Street Names I

Contributed by Administrator
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History of Streets and Neighborhoods Naming Marilyn K. Wempa Developer ar
Mistick, who served on Monroeville’s Planning Commission from 1958 to 1968, says “I always thought the streets in each neighborhood ought to have a theme.” Still building homes in Monroeville and Oakmont at 78, Mistick named Haymaker Road area homes for colleges in 1958. “Naming streets isn’t an easy task, but I felt people’s street names should have a certain elegance they could be proud of.” As a result of this criterion, the street names for the seven Monroe Heights Plans located in Ward 2 include Harvard, Princeton, Bowling Green, Bucknell, Northwestern, Colgate, Clemson, St. Vincent, and LaSalle (Mistick’s alma mater). Mistick named the plan after Joel Monroe, Monroeville’s first postmaster. When Mistick developed the Park Forest Plan, located off Saunders Station Road, he selected a woodland theme: Woodland, Woodcliff, Corkwood, Hazenwood, and Foxwood. He said there is a rise on one street so it was named Knollwood. Mistick also decided to pay tribute to Shakespeare’s great literary contributions. In 1960, he named the streets around his Ward 1 Stratford Village 300-unit apartment development (now called Birnam Wood) King Lear, MacBeth, and Hamlet. By studying a map of Monroeville, it is apparent other developers agreed a neighborhood street theme was important. Those who developed the Boyd Hill area (near Restland Memorial Park) in Ward 1 in 1915 must have wanted to honor early leaders of our country when they named the streets Washington, Lincoln and Hamilton. It seems Penn Lear Development Corporation, BPI, and Ryan Homes were inspired in 1973 by places and words denoting England and Ireland for Ward 1 streets. They are Regal, Castle Hill, Chatham, Kelvington, Westminster, Londonderry, and Kilbuck. Haymaker I, II, and III plans off Haymaker Road in the Ramsey Road area (named for the family who owned this land) in Ward 2 were developed by Pat Traficanti, Jim Volpe, Ryan Homes, and Crawford Homes from 1965 to 1968. The streets have a historical and geographic theme with names like Heritage, Mt. Vernon, Monticello, and Berkshire. One of University Park’s developers, Orin Sampson, chose street names in 1959 in Ward 3 for the colleges where his children attended, such as Tartan (Carnegie-Mellon University), Vanderbilt, Furman, Citadel, Illini (Illinois University), Drexel and Nittany (Penn State). Albert Krasman, Jr., Turnpike Gardens’ developer and WW2 hero who passed away at 82 in September, 2001, chose Ward 4 street names in 1955 close to his heart: his family’s names. He picked Laura Lee, Maria, Nancy, Bert, Jerry, Sandy, Valerie Circle, Lolly, and West and East Patty lanes. Longtime residents claim Krasman named one street Doe because he saw a deer there. Known for his skill in building houses on hills, Krasman built 700 homes, more than half of them in Monroeville, before he retired in 1991. In another area of Ward 4, Alpine Village has street names with a Swiss theme indicative of its hilly terrain. When its developer, Sampson-Miller Company, chose Luzerne, Interlacken, Matterhorn, St. Moritz, Tyrolia, and Altaview in 1959 , the vision of snow-capped Alps were an inspiration. Developed in the early 1930s, Rosecrest Plan in Ward 5 features streets denoting grove and tree themes: Orchard, Orange, Plum, Apple, Vine, Oak, Popular, Rockwood, Greenwood, Plumwood, Lynnwood, and Elmwood. Located on the border with Turtle Creek in Ward 6, Mellon Plan’s streets were named in the 1920s for U.S. states and the families who settled there; namely, states Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Maine, and California and family names McKinney, Garofolo, MacArthur, Speelman, Miller, and Dawkins. Some developers left personal legacies. Volpe Drive (off Saunders Station Road), Jamison Lane (off Monroeville Boulevard), and Urick Lane (off Foxwood Drive) were named after their developers. But credit is due to all those who named the streets and established a legend in Monroeville’s history. (Note: Appreciation to Paul Hugus, Director of Building and Engineering Dept. for his help in locating the dates of the early developments.) _____ This article appeared in Monroeville Matters magazine Vol. 3, Summer 2002.