Occupancy History of 302 W. Harrison, Harlingen

Norman Rozeff, November 2008

After the city was platted in 1908 the lots become slowly filled. The lots in the area west of the railroad tracks are sold to Anglos and Latins alike while, outside of commercial lots, the east side of the tracks has properties purchased exclusively by Anglos. W. Harrison Avenue is gradually built up starting with lots closest to the center of the town. The initial structures on both W. Harrison and W. Tyler Avenues are primarily modest frame houses often with part of the building dedicated to a business enterprise. Into the 1920s the west ends of these avenues are devoted to agriculture.

In the earliest telephone directory, that of the year 1930, 302 W. Harrison is occupied by one B. Garcia who is an employee of the auto repair business located at that site. The following year, 1931, has the site that of the Luna Garage with Juan Luna also residing in the building.

There are no entries for the 1935 and 1937-38 directories. It is highly likely that the original building was demolished at this time and a new one erected. The 1939 directory has the Behmer Company in the site. M. W. Behmer operates a garage there. At his time "garage" usually signifies an auto repair facility. M. W. and his wife Lucille reside at 709 E. Jackson Avenue.

The directories for 1941, 1942-43, and 1944 remain unchanged except for the latter a service station is now also noted at the location.

By 1946 Mr. Behmer is deceased. The Holsum Garage of the Holsum Baking Company is in the building this year. Likely the company is servicing their delivery fleet here.

By 1948 Holsum is gone and the building is listed as the residence of Mrs. Ella Miller. She is nowhere to be found in subsequent directories and may have died this year or the next. If there is a ghost currently haunting the site, she may be a possible candidate.

In 1950 the B. F. Goodrich Store, tire dealer, is in the building with A. G. Boycan as its manager. He will be succeeded as manager in 1952 by E. T. Sandell who fulfills that position into 1961 after which Boycan returns to the job through 1969. By 1971 Goodrich has moved into its new building at 1205 S. Commerce. 302 is vacant.

In 1974 there commences at 302 a succession of firms dealing with motorcycles. First is Performance International for two years. By 1976 Competition Imports is in the building. 1977 has no listing, but in 1979 Sun Wheels is active. For 1980 the entry is Sun Wheels Yamaha with Chris Christensen as manager. This firm is noted at the site into 1985. A significant change by 1986 is that the names are Cycle Center Harlingen and Sun Wheels Harley. The following year Harlingen Cycle Center is also added to the location listing.

In the 1988-89 Cole's Reverse Directory the location is listed as vacant. In 1990-91, however, Danners Cycle Sales fills the long motorcycle-associated site. It will continue there under that name into 2003. The following year the site is listed as occupied by Motorcycle Salvage yet in 2005 it retains this name plus Danners. This combined listing goes through 2006.

Also, to bring the story up to the present, Mr. Danner died -- in 2006 I think -- and in mid-2007 Mrs. Danner sold the building & business to Ruben & Firelli Hernandez, who own McAllen Motor Sports. They renamed the Harlingen location 802 Motor Sports (same as the shop they own in Brownsville) in 2008.
In 2007 the name is Danners plus Motorcycle Shop. In 2008 the firm name is 802 Motor Sports, and the structure bears an attractive outer paint job.