



805 McDonald Avenue



815 McDonald Avenue



725 McDonald Avenue



721 McDonald Avenue

The D. N. Carithers family rented 815 before moving to 725 McDonald in the 1930s.

The Godfrey family bought the home from Miss Wright. Neil Clark Godfrey was an attorney and became general counsel for the Arabian American Oil Company.

The Lester Murray Belden family purchased the home in 1964. Mr Belden is an attorney with the firm of Anderson, McDonald and Belden, in Santa Rosa. The Belden's have a three month old daughter, Cressey Joy.

The magnificent Irish Yew tree in the front garden at 815 was planted by the builder, Dr. Wright, before the turn of the century.

805

805 was originally two stories, with the first floor being the kitchen and dining section, and containing quarters for the help. It predates 815, so it was built before 1878. Dr. A. S. Wright had it built, then when he moved into 815, the Charles Wright family lived there.

About 1919, Harry Lilburn Hall and his wife, Annie Willson Hall (she was a native of Sebastopol) bought it from the Wright's. Mr Hall had owned a ranch on Wright Road, on which he raised hops. They sold the ranch when they moved to town.

The Hall's had one son, Harry Willson Hall, who worked for the post office, then was with Standard Oil Co., in 1919 becoming the first owner in the county of a privately owned service station. (Standard Oil, in Sebastopol.) Harry married Elvira Kenwerthy, and they have one son, James Willson Hall.

(In the 1890s, the Paul Hahman, Sr. family lived there, before building the home at 718 McDonald.)

In 1947, it became the home of Linus Byrne, with his wife Helen and children John E. Byrne, (now of Sacramento) and Mary Ann, (now Mrs Raymond Mariani, - parents of Anthony Michael). The Byrne's rented 805 until 1953, when they purchased it.

In the early 1960s, the home was leased by Kenneth Blackman and family, he being with the city planning department. Mrs Helen Byrne Detwiler is now in residence.

725

The original home on this site was a two story Victorian, dating back to the late 1870s or early 1880s. "When Byron M. Spencer, the first known resident owner landed in Santa Rosa in 1874, he received a cordial welcome to our city from the old timers, but when he began to build a frame grocery store on 4th st, he wondered if perchance he had committed some crime in his youth, the memory of which ever drove him to isolate himself in lonely places from his fellow men - this was because, when he was preparing to go into business, 4th street was a thoroughfare occupied only by surveyors stakes - and Main st (now Santa Rosa Ave and Mendocino Ave) looked out into the country."

But the street outgrew itself and spread into surrounding tracts. Another source says: "B. M. Spencer arrived in Santa Rosa November, 1874, and rented

the store now occupied by Carithers and Brooks, later selling it to J.C. Gamble in 1876.

Under the name of Spencer and Armstrong, he started a business in the Masonic building in May, 1877, then moved across the street December, 1878, in the Byington block.

"Byron M. Spencer owned two fine residences on McDonald Avenue and conducted a large grocery store on Fourth st below B St. He finally sold out to Thomas Brophy, who came from Sleepy Eye, Minnesota. Spencer was one of the organizers of the old Atheneum Theater Co. and was for some time its president!"

Mr Spencer was born in Albany Co., N.Y. in 1842. He was employed by an import house in N.Y.C. for ten years, then moved to Omaha, Neb. He was married in 1869 to Nellie M. Adams (of Maine) in Concord, N.H. They had three children; Harvey (died young); Louis R. (with Marathon Paper Mill, Wausau, Wisconsin); and Ralph J., who served as quartermaster in the U.S. Navy, aboard the cruiser Albany. Byron Spencer was a Mason, and was also associated with the local humane society. Mrs Spencer died in 1900.

The large family home had extensive grounds, with a family orchard, stables and gardens. Son Ralph, as recalled by a neighbor, was not above occasionally lifting the keys to the Wright's stables and letting Fanny, the horse, out. Then he would ride his bicycle down to Santa Rosa Creek and not come back until Mrs Spencer sent the maid after him.

(Apropos of this recollection, Isaac (Ike) Parsons' younger brother, John, once took a donkey up to the belfry of the high school on Hallow'een, and left it there. It drove people crazy with its braying, and the fire department was finally called to remove the animal.)

The Joseph T. Grace family lived in the old home before they built their lovely mansion on Fourth Street.

The next owners were the Maury Nelligan's, who bought it from the Spencer's, some years before 1921. In that year Mrs Joseph Nelligan (now Mrs Marie Keltner) had a lying in hospital in the old home. She generally had about three patients at a time, sometimes as many as six. Some of the doctors who officiated were Drs Bonner, Temple and Pryor. (Marie Nelligan, daughter of Mrs Keltner, has been Dean of Girls at Slater Jr. High School since it was built.)

The present home at 725 was built in 1931 for Maury Nelligan. Builder was Robert Whiting, and the cost was \$17,000. It stayed in the Nelligan family until 1935.

The new owners then became Mr and Mrs Donald N. Carithers, who had for a time lived at 815. Mr Carithers was owner of the White House Dept Store. He was born to a pioneer family in Santa Rosa, who had started the White House, with branches in Petaluma, Napa and Vallejo. The Carithers', with their daughters Jeanne and Judith, lived there until 1957.

Dr. William J. Rudee and his wife Helen, have made 725 their home since then. Dr. Rudee is a graduate of Stanford Medical School, class of 1939; Mrs Rudee is a registered nurse, a graduate of Stanford School of Nursing; and is currently on the Board of Education of Santa Rosa Schools; their children; Carolyn Shepard (Mrs Robert G. Young), graduate of U.C., Santa Barbara; Ann Rudee, graduate of U.C., with a Master's degree in psychology at Sonoma State College; John Rudee, student at Oakland College of Arts and Crafts, and Elaine, a student at Colorado State University.