



How Cleveland Park's Streets Got Their Names

by Mark N. Ozer. This material is excerpted from **Northwest Washington, D.C.: Tales from West of the Park**, Copyright 2011, with the author's permission.

Macomb Street

The history of Alexander Macomb is particularly connected with the Detroit area where the name of Macomb County was given early to the area adjacent to Detroit. Born in Detroit in 1782 while it was still part of British North America, Macomb spent part of his early career as an Army Engineer building fortifications in that same area. He became famous for his victory over a far larger British force at the Battle of Plattsburgh in New York State in September 1814. A gold medal honoring that victory and Macomb was ordered by Congress. Moreover, he became associated with Washington, DC when he was appointed Commanding General of the U.S. Army in 1828 by President John Quincy Adams. Commander during the Jackson Administration, his wife was involved in the controversy by the ladies of Washington with the social acceptance of Peggy O'Neale Eaton, the wife of the Secretary of War. Succeeded on his death by Winfield Scott in 1841, Macomb and his wife were buried in Congressional Cemetery in southeast Washington near the Navy Yard.

Newark Street

The origin of this Cleveland Park street name is unclear. Although there are several Newarks in the United States, the one in New Jersey is most prominent and probably most likely. That city's reputation at the turn of the 20th century when the street was named differs from its more recent reputation.

Newark, NJ was founded in the 17th century by persons from Milford, Connecticut who were seeking a more strictly religious environment. The name Newark reflects its religious origin. As early as 1680, leather tanning became its leading industry. The bark from the local tamarack tree provided the tannin necessary for the tanning process. By 1837, there were 155 patent leather manufacturers. The first plastic, called "Celluloid" was invented there. In 1840, the Ballantine brewery was founded that grew together with a large German population following the Revolution of 1848. Other businesses in the 19th century were the Mutual

Benefit Life Insurance Company in 1845 and the Prudential Insurance Company in 1875. Industrialization reached its zenith in the era ending in 1930 when its population approached a half-million. It was in this era that Newark Street, DC was named.

With the onset of the Depression, jobs became scarce and people moved to the suburbs leaving Newark a city of poverty and substandard housing that accelerated after the temporary prosperity of World War II. The riots of 1967 were particularly destructive there; the city became the epitome of urban decay. As in so many other places, the city's long-awaited renaissance has been connected with a medical school and hospital, portions of Rutgers University, an arts center and sports arena housing the New Jersey Nets and New Jersey Devils hockey team.

Porter Street

This family name is closely identified with the history of the U.S. Navy. The original David Porter commanded a ship during the Revolution. His son, Commodore David Porter (1780-1843) retired to Washington after his great success during the War with the Barbary Pirates. With his prize money, he purchased the property he called Mount Pleasant on 16th street atop Meridian Hill. One of his five naval officer sons, Daniel Dixon Porter (1813-1891), first went to sea as a midshipman when age ten. Rising to high rank during the Civil War, it was most likely this is the Porter after whom the street is named.

A free spirit, he was prone to act rashly but confidently. An example was his plan, in April 1861, to act directly to relieve Fort Pickens in Florida. He unilaterally assigned himself command of a crucial ship. Secretary of the Navy Welles had assigned that same ship to relieve Fort Sumter, to the detriment of both plans. Because of his reputation of energetic action, Lincoln supported his command at Vicksburg in October 1862 that ended successfully in July 1863 with its capture. He had less success in the Red River expedition to Shreveport in Louisiana in the spring 1864. Nevertheless, he ended the war as a Vice-Admiral just below his foster brother Admiral David Farragut.

Rodman Street

Just north of Porter Street, Rodman Street commemorates still another military man famous for his Civil War exploits. Thomas Jackson Rodman (1816-1871), born on a farm in Indiana, graduated from West Point in 1841. Assigned to the U.S. Army Ordnance Department, he spent his entire career in that service, finally as a brigadier general. The

"Rodman gun" he invented exceeded the previous limits of cast-iron cannon and was also a far more reliable and stronger weapon. His new "wet chill" method involved casting around a hollow core while cooling the inside of the barrel. The huge guns he was able to make, as large as 15-inch bore, were primarily used for permanent fixed positions such as Fortress Monroe at Point Comfort at the entrance to Hampton Roads. Other Rodman guns were used in the circle of forts protecting Washington. A picture of one of those massive guns traversing the streets of Washington can be seen today on the historical kiosk at the northwest corner of 15th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue NW. Mainly made at the Watertown Arsenal in Massachusetts, they were seldom fired in anger. They remained however the primary coast defense American weapons throughout the last half of the 19th century.

Tilden Street

Present-day Tilden Street follows the route of the long-time Peirce Mill Road from that mill on the edge of Rock Creek west toward Tenleytown Road. It is named for the unsuccessful Democratic Party presidential candidate in the crucial election of 1876. In the November 1876 balloting, Samuel Tilden received a majority of the popular vote and 184 of the 185 electoral votes need to win. The Republican Party candidate, the Ohioan Rutherford Hayes, received only 165 votes but there were 20 disputed votes in Oregon, Florida, Louisiana, and South Carolina. The last three were the only states in which federal troops were nominally still in place to oversee Reconstruction. Southerners on the Election Commission established to deal with the contested electoral votes knew that Tilden would remove such troops. However, these members of the Electoral Commission sided with the Republican Hayes. Their support was in return for additional assurances that there would be federal money for internal improvements in the South including subsidies for the building of a southern railroad to the Pacific.

Samuel Tilden, born in New York in 1814, trained at Yale before graduating from New York University in 1837. A lawyer, he made his fortune in the 1850s while reorganizing railroads. After the Civil War, he became active in Democratic Party politics. In conflict with Tammany Hall and the notorious Tweed Ring in New York City, he succeeded in impeaching the corrupt judges who sustained their power. Elected as a reform-minded Governor of New York in 1874, he was the Democratic presidential candidate in 1876. Retiring from public life after that election, he left a large bequest to help found the New York Public Library.

RIVES CARROLL AND THE CLEVELAND PARK CLUB CAMP

by Melanie Gibbons

If you have children who

grew up or are growing up in Cleveland Park, chances are they learned to jump rope because of Rives Carroll. They also learned how to swim, meet new friends, be a counselor, lead others, be responsible, follow instructions and have fun. All because she single-handedly launched the Cleveland Park Camp in 1978 and still manages it today. It is a gem for our neighborhood and a memory-maker for so many kids who have spent their summers as campers and counselors at the camp, tucked away at the end of 33rd Place, just off Highland Place.

Rives is smart, energetic, community-minded and a long-time Cleveland Parker who moved into the neighborhood with her husband and two small children in 1974.

"In 1970 and 1973, when my children were born, it was uncommon to have the help that working mothers need today. Instead, several of us formed a playgroup. We also belonged to the neighborhood babysitting co-op. I got to know many of my neighbors through the personal experience of taking care of their young children and trusting them to do the same with mine." Looking back now, it was then that Rives began to focus her talent and energy on the children of our neighborhood.

Rives graduated from Smith College with a degree in Art history/Architecture. She worked as a teacher and enrichment coordinator at John Eaton Elementary School from 1975 to 2000, and during that twenty-five year tenure, she taught drawing, creative writing, architecture, geography, and Washington, D.C. history.

"Rives created so many memorable themes and lesson plans for the whole school... on the neighborhood, China, water systems, whales, trees, traffic studies, you name it," said Susan Eastman, computer/technology teacher at John Eaton. "And Rives' attention went beyond the walls of the school. She and I, along with many John Eaton students, paraded up and down 34th street, in front of the school, carrying student-designed placards to protest against speeding cars. Our efforts were part of an award-winning traffic study to reduce accidents along that stretch of road. And, after the student project to calm the traffic, 34th Street was restriped with the middle turning lane."

Before working at Eaton, Rives directed the Cleveland Park After School Program – a project started by the now defunct Cleveland Park Community Committee. This was a group of



Rives Carroll with campers from the 2010 season:
(l-r) Gareth Meikle, Ruby Luzzatto, Shira Neufeld, Annie Caroline Wright, Max Burns

enterprising neighborhood mothers, particularly from Eaton, who, says Rives, "wanted a way for their kids to have non-academic time with each other and with kids who were attending John Eaton, but living in neighborhoods across the park." It offered classes, like gymnastics and pottery, but was not daycare as we know it today. That program is still going strong today, as the John Eaton afterschool daycare program, and the Block Party, started as its major fundraiser, is still a treasured annual event.

"I feel more rooted here than anywhere, not just because I've spent more than half my life here," says Rives. "When I think about all the neighbors I know and then add the campers and counselors who've come through over the years, and the kids I've taught at John Eaton, it's amazing to me. When I walk in the neighborhood, I'm sure to meet someone I know. And I'm particularly pleased when my former campers, counselors and students send their children to Cleveland Park Camp."

Luckily for Cleveland Park, this talented Smith grad kept her efforts close to home and has done so much for our children and our neighborhood.

SHARE YOUR MEMORIES!

If you attended Cleveland Park Camp as a camper, counselor, or both, please email your stories or memories to Rives Carroll at camp@clevelandparkclub.org.

REGISTER FOR CAMP!

Applications are now being accepted for campers and counselors-in-training for summer 2012. For full details, go to <http://clevelandparkclub.org/en/Camp.html>.

CLEVELAND PARK MARKS 25 YEARS AS A NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT

Through the hard work of the Cleveland Park Historical Society, Cleveland Park was designated a local historic district in November 1986, and in March of 1987, a nomination was entered to list the neighborhood in the National Register of Historic Places. That nomination was accepted in April 1987. The nomination reads in part:

"The Cleveland Park Historic District is a major cohesive urban neighborhood which includes 18th and 19th century estates ... Victorian houses ... Art Deco apartment houses and shops ... Cleveland Park is significant because it contains virtually every architectural style in vogue between 1890 and 1941."

You'll find a link to the complete nomination on our website under the "Historic District" tab. It contains a wealth of information on our architectural and community history. Check to see if your house is listed in the original nomination!

This spring, CPHS will gather to celebrate a quarter century of historic status.

Be sure to renew your membership today to help support the ongoing work of neighborhood preservation – and so you don't miss your invitation to the party!

ALL ABOUT THE ARC

CPHS's Architectural Review Committee

WHAT IS THE ARC?

CPHS's Architectural Review Committee (ARC) is made up of Cleveland Park neighbors who have professional expertise in architecture, historic preservation, and related fields. The ARC reviews proposed changes to properties within the Cleveland Park Historic District in order to help ensure the preservation of the historic character of the neighborhood's built environment. The ARC is your means of offering *neighborhood-specific* input on projects in the Historic District.

DOES MY PROJECT NEED TO BE REVIEWED BY THE ARC?

The first step is to consult with the D.C. Historic Preservation Office (HPO) staff. If your project is eligible for an expedited (over-the-counter) review, you do not need to present it to the ARC. If your project requires D.C. Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) review, then you will also need to present the project at an ARC meeting, as well as to the Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC).

In general, minor projects such as window or roof replacement and those involving only the interior of the property do not need HPRB review and do not need to be heard by ARC – though they still require a permit and may need to be vetted by HPO staff. Work involving the addition or removal of parts of the structure, including auxiliary structures, requires full review.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS?

The ARC reviews conceptual plans for projects in the Cleveland Park Historic District *after* homeowners have made contact with the HPO staff and received a case number and preliminary design guidance from them, but *before* projects are heard by the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB). ARC issues advisory opinions on the projects it hears, and HPRB takes those opinions into account in making its final decision.

If you are considering work of any kind on your Cleveland Park Historic District property, please contact the HPO first. If the HPO staff informs you that your project will require HPRB review, then contact CPHS and we will put you on the agenda for our next monthly ARC meeting.

At this stage, you should also contact the ANC and ask to be scheduled on their meeting calendar.

When you have been given a spot on the ARC agenda, we will ask you to provide the following materials in electronic form in the week preceding the meeting and to bring five hard copies of the same materials to the meeting itself. We prefer high-quality, 11" x 17" (minimum) printouts. We will keep one hard-copy set for our own records.

- A brief written description of the property and the proposed changes to the property.
- Existing and proposed plans of the entire house.
- Existing and proposed elevations of the entire house. Proposed elevations should have "cast shadows" or be otherwise rendered to convey three dimensions. Several three-dimensional views of the existing and proposed states are strongly encouraged.
- A site plan that makes it clear how the existing and proposed structures relate to the lot and property lines.
- Photographs of the house and surrounding context, including photos that demonstrate how any proposed addition will or will not be visible from public space.
- A report on consultation with the property's immediate neighbors and their opinions on the proposed project.

In short, we welcome any materials that will help committee members visualize the project in its entirety, together with its impact on the neighboring properties and the historic context of the streetscape. Clarity in the presentation will help the meeting and review process move quickly and smoothly.

At the meeting, we will ask you or your representative to talk the committee through the project, explaining the rationale and design decisions, and answering any questions the ARC members may have. The discussion normally takes about 20 minutes.

Homeowners are welcome and encouraged to attend the meeting and *may* present the project themselves, but we *strongly* encourage the architect or designer of the project to be present and to make the presentation. If ARC members have design suggestions, all parties can then participate directly in the discussion.

The ARC is normally able to issue its decisions within 2-3 days after its meetings. We email the decision to the property owner and architect and to the HPO staff. Decisions are normally communicated to HPO in time for projects to be heard at same month's HPRB meeting, although sometimes holidays or other scheduling issues mean that a project may not be heard until the following month's HPRB meeting. Additionally,

the ARC may request changes or further work on the design, which would require a followup presentation to the ARC. The ARC meets once a month and cannot schedule additional meetings between its regularly-scheduled meetings. Therefore, it is safest to allow two months to move through the review process.

WHEN DOES THE ARC MEET?

ARC normally meets the second Monday of every month at 7:30 p.m. at the Cleveland Park Congregational Church, 3400 Lowell St., N.W. Meeting dates for the first half of 2012 are February 13, March 12, April 9, May 14, & June 11.

WHERE CAN I FIND DESIGN GUIDELINES?

The Historic Preservation Office staff will assist you in developing a design that is consistent with historic preservation standards. HPO publishes design guidelines for properties in historic districts, all of which are listed on its website: <http://dpw.dc.gov/DC/Planning/Historic+Preservation/Maps+and+Information/Policies+and+Procedures/Design+Guidelines>



For more information, including HPO and ANC contacts, links to HPO design guidelines, and a current calendar of meetings, go to the ARC section of the CPHS website:

clevelandparkhistoricalsociety.org/historic-district/arc