

# 13 Muncie street names preserve pieces of city's history

Mary Freda, [mfreda@muncie.gannett.com](mailto:mfreda@muncie.gannett.com) Published 5:19 p.m. ET July 23, 2018 | Updated 11:47 a.m. ET July 24, 2018



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(Photo: Corey Ohlenkamp/Star Press)

MUNCIE, Ind. — While some streets, such as Walnut and Elm, have fairly standard street names, others, such as Hackley and Gilbert, are unique to Muncie because they pay homage to the city's beginnings.

"In the 19-teens, 1920s, companies would come in and try would buy up a bunch of property and then develop it for real estate," said Chris Flook, president of the Delaware County Historical Society. "We do it today. You'll see streets like 'Pleasantview,' really pretty sounding names. For that particular neighborhood (Morningside), it was done because these are elite colleges. So, yeah, it's Harvard, Yale, it was their attempt to be like, 'This is fancy, we're naming it after these universities.'"

Though some streets were named to attract residents, others carry on the legacy of Muncie's history.

## Buckles Street

Buckles Street is likely named after Abraham, also Abram, Buckles. Buckles was born near Muncie on Aug. 2, 1846, according to "History of Solano and Napa Counties in California," by Thomas Gregory, published in 1912.

During his adolescence, Buckles worked on a farm close to Muncie, and when he was 15 years old, he enlisted in the military to fight in the Civil War. During his service, he became Sgt. Buckles, Company E. 19th Indiana Voluntary Infantry. He was wounded multiple times and eventually had his right leg amputated in March 1865. Buckles was honorably discharged two months later. Congress presented him with a medal of honor for his conduct at the Battlefield of the Wilderness in May 1864.

## Fullhart Drive

In the latter half of the 19th century, the Fullharts were a prominent family in the area, Flook said.

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In the late 1940s, Jill Boyd and her family moved into the same neighborhood as Lafayette L. “Lafe” Fullhart. At the time, he was responsible for running the nursery, she said.

Boyd said Fullhart would let the kids play in his yard, coming out to “prank” them with an ugly mask every so often. He also would take the kids for rides on his workhorse and let them pick strawberries in the nursery.

According to a March 1940 edition of The Muncie Evening Press, a plat for “Fullhart’s First Addition” was filed. The addition included 14 irregularly-shaped lots and a new street name: Fullhart Drive. The plat was filed by Fullhart and his wife, Helen.

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### **Italiano Drive**

In 1958 an ordinance, which proposed changing 61 local street names including Manor Drive to Italiano Drive, was filed with then-City Clerk James DeVoe, according to Star Press archives.

The change was made shortly thereafter, with Italiano Drive addresses popping up in classified ads in 1960.

Although the ordinance doesn’t explain why the name was changed, Terry Nelson Thrash said the street actually got its name from her late mother, Mary Elaine Thrash (Italiano). Sometime after Italiano graduated from Ball State University in the late 1940s, she worked for a company whose owner would later name streets after his secretaries, Thrash said.

### **Neely Avenue**

The Neelys were pioneers who settled in Muncie before the 1900s. Thomas Neely was a prominent pioneer and settler, and he had relatives, such as Moses Neely, who also were active in the community.

Though the avenue could be named after Thomas, Flook said it’s likely named after the entire family and not a specific person.

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### **Wheeling Avenue**

Wheeling is an unincorporated community about 20 minutes northwest of Muncie. Today, Wheeling Avenue stretches from Muncie to Wheeling.

“There was a early turnpike between Muncie and Wheeling, it was called the Wheeling-Muncie turnpike or maybe the Muncie-Wheeling turnpike, and then it was just shortened to Wheeling,” Flook said.

### **Pershing and Memorial drives**

In 1922, Plum and Twelfth streets were renamed in honor of Delaware County soldiers, sailors and nurses. The Federate Club of Clubs and city council heard proposed names on April 19, 1922, according to Star Press archives. Names associated with war in some way were the most appropriate.

The street names were officially changed three days later. Plum Street became Pershing Drive, in honor of Gen. John J. Pershing, and Twelfth Street was renamed Memorial Road. Three years later, Memorial was referred to as Memorial Drive, according to the Emerson’s Muncie Directory.

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### **McGalliard, Petty and Riggin roads**

Flook said it's likely each road is a namesake for each family. The McGalliards had a farm as early as 1900, according to Star Press Archives.

Petty was likely named after the Petty family or someone in the family, with references to “the Petty road” popping up as early as 1912 in Star Press archives.

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**The Riggin Brick Barn** (Photo: The Star Press)

Riggin Road is likely named after the Riggin Family, he said. The family owned Riggin Dairy — also known as Rea Riggin & Sons — in the 1900s. In 1926, the operation was running for more than 15 years, supplying 1,200 gallons of milk daily at peak production, according to Star Press archives.

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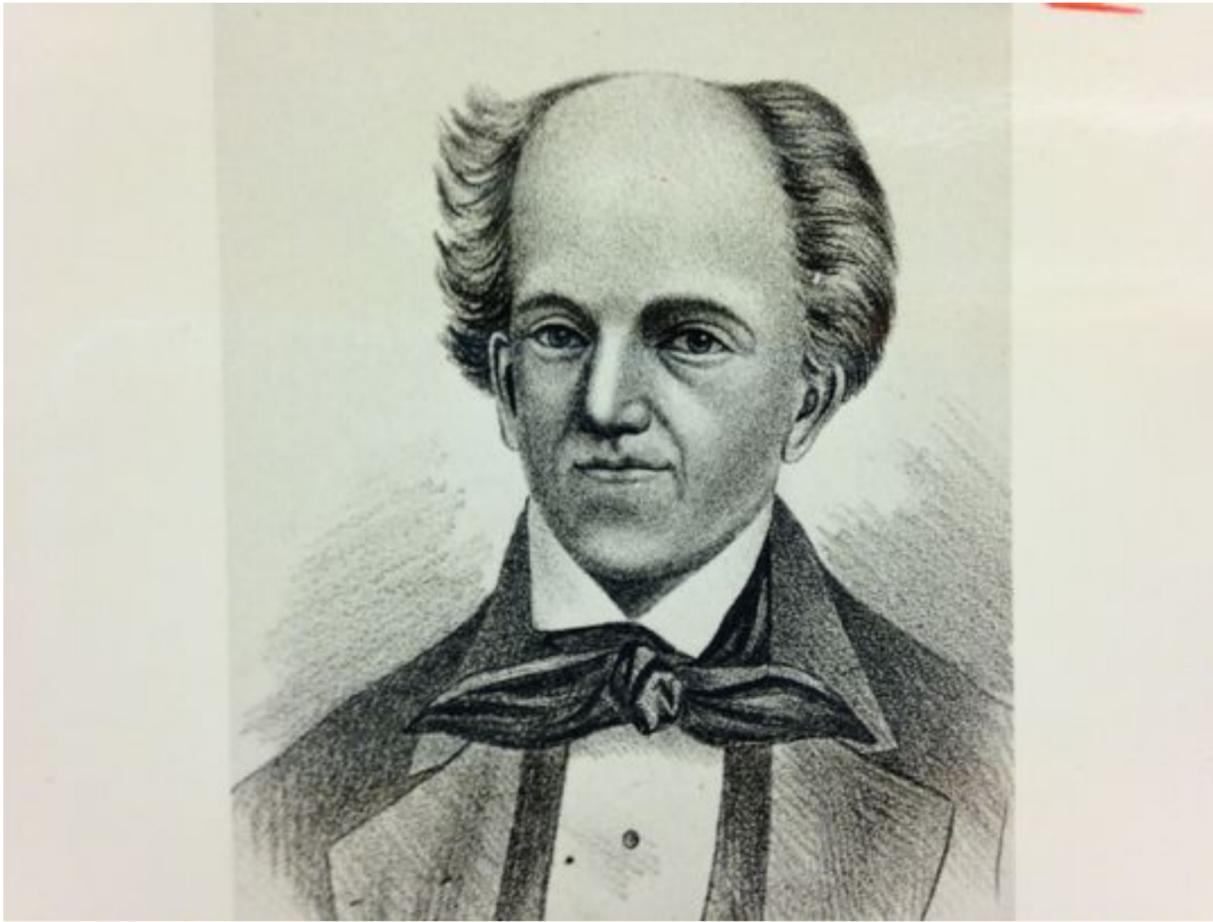
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Streets across Muncie carry historical significance that usually isn't well know. Jackson Street is most likely named after Lemuel Jackson, who donated land to develop the town square and courthouse while Hackley is known for Muncie's Rebecca Hackley. (Photo: Corey Ohlenkamp/Star Press)

**Gilbert, Hackley and Jackson streets**

In the early 1820s, Goldsmith C. Gilbert settled in Delaware County. Gilbert, who is typically referred to as Muncie's founder, donated land to create the town square and courthouse, Flook said. As an early settler, Gilbert operated various mills and factories, according to "A Twentieth Century History of Delaware County, Indiana" by General William Harrison Kemper.



**Goldsmith Gilbert is regarded as the founder of Muncie.** (Photo: provided)

In 1827, Rebecca Hackley sold the 672-acre Hackley Reserve to Gilbert for \$960. Gilbert didn't pay Hackley in full until eight years later, months before she died. ([/story/news/local/2018/06/24/bygone-muncie-rebekah-pemesahquah-hackleys-reserve/713523002/](https://www.muncie.com/story/news/local/2018/06/24/bygone-muncie-rebekah-pemesahquah-hackleys-reserve/713523002/)) Both Hackley and Gilbert have streets named after them. Additionally, Reserve Street is the western border of the old Hackley Reserve, Flook said.

Though the street boasts the same name the 7th President of the United States, Jackson Street isn't named after Andrew Jackson.

The street is likely named after Lemuel Jackson, who also donated land to develop the town square and courthouse, Flook said.

*Mary Freda is an intern at the Star Press. Follow her on Twitter @Mary\_Freda1, and email her story ideas: [mfreda@muncie.gannett.com](mailto:mfreda@muncie.gannett.com).*

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