

THE MIRROR

The Richmond Museum Association Newsletter

Richmond Museum of History

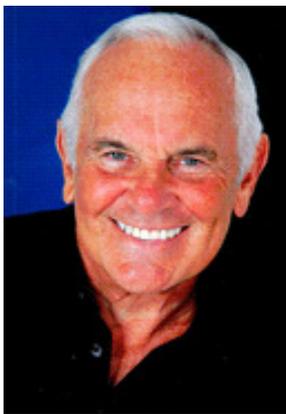
Spring 2015

SS Red Oak Victory Ship

A “SERIOUS NIGHT OF COMEDY” BENEFITS THE RMA

by John Ziesenhenne

Richmond native and comedian Ronnie Schell headlines two comedy shows on Sunday, April 26th. Who is Ronnie Schell, you ask? Well, he is the slowest rising comedian in all of this great land of ours and you need to be at this show to help him



continue on his rise to stardom. You may remember him as Duke Slater on the “*Gomer Pyle Show*” with Jim Nabors. His first TV appearance was on “*You Bet Your Life*” hosted by Groucho Marx and Ronnie played an expert on “*Beatnixs*” - yes – “*Beatnixs*.” Frank Sinatra even graced Ronnie’s presence on opening night at the Blue Angel in 1959!

Anyway, it will be a fun two shows. We need to do two shows because there isn’t time for four

funny comedians to do all their red carpet lines in only one show. Ronnie has invited the incredible Will Durst from San Francisco to be on stage as well as David Gee from the South Bay who found a microphone, a stage and a cold beer all on the same night and Kivi Rogers from Las Vegas who has them rolling on the

floor. Kivi has appeared in “*Everybody Loves Raymond*” and was also in “*Romy and Michelle’s High School Reunion*.”

The RMA would like to say Thank You to Ronnie, even though we haven’t seen the shows yet, for putting together these “Two serious performances of hilarious comedy direct from Las Vegas.” Even though he continues to rise slowly in the halls of comedy, he has appeared in too many, yes, too many TV shows to mention — but I will try: “*The Andy Griffith Show*,” “*Coach*,” “*The Golden Girls*,” “*Mr. Belvedere*,” “*The Love Boat*,” “*Love American Style*,” “*Alice*,” “*Mork and Mindy*” (with the incomparable Robin Williams), “*Charlie’s Angels*,” “*Sanford and Son*,” “*Happy Days*,” “*That Girl*” and “*M*A*S*H*,” and these are only a few of the TV programs that he has starred in, not to mention a couple of comedic and musical revues off-Broadway.

Need we say more about the two shows on April 26th other than to tell you to please go to our website (richmondmuseum.org) and buy your tickets to one or even both shows? The Stars will be available after the show for autographs and perhaps even pictures with you. Don’t be the only one on your block who doesn’t go to the show! We don’t want to disappoint Sergeant Carter or Private Gomer Pyle since they expect to see you on April 26th.

PANCAKE BREAKFASTS ARE BACK

Join us on **Sunday, April 12**, for the FIRST pancake breakfast of 2015 aboard the *SS Red Oak Victory*!

Breakfast is served from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and includes scrambled eggs, pancakes, sausage, bacon, orange juice and coffee and, for a small extra fee, a mimosa. It’s the best deal in town for a great breakfast with a million-dollar view!

And plan to celebrate Mother’s Day, May 10th, and Father’s Day, June 14th, at breakfast on the *Red Oak*!

Tickets are \$9 for adults and \$5 for children aged 8 and younger, or buy an Annual Pass for \$45 adults, \$25 kids -- both a 16.5% savings.

YOU WANT TO KNOW WHERE TO GO AND HOW TO BUY TICKETS?

Tickets are only \$30 and performances are at 2:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. on **Sunday, April 26, 2015**. Tickets can be purchased in three ways: online at richmondmuseum.org, over the phone (510-235-7387) or in person at both RMA gift shops -- the Museum at 400 Nevin or the Ship at 1337 Canal Blvd.

Both shows are at the Topline Theatre, 402 Marina Way South, Richmond 94804. Proceeds benefit the Richmond Museum Association.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends:

The first couple of months of the New Year have seen a whirlwind of activity here at the Richmond Museum of History. The Annual Membership meeting took place in January with more than 60 members in attendance. After thorough reports regarding 2014 activities and plans for 2015, the election took place for the open board seats. Steve Gilford, George Coles, Karen Stephenson and Rich Chivers were up for re-election and Lydia Stewart was nominated to be elected to the board for the first time. After a lively debate and a couple of nominations from the floor, Steve, George, Karen, Rich and Lydia were elected to the board. Lydia owns Stewart's Rose Manor Funeral Service and is a respected member of the Richmond community. The RMA board and staff are excited to welcome her and her new ideas to the organization.

At the meeting, I spoke of my goals for the Museum for 2015 and highlighted the need for increased collaboration with other institutions whose goals match our own. I am happy to report that the Museum hosted a successful open house for 3rd- to 5th-grade teachers in the West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD). The open house was planned with the help of Lyn Potter, Director of Educational Services for WCCUSD, who has taken a personal interest in the Museum. The teachers who attended the open house all promised to bring their classes to the Museum on a field trip later in the spring. Both the Museum and the school district are hoping this will be the beginning of a long and fruitful collaboration benefiting the students of WCCUSD.

I am also very excited to build upon a new relationship with the University of California-Berkeley (UCB), which is taking a greater interest in our community because of the forthcoming Richmond Global Campus. A representative from the UCB Chancellor's Office recently visited the Richmond Museum of History, and, as a result of the visit, we agreed to brainstorm collaborative projects that will allow both organizations to better carry out our missions to serve the people of Richmond.

The Richmond Museum of History is looking forward to a very exciting 2015!

Best Wishes,



Melinda McCrary

HISTORIC FILMS ON THE *RED OAK*

Join us on the *SS Red Oak Victory Ship* for movies of the WW II era.

Boarding begins at 6:30, and the movies start at 7 p.m. A requested donation of \$10 includes Boarding and the movie. Refreshments, including freshly-popped popcorn, other snacks, sodas, wine and beer are available for purchase.

Films are introduced by National Park Service Ranger Craig Riordan, who provides insights, context and fun background on each film.

Spring Movie Program – Terrific Tuesdays: Women on the Home Front and Beyond

Tuesday, April 14: *“Force of Arms”* (1951) William Holden and Nancy Olson; a nurse and a soldier find love during war.

Tuesday, May 12: *“The Josephine Baker Story”* (1991) African-American Singer Josephine Baker stays in France during WWII and helps Jews escape the Nazis.

RED OAK VISITOR ANALYSIS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2014

by Alan Burns, Head Docent

We had a total of 5,467 visitors from 46 states during 2014 including 124 visitors from 27 different countries. Not surprisingly, California provided most of the visitors (4,944), followed by Washington (42), Oregon (31), New York (27), Arizona (25), Texas (25) and Florida (22). The highest visitor count occurred in July (702) while the lowest occurred in February (179).

Foreign visitors came mostly from Canada (15), England (12) and Germany (10). There were 31 visitors from Mexico with a sister-city tour group.

GREETERS NEEDED

We get hundreds of visitors on the *Red Oak* on open days—Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays—and we need volunteers onboard to greet them and direct them to a self-guided tour or the next docent-led tour, especially on the weekends.

If you have one day a month to spend welcoming visitors, your help would be most appreciated, and you will enjoy it.

Call Lorraine on the Ship at (510) 237-2933 to talk about being a Greeter.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

CRAB FEED, COMEDY AND A SAD LOSS

by John Ziesenhenne, President of the Board

2015 is off and running with the Richmond Museum Association. We started the year with a very productive Annual Membership meeting held at the beautiful Carnegie Library Building at 400 Nevin in January. The attendance was great and the Board welcomed newly-elected Lydia Stewart as a member of the RMA Board of Directors.

Aboard the *Red Oak Victory*, the RMA hosted its very first Crab Feed and what a success it was! Our limit of 150 tickets sold quickly and a great time was had by all. Compliments to Head Chef Marsha Tomassi and her cooking crew as well the young men of the Northland (Sea Scouts) who served the crab to our devouring guests! Thanks also to the crew of the *Red Oak* who prepared the ship and staffed it for the event.

Executive Director Melinda McCrary has been diligently applying for grants for the Museum and has been quite successful. The RMA was awarded a grant from the Leshner Foundation for \$6,000 to help with the renovation of our Native American exhibit. Please stop by the Museum Wednesday through Sunday and check out the great collection of local history on display.

With the long-term lease in place to our new neighbors — R&B Cellars—in the Riggers Loft at the port, it is time for the *Red Oak* to move to a new location. With the help of Foss Maritime, R&B Cellars and the City of Richmond, we will be at our new home in Basin 1 of Shipyard 3 on Canal Blvd. by June 1st. Work continues at a vigorous pace in the engine room as the crew gets closer to the eventual startup of the engines. The crew of the *Red Oak* has done amazing work in the past two years, as evidenced by the granting of the Certificate of Inspection to the Ship by the Coast Guard.

I know everyone is looking forward to our first pancake breakfast on April 12th. And mark your calendar for another event on Sunday, April 26th—two comedy shows headlined by Richmond native Ronnie Schell. It will be a very funny show, so please don't miss it. (See the separate article and buy your tickets online now.)

The website of the Richmond Museum has been updated with the help of a fine local business—Nerd Crossing, and its owner, Jim Hammack—with funding from the Richmond Community Foundation. The website is still a work-in-progress, but we are now moving into the 21st century of technology as evidenced by 33 tickets to our first crab feed being sold online. Now that is progress. Stay tuned as it continues to be updated and information is added to our ultra-modern website.

In closing, the Richmond Museum Association lost a great supporter and long-time board member with the passing of George Coles. I remember looking at the picture of George in the newspaper from our 2013 Veterans Day Program, in uniform, proudly carrying the Stars and Stripes of our great country, which made you proud to be an American. He will be missed by the many pancake-breakfast patrons who monthly donated a little extra so they could taste the George Coles Mimosa to go with the pancakes. George was a gifted archeologist with many talents. He served on the RMA Board of Directors for 10 years, so to say he will be missed would be an understatement. He brought pragmatism, honesty, fairness and a little humor to the board meetings along with his great smile. He was a really popular Docent on the Ship. A memorial near his treasured *Red Oak Victory* was held on March 7th. He was a gentleman of the Greatest Generation; that is all one needs to say.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH YOUR MEMORIES?

Do you have memorabilia from your past? From Richmond's past? If so, now is the time to talk to the staff of the Richmond Museum Association about preserving your memorabilia and your memories forever by donating them to the place that will honor them, care for them and incorporate them into the story of Richmond.

Memorabilia can be photos, clothing, uniforms, paper items, toys—almost anything.

Call Melinda McCrary, Executive Director, at (510) 235-7385 or send her a note at melinda@richmondmuseum.org. Do it now.

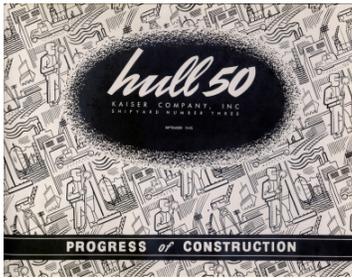


ITEMS NOT ON DISPLAY

by Lynn Maack

RICHMOND SHIPBUILDING MEMENTO

The Museum has in its collection many items documenting life and work in Richmond's Kaiser Shipyards during World War II. One of these items is a book entitled *Hull 50, Progress of Construction*, documenting the construction of a C-4-Class troop



transport ship named the *SS Marine Snapper* at Shipyard No. 3. The *SS Marine Snapper* was one of 35 C-4 ships built at Richmond during World War II. With 36 photographs and descriptive captions, the book shows a nearly day-by-day progress of the ship's construction, from keel-laying on June 29, 1945, until its launching on August 12, only one-and-a-half months later. The photos show how quickly the ship took shape, with huge sections appearing almost magically from one day to the next, and sometimes on the same day.

As remarkable as the photos are for documenting progress of the ship, they are also remarkable for giving insight into the operation and layout of the shipyard. Some photos show the pathways used by whirley cranes, motor vehicles and workers accessing the ships and surrounding shipyard buildings. Some show locations of buildings no longer in existence, such as the huge Plate and Angle Shop, commonly called the Plate Shop. Still others provide views of Brooks Island and San Francisco from the perspective of Yard 3, which still exists today and at which the Museum's *Red Oak Victory* ship is currently docked.



First day, laying the keel.

Along with photographic exposition, the book contains listings of ship dimensions and materials that went into construction of the C-4 ships. With a length of 522 ft., 10½ inches and a breadth of 71½ feet, the C-4 was the largest of the troop/cargo transports built at Richmond. For comparison with other, more common ships built in the Richmond yards, the Victory Ships, such as the *Red Oak*, were 455 long and 62 feet wide, and Liberty Ships measured 441½ feet long and nearly 57 feet at the beam.

The construction materials list is impressive; it includes six different metals or alloys — steel, copper, brass, bronze, zinc and lead — in plates, rolls, sheets, bars, rods and castings. 8,000 tons of steel plate yielded 431 total shell plates. There were 147 miles

of welds using 293 tons of welding rod, 35,800 rivets (who said we didn't have riveters at Richmond?), 45 miles of electrical cable, 36 miles of pipe, 1,000 tons of machinery, 4.2 miles of rigging cable and 12,572 gallons of paint. As for the human element, the finished ships accommodated 4,200 troops and crew and had a cafeteria capacity of 12,500 meals daily, supported by 491 tons of drinking water, 1,200 tons of wash water and 21,555 cubic feet of refrigeration space. Importantly, the hospital capacity was 272 people.



The SS Marine Snapper on launching day.

The book describes construction of Shipyard No. 3 itself, and highlights a feature of Yard 3 that distinguishes it from Richmond's three other shipyards. The introduction states, "The unique feature of the yard is that the vessels are constructed level in huge concrete drydocks instead of on sloping ways. This simplifies both the erection and launching operations. To launch a ship it is merely necessary to flood the basin, open the gates, and tow the vessel to the outfitting dock." The five dry dock bays that were Shipyard No. 3 exist today and, retaining the name Shipyard 3, are an

integral part of Richmond's Rosie the Riveter World War II / Home Front National Historical Park.



The 8½" x 12" book is a high-quality, hardbound volume, copies

of which shipyard management likely presented to various high-level employees as a memento of their contributions to shipbuilding efforts. In this case, Mr. E. T. Larsen, Assistant General Manager at Richmond Kaiser Shipyard No. 3, presented the book to Mr. L. B. Harbour, an engineer at Yard 3, after the *Marine Snapper's* launching. In a letter inserted into the book, Mr. Larsen stated that the gift was "in appreciation for your important role in making the accomplishments at Yard 3 possible." Mr. Harbour's daughter, Ms. JoAnne H. Jones, donated the book.

GREEN'S SADDLE ARTICLE - REDUX

Editor's note regarding last issue's Items Not On Display article about the saddle from Green's Boots and Saddle shop: the day we went to press, Green's changed its name to Golden Gate Western Wear.

EAST BAY GIVES 2015!

The Richmond Museum Association (RMA) is excited to be participating in **East Bay Gives** with the East Bay Community Foundation (EBCF) on Tuesday, May 5, 2015. **East Bay Gives** is a local effort on behalf of the National Day of Giving hosted by community foundations all over the United States. Last year EBCF raised over \$200,000 for 140 nonprofits in Alameda & Contra Costa Counties.

The RMA took part in the National Day of Giving the past two years with our friends at the Richmond Community Foundation, but they are taking a sabbatical from the program in 2015 to focus on other projects. The board and staff are truly grateful for these opportunities as we seek ways to diversify our funding base and increase our operating budget.

How can you participate? Simply log on to <https://www.eastbaygives.org/#npo/richmond-museum-association> on Tuesday, May 5, to give your gift of \$20 or more.

Please donate on May 5 and help us reach our fundraising goal of \$2,500, so we can continue to restore the *SS Red Oak Victory* and operate the Museum through 2015 and beyond!

New Exhibit in the Seaver Gallery

SHRIMPING ON THE BAY: THE VIEW FROM RICHMOND



The Richmond Museum of History is excited to announce a new exhibit in the Seaver Gallery telling the story of Chinese shrimping in the San Francisco Bay with a focus on Richmond. The exhibit will use a combination of historical photographs, oral history, archaeological evidence, and maps to reveal the experiences of Chinese shrimpers of the San Francisco Bay Area during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The exhibit opened on March 21 and will run

through mid-May 2015.

In an associated program on Saturday, April 11, 2015, Calvin Fong will speak about his father's experience owning the Fong Wan Shrimp Company and the Quong Tai Shrimp Company, both shops located in Richmond during the 1930s and 1940s. Mr. Fong's talk will be free with Museum admission.

Asbestos Victims Have Rights!

Anyone diagnosed with an asbestos disease such as mesothelioma has the right to compensation for medical expenses, lost wages or pension benefits, and for the pain and suffering that comes with this fatal illness.

Kazan Law is a nationally recognized asbestos law firm, serving asbestos victims and their families for over 40 years. Let us help you and your family get the justice you deserve.



To learn more about your legal rights, please call us at (877) 995-6372 or visit us at: KazanLaw.com/rma

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HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARDS

The Richmond Historic Preservation Commission invites nominations for the Richmond Historic Preservation Awards, 2015. The purpose of the Historic Preservation Awards program is to increase public awareness of Richmond's heritage by recognizing individuals, organizations, businesses, and agencies whose contributions demonstrate outstanding commitment to excellence in historic preservation, local history or promotion of the heritage of the City. Awards will be presented in May, National Preservation Month. In addition to public and private buildings and structures, historic preservation projects may include media, publications, presentations and exhibits, parks, burial grounds, public art, oral history, theater productions, events and video presentations.

You may nominate an eligible preservation project or activity by submitting a completed [2015 Historic Preservation Awards Nomination Form](#)* to the Richmond Planning and Building Services Department. Additional details about eligibility, evaluation criteria used, and submittal requirements are found in the nomination form.

Nominations are due by 5:00 p.m. on March 27, 2014.

Feel free to call Sabrina Lundy at (510) 620-6705 with any questions you may have.

*Visit <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/24573> to find the Awards Nomination form.

The Awards will be presented at a ceremony in the City Council Chambers on Wednesday, May 20th at 5 p.m., followed by a Reception at the Richmond Art Center.

THE GOINGS-ON ON THE RED OAK

Just this year there have been performances, weddings, conferences, classes and celebrations of birthdays and anniversaries on the decks of the *Red Oak Victory Ship* and in the holds below.

What a great place to host your own celebration! Your family and friends will never forget your party and you can make arrangements to include tours of the Ship for your guests.

Call Lorraine or Marjorie on the Ship at (510) 237-2933 to discuss using this unique and amazing venue for your next celebration!

Call Melinda at the Museum (510) 235-7387 to talk about holding a meeting or event in the Museum itself.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS TO THE PERMANENT COLLECTION

Melva Hall

157 maps of Richmond and surrounding vicinity

Indra Coles for the George Coles Estate

Native American Basket Collection

Roberta Thomas via Escondido History Center

Sadiron trivet, reads "Richmond, Cal."

Jean Newsom

Photograph of Student Body, Lincoln School, April 25, 1927

ROV WISH LIST

Donate wish-list items or send a monetary contribution toward any of these things:

- 6-foot ladder (straight or step-ladder)
- Fluorescent light fixtures
- Strings of Christmas lights
- Cree LED light bulbs, 100W, 60W
- Electric griddle – commercial size
- Stand-alone convection oven – commercial
- Rags
- Traffic cones (orange)
- Haze-gray marine paint (approx. \$50/gal.)
(Hempel Coating Co.)
- Hydraulic oil for steering gear
(approx. \$67/5-gal pail)

If you have questions about these items or about

how to get them to the Ship, please call the Ship at (510) 237-2933.

JOINING THE MOVEMENT

If you are able and willing to receive your quarterly issue of *The MIRROR* by email, please send a note to the Museum staff at melinda@richmondmuseum.org to tell us. And don't forget to include your email address!

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- ___ \$100 **Cutting Blvd** --
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- ___ \$250 **Garrard Ave** --Benefits above & "Behind the Scenes" tours of museum collection & ship archives
- ___ \$500 **Barrett Ave** -- Benefits above & exclusive tour & luncheon with museum curator & ship captain
- ___ \$1000 **Macdonald Ave** --Benefits above & two tickets on The Red Oak "Sail-on-the-Bay"
- ___ **New** ___ **Renew** ___ **Gift**
- ___ **I Would like to volunteer**

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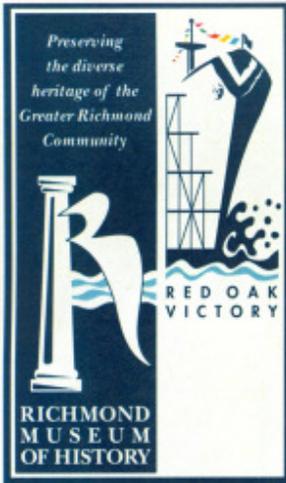
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Red Oak Victory Ship

Open Tues, Thurs, Sat, Sun
10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

1337 Canal Blvd.

Richmond CA 94804

Mail: P.O. Box 1267

Richmond CA 94802

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Richmond Museum of History

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400 Nevin Avenue

Mail: P.O. Box 1267

Richmond CA 94802

(510) 235-7387 for information and Tour Appointments

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