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The History of Ignacio Allende



Ignacio Jose de Allende

Ignacio José de Allende y Unzaga was a Mexican-born officer in the Spanish army who switched sides and fought for independence. He fought in the early part of the conflict alongside the “Father of Mexican Independence,” Father Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla. Although Allende and Hidalgo had some initial success against the Spanish colonial forces, both were eventually captured and executed in June and July of 1811.

Allende was born to a wealthy Creole family in the town of San Miguel el Grande (the name of the town is now San Miguel de Allende in his honor) in 1769. As a young man, he led a life of privilege and joined the army while in his twenties. He proved an able officer, and some of his promotions would come at the hands of future foe General Félix Calleja. By 1808 he returned to San Miguel, where he was put in charge of a royal cavalry regiment.

Allende apparently became convinced fairly early on of the need for Mexico to become independent from Spain, perhaps as early as 1806. There was evidence that he was part of an underground conspiracy in Valladolid in 1809, but he was not punished, probably because the conspiracy was quashed before it could go anywhere and he was a skilled officer from a good family. In early 1810 he became involved in another conspiracy, this one led by Mayor of Querétaro Miguel Domínguez and his wife. Allende was a valued leader because of his training, contacts and charisma. The revolution was set to begin in December of 1810.

The conspirators secretly ordered weapons and spoke to influential Creole military officers, bringing many over to their cause. But in September, 1810, they got word that their conspiracy had been found out and warrants issued for their arrests. Allende was in Dolores on September 15 with Father Hidalgo when they heard the bad news. They decided to start the revolution then and there as opposed to hiding. The next morning, Hidalgo rang the church bells and gave his legendary “Grito de Dolores” or “Cry of Dolores” in which he exhorted the poor of Mexico to take up arms against their Spanish oppressors. Allende and Hidalgo suddenly found themselves at the head of an angry mob. They marched on San Miguel, where the mob murdered Spaniards and looted their homes: it must have been difficult for Allende to see this happen in his home town. After passing



Angel of Independence

History of Ignacio Allende Cont.

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through the town of Celaya, which wisely surrendered without a shot, they marched on the city of Guanajuato where 500 Spaniards and royalists had fortified the large public granary and prepared to fight. The angry mob fought the defenders for five hours before overrunning the granary, massacring all inside. Then they turned their attention to the city, which was sacked.

The insurgent army continued to make its way towards Mexico City, which began to panic when word of the horrors of Guanajuato reached them. Viceroy Francisco Xavier Venegas hastily scraped together all of the infantry and cavalry he could muster and sent them out to meet the rebels. The royalists and insurgents met on October 30, 1810 at the Battle of Monte de las Cruces not far outside of Mexico City. The barely 1,500 royalists fought bravely but could not defeat the horde of 80,000 insurgents. Mexico City appeared to be within the reach of the rebels.

With Mexico City within their grasp, Allende and Hidalgo did the unthinkable: they retreated back towards Guadalajara. Historians are unsure why they did: all agree that it was a mistake. Allende was in favor of pressing on, but Hidalgo, who controlled the masses of peasants and Indians who made up the bulk of army, overrode him. The retreating army was caught in a skirmish near Aculco by a larger force led by general Calleja and split up: Allende went to Guanajuato and Hidalgo to Guadalajara.

Although Allende and Hidalgo agreed on independence, they disagreed on much, particularly how to wage war. Allende, the professional soldier, was aghast at Hidalgo's encouragement of the looting of towns and the executions of all Spaniards they came across. Hidalgo argued that the violence was necessary and that without the promise of loot most of their army would desert. Not all of the army was made up of angry peasants: there were some Creole army regiments, and these were almost all loyal to Allende: when the two men split up, most of the professional soldiers went to Guanajuato with Allende.

Allende fortified Guanajuato, but Calleja, turning his attention to Allende first, drove him out. Allende was forced to retreat to Guadalajara and rejoin Hidalgo. There, they decided to make a defensive stand at the strategic Calderon Bridge. On January 17, 1810, Calleja's well-trained royalist army met the insurgents there. It seemed that the vast insurgent numbers would carry the day, but a lucky Spanish cannonball ignited a rebel munitions dump, and in the ensuing chaos the undisciplined rebels scattered. Hidalgo, Allende and the other insurgent leaders were forced out of Guadalajara, most of their army gone.

As they made their way north, Allende had finally had enough of Hidalgo. He stripped him of command and arrested him. Their relationship had already deteriorated so badly that Allende had tried to poison Hidalgo while they were both in Guadalajara before the battle of Calderón Bridge. Hidalgo's removal became a moot point on March 21, 1811, when Ignacio Elizondo, an insurgent commander, betrayed and captured Allende, Hidalgo and the other insurgency leaders as they made their way north. The leaders were sent to the city of Chihuahua where all were tried and executed: Allende, Juan Aldama and Mariano Jimenez on June 26 and Hidalgo on July 30. Their four heads were sent to hang on the corners of the public granary of Guanajuato.

Allende was a capable officer and leader, and his history is enough to make one wonder "What If?" What if Hidalgo had followed Allende's advice and taken Mexico City in November of 1810? Years of strife may have been averted. What if Hidalgo had sent reinforcements to Allende at Guadalajara, like he requested? The skilled soldier Allende may have defeated Calleja and drawn more recruits to his cause.

It was unfortunate for the Mexicans involved in the struggle for Independence that Hidalgo and Allende quarreled so bitterly. In spite of their differences, the tactician and soldier and the charismatic priest made a very good team, something they realized at the end when it was too late.

Allende is today remembered as one of the great leaders of the early Independence movement, and his remains rest in Mexico City's hallowed Independence Column alongside those of Hidalgo, Jiménez, Aldama and others.

Adult Exchange - Schedule of Events

When I was 12 years old in 1965 I went to Taxco with the very first Youth Exchange group. That was an experience I will always remember. To this day I am still in contact with my first Taxco family and others that I have met though the years. When you participate in the exchange part of our organization, it is an amazing cultural experience. You will have a great time and as an added plus, you make lifelong friendships.



Ceci Gomez-Soles

It is my honor this year to be the Chairman of the Adult Exchange group. We will be hosting 8 guests from Taxco this year with an exciting program. They arrive Oct 4th and will be here through the 13th when they will depart. I encourage you to participate in any of the activities planned, especially the Welcome party on Tuesday October 4th at the Canoga Park's Women's Club, and the Farewell Party on Sunday October 9th at the Elks Lodge in Canoga Park.

We are hoping to have a big turnout for both these events, and I look forward in seeing you there. The visitation program schedule will also be on our website for you to review in a few days.

Schedule of Events

October 4	11:55 AM 2:55 PM 6:00 PM	Part of Delegation (3 people) Arrive at Airport - LAX Balance of Delegation (5 people) Arrive at Airport - LAX Welcome Party - Canoga Park Women's Club - \$30.00 Per Person
October 5	10:00 AM	Depart to Las Vegas (from Lewis home) Lunch in Barstow at Mega Tom's - 1701 E. Main St., Barstow Check In at Orleans Hotel - \$69.00 per night (includes tax & resort fee) Buffet Dinner at Orleans Hotel - \$24.00 (includes tax & tip)
October 6	8:00 AM 10:00 AM 6:30 PM 9:00 PM	Breakfast Buffet - Orleans Hotel - \$12.96 (includes tax & tip) Free Time with Host - (Host to provide lunch) Dinner (location to be announced) Purple Reign show - Tribute to Prince at Westgate Hotel - \$30.00
October 7	8:00 AM 12:00 PM	Breakfast Buffet - Orleans Hotel - \$12.96 (includes tax & tip) Check out of Orleans Hotel Free Day - Lunch & Dinner provided by Host - Return to Canoga Park
October 8	11:30 AM	TMZ Celebrity Tour - \$54.00 - Depart from HardRock Café 6801 Hollywood Blvd. - Lunch at the HardRock Café after tour
October 9	6:00 PM	Farewell Dinner - Canoga Park Elk's Lodge - \$30.00 per person
October 10		Free Day
October 11	6:00 PM	Family Dinners
October 12	11:00 AM 12:30 PM	School Visitation - Anatola Elementary - 7364 Anatola Ave., Van Nuys Joint Board Meeting - BBQ Lunch - At Lewis Home - 21305 Chase St.
October 13	1:00 PM 11:00 PM	Part of Delegation Returns to Taxco - Departure from LAX Part of Delegation Returns to Taxco - Departure from LAX

FOT Members are invited and encouraged to attend any/all of the functions highlighted in bold above.

My First Visit To Taxco - Barb White



Barb White

I remember that June in 1969 - my first visit to Taxco. I was 19 years old. Our student exchange group had about 16 members but each member was put into a different family home when we arrived in Taxco.

I didn't speak Spanish beyond "Buenos Dias" and "Como esta usted?" and "Gracias." The family I stayed with did not speak English. I was nervous that first night going to bed in a strange bed in a strange house. But the next morning, my new family had breakfast together - I was given plenty to eat and drink. I couldn't speak to them or vice versa but what does that matter when you have plenty to eat, a bed and a bathroom and shower? I used my Spanish phrases every day with everyone I met. My experience playing charades came in handy. Then I smiled. My smile showed that I was content, had everything I needed and was ready for the adventure. I became very popular with my smile.

Some people spoke English, some just Spanish. I started to learn a few words for the food I liked so that I could ask for it. And the word for the bathroom was very important each time I went to a new place.

During those next days I met so many kind, generous, warm and fun-loving people who took care of me when I needed something and then had fun along with me. All of us Canoga Park students and our hosts got together for trips to local areas of interest, museums, and parties where we could dance or swim. I will always remember that during that June trip, my Mexican family and I sat around the television watching the first moon landing. What a great memory for me! They loved it as much as I did.

Taxco is built in the colonial style which means cobble stone streets and tile roofs. Walking up and down the hills of Taxco, in and out of stores selling beautiful silver handicrafts, is an exhilarating experience. The town square, the zocalo, is overshadowed by the beautiful, majestic Santa Prisca church. The best view to enjoy the zocalo is from the balcony of Bar Paco. The cafe bar has a new name now but to me it will always be Bar Paco.

I had the adventure of a lifetime. By the end of my stay I had many friends who I have corresponded with since. YES, since 1969!! It opened my eyes to the fact that in our world we are all the same. We are all human beings with the same desires the same needs. What you get from a Taxco visit is a glimpse into the lives of a family in a different culture. AND you actually become part of their family. You see that there are many ways to a solution — not just the way we do things in the U.S. It was a broadening of my understanding of people, and I came away with a respect, and a love for the people, the culture, the food and the country of Mexico.

If you are a new member to the Friends of Taxco, please join us for one of the parties when the Taxco visitors are here in Canoga Park. But if you want to take your membership to the next level, visit Taxco and enjoy the adventure! I recommend it highly!

2016 Adult Exchange Group Now Forming

Our membership has been invited to make a trip down to Taxco by our Sister City. The timeframe that has been tentatively looked at is going down during the last week of October and returning sometime the first week in November. As usual the visitation would last for 10 days. Your cost to enjoy the hospitality of our friends in Taxco is your plane fare and a few small host/hostess gifts.

If Interested Contact Ceci Gomez-Soles
ninteen99@aol.com - (818) 917-4127

September Ways N Means Event

Food & Football



Poolside At the Lamoreaux's



Saturday - September 17th - 6:30 PM

Featuring the cooking of a student from Mission College Culinary School.
Preparing food themed around the football teams.
Wear your favorite team shirt or colors.

\$16.00
Per person



Are You Ready
For Some
Football?

*Green Bay Packers Cheese & Detroit Lions Brat Bites
New Orleans Saints Shrimp Salad
LA Ram Pork Chops
Washington Redskins Potatoes
Patriots Boston Baked Beans
Steelers Stack Dessert*

Reservations Contact Fayleen

Graphfx1@earthlink.net

818/259 2866



Presidents Article

The FOT board has a busy fall planned for our members. We hope you will mark your calendars and join us for multiple events!

September 17th we kick off football season with a poolside dinner prepared by a student from Mission College. All courses are themed after a football team. See the flyer for details.

October 4th our Taxco delegation arrives. We have guests arriving for a fun filled educational 10 days. Please join us for the welcome party on the 4th. Ceci is chairing their visit. Please call her if you can lend a hand. She has an article with all the visitation details. If you are not hosting a guest, please consider hosting a family dinner. We want our guests to experience time with as many of our members as possible. The farewell dinner will be a fun filled evening. Mark your calendars for Monday October 10th.



Jo Lamoreaux

We have an invitation to send a delegation down to Taxco to celebrate their major holiday Dia de Los Muertos the end of October and early November. Those that have been to Taxco say it is one of the best times to visit. I would like to put a delegation together to visit this year. As a guest, your only cost is an airline ticket! This is a unique opportunity, our Taxco friends are excited to host delegation from Canoga Park. If you are interested, see the detailed article. We need to commit by September 15th. They would like time to plan an exciting visit for us! Please consider it.

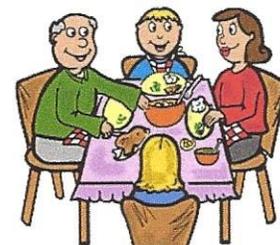
Want To Throw A Family Dinner?



We need Volunteers to host dinners for our Taxco guests.

If you are interested please call or email Ceci Gomez-Soles

ninteen99@aol.com - (818) 917-4127



Calendar of Events 2016

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| September 17 | Ways N Means Event - 6:00 PM
\$16.00 Lamoreaux Home |
| September 24 | Board Meeting - 10:00 AM - Pot Luck Brunch
Ana Bonilla Home |
| October 4 - 13 | Taxco Delegation Visit to Canoga Park
See Schedule of Events Page 3 |
| November 6 | General Meeting - 1:00 PM - Luncheon
\$12.00 Canoga Park Women's Club - 7401 Jordan Ave. |
| November 13 | Installation of Officers - Dinner
Location TBD |
| November 19 | Board Meeting - No Brunch
Location TBD |



FRIENDS OF TAXCO
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