

## Once Upon a Time in North Park

### North Park Enters the Wireless Era

By Donald Covington

1922 was the year San Diego faced a brave new world by tuning in to local broadcasting from the KDPT station atop the Pythian Building downtown. The San Diego Union-Tribune's pioneer station began city-wide broadcasting on April 17<sup>th</sup> of that year. The first transmissions were brief evening concerts. These musical programs were followed on April 30<sup>th</sup> by the first broadcast sermon given by the Reverend Roy Campbell, a North Park resident and the pastor of the First Congregational Church. These concerts and sermons proved so popular with the growing number of San Diegans who had received sets that by November there were four stations competing for the local airwaves.

On April, 18, 1922, one day following the initial broadcasts, building permits were issued to Henry Stacey and Edward Bryans for the construction of two apartment buildings on the east side of the 3600 block of Park Blvd. Three days later the S.D. Daily Transcript announced that, "The two apartment houses on Park Blvd. being constructed by H.W. Stacey are to be equipped with radio apparatus for each apartment, so that all tenants may receive broadcasting music and all data." These two apartment buildings were probably the earliest ones built with such modern conveniences.

Both Stacey, the owner of the properties, and Bryans, the building designer and contractor, were residents of Greater North Park. Henry Stacey lived at 3419 Park Blvd. Edward F. Bryans lived at 3022 Upas Street in a bungalow on part of the property now occupied by Gypsy Office Supply.

Bryans had lived in North Park since 1913 when he moved into a Craftsman bungalow which he had built at 3544 Pershing Avenue. Subsequently there followed a string of Bryans' styled bungalows along Pershing (then Oregon) Avenue, as well as several in other parts of North Park. In 1922, Bryans' focus shifted from the small detached bungalow to the larger building of multiple flats. Many of those on Park Blvd. between Upas and University are his designs. E.F. Bryans retired from contracting in the 1950s and died in 1973 at the age of 92.