

# HISTORY & FOLKLORE



From Illustrated Press of Liberty County, Thursday, August 15, 1963 –

## THE NINETIETH BIRTHDAY OF MR. CHARLIE STEUSSOFF

An open house will be held in honor of Liberty's venerable Charles F. Steusoff at the home of the Harry Lloyd McGuires at 702 San Jacinto, Liberty, Sunday, August 18, from 4 till 6 p.m. All his friends are invited. It will be in celebration of his ninetieth birthday.

Mr. Charlie was born in 1873. He started in Ager's Drug Store in 1894 and bought his own drugstore in 1903. His brother, Fred Steusoff, was his partner from 1910 till his death in 1942. He held the office of County Tax Collector & Assessor from 1914 till 1922. In 1932 he married the late Myrtie O'Brien.

Among the interesting highlights of Mr. Charlie's long career are: he had the first soda fountain in Liberty; he served as city alderman under Mayor Jeff Chambers; he organized the first light plant with Albert Riviere and Dr. Bowen in 1903 and was city assessor when Dayton was in Liberty city limits.

Indeed, if you must write the history of Liberty, you must get it first hand from Mr. Charlie Steusoff.



From Texas Illustrated, November 1986 –

## RUINS AT WALLISVILLE, 1932

Letter from the Hardin Papers, Sam Houston Center

The Humphreys family took this exceptional photograph during one of their frequent jaunts in the summer of 1932. It shows the remains of the old courthouse and jail at Wallisville, now long since destroyed. The courthouse, which was constructed in 1886 at a cost of \$10,000, stands in the background. All that is left standing of the jail is the hanging tower, which stands forlornly in the foreground. The main part of the jail was built immediately on this side of the tower as well as I can tell. Judging by some other photographs of the same site, the front of the old courthouse cannot be seen here as it faces the left-hand side of this picture.

The jailhouse was built in 1896. Twelve years later, the courthouse was moved to Anahuac because of a stock law. Some people who lived in Wallisville decided they wanted a stock law to keep hogs off of the courthouse lawn. The stock law passed in the precinct, but some residents who lived outside of town never forgot it. A campaign was started to move the county seat to Anahuac, and the rest is history. Anahuac became the county seat in 1908. Wallisville was devastated by the infamous 1915 storm, and ever afterward it was a town with no more than a handful of residents.

Today, Wallisville is not even that. The Wallisville Dam Project, which was halted in 1971, had plans to re-route the river right through the middle of the old town, and folks who toughed out for everything else packed up and moved. With construction unfinished and the costs for it doubling and tripling like nobody's business, the Wallisville Dam project grows more and more unlikely as time goes by. John Middleton who lives at Wallisville now, has pledged \$50,000 to restore the old courthouse and turn it into a museum and cultural center for Chambers County. The old foundation is still there and rooms are easily recognizable. I think a restored Wallisville would be a worthy project and if the city of Houston want to have the Army digging canals all through the countryside, why don't they just dig one right through the big middle of Houston?

– Kevin Ladd



From Illustrated Press of Liberty County, Thursday, June 6, 1968 –

Laura Murphy and her younger sister, Shanna, were both alternates for the Liberty High School and Junior High School twirlers last school year. Laura is one of the regular twirlers for the 1968-69 season.

**Liberty Gazette**  
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