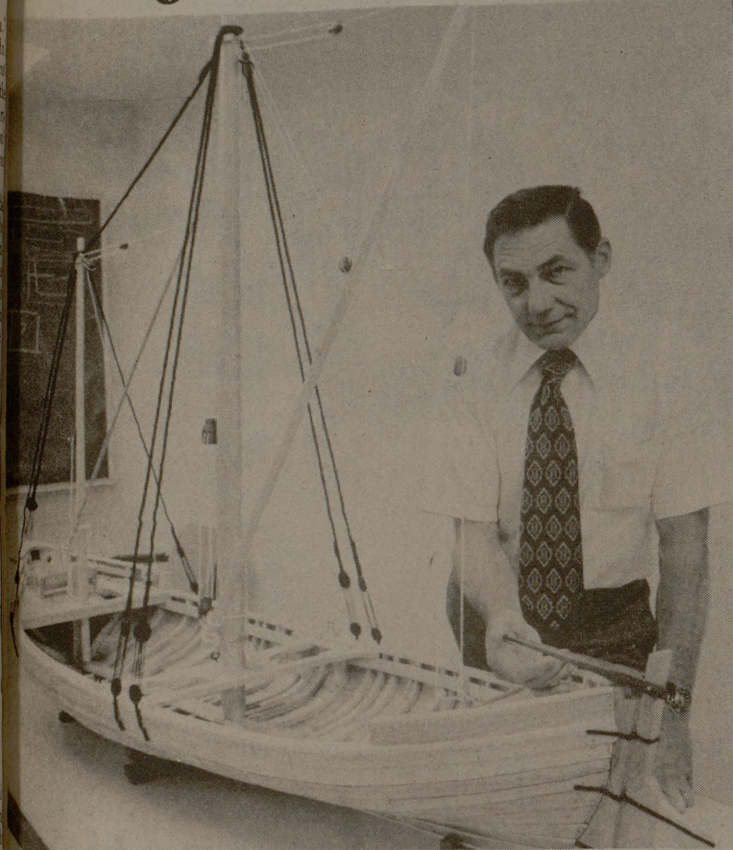


Aggie archaeologist reconstructs 258-year-old southern river ferry



Richard Steffy

The oldest ship in America is docked at Texas A&M University. Students and archaeologists from almost 1,000 miles away are helping reconstruct the original 258-year-old vessel.

Brown's Ferry, which sank on the Black River 20 miles north of Georgetown in 1730, has been scaled down to model size and reconstructed by Texas A&M nautical archaeologist Richard Steffy.

Steffy built the scaled down version at the request of the University of South Carolina, who handled the actual excavation and is currently reconstructing the unique find.

"This was a rare discovery for many reasons," Steffy said. "First, it's the oldest ship ever recovered in America. The only vessel that can even touch it for age is the 1776 gunboat Philadelphia, which is on display in the Smithsonian Institution."

"Second, just the fact that it's a Southern ship is important," he continued. "All ships discovered up until now have been found in New England and have been mostly war vessels. This ferry was a coastal and river freighter."

Steffy, who built his model as a pilot for the South Carolina reconstruction project, heard

about the find through a nautical archaeology conference in Ottawa, Ontario. He learned about the vessel from a visit to the Black River excavation site. Detailed photographs were made showing the location of timbers and nails to aid him in his reconstruction.

Steffy believes the ship was built around 1700 and traversed the river carrying various types of cargo. It was 50 feet long and 14 feet wide, could carry cargos totaling up to 30 tons and could probably get by with a crew of two to four men. It was carrying 10,000 bricks when it went down.

"The ship had pine planks and used cypress and oak for the heavy timbers," he said. "When it was loaded, it drew close to four feet of water and couldn't travel much faster than five or six knots."

"She was a finely built ship," the nautical archaeologist said. "It doesn't take much expertise to see she was built by a talented Southern craftsman."

Steffy's scale model shows the kind of craftsmanship the original builder put into his. His vessel is detailed down to the cuts on the floor of the ship where he believes a cook once chopped kindling wood for the oven.

Proposition 13 in Texas?

GOP proposes tax limiting

AMARILLO — State Republican leaders have proposed tax limiting amendments to the federal and state constitutions that would require a balanced U.S. budget and prohibit Congress from borrowing money except during a formally declared war.

Members of the GOP executive committee met Saturday and passed a resolution that calls for voters in the 1980 general election to decide whether Congress should be limited in its tax collecting powers.

On the national level, the resolution calls for Texas delegates to the Republican National Committee to put before the full panel a proposal supporting a U.S. constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget.

The proposal would limit the power of Congress to assess taxes no greater than 15 percent of net income and would apply to both personal and corporate taxes.

Furthermore, the resolution stated, federal taxes "shall be reduced by the amount of any other tax paid to any local, state or federal governmental agency." The resolution which was passed would allow Congress to borrow money only in the event of a "formally declared

war." The GOP leaders also recommended an amendment to state party rules which, if adopted by the state Republican party, would provide for a Republican presidential primary in 1980.

In the May statewide primary, 74 percent of Republican voters approved a referendum proposal calling for a presidential primary.

Republican executive committee chairman Allan Hamm of Fort Worth expressed doubt about whether the state legislature, controlled by Democrats, would enact legislation authorizing a Republican presidential primary. The panel, therefore, recommended an alter-

nate method of obtaining a Republican vote on presidential choices.

If the legislature fails to pass a Republican presidential primary measure, the Republicans will sponsor a 1980 presidential poll in the party's primary. The presidential primary-presidential poll proposition passed as part of the same package.

Earlier at the session, Sen. Bob Price, R-Pampa, called for an immediate vote on tax reduction in the November general elections.

Price, extremely conservative, was elected in December to fill the unexpired term of Max Sherman, who resigned.

Expert says electricity service charge like paying store entrance fee

AUSTIN — Customer service charges for electricity are no more reasonable than an entrance fee at grocery stores, a Bethesda, Md., economist and energy expert said Monday.

Frederick J. Wells urged Texas Public Utility Commission to abolish the flat service charges and

base electricity bills solely on the amount of energy each customer uses.

"They (service charges) are the equivalent of charging entrance fees at grocery stores," Wells said. He said many businesses incur costs in making it possible for a customer to make purchases, but few get to charge even when no purchase is made.

The economist, a witness for ACORN (Association of Citizens Organized for Reform Now), said utility companies should not be allowed to charge nonusers or assess low users for more than the costs of providing electricity.

"Prices should reflect the costs that will be increased not past expenses," Wells said.

Wells disputed arguments of utility companies that customer charges are necessary to recoup costs of in-

stalling and maintaining lines to deliver electricity to customers — costs the utilities say are higher for small customers.

Bills should be based instead on how much future costs will be incurred to provide electricity, not the amount the utility invested in equipment and facilities, Wells argued.

"It makes no sense to charge 5 cents for electricity that will cost 10 cents," he said. "When the customer goes to turn on the light he or she should be charged the actual cost of that electricity."

Wells said current rates discriminate against the poor and encourage unnecessary electricity use by industries and large commercial businesses.

"It is clear that utility interests are in conflict with long run cost

control," Wells said.

ACORN representatives said their proposals for so-called "life line" rates have been misconstrued as calls for utility subsidies to the poor.

"If we were looking for subsidies we wouldn't be here," said ACORN attorney Carol Barger.

Wells said basing electricity bills on replacement costs rather than utility companies' past expenses would benefit the poor by reducing rates for low volume use and penalizing heavy users.

Surcharges for air conditioner use or other extra electricity consumption during summer months should be imposed because it costs utilities more to provide power then, he said.

Bullock says he dislikes candidate Hill

AUSTIN — Comptroller Bob Bullock says his position is basic: he doesn't like Attorney General John Hill. But that won't stop him from cooperating with Hill if Hill is elected governor, Bullock vows.

Bullock said he is working daily to build a base to seek the office himself in 1982.

Bullock said he intends to vote for Hill and expects him to defeat Republican Bill Clements — but plans to challenge Hill in four years.

The two-term comptroller said running for governor is a lifelong dream.

"I'm still planning on it," he said. "I work on it a little bit every day. Not a day goes by that something is not done in that area."

Bullock said he does not expect his political aspirations and differences with Hill to cause problems between their offices.

"If Gen. Hill is elected governor — and I do intend to vote for him — our office, including myself, will work with him in every way to improve the status of Texas. And I mean that very sincerely."

Bullock said he has disliked Hill since he first met him.

"He's just kind of nasty to me. It's just one of those things where I don't care for him at all," the comptroller said. But he said he respects the office of governor and added: "I can work with anybody who's governor of Texas whether it's Clements or John Hill."

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Wednesday, June 21 - Texas Instruments (Semi Conductors) C.S., E.E., Ch.E., M.E., Physics.

Monday, June 26 - Action-Peace Corps-Vista. All majors.

Monday, June 26 - Army Corps of Engineers, August grads Ag. Engr., C.E., E.E., M.E.

Wednesday, June 28 - Mobil Oil Corporation, August grads Accounting

Wednesday, June 21 - Texas Instruments (Facilities Group) Arch., C.E., Ch.E., E.E., I.E., M.E.

Voters OK booze sale in Abilene

ABILENE — Voters Saturday approved by 50.2 percent the sale and on-premises consumption of liquor, beer and wine, ending an alcoholic prohibition dating to 1902.

The margin of approval was 11,591 to 11,460 — a difference of 131 votes. The vote of eligible residents of Precinct 1 included most of Abilene and the communities of Hamby, Tye, Caps, Wylie and Potosi.

Approximately two-thirds of the eligible electorate cast ballots. The same proposal was defeated narrowly in February of 1976.

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THE LIFE THAT IS REALLY LIFE

As a child, let's say 5 to 9, I was strange. I didn't fit into the little boy world of rock'em sock'em. Some thought me to be a pansy, others thought me to be self-righteous. On the warm summer nights when all the kids would gulp down dinner to run out for the last couple of hours to play, I would hear, "No new-comers," as I appeared on the scene. Somehow, I felt, I knew God was on my side. When someone would hit me I wouldn't hit them back. I had heard something about turning the other cheek or not hating your enemies. Let's go on before I sound to angelic or just plain weird.

Eventually I learned to fight back. Eventually I saw that my hopes to know the God I heard about were not real because all the people around me talked about God, yet their lives and their speech didn't match. Then one day, by this time I had just reached college, I figured it out. God did not exist. These people were only afraid and found comfort in God but he was nowhere around.

The next few years I would just as soon forget but I now see that although I tried just about everything, I was being set up. The main set up — a car accident with partial paralysis to both legs. This didn't turn me to God. If anything it proved the opposite. I wasn't bitter, it was just one of those things that happened.

The set up took its toll one day when I was least expecting it. I was hung over and it was raining miserably hard. It was a mid March day in Houston. Somehow I ended up with a group of Christians — a situation I always avoided. There was a tall lanky Jew there who asked me if I'd like to be healed. I figured, "It's all psychological — but I'll try anything once." So I prayed after him.

"Do you believe in God", he asked? Now why did he have to ask that. I thought we were praying for a healing. On well, I guess I'll try and see if it works. "Yes, I believe in God," I said. Then we prayed, about my sins (which I didn't think I was sinful), I was really just seeing if I could push some psychological button and maybe improve my physical being. "Do you take Jesus as your Savior?" he asked. Now that was really hard. Who is Jesus anyway. Oh well, "Yes, I take Jesus as my Savior".

When I tried to walk there was no improvement. The little crowd that had gathered around walked away disappointed. But as they left there was something in me. My-I couldn't stop smiling! Just as the Glory of God appeared to Abraham in Ur of Chaldea — I HAD MET GOD. All these people were disappointed. Nothing had happened in an outward way, yet, I had met the God of this universe. God! I met God! For the first time the Bible made sense — that night the words seemed alive to me. Later on I found out what had happened. I found out a little verse that says, "confess with thy mouth and believe in thine heart." That day I first confessed with my mouth and then I believed in my heart. No one was more shocked than I to find out God existed. If you don't believe me-try it. Say the words with your mouth and he'll come into your heart. If it sounds foolish I can't help it. Real foolishness would be not to at least try. If it doesn't work then you can call me a fool. If it works, you will find the life that is really life. As Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

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