Overview of the Collection

Collection Title: Antonio and Luz Mendez Calvo Family Collection
Dates: 1926-2001
Identification: URB/ALC
Creator: Calvo, Antonio and Luz Mendez, 1896-1982
Physical Description: 0.42 linear feet
Language of Materials: English
Repository: Urban Archives

Abstract: Antonio Regalado Calvo and Maria de la Luz Mendez Calvo were immigrants from the Mexican state of Sonora. They immigrated to the San Fernando region of California where they met and married during the Mexican Revolution. The collection gives a glimpse into the lives of a Mexican-American family in the Los Angeles area during the mid-20th century.

Note:

Other Information:
This collection was processed under a U.S. Department of Education Title V Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI) Grant.

Family History:

Antonio Regalado Calvo (1900-1973) was born in Alamos, Sonora, Mexico. Maria de la Luz Aguilar Mendez (1896-1982) was born in La Colorado, Sonora, Mexico. Both of them, independently, moved north during the time of the Mexican Revolution. Antonio and Luz married in 1926 and after living near downtown Los Angeles for a short time, moved to San Fernando, where Luz had extended family.

In their first years together, Luz worked in the local fruit packing houses while Antonio found employment working in restaurants, hotels, pool halls, and later, on Works Project Administration (WPA) projects. Eventually, the couple started their own business selling Mexican food to workers in the local packing houses. Working in her home’s kitchen, Luz prepared tacos, tamales, and burritos, which Antonio (and sometimes their children) then sold to workers during their lunch breaks.

As the business grew, Antonio and Luz were eventually able to open a small restaurant. Their restaurant, Las Delicias Café, did not find a permanent location until 1946. By this time, the restaurant had developed a distinctive Sonora-style menu and a loyal following. Known for its pure and simple dishes made of high-quality ingredients, Las Delicias Café was a popular San Fernando restaurant until it closed in the early 1970s.

Luz and Antonio had four children, who were raised working in the restaurant, waiting tables or helping out in the kitchen. The family’s primary language was Spanish and the children learned English in school. Antonio gained a working command of English and was able to communicate with his English-speaking customers.

The couple was active in the Santa Rosa parish, the Catholic Church in San Fernando that served the Mexican immigrant population. They were active in civic affairs, participating in the San Fernando “fiesta days,” and catering its “mantilla dinner” held at Saint Ferdinand’s church. They were also involved in exchanges with San Fernando’s sister city, Manzanillo, in the state of Colima, Mexico.

Genre/Form of Material:

Paper records
Photographic material

Processing Information:

Rebecca S. Graff

Conditions Governing Use:

Copyright for unpublished materials authored or otherwise produced by the creator(s) of this collection has not been transferred to California State University, Northridge. Copyright status for other materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.

Conditions Governing Access:

The collection is open for research use.

Electronic Format:

Digital reproductions of selected items in this collection are available electronically as a part of the Latina(o) Cultural Heritage Archives project. For more information please see https://digital-library.csun.edu/.
Preferred Citation:
For information about citing items in this collection consult the appropriate style manual, or see the Citing Archival Materials guide.

Scope and Contents
The Antonio and Luz Mendez Calvo Family Collection gives a glimpse into the lives of a Mexican-American family in the Los Angeles area during the mid-20th century. Antonio Regalado Calvo and Maria de la Luz Mendez Calvo were immigrants from the Mexican state of Sonora. They immigrated to the San Fernando region of California where they met and married during the Mexican Revolution. After working several different jobs, the Calvos started their own business selling Mexican food to workers in the local packing houses. Eventually the couple opened Las Delicias Café on Pico Street in downtown San Fernando. The collection consists of baptismal certificates, birth certificates, correspondence, family trees, identification cards, invitations, marriage certificates, newspaper clippings, photographs, and a yearbook.

| Box 1, Folder 1 | Calvo Family Tree, 2001 |
| Box 1, Folder 2 | Calvo, Hector Antonio: vital records, 1935-1938 |
| Box 1, Folder 3 | Calvo-Mendez marriage, 1926 |
| Box 1, Folder 4 | Calvo, Antonio Regalado: driver licenses, 1973, 1977 |
| Box 1, Folder 5 | Calvo, Antonio Regalado: vital records, 1973 |
| Box 1, Folder 6 | Calvo, Tony H., 1959 |
| Box 1, Folder 7 | Letter of introduction, 1965 |
| Box 1, Folder 8 | Mendez, Luz: baptismal certificate, 1964 |
| Box 1, Folder 9 | Mexican citizenship and US immigration, 1919-1946 |
| Box 1, Folder 10 | Newspaper clippings, 1962-1969 |
| Box 1, Folder 11 | Orange Blossom (Yearbook), 1954 |
| Box 1, Folder 12 | Photographs |