

# CHULA VISTA HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD

*Del Mar and 2nd Avenues between  
I and J Streets*

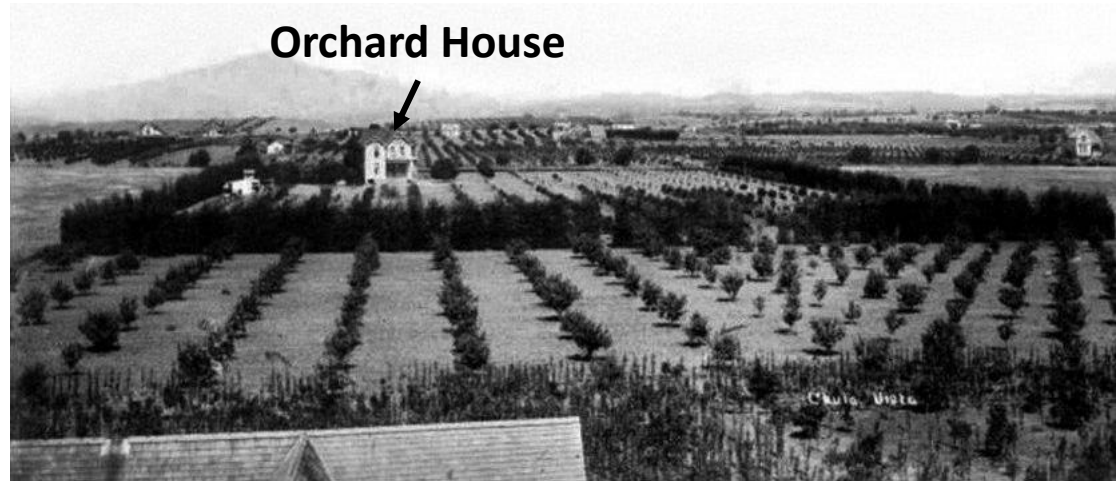
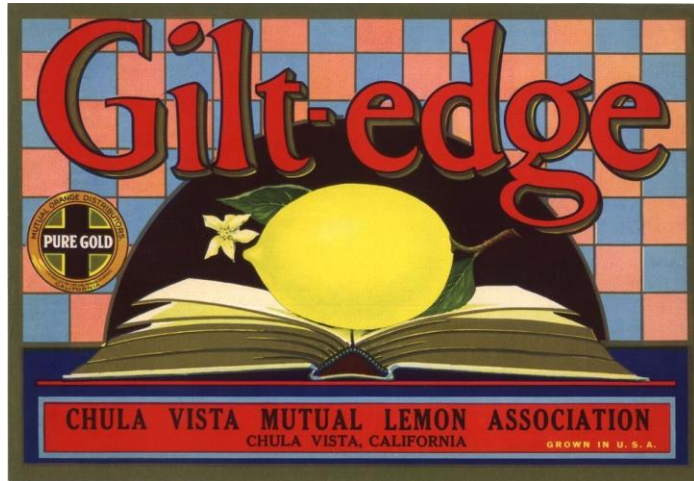
**By George Gillow**

Neighborhood where prominent citizens lived: mayors, doctors, attorneys, bankers and others.  
Homes of many architecture styles.



# Orchard Houses

- Chula Vista was once “The Lemon Capital of the World”.
- The homes on the lemon orchards were referred to as Orchard Houses.
  - Orchard Houses were of many different types of architectures.





# 616 Del Mar Avenue--Craftsman (1912)

- Home of **Edwin Smith**, the first Mayor of Chula Vista.
  - He was elected to the Board of Trustees (what the City Council was called then) in the same 1911 election where incorporation of Chula Vista as a city was approved.
  - He was chosen by the Board to be the first Mayor.

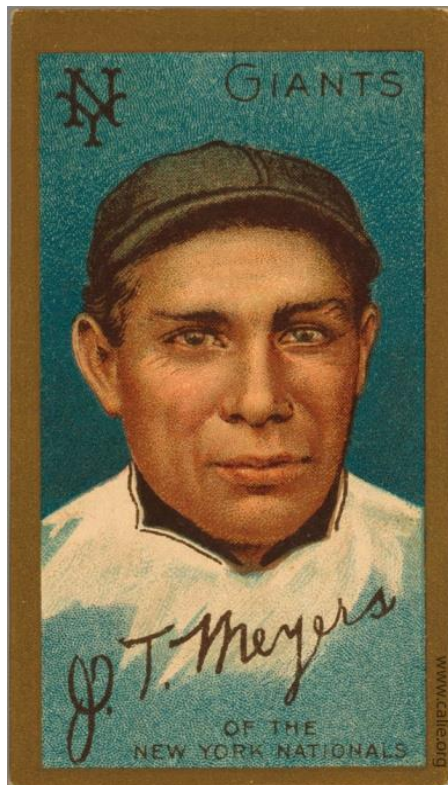


Edwin Smith standing in the center (without a hat) eating watermelon.

# 617 Del Mar Avenue--Spanish Revival (1911)

- The home was owned by Henry and Francis Fisher, prominent San Diego attorneys.
- It was sold in 1928 to John "Chief" Meyers.
  - He was the catcher for the NY Giants from 1909 to 1917 and a friend of Babe Ruth and Casey Stengel. They visited him at his home on Del Mar Ave.
  - Meyers played in the 1917 World Series.
  - Meyers was a Native American and had the nickname "Chief".

San Diego Historical Society



**Babe Ruth duck hunting at Sweetwater Lake.  
Babe Ruth visited Meyers at this home.**

## 630 Del Mar Avenue--Craftsman (1920)

- This home was owned by **Mayor George Rife** in the 1930s.
  - He was also the Tax Collector
  - Rife was the only Mayor to be removed/recalled. But he kept his job as councilman.
  - He died at the home in 1937. His body was found in the front yard.
  - His daughter, Edna Bruce, was a Chula Vista High School teacher.
- The Women's Club was upset with Mayor Rife because he shut down their "Wheel of Fortune" at the Fiesta de La Luna.
- Rife was a carpenter and may have built the house.
  - The house still has a "California Cooler". This is a screened-in food cabinet that brought in cool air from the cellar to the kitchen.





# 640 Del Mar Avenue--Craftsman (1923)

- Home of **Warner Edmonds**.
- He and his partner, **Greg Rogers**, established the first bank in Chula Vista.
  - The **Peoples State Bank** (building still there at 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. and F St.).
- The bank was later sold to Amadeo Giannini's Bank of Italy.
  - Established in San Francisco to serve working class citizens.
  - Giannini changed the name to Bank of America.



Peoples State Bank at 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. and F St.

# 659 Del Mar Avenue--Craftsman (1914)

- Home of **Dr. Ray Penwarden**.
  - First dentist in Chula Vista.
  - He had his office in the Melville building at the S/E corner of F and 3rd ( Appendix 1).
- Daughter Ruth had an asthma problem, so they moved to a warmer climate in Barstow.
- They later moved back to San Diego, but not Chula Vista.





## 665 Del Mar Avenue--Spanish Eclectic

- Home of **Peter DeGraaf** a Councilman and Mayor in the 1950s and 1960s.
  - He owned and operated a dairy in the Sweetwater Valley.
  - He was born in the Netherlands.



PETER DeGRAAF



## 669 Del Mar Avenue--Craftsman (1912) "El Nido"

- El Nido ("the Nest" in Spanish) was the home of **Dr. George Worthington**.
  - Chula Vista's first medical doctor.
- The house was sold to **Dr. Karl Kellogg** in 1927.
  - He, also, was a medical doctor.
  - Dr. Karl Kellogg was the eldest son of **W. K. Kellogg**, the founder of the Kellogg Cereal Company of Battle Creek, Michigan.
  - Dr. Kellogg's uncle, **John Kellogg**, invented corn flakes at his sanatorium in Battle Creek, Michigan.
  - Dr. Kellogg served on the Chula Vista Elementary school board and a school is named after him.
- Dr. Worthington and Dr. Kellogg had offices in the Melville building at the S/E corner of F Street and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue (see Appendix 1 and 2).

## 669 Del Mar Avenue--Craftsman (1912) "El Nido"



Dr. Kellogg's younger brother, John Kellogg, was President of the Kellogg Cereal Company for a few years. John died at El Nido in 1950, during a visit.



Dr. Karl Kellogg is standing in the middle back of the picture. His brother John is standing at the right. The three boys on the left of the picture are Dr. Karl's sons Will Lewis and Karl Landrum and John's son Will Keith II. Seated on the right of W.K. Kellogg is John's other son, John Jr.



## 681 Del Mar Avenue--Victorian (1888)

- This home was originally an orchard house built on 3rd Avenue.
  - It was moved to Del Mar Avenue in 1908.
- The original owners were the Francisco Family.
  - Their daughter Dema married **William Peters** and they later lived at this home for a few years after Dema's parents died.
  - Peters owned the Peters Feed and Hardware store on 3rd Ave. (Appendix 6).
  - Peters was Mayor of Chula Vista from 1927 to 1930.



Original location on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue.  
House was an orchard house.

## 613 Second Avenue--Queen Ann Victorian (1888)

- Original orchard house at this location.
- First owners were the **Byron Bronson** family.
- Later the home was purchased by **Florence and Charles Bean**.
  - Possibly related to Joshua Bean, San Diego's first Mayor (1850).
    - Joshua Bean was the brother of the famous/infamous Judge Roy Bean of Texas.
- These days the house is often called the "Blue Castle."



Carriage house in back of main house.

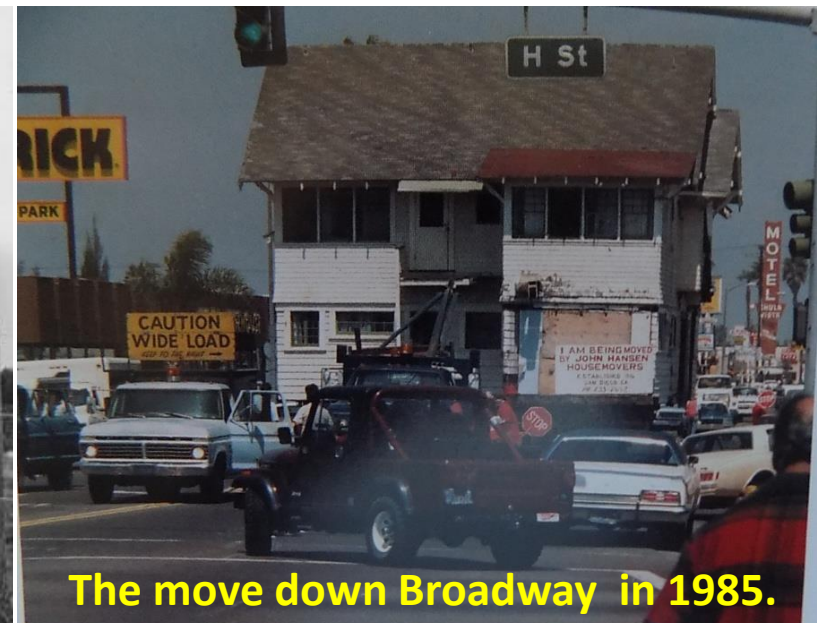


## 616 Second Avenue--Craftsman (1910)

- The home was built by **Greg Rogers** at 699 E Street.
  - Known as “The Breeze.”
- It was moved to its present location in 1985.
- **Greg Rogers** was the co-founder of the Peoples State Bank with **Warner Edmonds** (see 640 Del Mar).
- This link to the Greg Rogers Story at CV Library:  
<https://www.thefcvl.org/uploads/6/5/6/5/6565347/rogersbooklet.pdf>
- Rogers was elected to the first Board of Trustees (City Council) in 1911. He also served on the Chula Vista Elementary School Board.
  - There is an elementary school named after him.



Original Location at 669 E Street.



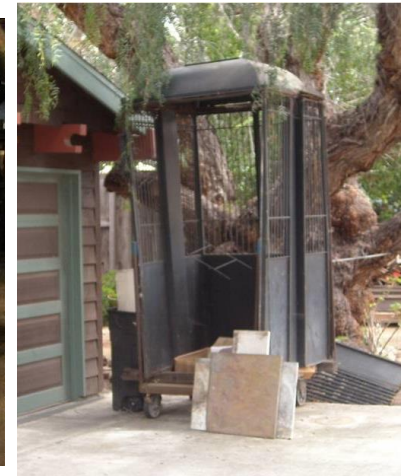
The move down Broadway in 1985.

# 616 Second Avenue--Craftsman (1910)

## Inside the Greg Rogers House



**Basement**



**This small elevator was once in the house.**



## 642 Second Avenue--Victorian (1889)

- The home was built by Garrett Garrettson at 166 Third Avenue.
  - He was a wealthy banker and became a director of the First National Bank of San Diego.
  - It was originally an Orchard House on a lemon orchard.
- The home was later sold to the Frank family.
- **Corinne McCall** purchased the home for \$1 in 1982 and had it moved to 642 Second Avenue where she restored the home.
- Here is a link to a **YouTube video of the “Wonderland” TV show** where Noah Taffola is given a tour of the home by Corinne:
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=at7abQz6LSk> (This video is **unlisted**.)



The Home when at 166 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue.

# 644 Second Avenue--Victorian (1888)

- The home was purchased in 1908 by **William and Jennie MacDonald**.
- Their son **William MacDonald Jr.** was known worldwide for his amateur radio work.
- Jennie, was born in Springfield Ill and later moved to Kansas.
  - Jennie's father was James Doolittle Jr. and her Grandfather, **James R Doolittle**, was a US Senator and knew and supported Abraham Lincoln.
- After William died Jennie lived in the home until 1935.
  - She sold it when her son, William MacDonald Jr., died in 1935. She moved into the house next door at 634 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue.
- Corinne's McCall's parents purchased the home in 1948 and she and her sisters grew up there. The home is currently owned by **Kristopher** and **Theresa Finch**. They have been doing restoration work. Interesting that Theresa grew up in Springfield Ill.



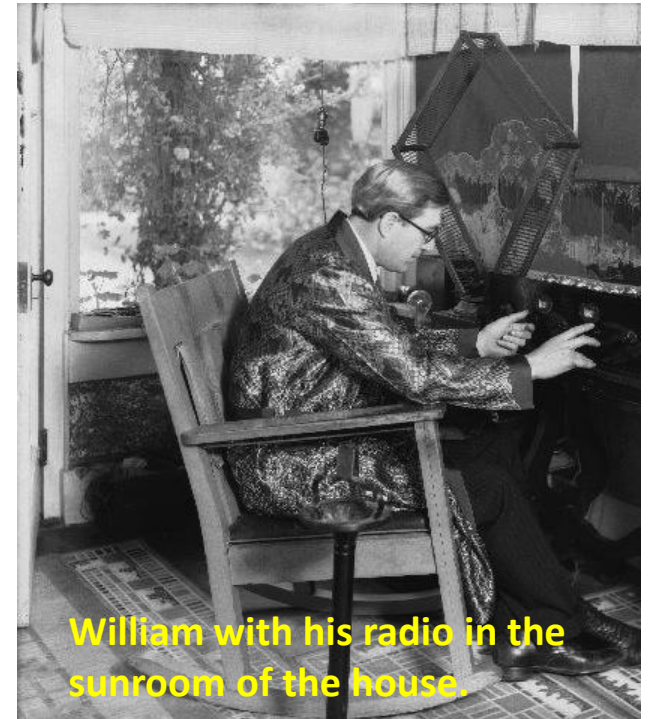


## 644 Second Avenue--Victorian (1888)

- **William MacDonald Jr.** was known worldwide for his innovations with amateur radio.
  - Known as **DXing** which is receiving commercial broadcasts from long distances (see more in Appendix 5).
  - **DX** is based on telegraphic shorthand for “distance”.
- MacDonald was a professional actor having acted in Cort Theater in New York City for two years then with the Brissac Stock Company in San Diego. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virginia\\_Brissac](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virginia_Brissac))



- MacDonald was the first person to be listed **twice** in “**Ripley’s Believe it or Not**” for logging in worldwide commercial radio stations
  - First for 1029 stations then for 1400.
- He took up the amateur radio hobby when he became too ill to work as an actor.
- He developed a technique of deep grounding of a large outdoor antenna with a pipe filled with water to a depth of 90 feet. It provided low ground impedance.



William with his radio in the sunroom of the house.

## 644 Second Avenue--Victorian (1888) Inside the Jennie MacDonald House





# Appendices

1. Miller Building on Third Avenue.
2. Trolley Map.
3. Sears and Roebuck Catalog Craftsman House Kit.
4. Chula Vista Election Results 1911.
5. More on William MacDonald's Radio Hobby.
6. Peters Feed Store on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue.
7. Trains and Lemon Packing Plant on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue.
8. Chula Vista Map showing old street numbers.
9. References.

## Appendix 1: Melville Building SE Corner of Third Ave. and F St.



This picture of the Melville building was taken in the early 1900s. The building is still located at the southeast corner of F St. and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. **Dr. George Worthington, Dr. Karl Kellogg and Dr. Ray Penwarden** had their medical offices on the second story of the building. Notice the **trolley** in front of the building. You could board a trolley here and travel to places like La Jolla, Mission Beach, Point Loma, Mission Hills and Downtown San Diego.



From there they could take a trolley to places like La Jolla, Point Loma, Balboa Park, Mission Hills and Downtown San Diego.

# Appendix 3:

## Sears and Roebuck Craftsman House Kit Catalog Page 54

A number of homes in  
Chula Vista were  
made from these kits.

**SIX ROOMS BATH AND PORCH**





*At the price quoted we will supply all the material to build this six-room bungalow, including all mill work, lumber, lath, shingles, siding, building paper, eaves trough, down spout, sash weights, bookcase colonnade, medicine case, mantel, hardware and painting material. Price does not include cement, brick or plaster. This house can be built with the rooms reversed. See page 3.*



FLOOR PLAN.

**Honor Bill**

### The Walton

No. 3050 "Already Cut" and Fitted.

## \$2,472<sup>00</sup>

See Description of "Honor Bill" Houses on Page 7.

**THIS** design embodies strength, dignity and gracefulness. It presents a most pleasing appearance and is of a character that will long retain popular favor.

**Main Floor** The six rooms and bath are well arranged. It is not necessary to enter any of the three bedrooms directly from the main rooms. Ample closets are provided and many of the latest ideas for space utilizers are embodied. The living room is of excellent proportions and well lighted. The fireplace and bookcase colonnade add to comfort as well as beauty. The dining room is flooded with sunshine by the row of windows on the left and with the long wall space opposite these windows you can place a buffet of any size. The kitchen is planned to make the work easy. Only a few steps away from the door to the dining room is the stove. On the landing at the grade entrance just inside the back door, which has a glass, is a space for refrigerator. All bedrooms have two windows and will comfortably accommodate the bedroom furniture. There is a closet with a door in two of the bedrooms, also a coat closet and a linen closet opening off the hall. There is a linen closet in the bathroom. A cedar chest forms the window seat in the front bedroom. Rooms are 9 feet from floor to ceiling.

**Basement** Excavated basement the full size of the bungalow. Has concrete floor and is 7 feet high from floor to joists.

We furnish our best "Quality Guaranteed" mill work, shown on pages 108 and 109. Interior doors are five-cross panel, with trim and flooring to match, all yellow pine, in beautiful grain and color. Windows are made of clear California white pine, with good quality glass set in with best grade of putty.

Built on a concrete foundation, No. 1 yellow pine construction. Sided with clear cypress siding and roofed with best grade thick cedar shingles over good wood sheathing.

Three coats of paint for outside woodwork; varnish and filler for interior. Chicago Design hardware, see page 116.

**Our Guarantee Protects You—Order Your House From This Book**

Price Includes Plans and Specifications.

**OPTIONS**

*Sheet Plaster and Plaster Finish to take the place of wood lath, \$241.00 extra. See page 114.*

*Oriental Asphalt Shingles, instead of wood shingles, \$34.00 extra.*

*Fire-Chief Shingle Roll Roofing, Red or Sea Green in color, instead of wood shingles, \$54.00 less.*

*Oak Trim Doors and Floors for living room and dining room, \$114.00 extra.*

*Clear maple flooring furnished for kitchen and bathroom, instead of yellow pine, no extra charge.*

*Storm Doors and Windows, \$68.00 extra.*

*Screen Doors and Windows, black wire, \$38.00 extra; galvanized wire, \$49.00 extra.*

*If Mantel is not wanted, \$49.00 less.*

*This house can be built on a lot 40 feet wide.*

For prices of Plumbing, Heating, Wiring, Electric Fixtures and Shades see page 115.



# Appendix 4: Chula Vista Election Results 1911

DATE: October 17, 1911  
 ELECTION: Special  
 TOTAL POPULATION OF CITY (1910) 550  
 TOTAL VOTES CAST: 215  
 COST OF ELECTION:

PRECINCTS:

## PROPOSITIONS:

I: Incorporation of City into a municipal incorporation of the 6th Class and election of officers.

TOTAL VOTES CAST  
 Yes: No:

121 88

ELECTION: Special

DATE: October 17, 1911

TOTAL POPULATION OF CITY ( 1910) 550

TOTAL VOTES CAST: (City) 215  
 (School)

COST OF ELECTION: (City)

OFFICE: TRUSTEES

Vacancies: 5

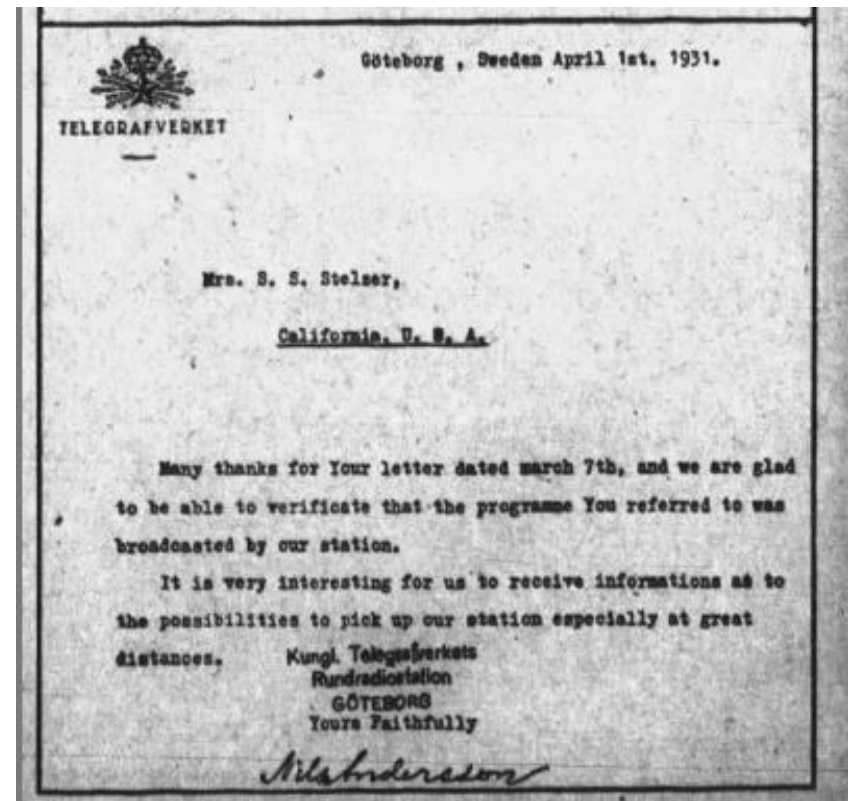
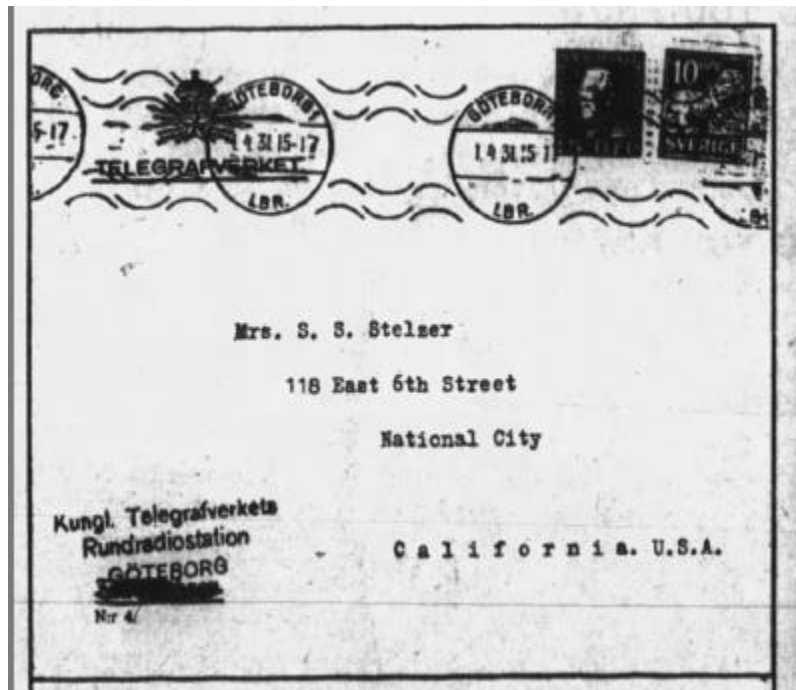
## NOMINEES

## TOTAL VOTE

E.T. SMITH	142
CHARLES BOLTZ	143
L.B. BARNES	139
GREGG ROGERS	144
CHARLES H. AUSTIN	144
Henry Smith	1
J.H. Radcliff	1
C.R. Colborn	1
Frank Howe	1
McCullogh	1
A.H. Skinner	1
S.W. Haines	4
E.W. Dyer	2

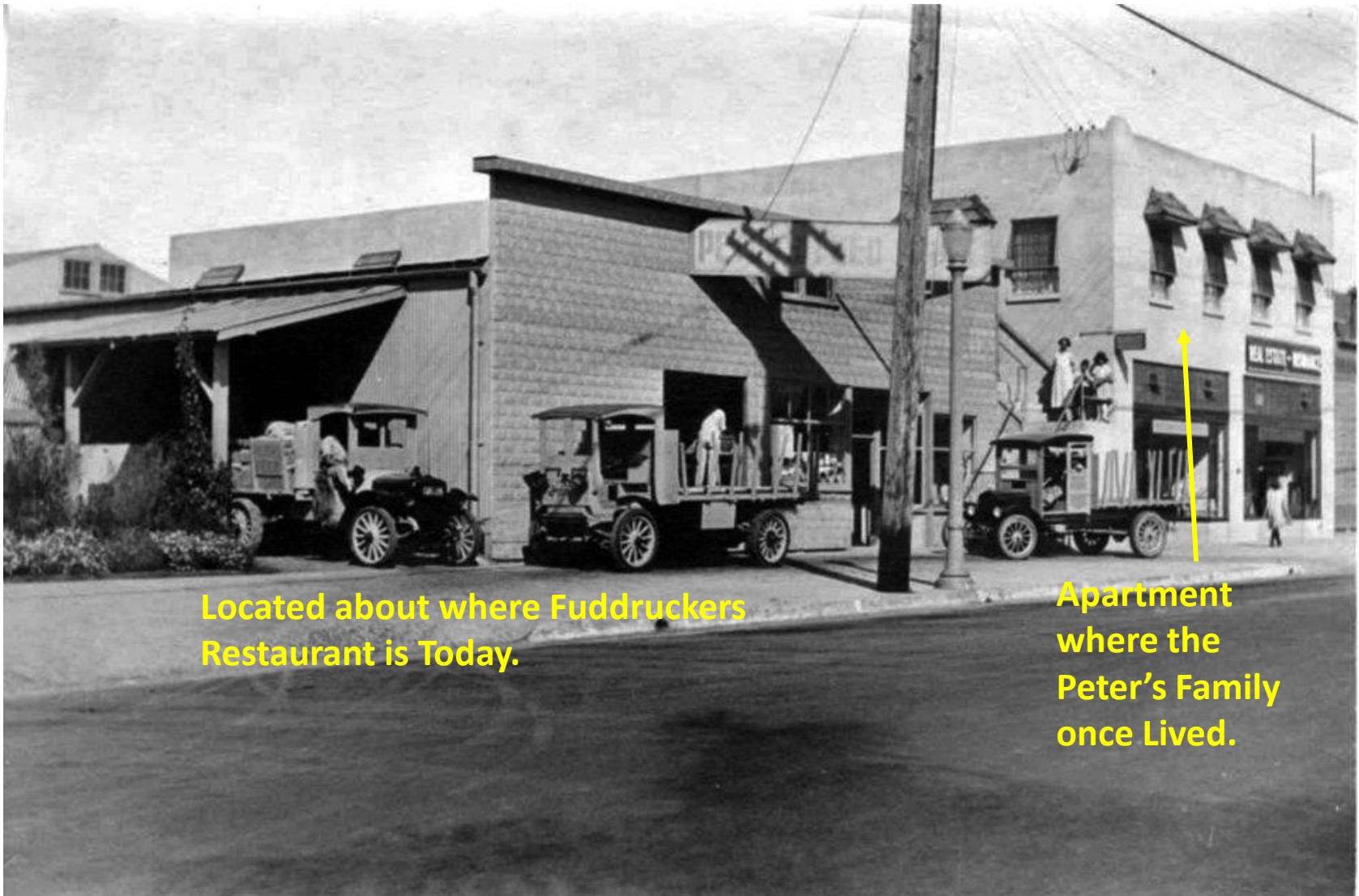
## Appendix 5: More on William MacDonald's Radio Hobby

- **William MacDonald's** worldwide radio reception was known as DXing (distant receiving).
- His amateur radio was different than the Ham radio amateurs who communicated with each other.
- MacDonald's radio was a **receiver only** where he tuned into commercial radio broadcasts worldwide.
  - After listening to a program from a station, he would send a certified letter to the commercial radio station to verify the broadcast that he had heard. Then hope for a reply letter.
  - MacDonald received 1000s of reply letters from radio stations worldwide. He kept a file of these.
- There were a number of people in the San Diego area who did this kind of DXing as a hobby.
  - Below is a sample letter sent to **Mrs. S. S. Stelzer**, an amateur operator in National City. It is from a commercial station in Gothenburg Sweden:





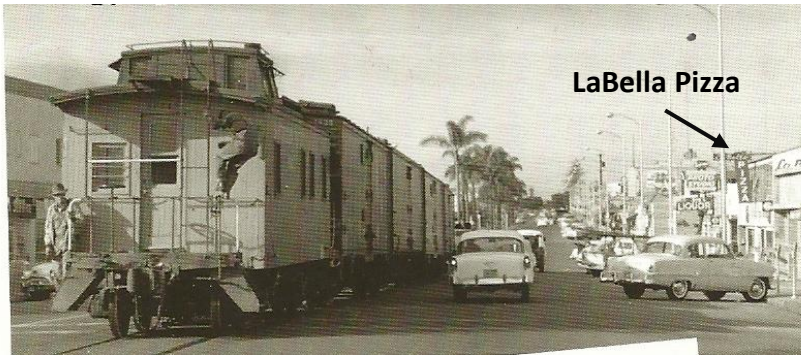
## Appendix 6: Peters Feed and Hardware Store



Located about where Fuddrucker's Restaurant is Today.

Apartment where the Peter's Family once Lived.

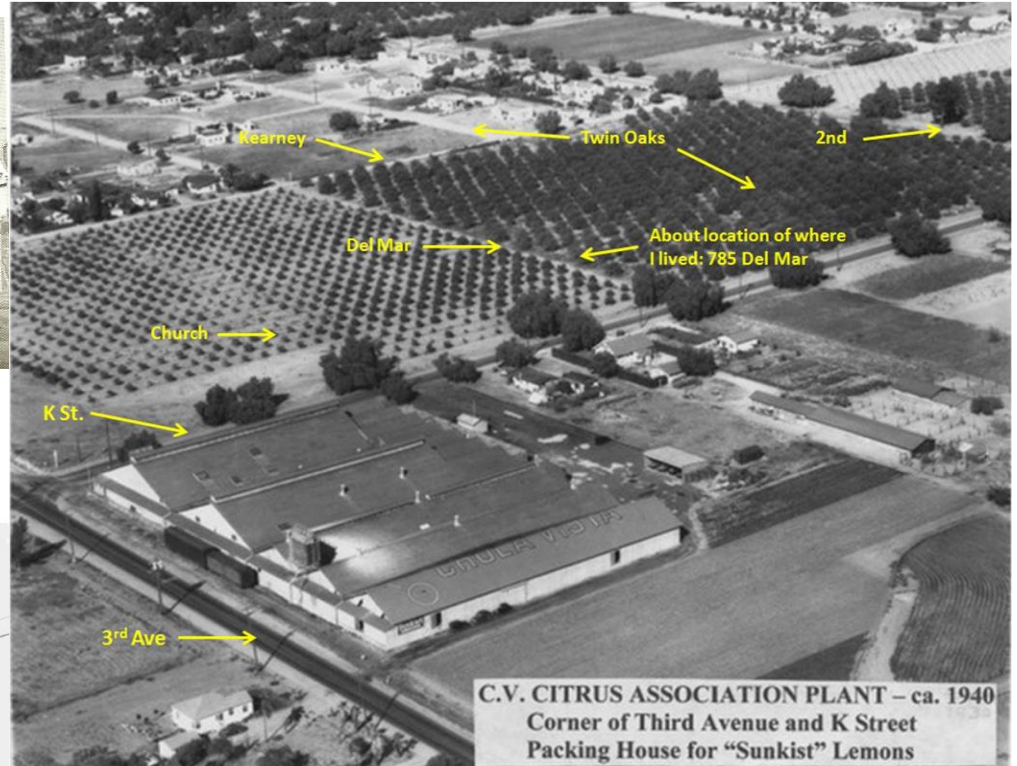
## Appendix 7: Trains and Lemon Packing on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue.



Train with reefer cars for lemons. It is stopped in front of La Bella Pizza Garden where the train crew bought pizzas.



Last Train on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue near Kearney Street in December 1960. Note Jack in the box head facing away from the street. Because it rotated.



Sunkist Packing Plant 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. and K St., 1920s



## Appendix 8: Vintage Chula Vista Map



Pre-1940s map showing original street numbers.

What is now Hilltop was 6th, 1<sup>st</sup> was 5<sup>th</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> was 4<sup>th</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> was the same, 4<sup>th</sup> was 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> was 1<sup>st</sup>.

These were changed in the 1940s so that house numbers on lettered streets matched the avenue numbers. So houses west of the new 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue had 200 numbers.

## Appendix 9: References

- ***Images of America Chula Vista*** by Peter Watry and Frank Roseman.
- [www.newspapers.com](http://www.newspapers.com).
- ***Chula Vista Centennial: A Century of People and Progress, 1911-2011*** by Dr. Steven Schoenherr.
- ***Chula Vista Heritage 1911 - 1986*** by City of Chula Vista.
- **Vintage San Diego** photographs on Facebook.
- ***Family, Friends, and Homes*** by Chula Vista Historical Society.
- ***The Kelloggs*** by Howard Markel (2017).
- **Cal Poly University** Library foundation.
- **Special Thanks to:**
  - Corinne McCall (Garrettson-Frank House).
  - Theresa Finch (Jennie MacDonald House).
  - Peter Watry (Chula Vista Historian).

