

IN THE SHADOW OF HOGAN'S MOUNTAIN

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What's in a Name? A Look at Road Names in Bethlehem

The Bethlehem Community has slightly over 200 named roads. There's an astonishing and relatively unknown world of legends to be found along the highways and by-ways of our community. As might be guessed, we have a significant number of names related to the Catawba River and Lake Hickory. But we also have roads that we drive along roads daily that have unique

names that could conjure interesting stories about our past. Roads have family names of long deceased individuals, geographic features that had changed over the decades, humorous names, obvious names, and some that make us say "hmmm."

As stated, many of the names in the Bethlehem community relate to the Catawba River and Lake Hickory. A review of listed

Bethlehem names shows 29 related names such as Catawba Shores, Davis Cove Road, Edgewater Road, Harbortown Drive, Heron Cove Loop, Hidden Cove Lane, Island Pointe Court, Lakemont Park Road, Lakeside Hill Court, Leeward Point Loop, Rink Dam Road, River Hills Court, Riverview Road, and Wildlife Access Road.

A unique road name, Devil

Track Road, relates to what is on a rock in the Middle Little River. How did Devil Track Road get its name? Legend says there is a large rock in the Middle Little River with a large indentation that resembled footprints. The footprints were called devil tracks because some people believed that they were the tracks of Satan, as they were allegedly made by a cloven hoof. Many theories have been put forward to explain the indentations in the rock. Many question the genuineness of their appearance. Some say they were caused by human hands; some say they were caused by erosion, and some say they were an attempt by a local moonshine maker to keep people out of the area. I imagine the residents of the area can provide their own stories about the legend of the devil track.

One developer chose to name his roads with a literature twist by choosing to name roads after poets such as Kipling Drive, Browning Drive, Frost Lane, and Whitman Court. Others chose names with a restful connotation including Pleasant Court, Pleasant Gardens Drive, Pleasant Point Drive, Restful Lane, Snug Harbor Drive, and Serenity Lane,

How about Chigger Ridge Road? We can only surmise that the name came from an overabundance of chiggers to be found along

the crest of the land in the area. It could have been named by the road makers who dealt with the chiggers or even berry pickers who fought the chiggers during their outdoor excursions.

We wonder what kind of patches were on Nine Patch Road. ISWA Point was named by the earlier owner, the Girl Scouts, after an identified area where an Indian tribe camped in Bethlehem.

The gazebo used to name Gazebo Road has been moved to Wittenburg Springs Road. Wildlife Club Lane no longer has a wildlife club on the road.

Other roads have been named after types of trees, golf course related terms, churches, cemeteries, animals, families, high places, low places, and geographic features. If you want more information on our community road names go to <https://www.maps-streetview.com/United-States/Bethlehem/streets.php?id=4455335&streets>.

Luckily, our county officials did not approve some of the following actual road names: Chicken Dinner Road, Anyhow Lane, Pillow Talk Court, Old Trash Pile Road, Yellow Snow Lane, Psycho Path, One Fun Place, and Elvis Alive Drive. In Alexander County, we have an extensive road naming ordinance controlled by the Alexander County Board of Commissioners.

And finally, since we are on the subject of names, do you know how Bethlehem got its name? It was called Bethlehem after the new consolidated high school built in 1924. Bethlehem was the first consolidated school in the county and was composed of students from early one and two teacher schools such as Pisgah, Herman, Duncan, Teague, Preslar and Lail schools. The land for the new school was acquired from Robert Starnes and Taylor Johnson. Taylor Johnson, a member of the school committee, encouraged to school to be named after the nearby Bethlehem Baptist Church. Other persons wanted the school to be called Pisgah. If that name had been chosen, we would be coming home to Pisgah instead of Bethlehem.

There are many, many more stories and myths about how roads and places got their names as well as many interesting oral history lessons that are easily accessible by simply talking with the older residents of our area. I encourage readers to find time to reminisce with some older relative or resident. Not only will it provide the younger person with family and local history that will be forever lost when the older person passes, but it will also heighten a sense of personal identity, self-esteem, peace, and self-worth for the senior citizen.



New staff named at Bethlehem School

Bethlehem Elementary School (BES) Principal Charles Draper has announced the following new staff members:

• **Jessica Bowman** (Second Grade Teacher) -- "Hi! This is my fourth year in education. I absolutely love working with children! I graduated from Appalachian State University in the fall of 2018. I am originally from Catawba County. I now reside in Bethlehem with my husband and my two-year-old son. I enjoy traveling and spending time outdoors with my family. I am a lifelong learner and I am so excited for this new adventure in 2nd grade at BES!"

• **Victoria Acord** (Second Grade Teacher) -- "This year, I am teaching 2nd grade at Bethlehem Elementary. I am a native of Alexander County. As a child, I attended Hiddenite Elementary and East Alexander Middle School. When I began my freshman year at Alexander Central High School, my parents moved to Bethlehem; and I completely fell in love with the community. I graduated from Appalachian State University in December, 2020. I began my teaching career in August 2021."

"My husband and I live in the community. We have three wonderful daughters, who mean the world to us. We enjoy spending family time together, traveling, and going to church."

"I absolutely love teaching and I am extremely blessed to have the opportunity to follow my passion!"

• **Caitlin Davis** (Second Grade Teacher) -- "I will enter my fifth year as an educator this upcoming 2022-2023 school year. With great excitement, I will be joining Bethlehem Elementary School as a second-grade teacher. Recently my husband and I moved back to our hometown of Taylorsville from Wake County, where I taught first grade. We have two cats named Salem and Thea. I enjoy playing games with my family and reading in my free time."

• **Charissa Ferrese** (Second Grade Teacher) -- "I have been involved in the Bethlehem Community one way or another all of my life, from spending nights with my grandparents to days out on the lake. My

husband David is also from the area, and we have lived in Bethlehem all 22 years of our marriage. We have two children, Alyssa and Landon, who both attended BES in their elementary school years.

"After years of being an x-ray tech., having my own children led me to see that education is what I was truly meant to do. I served as a TA/Interventionist at Wittenburg Elementary School for 5 years and a TA for Hickory City Schools 2 years prior to that. I have also served as a substitute teacher for Alexander County Schools. Teaching has always been a passion of mine, and I honestly feel as if it is my life's calling. My mother was a Sunday School teacher for over 30 years at Corinth Reformed Church in Hickory, and she is my mentor, so I like to say I learned from the best."

"Summer is my favorite season. I love going to the beach, being by the lake, or at the pool. In my spare time, I love to read. My kids and I also love roller coasters, so we frequent theme parks quite often."

"I have spent a lot of time in primary grades, and I am very much looking forward to having my own classroom. One of my favorite quotes is by an anonymous author. It says, "Every child is a different kind of flower, and altogether, they make this world a beautiful garden." I cannot wait to do my part in assisting this community's children while they grow and flourish; becoming that beautiful garden!"

• **Johnna Minton** (EC Teacher) -- This is my first year at Bethlehem Elementary School. I graduated from Western Carolina University with my bachelor's and I will be finished with my Master's Degree in Special Education from Appalachian State University this August. I am married and I have a six-year-old son. We love to do anything outdoors! I am so honored and excited to join your team!

• **Ashley Jenkins** (Assistant Principal) -- "I am very excited to be joining your school family as the new assistant principal for both Bethlehem Elementary and Hiddenite Elementary! I am coming from Catawba County Schools, and have 18 years

of teaching experience. I earned a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from Appalachian State University and a master's degree in both elementary education and school administration from Gardner-Webb University. My husband, Jeff, and I have three daughters, Bailey (23), Rylie (19), and Avery (15). In my free time, I love going to the mountains, attending ASU football games, and trips to the beach. I look forward to getting to know you all in August. It's going to be an amazing school year!"

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Shown left to right is YMCA executive director Kristy Harrington and Taylorsville Savings Bank employees Riley Davis and Crystal Pennell.

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