

Anderson City Streets Names Stories

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Virginia Circle and Gilmer Drive

Near Anderson University are two streets that connect – Virginia Circle and Gilmer Drive. Virginia “Jennie” Gilmer was a driving force behind the formation of the Anderson hospital.

Pope Drive

John Linley was the developer responsible for the expansion of Anderson to what became known as North Anderson. As a Citadel graduate and teacher, he had a keen interest in military history, particularly the American Revolution and Civil War. Many of the streets he developed were named after participants in the two wars. Jackson Square was named for Confederate General Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson. At one point Stonewall Jackson was attacked upon his rear flank by Union Brigadier General John Pope. Pope was defeated. Linley placed Pope Drive on the rear flank of Jackson Square.

Barry Knobel Boulevard

When Richard Shirley was mayor of Anderson a beautification project was introduced for downtown that included a tree lined island on Main Street. When the dedication was to be made, Mayor Shirley had to be out of town and he asked County Manager Joey Preston to introduce Judge Barry Knobel to make a few remarks on his behalf. After his introduction, Judge Knobel ascended the podium, turned to County Manager Preston, and quipped with straight face: “I appreciate the honor that the name of Main Street will be changed to Knobel Boulevard.” Not long afterward, Judge Knobel was at the county recycling center and

saw there was a street on the county property called Barry Noble Boulevard. He called Joey Preston to ask who Barry Noble was and Preston was not in the office. He explained the question to his secretary who said: "How do you like your new street." Judge Knobel was surprised and flattered but told her that wasn't his name. They subsequently replaced the sign to read Barry Knobel Boulevard.

Duckworth Lane

Duckworth Lane should actually be Ducworth Lane and apparently it was originally spelled correctly and then changed for an unknown reason. It was named after Nettie Ducworth who had lived on the street and her husband, or one of his ancestors, had changed his name to take out the "k". A professor from Winthrop told her the Duckworth name originated in England. The family raised Ducks and took them to market for sale. Someone reputedly asked "How much is this duck worth?"

Mill Village Street Names

Streets in the mill villages generally were just named with letters of the alphabet. Historian Fred Marshall Whitten explained that this created a great source of confusion to the post office and it was insisted the names be changed to distinguish them. Anderson Mill was permitted to retain the alphabet system but Toxaway and Riverside Mills changed to honor World War I soldiers killed in action with street names and Riverside Mill named streets after their overseers. Orr Mill honored its overseers and Equinox used place names.

Darson Drive

In 1964 the Kenneth Garland family moved onto a dirt road that was later annexed into the City of Anderson. It did not have a

name. Jerry Simpson built next door and Kenneth Garland and Jerry Simpson were asked to name the road. They decided on Garson Drive, combining their names. When signs went up they read Darson Drive. They laughed about it and never attempted to have it changed.

Stories of Streets Not named for Individuals

Peachtree Street

Where Peachtree Street now exists, there was a peach orchard owned by Rufus Gaines, Sr. Barbara Gaines related that the peach orchard was sold to a developer and funds from the sale were used to take his family, including her husband Robert La Fayette Gaines, to visit the 1939 World's Fair in New York.

Holly Street

Shortly after the law firm of Neely, Otter & Belk moved into its new office at 2001 North Main on the corner of Main and Holly Streets, client and friend Charley Phillips, who owned a Shell service station on South Main, came to the office and plopped on the reception room floor a small holly tree. He said Holly Street had been named for the big old holly tree that stood on their corner before Main Street had been widened and left after telling them it needed to be planted. Rich Otter and his daughter Linne obediently planted the tree. Charley Phillips then sent them the bill for the tree. There is once again a big old holly tree at the corner of Main and Holly Street.

Boulevard

According to historian James E. Harper, Boulevard was originally named by Mrs. Sylvester Bleckley as East Boulevard

because it was then the most eastern street in the City of Anderson. Usage dropped the east reference. In the 1970s there was a concerted effort to have the name changed to Lilly Strickland Boulevard that was vigorously opposed by Boulevard residents and it was not changed. Lilly Strickland was a very accomplished musician from Anderson. Born in 1884 she studied music at Converse College and Julliard and published 395 works. It is said her early works were influenced by folk songs and spirituals. After marriage she lived and traveled in Asia and Africa for a number of years. She received an honorary doctorate from Converse.