

## **Latinx Heritage in Pasadena**

A visual story of migrants and immigrants in the City of Roses, from pre-statehood to today.

Curated by Roberta H. Martínez

### **Pre-Statehood – 1850**

In the span of 50 years, less than three generations, those living in Alta California were a part of four social systems and three governments: Spain, the United States of Mexico, and the United States of America. The original inhabitants were the Hahamog-na, a branch of the Tongva Indians Nation with habitations that included those that lined the Arroyo Seco.

With the establishment of the San Gabriel Mission on September 8, 1771 indigenous people in the region were converted to Catholicism and were the primary labor force for the prosperous mission. The Mexican War of Independence from Spain (1810 – 1821) and the United States and Mexican War (1846 – 1847) transitioned land ownership from the Catholic Church and Spain to private property. Popularly known as the Californio period (1820s – 1848) the romantic images were in contrast to the experiences of women and indigenous people.

#### **Photo 1**

A woman filling a granary with acorns circa 1898 at the San Gabriel Mission. Indians at the missions were called to by names that reflected the missions where they lived. Though she is likely Tongva, she is referred to as a Gabrieleño. Currently, many people of this nation also refer to themselves as Kizh.

– The California Historical Society Collection at the University of Southern California

#### **Photo 2**

Marcos Alaniz was the son of a Soldado de Cuero. During the late 18th century, these soldiers wore armor of leather. They were stationed at missions and presidios, and accompanied colonists as they traveled. Some soldados saw the military as a means of advancing in society. They were paid a salary or were on occasion given land grants. Miguel Antonio Guillen was a soldado who married 15-year-old Eulalia Pérez. She and their family followed him as he was stationed at different missions and presidios in Baja and Alta California. After she was widowed, Eulalia Pérez de Guillen began to work at the San Gabriel Mission as their head cook.

– University of Southern California, USC Special Collections

#### **Photo 3**

Eulalia Pérez de Guillén Mariné (1766? – June 11, 1878) – Capable, clever and disciplined, she was a non-aristocrat who was La Llavera (Keykeeper) of Misión San Gabriel Arcángel. Rancho El Rincón de San Pascual; 14,000 acres, was reserved for her. Parts of the lands of the rancho later became the cities of Pasadena, San Marino, as well as parts of La Cañada, Sierra Madre, and South Pasadena. The rancho extended a mile into to the foothills.

– Roberta H. Martínez, “Latinos in Pasadena”

#### Photo 4

Living somewhat in isolation, older generations would share their reminiscences of songs, dances, and games that were a part of their youth. Living in Alta or Baja California, far from cosmopolitan centers like Mexico City, necessitated smaller, more intimate expression of song and dance. It also supported ritual and tradition that kept what had been known, cherished, and practiced in a place far from the other established parts of Nueva España.

– University of Southern California, USC Special Collections

#### **1850 – 1910**

The transition to the American period with statehood of California in 1850 fundamentally changed the conditions for Latinx and Indigenous in the region. Ranchos gave way to ranches, which in turn gave way to single- and multi-family dwellings. Land turned into cash crops that could be shipped by railway to markets throughout the United States in refrigerated freight cars.

In March 1886, the Indiana Southern California Orange and Citrus Growers, which grew from the California Colony of Indiana, were among those that established the City of Pasadena, a name borrowed from the Chippewa Nation in Minnesota. Labor for the burgeoning citrus industry as well as the construction of railway and the dream homes of Orange Grove aspirational arrivals from the Midwest fell to the hands of migrants from other parts of the United States and immigrants. Large numbers of Irish, Mexican, Chinese and African Americans were a part of this work pool.

#### Photo 1

Manuel Garfias (1820 – 188?) – Don Manuel Garfias was the last grantee of Rancho San Pascual under the Mexican government. And as a result of The Treaty of the Guadalupe Hidalgo following the U.S./Mexican War, he became an American citizen and was the first grantee under U.S. government. His wife was Luisa Avila, the daughter of Francisco Avila and María Encarnación Sepúlveda Avila, owners of Rancho Las Cienegas and the Avila Adobe. The Garfias adobe was on the east ridge of the Arroyo Seco. He was Los Angeles County's first treasurer and was later a Los Angeles councilman.

– University of Southern California, USC Special Collections

#### Photo 2

Mesa Alta Ranch/Hastings Ranch (ca.1890) – Immigrants and migrants worked in the agricultural fields, sewer fields, and vineyards that surrounded the area that would become the city of Pasadena. While the label of the image reads "Picking Grapes on Hastings Ranch," the diversity and division of labor is clearly represented in this photo. Large numbers of workers, many of whom were immigrants from Mexico, worked in the fields with Blacks, Chinese, Greeks, Irish, and Japanese as land ownership had become almost exclusively Euro-American.

– Pasadena Museum of History

### Photo 3

Maria Guadalupe Evangelina López de Lowther – Graduate of Pasadena High School in 1897, with a B.S. and M.A, lecturer in Spanish at University of California, Southern Branch (later known as UCLA). In 1902, she became the youngest professor at the University for Southern California, and later served as a translator of various papers that relate to the 19th Century. She served as President of the College Equal Suffrage League and was the first woman to a Spanish-language speech on suffrage at the Plaza de Los Angeles. (She was related to Claudio López, Mayordomo at the San Gabriel Mission at the same time Eulalia Pérez de Guillén Mariné was La Llavera). Her husband, Hugh Lowther, was a Professor at Occidental College. Mrs. López de Lowther spent her last years active in the City of San Gabriel with a focus on redevelopment and the preservation of Mexican history of the area.

– University of Southern California, USC Special Collections

### Photo 4

View of business owner, Abalenio Hernandez, driving his tamale wagon. He and his wife, Rita, lived at 615 South Broadway, Pasadena. Broadway is now called Arroyo Parkway.

– Water and Power Associates

## **1910 – 1940**

Latinx community members arrived for a range of reasons, some due to the Mexican Revolution, some due to the Cristero Rebellion, and others migrated from other states after gathering enough resources for the trek to California. In Pasadena, these families primarily moved to three areas in Pasadena. Wynona/Cypress was a multi-racial, multi-cultural neighborhood in the Northside and was comprised of African Americans, Irish Americans, and Japanese Americans. The Southside, namely called Sonora, was of a barrio, an urban setting where residents shared a common language and cultural experience. Chihuahueta, a colonia, or more rural area, existed in what is now East Pasadena. Layered stories of families with some children establishing small businesses, others going into labor and others, and a much smaller in number, pursuing education. Excellence emerged despite the often disparate allocation of funds and resources as well as the establishment of segregated Mexican schools.

In 1924, Pasadena Junior College was established on the campus of Pasadena High School. Since then, the college has grown to serve the needs of a growing San Gabriel Valley.

Members of the community were affected by the Great Deportations that took place in the 1930s. In April of 1931, Pasadena residents – 143 Mexicans and Americans of Mexican descent – were deported to Mexico.

### Photo 1

A map of the three barrios in Pasadena, circa 1930. The barrios were identified as: Wynona/Cypress in the northwest, Chihuahueta in the northeast, and Sonora or Southside in the southwest.

#### Photo 2

Integration of American ideals, if not integration of individuals, more and more began to be a part of Mexican and Mexican-American youths and their experiences. Many who lived in the Sonora barrio, the Colonia Chihuahueta, and the neighborhood Wynona-Cypress readily accepted the idea of the flapper: a young woman of some independence who claimed independence from traditional, and more conservative, women's roles. Amelia Hernandez and her friends are posed, in studio, looking rather smashing. They may have listened to the music of Al Jolson, Rhapsody in Blue, and Lydia Mendoza on the Victrola or radio.

– Guerrero Collection

#### Photo 3

Pasadena Junior College had restricted and unrestricted clubs. The restricted clubs had names or a purpose that were generally abstract or symbolic. La Filipina Club's purpose was clear, direct, and touching. The quote for 1929 reads, "La Filipina touches the Filipino's heart as a reminder of home." From 1933, it reads, "Filipino students, coming to school in a strange land, find their longings for home and fellow-countrymen alleviated in the companionship of La Filipina."

– Pasadena Museum of History

#### Photo 4

Nati Vacio (1912-1996)

Natividad "Nati" Vacio came with his family to Chihuahueta in 1923. He attended the Pasadena Mexican Settlement and Pasadena schools. He developed skills as a musician, dancer, producer, and director. In 1937 Gilmore Brown, of the Pasadena Playhouse Pasadena, presented a festival highlight the great Southwest; Nati was among the local talents hired. He made recordings with such greats as Laurindo Almeida and was the director of the Commedia del Artistes stage company of Padua Hills, California. After military service in World War II, he worked as a teacher and appeared frequently in films and television. Among his final appearances was the Milagro Beanfield War – Robert Redford, director and Moctezuma Esparza, producer.

#### **1940 – 1960**

The War years would be difficult for the community with a low point at the June 1943 Zoot Suit Riots of Servicemen into Mexican-American communities. At Pasadena Junior College in 1947 the Xochimilco Club stated that the purpose of the organization was to further the ideals of racial equality. World War II and the service of Mexican Americans in the United States military merged in the post war with a growing student population seeking the American Dream. The GI Bill contributed to the ability of community members to advance their education; some Pasadena residents became the first Latinx faculty and staff in the Pasadena Unified School District.

#### Photo 1

Belen Lopez' parents attended schools, met, and married in Pasadena. They were also among those deported and/or repatriated from Pasadena to Mexico. Belen was

conceived in Mexico and was born in the United States in 1935. Although the Roman Catholic churches had the largest congregations in the Mexican communities many families attended the Pasadena Nazarene Church or, like Belen's family, the Iglesia Metodista Mexicana. Belen, like other children growing up in Pasadena, felt comfortable with her friends and familia. She and her best friend, Faithie McWilliams, share a moment with the camera – and us.

– Segura Collection

#### Photo 2

From the late 1920s through the early 1950s Pasadena Junior College served as a four-year junior college. Students attended a campus where the last two year of high school and the first two years of college were offered. For many Latinx students this was an introduction to a level of education most of their families may not have previously achieved. The young folks pictured here may have been members of the Xochimilco Club.

– Pasadena City College archives

#### Photo 3

Members of the Valadez family were involved at the Mexican Settlement where Americanization Classes, Jarabe classes, and field trips were offered. The Sisters were well-known folklorico dancers. The eldest Valadez sons were soldiers in World War II. The youngest son, Mauricio "Wicho" (to the right of his father), became a pioneer in 1956, when he became the first Mexican-American to serve in the Pasadena Fire Department.

– Valadez Collection

#### Photo 4

Jeanette López with St. Andrew's catechism class, ca. 1955.

#### Photo 5

In 1934 Danny Castro brought some Tejano bravura when he came to California. He was a part of the Civilian Conservation Corp, a work relief program of the Great Depression. Danny was among those that worked at Oak Grove. He later established Pasadena Transfer and Trucking Company, Fair Deal Realty, and Danny's Café at the corner of Fair Oaks and Colorado. He and Sergio Hernandez established the Danzón nightclub on Union, near Fair Oaks in the early 1950s. It was complete with dancefloor and white grand piano. The club was so popular that the music was broadcast over radio station KWKW.

– Daniel and Stella Castro Collection

### **1960 – 1990**

Vietnam and the rise of social justice movements informed how Latinx communities engaged with the Chicano Moratorium of 1970 as well as the walkouts of East Los Angeles schools and Pasadena schools. In 1970 Latinx in the City of Pasadena was 10%. The population increased to 20% by 1980 and continued to increase. By 1990

Latinx were 30% of the population of the city. Like others who lived in the Northwest Pasadena, the community was buffeted by winds of change.

While the 1970 school desegregation of Pasadena Unified School District impacted all students, Pasadena City College continued to serve as an incubator educating alumni, including Jaime Escalante and Adriana Ocampo.

#### Photo 1

As a young child Manny Perez met Albert Einstein. He went against advice to change his name to Perry "Because he didn't look Mexican." After his time in the service he attended Occidental College and University of Southern California. He became the first Mexican-American teacher in Pasadena School District in 1958 and the first Mexican-American dean at Pasadena City College in 1971.

#### Photo 2

El Centro de Información, later El Centro de Acción Social, developed out of the political empowerment that developed in the Chicano community in Pasadena. When it was established in 1968, it provided services to the Latino community, which made up 10 percent of the population of the city of Pasadena. Its advocacy was strengthened by collaborative efforts of individuals involved with the city, the schools, and with the community at large.

– Latino Heritage Collection

#### Photo 3

The Latinx population is often perceived as being nearly exclusively Mexican or of Mexican heritage; this has never been the case. Well-known community leaders and their heritage include Oscar Palmer, Cuba; Yvette Lightfoot, Puerto Rico; Pablo Alvarado, El Salvador; and Ralph Hurtado, Spain. Young Romelia Kirkaldy lived in Colón, Panama Canal Zone. Like many other members of the Latinx community, you may not find her name in clippings. But she, like many others, has contributed to the quality of life in our city.

– Monzon Collection

#### Photo 4

Jaime Escalante (1930 – 2010), PCC Class of 1971, was an educator known for teaching students calculus from 1974 to 1991 at Garfield High School in East Los Angeles. His life's passion was chronicled in the highly acclaimed film "Stand and Deliver," starring Edward James Olmos. In 2014, PCC honored the famed teacher and his family with an on-campus exhibit titled "A Life Con Ganas."

– Pasadena City College archives

#### Photo 5

Adriana C. Ocampo, PCC Class of 1978, is a planetary geologist and a Science Program Manager at NASA Headquarters. In 2002, Ocampo was named one of the 50 Most Important Women in Science by Discover Magazine.

– NASA

## **1990 – Present**

The lives of those who lived in the 20th Century can be found in the stories told by seniors who are still here to share them. Some of the topics of the last century continue to return: affordable housing, business opportunities, economic viability, education achievement, and incorporation into the mainstream society while retaining cultural sensibilities will likely be a part of the balancing act between city and citizen. The tenor toward immigrants, feelings of displacement in the job market, and the global economy will likely continue to inform local political and social choices. Until the year 2000, there had been only three Latinx who had served on the city council or school board. In 2019 there are currently three Latinx: one each on the PCC board, the PUSD board, and the Pasadena city council. There is work yet to be done.

### **Photo 1**

Liana Carisa Yamasaki, the 75th and first Latina Rose Queen  
– Pasadena Tournament of Roses

### **Photo 2**

Dr. Consuelo Rey Castro attended Santa Barbara City College and completed her bachelor's and master's degrees at Loyola University. Dr Rey Castro has encouraged students of all ages to fulfill their aspirations. She earned her doctorate from the University of Southern California while teaching at East Los Angeles College and serving on the Pasadena City College Board of Trustees. She was the first person of Latino heritage elected to that governing body.  
– Pasadena City College archives

### **Photo 3**

Every fall semester, PCC celebrates Dia de los Muertos to pay tribute friends and family members who have died and help support their spiritual journey.  
– Pasadena City College archives

### **Photo 4**

A PCC graduate with members of PCC's Puente Project, a program that helps prepare students to transfer to a four-year university and reach their educational goals.  
– Pasadena City College archives

### **Photo 5**

A PCC graduate with his family at the college's annual Latinx graduation ceremony.  
– Pasadena City College archives

## **Latino Heritage Parade**

The Latino Heritage Parade and Festival was established in 1999 by community members. It was seen as an opportunity to increase the visibility of the Latinx community in Pasadena. Most area residents were surprised to learn that the city was nearly 40% Latinx. In 2000 the newly formed Latino Heritage Association committed to organizing and growing the event, which it did for the next 14 years. In 2014 the City of

Pasadena agreed to take the lead in organizing the event and worked with community members to assure the continued existence of the event. The festival features proclamations and speeches, family activities (arts & crafts workshops), entertainment, (dance performances and musical concert), information booths, and food. The Grand Marshal and Community Grand Marshal have been individuals and groups that have achieved success in their field and have remained committed to the betterment and strengthening of the Latinx community of Pasadena.

#### Photo 1

Lalo Guerrero, Grand Marshal, 1999 – Known as the “Father of Chicano Music” who wrote about what he saw and documented the Mexican American, Chicano, and Latino experience in the United States. His corridos told stories of the struggles and triumphs of Mexican-American heroes, from Cesar Chavez to Ruben Salazar. In 1980 he was declared a National Folk Treasure by the Smithsonian Institution, and President Clinton gave him the National Medal of Arts in 1996, the highest honor given to artists.

#### Photo 2

Raul R. Rodriguez, Grand Marshal, 2000 – A Pasadena and Southern California icon, artist of international acclaim, Raul R. Rodriguez designed over 500 floats in the Tournament of Roses Parade and won more awards than any other designer in the history of the parade. Raul also designed many famous casinos in Las Vegas, as well as amusement parks, parades, and public events worldwide. He illustrated children’s books. Raul was a third-generation Angelino, he, and his husband were residents of Pasadena.

#### Photo 3

Dolores Huerta, Grand Marshal, 2001 – Dolores Huerta was born in New Mexico. She was influenced by her mother’s resourcefulness and strong independence and by her father’s union activism and his educational achievements. She moved to California and became co-founder of the Community Service Organization, Stockton. In 1962 she and Cesar Chavezco-founded the National Farm Workers Union that eventually became the UFW. In 2002 she received the Puffin Nation, Prize for Creative Citizenship. She donated \$100,000 prize to the establishment of the Dolores Huerta Foundation. In 2012 she received the Medal of Freedom from President Obama.

#### Photo 4

Laura Farber, Grand Marshal, 2019 – Laura Farber is the first Latina elected as Tournament of Roses President, 2019-2020. In addition to her many years of service in the Tournament of Roses, she has volunteered in various nonprofit organizations worldwide, including the American Bar Association. Ms. Farber was brought to this country from Argentina by her parents as a child. She is bilingual - her native language being Spanish, and earned a degree in political science, cum laude with department highest honors from UCLA and earned her juris doctor from Georgetown University. She is a partner in the Pasadena law firm of Hahn & Hahn.

#### Photo 5



Dr. Cynthia Olivo, Community Grand Marshal, 2019 – Dr. Cynthia Olivo is a longtime advocate for minority, low-income, and first-generation college students. She is the Pasadena City College Vice President of Student Services, serving 30,000 diverse students. Olivo is the granddaughter of migrant farmworkers, raised by a single mom, first in her family to go to college, and third-generation Mexican American/Chicana. She earned her bachelor's degree in Psychology and a Master of Science in Counseling from California State University San Bernardino, and a Ph.D. in Education with an emphasis in Urban Leadership from Claremont Graduate University.

### **Acknowledgements**

Pasadena City College

Latino Heritage – Herencia Latina

Pasadena City College Association of Latino Employees

Pasadena City College President's Latino Advisory Committee

Venture Works

Curator: Roberta H. Martínez

Unless otherwise indicated, text and images from *Latinos in Pasadena* by Roberta H. Martínez

Special thanks:

Dr. Christopher West, PCC Social Sciences Division

José A. Hernandez, Venture Works

Eladio Fernandez, PCC Office Services

Gilbert Rivera, PCC Strategic Communications and Marketing

David Steiman, PCC Strategic Communications and Marketing

Carlos "Tito" Altamirano, PCC Pathways