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**ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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**MS 1134**  
**TORRES, ALVA BUSTAMANTE, 1932-**  
**Papers, 1960-1989**

**DESCRIPTION**

Alva Bustmante Torres, a fourth-generation Tucsonian, is a community activist who served on a number of local boards and committees. She was particularly involved in Mexican-American organizations and historic preservation. Mrs. Torres spearheaded the drive in the early 1970's to preserve La Plaza de la Mesilla in downtown Tucson at the time of massive urban renewal in that area. This collection includes correspondence, minutes, notes, invitations and programs, and newspaper clippings pertinent to the many organizations that she was involved with. The bulk of the collection covers the period 1969-1980 with the exception of materials pertaining to the Immigrant Amnesty program of 1988.

4 boxes, 2 linear feet

**ACQUISITION**

These materials were donated to the Historical Society by Mrs. Torres over a period of years. Materials pertaining to the Tucson Pima County Historical Commission were transferred to the manuscript collection on that commission, MS 1076.

**ACCESS**

There are no restrictions to this collection.

**COPYRIGHT**

Requests for permission to publish material from this collection should be addressed to the Arizona Historical Society, Tucson, Archives Department.

**PROCESSING**

This collection was processed in 1999 by Sue Conklin, volunteer, under the supervision of Riva Dean.

**ARRANGEMENT**

Topical: 1/ Mexican-American Organizations, 1969-1980, 2/ Historic Preservation materials, 1960-1980, 3/ Immigration Amnesty documents arranged by format, 1996-1989, 4/ Miscellaneous Organizations (includes Salvation Army and YWCA), 1969-1988, 5/ Personal Materials, 1965-1978

## **BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE**

Alva Torres was born in Tucson in 1932, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Miguel Bustamante. She attended local schools and graduated from Tucson High School in 1950. She attended the University of Arizona where she received a two-year liberal arts degree. She married Arthur A. Torres in 1950 and raised three children. She became a community activist involved in her children's schools, the Catholic Church and numerous Mexican-American organizations such as Una Noche Plateada, the Mexican American Unity Council, LULAC and the Mexican-American Women's League. In the late 1960's she was instrumental in forming the Society for the Preservation of La Plaza de la Mesilla, a tiny park and bandstand in downtown Tucson, which was threatened by urban renewal in the area. This effort was successful and the area eventually became part of La Placita Village. Mrs. Torres' interest in historic preservation led her to become involved with efforts to preserve the Fremont-Carillo House, El Tiradito, La Casa de Cordova and other landmarks important to the Mexican-American community. She was an original member of the Tucson Historic Areas Committee which eventually became part of the Tucson Pima County Historic Commission, a board which she also served on. In 1988, Mrs. Torres headed up the legalization/amnesty office of the Diocese of Tucson which coordinated efforts to get immigrants to register for citizenship during the amnesty period.

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

This collection consists of materials kept by Torres during her years of community activity, chiefly during the late 1960's and 1970's. She kept minutes, correspondence, invitations and programs from fund-raisers for the various organizations, newspaper clippings on club events. The materials relating to her efforts to save La Plaza de la Mesilla include minutes, correspondence and signed petitions. As Director of the legalization/amnesty program run by the Diocese of Tucson, she retained samples of the forms, publications, citizenship materials as well as correspondence, memos and financial documents. Finally, there is a limited amount of personal correspondence, photos and other mementos.

The collection of four boxes (2 linear feet) is arranged in five series:

**Series 1:** Materials relating to Mexican American organizations arranged by organization, 1969-1980.

**Series 2:** Historic Preservation materials, 1960-1980.

**Series 3:** Immigration Amnesty documents arranged by format, 1996-1989

**Series 4:** Miscellaneous Organizations (includes Salvation Army and YWCA),  
1969-1988

**Series 5:** Personal Materials, 1965-1978

## **BOX AND FOLDER LIST**

### **Box 1, Series 1: Mexican-American Organizations, 1969-1980**

- f. 1 Una Noche Plateada - Invitations and Programs, 1969-1976
- f. 2 Una Noche Plateada - Correspondence, 1970-1975
- f. 3 Una Noche Plateada - Newspaper clippings, 1970-1974
- f. 4 League of Mexican-American Women - Invitations and Programs, 1968-1979
- f. 5 League of Mexican-American Women - Correspondence, 1971-1979
- f. 6 League of Mexican-American Women - Newspaper clippings, 1970-1979
- f. 7 Club Duette, 1967-1980
- f. 8 Mexican American Unity Council, 1969-1977
- f. 9 LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens), 1960-1976
- f. 10 Hanigan Trial in Bisbee, 1977

### **Box 2**

- f. 11 Mexican-American Organizations, Miscellaneous, 1968-1980
- f. 12 Mexican American Relations- Newspaper clippings, 1968-1979
- f. 13 Political Campaigns, 1974-1976

### **Series 2: Historic Preservation, 1960-1980**

- f. 14 Historic Preservation - General, 1967-1971
- f. 15 Historic Preservation - Tucson, 1969-1980
- f. 16 Plaza de la Mesilla - Minutes, 1967-1968
- f. 17-18 Plaza de la Mesilla - Correspondence, 1967-1974

### **Box 3**

- f. 19 Plaza de la Mesilla - Petitions
- f. 20 Plaza de la Mesilla - Newspaper clippings, 1967-1980
- f. 21 Plaza de la Mesilla - Miscellaneous, 1967-1974
- f. 22 Urban Renewal Project, 1960-1971
- f. 23 Historic Areas Committee, 1969-1970
- f. 24 Tucson Historical Committee, 1972-1976

### **Series 3: Immigration Amnesty, 1986-1989**

- f. 25 Publications, 1986-1989
- f. 26 Forms
- f. 27 Financial Documents, 1987-1988
- f. 28 Newspaper clippings, 1986-1989

### **Box 4**

- f. 29 Correspondence, Memos, 1987-1988
- f. 30 Citizenship Materials

### **Series 4: Miscellaneous Organizations, 1969-1988**

- f. 31 Salvation Army, 1988
- f. 32 YWCA Action Audit, 1969-1972

**Series 5: Personal Materials, 1965-1978**

f. 33 Personal Correspondence, Notes, Legal Papers, 1965-1978

f. 34 Religious Materials

f. 35 Miscellaneous

f. 36 Portrait File