

Longest Town:

Shalimar Strides Into Second Year As Incorporated State Community

SHALIMAR—This youngest of Northwest Florida towns strides out of babyhood today. Shalimar starts its second year as an incorporated town under Florida law.

To be exact, Shalimar is slightly older than one year—but its legal machinery for the town was set up so that July 1 is the start of the town commissioners' yearly duties.

Washed by salt-fresh water in three sides, Shalimar is situated on a peninsula which faces Choctawhatchee bay, bays and Choctawhatchee bay.

Mayor Clifford Meigs points proudly to the fact that Shalimar is a five-minute drive from Eglin Air Force base headquarters and five minutes away from the beaches on the Gulf of Mexico.

It is the popular impression that Shalimar is exclusively an "air force town." That impression is nearly right, but there is a growing segment of population in the town that is not connected officially with the air force base. Among the latter families are Mr. and Mrs. Roger Clary, Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Meigs, Jr. and Mrs. John Boyce, Dennis Davis, T. W. Britton and Dr. Walker.

EGLIN HOUSING

But it is as a housing center for Eglin officers and top grade Eglin civilians that Shalimar is best known. The Shalimar folk own two.

One hundred and sixty residences are rented through Shalimar Homes and Meigs Homes corporations to Eglin personnel. An area which is about a year old, and which is almost wilderness, Shalimar today is a unique town in Northwest Florida and perhaps in the nation.

It has approximately five miles of paved streets, street lights, street signs, lush lawns growing from the streets.

HIGH RATE

Shalimar is a town of many automobiles and it may have the highest auto ownership rate of an incorporated community in America. Mayor Meigs says he doesn't know of any family in the town without an automobile and most of them are driving new jobs which make you drool as you ride through the quiet residential communities.

Shalimar folk own two of more cars. There was a dream developed in Valparaiso about a projected area to be called Fort Dixie, the approximate present site of Shalimar. Fort Dixie, if the dreams had come true, would have been a great air training base, shipping, railroad terminal and dock space.

As deep water still is there, but only a few barges use commercial shipping facilities. Many small boats are used for pleasure. Plans for outboards, small power-driven cruisers and sailing craft, Shalimar is a town of boat building.

SHALIMAR BUILDING

Mayor Meigs declares that Shalimar is still building, but at a much slower rate than the town built in 1943-44 when the town sprang up out of the woods. He points to the new air training base, the Homestead avenue and he hints at plans for development of a small shopping center.

"We don't want to be a commercial center," the mayor says, "but we do want to have thousands of people to drive to and perhaps a few to establish themselves. We want to serve the convenience of our own residents."

Shalimar residents in Shalimar include the Shalimar Store, Shalimar Service Station and Shalimar Club. B. E. Reed, Shalimar banker, has a headquarters at Shalimar. All are housed in modern buildings, and there is nothing drab about Shalimar.

NIGHT LIFE

There is a club in Shalimar club advertises "Flask Club on the Gulf Coast—4 miles north of Fort Walton."

After you have seen the recently decorated decorating job, you can hardly put up with the argument about Clary's use of rubber stamps in the Shalimar club which would hold its own anywhere.

Shalimar is not night clubbing in Shalimar. In fact, many Shalimar residents never go near the night club in Shalimar. Shalimar is a town of residences. Family groups picnic in nearby Shalimar park. Children romp around the town in all directions.

STREET NAMES

Street names in Shalimar are interesting. Shalimar drive of course gets its name from the town. Shalimar was an Indian name meaning "by the water side."

The first street named for Eglin's first commanding general, Timney trail got its name from an FBI director who did much of the early development work in the town site. Clifford drive takes the first name of the mayor and major property owner.

Editor's Note: Each town in the Playground News has some claim to fame. Let us know about yours. The Playground News will feature each of the towns among its towns in the Playground community in later issues. Please help.

LIFEGUARD DANCE

A dance to boost the Tower Beach lifeguard fund has been set for Friday, July 3, at the Magnolia club in Fort Walton, reports Bob Gibson, chief lifeguard.

Montgomery Wins Pensacola Boating Race

Yachtsman Announces Plans for 'Bigger' Event Next Year

"We'll be back again next year with a bigger and better Fort Walton race day."

Those were the words of Commodore Jack Pace as the Pensacola Yacht Club wound up its 21st Fort Walton race day at a banquet at the Shalimar club Saturday night.

Prize winners honored at the banquet were: J. D. Montgomery, who took the first place in a 40-horse trophy for winning the cruise division.

Leslie Shepherd, who won the first prize in a 40-horse trophy for his victory in the sailboat class.

Jimmy Pace, who won the first annual award for outstanding

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'Different' Town of Shalimar

"Different is the word for Shalimar. The incorporated town starts its second official year today and here are some of the more unusual facts about the town:

Since incorporation there has never been: A baby born in Shalimar (although the birth rate is high, most of the new babies are delivered at Eglin air base hospital). An arrest within the town limits.

A death within the town limits (several Eglin fliers who lived at Shalimar have lost their lives elsewhere).

A fireman or policeman on the beach patrol.

A vote cast in Shalimar (officially the town is part of Garner voting precinct, but Mayor Meigs says that there are plans for establishing a voting precinct for Shalimar).

A water bill presented in Shalimar (Water comes from free-flowing artesian wells).

Outboard Racers: Eglin Sergeant Wins at Florida Masonic Event

NICEVILLE—Sgt. Lewis E. Pitzer of Eglin Air Force Base won the 21st annual Florida Masonic Outboard Motor Club, Sgt. Pitzer finished the six mile course ahead of contestants from four states.

Other racing enthusiasts in the community are Col. Charles B. Good, all of Eglin field, and Lt. Sgt. Fitzgerald.

By-Laws Proposed for Volunteer Fire Department in Fort Walton

Fort Walton Fire Chief Bob Brooks has laid plans for a more active Fort Walton Volunteer Fire department. First step in these plans was the release of a detailed set of by-laws to govern the fire fighting organization.

The proposed by-laws will be printed in a series of three articles in The Playground News. The first of the fire department by-laws is printed below:

BY-LAWS OF F. W. V. F. D.

Preamble In order to establish an orderly guide for the transaction of business and to protect from sudden changes in membership, certain rules we deem important, we, the members, do adopt and agree to be bound by these by-laws:

Article 1—Name Sec. 1. This organization shall be known as Fort Walton Volunteer Fire Department, Fort Walton, Florida.

Article 2—Membership Sec. 1. There shall be two classes of members, active and associate. Associate membership shall not have voice or vote on any firemanic matter.

Sec. 2. Applicants for active and associate membership shall have passed their eighteenth birthday. (Senior Scouts may become Junior members at the age of 16 with parents consent. Any boy that is a member of the Boy Scouts of America may become a Junior member at any age, with parents consent. All Junior Members serve 6 months training period and become active members of the F. W. V. F. D.) An active member may propose for associate membership only, any man of the required age who is a citizen of the United States, of good character, and able and willing to discharge all the duties of his membership.

Sec. 3. Proposals for membership will be made in writing, on the form furnished by the Department and approved by the applicant. An initiation fee of one dollar—in the case of an applicant for active membership who is under twenty-one years of age such proposal shall be accompanied also by the written consent of his parent or guardian.

Sec. 4. Proposals shall be read at the meeting at which they are received. The final lay over until the regular meeting next following during which they shall be considered and approved by the President and consisting of Directors who are active members. The applicant shall meet with the applicant, inquire into his purpose in seeking membership and his qualifications, and explain to him the duties and rights of membership and the fines to which he is subject.

Sec. 5. At the regular meeting next following the first reading of the proposing such committee shall report either favorably or unfavorably on the application. The members of the Department shall then vote, by use of the secret ballot, to accept or not to accept such applicant. Three blackbills shall reject an application. Proposals for active membership shall be voted on by active members only. The Secretary shall communicate the action of the Committee on the applicant, returning his initiation fee if he has been rejected, instructing him as to how to proceed.

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A BOY IS DROWNED

Last week this newspaper told of the drowning of a 15-year-old boy who would have been an overnight visitor to Fort Walton. But the boy did not live to see the next morning.

You may remember the boy's name—Stanley Lyle Sigman; his hometown—Red House, W. Va.; his parents, Mr. and Mrs. V. S. Sigman, owners of a store in a small town.

Unless you were near the scene of the accident you don't know the tragedy. A hurried newspaperman (we were getting ready to go to press) sometimes doesn't get all the heart-tug in type.

This is how it went: "This was a rather difficult day at the office and you went home hot and tired. You went for a quick dip in the Santa Rosa sound, less than 10 feet from the place where the boy later drowned. You walked home and ate as leisurely as a weekly newspaperman ever eats on "press day."

Back to the office to clean up those inevitable last-hour details. A frantic voice on the telephone told about a "boy they just got out of the water." Later you learned that your wife had seen most of the early rescue efforts. You knew then why her voice sounded so strange.

So you followed the town fire truck to the waterfront. Darkness had fallen and Fire Chief Bob Brooks turned on his big spotlight.

The beam showed shadowy figures huddled over a boy. The boy was laid out on blankets near the water's edge. He was bunched up so that his face was barely visible. There were no signs of life in the lad.

Doctor White's oxygen pump thumped away. Rescuers applied artificial respiration. Volunteers rubbed the boy's limbs.

The crowd was hushed.

Apart from all the others were the most distressed couple you had ever seen—and you had seen distress in many forms during eight years of newspapering and four years in the U. S. Navy.

The boy's father and mother prayed on the sand. They called for Divine assistance and the tone in their voices wrenched at your heart there on the beach under the moonlight.

You tried to help some. You knelt in the sand and patted the boy's legs. You looked into the eyes of some of the people you knew, Cecil Bass, Docie Bass, Lee Counter, Dale Moon, Hank Winters, Father Sherman, Theo Staff, and others. There was hope and despair there on the sand.

The boy's life ebbed away and you felt helpless. You wanted to do something so you patted his legs some more and asked silently that his life be saved.

Oxygen pumped on. Artificial respirators applied their skill. The moon rose higher and higher. The crowd grew thicker. The Sigman parents, strangers to everyone in Fort Walton, sobbed and prayed.

Every other parent could see their own youngster. Every parent wanted to offer solace to these visitors. But words failed.

Two hours passed. Rescue efforts seemed hopeless now, but the volunteer crews worked valiantly. The boy's face turned deeper purple.

You watched the father leave his wife's side and walk heavily to the circle around the prostrate boy. "Is there any improvement, doctor?"

The doctor shook his head. The oxygen pump thumped away.

You watched the father clutch at his heart and walk away. With great effort he clinched his fists and strides to the cottage he had rented so happily just a few hours earlier.

He pulled the light cord and gathered up his son's clothing from the corners of the room. He stowed the clothing in the family car, to spare his wife further grief.

Later you went to the hospital. "You saw two words on the death certificate. Accidental drowning. You wrote the news story and it appeared in last week's paper. You should have written more, but the words didn't click off the typewriter keys. So you saved it for this editorial."

TEACH YOUR CHILDREN TO SWIM.

Niceville Baptists Plan July 5 Picnic

NICEVILLE—The First Baptist church of Niceville will hold its annual picnic Monday afternoon, July 5.

The picnic will be held at the Shalimar park on Garners bayou. Games, swimming and funnery will entertain the picnickers through the early afternoon. All members of the congregation are invited to bring guests with them. More than 200 friends of the Baptist church are expected to attend a spokesman for the church stated.

County Health Meet At Vol-P Tonight

The annual meeting of the Okaloosa County Tuberculosis and Health association will be held at the Valparaiso Inn tonight (Thursday) at 7:30 p.m.

Judge Ernest Mason of Pensacola, newly-elected president of the Florida Tuberculosis association, will be guest speaker. The association will elect officers and hear brief reports of the activities. An association announcement stated.

Birth Announcements

EGLIN AIR BASE Mrs. E. M. Roseberry—MARRY ESTHER, Fla. Born to Mr. and Mrs. E. M. Roseberry at Eglin Air Force Base, June 29, 1948. Weight 9.30 lbs. at White's Club baby weighed 9 pounds 8 ounces. Mrs. Roseberry is a member of the church.

EGLIN AIR BASE Mrs. M. R. Irvin—June 29, 1948. Born to Mr. and Mrs. M. R. Irvin at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida. Weight 9.30 lbs. at White's Club baby weighed 9 pounds 8 ounces. Mrs. Irvin is a member of the church.

BUSINESS MEET The Fort Walton Business association will meet Monday at Eglin Air Force Base, 8 p.m. A report will be made on the softball and other important matters taken up at this time. George Miller requests membership in present.



READY FOR THE HOE son (left) and Gene Himson are ready for the hoe on their holidays.

Army Lieutenant Placed in Br Cemetery At

The body of Lieutenant A son was laid to rest in Br cemetery, Fort Walton, Thursday afternoon. Lieutenant was killed in action, 85th Bombardment group, Africa February 14, 1943.

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Chaplain Lawrence T. Eglin air base field service Community church, and it followed with the American Legion post 454.

The church was filled with mourners for the young man who was 44 years old in action. L. Hinson received his early in the business. He attended Pasadena Junior and the University of Florida.

He had served his education and half before his military service. He was a member of the Fort Walton cemetery, one of the men for whom the Roman American Legion was named.

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SHALIMAR SCENE—This is a typical street scene in Shalimar, the north of Fort Walton which today starts its second year officially as an incorporated municipality.