



# KNOXVILLE SOUTH WATERFRONT

## Monthly Newsletter

Website Information:

No. 07-08 (June 2008)

[www.cityofknoxville.org/southwaterfront](http://www.cityofknoxville.org/southwaterfront)

### What's in a Name?

Last month's newsletter mentioned the need to rename River Road, Lincoln Street, a new 'E-Street', and the new South Waterfront Park.

#### Comments received to date:

Heard you were interested in finding appropriate historical names for the South Side area.

One is Luttrell Park. The area where Baptist Hospital is now was known as Luttrell Park from about the time of the construction of the Gay Street Bridge in 1898 to 1930 or so. During the earlier part of that time, it was a popular destination for picnics, apparently a spawn of the City Beautiful movement, but after WW1 seemed to fall into ill use.

Probably the most famous person who ever lived in the area in question is Paul Y. Anderson. Son of a southside quarryman who was killed in an accident, he was a hard-nosed newspaperman of the 1920s and '30s who won the Pulitzer for cracking part of the Teapot Dome scandal. I think the family home was on Phillips St. He died young, and is buried at Island Home Baptist Church. He's rarely mentioned even in historical forums, but was a major figure in his day. He deserves some kind of homage.

Cormac McCarthy's family lived on the heights above Baptist Hospital, albeit for a short time, ca. 1940. They continued to live in South Knox, which figures prominently in some early novels. Even his last one, *The Road*, appears to present its characters crossing the Henley St. Bridge. One perhaps whimsical suggestion comes via his novel *Suttree*, which includes the word *Tavernboat*, which the web suggests is unique to Knoxville. Ab Jones' *tavernboat* appears repeatedly in that story. It apparently really did exist, moored to the south side, near the Gay Street Bridge.

Another whimsical suggestion is South America, which was for several decades in the 19th and early 20th century the nickname for South Knoxville. Locals seemed to like it, and even dressed like South Americans for parades. Maybe streets could have names of South American countries.

Or names of riverboats. Right now, can think of only the Atlas, the Onega, the Oliver King, and the Annabell King--but there were dozens. If you're looking for a colorful theme, that might be the best bet.

Perhaps some reference to Perez Dickinson, the business tycoon who established his Island Home. Or his Massachusetts bride, Susan Penniman, for whom he built it: a tragic story, because she died, young, before the house was finished.

Or outlaw Harvey Logan, a.k.a. "Kid Curry," last seen riding a stolen horse across the Gay St. Bridge into the wilds of South Knoxville in 1903.

You've probably already considered Civil War names, like Fort Stanley, the Union fort on the hill above. It's named for a Capt. C.E. Stanley, who'd recently been killed at Philadelphia, Tenn. In 1863 Ft. Stanley and much of the southside defenses were under the command of U.S. Gen. James Shackelford, of Kentucky, who successfully repelled an attack by Fightin' Joe Wheeler at Ft. Dickerson. Pontoon Bridge, the most prominent feature there during the war, might make an interesting street name.

Ft. Stanley's hill had previously been known as Gobbler's Knob, and was at least occasionally a site for hangings. Also, there was a racetrack over there at some point, maybe one of Cal Johnson's tracks, but I'm not sure exactly when that was.

I'm not sure who was in charge of building the current Gay Street Bridge in 1898, which I haven't researched lately, but as the first durable bridge ever built there, it obviously had an enormous effect. It was built either during the administration of Sam Heiskell or William Rule, both of whom were progressive and effective civic leaders.

Some reference to George Dempster, or Louis Brownlow, who were involved in planning the Henley Street Bridge, might be in order, too. - Jack Neely

We are thinking of names for River Road and Lincoln. Possibility could be Simpson for the old ferry stop and cemetery. - Patti Berrier

### Upcoming Meetings

Two public meetings have been scheduled in August, after schools have opened for the fall semester.

An Open House meeting will be held on **Thursday, August 21<sup>st</sup>, at 6:00 PM** at the **Kerbela Shriners Temple** on Mimosa Avenue to present the draft design plans for River Road, Lincoln Street, Langford Avenue, and four side streets, including converting Barber Street to a two-way street. This is part of the Vaughn & Melton contract.

The second meeting will kick-off the River Plain Park design process that will be led by Hargreaves Associates. The tentative date for this meeting will be **Thursday, August 28<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00 PM**, at the **Kerbela Shriners Temple** on Mimosa Avenue.

A reminder of these meetings dates will be in the August newsletter.

### What's in a Name? *(continued)*

Suggested names: "E" Street to Evan Street, simple name in keeping with spirit of Barber, Claude, and Dixie. Also, South Waterfront Drive or Waterfront Drive to keep identity going. South Waterfront Drive or Waterfront Drive to run from the traffic circle at Island Home to end at waterfront marketplace. For a permanent name for the park, South Waterfront Park or Waterfront Park. This keeps sense of what the project is about. - Gary Deitsch

Note: Please send suggestions or comments regarding street names or the park name to Dave Hill or Susanna Bass using the contact information at the bottom of this page.

### Other Events:

Cannon & Cannon, a local engineering firm, has been selected to provide design services for the reconstruction of Blount Avenue in front of the Cityview condominiums project. We hope to ask City Council for approval of the contract on August 26<sup>th</sup>.

A draft site plan for the former Island Home Avenue tank farm site is being reviewed and revised. Due to changing market conditions, apartments that can be converted to condominiums are being proposed. The revised plan will be available for review within the next few months.

City of Knoxville  
South Waterfront Development Department  
City-County Building, 400 Main Street  
Room 503  
Knoxville, Tennessee 37902



[southwaterfront@cityofknoxville.org](mailto:southwaterfront@cityofknoxville.org)

Dave Hill, Senior Director  
(865) 215-3764 [dhill@cityofknoxville.org](mailto:dhill@cityofknoxville.org)

Susanna Bass, Project Manager  
(865) 215-4545 [sbass@cityofknoxville.org](mailto:sbass@cityofknoxville.org)