

## Placentia Citrus Packinghouse Oral History Project

### **Title**

Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project  
“Packed Up, Squeezed Out”

### **Date(s)**

2004-2005

### **Extent**

19 Interviews  
23 Narrators

### **Repository**

Center for Oral and Public History  
California State University, Fullerton

### **Project Abstract**

The Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project is part of the collections of California State University, Fullerton’s (CSUF) Center for Oral and Public History. It documents, through oral histories, the impact the citrus industry had on life, labor, and the business of Placentia, California. Interviews capture stories from all levels of the industry, from the growers, pickers and packers. Most recollections focus specifically on pre-World War II and how the city readjusted after the war. Both men and women tell their stories and recall the early history of the city and their involvement in the packinghouse, a critical element to the success of the citrus industry. World War II defense industry and aerospace are also mentioned as viable occupations available after the war and as the citrus groves declined. School segregation, labor camps, the *Bracero* program, and migration due to the Mexican Revolution are retold by the Mexican-American population, a vital part of Placentia.

### **History**

As the city of Placentia was planning to renovate, many issues came to the surface. The major issue being that residents have remained socially and racially divided since its early days. The Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project was created in an effort to reduce these tensions, as well as to create a museum, encapsulating the history of the citrus industry. While an exhibition was not the end result, the grant money, provided by the California Council for the Humanities, allowed the members of the research team to create a Readers Theater. The nineteen interviews collected during the course of the project led to the creation of a script, “Packed Up, Squeezed Out”, written by former resident of Placentia and award-winning playwright, Joey Aucoin.

The interviews were collected during 2004-2005 by a variety of volunteers. Among them include members of the Placentia Historical Committee as well as an independent study student from California State University, Fullerton. Thirteen readers volunteered their

time to retell the story of the early residents of Placentia using this script. Aucoin donated much of his time to see the script come to fruition. At the last minute, the decision was made to videotape the presentation of the Readers Theater, thereby saving a copy of the presentation for preservation.

### **Scope and Content**

The Placentia Packinghouse Project is available in the Center for Oral and Public History at California State University, Fullerton. The collection consists of 19 interviews with 23 individuals who all lived in Placentia between 1920 and 1960. Topics discussed include life in Placentia, especially La Jolla colonia, citrus culture, worker experiences in the packing house, the Bracero program, the flood of 1938 and its effect on the community, and World War II homefront. The collection holds the original recorded interviews on tape and transcripts. Collateral material within the collection includes: ephemera, "Packed Up, Squeezed Out" script, as well as the final DVD recording of the production.

The majority of the interviews were taped and then transferred to a disk for preservation purposes. All interviews have been transcribed and abstracts have been created. However, one interview, OH3536, was conducted in Spanish; while it was transcribed it has not yet been translated into English. The collection is not yet at the completed stage, it is however available for research.

Additional material can also be found, and is available for research at the CSUF Center for Oral and Public History. Specifically, oral histories conducted with Cecil Rospaw, OH2015, and Chester Whitten, OH2147, both of whom are mentioned in the interviews conducted for the Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project, are available.

### **Restrictions**

The oral history with A.S. "Bud" Bradford (OH3519) is restricted until further notice.

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## **Series Outline**

### **Series I: Oral Histories**

### **Series II: Newspaper Clippings**

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### **Series III: “Packed Up, Squeezed Out” script**

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### **Series IV: DVD of “Packed Up, Squeezed Out”, Readers Theater**

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### **Series V: Correspondence and Placentia Historical Society Minutes**

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### **Series VI: California Council for the Humanities**

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## **Series I: Oral Histories**

### **Narrators**

OH 3518	Julia Aguirre
OH 3519	A.S. “Bud” Bradford
OH 3520	Eddie and Vera Castro
OH 3521	Jeanne Christensen
OH 3522	Mary Castner
OH 3523	Jose Felipe
OH 3524	Luis Garcia
OH 3525	Clyde Hodges
OH 3526	Rosalio Gonzales with Fred Aguirre
OH 3527	William Holmes
OH 3528	George and Josephine Jones
OH 3529	Ruby Lopez
OH 3530	Thomas “Tommie” Martinez
OH 3531	Apolinar and Frances Ramirez
OH 3532	Ted Russell
OH 3533	Edna Sandoval
OH 3534	Ramon “Fito” Torres
OH 3535	Clairee Tynes
OH 3536	Jose Zavala

**Interviewers**

Lynda Baker

Angela Barrientos

Donna Bass

Kathy Frazee

Jeanette Gardner

Bill Zavala

**OH3518**

**Narrator:** Aguirre, Julia (also heard, Fred Aguirre)  
**Interviewer:** Angela Barrientos  
**Title:** An Oral History with Julia Aguirre  
**Date:** April, 2004  
**Language:** English  
**Location:** Home of Julia Aguirre  
**Project:** Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project  
**Status:** Transcribed, verbatim, 21 pages

*Abstract*

An oral history of Julia Aguirre, resident of Placentia, California, this interview was conducted to gain information for the Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project for California State University, Fullerton. Julia and her family have spent time researching her childhood, used the Carnegie Public Library in Colorado to obtain early information, including having two brothers that died in 1918 because of the Influenza. Came to California and began working for the packinghouse, which was like a family environment. Son received a scholarship to USC; at that time she quit the packinghouse and worked for a telephone service in Fullerton. Recalls the rules of the packinghouse, how the days varied, remembers labels, Kraemer family ranch was divided among the eight children, all had own label. Stresses the strictness of the packinghouse, quality was important, Mutual was the largest of the Orange County packinghouses. Husband Fred went to a segregated school, after going into the service, he fought against it, formed a group consisting of Veterans and Placentia natives to fight against segregation. Fred was in the Conservation Corps, did not want to work for orange industry, after war worked for Vultee Aircraft, and built parts for B-24. Both wanted kids to get an education, became a judge, attorney and a teacher.

**OH3519**

**Narrator:** A.S. "Bud" Bradford  
**Interviewer:** Lynda Baker, Kathy Frazee, Jo Lyons also Present  
**Title:** An Oral History with A.S. "Bud" Bradford  
**Date:** February 03, 2000  
**Language:** English  
**Location:** Bradford House  
**Project:** Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project  
**Status:** Transcribed, verbatim, 20 pages

*Abstract*

An oral history with Bud Bradford, grandson of one of the founding fathers of Placentia, California. This interview was conducted to gain information for the Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project for California State University, Fullerton. Earliest memories include: raising chickens and selling eggs during World War II, and his life on the ranch. Mentions the bracero program, gender differences within the citrus industry, women packed, men picked, however not aware of racial inequality, remembers Joe Diaz

being a foreman. People from Mexico lived in the labor camps owned by the packinghouses, there was a camp in Anaheim. Talks about his grandfather, A.S. Bradford, active in the community: bank, water company, and railroad; originally was a Mason. Ranch survived the freeze of 1913, talks about Oscar Carlson, street is now named after him, and how before his grandfather brought the railroad, oranges were transported by horse. Gives an overview of early life in Placentia, the ice company and other jobs the packinghouse provided. Recreational activities included going to Newport Beach to fish and bird hunting. Discusses the introduction of electricity to Yorba Hills in 1913 and making orange wine during Prohibition, Bradford Brothers started their packinghouse after the railroad; their bank issued own currency. Remembers communities having their own Christmas trees, Fullerton, Orange, one on Bradford property, had entertainment; Palm Drive would attract people from Hollywood. Company in San Francisco used a special art form to create the labels for the orange crates. Talks about the cooler climate during this time, including picking oranges in the snow.

**OH3522**

**Narrator:** Castner, Mary  
**Interviewer:** Jeanette Gardner  
**Title:** An Oral History with Mary Castner  
**Date:** June 18, 2004  
**Language:** English  
**Location:** Home of Mary Castner  
**Project:** Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project  
**Status:** Transcribed, verbatim, 32 Pages

*Abstract*

An oral history with Mary Castner, a lifelong resident of Placentia, California. This interview was conducted as part of the Placentia Packinghouse Project for California State University, Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather information relating to early life in Placentia, specifically relating to the citrus industry. Early memories recall a variety of students in class while at school during the '40s, knew that the Chapman Hill School was there. Considered living on McCormack and Birkenstock (now Bastanchury) –out in the country. Recalls friends and family, including A.S. Bradford, the Christensens and Wagners. Everyone worked at the packinghouse, unless you were a grower; remembers the bracero program and how they stayed at Richfield School. Houses for rent were not available until after WWII, prior Chapman Ranch provided housing to workers, an example of a workers house exists on Imperial Highway, now a teahouse. Mentions cradle role certificates and how the churches used them. Mr. Johnson started to bring ranch houses onto Primrose, city said no more. Would like to make Santa Fe Street a historic district. Remembers the train running from Placentia to Fullerton, having a turnaround on Orangethorpe, now nothing grows there, still owned by the railroads. Entertainment was provided at the American Legion on Bradford and Chapman, including an appearance by Tennessee Ernie Ford. Remembers the box machine, used to make boxes at the packinghouse, and beehives, used to house them and

the families would be paid in honey. She and her husband, Lee, were in business for forty-seven years, Lee was citizen of the year; she, volunteer of the year. There is also a street named after them.

**OH3520**

**Narrator:** Castro, Eddie (b.1928) and Vera  
**Interviewer:** Jeanette Gardner  
**Title:** An Oral History with Eddie and Vera Castro  
**Date:** January 21, 2005  
**Language:** English  
**Location:** Home of Eddie and Vera Castro  
**Project:** Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project  
**Status:** Transcribed, verbatim, 33 pages

*Abstract*

An oral history with Eddie and his wife, Vera Castro, a resident of Placentia, California. This interview was conducted as part of the Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project for California State University, Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather information related to working in the Mutual Packinghouse located in Placentia, California. Discusses early life, including born in Placentia barrio, an area designed for the citrus labor force; how his mother entered the United States, paying \$0.25 and father relocated to Orange County to help build the El Canal Canyon de Santana, using hands and picks. Recalls many of the nuances of Placentia and surrounding areas, including areas which were displaced by Interstate 5; how grandparents were refugees to United States in 1915 because of Mexican Revolution. Discusses segregation, recalls La Jolla school, including integrated by 1947, not realizing it was separate. Recalls surviving the flood of 1938, which caused considerable destruction of La Jolla barrio on March 3-4, including problems with trash, standing water, and dirt roads, being sheltered at the La Jolla School and receiving help from American Legion, National Guard, and Red Cross. Observations on rarity of interracial dating and couples; discrimination, including unfair housing practices, and undeserving arrests of Japanese Americans. Comments on Placentia today, including palpable tension between Anglos and Mexican Americans. Vera remembers that it cost her father \$0.03 to cross Mexico-United States border.

**OH3521**

**Narrator:** Christensen, Jeanne  
**Interviewer:** Kathy Frazee  
**Title:** An Oral History with Jeanne Christensen  
**Date:** April 14, 2004  
**Language:** English  
**Location:** Home of Jeanne Christensen  
**Project:** Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project  
**Status:** Transcribed, verbatim, 41 Pages

*Abstract*

An oral history with Jeanne Christensen, wife of Jack Christensen, long time resident of Placentia, California. Interview was conducted as part of the Placentia Packinghouse project for California State University, Fullerton. The purpose of the interview was to gather information about her life as a wife of a grower, and how she remembers Placentia. Husband, Jack owned Placentia Orange Growers Association packinghouse. When her house was built, there were only ten houses from Palm Avenue to Carbon Canyon. Discusses husband's involvement in all operations of the citrus industry, the various changes in schooling during community growth, and the diminishing orange groves. Recalls smudge pots used for frost and change to wind machines. Discusses additional real property in Riverside and San Bernardino County, changes in local water company (Yorba Linda Water Co. to Brea) during the 1960s, and their decreasing profits. Mentions issues pertaining to ranching, including Bracero program, growers' jobs vs. the role of the packinghouse, women employed at packinghouse during World War II, quick decline disease, and that Placentia is famous for ten foot deep soil. Recalls husband as member of Citriculture, a worldwide growers group, life in Placentia, shopping on Santa Fe, how men in city would play Liar's poker at Tlaquepaque restaurant every morning, including Steve Manassero. Discusses real property on Bradford and Chapman purchased was bought by Gulf Oil in 1965. Discusses volunteerism with Placentia Round Table, Library Literacy program, and Assistance League of Anaheim. Talks about the theater on Santa Fe, a Mexican movie house, while Anglos attended Fox Theater in Fullerton.

**OH3523**

**Narrator:** Felipe, Jose (b.1920)  
**Interviewer:** Kathy Frazee, Donna Bass  
**Title:** An Oral History with Jose Felipe  
**Date:** September 23, 2004  
**Language:** English  
**Location:** History Room at the Placentia, California Public Library  
**Project:** Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project  
**Status:** Transcribed, verbatim, 64 pages

*Abstract*

An oral history of Jose Felipe, lifelong resident of Placentia. This interview was conducted to gain information relating to his experiences for the Placentia Citrus Packinghouse Oral History Project for California State University, Fullerton. Earliest memories include Baker School and digging for treasure at the Yorba Hacienda. His mother cooked for priests, including first priest in Placentia, Father Juan Valencia. Mentions Chapman Hill, where many people lived and Chapman Hall, an Americanization building. Recalls residents, the Aguirres, Munozes, and Gil Kuhn who played football for USC. Speaks of Archie Raitt, father of John Raitt. Sports and Recreational activities included softball, played between cities; played on the Alley Gang. Recalls other residents, including Mrs. Hetebrink, Chapman, Bradford, Valenzuela Sepulveda (uncle of Richie Valenz). Recall Mexican baseball League and discrimination

in the major leagues. Comments on how discrimination kept many out of service, especially if they were good workers. Discusses post-war opportunities for Mexicans and the decline of the orange industry. Discusses new wave of Mexican immigration in 1970s and their taking low paying jobs and working in the citrus groves. Recalls flood of 1938 and job cleaning out the trees where Angel Stadium is currently located. After flood, had to recouse the Santa Ana River. Recalls job as citrus picker for companies like Union 76, and other citrus-related topics including smudge pots and strike of 1936. Recalls life in Placentia, Carbon Canyon Winery, fiestas on Santa Fe Avenue, and early days of Disneyland. Negative memories include discrimination at public pools, curfew for Mexicans, and using term barrio. Mentions defense industry, making gas masks, taking shelter at packinghouse during Cuban missile crisis, and friend who fought with Richard Nixon in World War II. Lastly, recalls tramps who lived in area that is now Orange [57 Freeway] and sold baskets during summer for money.

### **OH3524**

**Narrator:** Garcia, Luis (b.1945)  
**Interviewer:** Jeanette Gardner  
**Title:** An Oral History with Luis Garcia  
**Date:** January 22, 2005  
**Language:** English  
**Location:** Home of Jeanette Gardner  
**Project:** Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project  
**Status:** Transcribed, verbatim, 19 pages

#### *Abstract*

The information was obtained for the Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project for California State University, Fullerton. A longtime Placentia, California resident, Garcia was the first in his family to be born in California. Recalls early days of the city including school segregation, picking oranges in the summer, baseball, and city clubs. Sister played softball for an all Mexican girl team, the La Jolla Lady Cats; he was a member of LULAC, that held dances at the Chapman Hall. Mentions the Bracero program and bracero work camp in Fullerton. Provides general description of 1950's life in Placentia including Fox movie theater and Taste Freeze.

### **OH3526**

**Narrator:** Gonzales, Rosalio (b. 1926) with Aguirre, Fred (b.1920)  
**Interviewer:** Kathy Frazee  
**Title:** An Oral History with Rosalio Gonzales and Fred Aguirre  
**Date:** May 13, 2004  
**Language:** English  
**Location:** Home of Rosalio Gonzales  
**Project:** Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project  
**Status:** Transcribed, verbatim, 39 pages

*Abstract*

Rosalio Gonzales and Fred Aguirre, long time residents of Placentia who have seen a number of changes. The information was obtained for the Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project for California State University, Fullerton. Both discuss working for packinghouses and in fields. Recalls early life of Placentia, Mexican town, and a segregated Santa Fe area because of language. During World War II, Gonzales worked for CalShip Welding that manufactured Liberty Ships while Fred served in the military in Okinawa. Recalls 9:00 p.m. curfew for Mexicans and building library in 1927. Discusses the desegregation of schools, supported by Veteran's groups, Citizens of Placentia, and LULAC, and the difficult time just after World War II. Recalls the consequences of discrimination at work, schools, pools, and hiring practices. In addition, remembers women working for defense industry during World War II and female entrepreneurs who refused work in the packinghouses; the post-World War II families from Texas came to live in Placentia; and redlining (banks discriminating against loaning money in certain areas). During late '50s early '60s, cities began to expand around Placentia; remembers decisions that changed the course of life in the city. Many city people are mentioned, including George Koch. Continues to discuss the discrimination suffered by many, citrus strike of 1936, the *Wobblies* (Industrial Workers of the World) who supported it, and other leading members of the community, including Joe Hannah, one time mayor of the city.

**OH3525**

**Narrator:** Hodges, Clyde (b.1908 d.2005) and Essie  
**Interviewer:** Angela Barrientos  
**Title:** An Oral History with Clyde and Essie Hodges  
**Date:** May 15, 2004  
**Language:** English  
**Location:** Home of Clyde and Essie Hodges  
**Project:** Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project  
**Status:** Transcribed, verbatim, 17 pages

*Abstract*

This oral history of Clyde and Essie Hodges was conducted for the Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project for California State University, Fullerton. Describes his family's reason for moving from Missouri to California in 1929, his employment in the citrus groves before working in the packinghouse operating the lidding machine and maintenance. Describes specific work day tasks, including hours, loading railroad cars, and working on the ice crew, in addition to performing chores around the house of the packinghouse boss. Discusses employment history working for Safeway (one of the local supermarkets in town), then maintenance work for the local school district for twelve years. Recalls working with with Hispanic and Anglo women, including sister and wife, Essie, who packed Valencia and navel oranges year round, identifying boxes with "skirts." Comments on the consequences of weather upon fruit production. Lastly, recalls, again, his job at Safeway, and his retirement.

**OH3527**

**Narrator:** Holmes, William  
**Interviewer:** Kathy Frazee  
**Title:** An Oral History with William Holmes  
**Date:** March 24, 2004  
**Language:** English  
**Location:** Home of William Holmes  
**Project:** Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project  
**Status:** Transcribed, verbatim, 22 pages

*Abstract*

This oral history gathered information related to the Placentia Packinghouse Project for California State University, Fullerton. Originally born in St. Louis, Missouri, William came to California in 1944. Speaks about earliest career for the Santa Fe Railroad and his arrival in Placentia during the peak orange season, the role the railroads played in citrus industry as well as everyday life, reefer cars, mail system, and how the companies kept track of shipments. Discusses employment in aerospace in El Segundo, CA, after World War II, including details about Apollo capsules and their transportation, B-52 project, and various test sites, especially in Mississippi, New Orleans, LA, and Pearl River. Recalls life in Placentia, Spanish theater on Santa Fe, renting a room, and working at the Ice House in Fullerton for extra money; aerospace occupation dealt with Apollo capsules, moving them, worked on the B-52 bomber project, mentions various test sites including Mississippi, and New Orleans and Pearl River, LA, and modification of roads to haul items.

**OH3528**

**Narrator:** Jones, George (b. 1913 d. 2005) and Josephine  
**Interviewer:** Kathy Frazee  
**Title:** An Oral History with George and Josephine Jones  
**Date:** April 20, 2004  
**Language:** English  
**Location:** Home of George and Josephine Jones, Placentia, California  
**Project:** Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project  
**Status:** Transcribed, verbatim, 44 Pages

*Abstract*

An oral history with George Jones and his wife, Josephine Jones, a long time resident of Placentia, California. This interview was conducted as a part of the Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project for California State University, Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gain information of his life in Placentia and his work in the citrus Packinghouse. This interview discusses the various techniques used in both packinghouse and orange fields, including smudge pots used for frost, and the use of ethylene gas to give color. Wife, Jo, also worked at the packinghouse in 1935 and 1936, an unusual case since her father was a grower and job was considered exclusively for

Mexican women. Discusses Sunkist and their involvement in the citrus industry, especially inspection, sales and shipping; as a major grower, and their hiring of Midwesterners during Dust Bowl. Recalls early life in Placentia, Mr. Clarence Haiber, as well as his brother, the first in Placentia to die in World War II. Talks about wages, prices, and general economy during the time period. Information is given about John Tuffree, who started the Mutual Packinghouse and the Farm Bureau, who came in to help farmers with spraying pesticides; tells about the role Placentia men played in World War II volunteers who monitored planes and phoned it in to the government. Overall mention of the family atmosphere of the packinghouse and Placentia, roles they played in war and postwar jobs that became available.

### **OH3529**

**Narrator:** Lopez, Ruby (b.1916)  
**Interviewer:** Bill Zavala  
**Title:** An Oral History with Ruby Lopez  
**Date:** May 8, 2001  
**Language:** English and Spanish  
**Location:** Undisclosed location  
**Project:** Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project  
**Status:** Transcribed, verbatim, 26 pages

#### *Abstract*

An oral history of Ruby Lopez, longtime resident of Placentia, California. This interview was conducted as part of the Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project for California State University, Fullerton. Specifically, this interview contains information about Lopez's parents, who came to work in citrus industry and father who worked as foreman for \$1 per day. Includes early life in Placentia, including fiestas, going to Baker Street School, and segregation, earthquake of 1933, the Depression, selling gas coupons, and flood of 1938. Discusses first husband who served in World War II and how federal government sent money for wives; her occupation in defense industry when war broke out. Recalls brother who became one of the first on the police force and desegregation in 1947. Discusses discrimination issues included the *Americanos* who were afraid to eat Mexican food, believing they would be poisoned; and happy times include fiestas, dances, visitors from Fullerton and Anaheim who attended.

### **OH3530**

**Narrator:** Martinez, Thomas "Tommie" (b.1928)  
**Interviewer:** Jeanette Gardner  
**Title:** An Oral History with Thomas "Tommie" Martinez  
**Date:** January 21, 2005  
**Language:** English  
**Location:** Home of Tommie Martinez  
**Project:** Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project  
**Status:** Transcribed, verbatim, 26 pages

*Abstract*

An oral history with Thomas “Tommie” Martinez, lifelong resident of Placentia, California. This interview was conducted for the Placentia Packinghouse oral history project for California State University, Fullerton. Earliest memories include his family employed in many aspects of the citrus industry, including packing and picking. Recalls odd jobs as a child, selling burritos and shining shoes for extra money to see movies; discusses segregation in school as a language issue and how it contributed to overall divisions within Placentia. Remembers winning art contest and design for Placentia logo; his education that included drafting and mechanics, his career with Hughes Aircraft Company, designing the Mars rover motor and the Cassini Satellite. In recalling early Placentia, remembers them sending second rate teachers to the Mexican schools, Knights of Columbus meetings at Chapman Hill Hall, and learning about jobs at packinghouse by word of mouth. Remembers bracero camp, the closest hospital was Orange County Hospital (now part of the UCI Medical complex), losing his arm in an automobile accident, and receiving prosthetic arm at UCLA. Early recreation included biking to Newport Beach to catch a boat going to Catalina. Remembers Anglo merchants living on the outskirts of town; his continuing work in fields to help out his family; his first marriage (mixed) and rental discrimination; moving into tract homes, how fast Placentia grew up, and talks about current restoration projects.

**OH3531**

**Narrator:** Ramirez, Apolinar and Frances  
**Interviewer:** Kathy Frazee and Donna Bass  
**Title:** An Oral History with Apolinar and Frances Ramirez  
**Date:** August 02, 2004 and September 25, 2004  
**Language:** English  
**Location:** Home of Apolinar and Frances Ramirez  
**Project:** Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project  
**Status:** Transcribed, verbatim, 35 pages

*Abstract*

An oral history of Apolinar (Paul) and Frances Ramirez, longtime residents of Placentia. This interview was conducted as part of the Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project for California State University, Fullerton, to learn about life in Placentia in the early-to mid-twentieth century. Specifically, it documents Ramirez’s early life, including his birth in Mexico and his immigration and move to the United States, particularly Atwood and La Jolla, unincorporated neighborhoods of Placentia. Recalls the tremendous amount of rainfall in 1938 and thought people were joking about it being a serious flood, then moving to Rose Drive to avoid the flood. Discusses local businesses, including two grocery stores and Post Office, when mail was delivered by train. Recalls children attending Bradford School and moving out of Atwood because of discrimination; picking oranges and lemons until World War II, then worked as Air Force medic in 1945, his transfer to Florida and experience as only Mexican in unit, and hurricane tearing down the base. Discusses return to Placentia and shopping, dancing, going to the movies in Anaheim, owning a 1946 Ford Edsel and about a variety of cars he owned. Remembers

taking his children to Knott's Berry Farm every Sunday and attending Huntington Beach 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade every year, as well as westerns shown at Santa Fe theater. Comments on family's economic situation and adjustments wife made after they were married.

### **OH3532**

**Narrator:** Russell, Ted  
**Interviewer:** Angela Barrientos  
**Title:** An Oral History with Ted Russell  
**Date:** April 02, 2004  
**Language:** English  
**Location:** Home of Ted Russell  
**Project:** Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project  
**Status:** Transcribed, verbatim, 25 pages

#### *Abstract*

An oral history with Ted Russell, longtime resident of Placentia, California, Interview was conducted as part of the Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project for California State University, Fullerton. This interview includes information about Placentia and his memories of the Placentia Packinghouse during the early- to mid-twentieth century, more specifically, his father's relocation from Kansas to Azusa, California, where he played football; his father's rank of master gunner during World War I; his return from war and subsequent work in Southern California citrus groves as an orange picker and later becoming the agricultural commissioner in Ventura County. Got started in Winnick Lab in Anaheim, worked on pest control, until Dr. Winnick was killed in an accident. This led him to create the Russell Pest Control Service. Russell discusses attending UC Berkeley and studying anemology before joining Navy after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Describes his military duty as corpsman, including checking recruits, and recalls battle of Midway, mosquito problems and quarantining Hawaii, and responsibilities related to identification and extermination of bugs on B-17s and sugar plantations. Recalls following father's lead as member Orange County Vector Control Board, establishing fertilizer chemical business, working with Jack Christensen and other growers, and creating natural enemies in citrus groves for red scale and spider mites. Discusses the program which brought African Americans from Los Angeles to work in citrus groves and compares them to Mexican Americans as workers; Lastly, discusses synthetic pesticide DDT and how it affected fish supply in Newport Beach; and creation of snail bait that eradicated pests.

### **OH3533**

**Narrator:** Sandoval, Edna (b.1927)  
**Interviewer:** Angela Barrientos  
**Title:** An Oral History with Edna Sandoval  
**Date:** April 01, 2004  
**Language:** English  
**Location:** Home of Edna Sandoval  
**Project:** Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project

**Status:** Transcribed, verbatim, 20 pages

*Abstract*

An oral history of Edna Sandoval, resident of Placentia, California. This oral history was conducted as part of the Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project for California State University, Fullerton. Discusses mother's immigration from Zacatecas, Mexico, because of the Mexican Revolution. Recalls the difficulties of getting a job at the packinghouse, her early education in schools in Atwood, then Chapman, before mother enrolled her in Catholic school. Talks about the process of working in packinghouse, keeping track of boxes, pickers, following harvest cycle; and Placentia housing people from El Modena, Huntington Beach, and Santa Ana. Remembers perceived privileged classmates who didn't have to work, anglicizing her name, being punished for being Spanish, segregation in schools, and how they desegregated after World War II when Aguirre Family fought against it. Recalls early employment at packinghouse (1946) and sister working at Douglas Aircraft Company during the war; talks about lack of new housing construction during war years; and eventually turning house into restaurant, *El Rosar*, which gave local college students part-time work. Comments about the current redevelopment of Placentia.

**OH3534**

**Narrator:** Torres, Ramon "Fito" (b.1939)  
**Interviewer:** Kathy Frazee  
**Title:** An Oral History with Ramon "Fito" Torres  
**Date:** July 29, 2004  
**Language:** English  
**Location:** Home of Ramon Torres  
**Project:** Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project  
**Status:** Transcribed, verbatim, 46 pages

*Abstract*

An oral history with Ramon "Fito" Torres, longtime resident of Placentia, California. Interview was conducted as part of the Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project for California State University, Fullerton. Torres describes relocating from was from Riverside's [CA] Casa Blanca colonia (or barrio); the expansion of Placentia after World War II, tract homes built in the 1950s, Hunt Foods, and active orange groves in 1950s and 1960s Tustin, Villa Park and Riverside. Remembers the division among residents, mixed Santa Fe neighborhoods, green camp or *campo verde* for migrant workers located in Atwood near Orangethorpe and Lakeview. Recalls early days of aerospace and schools encouraging trade classes to its students; how Fender Guitar Company in Fullerton gave jobs to women; and other jobs at schools, cafeterias, laundry, once orange industry had been exhausted. Discusses Mendez v. Westminster case initiating the fight for desegregation in Placentia schools and igniting groups such as Placentia Veterans and Citizens, bracero workers, to get involved. Remembers picking oranges as a kid, earning money to go to the pool while white kids would deliver newspapers. Lastly, discusses stepfather, who was a bracero, and bracero camp also housed Navajo and Pueblo Indians working for the Santa Fe Railroad.

**OH3535**

**Narrator:** Tynes, Clairee  
**Interviewer:** Kathy Frazee  
**Title:** An Oral History with Clairee Tynes  
**Date:** November 09, 2004  
**Language:** English  
**Location:** Home of Clairee Tynes  
**Project:** Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project  
**Status:** Transcribed, verbatim, 34 pages

*Abstract*

An oral history with Clairee Tynes, longtime resident of Placentia, gives an insight into both her life, as well as the innovations made by her late husband, John. This interview was conducted as part of the Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project for California State University, Fullerton. Tynes discusses her family's relocation to Placentia in 1944, and subsequent move to Character Manor, a renovated school that housed faculty members, her husband, John's, employment as coach at Valencia High School, who was known to play kids according to ability, rather than color. Mentions time capsules located in a pedestal in front of VHS auditorium, her husband teaching citizenship classes at La Jolla, and starting the recreation program; her time as volunteer craft teacher for Chapman Hills School and La Jolla. Recalls the perceptual learning program developed by husband, as well as subjects he taught, including history, math, senior problems (also known as health), and coaching. Remembers quick decline (Citrus Tristeza), a virus responsible for the death of many orange groves. Discusses her son dying of AIDS in 1987, launching a local support group and the negative thinking many had at that time. Comments on her commitment to preserving the Bradford House and the actions she and the committee took, how Betty Mead raised funds to purchase insurance coverage, and now, how cultural events are now held there. Moreover, addresses her participation in creating Grad Night parties for Valencia High School, a safe alternative for the graduates. Finally, involvement in bringing Literacy Volunteers of America to the Placentia Public Library.

**OH3536**

**Narrator:** Zavala-Lopez, Jose  
**Interviewer:** Angela Barrientos  
**Title:** An Oral History with Jose Zavala-Lopez  
**Date:** April 19, 2004  
**Language:** Spanish  
**Location:** Home of Jose Zavala-Lopez  
**Project:** Placentia Packinghouse Oral History Project  
**Status:** Transcribed, verbatim, 13 pages

*Abstract*

An oral history with Jose Zavala Lopez. This interview gives an account of his undocumented arrival to the United States in 1949 after which he obtained legal status after working as a fruit picker; brought his family to the United States from Michoacan, Mexico between 1965 to 1972; His family lived throughout Orange County; Discusses his motivation for coming to the U.S. after his father's death in search of a better life and economic opportunities; describes the living and working conditions as well as the standard pay for box of fruit as a Bracero; his experience in the Bracero program was very negative because it involved extremely long hours, low pay, and substandard living conditions in the boarding houses; he and his brothers had multiple occupations in agricultural fields, construction, factories, and packing houses; discusses the high demands of the supervisors and mentions discriminations; He married in 1950 had two children and was eventually able to purchase a home; his son born in 1951 and his daughter born in the 1960s attended school on Bradford Avenue in Placentia, California; on weekends his children helped pick fruit to make more money; he was at one point deported to Tijuana, Mexico and returned walking; comments on the changing nature of Orange County as the agriculture diminishes and business grows.

#### *Abstracto*

Una historia oral con Jose Zavala Lopez. En esta entrevista se discuten las circunstancias en que llego a los Estados Unidos indocumentado en 1949 y obtuvo su legalidad después de trabajar como picador; de 1965 a 1972 trajo a su familia para los Estados Unidos de Michoacan, Mexico; Su familia se estableció en las ciudades del condado de Orange; discute sus razones para venir a los Estados Unidos después de la muerte de su padre en búsqueda de una vida mejor y oportunidades económicas; describe las condiciones en que vivía y el trabajo, también el pago por caja de fruta como Bracero; su experiencia en el programa Bracero fue muy negativa porque envolvía poco dinero pagado por las largas horas trabajadas, y condiciones de vivir muy malas; él y sus hermanos tuvieron varios trabajos en las áreas de agricultura, construcción, fábricas, y casas de empaque; habla sobre las muchas demandas de los mayordomos y menciona la discriminación; en 1950 se casó, tuvo dos hijos, y eventualmente pudo comprar una casa; Su hijo, nacido en 1951, y hija, nacida en los 1960s, fueron a la escuela en Bradford Avenue en Placentia, California; en los fines de semana sus hijos le ayudaban a recolectar fruta para tener más dinero para la familia; una vez fue deportado a Tijuana, Mexico y regreso a pie; comenta sobre los cambios en el condado de Orange como área de agricultura a área de negocios.