

Our Policies

Research

The department is open weekdays from 9 am to 4:30 pm. Closed on weekends. Appointments are encouraged.

Copying

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The work of the Local History, Genealogy & Special Collections Department is made possible through the generous funding of the New Jersey Historical Commission, a division of the Department of State; the Union County Office of Cultural & Heritage Affairs; the Plainfield Cultural & Heritage Commission; the Plainfield Foundation.; and the Friends of Plainfield Public Library (FOPPL).

Come see what you can discover!



VISIT THE LIBRARY'S PLAINFIELD ROOM

Local History
(908) 757-1111 ext. 1400

Website
www.plfdpl.info

Email
localhistory@plfdpl.info

Address
800 Park Avenue
Plainfield, NJ 07060

HISPANIC HERITAGE IN PLAINFIELD



EARLY RESIDENTS

Some of the earliest known Plainfield residents from Latin America came from Argentina, Puerto Rico, Cuba, and Venezuela in the late 1800s.

Wants to be an American
Alexander Tapia Diaz, a young Porto Rican, is spending the summer in Plainfield. He has been sent to the States to learn English. Mr. Diaz already gives evidence of being able to acquire the language quickly. He is boarding at 338 East Front street.

Daily Press, August 11, 1899.

Alexander Diaz became a merchant and lived in Plainfield for many years.

Start your research with Federal and State Census records, and continue with our early local newspapers.

Spanish Course to be Opened.
The educational department of the Y. M. C. A. have secured an instructor for their Spanish classes, which will be opened next week. The teacher will be Jose A. Machado, and is a graduate of Harvard University. When the classes are gotten into working order, Monday will be the night assigned to the study of Spanish.

Courier News, October 26, 1898.

Born in Cuba, Jose Machado immigrated here in 1866.

ONLINE RESEARCH

Access From Home or Library

ProQuest Historical Newspapers

Search the Courier News back to 1891
Historical Local Newspapers
1837 to 1918

Ancestry.com Library Edition

Family history information, with 5 billion names and 4,000 searchable databases.

FamilySearch Affiliate Library

Explore the world's largest collection of free family trees, genealogy records and International resources.

HeritageQuest Online

A comprehensive treasury of American genealogical sources, family histories, and more.

Plainfield City Directories

1868 to 1982

Rodgers M. & M. Co., Inc., ladies' furngs, 207 North av,
Melissa Rodgers, sec
Rodgers Melissa, sec M. & M. Rodgers Co., Inc., h Cran-
ford, N. J.
Rodman May, h 325 Franklin pl
Rodriguez Soila, maid, 47 Westervelt av
Rogers A. Burnett, machinist, h 508 Watchung av
Rogers Albert, (col), pool, 308 Liberty, h 541 W 3d

Plainfield City Directory, 1914.

Born in Venezuela in 1875, Soila Rodrigues came to Plainfield in 1895 and lived here until her death in 1915.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

Newspapers report local news about residents, including birth announcements, marriages, and death or funeral notices.

COSTALES—Killed in action, Oct. 16, 1918, France, Corporal Carlos R. Costales, Company F, 113th Infantry (former Co. K., of Plainfield), son of J. Antonio and Elsie Costales, and grandson of J. de J. Costales, in his 23rd year.

Courier News, November 30, 1918.

Carlos Costales was a 3rd generation Plainfielder, who fought and died in WWI. His grandfather, Jose Sr., immigrated here from Havana, Cuba in the 1850s.

There are very few photographs of these early immigrants to the Queen City. Sometimes, there may be a passport photo found via one of our online resources.



*Arthur E. Lee
Passport Photo, 1920.*

Born in Puerto Rico in 1874, Arthur Lee lived in Plainfield by 1895. He married Susan Vail in 1896. They lived in a house located where PHS now stands.