

# **THIS POINT**.... in time

## **NEWSLETTER**

**The Point Richmond History Association**

*www.PointRichmondHistory.org*

**Vol. XXX No. 1**

**June/July/August, 2011**

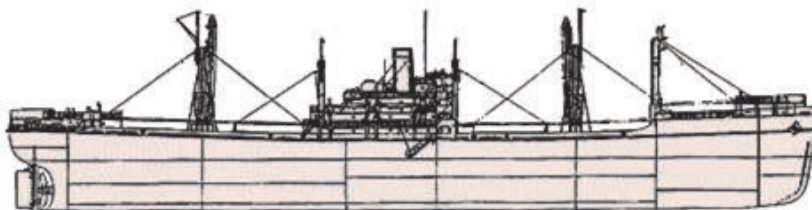
**\$3.00**



## ***S.S. RED OAK VICTORY***

***Launched on November 9, 1944***

***One of 747 ships built at the Kaiser Shipyards  
Richmond, California between 1941 and 1945.***



**SS Red Oak Victory is open for visitors on Saturdays, Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays.**

**Visiting hours are 10 AM - 3 PM.**


**Last tour at 2 p.m. Ship closes promptly at 3 p.m.**

**Admission is \$5 per person, \$2 for children under 5 years of age.**

**Note access to the ship requires walking up a steep ramp and the ability to climb stairs.**

**For group tour booking information call Lorraine at (510) 222-0955**

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All contributions are tax-deductible to the full extent provided by law. Please make checks payable to *Red Oak Victory Project*. Mail to: P.O. Box 1267, Richmond, CA 94802.

**Thank you.**



P.O. Box 1267, Richmond, CA 94802 • [www.ssredoakvictory.org](http://www.ssredoakvictory.org) • ship tel: 510-237-2933

# S. S. RED OAK VICTORY

# *From the President*

*By Mid Dornan*

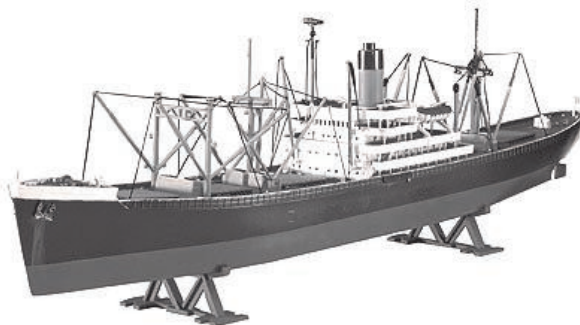
We celebrated our 30th year as the Point Richmond History Association at our Annual Meeting in May. Three of the five Charter members are still participating; Founder Donna Roselius, now living in Port Orford, Oregon, Rosemary Corbin and I still live in the Point. We don't have an issue getting officers as our present congenial board happily continues to be a part of the success. Our biggest asset is our newsletter, *THIS POINT....in time*, which must be the best in its class in the state and made possible by Editor Gary Shows and Thomas Mercer-Hursh.

Lois Boyle, President of Richmond Museum of History, interrupted the meeting dressed as Rosie the Riveter in her overalls and red bandana head piece to take us on a historical journey from the Deep South to Richmond in World War II.

When Rosie found work at the shipyards, her father ordered Rosie either to quit her job (women didn't work those days) or move out. Lois's narration told how important women's work was to the War effort since our men were protecting the country. And, the importance of the RED OAK VICTORY SHIP, the last of 747 Victory Ships built in the Richmond shipyards. The ROV has been saved to be a part of Richmond's Rosie the Riveter World War II Homefront National Historic Park. Her narration reminded the audience how income, housing, life, and attitudes toward working have changed. Lois invited everyone to visit this historic ship to see and be a part of the restoration. Our guests, aside from those in Richmond, El Cerrito, San Pablo, and El Sobrante, came from Sacramento, Pinole, Antioch, Antelope and Rodeo. Some were so impressed with the history by Lois, one asked if it had been published, if not, why?

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*A Victory Ship*

Thank you members for your renewal:

**Gilda Markarian\*\***

**Simeon J. Burtner**

**Jeff Lee & Janice Cook Family**

**Jack Mormon & Nancy Webb Family**

**Sonny & Barbara Jackson Family**

**First Church of Christ, Scientist\*\***

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**Mary Highfill**

**Gary Elliott**

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**Norma Wallace**

\*Gift Membership

\*\*Special Member, *Thank You!*

Thank you members for your renewal:

**Connie Tritt, CPA**

**Jean Rose**

*Thank You!*

**Santa Fe Market**  
and  
**Point Richmond Market**

*For selling*

***“THIS POINT.....in time”***

*For us*

***Museum Hours:***

***Wednesday 4:30 pm - 7:00 pm***

***Thursday 11:30 - 2:00 pm***

*Thanks to the Volunteers who open and  
close our history museum two days each  
week*

♦ **Betty Dornan**

♦ **Ann Bartram**

♦ **Pat Pearson**

♦ **Mid Dornan**

♦ **Bonnie Jo Cullison**

♦ **Susan Brooks**

♦ **Sonja Darling**

♦ **Margaret Morkowski**

***The Cover:***

*Deck of the SS Red Oak Victory*

*Photo by Gary Shows*

# *Editor's Notes*

***Gary Shows (510-235-1336)***

This is our Summer issue, sure doesn't feel like Summer yet, at least as of this writing.

As you can see the theme of this issue is the USS Red Oak Victory ship. Lois Boyle, President of the Richmond Museum of History gave a wonderful performance at our Annual Meeting on May 22nd. She gave us an update on the progress of the USS Red Oak Victory and a story about a young Rosie during World War II. You can listen to her talk on our website [www.pointrichmondhistory.org](http://www.pointrichmondhistory.org). I think you will enjoy it. The ship is a real treasure that we should be proud of.

Everyone keep the interesting stories and old photos coming in to me so that I can share them with others. Have a great Summer, I am sure the rains will stop eventually.

**The deadline for articles and items for the next issue is August 26, 2011.**

## **Correction**

Vol. XXIX-2, September/October, 2010 page 15  
The photo in the upper right was credited to Don Hansen and was actually taken by Ken Rattenne, I apologize for this mistake.

Gary

## *Thank You! Our Special Supporters!*

### *History Makers*

Doug & Rosemary Corbin  
Kathe Kiehn

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Michelle Healy

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Spiro Cakos

Jim & Olivia Jacobs



# *A-Mid Trivia*

**Mid Dornan (510-234-5334)**

Q: Most American presidents were fathers. Who had the most children? Which presidents were father and son?

ANSWER at end of TRIVIA.

\*\*\*

July 4 is traditionally a holiday celebrating the Declaration of Independence. The United States is the only country with a known birthday.

\*\*\*

An Old -timer is one who remembers when any man who didn't doff his hat when the Flag went by during a parade got it yanked off.

\*\*\*

Jean and Norm Reynolds will have interesting stories when they return from their three week bicycling tour around Europe.

\*\*\*

That baby picture proud grandpa Tom Piazza was passing around at the Annual Meeting was of Iris Josephine, born May 16, 1911 to John and Lyla Piazza weighing 7 lbs 3 oz, 19 3/4 inches.

\*\*\*

If it is June, it is graduation time. Getting their college degrees are Michael Marshall from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, son of Linda Andrews-Marshall. Liam Thompson receives his degree from University of California, Davis, son of Bill and Alice Thompson.

\*\*\*

High school graduates are Regan Bradshaw graduating from Terra Linda High and will be attending University of San Diego. She is daughter of Chris and David Bradshaw and granddaughter of Sonja and Joe Darling. Another graduate is Rachel Palfini from Woodbridge High in Irvine and has been accepted at Whitman College in Walla Walla, WA. Daughter of Roberta (Dornan) and Richard Palfini and granddaughter of Mid Dornan.

\*\*\*

Terry Wynn has her sister, Karla, visiting from Fairfield, Iowa.

\*\*\*

According to the National Auto Dealers Association the average vehicle in U.S. is now 10.2 years old.

\*\*\*

Grandchildren don't stay young forever which is good because grandfathers only have so many horsey rides in them.

\*\*\*

Joe used to eat a lot of natural food until he learned so many people died of natural causes.

\*\*\*

The Energy Department says to "slow down" for better mileage. They say each 5 mph over 60 is like paying an additional 24 cents a gallon for most vehicles. Go 75 mph, and that's an extra 72 cents a gallon. Yep, 72 cents.

\*\*\*

In April postage rates for basic first class letters remained at 44¢ but if it weighs more than that add 20¢ for each additional ounce.

\*\*\*

Five foods to help you sleep. CHERRIES - fresh, dried-one of the only natural food sources of Melatonin, the chemical that controls the body's internal clock to regulate sleep. Eat an hour before bedtime or before a trip when you want to sleep on a plane. BANANAS - Magnesium, and potassium, natural muscle relaxant. OATMEAL - rich in melatonin which many people take as a sleep aid. TOAST - triggers release of Tryptophan and Serotonin, two brain chemicals that relax you and send you to sleep. WARM MILK - calcium promotes sleep.

\*\*\*

It is amazing how grandparents seem so young once you become one.

\*\*\*

Sign in gift shop: "for the man who has

everything: a calendar to remind him when the payments are due.”

\*\*\*

Our neighborhood has many dogs that roam before the dawn. And every one investigates my bushes and my lawn. These visitors, I rarely see that come within my yard. But they follow canine etiquette and always leave a calling card!

## WHO VISITS OUR MUSEUM?

From within California they came from :San Francisco, Mill Valley, Dixon, El Cerrito, Pleasant Hill, Albany, Daly City, Berkeley, Rodeo, Redwood City, Pacifica El Sobrante, Ventura, Carmel, Richmond, Walnut Creek, Oakland, Novota, Lakewood, Alameda, Atwater, Clear Lake, Hercules, San Rafael, Vallejo, Sebastopol, and Los Angeles..

From the 50 states they came fom: Mosier, Oregon; Houston and Spring; Texas; Stevens Point, Wisconsin; Las Vegas, Nevada; Louisiana, Mississippi.

Visitors from the around the world; Mayenne, France; Beijing, China; Hawaii; and Perth, Australia. A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL THE MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS WHO STAFF THE MUSEUM AND GREET THE VISITORS for over 104 days.

*Mid*

### Did you know?

***Men can read smaller print than women can.***

***Women can hear better.***

*Ellen Schaefer*

Do elementary students still write in cursive? Have they seen a phone with a coiled handset wire?

\*\*\*

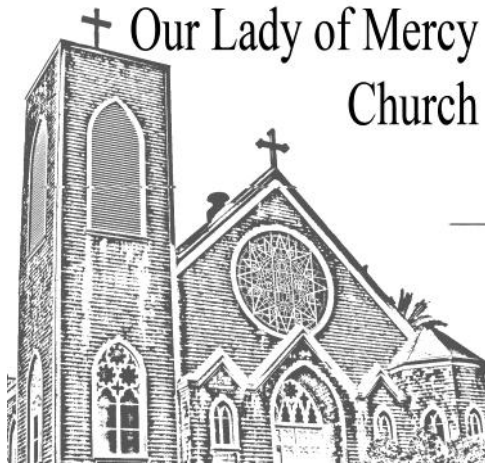
ANSWER: Fourteen children of 12th president John Tyler lived to maturity. Sixth president John Quincy Adams was the son of second president John Adams.

## IF YOU ARE OVER 80!

- \* You are probably reading more and dusting less.
- \* You wear your good blazer to the market with the theory that if you look prosperous, you can shell out \$28.49 for one small bag of groceries.
- \* You sit in the yard admiring the view without fussing about the weeds in the garden.
- \* “Someday” and “one of these days” are not in your vocabulary as you want to do, see and hear it now.
- \* You have stopped “saving” things and use your good china and Crystal for every special event such as losing a pound, or getting the sink unstopped
- \* You will be upset because you hadn’t written certain letters or didn’t tell parents or family often enough that you loved them.
- \* You need to call a close friend, a family member to apologize and mend fences for past squabbles.
- \* You need to take them out for a Chinese dinner or whatever their favorite food is.
- \* You don’t believe in Miracles, you rely on them.
- \* You wake up every morning and open your eyes and tell yourself the day is special.

*Mid*

# Church News



## † Our Lady of Mercy Church

*By Dee Rosier*

510-232-1387

*drosier@sbcglobal.net*

Once again the roses in the rectory garden displayed a mass of color to welcome us to church. Father does not pick the roses, but allows them to do as Mother Nature intended. The only known recipient of a bouquet was Anna Schwarz.

The Building and Maintenance Fund continues to allow us revenue to complete needed upgrades and repairs. As any homeowner knows upkeep is an ongoing challenge. Thanks to many generous contributions, we are able to stay on top of maintenance needs and still set aside some in savings.

Father O'Rourke is not the only author in the family. His great niece, Meaghen O'Rourke, recently published a memoir on the death of her mother, "The Long Good Bye: a Memoir." The writing was recently reviewed in the San Francisco Chronicle.

Within her writings, she quotes from a memoir written by Father in one of his publications. He refers to it as a rare compliment.

Another group of children received their First Holy Communion.

Worth noting in the post office window is a

series of art exhibits. Parishioner David Bintinger is currently featured. The series has been organized by parishioner, Linda Drake, who deserves credit for turning the local art association into a very active community resource.

A listing of scheduled masses can be found on the parish web page.

In June 2012 Father will celebrate 50 years as a priest. He enjoys swimming at the Plunge and shopping at the Farmer's Market and like the rest of us experiences computer problems.

Pancake breakfasts continue to be held on the third Sunday of each month. Please join us and enjoy a hearty meal at a bargain price.

Due to family obligations, Nicole Cruz has found it necessary to resign as Parish Council Secretary. Many thanks to Nicole for her dedication. If you are interested in serving on the Parish Council as Secretary, please contact Father.

Father hosted a Memorial Day BBQ. He was in charge of the grill and those in attendance supplied an array of gourmet food. It was a great opportunity to sit and visit with many of the parishioners.

They may leave us, but they never fail to return. We were all delighted to see Cynthia Young visiting from Alaska. Many hugs and kisses were exchanged. After a couple of other stops, she would be on her way to San Juan for her daughter Christine's marriage.

Rick and Linda Duste never fail to attend Mass with us. They presently reside in Houston. During their latest visit, their grandson, Andrew was in their good company.

We welcome a younger generation and their children at Sunday Mass. Fred and Diane Siegmund brought their 3-year old grandson Eric to Mass. His father attended OLM and was an usher. Bring on the next generation!

It is with great sorrow that we extend condolences to the Workman family. As a member of our Christian community, Katherine was a warm, caring, generous person. Each year a Summerfest was held in their El Cerrito home. She and Michael were founders of our annual Epiphany dinners. We supported her as she journeyed through breast



cancer. Her loss in April leaves us without a very dear friend. Services for Katherine were held at Our Lady of Mercy.

We also mourn the death of our 99-year old Anna Schwarz. She was a woman of courage with a unique life story. She was her own one woman show, with a voice that towered over all others. She held the honor of being our oldest member. Will always be impressed that she was retired more years than the years she spent at Chevron. Services will be held at Our Lady of Mercy.

Continue to remember in your prayers: Al Frosini, John Gerk, Frankie Mello, Dody Perry, Vince Kafka, and Bill Smith.

My kindergarten group of friends and I added another year to our continued friendship by celebrating at lunch in Concord.

Taking the summer off – enjoy yours and visit exotic places.

#### KIDS IN CHURCH

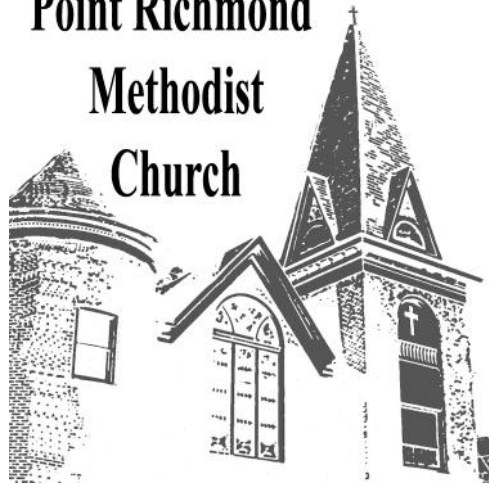
OUR FATHER, WHO DOES ART  
IN HEAVEN, HAROLD IS HIS NAME.  
AMEN.

See you in church



***Late Anna Schwarz and Dody Perry enjoying Mother's Day, 2011. Photo courtesy Dee Rosier***

## Point Richmond Methodist Church



**By Jean Reynolds**

510-235-2988

[jeanormr@pacbell.net](mailto:jeanormr@pacbell.net)

On March 27 we had a visit from the choir at Richmond College Prep School, a K-5 charter elementary school in Richmond. The students sang several songs for our worship: they were full of life, light and enthusiasm! We were impressed with their musicianship and learned that they have music as part of their curriculum every day.

On Easter Sunday, April 24, cool and blustery weather in the morning called for Plan B, and the 8:00 a.m. service met in the sanctuary instead of out in the garden. Thanks to Norm Reynolds, Deby McFadyen, and Linda Andrew-Marshall, we shared breakfast at 9:00 without a hitch. Jonathan and Diane Frary arranged the places the day before, so the room beamed a welcome! The 11:00 a.m. worship featured music by both choirs. The children enjoyed an egg hunt in the back yard after the service. The sun had finally broken through and made the perfect setting to search for eggs, both plastic and real.

The Junktique Sale on May 7 showed how people are willing to shoulder new responsibilities as the need arises. Florence Wilson was unable to

make her signature minestrone soup, but Matthew Foster volunteered to make it in her stead. Matthew's version created its own minestrone reputation! Knowing that we lost Helen Valentine and her extraordinary pie-baking expertise, many people baked or brought pies so there were plenty to sell by the slice and whole. Who knew so many people were such accomplished bakers? JoAnn Bray came from Bodega Bay with her chili. It sold out before the day was over as usual. A newish crew in the kitchen still managed to top previous food sales. Each year Betty Graham and Fran Smith find new ways to organize the event for a smoother day for everyone. Bill Thompson and Jonathan Swett picked up items from donors in advance to add to the sale items. A crew of volunteers came at the end to help take everything down: we cleaned up in record time! It was a successful day from every aspect.

A smaller team sold items from the basement on Memorial Day for the Masquers' Community Yard Sale day. Pancake breakfast ala 'Boy Scout recipe' sustained some of the shoppers and sales staff that day. Our ancient Wolf Stove with its temperamental controls created a special challenge for the kitchen crew, but it finally bent to the will of Chef Mathew Foster. Our two Junktique sales help keep the church finances in the plus column, allow for recycling of good used items to new owners, and give us all an opportunity to work together with more of the community. Thanks to all of you who support us through donations, purchases, or volunteer efforts!

We were the lucky recipients of a Vespers concert provided by the Piedmont Boys' Choir on May 1. In exchange for use of our sanctuary for rehearsal, the choir gifted us with a concert! On April 29, the Acoustic Music series featured Chris Kokesh and Steve Meckfessel, with Nancy Cassidy as the opening act. It really was an all-concert weekend: Flautist Matt Eakle performed on April 30 with his own band: Jack Dorsey, Alex Bauer and Joey Edleman. Matt is a Point Richmond native and one of the premiere jazz flute players in the country. It is an honor to have him perform here! On May 20, Misner & Smith

performed. Special guest Jill Freeman opened the show.

The United Methodist Women met at the home of Jennifer Metz Foster on May 21. They viewed a video made for Public Television about Bay Area women who create quilt art. It features our own Nina Shortridge. Nina brought some of her art quilts to share so it brought the story to life! This nascent women's group has accomplished much this year. They continue to prepare dinner quarterly at the GRIP shelter, have given micro loans through KIVA, and have contributed in various positive ways to the community.

The United Methodist Women sponsored a Teddy Bear Tea for parents, children, grandparents, friends and teddy bears on June 4. Friendship Hall was transformed into a tearoom with extra teddy bears on hand in case you didn't bring your own. Homemade scones, cream puffs, dainty sandwiches, fruit, cookies, cupcakes, lemon curd, preserves and tea were the fare of the day. Everything was splendid: even the rainy weather added an air of being in old England!

On the Calendar:

Sunday, June 19, 11 a.m. – Fathers' Day Jazz – Sunday's message in music with the Dan Damon Quartet: Dan Damon, piano; Kurt Ribak, bass; Randy Odell, drums; Tom Griesser, sax; GG Amos, guitar and vocals; Sheilani Alix, vocals.

Vacation Bible School: August 1 – 5, daily 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. A week of stories, art, music, games, snacks and more! Lunch for campers and their families on Friday. Call Jean Reynolds (510) 235-2988 to sign up children age three to sixth grade.

Friday, June 17, 8 p.m. Concert with Rosalie Sorrels, legendary folksinger/songwriter and master storyteller, \$15 at the door. Rosalie was nominated for a Grammy award in 2005. She is scheduled to perform at the Annual Kate Wolf Festival in Laytonville, and at the Freight & Salvage in Berkeley.

Sunday, June 26, 5 pm - Mark LeMaire and Twilight in concert, returning to perform after their August 2010 concert. Berkeley songwriter

Carol Denney says that "To call [Mark LeMaire] a remarkable player would be a considerable understatement - just about nobody I know is doing what Mark can do on the guitar." \$10 donation.



## POINT METHODIST CHURCH HISTORY

*Mid Dornan*

Church history is rich with contributions of women. One church group in the 1920s was the SOCIAL LEAGUE of the First Methodist Episcopal Church whose history is reflected in their minutes printed below and taken from the canvass covered, red leather cornered notebook which cost \$1.15. The minutes are printed as written,

May 21st, 1929

The meeting of the Social League was called to order by the President in the Church parlors, Tuesday, May 21st. Mrs. Adams and Mrs. Dingle presided as hostesses for the afternoon. There were 13 members present. The matter of papering the parsonage was discussed and a bill of \$18.00 paid. Also noted that the sum of 85¢ be taken out of the collection of the day for prizes for the Social League. Mrs. Prince was appointed temporary Treasurer by the President to fill unexplored term of Mrs. Kibbo due to her removal from the City. The Annual Tea was discussed with Mrs. A. D. Jones appointed chairman of said "tea". Mrs. Scofield chairman of entertainment committee, Mrs. Elizabeth Jenkins to take charge of guest list. Each member of League entitled to three invitations. Decided to solicit cakes if it meets with the approval of refreshment committee.

Moved and seconded a food sale be held by the League during the month of June to take care of finances during vacation, sale to be held Sat. June 22nd Mrs. Hill and Mrs. Saw in charge.

Old Balance	\$65.51
20% of Shredders sold	2.60
Plate collection	1.40
	\$ 69.51

Paid out Papering	18.00
Mrs Meece prizes	.85
M EC (Mrs Adams)	28..85
Balance	40.66
Paid June Mrs. Adams	10.00
July Mrs. Adams	10.00
Balance	\$20.66

Elizabeth Gray Secty



## What is the Difference between a Liberty Ship and a Victory Ship?

There were the two kinds of American-built cargo ships used in World War II the Liberty and the Victory. The Liberty ships were first built in 1941 and Victory ships were first built in 1944. As the early action of the war raged in Europe, the United States faced the need to supply its allies by sea and to be prepared for the possibility of America's entry into the conflict. German U-Boats were playing havoc with allied shipping and the country faced a critical shortage of cargo ships. The result was the emergency fleet program, which introduced the Liberty ship. The SS Patrick Henry, the first Liberty ship, was launched at Baltimore. These vessels became known as Liberty ships after President Roosevelt, christened the Patrick Henry, by quoting the famous Virginian, "Give me liberty, or give me death." We should note here that it took 244 days to build the Patrick Henry. In all, 2,571 Liberty Ships were constructed between 1941 and 1945, making them the largest class of ships ever built worldwide. Today, there are only two unaltered survivors of the class, SS Jeremiah O'Brien in San Francisco and SS John Brown in Baltimore. They have been designated National Historic Landmarks. Liberties were produced under the direction of U.S. Maritime Commission, later under the War Shipping Administration.

A Liberty ship's maximum speed was 11 knots, making her easy prey for submarines, so early in 1942, the War Shipping Administration commissioned a design for a faster vessel, with more a modern steam plant, better trim and stability, stronger hulls, and other improvements. Victory ships were strengthened to avoid fractures

in hull plates and ship sides, a problem that sometimes plagued the Liberties. In April 1943, the type was introduced as the "Victory Ship," and production commenced. In addition, Victory ships were designed specifically to allow for easy modification after World War II into other types of cargo carriers, special uses and even passenger ships. Production line techniques were used to build both types of vessels.

Both Liberty and Victory class ships were important to America's war efforts. The U.S. merchant fleet played a major role in winning the war, transporting an estimated 85 percent of the troops, ammunition and supplies used to support Allied war effort. Victory ships also played a significant role during the Korean War and the Vietnam War, transporting thousands of refugees to freedom and carrying material, equipment and ammunition.

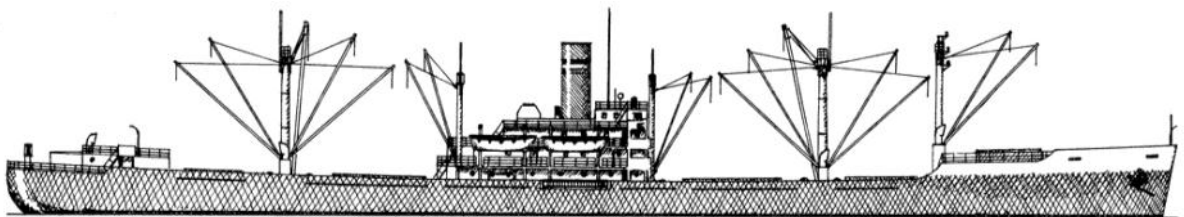
After World War II Victory ships were at the forefront of the resurgence of the United States as a world economic power. For example, they carried American goods around the world in support of the Marshall Plan. Private firms chartered hundreds of them and hundreds more were sold or leased to foreign countries for use as freighters and some were converted for passenger service.

Here ends the Liberty vs. Victory lesson!

*This is taken from a talk given by Carl Westerdahl on February 10, 2011*

*[http://alumni.rpi.edu/s/1225/images/editor\\_documents/victoryship.pdf](http://alumni.rpi.edu/s/1225/images/editor_documents/victoryship.pdf)*

Gary





## SS *Red Oak Victory*

is a World War II Victory ship preserved as a museum ship in Richmond, California. It was one of 534 Victories built during World War II, but one of only a few of these ships to be transferred from the Merchant Marine to the United States Navy. It was named after Red Oak, Iowa, which suffered a disproportionate number of casualties in early World War II battles. The ship was active during World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War.

The *Red Oak Victory* was built by the Permanente Metals Corporation's Richmond Number 1 Yard in Richmond, California and launched on November 9, 1944. Victory ships were not supposed to last long, but the welds of the *Red Oak Victory* are still intact after 60 years. The ship is 455 feet (138 m) in length, and armed with one five-inch/38 caliber gun; one three-inch/50 caliber gun, and eight 20 mm guns.

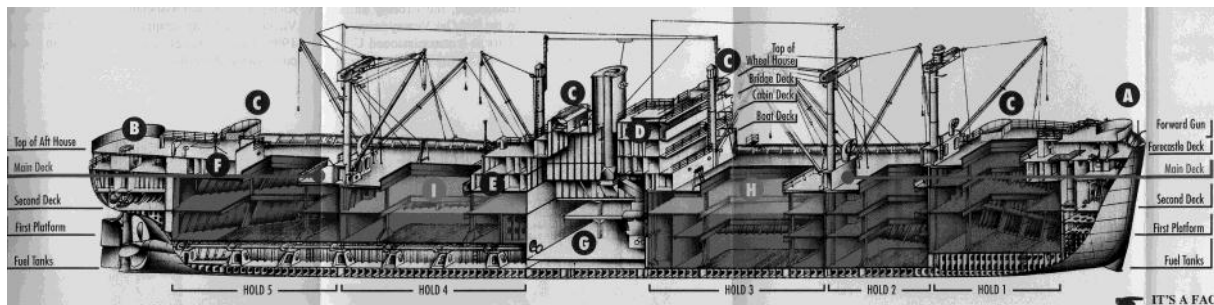
The ship was acquired by the United States Navy on December 5, 1944 and commissioned the same day as USS *Red Oak Victory* (AK-235). Following a fitting out period, the *Red Oak Victory* was loaded with cargo and departed San Francisco for Pearl Harbor on January 10, 1945. *Red Oak Victory* departed Hawaii on February 10 loaded with munitions needed in the Marshall and Caroline islands. Sent onward from Eniwetok, she arrived in Ulithi on February 28, 1945, and then began operating under Commander Service

Squadron Ten. Operating out of the Philippines, the vessel issued cargo and ammunition to various ships in the fleet through the end of the war in August 1945. During a hazardous tour of duty in the Pacific, the USS *Red Oak Victory* handled many tons of ammunition, supplying the fleet without a single casualty.

The vessel was decommissioned in 1946 and returned to the U.S. Maritime Commission. *Red Oak Victory* was used by the Luckenbach Steamship Company from 1947 through the 1950s, during which time the vessel went to Japan, Korea, Cuba, Pakistan, India, Singapore and Japan again. *Red Oak Victory* was operated by American Mail Lines for the Military Sea Transport Service from 1966 to 1968, making a dozen voyages to Vietnam, Japan and the Philippines carrying military supplies loaded at West Coast ports. From 1968 until 1998, the vessel was laid up in the National Defense Reserve Fleet in Suisun Bay.

Doomed to be scrapped, the *Red Oak Victory* came to the attention of the Richmond Museum Association in 1993. In 1996 Congress passed legislation authorizing the conveyance of the ship to the Museum Association. *Red Oak Victory* was turned over to the Richmond Museum of History and returned to a new home in Richmond on September 20, 1998. It is being restored and operated by the Richmond Museum of History, and is part of the Rosie the Riveter/World War II Home Front National Historical Park.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia





# Out and About Town

Margaret Morkowski (510) 234-4219

Have you been to the **Point Richmond Farmers' Market**? It's great. The Market's farmers, cooks, bakers, artists, gardeners and businesses welcome you to the Point every Wednesday. The second Wednesday of each month is "Family Day" with special activities for the young ones. There is live music every week and Kettle Corn too. **The Point Richmond Farmers' Market is located on Park Place every Wednesday from 4 pm - 8 pm.** The certified farmers' market is sponsored by the Point Richmond Business Association and is managed by the Pacific Coast Farmers' Market Association. Please call Marge Cellucci at 237-0101 for more information.



The **Point Richmond Summer Concert Series** begins Friday, **June 10<sup>th</sup>**. Again this year **The Point is Music** will be hosting 5 Friday-Night Concerts from **5:30 pm - 8:00 pm** on Park Place. The five concerts will be held on **Friday Nights June 10<sup>th</sup>, July 8<sup>th</sup>, August 12<sup>th</sup>, September 9<sup>th</sup> and September 23<sup>rd</sup>**. The Point Richmond Business Association encourages everyone to set aside some time before and after each concert to visit the stores and restaurants in town. Invite all your friends and to come enjoy the music. Please call Andrew Butt at 236-7435 for more information.



Point Richmond's Historic **Our Lady of Mercy Church** invites you to join them for their monthly **Pancake Breakfast** fund raisers. If you enjoy pancakes, eggs, sausages, bacon, fruit, coffee, tea and juice stop by the Church Hall on the third Sunday of the month. The dates are **Sunday June 19<sup>th</sup>, July 17<sup>th</sup>, August 21<sup>st</sup>, September 18<sup>th</sup> and October 16<sup>th</sup>**. The donation is \$8.00 and we serve breakfast from **8:30am to 12 Noon**. The food is great and we always have a lot of fun. Mark your calendars for the third Sunday of the

month then come and join us. We thank Susan Brooks for organizing this fun event. Please call 232-1843 for more information.



This year more than 180 children in grades 1-6 at **Washington Elementary School** finished the 5 assignments for the **Many Hands Project- Spirit of Leadership Program**. This is an increase of more than 60 children over last year. The theme this year was "Outer Space" and the projects were awesome. We arranged this year's field trip for more than 140 children to the Chabot Space and Science Center in Oakland on May 18<sup>th</sup>. Everyone, including the 30 adult chaperones returned from the trip happy and exhausted. It was a great success. On May 19<sup>th</sup> the 24 first graders along with Mrs. Lafosse and the 6<sup>th</sup> graders, decorated "Space Cookies," created the planet Saturn from recycled CDs, then wrote and illustrated "space stories." In the afternoon Mrs. Feldman created the "Moon's surface" by layering flour, cornmeal and coco powder into a dish pan. Then she dropped Meteorites made of a Christmas Ornament, an apple and a rock onto the "Moon" to show how craters are made. Everyone yelled and scampered as the "layers of the Moon" rose into the air in a cloud of dust. For more information on Many Hands please call Margaret Morkowski at 234-4219



Next year **Washington School** will begin to celebrate its **Centennial**. **The Point Richmond History Association** and the **Many Hands Project** will be working with the school to make the year long celebration a great success. To contribute to this effort we are asking everyone to provide us information about the school. One project includes a display on Washington School's alumnae. If you or some one you know went to Washington we would like to display a picture of them as a

child, one as an adult and a paragraph about their careers, hobbies and/or other activities the “students” participate in as adults. If you would like to contribute information about any of the former students and teachers from the school or if you have any pictures, stories or facts about Washington School from the past 100 years, please call Margaret at (510) 234-4219. Thanks,



Now that summer is here, the kids’ swim team called the **Richmond Sailfish** will be practicing at the **Richmond Plunge**. You only have to be 5 years old to join ... there’s not a lot of competition but they sure do have fun. If you like the idea of swimming as part of the Sailfish Team and maybe prepare for a future “meet” check out the web page or give us a call. Coach John is just great and sometimes he has the teenage Sailfish work with the little ones. There’s always lots of laughing and giggling and with the summer here, it’s a great time to join. By the way, if you are a “kid at heart,” **Richmond Swims, Inc.** has a Masters program too. For more details on the programs for both groups, check out the Richmond Swims, Inc. web page at [RichmondSwims.org](http://RichmondSwims.org) or call (510) 356-8801..



**The Point Richmond Neighborhood Council** has just installed their new Officers. They are President Peter Minkwitz, 1<sup>st</sup>-Vice-President Megan Bleckinger, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President and Membership Chair Sue Rosenof, Secretary Margaret Jordan and Treasurer Louise Fender. Various issues or standing agenda items currently coordinated with the PRNC include the Police Repot, Safety Committee, Land Use/Design Review Committee, Emergency Preparedness, Veolia Waste Treatment Plant, Formula Restaurant Ordinance Committee, TRAC, PRBA, WWIC, Landscape Advisory, PRHA and the Red Oak Victory Ship. For more information please call Peter Minkwitz at (510) 232-3663.

**Knit-and-Such** group meet on the first Wednesday of every month in the Point Richmond Community Center from **12:30 pm until 2:30 pm**. Altha Humphrey, who is very active in our Point Richmond neighborhood, leads a gathering of us who knit, crochet, craft and/or who just like getting together. Please call Altha at 232-2934 for more details.



**The Arts of Point Richmond** meets on the third Tuesday of the month at the Point Richmond Community Center from **7:00 pm to 9:00 pm**. They gather to hear from local artists, enjoy an art exhibit, to hear from a writer or presentations from others associated with or of interest of to those who love art. Please call Linda Drake at 672-0793 for more information.



Don’t forget to check out the “**Calendar**” page near the end of this newsletter for a list of the various Point Richmond organizations. We have lots of groups and the members always like to welcome newcomers. You’ll meet lots of great people.



Remember, for an update on what’s new, call the **Point Richmond/West Side Branch Library at 620-6567** and the **Point Richmond Community Center at 233-6881**.



Search **PointRichmond.com** for more up-to-date information on “What’s Out and About” in Point Richmond.



# *Thomas Mercer-Hursh Enhanced Historical Photos*



**November 9, 1945  
Launching of Permanent  
558th Ship**

***S.S. Red Oak Victory***

**All photos are courtesy of  
Richmond Museum of  
History**



Photos

1944  
Permanente's

Victory

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um of





# The Musical of Musicals

## *at the Masquers*

*A review by Theresa de Valencé, TdeV@bstw.com*

When you haven't seen a show in a while, do you sometimes wonder what attracts you to theatre? I do, regularly. I know, fundamentally, I'm happier when I persevere in getting out of my soft couch, but that's a logical deduction from a memory. Yet, at most performances, I become amazed (again) by the magic of theatre. What's surprising is the magnitude of the before and after feelings. It's like forgetting what cherries taste like until this time of year. Unless you have season tickets to the Masquers, then you've not resolved this issue either. My job is to try to capture that great wonder into words, so that you too will get off your duff to see this performance.



*From left to right: Craig Eychner, Shauna Shoptaw, Ted Bigornia, and Sophia Rose Morris*

The set (designed by **John Hull**) is boring black, comprised of a banner, a few steps, and a piano; yet it becomes a hayfield, an artist's loft, a fashion runway and a crowded subway staircase.

The performers are a crew of five—small by some standards—yet before we're done, they will become a whole army stomping across the stage and will gather the entire audience in their momentum.

The props—there are many—are mostly imaginary, but they're effective and hilarious.

Costume Designer **Marjorie Moore** has dressed everyone in basic black, but there the monotony ends as she accessorizes each character in each vignette. The permutations will delight you. Marjorie is definitely a magician.

*The Musical of Musicals: the Musical* is, of course, a musical, written by **Eric Rockwell** and **Joanne Bogart** and directed by **Arthur Atlas** with music direction by **Ted Bigornia** and **Pat King**. In five acts it tells the story (with variations) of June, the lovely, who can't pay her rent; Willy, her sometimes boyfriend; Jitter, the landlord; and Abby, the voluptuous Older Woman.

It's an originally-written parody of Broadway greats (Oklahoma, Carousel, Sweeney Todd, Company, Hello Dolly, Mame, The Phantom of the Opera, Evita, Chicago, Cabaret, A Chorus Line, and more), told in five vignettes, each in the style of a writing team. If you're a musical buff, then you know this show will be great, but what if you're an ordinary person like me who's seen, maybe, only one of these plays and know you won't catch the jokes?

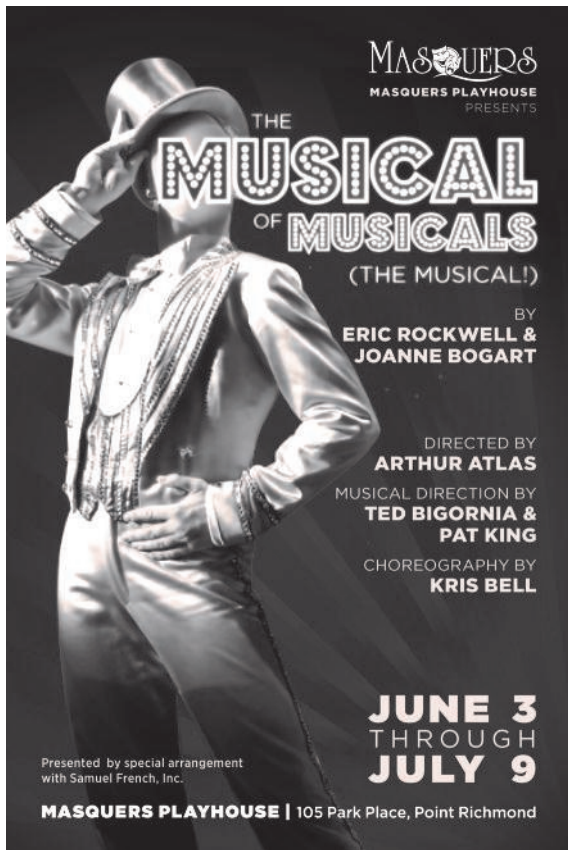
**Mark Ferreira** is the able pianist without whom none of this thaumaturgy would happen. He gets my award for Performer Having The Most Fun because every time I looked at him over the top of the piano, he was smirking.

This was another instance where I attended a rehearsal so my review would be in time for the TPIT magazine schedule. I attended the photo shoot with photographer **Jerry Telfer** and noticed he missed a few fine opportunities because he was irresistibly dancing along with the music, camera in hand.

**Sophia Rose Morris** (*photo, right*) is a clear, beautiful soprano. She has the unenviable job of playing, June, the silly nit without a brain, though she evolves into a whiny, self-absorbed superstar and has an impressive not-quite-yet dying scene.

**Craig Eychner** (as Willy, *photo, left*) is a strong baritone. As history shows, Craig does a good job playing a hokey young man in love and lust. What's new (and outstanding) is the slutty,





seen-everything-done-everything, but still cooler-than-dirt fellow.

**Shauna Shoptaw** (as Abby, *photo, second from left*) proceeds in song like a royal battleship where neither wind nor tsunami could upset her stately pace. The dichotomy of her majestic voice juxtaposed with the lyrics are too, too funny.

**Ted Bigornia** (as Jidder, *photo, second from right*) is a brilliant madman, an unfathomably evil genius, a fancy ghost and a funny man with a magnificent voice. Several of Ted's characterizations were maiden experiences for me and I very much enjoyed them.

Although the storyline is similar in all five acts, the actors go from playing lead to chorus to narrator and back in every vignette. And the changes they make are impressive. Who would have thought they

could become such a debauched and dissipated group!

Yet, the rôles these characters play are minor compared with the journey on which their voices take us. Each song is softer, higher, deeper, lower, louder than the rest. That Masquers theatre provides unamplified sound is our splendid good fortune and these voices reach to the very edges of the space.

The intensity of the songs and the seriousness with which they are delivered is belied by the ridiculousness of the lyrics, even if you don't understand the caricatures. The performers must have had coaching lessons in keeping a straight face.

Also significant are the dances. Choreographer **Kris Bell** freely admits to plagiarizing the greats at whom the parody pokes. Of course, there are hats. The actors range all over the stage, moving alone, in pairs and all together, synchronized and not, up and down those stairs, in a drumming, enthralling dance that sweeps the heart and overpowers the audience, body and soul. It was solely by tucking my fists under my armpits that I curbed the urge to get up and join the end of the chorus line.

This show is boisterous and powerful—by the end, you'll probably find yourself stomping and screaming along with everyone else. Before this production, I've never felt any compulsion to dash out to see this long list of performances, but *The Musical of Musicals* gave me an interest in doing so.

Of course, if you know what you're in for, you've probably already got tickets.

Definitely not to be missed.

*This is the 8th season Theresa de Valencé has reviewed Masquers performances. All her reviews can be read at [www.ReviewsByTdeV.com](http://www.ReviewsByTdeV.com). Subscription to the electronic list is free, send an email with "subscribe" in the subject to [Theresa@ReviewsByTdeV.com](mailto:Theresa@ReviewsByTdeV.com).*

# *A Gallant Liberty Ship*

*David Blaisdell Smith*

Out of the 747 ships built at the Richmond Ship Yards during WWII that helped win the war, two have an additional historical importance. The *Red Oak Victory* is one and is a living history memorial for the City of Richmond, Ca. The other is the *Stephen Hopkins*; this liberty ship was the first American vessel to sink a German ship on the high seas during WWII.

The *Stephen Hopkins*, a 7000 ton Liberty ship was launched on April 14, 1942 at Kaiser Richmond Yard Two. Like other commerce tankers the *Stephen Hopkins* was lightly armed with a 4" / 50 naval rifle on her stern, two 37mm cannon on forward tub mounts long with four .50 caliber and two .30 caliber machineguns.

She was named for Stephen Hopkins from Rhode Island, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Her Captain Paul Buck, from Merrimacort, Ma. had a crew of eight officers, thirty-three seamen and fifteen armed guards to man the ship's guns. Captain Buck told his crew if they were attacked by enemy shipping they

would fight.

The German surface raider *Stier* was a converted 5000 ton cargo ship and was camouflaged and had hidden on board six 5.9 cannons, two 37mm anti-aircraft guns, four 20mm anti-aircraft guns, two 21 inch torpedo tubes and an Arado AR-231 Floatplane.

The *Stier*, captained by German Naval Officer Horst Gerlach, with a crew of 324, broke out into the Atlantic in May 1942. The *Stier* was one of Hitler's nine pirate surface raiders, along with submarines, battle ships and aircraft that were designed to strangle allied shipping. The sneaky surface raiders, disguised as neutral cargo ships, would close on an allied ship, unmask its guns, fire a shot over their victim's bow, order them to stop and silence their radio and prepare to be bordered.

If a ship obeyed it would be bordered, and it's crew taken prisoner, stores confiscated and the ship was either commandeered or sunk. If the ship failed to obey the raider's commands the raider would sink the ship by cannon fire or torpedoes.

As the raider *Stier* entered it's patrol area in the South Atlantic it took two freighters, the British *Gemstone* and *Dalhousie* and the American tanker *Stanvac Calcutta*. All three ships had been warned that German



*Liberty ship  
SS Stephen Hopkins*

raiders were prowling the waters between Africa and South America. All three tried to run from the *Stier*, but were overtaken and sunk by cannon and torpedo. The *Gemstone* and *Stanvac Calcutta* put up a fight with their single deck guns, but were outgunned by the *Stier*. The crew members that lived through the cannonade were taken prisoner.

On September 27, 1942 the *Stephen Hopkins* was on her maiden voyage from San Francisco to ports in the South Atlantic. After delivering its cargo at Cape Town she was bound for Dutch Guiana on a misty, rain squalled, morning when she encountered the German raider *Stier* and its supply ship *Tannenfels*. Taking advantage of the weather the *Stier* was taking on stores and transferring prisoners to the *Tannenfels*. When the Germans spotted the *Stephen Hopkins* they immediately opened fire on it.

The *Stephen Hopkins* turned away from the *Stier* and went to battle stations. The gun captain Ensign Kenneth M. Willett, from Sacramento, Ca. and his 4-inch gun crew returned the cannon fire at the *Stier*. The *Stier* concentrated all its guns on them, killing the 4-inch gun crew and also knocking out the forward 37mm gun tubs. Crew members replaced the dead 4-inch gun crew and continued shooting back and striking the *Stier* with every shot. With the help of the *Tannenfels* machineguns, the *Stier's* big guns tore holes into the *Stephen Hopkins*, killing its engine, pilot house and most of the crew, including Captain Buck and Chief Mate Richard Moczowski, from Richmond, Ca.

The *Stephen Hopkins* was on fire and sinking when the abandon ship signal was sounded. Crew members along with some wounded, manned the ship's two life boats. Seaman Second Class Wallace E. Breck, from Oakland, Ca. was knocked from the 37mm gun tub into the water. When he got into one life boat it was immediately sunk by *Stier's* cannon fire. Breck was pulled into the second life boat with 18 other crew members. They saw one man was still on board; it was Engine Cadet Edwin Joseph O'Hara, from Lindsay, Ca.

O'Hara had come on deck to check on the 4-inch gun crew. He found them all dead, but there were 5 cannon rounds still left in the ready box. As the *Stephen Hopkins* slowly sank, O'Hara manned the 4-inch gun by himself. He fired the last 5 rounds at the *Stier* and every round struck the raider. The life boat crew watched in horror as their ship sank with O'Hara still on-board.

Within a half an hour the battle was over, but the *Stier* had been hit by thirty five cannon rounds from the *Stephen Hopkins* and several of them hit at her water line. The ship's steering gear and fire mains were destroyed, fuel lines cut and the emergency electrical generator was knocked out. Fires started amidships, but without electricity, the cannon shell hoists were stopped, the pumps couldn't stop the flooding, or fight the fires. As there was no hope for the *Stier* her crew was transferred to the tender *Tannenfels*. Within two hours the *Stier* blew up and sank either by a scuttling charge or her store of torpedoes. Captain Gerlach headed back to Germany, a disgraced Sea Captain.

Nineteen crew members from the "Stephen Hopkins" were set adrift in their life boat. It took them 31 days and 2,200 miles to reach the coast of Brazil. During that time four of the crew died. The *Stephen Hopkins* crew of 55 men came from all parts of the United States. Twenty seven from California and of those, twenty were from the San Francisco Bay area.

The U.S. Maritime Administration awarded the *Stephen Hopkins* the title **Gallant Ship** and a second *Stephen Hopkins II* was launched from Richmond Yard Two on May 10, 1944. New ships were named after fallen crew members of the *Stephen Hopkins*. They were the Liberty Ships *SS Paul Buck*, *SS Richard Moczowski*, *SS Edwin Joseph O'Hara* and the destroyer escort *USS Kenneth M. Willett*.

Captain Buck and Cadet O'Hara were posthumously awarded the Merchant Marine Distinguished Service Medal for their actions that morning and Lieutenant (JG) Willett was posthumously awarded the Navy Cross.

# On This Date in KP History

*Steve Gilford*

## #308 A Search for the “real” Rosie the Riveter



Ethel Kelly may have provided the face of the familiar Rosie of the “We Can Do It” poster but Rose Will Monroe helped to shape her character.

Because so many women were joining the workforce, anxious to become a part of the war effort, the concept of a “Rosie the Riveter” caught the imagination of the public. She seemed to express the positive outlook of the women themselves as they discovered that they could push way back the boundaries of what was thought of as “men’s work”. Rosie became the women’s equivalent of GI Joe, becoming an icon representing all working women, in whatever industries, in whatever jobs. However, in 1943, the mass media of the day, newsreels, radio broadcasters, magazines and newspapers all pursued the quest of finding their own Rosie, the Riveter, literally, a woman named Rosie who was working as a riveter. As it happens, Walter Pidgeon found a particularly fine one.



*Walter  
Pidgeon*

### More About The Rosie Everyone Knows

Pidgeon, a handsome and distinguished Canadian actor was one of the most popular Hollywood figures of the day. During the war, he made a campaign of personal appearances around the US and

sold more than 5-million dollars in War Bonds. He also made a short film capitalizing on the popularity of the Rosie the Riveter ideal. For this, he and a film crew traveled to Ypsalanti, Michigan to gigantic aircraft factory recently built by Ford at Willow Run. The plant had been a mammoth undertaking, at 3.5 million square feet, the largest manufacturing facility in the world. Charles Lindbergh called it Walter Pidgeon “The Grand Canyon of the mechanized world.” It had a problem, though, not enough workers to “man” the assembly lines turning out the heavy bombers needed so desperately on the fighting fronts of the world. To remedy this, the government had ordered Ford to hire and train women so that by the time the Hollywood crew arrived, there were thousands of women working there, many of them riveters. One was Rose Will Monroe, a single mother raising two Rose Will Monroe daughters. She was independent of spirit, attractive, poised and articulate. She became the Rosie of the film Walter Pidgeon was preparing.

Several years ago, one of Rose Monroe’s daughters told the story of how her mother, although not the woman in the poster, came to be associated with the image of Rosie.

“Mom happened to be in the right place at the right time” . . . “Mom never posed for any posters or paintings. She only appeared in war bond promotional movies with the British actor Walter Pidgeon to help finance the war effort. Mr. Pidgeon came to her factory to film the promos, and Mom’s foreman said he had a worker named Rose, who was a riveter and fit the stereotype of the ‘Rosie’ of the popular song of the day.



*Rose Will Monroe  
1920-1977*



After getting her permission to do so, she appeared in the films, totally unpaid. She supported the war effort and this was her part in helping get our guys back home as safely and quickly as possible.”

### Rosie Goes Hollywood

As time went on, more and more women entered the wartime work force and the idea of Rosie the Riveter continued to become more and more popular. It was probably inevitable that with this sort of popularity there would be a Hollywood movie. The story that would take Rosie from the assembly line to Hollywood was published in *The Saturday Evening Post*. (Coincidentally, six weeks later, May 29, 1943, an image of Rosie would appear on that magazine’s cover. For many years, it would be the one most closely associated with Rosie the Riveter but more about her and the *Saturday Evening Post* later.)

The *Saturday Evening Post* story by Elizabeth Curnow Handley, Room for Two was transformed by Handley into a movie script with the very saleable title, “Rosie the Riveter”. The film, released in 1944, although not a classic, did succeed in burning the Rosie image further into the consciousness of America. Rosie was on her way to becoming a powerful, a near mythic figure who would long outlast *The Duration*.

### Richmond’s Own Rosie

Roughly ten years ago, Donna Powers, Richmond City Councilwoman and one of the strongest supporters of the Rosie the Riveter Park effort, was looking for a picture of someone to represent the women workers of the shipyards. She found what she was looking for in a 1945 issue of

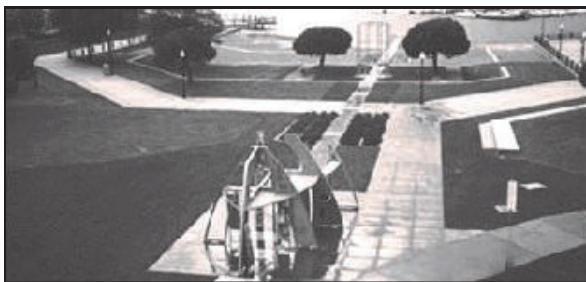
*Fore n Aft*, the weekly magazine published for and by the employees of Kaiser’s Richmond shipyards. Powers found a photo of an African-American welder who seemed to capture the vitality, confidence and independence of the women of the wartime shipyards.

One of the first uses for this photo was as a part of a poster celebrating the park development. A poster was placed in the window of a Richmond graphic arts shop where it set off an unexpected chain of events.

Aminah Bilal happened to see the poster there and she was stunned. “That’s my grandmother”, she said, and it turned out that she was right. The illustration on the poster was a photograph of Charles “Charlie” Etta Turner taken fifty years before when she had been a shipfitter at the Kaiser Richmond shipyards. But there was much more to the story than simple coincidence. It was also a love story.

“Charlie” had been taking a break that hot summer day in 1945.. She’d found a welcome bit of shade beneath some iron beams and it was there that *Fore n Aft* photographer, Bill Turner spotted her. He’d never seen her before but decided immediately that she would be a good subject, peered through his viewfinder and took her photograph. That picture turned out to be a record of an important moment in both Bill’s and Charlie’s lives because a few years later they were married, becoming, incidentally, one of the first legally married interracial couples in California.

In 1996, more than a half century after the photograph was taken, but in time for the dedication of the park, the picture of “Charlie” was also reproduced on 75 red, white and blue banners, ten feet high, flown from poles around the new site. On the Dedication Day, both men and women “Rosies”



*Photo courtesy of the National Park Service*

*(Continued on page 26)*





***Early Days,  
History of the  
City of Richmond  
according to  
Bill Foster***

***This was written by Mr. Foster in 1954. I would like to know more about Bill Foster and will share any information with our TPIT readers. Gary.***

***Installment #4***

*I have not learned anything more about Mr. Foster, must have been an interesting man.....Gary*

Theo Marcollo built the first hotel at 1<sup>st</sup> and McDonald. Then a saloon went up at 3<sup>rd</sup> and McDonald and at 4<sup>th</sup> Street the first post office was put in run by two old maids called the Mahoney sisters. At 5<sup>th</sup> Street St. George Swartz opened up a bike ship and up the avenue between 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, old man Burke started the first hardware store. (He moved from the Point). His sons still run it today (1954). Then Rhodes opened up the first tailor ship at 6<sup>th</sup> and Barrett.

Things began to hum in Richmond. Col. Rheem, Superintendent at the refinery put in an electric car service (1904) from the refinery gates to 16<sup>th</sup> and McDonald. This for a while was the length of the avenue. The Southern Pacific had a big iron fence at the end of the road. Well, it was a crude electric car system more like flat cars with top on and long seats for the workers.. It was a sight to see 5 or 6 of them coming along behind each other. Men hanging on like flies at every street corner. They had platforms to let you off

onto, because of the winter rains. If you missed one of them in the winter months you were down to your knees in mud for it rained very hard in Richmond, at least 25 or 30 inches.

Well, the real estate sharks came in droves selling lots. Some of them you would have to go out in a row boat to see. They had high poles with the lot numbers in the swamps around Bissell and Chancellor Avenues. Then the Santa Fe put their road to Oakland and that shut off the tide from McDonald Avenue and the lots dried out more or less. Some were very low and the water stood on them from the rains the year around. I have some pictures which will show you some of the events that apply to Richmond and the Point. It is very hard after 50 years from me to remember up to the minute, as I am an old man now past 70 years of age, but I will outline it as best I can.

Richmond began to boom like mushrooms but it was very much different than the way the Point grew up. No wild days, no drunks on the streets. It was peaceful. The town was on the go fast with new merchants coming to town such as Pulse Brothers bid store at 6th and McDonald. Then Schraders furniture store at 7th; Philpota Drygoods at 8th, then some merchants came over from the Point such as Gus Lang drug store to 6th and McDonald and McCrackens and Frank Dietricks Jewelry Store and many others.

By the end of World War I the Point began to get the look of a ghost town. Bert Curry was the first undertaker and was located on Park Place in the Point and he moved to Richmond. Billy Logan

opened up the finest bar in town called the Bank Saloon. Brussels carpets were on the floors, running water in front of the bar and a huge safe as you entered. The merchants banked there until the 1st National Bank was built at 6th and McDonald and it still stands today. The "Bank Bar" location now has the United Artists theater on it. Then Richmond got its first theater at 5th and McDonald which was a rough frame building. (Wrong, it was at 3rd Street). Connelly, a brick layer at the SOCo built the Richmond Theater at 5th Street and McDonald Avenue later.

The opening night they took a vote on a stage as to who was the most popular young man and girl in town. I, Bill Foster, was chosen as the man of the town and a girl who worked at the new post office at 6th Street was chosen. I forgot her name but boy, she was pretty! I took her to a dance at Maple Hall one rainy night and packed her home in my arms to save her white shoes from the mud.

The Independent moved to town from the Point to about 11th and McDonald. It got to be a good paper. Then another one on 6th Street, The Record entered the field. (The Record had moved over from the Point many years before). The Elks put up the finest big building at 10th Street, largest in town. (Dedicated May 2nd and 3rd, 1914). Then Jerry LaSalle put up a 4 store at 6th Street. Next door to it George Zanes, a Greek, opened up the 1st chop house called "The Gold Mine" and it was Charlie Russell who had a cigar store next to him and it was also a pool hall. He got rich too.

Later on Bill Helms mother opened up the 1st picture house at 12th and McDonald. George Swartz and his sister played for all the dances. (George, violin and Eleanor, piano. Later on Bill Logan joined up with them. He was a fine violin player and later married Eleanor, the belle of the town. It was during World War I that the flu hit the

town hard and everybody in town had to wear masks. The people died like flies, Eleanor Swartz was one of them. It took the lives of people of all walks of life. Mike Duce ran a good old Irish saloon. He told me if you want to live thru this flu you should drink good whiskey. I did and plenty of it. I sure shook off the flu and it worked.

Richmond got its first hospital at 8th Street and Barrett called the "Cottage Hospital". Dr. Abbott moved his offices also from the Point to 9th and McDonald. Then Richmond got its third City Hall, a big brick building near 15th and Florida back of the Santa Fe tracks. The city at the time it started had no sewers and no gas. Wood and coal stoves and coal oil lamps were used. Later Western Light and Power came in to install electric lights and it was some years later before gas was installed by the P.G.&E. from Oakland who got the franchise and bought out Western Light and put in a sub-station on 10th Street. Later Pac. Tel and Tel Co. came to town, locating on South 3rd below McDonald Avenue.

I can remember well the old coal oil lamp swinging in Burkes Hardware store in Point Richmond. The Point never had lights and gas for years. The sewer ran down the hillside. Nystrom School was one of the oldest in town. (the 1st on the South side was in Weeks barn located at 6th and Ohio.)

Bert Curry came in 1906 and started on Park Place. His brother Sam had undertakers quarters upstairs in his livery stable in 1901. Brownie Wing tells of how (as kids) they used to sneak upstairs and view the corpses. A man named Huges ran undertaking parlors in connection with his furniture store from 1903 to 1906 or later.

*To be continued in the next issue.....*

### **Did you know?**

***Every day more money is printed for Monopoly  
than the U.S. Treasury.***

*Ellen Schaefer*

# *Birthdays*

## *June*

Alissa Bagley	Stacey Spinola	Tom Kenny	Luke Karl
Phyllis Downey	Gill Stanfield	Bill Smith	Steve Wyrick
William Shea	John H. Knox	Aaron Marshall	June Solosbal
Emeric H. Baxter	Alice Baxter	Michael Marshall	Phyllis Bogue
Andrew Butt	Wilson Gandola	Marcelina Smith	Doreen Minkwitz
Jean Eakle	Rosemary Giacomelli	Gerry Higuera	
Joanne Lansing	Daniel Buhler	Judy Travis	
Cathe Brazil	Dianne Primaver	Lee Christioan	
Brian Rotting	Suzanne Unser	Lillian Karl	

## *July*

Francis Smith	Diedre Cerkowicz	Loretta 'Mertle' Lease	Martha Bielawski
Amy Rotting	Allen Anderson	Madeline Bellando	Madison Bradshaw
Mrs.Chas Baldwin	Roger Elle	Albright	Dixie L. Mello
Dan Damon	Trace Smith	Jean Reynolds	Frank Matteucci
Julius Matteucci	Alice McMahon	Regan Bradshaw	Lea Smith
Bea Read	Hilary Lord	Jon Healy	
Mary L.Knox	Clifford (Lou)	Golda Pettycord Howard	
Richard Smith	MacMillan	Alyce Williamson	

## *August*

Donna Wilson	Alice Thompson	Lisa Smith	Tony Bernabich
Mid Dornan	Linda DeLaTorre	Kelly von York	Michael Shaw
Molly Kate Barnes	Zoanna Kille	Rose Barra	Roy Henry Gover
Joe Darling	Mary Knox	Bonnie Ritzenthaler	Beatrice Beesley Casey
Marlene Smith	Karla Peterson	Wilson	Jim Healy
Barbara Ward	Alia Smyke	Dean Beesley	
Connee Fisher	Terrence Doherty	R. Clayton Barnes	

### **References for "The Gallant Liberty Ship"**

1. Hitler's Secret Pirate Fleet, by James P Duffy ISBN 0-8032-6652--9
2. Build Ships, by Wayne Bonnett, Wingate Press: Sausalito, CA
3. FORE'N'Aft: Kiser Shipyards Richmond, CA, February 1, 1946
4. The Last Five Shells, By Edward F. Oliver, True Men's Magazine
5. Left-For-Dead Gunner Who Sank Germany's Top Atlantic Raider,  
By Walter Martin, True Magazine

# EXCLUSIVE OVER 90 CLUB

*An impressive list that grows each month.*

Gretchen Van Tassel Shaw - 93

Al Frosini - 93

Shoney Gustafson 96

Madelilne Bellando Albright - 94

Charlotte Kermabon Birsinger - 94

Lupe Padilla Lopez - 97

Steve Wyrick - 95

Bernard Dietz - 95

Avis Blanchette - 97

Roger Wiese - 95

Eunice Ruth Hursh - 94

Dody Perry - 94

Betty Dornan - 92

Edna Hathaway - 92

Jerry Cerkowicz, Sr. - 91

Mark Gebhart - 97

Delphina Franco Tawney -93

Harry Gondola - 91

Anne M. Gondola - 98

Viola Kennedy—93 (welcome to the Over 90 Club!)

## MORE EXCLUSIVE OVER 100 CLUB

Rena Cairo Gonsalves- 100

*Age is not a number, it is an attitude.*

**Please send corrections and additions to “Over 90 Club” to [midornan@sbcglobal.net](mailto:midornan@sbcglobal.net) or call 510-234-5334**

*SS Red Oak  
Victory*

*Archive photo  
#ROV.09.09.1945*

*Courtesy of the  
Richmond  
Museum of  
History*



# Cards, Letters & E-Mails

Dear Gary:

In "This Point In Time" magazine, you do not say what the pictures are about or who they are (people, etc.) #10 & 11. Take page #1, #14 & #15 you say "PRHA Archive photo #—" which doesn't mean anything to me. Can you tell us what the picture is about and when taken, etc. I enjoy your magazine very much. It brings back a lot of great memories for me!

Thanks, Donna Diaz  
Fairfield, CA

*I appreciate the criticism and will try to do better in that regard. Sometimes I don't have the time and sometimes I just don't know.*

Gary

## On This Day in KP History

*(Continued from page 21)*

gathered on land that had once been a Kaiser shipyard to celebrate their achievements five decades earlier and to receive the thanks of younger generations for their wartime efforts. Among those Rosies that day were Bill and Charlie Turner who were there with their daughter, their five grandchildren and their four great-grandchildren. Looking down on the festivities from the brightly colored banners was that long-ago photo taken by Bill of Charlie, the woman whom he had met only moments earlier, and to whom he had been married for 48-years.. After a half century she had once again become a symbol for all the Rosies of Richmond.

Part 3:

Rosie in the Sistine Chapel: Wendy the Welder

**Anna Schwarz was a fascinating person, learn more about her life in previous "THIS POINT.....in time" editions Volume XXVIII numbers 3 and 4.**

**You can read them on the PRHA website,  
[www.pointrichmondhistory.org](http://www.pointrichmondhistory.org)**

vs. Rosie the Riveter; The WINKS; the role of copyright in the creation of Rosie, and an interview with a woman with a rightful claim to being the original Rosie .

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# *Deaths.....*

**Anna Kosak Schwarz** died May 25, 2011. Age 99. Born April 1, 1912 to Anna Henning, German, and Wilhelm Kosak, Czech, in Sudenland, Czechoslovakia. She had a brother, Wilhelm, four years her senior and a sister, Frida, four years her junior. After attending the University of Prague, Anna became a teacher of languages and music , playing a number of instruments as well as singing. In 1932 she met her future husband, Walter, at a masquerade party. Hitler and the Nazi party were causing major unrest in the world and Walter was Jewish. In 1941, she and Walter were able to settle in San Francisco and by 1945 Anna became an American citizen. They purchased the Point Movie House, where Symphony Restaurant is now located and moved to the Point. Walter died in 1954.. Anna enjoyed swimming and loved the Plunge and Chevron Rod and Gun Club. She was the musical director for Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church for decades and an active member of the Women's Westside Improvement Club where her singing Silent Night in German as she accompanied herself on her Accordion became a Christmas tradition for the club after their luncheon. Mass was held on Saturday, June 4th at Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church.

**Peggy Renae Wilson** passed away on April 3, 2011. Age 53. Peggy was born in Richmond to Donna and Richard Wilson. She attended Washington School and graduated from Harry Ells High in 1976. Peggy was a lifeguard at the YWCA and the Plunge, is a past Honored Queen of Bethel #319 of the International Order of Jobs Daughters and a member of the Point Baptist Church but had taken instruction at St. Callistus Catholic Church before moving to Morgan Hill. Peggy is survived by her daughters Hillary Danks, Robyn Danks and Rebekah Danks, three grandchildren; her mother Donna Wilson, and sisters Pam Wilson, Paula Israeli and Patrice Verhines and her best friend, Michael Dominguez. Mass was held at noon at St. Callistus Catholic Church on Saturday, April 30.

**Russell P. Church** passed away February 6, 2011 at his home in Arizona. Age 66.. Russ attended Washington School. He retired as a machinist. Russ was the son of historian Don Church and is survived by his wife of 55 years, Joyce, his son Greg, and 2 grandchildren.

**Bill Herkert** was born in Pittsburg Pennsylvania on May 13 1925, died April 13, 2011. Bill and his wife Joanna have lived in a home Bill remodeled on Cypress Point Road since 1987. Private services were held to commemorate his life.



# *CALENDAR/DIRECTORY*

## **ARTS OF POINT RICHMOND**

Meets third Tuesday of each month 7-9 at the Pt. Community Center, Contact: Linda Drake, 510672-0793

## **CHRISTIAN SCIENCE READING ROOM**

114 Washington Avenue, Point Richmond, 510-223-0487

## **GOLDEN STATE MODEL RAILROAD MUSEUM AND EAST BAY MODEL ENGINEERS SOCIETY**

900 Dornan Drive, Miller/Knox Regional Park. Sunday 12:00 to 5:00. Special openings on Saturdays and Holidays. 510-234-4884 for details.

## **MANY HANDS PROJECT TO SUPPORT WASHINGTON SCHOOL**

Contact, Margaret Morkowski, 510-234-4219

## **MASQUERS PLAYHOUSE**

Quality productions, Fridays and Saturdays at 8 pm, Sunday Matinees at 2:30 pm. Tickets are \$18-\$20. Dinner at the Hotel Mac and the play on Thursday, for only \$50. Call 510-232-4031 for reservations.

## **PARENTS, RESOURCES AND MORE (PRAM)**

A volunteer, nonprofit organization serving families with children 5 or under. Playgroups, social events, educational opportunities, Information go to <http://www.PRAM.net> or call 510-215-1734.

## **PARENT, TEACHER ASSOCIATION**

Becky Jonas, Contact, 510-235-0157

## **POINT RICHMOND BUSINESS ASSOCIATION**

Contact: Andrew Butt, 510-236-7445

## **POINT RICHMOND COMMUNITY CENTER**

Info: 233-6881

## **POINT RICHMOND HISTORY ASSOCIATION**

Museum is at 139½ Washington Avenue, and open Winter, Thursday's 11:30 to 2:00 and Saturday 11:30 to 2:00 and Summer, Wednesday 4:30 to 7:00 and Thursday's 11:30 to 2:00. The deadline for the next issue of TPIT is Friday August 26, 2011. Info call President Mildred Dornan at 510-234-5334.

## **POINT RICHMOND NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL**

Meets last Wednesday each month, Point Richmond Community Center; 7:30 P.M Contact: Peter Minkwitz, President, 510-232-3663

## **POINT RICHMOND/WEST SIDE BRANCH LIBRARY**

Information call 510-620-6567

## **RED OAK VICTORY**

Open Saturday, Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday 10am - 3pm. \$5 donation for adults, \$4 seniors, \$2 children. Sunday Breakfast September 10th and October 12th, 9 am - 1 pm, \$6 adults children FREE

## **RICHMOND SWIMS**

The Children and teens "Sail Fish" and Masters swim teams at the Richmond Plunge.  
Contact: Coach John Schonder, 510-504-0330

## **WASHINGTON SCHOOL**

Washington School at 565 Wine Street offers traditional and Spanish dual immersion curriculum, K - 6th grade. Contact principal Lisa Levi at 231-1417 for more information.

## **WOMEN'S WESTSIDE IMPROVEMENT CLUB (established 1908)**

Richmond's longest standing women's club. Contact: Connie Lompa, President. 510-237-7888

I would like to join the P.R.H.A.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of membership (check one):

<input type="checkbox"/>	Single	\$20.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Senior (65+)	15.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Family	25.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	History Preserver	50.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Corporate Sponsor	75.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	History Maker	100.00

Membership in the Point Richmond History Association includes a one year subscription to "THIS POINT...in time" newsletter (five issues). Please make your check payable to the Point Richmond History Association and mail it to:

**Pam Wilson**  
**521 Western Drive**  
**Point Richmond, CA 94801**

If you would like to have birthdays noted in the newsletter, please include names and months.

Articles for each issue are due on or before the deadline printed in the calendar section.

Please mail articles and items of interest to:

**Gary Shows**  
**229 Golden Gate Avenue**  
**Point Richmond, CA 94801**

or  
email: [gary@alkos.com](mailto:gary@alkos.com)

"This Point...in time" is a publication of the Point Richmond History Association, a non-profit organization at:  
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Theresa de Valencé	Article
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Richmond Museum of History	Images
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Ellen Schaefer	Information

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Richmond Museum of History 510-235-7387  
Red Oak Victory Information 510-235-7387  
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