

CHATSWORTH PAST & PRESENT

By Ann Vincent

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Now celebrating 20 years in our beautiful building, the Chatsworth Branch of the Los Angeles Public Library at 21052 Devonshire, has an interesting history.

In 1947 Eileen Janess photographed many of our local streets and businesses. One of those photos shows a LA Public Library sign in the Lombardi Building at the southwest corner of Owensmouth and Devonshire, on Owensmouth. The building was a brick structure that housed a variety of business through the years, including an Auto Parts, Feed Store and the 5 & 10 cent store. It has since been demolished. Although no records of the library have been located, the photos clearly show that this early branch existed in one of the storefronts in 1947.



1947 Photo of the Lombardi Building with LA Public Library sign in the window on the left.



This same LA PUBLIC LIBRARY sign is later found in the 1950 photo shown below provided by the LA Public Library archives and listed as the Chatsworth Station Branch. This photo is clearly a different

storefront, and appears to be the Chrysler Building, once located on the south east corner of Devonshire and Topanga. The features above the windows correspond to that building at that time. The location was on Devonshire, before the hardware store moved to that section of the building.



1950 Photo of Chatsworth Station Branch



1949 Photo of Chrysler Building, library would have been on the left facing Devonshire in about 1950.



1952 Photo of Bookmobile located in Chatsworth, note Chatsworth Women's Club building in background on Topanga.

From 1952-1963 the Chatsworth community was serviced by the LA Public Library Bookmobile Program. The bookmobile made scheduled stops throughout the valley, stopping here at the Chatsworth Park Elementary School.



1970 Photo of Chatsworth Branch Library built in 1963

In 1957, land was purchased and a new branch library was built at 21052 Devonshire, opening on May 22, 1963. The Friends of the Library book sales were held regularly on the front lawn of the library, weather permitting.

In 1998 funds were approved for adjacent land and an expanded building on the existing site. In June 2002, ground breaking began for the new building while a temporary library was opened at the Chatsworth Train Station that housed a small portion of books while allowing local patrons easy access to the LA City library system.



2009 Chatsworth Branch Library parking lot entrance

On November 15, 2004, a beautiful building designed specifically for Chatsworth was re-opened with Bruce Seidman continuing as the Head Librarian. Special features at our library include a stained-glass window, book art and children's murals. State of the art computer access and a multimedia collection of over 42,000 items are on site. Come on by, it's your library ... check it out!

Twenty years later...there is no limit to what is available. Come on by, it's your library ... check it out!