-581-4311.

Other Santa Susana Mountain/Simi Hills Hikes

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority offer hikes on an irregular basis at Rocky Peak Park (SR 118 at Chatsworth Simi Valley line); Sage Ranch (SR 118 or 101 to Topanga Canyon Blvd., west on Roscoe or Plummer to Valley Circle, to Woolsey Canyon Road (Rocketdyne Road), to Black Canyon Road; Santa Clarita Woodlands/Mentryville (I-5, Lyons, west to Pico Canyon, left at Y to end of road); and Towsley Canyon Park (I-5, Calgrove, west on The Old Road to Ed Davis Park, 1/2 mile to parking area by the kiosk). These hikes are free. Please call Nancy at 310-589-3200, ext. 126 for additional information and requirements. There are many hikes scheduled every month.

Connections with Our Past

from the Oral Tape Library of the Chatsworth Historical Society

Early Park Moderne and the Cooper Ranch

(Interview with artist Jan de Swar, First resident of Park Moderne, by Ruth Loring in 1984):

We used to get milk from the Coopers. The stagecoach formerly stopped there from Old Topanga Road. They had a big barn. The stagecoach entered the barn and they close the doors so they could pull out before anyone knew. They got ahead of bandits that way.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

by *Albert Knight*, Vice-President SSMPA

This month's FROM THE ARCHIVES concerns information collected by the non-famous anthropologist John Peabody Harrington. Harrington, who lived in Simi Valley during the last part of his life, was probably the greatest collector of information about the Indians of the United States that ever lived. However, although Harrington collected an amazing amount of information, very little of it was published during his lifetime....and he remains largely unknown (except by experts) even today (what a shame!). What is of interest to us here is some of the information that JPH collected on a trip to the Chatsworth and west SFV area in 1917. JPH and his Fernandeno Indian consultant "Melendrez" (and an other native person) traveled from the City of San Fernando to the West Valley, as far as Bell Canyon. Their journey through this area may be the only one where a professional recorder took notes from a local Indian. This set of Harrington notes describes the geography of the west SFV and the old Indian and the early historic settlements of the area.

"Melendrez" was a child of the old mission system, He apparently knew very little of the old language and his English was not the best either, so much of what he describes is in Spanish. Melendrez tells Harrington, as they reach the west SFV, that there is a rock on a hillside called "la luna". The hill where the rock is located is also called "la luna", as are the entire group of hills where "la luna" is located. One of the few Indian names that Melendrez remembers is "Mwar" (i. e. the Moon), which refers to this rock. The higher hills to the north are called (I am translating here) the "hills of the Devil" (i. e. of the Indian's God). These comments appear to refer to the hills at the east side of Chatsworth Reservoir and to the Simi Hills themselves, respectively. The party passes by "Las Pilitas" (the pools - apparently this refers to the old De la Ossa homestead), and by "El Escorpion de las Salinas" (i. e. Chatsworth Reservoir). They arrive at the old Domec adobe (now the site of the Chatsworth Lake Manor Chapel) and stop and discuss the rock paintings of the area. Melendrez informs JPH that the area of Chatsworth Peak is a sacred place and that there used to be a large Indian village in the Chatsworth area. The group proceeds and passes "La Calera" (the old lime kiln seen at the NE end of Chatsworth reservoir) on their way to "EL Escorpion, Viejo" (Charlie Bell's ranch @ Bell Canyon). Here the natives discuss three caves which are (or were) inhabited by evil spirits (especially the terrible Munits).

They also discuss the painted caves @ Burro Flats, local mineral springs, the Santa Susana Pass area, other local places (e. g. Bannon's quarry), local families (e. g. the Mirandas), and they provide us with some stories relating to these places.

Harrington's notes for the area include a number of photographs and sketches, including some quickie maps of the area (I have not have a chance to review these other materials, yet).

Gopher Road to Rock Quarry

by Judy Garris

The road just north of Deerlake Highlands is listed in the new Thomas's Road guide as Gopher Road. A stream with a lush riparian corridor runs along the road for about a quarter of a mile. The western slope is severely eroded as a result of the road cut. The road leads to a rock quarry locally known simply as the Rock Quarry and was apparently quarried for road or foundation rocks. According to aerial photo maps, the operation was active before 1976 until the late 1980's. Heavy cement pieces of roads or foundations have been dumped there, some recently.

On the left, what appears to be a cement foundation is in fact an underground weighing platform for truckloads of rock. Above the weighing station a road winds up to the quarry.

Two horse trails lead out from either end of the quarry. There are probably other horse trails further up Gopher road along the stream. The horse trail at the west end of the quarry ascends a small messy canyon with sandstone walls bearing finely etched lines from tricking water during the rains. The trail then cuts into a bench meadow and heads toward an old ridgeline fireroad that eventually joins with the Rim of the Valley trail system.

The east trail leads to Deerlake highlands with a fork on the left to an overlook. Straight ahead the trail heads for Deerlake Highlands. A right fork runs along the north side of a foothill and connects with the old fireroad along the ridges.

The fire road to the right runs out along the ridges but to the left it goes to the old homestead noted as a "well" on the US topological maps. A chimney still stands there and nearby sits a small cinderblock pumphouse which looks like it may still be in

use. A road leads east about 200' to the house of the Deerlake Highland caretaker and his family according to the present owner/developer.

A few hundred feet to the west and unseen from here, the land descends steeply into the intricately eroded rock sides of Devil Canyon where rare Dudlea nestles in crevices of the damp canyon walls. The developer plans to build a clearspan bridge across Devil Creek to connect Deerlake Highlands with Twin Lakes. A clearspan bridge eliminates the expense and time of regulatory processes required by government agencies for disturbing wetland habitats.

From a spot south of the caretakers home, one can look out and see the ridge over blind canyon and in the early mornings a misty layer of fog arises in that direction indicating the canyon's deep lush interior.

Watch for group hikes with SSMPA in the Rock Quarry!

CALENDAR

Dec. 21	(Sunday)	Weekly Hike; meet at Chatsworth Park South - 9:00 a.m.
Dec. 24	(Wednesday)	Deadline for articles for the January Newsletter
Dec. 28	(Sunday)	Weekly Hike; meet at Chatsworth Park South - 9:00 a.m.
Jan. 5	(Monday)	Executive Board Meeting, Visitors Center, Chatsworth Park S.
Jan. 19	(Monday)	General Membership Meeting, Glendale Fed. - 7:00 p.m.

Editor's Message

by Theodore Dent,

First, let me offer an apology and say to you that the Board has made the necessary changes (disapproving snarls) to assure the consistent publication of our newsletter. Secondly, let me state that our association thrives because of you.

Our needs for the new year are to secure new members and for all members to appreciate their critical value to society in helping each other.

If I have let a moment go by this past year and neglected to say thanks to you, let me start the new year off with, "Thank you very much! We couldn't have done it without you!"

Phone List

Assemblywoman Tom McClintock-----	818-368-3838
California State Parks Department (general information) -----	818-880-0350
California State Parks Foundation -----	415-258-9975
Congressman Howard P. "Buck" McKeon (San Fernando Valley) -----	818-885-1032
Congressman Howard P. "Buck" McKeon (San Clarita) -----	805-254-2111
Frank M. Buda, Attorney At Law-----	818-999-9871
Friends of California Parks (Laura Svendsgaard) -----	800-300-7501
Governor Pete Wilson -----	213-897-0322
Los Angeles City Park Headquarters (general information) -----	213-665-5188
Los Angeles City Park Headquarters (Ranger dispatch) -----	213-913-4147
Southern California Edison (general information) -----	800-655-4555
State Senator Cathie Wright -----	800-458-8500
William S. Abbey, Deputy Attorney General, State of California -----	213-897-2604

Address List

Department of Parks and Recreation, Box 942896, Sacramento CA 94296-0001
Governor Pete Wilson, State Capitol, Sacramento, CA 95814
Senator Cathie Wright, (or your Senator), State Senate, Sacramento CA 95814
Assemblyman Tom McClintock (or your assemblyperson), State Assembly, Sacramento CA 95814

Welcome New Members



Lee & Dori Brigham - Life Members
 Gene Blumfield, M.D.
 Marge D'Elia
 Richard & Carole Garsparini
 Norma B. Hulet
 Selene & Richard Kelly
 Richard Klotz
 Ken Matta
 Rick Miller
 Brian Moore
 Sheri Strahl
 Karen Thomas
 Diane Trautman
 Don & Holly Huff

Welcome AGAIN to Renewing Members

Leon & Shirley Brown
 Robert D. Lisenby
 Gene Paulin
 Jeffrey Pomerantz
 Mrs. Samuel (Edith) Roth
 Kim & Jack Sodek
 James & Donna Swavely
 Charles & Darlene Wilson
 (Apologies to anyone we may have
 accidentally omitted!)

Hike Leaders, Train Now!

Every Sunday (except July-Sept. and fifth Sundays of the month) hike leaders take groups of approximately ten to thirty interested individuals, families, and groups on hikes on the Stagecoach Trail. The need for additional hike leaders to be trained is always there. If you would like to become one of these fine individuals, please call Barbara Coffman at 818-347-5603. Your heart will thank you.

NXXDXD VXYR MUCH!

Xvxn though my computxr is an old modxl, it works quitx will, xxxcpt for onx kxy. Thxrx arx 46 kxys that function wxll xnough, but just onx kxy not working makxs thx diffxrxncx.

Somxtimxs it sxxms to mx that our group is somxwhat likx my computxr, not all thx kxys arx working proprly. You may say, "Wxll, I am only onx pxrson. It won't makx much diffxrxncx." But you sxx, for SSMPA to bx xffxctivx, it nxxds thx activx participation of vxvry pxrson.

So thx nxxt timx you think you arx only onx pxrson and that your xffort is not nxxdx, rxmxmbxr my computxr and say to yoursxlf, "I am a kxy pxrson and nxxdx vxry much."



SANTA SUSANA MOUNTAIN PARK ASSOCIATION

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN/RENEW/REJOIN S.S.M.P.A.

Investing in the future of our communities and its resources is probably one of the best expenditures of our time and efforts. Please return this cutoff with your contributions to help ensure our futures.

Please make checks payable to SSMPA and send to P.O. Box 4831, Chatsworth, CA 91313-4831

_____ Senior or Student (\$5.00) _____ Individual (\$10.00) _____ Family (\$15.00)
 _____ Business or Organization (\$25.00) _____ Life Member (\$100.00)

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

SPECIAL INTEREST/EXPERTISE: _____

Visitors Center

The Visitors Center is open to everyone on Sundays from noon until 3:00 p.m., October through June.

The purpose of the Visitors Center is to help educate, inform, and inspire the public as to the special historical significance and the natural beauty of the area. The Visitors Center Docents' duties include answering questions from the public, encouraging visitors to sign the guest book, and maintaining and securing the room. The following inspired docents now lead our program:

1st Sunday of the month - Gretha Davis

2nd Sunday of the month - Rodney Harding

3rd Sunday of the month - Catherine Roy

4th Sunday of the month - Irene Tonius

5th Sunday of the month - Linda Stone

For information on how you can make an impact on others, call Gretha at 818-340-4011.

Wear Some Pride!

Have you been wishing you could find (and buy) our very special T-shirt which features Chumash rock art? These are attractive black shirts with red artwork, and we just received a new shipment in a variety of adult sizes. You can buy as many as you like at our general meeting on Monday, January 19, 1998. (or call Susan at 818-704-9304.) All proceeds go to the preservation of the Santa Susanas.

Santa Susana Docents

The Santa Susana Docents provide Nature/History walks at Chatsworth Park South for elementary school children. On the walk, the children tour five stations, including a small display of local artifacts at the Visitors Center. This program has been very well received by hundreds of children, and hundreds more could learn about the Santa Susana Mountains and the Simi Hills if...if... we had a couple of more docents. If you have a need to help others, have a couple of hours free on a regular basis, and want some really good times, this may be your great opportunity knocking. For more information on becoming a docent and joining the fun, sharing your love of nature with children, please call Pat at 818-998-5224 or Jan at 818-993-0508.

SSMPA Executive Board

Pauline Aue	Member	818-341-5872
Barbara Coffman	Member	818-347-5603
Theodore Dent	Rec.Sec.	818-882-4664
Judy Garris	Member	818-340-0469
Susan Gerke	Treasurer	818-704-9304
Jeff Johnston	Member	805-522-8662
Albert Knight	VicePres.	818-252-3466
Patricia Levin	Corr.Sec.	818-998-5224
Doreen Rusen	President	818-360-0894
Lindsay Wilhelm	Member	818-348-9682

NOTE! If your mailing labels says "97-12" or prior, that means, Please renew.

Foundation for the Preservation
of the Santa Susana Mountains

P.O. Box 4831

Chatsworth, CA 91313-4831

Non-Profit Organization

U.S. Postage

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