

# BOONE'S LICK HERITAGE QUARTERLY



Historic Clark's Chapel and Cemetery near Old Franklin. *Photo by Don Cullimore*

- **A PREVIEW: THE UNTOLD STORY OF FRANKLIN**
- **WORLD WAR II SHIP NAMED FOR CENTRAL COLLEGE**
- **BOONSLICK HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEETINGS**

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BOONSLICK HISTORICAL SOCIETY PERIODICAL

## The Untold Story of 'Old' Franklin

THE INTIMATE HISTORY OF FRANKLIN, “OLD” FRANKLIN, the original settlement and river port that sprang forth on the Howard County Missouri River bottoms across from better known Boonville in 1816, might be one of the best-kept secrets in the Show-Me State. If truth be known, that now sparsely populated place might qualify as Missouri’s Camelot.

But it wasn’t a myth. If you believe in magic and romance and employ a little imagination, Franklin too had its King Arthur and Knights of the Roundtable ... and its scoundrels and perhaps a damsel or two in distress. And it played a large role in the early 19th-century forces that forged Missouri politics, mercantile trade and monetary development, and westward expansion. Its geographic location and the diverse population it attracted also played a key part in the manifestation of a slave-holding culture and economy in the Boonslick.

Through months of scholarly, time-consuming research into often obscure archives of state agencies, historical societies, and newspapers storing snippets of that history, Missouri historian Lynn Morrow has pieced together a more complete, untold story of old Franklin, one that yields interesting tales of well-known—and some little-known—personalities associated with 19th-century Missouri history.

An introduction to Morrow’s more than 70,000-word essay on Franklin appeared in the Spring issue of *Boone’s Lick Heritage Quarterly*. Titled “Franklin Merchant, William T. Lamme,” it was the first of six installments; the last five will appear in the *Quarterly* between the Fall 2022 and Fall 2023 issues of the magazine under the collective title of “Franklin in the New West: ‘It rose with fictitious splendor.’”

Segment titles for those six installments will be: “By the People, For the People,” “Constitutionalized Slavery,” “Destination Franklin,” “Franklin Honor,” and “Franklin’s Water.”

Short selections from the five forthcoming segments are presented in this issue of the *Quarterly*. They begin on page 4, following “Did you know?”-type comments by Morrow—“teasers” to prompt readers’ interest in following the series when it starts in the Fall issue. If you missed the introductory segment on Franklin merchant William T. Lamme, it can be read on the Boonslick Historical Society website: [www.boonslickhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.boonslickhistoricalsociety.org) under the home page tab “Quarterly Journal,” Vol. 21, No. 1.

### WW II Victory Ship named for Central College

On page 7, CMU Professor of History Robert Weigers tells an interesting story about the WWII ship, SS *Central Victory*. In

1945 the four Kaiser Permanente Metals Corporation shipyards in Richmond, California, labored round-the-clock, building ships so fast one comic claimed they were “turning out ships by the mile and cutting them off by the yard” The Kaiser yards reduced ship building time from almost a year to 60 days or less. Of the seven Missouri V-12 Navy program schools, only two had Victory class ships named for their institutions: The SS *Central Victory* named after Central College, now Central Methodist University in Fayette, and the SS *Park Victory* named after Park College, now Park University in Parkville. The SS *Central Victory* was launched in March 1945 at Kaiser Permanente Metals Corporation Shipyard in Richmond. Her launching ceremony was one of 747 christenings at the Kaiser Permanente yards and the 400th ship constructed in Yard Number 2.

### Boonslick Historical Society Membership Update

The recurring coronavirus pandemic that has affected the health of millions of people has also taken its toll on Boonslick Historical Society membership. A review by BHS Treasurer Sam Jewett of membership numbers dating from three years ago – before the pandemic put a damper on group gatherings – shows that membership renewals have declined significantly. Obviously this is the result of having to cancel our normal yearly events, especially our popular annual fall banquet, a time when most members renew for the upcoming year.

With fingers crossed – and keeping a wary eye on the medical news front regarding COVID 19 variants – the BHS Board of Directors made a decision to hold membership events this year, including a fall banquet on November 6 at the historic Hotel Frederick in Boonville and a September 10 tour of the new Center for Missouri Studies and headquarters for the State Historical Society in Columbia (see details on page 10).

We value the participation of every member as the Society works to promote public awareness of the rich cultural history of the Boonslick region, especially its important place in the western exploration and expansion of the United States following the Louisiana Purchase Treaty of 1803.

Society members have worked together over the years to publish historical books and brochures and to mark historic locations such as the sites of Cooper’s Fort and Hannah Cole’s Fort. If you have allowed your membership to lapse, we hope you will renew it and continue receiving the *Quarterly* journal and join us during forthcoming meetings. Membership fees for the current year are \$15 for individuals and \$25 for families. Current dues may be paid to the Boonslick Historical Society, P.O. Box 426, Boonville, MO 65233

—Don B. Cullimore

*Boone's Lick Heritage Quarterly* is published four times a year by the Boonslick Historical Society, P.O. Box 426, Boonville, MO 65233.

We encourage our members and others interested in history to contribute articles or other information of historical interest, including family histories, pertaining to the region. Please address all contributions and correspondence related to the periodical to the editor, Don B. Cullimore, 1 Lawrence Dr., Fayette, MO 65248, or email to: [don.cullimore40@gmail.com](mailto:don.cullimore40@gmail.com), phone: 660-888-3429. Editorial guidelines may be obtained from the editor. Publication deadlines are February 1 for the March (Spring) issue; May 1 for the June (Summer) issue; August 1 for the September (Fall) issue; and November 1 for the (Winter) December issue.

The Boonslick Historical Society was founded in 1937 and meets several times a year to enjoy programs about historical topics pertinent to the Boonslick area. Members of the Society have worked together over the years to publish historical books and brochures and to mark historic sites. They supported the founding of Boone's Lick State Historic Site, marked the sites of Cooper's Fort and Hanna Cole's Fort and have restored a George Caleb Bingham painting on loan to The Ashby-Hodge Gallery of American Art at Central Methodist University, Fayette.

**Membership dues** are \$15-Individual, \$25-Family, \$50-Sponsor, \$250-Patron, \$500-Life. The dues year is January through December. Receive our publication, *Boone's Lick Heritage Quarterly*, and attend annual Society events highlighting the region's history. To become a member, send a check made out to the Boonslick Historical Society, P.O. Box 426, Boonville, MO 65233.

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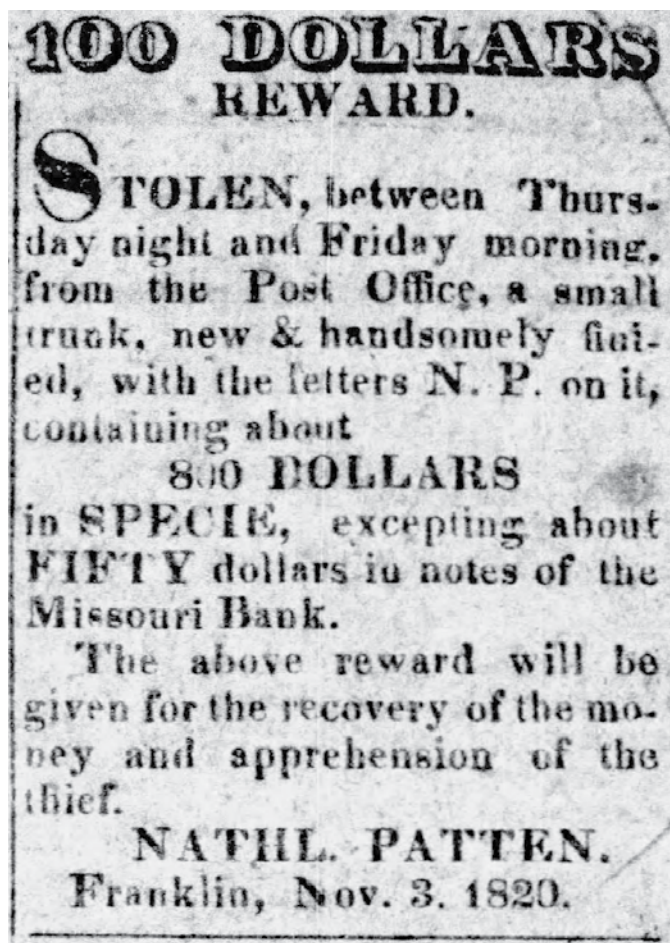
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# BOONE'S LICK HERITAGE QUARTERLY

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Newspaper ad placed by Nathaniel Patten, publisher of the *Missouri Intelligencer*, that appeared in the November 4, 1820, issue of the paper. See page 4 "Preview: The Untold Story of Franklin." Courtesy of the State Historical Society of Missouri Digital News Archives



# A Preview: The Untold Story of 'Old' Franklin

By Lynn Morrow

EDITOR'S NOTE: To understand the following article, readers should first read The Editor's Page (2) commentary "The Untold Story of 'Old' Franklin." Under the subhead below, "Why Franklin," Lynn Morrow, author of the series "Franklin in the New West: 'It rose with fictitious splendor,'" poses a series of "Did you know"-type questions that pertain to his extended essay on old Franklin that will appear in the next five issues of the *Quarterly*. Following Morrow's "Why Franklin" teasers below are short entries from each of the five segments that will be published: "By the People, For the People," "Constitutionalized Slavery," "Destination Franklin," "Franklin Honor," and "Franklin's Water."

## Why Franklin?

FRANKLIN'S FAME AS A VIGOROUS DEVELOPMENT AND WESTERN outpost in Missouri's drive to become a state and subsequent economic leader is assured. Town and nearby leaders of this historic innovative epicenter strove to make their part of the "western country" a special place. But, the *Missouri Intelligencer* newspaper, court records, and federal documents raise questions, some that we cannot answer, only ponder in documents from the era.

Did you know that James Morrison in 1810 brought Benjamin Cooper's assembly of immigrants upriver in his keel boat to disembark and later work at Boon's Lick? How well known is the story of the efforts of Ira P. Nash and his colleagues who initiated a multi-year legal and federal administrative battle to swindle local settlers out of their Franklin land claims? How did Franklin co-founders, settlers of modest means, defeat Taylor Berry, William V. Rector, and Thomas Hart Benton?

General Thomas A. Smith retired from the army to become the federal receiver of public monies at Franklin, but the military did not retire from him. Did you know that Smith continued work with the army for a dozen years to finance the military's movement up the Missouri River to Fort Atkinson and to pay soldiers in the West? Moreover, Smith distributed funds to Gen. William Clark, superintendent of Indian Affairs, and Gen. William Rector, surveyor general, to aid in their expansive administrations. But, did you know politics forced Smith into a national scandal of fiscal corruption and he found himself the subject of acrimonious debate in the U.S. Senate. Importantly, was Smith's federal role unique in Franklin or a model in the New West?

Franklin became the center of intelligence and planning for the Santa Fe trade; its merchants received manufactured goods for the Indian trade and Santa Fe markets from Philadelphia and Baltimore wholesalers, including medicines and "the Peruvian bark" for Dr. John Sappington's experiments to combat malaria. Sappington, a Franklin trustee, also wrote the municipal ordinance for slave patrols to keep blacks from gathering on Sunday nights. Did you know that taxes on slaves contributed to the funding of local government?

Chariton, and neighbor Franklin, were model entrepôts for the construction of flatboats to first export tobacco in 1822, then hemp, and agricultural products from outstate Missouri to St. Louis and

New Orleans. How many times did slave owners add the sale of their human chattel from Franklin Landing south to New Orleans? To what extent did the white-initiated mulatto population, wrought by ethnic violence, emanate from Franklin and its environs?

Did William Becknell take Sally, a young female slave, as a camp cook with his small band to Santa Fe in September 1821? Without the support of slavery he could not have left town. Just how much did the famed salt trade, bushels selling as high as \$5 in 1819 and as low as 50 cents in 1822, at Boon's Lick, Burckhardt's Lick, Craig's Lick, the Lamine River licks, and others bolster the regional economy, as it aided in the founding of Franklin and Fayette? Is there a reason we have not memorialized the institutional founding across the river from Franklin of the first Cumberland Presbyterian evangelical institution in Missouri (1820). Some leaders were slave-owning, politically-active settlers just like the Franklin merchants.

What led a respected novelist in 1835, who traveled to Franklin, to observe what he called the "grotesque appearance" of New Franklin?

Franklin, in Booneslick history, birthed organized economics, slavery, politics, religion, and thrived on visions for tomorrow, all residents informed by their previous sojourns in the Southern Uplands. We see them only slightly through our historical imaginations of the 1820s, but that is better than not seeing them at all. No other place in 1820s Missouri resembled Franklin. —Lynn Morrow, author of the series "Franklin in the New West: 'It rose with fictitious splendor.'"

## Segment Excerpts

### By the People, For the People

Several of Missouri's best legal minds worked at Franklin. But, most of them left after short duration and were not part of an extended social or economic fabric of Franklin society during its late territorial beginnings to nearly 1830 that covered the zenith of its commercial years. Rather, a larger group of citizens, who had a mix of boyhoods and girlhoods, young adulthood and families, and middle-age lives, were the heart of Franklin's neighborhood. And, many intended to stay longer. Their families made investments and profits in merchandising and high production agricultural surpluses common in first generation settlements. They included folks like Shadrach and Amos Barnes, Hampton L. Boon, Benjamin Cooper's clan, Laurence J. Daly, William Becknell, Thomas and John Hardeman, Thomas and James Hickman, William T. Lamme, Alfred W. Morrison, James and Jesse Morrison, Nathaniel Patten, John F. Ryland, Talton Turner, Thomas A. Smith, Giles M. Samuel, Joseph and Mary Simpson, Alphonso Wetmore, and others who traded and worked for livelihoods and the stability of Franklin. A few like the Coopers, James Morrison and Talton Turner were in and out of Franklin itself. Franklin's people ultimately dissolved into a Diaspora that spread into the Booneslick region. Before they left, they built a slaveholders' power base that rippled up and down

the Missouri River.

### Constitutionalized Slavery

Missouri's territorial assembly petitioned Congress for statehood in November 1818. As soon as the *Intelligencer* began business in Franklin, in April 1819, it benefitted financially from advertisements for runaway slaves, slave auctions, and slave hires, just as the town's namesake and slaveholder, Ben Franklin, did in Philadelphia. Press commentary on the status of bonded property was common in its columns. *Intelligencer* subscribers asked for Negroes to rent "six or eight well-acquainted with chopping" to clear the bottom land. Chopping never ended for slaves, nor cutting cord wood for fuel.

Readers will notice a historic distinction for runaways identified in the *Intelligencer*. The slaves retreated to areas they once knew east of Franklin, and not north to upper Illinois or Iowa, as the abolitionist movement did not start until the 1830s. Thus, runaways used the St. Charles Road (Boone's Lick Road), perhaps trying to remember a master's mission or simply not knowing how else to travel without Underground Railroad help or a safe haven to advise fugitive slaves. During John Mason Peck's visit in 1818, he walked through Franklin's town of "seventy families" situated on the border "of a heavy forest." He, too, knew that Franklin traders who went to St. Louis could buy "A likely Negro Girl, 18 or 20 years of age, for six or eight hundred bushels of CORN (sic), and a large quantity of hay." Wealthy John Hardeman with his two dozen slaves opened up his Fruitage Farm and ten-acre experimental garden with such labor to clear "towering cottonwoods, elms, and oaks, and grub dank willow thickets.

### Destination Franklin

President Monroe scheduled the land office at Franklin to open for sales in September 1818, but it was not to be. Disappointing to Franklin settlers was that the first register appointee declined, and then New Englander Charles Carroll received the envious Franklin land office patronage appointment at a late date in July 1818. His son, Henry, wrote to James Madison in March 1818 recalling the friendship of the Madison and Carroll families, saying that he wanted "to fix myself at Boone's Lick in Missouri Territory," and that Henry Clay had recommended

him for land office register or receiver although "no patronage of Government has ever reached any member of our family." Madison returned a letter saying that he had written President Monroe "to express my favorable sentiments towards you and my respect for the worth & wishes of your father." The federal government awarded the position to father Charles Carroll. But, Charles had to attend to "indispositions of his family."

A week later, after receiving official approval from the Treasury Department, Henry began a journey of six weeks from Washington, D.C., to Franklin to begin work as an acting register. He arrived in Franklin to begin business in July 1818. The land receiver, Gen. Thomas A. Smith, was already there and had begun setting up an office. Public business opened for pre-emption filings in November 1818, while sales to surveyed land had to wait until

February 1819. As it turned out, land patents often did not arrive back to settlers for two years or longer, frustrating settlers who wanted their land certificates in hand.

### Franklin Honor

Franklin resident, Richard Gentry, a Madison County, Kentucky, native, was part of a group that included Gen. William Rector, to promote Osage, a new town in June-July 1819 at the confluence of the Osage and Missouri Rivers. Gentry and several St. Louisans promoted the "Osage at the mouth of Osage River for its harbor advantage, publishing that "The Missouri River has but few places capable of harboring a vessel." Its plan had "a front street on each river." Gentry harshly criticized Henry Carroll's land register work during his father Charles Carroll's absence. He claimed that he heard young Carroll say that he had sold a quarter section of land (160 acres) and then entered the land himself and made \$20.00 reselling it. Gentry wrote an incensed letter in September 1819 to President James Monroe to complain about shenanigans in Franklin. The same month Gentry, Taylor Berry and David Todd promoted Smithton, named for Gen. T. A. Smith, that later became Columbia [just 25 miles to the east].

On January 1 and 15, 1820, Gentry and others began selling lots in Franklin for another new town at Nashville, 30 miles downriver from Franklin "laid off on a confirmed Spanish grant" in Boone County. Nashville was Gentry's fourth town lot speculation in two years. Bernard O'Neill, later state senator in 1822, also complained to President Monroe that Amos Barnes sold his pre-empted land to Henry Carroll and John Welch by "whatever land the register and



receiver might adjudge to him by virtue.” It’s unknown if either received an answer, but the register and receiver’s office was first located in the original house that Barnes built until Smith constructed a much superior building for the public’s business. Gentry acquired Henry Carroll’s share in the Barnes pre-emption that lay on the east side of the original town.

What Patten didn’t publish in September 1819 is that “Gentry’s letter” was a long, formal List of Petitioners to President Monroe that included dozens of Franklin-area residents, including newspapermen Nathaniel Patten and Benjamin Holliday Jr. It outlined acting register Henry Carroll’s activities that irritated observers. They charged Carroll with irresponsible misdeeds in his office, including his own purchase and sale of New Madrid certificates and suspicious details regarding the purchase and reputed re-sale of Hannah Cole’s pre-emption acres to speculators. Many thought widow Cole, a plain uneducated woman with a family, was cheated on the value of her claim.

### Franklin’s Water

The mythology that Missouri flood waters swept Franklin into the river, including that collapsing banks took the real estate upon which it stood during the 1826 and 1828 floods, is unfortunate for Howard County history. Any modest survey of the after years proves that is categorically wrong. There was no mass exodus or widespread destruction that took the town downriver to New

Orleans or anywhere else in 1826 or 1828, although agricultural and town property losses were spread across Franklin Township. Franklin’s original real estate of alluvial earth remained in place for decades. Evidence suggests lateral movement of the river covered part of it for a short time in the 1870s, but no one has a clue when and how long the site’s earth remained washed out and was later returned by the river as so often asserted. The reader should be generally familiar with the previous heritage series of articles on the history of Franklin in the *Boone’s Lick Heritage Quarterly* to reflect on the context of this last installment, an epilogue of sorts. The complexities and questions of history are more complicated and entertaining than the simplicities of mythology.

Franklin’s evolution from a vibrant town, to years of dismantling its buildings for a less expensive New Franklin, to an Old Franklin steamboat landing for shipping and receiving goods and agricultural products, a regular ferry crossing, a site for small shops, a landmark crossing in the network of local roads, to an agricultural work camp for tenants is a long history, and as yet, only superficially understood and needs further investigation. What is sure is that gossip about Franklin, in 1826 and 1828, was similar to Mark Twain’s adage about the reports of his death – they were quite premature and exaggerated. Antebellum floods rose slowly and receded across the large bottoms gradually and their destructive force to surface buildings was less than the channelized trough of swift waters of the 20th-century.



**Missouri River bottoms to the west side of original settlement of Franklin and its river port. This view is from Clark’s Chapel Cemetery, cir. 1822, which is located on Highway 87 about three miles northwest of Boonville. The cemetery has served many generations of Old Franklin and New Franklin families. The oldest grave in the cemetery is dated 1824. Photo by Don Cullimore**

# Ships for Victory: Missouri's 'VC2-S-AP2' Cargo Ships

By Robert P. Wieggers (Photo Courtesy of author)

IN 1945 THE FOUR KAISER PERMANENTE METALS CORPORATION shipyards in Richmond, California, labored round-the-clock, employing so many shift workers that local merchants learned to stay open all night. The Kaiser yards were building ships so fast one comic claimed they were “turning out ships by the mile and cutting them off by the yard” (Gilford 2011:3). The Kaiser yards reduced ship building time from almost a year to 60 days or less. After an additional 30 days for final outfitting a typical ship was ready for service in less than 100 days.

## Shipping Shortage

Every ship steaming out of the shipyards was sorely needed. American industry would build up to two-thirds of the military equipment used by the Allies (Herman 2012:ix). However, before and after the U.S. entry into the war, the problem was transporting planes, men, and food 3,000 miles to Europe or 4,000 miles to Asia. Unfortunately, the scarcity of merchant ships turned major ports into transportation bottlenecks for everything produced in the U.S. The Allied shipping problem was compounded by the successful German U-boat campaign.

Fortunately, in the depths of the Great Depression, the U.S. government initiated a program to revitalize the shipbuilding industry. Intended as a back-to-work program, the Merchant Marine Act of 1936 created a Maritime Commission to modernize the U.S. merchant fleet a few ships at a time (Lane 2001:10). Toward that end the Commission contracted in 1938 to build 50 merchant ships a year for 10 years (Lane 2001:10, 23). This limited goal was a challenge to the shipping industry with 10 large yards in the U.S. with a combined total of 46 slipways capable of building ocean-going vessels. Twenty-three of those ways were already contracted to build U.S. Navy ships (Kissel 1988:12).

The commission's early ship orders were designed according to the “quality” concept: ships similar in design, fast for commercial

use, and constructed in the traditional piece by piece method (Lane 2001:10-21). The opposite of quality is “quantity” building using an identical design, basic materials and mass production. Where the 1938 quality ships were meant for peace-time commerce, the 1939 declaration of the war between Britain and Germany changed the shipping dynamic to quantity ships.

Under Lend Lease, Roosevelt permitted foreign governments to buy and build vessels in the few U.S. yards available (Lane 2001:40). The American merchant marine once had 8.18 million

tons of shipping, but British purchases dwindled this to 5.5 million. Lend Lease transferred almost 2 million tons to the British war effort, and the U.S. Navy requisitioned a million tons of all types of shipping (Klein 2013:187). Incrementally, there were fewer ships with less cargo space for American commerce or emergency needs. Fortunately for the U.S. war effort, the Merchant Marine Act created the ship building program that converted into the successful emergency effort to build Liberty and later Victory ships (Klein 2013:317).

In 1940 the Maritime Commission ordered more ships and instituted the build in quantity era (Lane 2001:24). The justification for the change was the loss

of 750 British ships totaling nearly 3 million tons from spring to December, 1941 (Sawyer 1974:16). In 1942, with America now in the war, U-boats sank 1,200 U.S., British, and Allied ships (Jaffee 2006:3-4). The U-boat campaign was sinking ships faster than the Allies could build them therefore quantity building replaced quality to fill the void (Lane 2001:44).

In 1942 the commission borrowed a design from the British for a 10,000-ton vessel with a five-year design life (Lane 2001:43; Jaffee 2006:4). The commission elected to discard the traditional way to build a ship in favor of “assembly line” techniques borrowed from Detroit (Baime 2014:13; Kissel 1988:12). This required standardization of the hull, the engine plant, and use of





welding instead of rivets.

It was also necessary to build new shipyards and hire or train skilled workers. Henry Kaiser and his construction companies, had never built a ship, but he had the construction machinery, labor, and a team of managers willing to take on the challenge (Lane 2001:53-55). Together they built the Hoover, Bonneville, and Grand Coulee dams as well as the Bay Bridge. Beginning in 1940 Kaiser and Company built the shipyard at Richmond, California, and six others on the West Coast. The Richmond yard, christened Kaiser Permanente, was the largest containing four separate yards with a total of 27 slipways. It took four months to excavate the San Francisco Bay shoreline near Richmond and begin operations with the first keel laid on April 14, 1941 (Guilford 2011: 27-29).

### Liberty Class

Kaiser's first shipbuilding project was to make the "quantity" ships the Liberty class, described by President Roosevelt as "ugly ducklings." The Liberty ship was 441 feet long with a beam of 56 feet 10 and three quarters inches. When fully loaded the Liberty sat 27 feet in the water and could move at 11 knots or 12.5 MPH. The saving grace for these humble ships was their deadweight tonnage of 10, 419 with five holds for dry cargo and deck space for oversize cargo (Klein 2013).

The first Liberty to be launched was the SS *Patrick Henry* on September 27, 1941. As the first of its kind it took 244 days to build. As various forms of supply from steel to paint were streamlined the build time shrank from the initial 244 days to the shipyard record of 4 days and 15 and a half hours set by the SS *Robert E. Peary*. From the beginning to 1945 a total of 2,708 Liberty ships were built (Lane 2001:4). Over 200 were lost to enemy action in Atlantic Convoys or Pacific Island campaigns.

### Victory Class

The Victory Class cargo ship grew out of the Quality concept at the Maritime Commission. By 1943 the U-boat threat was contained allowing planners to shift emphasis toward post-war commerce. From the beginning the Liberty Class was considered too small and slow but the Victory Class was larger and faster (Jaffee 2006).

Originally designed in April 1943 the Victory Class was 455 feet long (overall) and 62 feet across the beam. The Victory Class was 14 feet longer, 5 feet wider, allowing 1,000 tons more displacement, and carried more powerful engines (Jaffee 2006:11, 35). A Victory ship had the capacity to handle up to 2,000 men, or 440 light tanks, or 2,840 jeeps. The official designation for this new class of ships is VC2-S-AP2. ("V" for Victory Class, "C" for cargo, "2" for hull size (400 to 449 feet at the waterline), "S" for steam propulsion, "AP" design letters for type of ship hull, and "2" the second version of the class). Not only was the Victory Class faster and larger but it was more comfortable for the crew.

Although Liberty and Victory Class ships were cargo vessels, during war they were armed against surfaced submarines and aircraft. A typical Victory carried a 5"-38 caliber cannon mounted on the stern and a 3"-50 caliber cannon on the bow. Eight 20 mm Oerlikon cannons<sup>1</sup>, two aft, 4 around the central cabin area and 2

forward provided air defense (Jaffee 2006:12).

### Naming

Naming vessels was in the hands of a Ship Naming Committee appointed by the Maritime Commission. Having a ship named for your town was a popular way to promote the program. The Victory class followed the general guidelines of the Liberty class naming process. The honoree was selected from a list of approved names based on historical background or their role in the war effort. All Victory Class ships were named from a list of qualified nations, towns, or schools followed by the name "Victory." The first Victory ship of 534 built was named the SS *United Victory* launched on February 28, 1944. The next 34 Victory Class ships were named for Allied nations. The following 218 were named after American cities. Several Missouri cities have named Victory ships, like the SS *Hannibal Victory*, the focus of a wartime documentary film. But the next 150 were named after educational institutions (Lane 2001:66-71). Many of the 131 colleges and universities with named ships were institutions participating with V-12 U.S. Navy Officer Training programs.

### V-12 Program

As the U.S. built ships for the Navy or the cargo fleet it needed trained officers to man them. Filling this need led the Navy to establish the V-12 or Officer Training Program. The V-12 was meant for small to medium size institutions of higher learning, those without a Navy ROTC program on campus (Schneider 1987:5,100). The Navy V-12 Program literally saved many small colleges and universities across the nation from closing by hosting a Navy contingent of student officer trainees.

Of the seven Missouri V-12 schools (Central College, Central Missouri State Teachers College, Missouri Valley College, Northwest Missouri State Teachers College, Park College, Southeast Missouri State Teachers College, Westminster College) only two have Victory class ships named for their institutions. The SS *Central Victory* named after Central College, now Central Methodist University in Fayette, and the SS *Park Victory* named after Park College, now Park University in Parkville. Had the war continued more Missouri schools might have been so honored, but up to the end of the war only two were selected for Victory ship honors.

### SS Central Victory

Both Missouri Victory ships were built as part of the "quality" program in the Kaiser Permanente shipyard and the same Yard Number 2. Each began their careers with a naming ceremony but their careers were fated to end in different ways. The path for the *Central Victory* began when her keel was laid on January 27, 1945 as hull number 736. She was launched on 10 March at Yard Number 2 in 1945. Her launching ceremony was held on Saturday night at 11:15 pm, one of 747 christenings at the Kaiser Permanente yards and the 400<sup>th</sup> ship constructed in Yard Number 2 (*Central Collegian* 1945). The late-night ceremony included a short address by dignitaries and a representative from Central College. Colonel B. I. Lawrence, professor of psychology on leave from Central College, spoke for three minutes about the ship and its name over



a national radio net. In his remarks Colonel Lawrence claimed this ship is the symbol of “the faith, hopes, [and] ambitions” of Central College to win the war (*Central College Bulletin* 1945).

In total the ship spent 43 days on the slipway and 26 fitting out for a total build time of 69 days at a cost to the government of \$2,536,432 (Cooper, 2000). On April 23, 1945, the *Central Victory* was given her “Final Guarantee Survey Board” where small items were noted and corrected and she was ready for duty (Claude 1946).

## Voyages

The *Central Victory* had one war time cruise for the War Shipping Administration. She was leased to the American Hawaiian Steam Ship Company and commanded by Capt. James Ralph Reichel to unload cargo on islands such as Eniwetok, Guam, Tinian, and Saipan (Record of the American Bureau of Shipping, 1946:238). In 1948 she was put into the Reserve Fleet in Mobile, Alabama, then reactivated for the Korean War in 1950. Leased to the Waterman Steam Ship Corporation she made trips to Japan and Korea. In 1952 she was leased to the American Foreign Steam Ship Company and made repeated trips to Japan and Korea.

In 1953 the *Central Victory* went into the Reserve Fleet at Suisun Bay, California, until 1966 when she was refitted at a cost of \$838,735.87. The Weyerhaeuser Steam Ship Company leased the *Central Victory* for voyages to Viet Nam (Chung 1966). Between 1969 and 1990 she was moved around the Reserve Fleet at Suisun Bay until November, 1993. After years of service the 48-year-old hull was sold for scrap on November 19, 1993, to the Chenco, Co., Taiwan (Vessel Status Card 2000; Jaffee 2006:313).

## SS Park Victory

About the time the *Central Victory* was sailing out of the Permanente Yards, the *Park Victory*, hull number 748, was sliding into the water on April 21, 1945. The ceremony was attended by Park College alumni and representative Harry Clayton Rogers who delivered a short address (Elwess 2009:18-19).

The *Park Victory* serviced home port needs until the war ended August 1945. Shortly afterward the ship was leased to the Seas Shipping Company and converted into a livestock carrier by Todd Shipyards in New York (Jaffee 2006:67). In several voyages she transported livestock to devastated countries in Europe.

The *Park Victory* served faithfully until 1947 when her career ended in the Gulf of Finland. On December 24, steaming from the U.S. to Helsinki, Finland loaded with coal, she was caught in a blizzard. The ship sheltered behind Uto Island on the night of December 25. In the midst of the snow storm the anchors failed to hold and she foundered on a reef two miles southeast of Uto, near Ostra Storgund. Her bottom was ripped open, she broke in half, and sank in 20 minutes taking 10 of her crew with her. The remaining 38 crew members suffered through the storm until locals took them to safety. The *Park Victory* was later found lying on her

side completely submerged leading to a determination of total loss on her (Jaffee 2006:67).

**Author’s note:** During the war three Victory ships were lost off Okinawa due to Kamikaze attacks. A fourth Victory tragically exploded at Port Chicago, California, ammunition facility with great loss of life. Today only two remain, the SS *Lane Victory* in San Pedro, California, and the *American Victory* anchored at Tampa, Florida. Although both of Missouri’s Victory ships are now a memory their existence commemorates the part Missouri colleges played in World War II via the V-12 Program. Two of those Missouri colleges have a material connection to the war through the ships that bear their names.

*Robert P. Wieggers is Professor Emeritus of History at Central Methodist University in Fayette and is the curator of the Central Museum of History. He holds a bachelor’s degree in history from Westminster College in Fulton, a master’s in education from Boston University, and a master’s degree and Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Missouri-Columbia. He is the author of Missouri Armories: The Guard’s Home in Architecture and History (Kirksville, Mo.: Truman State University Press, 2012).*

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# Boonslick Historical Society News Briefs

## Lammers and Steele Guest Speakers at BHS November Banquet in Boonville

Missouri historian and journalist Jim Steele and videographer and author Wayne Lammers will be the featured presenters at the Boonslick Historical Society (BHS) fall meeting, November 6, at the historic Hotel Frederick in Boonville.

The BHS fall meeting normally begins at 5:30 p.m. with a social hour, followed by dinner at 6:30 p.m. and then the program.

Dinner reservations (due by October 28) are required. Attendees are requested to return the reservation form (with a check) that will be included in the fall (September/October) issue of *Boone's Lick Heritage Quarterly* to: Boonslick Historical Society, P.O. Box 426, Boonville, MO 65233. For more information, contact BHS President Jim Steele at 660-537-0484 or by email at [jsteele@woodcreekmedia.com](mailto:jsteele@woodcreekmedia.com).

Additional information on the program, including per-person costs of the dinner, will be noted in the fall issue of the magazine. Alcoholic beverages will be available from the hotel bar. Seating is limited to 65 persons.

The topic of the presentation by Steele and Lammers will be the general history of Cooper and Howard counties. It will include a number of restored vintage photos from both Cooper and Howard counties (projected on a screen), provided from the extensive photo collections of Lammers and Steele.

Steele is a 1964 graduate of Central Methodist College (now University), where he earned degrees in history and political science; he also holds a journalism degree from the University of Missouri-Columbia (1966). He served as public relations director of Central Methodist College in the early 1970s, later became communications director for the United Methodist Church, serving in Missouri, Indiana and Alabama. In 2000 he returned to Fayette after purchasing the *Fayette Advertiser* and *Democrat Leader* and served as publisher and editor until selling the papers 10 years later.

Since then, he has been active in the Boonslick Historical Society, serving on its board of directors since 2014 and as president since 2019. He has also been writing and presenting a program on Howard County and American history for Fayette Community Radio Station KPIP, 49.7 FM, for several years.

Steele was editor of a major publication chronicling two centuries of Boonslick Country history published in 2016 by the Howard County Genealogical Society. Titled *Howard County: From Prairie Land to Promised Land – A remembrance Across Two Centuries*, the 180-page hard cover book marked the culmination of more than two years of planning, writing and information gathering.

More than two dozen local historians contributed to the coffee-table sized volume. Steele dedicated the publication in honor of two former Fayette newspaper editors who also were noted historians—the late John Hert and the late H. Denny Davis. In words and photos, the work is designed as an all-encompassing look at the county's past, Steele notes.

Lammers, an enthusiast of local Boonslick history, is a native

of Boonville and a past president of the Boonslick Historical Society. He attended Central Missouri State University (now UCM) in Warrensburg.

After college, he worked at Stevens TV in Boonville for 11 years, operated Lammers Elevator feed store for eight years, then became involved in videography and photography and worked at Miller's Professional Imaging for 11 years.

"I love the history of the Boonslick Area and have found many historical items on digs [using metal detectors] in the community," Lammers says. "Some of the finds were a lost fort that was abandoned in June 1814 when Indians attacked Fort McMahan, two miles north of the Lamine River along the banks of the Missouri River. This fort was lost for some 200 years."

Lammers also videotaped the excavation of the steamboat Missouri Packet that sank in the Missouri River on May 5, 1820. "This boat will be the oldest steamboat ever to be excavated on the Missouri River," he notes. He is also the author of a recently published, coffee-table-sized book containing many historic and current photos, *Boonville - Then & Now - A Pictorial*.

The Daughters of the American Revolution Hannah Cole Chapter Historic Preservation Award was presented to Lammers in 2021 during a ceremony at the Boonville Museum of History. The award was given in recognition of his "many years of dedicated documenting, through photography and videography and print, the history of this place."

"You have been there with your camera at the ready when many of us were not even aware of the significant happenings going on around us," stated the DAR awards committee representatives, Regent Mary Ellen McVicker and Historic Preservation Chair M. Pat Holmes. Among the historically significant events, places or items preserved through photographs and videography by Lammers are:

The last train crossing the MKT Railroad lift-span bridge; the raging Missouri River flood waters of 1993 swirling around Rivercene Mansion in the Howard County bottoms across from Boonville; the triple football stadium-sized excavation of an early steamboat wreck in the river bottoms—with barrels of packed pork—still intact; and archaeological evidence of the early 1800s settlement in the Boonville area.

The Boonslick Historical Society was founded at the Hotel Frederick in November 1937. The hotel is a significant local and state historical landmark, and is a classic example of Romanesque Revival architecture in the region. It was built in 1905 by Charles A. Sombart, a local miller and banker. It was constructed by W. J. Cochran and Sons Construction Company for a cost of \$40,000. It is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

**More information** about the Fall Boonslick Historical Society Banquet will be published in the Fall issue (Sept./Oct.) of the magazine, along with a reservation form for the dinner and membership renewal for Year 2023. This information may also be seen on the BHS website: [www.boonslickhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.boonslickhistoricalsociety.org)

## New Center for Missouri Studies Tour Sept. 10

The Boonslick Historical Society summer event is a Saturday, September 10, tour (beginning at 10:30 a.m.) of the new Center for Missouri Studies in downtown Columbia. Administrative staff member Maggie Mayhen will be our guide. The Center has limited visitor parking available in a parking lot located north of the Center, at the corner of Locust and 6th Streets.

The Center is headquarters of the State Historical Society of Missouri (SHSMO), founded in 1898, and will serve as the premier research center for the study of Missouri state and local history.

At the Center, a second floor research center connects students, researchers, patrons, and genealogists with the collections that the State Historical Society of Missouri holds on their behalf. The Center's first floor gallery is designed to showcase one-of-a-kind pieces, whether they are the iconic works of George Caleb Bingham and Thomas Hart Benton or original Hare and Hare architectural drawings from the Kansas City collections. Flexible public spaces are also available for hosting a wide range of events.

Through its education program, the Center fosters ongoing study of Missouri's past, encouraging connections among scholars in fields such as history, geography, folklore, anthropology, journalism, and other disciplines. Center initiatives consolidate and extend the State Historical Society of Missouri's efforts to support scholars, publish new works, provide educational programs, and promote greater understanding of Missouri's history.

The Center publishes the *Missouri Historical Review*. This quarterly journal offers scholarly articles on diverse topics in Missouri history. As a book publisher, SHSMO's publications have covered everything from editorial cartoons to German settlement. Copies of SHSMO publications can be purchased at the Center's Ronald F. and Patty Richard Bookstore and online.

The Center for Missouri Studies competitive fellowship program extends SHSMO's mission to promote and disseminate the study of the state's history and culture. The fellowships specifically encourage scholarship in new or underexplored areas.

For more information, contact the State Historical Society of Missouri at (573) 882-7083 or by Email: [contact@shsmo.org](mailto:contact@shsmo.org). The street and mailing address is: 605 Elm Street, Columbia, MO 65201.—Information and image courtesy of the State Historical Society of Missouri.



## BHS Member Ralph Lee Woodward Dies

Dr. Ralph Lee Woodward Jr., 87, of Fayette, a distinguished educator and historian and BHS member, passed away June 26. Dr. Woodward was born in New London, Connecticut, to Ralph Lee Woodward and Beulah Suter Woodward on December 2, 1934. A 1952 graduate of Fayette High School, he earned a bachelor's degree from Central College (now Central Methodist University), 1955; a master's degree, 1959, and a Ph.D., 1962, both from Tulane University.

He served as a captain in the United States Marine Corps, 1955-1958. He was a member American History Association (member Conference on Latin American History, president 1989); Louisiana History Association; Southeastern Conference Latin American Studies (president 1975-1976); Latin American Studies Association, Committee on Andean Studies (chairman 1972-1973); and the Geography and History Academy, Guatemala.



He joined the faculty of The University of North Carolina in 1961. In 1970, he returned to teach at Tulane University until 1999, when he retired as professor emeritus of Latin American History. He authored many professional articles and 13 books on Latin American History, including: *Class Privilege and Economic Development: The Consulado de Comercio of Guatemala, 1793-1871* (1966); *Robinson Crusoe's Island: A History of the Juan Fernández Islands* (1969); and *Central America: A Nation Divided* ([1976], [1985] 1999).

He earned many honors at Tulane and was twice honored by Central Methodist University as a distinguished alumnus.

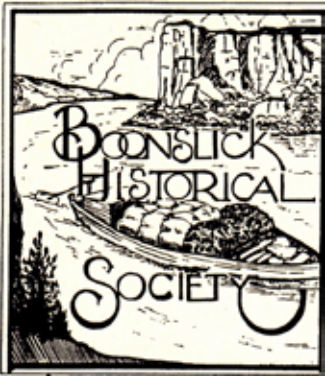
He was preceded in death by his parents and two wives, Sue Dawn McGrady and Janice Chatelain.

Survivors include his third wife, Dr. Delores "Dee" Bland Woodward; three children from his first marriage, Mark Woodward of New Orleans, Laura Woodward of Guadalajara, Mexico, and Matthew Woodward of Shelton, Washington; a grandson, Michael Woodward of Houston, Texas; and two sisters, Margaret Drakesmith of Orlando, Florida, and Nancy Drebes of Fort Meyers Beach, Florida; and two stepdaughters Karen Wyckoff of Aurora, Colorado, and Gina Wyckoff of Springfield, Missouri.

Memorial contributions are suggested to St. Mary's Episcopal Church or The Ashby-Hodge Gallery at Central Methodist University, both in Fayette.

**To learn more about the  
Boonslick Historical Society, go to:  
[www.boonslickhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.boonslickhistoricalsociety.org)**





P.O. Box 426  
Boonville, MO 65233



**Photo of the historic Hotel Frederick in Boonville, cir. early 1900s. The hotel will be the site of the annual fall meeting of the Boonslick Historical Society, which was founded in the fall of 1937 during a meeting at the hotel of area historians and other interested citizens. Photo courtesy of Jim Steele.**