

The history of Vista is a colorful one, full of interesting people, places and events.

It stretches back more than 200 years – to the days of the Spanish explorers and missionaries.

The recorded history of the region begins with the arrival in the late 1700's of the Mission padres who traveled north from San Diego along the original El Camino Real – the King's Highway – which actually passed through Vista on its way to the Mission San Luis Rey. In 1850, Col. Cave J. Couts, Sr., who later constructed the magnificent Guajome ranch house adobe, drew a map which plainly shows Vista on the original El Camino Real over which Portola, Crespi, Fages, and Moncado first traveled. Others who passed through Vista in its earliest days included Jedediah Smith, General Kearny, Commodore Stockton, Kit Carson, and Jean Baptiste Charbonneau, son of the Indian maiden guide of the Lewis and Clark expeditionary force.

Shortly after Mission San Luis Rey was secularized in the 1830's, an Indian neophyte named Felipe Subria squatted on lands lying along Buena Vista Creek. To make the ownership legal, Mexican Governor Pio Pico granted Subria the 1,184 acres he had long been claiming. Subria soon deeded the property to his daughter who in turn handed over ownership to Jesus Machado to pay off an \$8 debt.

The stagecoach brought a new dimension to Rancho Buena Vista in 1852. The Browning & Alexander Stage Coach Line began operating semi-weekly, stopping at Vista on the way between Los Angeles and San Diego. Stages stopped here beneath a huge sycamore tree that grew alongside what is now Dura Paint Store at the corner of Main St and Citrus Avenue. It was also in 1852 that Cave Couts, Sr. began construction of the Rancho Guajome on what is now the northern outskirts of Vista. In its heyday it attracted many celebrities, including Gen. (later President) Ulysses S. Grant, Helen Hunt (author of "Ramona") and author Peter Kyne.

In 1862, a severe earthquake struck the area, followed by three years of severe drought. In 1870, Bernard Delpy arrived from France to build what eventually became known as "Delpy Corners" at the intersection of today's East Vista Way and Foothill Drive. His nephew, Jules Jacques Delpy, joined him in 1879 and together they planted several hundred acres of grapes. In 1886, they built the first successful winery in the country. The winery was shut down by the prohibition era.

Vista received its name in an unusual manner. A settler named John Frazier lived where Peto's Farm Supplies was located on W. Vista Way, near where the railroad tracks are today. He constructed a mineral well and took to calling the area "Frazier's Crossing." On September 1, 1882 he applied for a permit with the U.S. Postal Department to call the town Frazier's Crossing. The application

came back with the simple notation; "There is already a Frazier Post Office in Tulare County. Submit another name." Frazier did just that with the name "Vista." This time the Post Office Department accepted the name and permission was granted for him to open Vista's first post office on October 9, 1882.

In 1887, the Santa Fe Railroad Company laid its tracks from Oceanside to Escondido through Vista. In 1912, A.W. Martin organized the Vista Land & Water Co. He dug a shallow well where the Lincoln Middle School is today, and pumped water up the hill to a steel tank opposite the present Wildwood Park. In 1913, the Santa Fe Railroad announced it would build a Vista railroad depot at the cost of \$8,007. The station was completed in 1914 and was used until the late 1970s, when it was moved to 201 Washington St., where it became the home of the Vista Chamber of Commerce - and remains the Chamber's home today.

During the winter of 1912 – 1913, the Martin Corporation began of the 26-room Vista Inn on the corner of Vista Way and Santa Fe Ave. The Inn was to be the cradle of birth for numerous civic organizations, including the Chamber of Commerce, the Vista Irrigation District, the Vista Press, and the First National Bank of Vista. Eventually, the Inn was moved down the block and then dismantled for its lumber in 1960.

Electric power came to Vista in 1916 and the Vista Irrigation district was formed in 1923, bringing the first water to town in 1926. Following the close of World War II, Vista began to attract new settlers and new construction was everywhere. Determined to become master of its own destiny. Vista was incorporated into a city on January 28, 1963

In January 2003, the City of Vista celebrated its 40th anniversary of incorporation.