

The History of Bolling Heights

It was an interesting time here in the northwest corner of Clay County, there were airplanes but it would be some time before jet planes would make routine flights overhead in our area. It was after major roads were paved and U. S. Highways 71, 69 and 169 intersected this corner of the county that farmland was developed into a new lifestyle called the suburbs.

The end of World War II saw large numbers of military servicemen becoming veterans as the world around us expanded in all directions. There was great demand for a new modern phase everywhere and we were no exception. The automobile was quickly becoming the convenient way to travel. Moving into the suburbs required that you have good transportation but moving to the country required a car. The only way to get to work or to go shopping required a car. The expanding auto industry was a small instrument to the process of the evolving modernization process. As young men came home they could be hired by the local Ford plant and General Motors which would not only allow them to have a car but also have full-time employment as a new home owner. These were young men who were trying to raise a family, own a home and become part of a community they would call home.

In 1950 a great impact for housing was met by men with visions of the future. They found landowners who were willing to sell acres of their farmland. There were young families ready to spread their wings and move to new surroundings. Veterans were being encouraged to take advantage of Government GI Loans and the GI was not afraid to confront a 30-year loan with a 4.25% interest rate. Ironically, the loan companies were eager to work with the young borrower if their monthly income met the companies' strict standards.

By Joan Tierney
Chairman Bolling Heights History Committee



It was in the 1950 time period that a young man from Fort Scott, Kansas came to Clay County with great expectations for his future. Ira Bolling and his sons, Howard and Glen were roofing contractors when they came to town. Ira could see the demand for new homes was growing and formed H & I Builders with his sons and developed what was once a "corn field" into a housing development that would become Bolling Heights. This development was on land that was purchased just south of Linden, Missouri, which was, according to the record, Platted as Township 51, Range 33, and Section 23 with lot numbers set for property and deed records. It was no time at all and houses began going up in several phases.



top to bottom Mike Wallace, Truman Wallace, and Vicki Wallace



1804

The expedition led by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark arrived at Kaw Point in June. This is the point where the Kansas River enters the Missouri River. The group stopped at this confluence for three days.

1821

Missouri joined the union as the 24th state after the Missouri Compromise allowed the state to enter as a slave state while Maine entered as a free state.



A Bolling Heights home in 1962

Throughout the years there seems to have been many names for the north and south routes that were traveled in the early years. Jefferson Highway was once a route that today would follow along N. Troost. Old Pike Road, which is now N. Broadway north of Englewood Road. Fairgrounds Boulevard became Highway 169, which eventually moved west to its present location, leaving behind what became N. Oak Trafficway today. At what is now N.E. 67th Street and N. Oak was the starting point of the Bolling Heights addition. A wide entrance, graced by a brick wall, held lettering to name the addition. The first street to the east was 67th Street, which was identified by the Post Office as Route 4. Three other streets would branch from this main entrance as 67th Place curved to the left, 67th Terrace would stem from there and the far right would develop as 66th Terrace. The first intersecting name streets were N. Holmes, N. Charlotte, N. Campbell, N. Harrison, N. Forest and on to N. Flora. The shape of the addition appears as a fancy letter "T." All the streets are listed in the well-established numbers as designated by the Post Office in the 1960's. As names changed and things became established you could find variances in land records. H & I Builders, Inc. BOLLING HEIGHTS of Gladstone,

Mo., In Clay Co. Mo. Published their sales as, "PLANNED COMMUNITY", "A HOME TO BE PROUD OF", PAVED STREETS AND CURBS, ON SEWER LINES, CITY WATER, (Sewer, Paved Streets and Curbs installed and Paid for). "Three Bedroom Homes with Private drive, Many Different Front Elevations, Minimum Lot size 10,000 SQ. FT. Convenient to Churches, Schools, Shopping and Transportation. In the City of Gladstone, You'll enjoy Living Here!"

On December 3, 1953 the first Homeowners Association was recorded and Articles of Incorporation under the General Not For Profit Corporation Act was formed and sent to the Secretary of State in Jefferson City, Mo. Five residences were the first Board of Directors. All lived on 65th Street Terrace, North (now N.E. 67th Street) except one. Stanley A. Tyron lived at 423 E. 64th St. Terrace North, (now N.E. 66th Terrace). It has been reported Stanley Tyron owned the lumber company in Northtown. All lumber materials used to construct Bolling Heights houses came from this lumberyard. Other names of interest and Board Directors were, William D. Meadows, Howard L. Bolling, Vervyle Lee Weathers and Charles H. Arnold.

The construction of Bolling Heights was a stepping-stone for Garney Plumbing. Arthur Garney was a sub contractor with Ira Bolling for all plumbing work. This association, as well as many other sub-contractors held firm for 30 years. Bolling Heights was not a strange place for Arthur Garney or his son Charles. Arthur had managed his Plumbing business since 1924. Son, Charles was on the job at age 10. After his college years and a tour in the Navy, Charles returned to help finish the last phase of houses in 1956. Glen Bolling was a great friend as well as a wonderful builder, says Charles Garney. It's a well known fact that Ira Bolling and sons were hard working men with strong ethics. A great motivator to live in BOLLING HEIGHTS could be found with homeowners such as Howard Bolling, and Garney employee, Randy Thornton. Here were two men who knew how well all houses were constructed. Master Carpenter and 53-year homeowner, Henry Smithmeir explains in detail the methods used to build our houses. "You will never need to worry about the roof collapsing." The Ira Bolling Builders moved on to create "HOLIDAY HILLS" AND "RANDOLPH CORNERS" in Kansas City, Mo.

1821

A Frenchman from St. Louis, Francois Chouteau, travels up the Missouri River and opens a trading post on the waterway about three miles below the great bend in the river, now the Northeast Industrial District.

1825

After the 1825 Treaty of St. Louis, one of the many treaties signed between United States officials and Native American tribes, about 1,400 Missouri Shawnees were forcibly moved from Cape Girardeau to southeastern Kansas, close to the Neosho River. The U.S. government gave the Shawnee \$11,000 and leased to them a blacksmith shop for five years, provided all the tools and 300 pounds of iron annually.





1306 N.E. 67th Terrace

1955 brought the last phase of building in Bolling Heights at the south leg on North Campbell and North Harrison below 66th Terrace N.E. The sales pitch of H & I Builders had worked well. All homes were completed and occupied by 1957. The total comfort of new spacious homes and green lawns brought people together making good neighbors. Husbands and fathers left for work daily. Wives and Moms stayed home to manage the children and homemaking. The one family car was used to get the husband and “breadwinner” to work. Most wives were stranded, as transportation provided by city buses did not reach the suburbs. Some men would double up for their drive to work so wives could have a car for important errands. Other arrangements of delivering Dad to work were good at times. A phone call away was the only available taxi, Jerry’s Cab, and it stayed busy. Should you be lucky enough to gain access to the cab, you would probably find 5-8 other women already in the cab. But “NO PROBLEM”, Jerry didn’t mind if you sat on somebody’s lap and no one thought about seat belts at that time.

This new life style in the suburbs needed new schools, new churches, new shopping malls, new streets, new city government and contented residents. There were restaurants in the area, but those were only used on special occasions. There was no allowance

in the budget for eating outside the home. The trips to the grocery store were done mostly at night on a weekly basis. Northtown had stores for shopping, but a closer location was at Antioch Road and 69 Highway (Vivion Rd). The long established Monteil Grocery or A & P Grocery in Foxwood, just east on 69 Highway. After Antioch Shopping Center opened it was nice to shop at the big Kroger Grocery.

Bolling



Vicki Wallace and Christi Holland

Our new schools in the North Kansas City School District educated all the children of the booming 1950’s. Many large families of 9-13 children were raised in the 3-bedroom home. It was not uncommon to find 50-100 children on any given street. Elementary schools were Linden East, Linden West, or St. Charles Catholic School. Antioch Junior High School was built and later became Antioch Middle School. North Kansas City High School was the only high school at the time. Soon it was necessary to add another high school and Oak Park High School was built just north of Gladstone. This was just the beginning of expansion and growth in the North Kansas City School District.



1833

John Calvin McCoy, often considered by historians as the “father of Kansas City,” traveled with his parents to the area to perform Missionary work, but found a chance to become a merchant and opened a store at the northeast corner of Pennsylvania that aided travelers along the Santa Fe and Oregon trails. He called the area Westport.

1853

With an area of nearly a square mile and a population of 2,500 persons, the City of Kansas elected its first mayor, William S. Gregory.

The Bolling Heights home originally sold from \$9,000.00 - \$14,000.00 and ranged in size from 980 square feet to 1214 square feet on 10,000 square foot lots. Many houses were built without a garage or basement. Asphalt driveways were nice when new, but concrete driveways were better and later made by neighborhood manpower. At that time cement cost \$11.00 a yard. In 1955 a house payment was at least \$72.00 a month. That was most likely one weeks wages. There were many advantages to living north of the Missouri River. It was closer to work for many, the houses were affordable and people stayed because of the convenience or the love of good neighbors. The children of the Booming 50's grew to adults. Some moved away. Many remained as residents or returned to be homeowners. It's also a fact there are still many original owners who've lived more than 50 years in the same home. They have pride in ownership and clean neighborhoods. As the builder said in the early years of selling, "A Home you'll Be Proud to Own".

History were important beginnings. The Special Events Committee has produced good times with Halloween and 4th of July Parades. Awards are given for the Home of the Season, and much more to come. With the help of Consultant, Carolyn Vellar, a study for long-range plans was completed and 6 major goals were established with a timeline for completion. 1. Assist residence with disposal of bulky items. 2. Promote and educate residents regarding City Codes and property maintenance. 3. Create beautiful backyards. 4. Create a skills list of Bolling Heights' residents. 5. Assist the city of Gladstone with brush and leaf collection. 6. Design property maintenance program for residents who need assistance. Committee members have been appointed and for some, this represents ongoing responsibilities long term, so the commitment will continue.

February of 2007 was the first election of the Bolling Heights Community Link Board of Directors and Officers. A full staff of 12 was elected with the compliments of most all the original volunteers. President: Carolyn Meyer, Vice-President: Winnie Estep, Secretary: Chris Reeves, Treasurer: Sherry Long. Members of the Board are Karen Farris, Ann Guenther, Ron Murphy, Marie Perry, Jeanine Sifers, Diana Snyder, Joan Tierney and Sheryl Wagaman. Community meetings are held monthly with great points of interest as we learn how to become leaders with good support from all residence of BOLLING HEIGHTS.



Heights



In 2006 the City of Gladstone was instrumental in assessing the total community and encouraged the residents of local housing areas to re-evaluate the appearance of their homes and establish new leadership to enhance and promote better maintenance. A community of 50 years growth will show wear if not given the proper care. With strong persistence, volunteers stepped forward to form the second Community Association and a Board of Directors that has put forth many hours of work to build a better community in Bolling Heights. Communication in the form of a monthly newsletter, "THE LINK" is just one small effort to make friendly neighbors. Committees for Beautification, Safety, and



Spike, Christi Holland, Carol Wendland, Vicki Wallace and KoKo

1863

As the Civil War raged, a building at 14th and Grand being used by the Union army as a temporary jail collapsed, killing some women who were related to William Quantrill's pro-slavery raiders. One of the women killed was Quantrill's sister.



Quantrill retaliated seven days later with his attack on Lawrence, Kan., where 150 people were killed.