

NEIGHBORHOODS: NORFOLK 1955 ANNEXATION

By 1950, the Norfolk area was the ninth fastest growing metropolitan area in the United States. The Norfolk County area from Ingleside through Norview to North Chesapeake Blvd was annexed. Including the 1959 annexation, the size of the city grew to 64.3 square miles, of which 53.6 are land, and 10.7 which are of water. Once WWII had ended, an intense demand for housing of military members and their families erupted. The Veterans Administration made it easy for them to purchase homes which builders, in turn, responded by flooding the market with small detached homes meant to fit a certain price range, often less than \$7,000. Examples of these neighborhoods include Sewells Gardens, and Suburban Acres and others mentioned in this text.

As one of the oldest communities located in Norfolk's east side, Ballentine sprouted its roots when Ballentine Realty Corporation converted this tract from farmland into housing property in 1907. Development seemed to lag a bit until the 1920s, when a housing boom hit the area. Lots costing \$150 to \$275 were offered for the low price of \$1 down and \$1 a week. With the aid of the Works Project Administration, swampy marshland in this area was miraculously turned into a lake and playground, Ballentine Blvd. was paved, and Crape Myrtles were planted to grace the streets of the developing area. By the mid 1950s, about 750 families resided here.

Ballentine's reputation of being a strong, stable community proved itself once again in the 1960s, when integration spread into the area. Residents united harmoniously to fight the beginnings of "white flight" with the influx of black families seeking affordable housing.

Proclaimed as Norfolk's most versatile neighborhood, the history of Ingleside weaves an interesting tale. Originally, this land was given as a grant from the king of England in the early 1600s to a local gentleman. After failing to comply with some of his obligations to the crown, however, he soon lost his 500 acres to Mr. William Godfrey. Thus, from this point the territory was passed from owner to owner over the years, and eventually landed in the lap of Barton Myer. Mr. Myers worked on developing the land after the turn of the century. Due to local housing shortages after WWII, houses and apartments were erected in the area at a rapid pace. One of these apartment buildings was the Ingleside Terrace Apartments, developed by Norfolk contractor Ralph E. Bush.

Additionally, located in Ingleside is the Boone Home, the oldest surviving home in the area. Once named "Clairevue", it was the home of Richard Drummond, a West Indies trader from the Eastern Shore. Over a four year period, this house was built by slave labor. In the more recent past, such prominent names as the Whitehursts, the Grandys, and the Barton Myers families have owned the house. At the present day, however, the Boone family dwells in the home.

Stability is the best word to describe Estabrook's past. Developed in the 1920s as almost a country settlement in Norfolk county, Estabrook's only connection with the downtown area revolved around a trolley line that ran along Chesapeake Blvd., between the City of Norfolk and Ocean View. Containing a history of helpful residents who resided along quiet streets where no two houses were the same, the two or three bedroom homes in here were built to last.

During 1940, when four Cape Cod-style houses stood on Waco Street in Denby Park, this neighborhood was ripe with pioneers. At a time when it was still Norfolk County, and corn grew in what is now Monticello Village, the neighborhood boys trapped rabbits in the woods within walking distance of Wards Corner. Over the next two decades, this neighborhood grew up to contain streets named after Texas cities, and became filled with neat frame houses.

Oakdale Farms was built by world renowned developer William J. Levitt, the man who gave us the prototypical American suburb of Levittown, just outside New York City, in the late 1940s. The beginnings of mass-produced, production-line construction was seen here, after Levitt perfected the technique at Levittown. Oakdale Farms was strictly suburban when the assembly-line technique was employed to erect one-story frame houses with two bedrooms and a single bath in 1941 and 1942.

Many of the streets in this neighborhood were named for admirals who were familiar figures during the war years. The tiny, mass-produced homes were built to meet the temporary needs of junior officers. They were one-story frame houses with two bedrooms and a bath. Like other military housing, and like other early Levitt housing, they tended to look a lot alike. Ironically, Levitt had much less success with his only other Tidewater-area development which hasn't stood up nearly as well.

When East Princess Anne Road was a principal connection between Norfolk and the farms to the east in Norfolk and Princess Anne County during the early 1930s, a suburban neighborhood called Fox Hall Residence Park was created on a strip between this sparsely traveled highway and the right of way of Norfolk Southern Railway. Developed in the early 1930s as a suburban community for working-class families, it had the distinction of offering nearly rural living with an easy commute to work. A vast majority of the homes built here were designed as bungalows in a sort of Cape Cod style with most homes are one story have two or three bedrooms.

Boroughs Established:

South Azalea Acres

Ballentine Place

West Ballentine

Brandon Place

Broad Creek Shores

Cherokee Heights

Coleman Place

Colonial Heights

Coronado

Denby Park

Elmhurst

Estabrook

Estabrook Park

Forest Park

Fox Hall

Fox Hall Gardens

North Fox Hall

Greenhill Farms

Greenwood

Industrial Park

Ingleside

Ingleside Trace

Lansdale

Lansdale East

Lincoln Park

Mamie Homes

Monticello Village

Norfolk Square

Norvella Heights

East Norview

Norview

Oakland

Oakmont

Oakwood Terrace

Pennystown

River Oaks

Rosemont

Sewells Garden

Snug Harbor

South Bayview

Townhouse

Tucker Place

Washington Park