

## BELLA VISTA STREET NAMES

There are some unusual street and subdivision names in the City of Bella Vista, many of which raise the question, where did that name come from?

When John Cooper Sr. opened Bella Vista Village in 1965, he decided to use a variety of sources for naming the streets, from individuals who played an important role in the initial development of the Village, to residents who bought lots and built homes on previously unnamed streets, to a British atlas that listed counties and towns. For example, when Cooper sold a lot to Gil Fite (historian and author of the 1993 book on the history of Bella Vista), its address became Fite Circle.

According to the September 1965 issue of the Vista, *“Bella Vista’s road system will honor some of the area civic leaders by naming the streets after these persons. With 15 miles of the projected 154-mile street system now completed, the new streets have already been named. Two drives lying adjacent to one another have been named “Little Drive” and “Enfield Drive” titled in honor of Clayton Little and Bill Enfield, partners of a Bentonville law firm. Other streets have been named after the development company vice-presidents and representatives.”*

Gil Fite in his book wrote, *“By the spring of 1965 most of the surveying and street engineering had been done in Avondale, Bella Vista’s first subdivision (located between the Bella Vista Country Club and Lake Avalon)...Houses were being built on streets named after Cooper executives or other individuals who were playing an important role in the Village’s development. These included streets named Basore Dr., Billingsley Dr., Gore Lane, Hatcher Dr., Finger Dr., Sheneman Dr., Spencer Dr., and others....Almost all the other streets were given English origin names until development began in the Highlands.”* (In the Highlands, according to the September 1998 Village Voice, the street names were borrowed from Scotland.)

In July 1966, it was noted by Ernie Dean, editor of the (at that time monthly) Vista, in that month’s issue, *“New subdivisions and streets in Bella Vista Village will follow a unique naming pattern. All will have English names and the names will come from counties and towns in England. Subdivisions are being named for the counties and most of the street names in the respective subdivisions are coming from towns within those counties....An atlas of British counties and towns provided an easy and accurate source of names and of their spellings, and (was) a source that seemed more than adequate to continue providing names as Bella Vista Village grew in area.”*

However, one of the most unusual street names we have in Bella Vista is “Suits Us Drive.” C.A. Linebarger, one of the three Linebarger Brothers who developed the original Lake Bella Vista summer resort, reported in his newspaper, the Bella Vista Breezes, on June 19, 1928, that his father, S.C. Linebarger, of Arlington, Texas, *“...arrived today to spend the summer once again in God’s country....Just yesterday as we drove up ‘Suits-Us Mountain,’ it occurred to us, if our memory holds good, that it was Daddy Linebarger that gave this attractive addition its peculiar name. Shortly after Bella Vista first opened, he built a cottage on this mountain and (said) it ‘Suits-Us.’ The name still holds good.”*

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*Picture 1: Original street signs, such as this one for Cresswell Drive, in Cooper’s Bella Vista Village were made of wood. The name was taken from a British atlas that listed Cresswell as the name for several English locales.*

*Picture 2: Thirsk Lane, off Kingsland, was named after a small market town in northeastern England. The name is derived from the Viking (Old Norse) word ‘þresk’ meaning fen or lake, according to Wikipedia. There are several Kingslands in England, including a small settlement that is now part of Dalston, within the London Borough of Hackney.*

*Picture 3: This picture from Wikipedia shows the Town Center of Thirsk, England. Thirsk is also the imaginary Darrowby of the books by the late James Alfred Wight (whose pen name was James Herriot), veterinarian and author of All Creatures Great and Small.*

