

## **The Barrio in Carlsbad**

As Cinco de Mayo draws near, thoughts wander to our own Mexican-American community, and questions arise as to when and how it developed in downtown Carlsbad. In future months, we will be covering more individual stories of these community volunteers. For this email blast we will focus on the original development.

Below is a very brief history of the Carlsbad Barrio. More can be found in Seekers of the Springs by Marge Howard Jones, or please check out "Barrio Voices", a video available on our website at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V0uNC7J62UY>

Carlsbad's agricultural fame began in 1914 with the ready supply of water provided by the South Coast Land Company and their division of land offered at fair prices for agricultural development. One of the first growers, Sam Thompson, began Carlsbad's avocado industry, followed by many other growers of fruits, beans and flowers. But even with land, water, and know-how, an important element was still needed in order to thrive, and that was provided by immigrant farm workers from Mexico.

The 1916 Mexican Revolution created a large exodus of people from Mexico, who arrived in Carlsbad by a variety of ways, and with a variety of stories. They were all looking for employment in the agricultural fields and groves. Many settled in the south end of town, near the railroad tracks, and located close to the bean and flower fields. Some of the first to arrive were the Ramirez, Trejo, Acuña, Aguilar, Gastelum, Martinez, Mata and Soto families.

Most of these families still have many members living in the area. These families settled near each other, creating a tight knit community. Their hard work and talents, built businesses, establishing deep and productive ties to Carlsbad, and their neighborhood, which they called Barrio Carlos. Each of these families have contributed to creating a more vibrant Carlsbad.

As time passed the Barrio grew, adding new families, each adding their important contribution to Carlsbad and also to the barrio. One such family was the Monroys who moved to Carlsbad in 1978. When Mario retired in 1985, both Margie and Mario became involved in local issues as well as the League of Women Voters and the Carlsbad Historical Society. Margie and Mario became a vital part of Carlsbad the Barrio transition and redevelopment. Their community service contributed to volunteering in various growth study plans, Friends of the Carlsbad Library, the Carlsbad Planning Commission, board members of La Posada de Guadalupe, and they were very active in their grandchildren's school.

More information on the Barrio Carlos can be found at the Barrio Museum, across the street from the Lola's 7 Up Market and Deli, at the corner of Walnut and Roosevelt. Ask at the Deli when they can show you the museum. Third grade history tours have been stopping to see this museum. Connie Trejo, former Board CHS Member, is Carlsbad Historical Society's Goodwill Barrio Ambassador.

## Brief History of Cinco de Mayo

Cinco de Mayo (Fifth of May) celebrates the Mexican Army's defeat of the French Army at the Battle of Puebla. in 1862. under General Ignacio Zaragoza. In 1861. under Louis Napoleon Bonaparte (Napoleon III), France invaded Mexico trying to expand its empire there. The Mexican army consisted of 4000 poorly equipped men, while the French troops numbered 8000. According to [Mexico Online](#): "*The victory represented a significant morale boost to the Mexican army and the Mexican people at large and helped establish a sense of national unity and patriotism.*"