

HISTORY & FOLKLORE



From Liberty Gazette, Thursday, January 6, 1977 –
CITY OF LIBERTY ASSUMES AMBULANCE SERVICE

The City of Liberty has put into service a pair of ambulances operating out of the Liberty fire station.

Ambulance service has been provided for many years by the funeral homes of the county, but they discontinued service January 1. They cited heavy financial losses incurred in transporting indigent patients without compensation.

Another pressure against the funeral home ambulance service is the myriad of expensive requirements laid down by government regulations. Some of the regulations are poorly founded in practicality and fact, according to funeral operators the Gazette interviewed.



From Liberty Gazette, Thursday, January 6, 1977 –

New ambulance units put into service at the Liberty fire station by the City of Liberty this month. The state is pressing for paramedic service on ambulances. To provide this service, together with maintaining doctors near the radio in hospitals to consult with field medics would cost major sums of money – perhaps an amount to compare with the cost of operating Kersting Hospital.



Allison Funeral Home of Liberty, owned by Reuben Allison, has this new unit outfitted for ambulance service, which it maintained until January 1, 1977. It is now out of the business for the same reasons as Sterling of Dayton. There will be an election April 2, 1977, in which county voters will decide whether to approve an ambulance district supported by taxes.

The combined losses of Liberty County funeral homes in their ambulance operations probably ran in the neighborhood of \$25,000. If they had been compensated for welfare work to this extent, it would have been quite a bargain compared to what the people of the county will now pay one way or the other. Ambulance service provided by cities and counties, if following normal bureaucratic course, would run to a half-million dollars a year. Possibly at a lower level of quality.



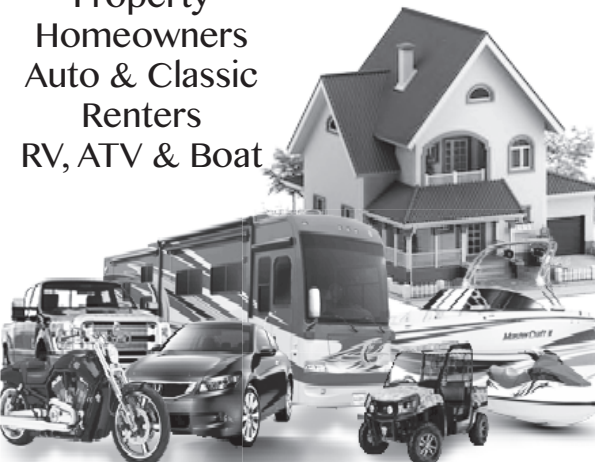
Jimmy Sterling of Sterling Funeral Home in Dayton. Jimmy is a graduate of Texas A&M University where he studied maritime science and spent some time at sea as a merchant marine officer. He plans now to follow the family business of mortuary science. He stands here with the fine ambulance, which Sterling has retired from service this week. The ambulance operations will be assumed by the county and cities now.

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Sterling Funeral Home in Dayton has been operating this ambulance unit. It's a new machine, superbly equipped and quickly put into service on call. It is now retired from ambulance service and will be used for other duties in the Sterling organization. Losses ran into thousands as it fell to Sterling to transport many welfare cases that brought no money whatever to Sterling. The ambulance service was maintained despite losses until the requirements of the state for expensive technical changes threatened to drive costs through the roof.

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