

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

In Shoreham we have prime examples of a popular American pastime - name changing. Not only have the street names all been changed, but the area has had a bewildering number of names during the relatively brief span of its settlement and development.

The first name, as mentioned earlier, was "Long Chestnuts". This was followed by "Skidmore's Landing", then in succession by "Swezey's Landing", "Woodville", "Woodville Landing", "Woodville Farms", "Shoreham Beach", "Wardenclyffe", "Oak Ridge" and finally "Shoreham".

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Not one of the roads in the Old Village retains its original name; some have had their names changed twice. Elsewhere the street names have held, except for Ashley Lane which, at the turn of the century was called "New Road". Woodville Road, still sometimes called "Woodville Landing Road", was formerly "Swezey's Landing Road". The original street names in the Old Village were assigned by the developer, the Oak Ridge Company.

In July of 1927, the Trustees of the Village decreed that the then prevailing street names were "significantly nothing connected with the history or development of the community", and proceeded to change them all. Some of the new names assigned in 1927 were again changed in later years to accommodate changing times and to honor prominent citizens.

Thompson Street was originally "Campbell Street". The former name was that of an early abutting owner; the new name that of an early owner of the Madigan property. Since neither Campbell nor Thompson was a resident in 1927, the reason behind this change is not apparent. Although not memorialized on any map or street sign, the minutes of a 'trustees' meeting in 1947 record their vote to change the name of the portion of Thompson Street lying west of Tagliabue Road to "Finale": a bit of whimsy to honor Mrs. Florence Finn, a former owner of the Madigan property.

Wardencliff Road and Beach Lane originally comprised "Flint Street"; the derivation of the early name is unknown. Wardencliff honors one of the early families of the Village.

Tagliabue Road was formerly known as "Perkins Street" the old name being of unascertained origin. The new name honored Charles J. Tagliabue, a prominent figure in the early days of the Village.

Fitzgerald Road was formerly "Walker Street"; again, the origin of the old name is unknown.

The present name honors a long-time resident who lived in the house where the Mc Cabes are today. Officially the new name was Fitzgerald "Street", but "Road" found more popular acceptance.

Sturgis Road was originally "Holton Road", the old name honoring the developer's chief architect. The new name honors Dr. Sturgis, a former owner of the Beatty Sr. property.

Overhill Road was originally "Oak Ridge Road". Oliver Road was originally Oak Lane; between those names it was called "Oak Road". The present name honors E.W. Oliver, another prominent citizen.

The most complex name-changing situation has been reserved for last. Gridley Road, Barnhart Place and Prospect Street were originally named, collectively, as "Barton Road", honoring one of the developer's construction engineers and contractors. Prior to acquiring the present name, Barnhart Place was known as High Street under the 1927 resolutions. The present name was adopted in 1975 to honor Albert W. Barnhart, for many years mayor of the Village. The old name "Gridley Road" honors an old-time resident who owned lands on the south side of the street between Wardencliff and Tagliabue. The short stretch of Prospect between Tagliabue Road and Barnhart Place was apparently regarded as a portion of old Barton Road, although the logic of such a circumstance is far from obvious.