

Peeking into the Past: WHAT'S IN A NAME?

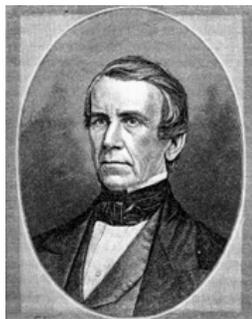
By Cara Jensen

What a better way to learn the history of a city than through the names of her streets? Take a walk, enjoy the fall colors, and absorb a piece of the St. Louis experience. Here are just a few local tidbits to start your on your way.....

Lafayette Avenue: So named in the original 1836 platting of the St. Louis Commons because it formed the southern boundary of Lafayette Park. It honors the Marquis de Lafayette (1757-1834), the French general and statesman who aided George Washington in the American Revolutionary War.



Rutger Street: Named for Arend Rutgers, an early landowner in St. Louis. His widowed daughter-in-law Pelagie was considered one of the wealthiest people in 1840's St. Louis.



Geyer Avenue: Commemorates Henry Sheffie Geyer, a prominent St. Louis attorney, who defeated Thomas Hart Benton for the United States Senate in 1851. Arriving in St. Louis in 1815, he became a strong pro slavery Whig. He gained a national reputation when he argued against the cause of Dred Scott before the Supreme Court in 1854. Geyer also fought a duel with merchant George Kennerly in 1816, Kennerly was wounded.

Pestalozzi Street: Named to honor Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827), a Swiss educational reformer whose theory and methods laid the foundations for modern elementary education.

Menard Street: Honors Pierre Menard (1766-1844), a pioneer settler of Kaskaskia and first lieutenant governor of Illinois. Menard made his fortune through friendly dealings with the Native American tribes.



Eighteenth Street: Originally named Tayon Avenue in the mid-1830s, after Joseph Taillon, an original French settler who in 1765 built a dam to power the city's first flour mill at the east end of Mill Creek Valley.

Please read more about these and other St. Louis street names in *The Streets of St. Louis* by William and Marcella Magnan, and *St. Louis Street Index* by Dr. Glen Holt and Thomas A. Pearson.

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