

Weather

Continued warm with showers likely by late today. Friday, clearing and warm. Low today, 68; high, 85.

Comment

Hard work is probably a good thing for mankind, but there are many people who want very little of the good thing.

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Staff Photos by Clint Fuller

Nash Gets Paving, Franklin Gets Paint

An Editorial

We are not too disturbed that Nash (and other surrounding counties) are getting road improvements. It doesn't cause us too much concern that they are getting bright new signs letting the motorist know he is leaving another county and entering Franklin. In fact, we are happy for them.

We are, however, disturbed and concerned at what continues to happen or rather, not to happen to Franklin County. It's about time this red-headed step child stood up on his hind legs and yelled. Everybody in the world might not like Franklin County. This is their loss. We, who live here, like it and to us, it is as important as any place in the state.

The world about us seems to be closing in on Franklin County. Leaving the county in almost any direction and on almost any North Carolina Primary highway, a traveler can tell, without looking, when he passes into the neighboring county. There's a difference in the roads. We say this, in case there is anyone who might not have noticed.

The latest difference is pictured above, left, where Nash county meets Franklin county 4.5 miles east of Pilot. The Nash county portion of N. C. 64 has just been finished with a complete repaving job. Franklin remains as it has been for years and years... patched. Even the patches need patching now.

The same exists on N. C. 56 where Nash meets Franklin. The same exists where Wake meets Franklin on U. S. 401. The same exists where Johnston and Wake meet Franklin below Pilot and in other places. Soon it will exist where Vance meets Franklin on N. C. 39.

Since Franklin county citizens, at last report, were still paying their state taxes, including the gasoline tax to retire the old road bonds, it seems in order to us, and to many others, that Franklin get some answer from somebody as to why? Why are we being surrounded with heavy expenditures of highway funds and none here? Is Franklin to be isolated by deplorable roads from the remainder of the state? Is it a pattern? Certainly it seems so. Highway 56 (only promised project in the past ten years) is still sitting in some Raleigh office gathering dust. When is this one coming out?

There may be a road in greater need of repair than N. C. 56 from Louisburg to the Nash County line, but we doubt it. There may be a road which holds an older promise of repairs than N. C. 56. We doubt this too. Present administration officials said, last fall in writing, that N. C. 56 would be repaired and indicated that work should have started several months ago. The obvious question is: Why hasn't it?

One official, reportedly said some time ago, that the reason Franklin has not gotten its share of road money was because no one had asked for it. There are a number of county officials ready to deny this statement. But, just to set the record straight, we're asking now for Franklin's fair share of road improvements. They are long overdue. This is a fact, not an opinion. A ride over the county will verify this and State Highway officials should take such a ride. And please watch for the holes after you pass the county line.

While other counties get paving, Franklin gets paint. We want some of the paving. And it's time we got it.

Pilot Killed As F-101 Jet Crashes At New Hope



Smoking Ruins of RF-101 Jet Plane



Body of Pilot Lies Beneath Parachute



Tail Section Wedged In Trees

Staff Photos by Clint Fuller

Hundreds of spectators flocked to the scene of the crash of an Air Force RF-101 Voodoo Jet, in which Major William L. Strait of Shaw Air Force Base, S. C. was killed, yesterday near New Hope in Franklin County.

The crash occurred shortly after 3 p.m. in a heavily wooded area, about a mile and half off N. C. Highway 98 in the New Hope community. Odell Arnold, a Louisburg

Public Information Officer Dave Garwick of Seymour Johnson Air Base, Goldsboro, N.C., told The Franklin Times this morning that the cause of the accident was still undetermined. He stated that a team "qualified Air Force officers from Seymour Johnson was at the scene late Wednesday and investigating team from Shaw Air Force Base, S. C. would arrive at the scene this morning."

According to the officer, Major Strait was flying a jet re-

fueling mission at the time of the crash, over the North Carolina refueling area. The 35-year old senior pilot, with 4,000 flying hours to his credit, was assigned to the 441st Combat Crew Training Wing at Shaw. The pilot was married and the father of two sons. His wife, Mrs. Lucille A. Strait lives in Dalsell, S. C. and his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Allen N. Strait, live in Austin, Texas. Witness to the crash told somewhat conflicting stories of the incident with some report-

ing sighting at least three parachutes in the air just before the plane fell. Others said only one chute was seen and this one was draped over the tail section of the plane. One New Hope resident said he and others heard what they thought to be two explosions and saw the plane turn on its side just before plunging earthward. The plane, apparently dropped straight down into the wooded area. Only trees in the exact vicinity of the crash were sheared.

There was no indication of any glide by the aircraft prior to landing. There was only a short path of skid following the crash. The plexiglass canopy, apparently jettisoned just prior to the crash, was sighted about 200 feet from the scene of the crash and the pilot's seat was lying against a tree about 50 feet from the crash. The body of the pilot was found between the crashed plane and the seat, about 15 feet from the seat. What was believed to be

the seat ejection rod was found a few feet from the seat. Observers theorized that the pilot was unable to jettison the seat and was carried to his death, being thrown from the falling plane just moments before it hit ground.

The body was recovered by the Louisburg Rescue Service following investigation by Coroner James H. Edwards. Major Strait was flying with the 29th Tactical Squadron out of Shaw Air Force Base at the time of the accident.

A sister jet, flying with Maj. Strait at the time of the accident, hovered over the area until fuel supply caused it to head for home. A Coast Guard four-propeller rescue aircraft picked up the position shortly thereafter and continued to circle the area. A rescue helicopter from Seymour Johnson Air Base arrived about an hour after the crash and landed near the scene with Air Force personnel. Other Air Force personnel are on the scene today searching for clues in an effort to determine the cause of the accident.

Several young crops, mostly cotton and tobacco, suffered damage in the general area of the crash as spectators, afoot and on cars, moved through freshly plowed and planted fields in an effort to get to the scene. Fire from the white-hot blaze of the burning craft, was limited to the immediate area.

Louisburg Mayor and Rescue Chief V. A. Peoples headed the Rescue Service at the scene

with State Troopers D. C. Day and Gary Kearney and others on duty in the area. Sheriff's Deputies Dave Batten and Tom Powell plus county forest warden Joe Smith and others were on the scene.

The crash occurred within a few miles of the site where a Navy trainer plane landed safely in 1964. Following an engine repair, the Navy plane took off using the rural paved road as a runway.