

**L2007.16  
Imperial Court  
Collection, 1985-2015**

**FINDING AID AUTHOR**

Gabrielle Garcia

**ACQUISITION INFORMATION**

An anonymous donor mail-in donated these materials on behalf of the Imperial Court de San Diego to Lambda Archives of San Diego in 2007.

**PROCESSING INFORMATION**

This collection was processed by Gabrielle Garcia as part of the 2020 CSL Project.

**EXTENT**

Number of containers: File folder

Linear feet of shelf space:

**ABSTRACT**

**BIOGRAPHY OR HISTORY**

The international Court System was founded in 1965 by War World II veteran and gay icon, Jose Julio Sarria who in 1961 became the first openly gay candidate for public office in North America. The first Imperial Court Chapter was established in San Francisco and now there are chapters in over 68 cities within the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Sarria was the titular leader of the world's largest LGBT organizations until 2007 when he named and crowned Nicole Murray Ramirez (Empress Nicole the Great de San Diego) as his successor within the title and position as "Queen Mother I of the Americas". "The best way to describe the Court System is to say it's the gay Shriners or elks of the Americas", states Murray Ramirez.

The first Imperial Coronation Ball held at what is now the Holiday Inn at the Embarcadero drew over 1,000 people and made it the first "homosexual event" ever held in a public hotel in San Diego. Elected the first monarchs of San Diego were Emperor I Omar (who currently is the owner of No. 1 5th Ave.) and legendary entertainer Empress Tony Tann who died of AIDS in the 1980's.

Nicole Murray Ramirez actually was one of the eight candidates who ran for "Empress II" and placed fourth and was elected Baroness de San Diego but went on to be elected

Empress! The Court of San Diego has established itself as one of the most successful fundraising organizations in the country raising countless hundreds of thousands of dollars over these past three decades. The Imperial Court played a major part in helping establish the LGBT Center, San Diego Pride, Stepping Stone, AIDS Walk, Mama's Kitchen, and many other organizations with their badly needed fundraisers that in the 1970's occurred almost weekly. The court of San Diego has the distinction of establishing one of the first LGBT Student Scholarships in the nation in 1979 now called the Harvey Milk/Nicole Murray Ramirez Student Scholarship Fund.

Imperial Court de San Diego Facebook page

## **COLLECTION SCOPE AND CONTENT**

The collection contains materials pertaining to the Imperial Court de San Diego, their coronation ceremonies, and their events from 1985-2015. Materials include a newspaper clipping, souvenir/event programs, tickets, and flyers.

## **ARRANGEMENT**

This collection consists of 1 folder.

## **SEPARATED MATERIAL**

None.

## **SUBJECTS**

Imperial Court de San Diego, Nicole Murray Ramirez, fundraisers, fundraising, drag, drag queens, Gay Rights National Lobby (GRNL), Queen Eddie -- Imperial Court, San Diego Regal Coronation, Susan Jester

## **CONDITIONS GOVERNING ACCESS**

This collection is open and available for research use. Copyright restrictions apply.

## **PREFERRED CITATION**

The suggested citation for the collection is:

[Item Description]  
Imperial Court, 1985-2015  
Lambda Archives of San Diego  
San Diego, California

## RELATED MATERIAL

L2004.04

## LOCATION NOTE

C.11.2.4

## LANGUAGES

English

## CONTAINER LIST

| Box | Folder | Description   | Date(s) |  |
|-----|--------|---|---------|--|
| 1   | 1      | "New Directors" newspaper clipping and photocopy 1985                             | 1985    |  |
| 1   | 2      | 1985 "XIII Imperial Pegasus Court" program  | 1985    |  |
| 1   | 3      | 1993 "Queen Eddie 65th Birthday Roast: A Fundraiser for Special Delivery" program | 1993    |  |
| 1   | 4      | 1993 "Coronation XXII" program  | 1993    |  |
| 1   | 5      | 1985 "A Military Affair"  | 1985    |  |
| 1   | 6      | "Coronation XLIV" ticket  |         |  |
| 1   | 7      | Small flyer for "The Legends - August 13 - An Evening of Soul and Funk"           |         |  |
| 1   | 8      | 2015 flyer for "The Monarch's Birthday Show"                                      | 2015    |  |
| 1   | 9      | 2015 "Coronation XLIII" program   | 2015    |  |
| 1   | 10     | 2015 flyer for "The Easter Show by Reign XLIII"                                   | 2015    |  |
| 1   | 11     | Empty mailing envelope with no sender   |         |  |