

THE MIRROR

The Richmond Museum Association Newsletter

Spring -- 2011

Save America's Treasures

THE SS RED OAK VICTORY HAS BEEN DECLARED ONE!

On February 1st the National Park Service (NPS) announced the awarding of \$14.3 million in federal competitive *Save America's Treasures* grants. Congressman George Miller's office immediately notified the Richmond Museum Association that the *SS Red Oak Victory* had received the highest award possible in the amount of \$700,000.

First Lady Michelle Obama has noted that "these *Save America's Treasures* grants will preserve the physical fabric of our history and the rich diversity of America's story, as told by its artists, scholars, and other notable figures. These awards also honor the hundreds of volunteers, organizations, and communities whose energy and investment are ensuring that this national legacy endures for generations to come."

Launched in 1944 at Richmond's Kaiser Shipyard #1, the *Red Oak Victory* served this country until 1968. When the Richmond Museum Association took ownership of her and began her restoration in 1998, she had experienced minimal upkeep and repairs, resulting in 30 years of accumulated bird droppings and nestings, damage from exposure, and peeling lead paint with serious rust and corrosion. All of her sensitive parts had been disassembled and stored in safe areas within her cargo holds; winches were lowered, weapons removed, cargo booms taken down and secured on the decks, and the engine room and house had been opened for dehumidification.

The work has been hard and accomplished with limited resources. But the steady, committed volunteers have persevered and completed many repairs, both cosmetic and technical. The deck and superstructure of the Ship have been painted, an approved sanitation system has been installed, significant upgrade to the electrical system has been completed, all cabins in the house and afterhouse have been restored, and the galley is to-

tally functional.

But while the volunteer crew is capable of completing many repairs and accomplishing so much, they do not have the facility nor the equipment to finish the job. That is why the dry dock and its services become so critical to the completion of the project. While in dry dock, the Ship's hull will be completely cleaned of all contaminants (disposed of safely and properly) and repaired and painted; sea suction and overboard valves will be opened and repaired as necessary; the Ship's turbine generators will be opened and repaired; the tail shaft will be surveyed, and the rudder removed and repaired as needed.



The degrading condition of the Ship's hull is a critical imminent threat, not only to the Ship but to the environment where she is berthed within the state's corridor of natural bird and wildlife pre-

serves. Dry dock will be eliminating that threat as well with the use of these badly-needed funds.

The Ship will be away for a short while and we are not sure when that will be. Timing is very important so that our calendar of events will experience the least disruption.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

You have an important part to play in this saga and there are two ways you can help make this happen. The \$700,000 is a dollar-for-dollar matching program. So we need your help. If every member joins in, we can meet that match. Please send your donation to the "Drydock Fund" in whatever amount you can spare. We will make it! *Sailing Certificates* are still available: \$20 each; six certificates required for the first sale (a savings of \$30 off the cost of the first sailing of the *Red Oak*). Mail your donations to P.O. Box 1267, Richmond, 94802, attn: DRYDOCK FUND.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

JANUARY 30, 2011

by Lois Boyle, President

With the first rose of winter from our new Monument and Memorial Rose Garden on the podium, the annual membership meeting of the Richmond Museum Association was called to order, ushering in a new year of expectation for the museum.

With the joy of the 100th anniversary of our Carnegie Building still fresh in our minds, we adopted ambitious calendars for both the *Red Oak Victory Ship* and the association. Vice President John Zieshenne, chair of the Plans and Programs Committee, captured the enthusiasm of the

volunteers as he presented new project proposals along with the traditional ones. (Check the calendar in each issue of *The MIRROR* for upcoming events.)

Five board members—James Becker, Phyllis Doering, Robert Moore, Ray Sitton and Jeff Wright—were elected to return for three-year terms to help move the organization forward in meeting the challenges of the ambitious calendars. And now the excitement of moving the Ship into dry dock! What a great year this will be.

RICHMOND MUSEUM ASSOCIATION CALENDAR - SPRING, 2011

April 10 Pancake Breakfast 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.*

May 8 Mother's Day Pancake Breakfast 9 to 12:30 p.m.*

May 6, 13, 20, 27 USO Victory Dances 7 to 10 p.m.*

June 19 Father's Day Pancake Breakfast 9 to 12:30 p.m.*

July 3 Annual 4th of July Celebration & BBQ

*See article in this issue

BOOK SALE - CALL FOR USED BOOKS

The Museum held a used book sale on board the *Red Oak Victory Ship* in conjunction with the Home Front Festival activities in October. The sale was a success and we still have books, so we have decided to continue the sale on an ongoing basis. To that end, we invite anyone who has used books to donate them to the Museum for the book sale.

If you want to donate, please take your books to the Richmond Museum of History at 4th St. and Nevin Ave. -- not to the Ship. All used books are now on display and available for purchase in Hold #4 on board the *Red Oak*.

USO VICTORY DANCES FRIDAYS IN MAY

1940S ATTIRE ADMIRER, BUT NOT REQUIRED

Dance to '40s music on the wonderful hardwood dance floor of Hold #4 of the *Red Oak Victory Ship* every Friday night in May -- the 6th, 13th, 20th and 27th -- from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. or come early for Swing Dance lessons at 7 p.m.

Come find a partner or bring your own. Tickets at the door are \$15 per person or \$25 for a couple.

The Ship, built in 1944 at the Kaiser Richmond Shipyards, is berthed at the Port of Richmond, 1337 Canal Boulevard. There is ample free parking. Boarding begins at 6:30 p.m.; lesson starts promptly at 7:00. Wear comfortable shoes.

(Directions: From Oakland/Berkeley, take 580 off of I-80 toward San Rafael. Get off freeway at Canal/Garrard Boulevard. Turn left, stay on Canal, cross Cutting Blvd., and follow signs to the *Red Oak*. From San Rafael, get off freeway at Canal Boulevard, and turn right. Follow signs to the *Red Oak*.)

For further information, call the Ship at (510) 237-2933.

BLUEGRASS AND PANCAKES FOR MOTHER'S DAY

Good news for moms! It has been confirmed that the local Bluegrass Band, *The Black Powder Boys*, has agreed to entertain at the Mother's Day Pancake Breakfast on board the *SS Red Oak Victory*, on Sunday, May 8th, from 9 a.m. until 12:30 p.m.

This is a one-day-only, wonderful opportunity for you to enjoy bluegrass music in the fresh air, have the pancake breakfast of your life, and treat mom to a morning she will never forget—fresh coffee, orange juice, sausage, bacon and fluffy pancakes—all for just \$6 per person.

Children under five are free and reservations are not required.

And let us remind you that the monthly Pancake Breakfasts on the *Red Oak* are a wonderful place to meet friends, take visitors or just get a relaxing start on a Sunday. The first breakfast this year will be April 10, and don't forget Dad on June 19th.

The *Red Oak* Pancake Breakfasts are always 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., always \$6, a million-dollar view, and the weather is always balmy breezes and sunshine on the bay. (We hope....)

DOCENTS WANTED!

Want adventure on the high seas without actually sailing anywhere? Want a job with great hours, no pay, good company and lots of fresh air?

Try sharing your talents with the volunteers on the *Red Oak* as a weekend docent. No experience necessary, standing in line at a union hall not required, and training provided.

Intrigued? Call the Ship at (510) 237-2933. You'll get a vest, a badge, a flashlight, a whistle and a laser pointer! You'll love it. Call today!

SEA CHARTS FOR SALE

More than 2,000 sea charts of country coastlines and islands from all over the world are available for sale at \$5.00 each on the *Red Oak Victory*. For information, contact the *Red Oak* Gift Shop at (510) 237-2933.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARDS 2011

Richmond's Historic Preservation Commission has called for nominations for its 4th annual Historic Preservation Awards. Designed to foster awareness of Richmond's local history and to promote understanding of the city's rich cultural legacy, the awards embrace a variety of projects and places, including buildings, media, and individuals active in promoting Richmond's heritage. Nominations require completion of the nomination form, a statement describing the contribution of the nominee and other supporting material.

Details of eligibility and specific submission guidelines can be secured from Richmond's Historic Preservation Commission, c/o the Planning and Building Services Department, Richmond City Hall, or online at <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/DocumentView.aspx?DID=5573>.

Submissions must be received by March 31, 2011. Awards will be presented on May 9, during National Preservation Month.

Past awards have honored individuals active in preserving a host of sites, e.g., Lucretia Edwards' efforts to save East Brother Light Station—award in 2000—and the 2008 award to Donna Roselius for her efforts in founding the Point Richmond History Association. Among last year's recipients were oral historians who recorded the histories of Atchison Village (Dr. Rachael Stryker and her students at Mills College), and Summer Brenner's book, *Richmond Tales - Lost Secrets of the Iron Triangle*. Buildings have been honored in the past, including the Santa Fe Trainmasters Building, which is now the Mechanics Bank in Point Richmond, the Ford Building and the Civic Center complex.

The National Park Service, through the Rosie the Riveter World War II Home Front National Historical Park, presents an annual "Home Front" award. In 2008, Donna Graves was the Park Service's first recipient, honored for her leadership in developing the Bay Trail Markers and other related commitments to the city's legacy from World War II. Last year Tom Debley, former Kaiser Permanente Heritage Research Director, was presented with this award for his initiatives in promoting the Rosie the Riveter Park.

YOU ARE INVITED...

You are invited to the City of Richmond 2011 Historic Preservation Awards on Monday, May 9, at 5:00 p.m. at the City Council Chambers at 450 Civic Center Plaza with Reception following.

FOUND: A TOMBSTONE IN RICHMOND

by Joe Fischer

Discarded objects of the distant past surround us, are often left unnoticed for years and may reappear in surprising ways. On the sunny morning of November 2, 2010, a 3-1/2-by-2-foot tombstone was discovered in the back of an abandoned property at 623 17th Street in the city of Richmond. A group of high-school students came across it while cleaning up the back yard of a property designated by the city for redevelopment. The frightened teenager who uncovered it feared that two human skeletons might be buried nearby and refused to continue working in the yard. The city was immediately notified of this unusual find and after investigation determined that there were no burials at the site. The Richmond Museum of History was contacted and accepted the tombstone as an artifact for its collection. The grayish-white tombstone now rests in the Museum's garden.

The inscription on the face of the tombstone reads:

Sacred to the Memory of
Thomas Tormey
Died Dec. 22, 1882
Age 36 Years

Mary Tormey
Died Feb. 12, 1883
Age 27 Years

May their Souls Rest in Peace
Erected by their sister Annie

Thomas Tormey was the son of Patrick Tormey who had come from Ireland to California with his brother John around 1850. Thomas died in an explosion at the old Vulcan Powder Works in what was then Stege. *The Contra Costa Gazette* reported in an article dated December 30, 1882, that Thomas Tormey and "two Chinamen" had died "after several hours of agony worse than death." There is no record of what caused the death of Mary Tormey. We know nothing about sister Annie except that all three were siblings.

The Tormey brothers, John and Patrick, were a part of the large community of Irish immigrants that settled in the Bay Area in the mid-nineteenth century. An 1860 census showed that the Irish represented 20% of the foreign-born population in Contra Costa County and were its largest ethnic group. The Tormey brothers became prominent landowners, farmers and ranchers. They had purchased 9,000 acres from Martinez heirs between 1865 and 1867. By 1870 they had become wealthy and well-known. Patrick Tormey was one of the original founders of Rodeo. He served 26 years on the Board of Supervisors of Contra Costa County. His name appears notably in San Francisco city directories from 1861 onward until his death. By 1890 he had acquired a substantial interest in the Union Stockyards in San Francisco. The economic Panic of 1893 resulted in his bankruptcy later on in 1895. He died May 7, 1907, at the age of 67. It



was recorded that "a grand funeral" was held in his honor.

How this tombstone ended up in the middle of Richmond is a mystery. It was first reported found at the 17th Street location in 1980, as noted in a story in *The Richmond Independent*. Josefina Castellano, the new homeowner, had found it and offered it to anyone who could prove they were related to this particular Tormey family. Although there were several Tormey families in the Bay Area, no one came forth to claim the tombstone. What happened from that day on is unknown, and the tombstone remained unnoticed in the same backyard for another three decades.

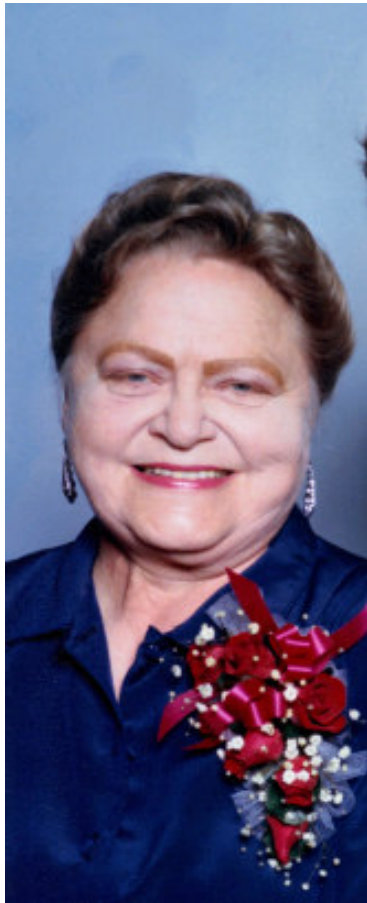
Cemetery records show that Thomas and Mary Tormey were buried at the old St. Paul graveyard on Church Lane in San Pablo. However, sometime after 1952, when St. Paul Catholic School was built, the graveyard was paved over and turned into a playground. Families of the buried were given the opportunity to move their plots before the cemetery was closed. Most, but probably not all, of the graves were moved down the street to St. Joseph Cemetery at 2560 Church Lane. However, there are no records for Thomas and Mary Tormey, leaving open the speculation that they may still be buried in San Pablo. It is more than likely that the tombstone was stolen and later abandoned in Richmond. How did it go unnoticed for so many years? The mystery remains.

REMEMBERING LUCILLE ZIESENHENNE

by Clare Fischer

Richmond's legacy during the "home front" years has been the focus of a number of projects designed to record and preserve, among other issues, the contribution of women. The Rosie the Riveter World War II Home Front National Historical Park is notable in this effort, especially in drawing upon women's experiences for its substantial oral and written accounts of the vital work of women in many of Richmond's work sites during the World War II years. Among the stories that invite our attention is that of Lucille Ziesenhenné who died last year (April 25, 2010) at the age of 85. Her commitment to preserving and promoting Richmond's historic home front narrative is exemplary. She had a keen memory of the city's critical transition prompted by the recruitment of thousands of shipyard workers. Lucille enjoyed sharing personal stories about the community's major adjustments in everyday life during the war years. She helped us recall the ways in which Richmond functioned as a national center — both in the building of ships and the performance of supportive war efforts.

Lucille Ziesenhenné moved with her family from a small Midwestern community to Richmond in her eleventh year (1936). The depression had enticed many Americans to resettle on the West Coast in order to find employment. Her father was fortunate in securing a job and finding a comfortable home in a neighborhood that remained central to Lucille's long life. The positive role played by her neighborhood Lutheran church was often mentioned in the retelling of her earliest years in Richmond. School was also essential in helping her make adjustments to her new life and providing opportunities for friendships. Lucille thought Richmond High School "was a beautiful, beautiful school and a wonderful school. My father, being a brick mason...couldn't get over the beauty of it. When people would visit us from the east, that's one place he would take them, to see the wonderful masonry."



Lucille going to a Richmond High Reunion

In her last year at

Richmond High School, World War II was declared and Lucille, chosen to be a commencement speaker, spoke on women in war work. This was a focus that proved to be central to her activities in the ensuing years.

Securing work with the federal War Manpower Commission, Lucille spent the war years enabling workers in their pursuit of jobs. Her work experience offered her the opportunity to learn much, especially about the diversity of the workforce in Richmond and the capacity of workers to adapt to new job demands and circumstances. (This is also where Lucille met her husband after the war: "I first met him at the office where I worked and I said to my manager 'This is a strange name.'" They married when Lucille was 23 years old. They couldn't work together so Lucille spent the rest of her working life in the Oakland office.)

Lucille delighted in spending time at the local USO meeting servicemen from all parts of the country in her free time and was the President of the Richmond chapter in 1944-45. Her son John recalls that "she was very proud of the work that the people of Richmond provided during WWII." He added that the USO experience added to "her love of Richmond's history."

Lucille had planned to go to college when she graduated, but the war changed that for her and many other young women, who had to go to work in the war industries and to take up the slack of the men going to war. But Lucille eventually did go to college — two years to Junior College and then got her B.A. in English at Cal at the same time that son John was a student there himself. They waved to each other as they went from class to class.

Lucille was a committed citizen of Richmond: a member of the oldest choir of Richmond (the one hundred-year-old German Choir), and supporter of the YMCA, the Salesian Boys and Girls Club and the National Institute of Art and Disabilities (NIAD Art Center). Perhaps most relevant to *The MIRROR* readers, she volunteered at the Museum of History for years, both as a docent, and once a month doing whatever duties the Museum staff needed. John Ziesenhenné reflects that his mother's involvement in the Museum accounts, in large part, for his commitment to the Museum and his activities as a current member of the Board of Directors.

Lucille enjoyed her life, her activities, and her home where she lived alone, in the same central Richmond neighborhood where she had lived with her parents and then her husband, since coming to Richmond as a child. She described herself as a busy person and everyone who knew her knew that was so. And everyone at the Richmond Museum of History was glad Lucille gave her time and talents to the Museum -- she was a hard worker and it was a pleasure to work with her.

And Lucille really loved Richmond.

IN APPRECIATION...

...to the Maida family for a generous donation in honor of the recent exhibit on the Japanese rose-growing families.

RECENT DONATIONS

Susan Wilson 09.09.10, 10.03.10

Ventilation Isometrics Installation Guide

Kaiser Co., Inc., Shipyard #3, Richmond, CA

Maria Baca Gorman 10.02.10

Baca family photo (workers in Shipyard #3)

Richard Shumake 10.21.10

Ford Motor Co. pay stub (envelope) Nov. 28, 1943

John Weaver 09.10

Directory of Richmond School Dept., 1943, '62-'63

Richmond Ballet Company programs, 5/19/62 & 5/29/58

Various booklets & programs from Richmond

John & Laura Weeks 10.10.10

Golden Gate Exposition booklets, key, bath towel, 1939

Mary Mariola

Old metal safe, "The Champion Register. Cleveland, Ohio,"
with store records.

Joe Fischer 11.11.10

Tiles from California Art Tile Co., Richmond, CA

How to bake by the Ration book, wartime recipes

Barbara Olds 12.11.10

22 photos of Kaiser Shipyards with some people identified

Commemorative Launching Ribbon,

"Pre-Fabricated SS Robert E. Peary"

Manuscript - Excerpts from oral history of Mrs. T.A. Bedford

Sonja Klevin Gandola 01.21.10

Sign "The Viking Hall," Sons of Norway

David Weinstein 02.04.11

Book "Haley" -- self-published bio of Richmond's John Haley

Color slides of Haley's paintings

Slides and photos of Richmond -- 1970s thru '90s

Brochure and newspaper clipping of Fred Jackson

Newspaper clippings of East Bay Center for Performing Arts

Jesse Keese 02.09.11

"The Blu-J" Dec., 1923 - Roosevelt Jr. High School yearbook

Vera Dean-Ross 02.10.11

Archive of Atchison Village community:

Atchison Village Agenda and Minutes, 1999

Plan showing the location of the building at RUHS, June 1946

Medicine bottle from Savin's Drug Store, Richmond

BECOME A MEMBER OF THE RICHMOND MUSEUM ASSOCIATION

Privileges:

- ◆ Reduced admission to events
- ◆ Discounts on services, books, and gift items
- ◆ Quarterly newsletter, "*The MIRROR*"
- ◆ Advance notice of tours and events
- ◆ Free entrance to Museum and Ship

Yes, I want to become a member

Enclosed is my check for

\$ _____ (payable to RMA)

Categories of Membership

\$25	Senior/Student
\$35	Individual
\$50	Family/Organization
\$65	Contributing
\$100	Sustaining
\$500	Patron
\$1000	Benefactor/Corporate

___ **New** ___ **Renew** ___ **Gift**

___ **I Would like to volunteer**

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State/Zip _____

Phone _____

E-Mail _____

___ **I would like my newsletter sent by e-mail**

(saves money & trees).

Mail to:

**Richmond Museum of History
PO Box 1267
Richmond, CA 94802**

ITEMS NOT ON DISPLAY

by Lynn Maack



"The Chicago" typewriter, patent dates 1889, 1891 and 1892.

When I was searching for items from the Museum's collection that are not currently on display, our Museum Manager Inna Soiguine pointed out an intriguing one that bears recognizing. This item harkens back to another time, while also

harkening forward to another time, all in the past. Confused? Let me explain. Do you remember typewriters? They have been nearly forgotten in this day of computers and mobile communication devices, but the typewriter, introduced in 1874, was the forerunner of the modern-day computer in a way. It was a device that mechanically transcribed thought into visual display. The difference, of course, was that the display consisted of ink on a piece of paper, rather than pixels on a computer screen. The keyboard finger pieces on most typewriters were connected to a maze of steel wires and arms and levers that ultimately moved little hammers with letters embossed on them to strike an inked ribbon and imprint those letters on paper. Well, the item I'm highlighting is a typewriter from the turn of the 20th century. That's the harkening back to another time part.

Now for another memory test: do you remember the IBM Selectric typewriter? It was an electrically-powered machine, considered revolutionary when it was introduced in the 1960s, because instead of relying on separate arms and hammers for each individual letter, it had one type element—a single ball—around which were embossed all of the keyboard characters. Pressing a key caused the ball to rotate to the appropriate character and the ball would strike the inked ribbon and the paper. This is the harkening forward to another time, still in the past, part.

The typewriter in the Museum's collection is "The Chicago," a marvelous device, which, in 1898, although manual rather than electric, utilized a similar mechanism of print delivery as the Selectric, 60-plus years later. Somewhat like the Selectric's ball, The Chicago's type element was a cylinder or a sleeve around which were embossed the characters to be typed. The type element could be changed to enable the use of different type fonts or languages. But that's where the similarity with the Selectric ends. The Chicago typewriter's type sleeve does not strike the paper; rather, it remains stationary in front of an inked ribbon, behind which sits the paper. The device has only one hammer, which strikes the paper from behind. Pressing a key causes the type sleeve to spin and move horizontally on an inner spindle, bringing the appropriate character into position to be struck by the hammer, thus printing the character on the paper. As with all

manual typewriters, keystrokes required considerable finger pressure to complete. It would be difficult for The Chicago to compete with the speed of the Selectric or other electric typewriters, much less today's computers, with light-touch keys, no manual carriage return, no paper to change. What a difference.

The keyboard on The Chicago is almost the same as the standard "qwerty" keyboard we all know today, except that the "Q" is in the first position on the bottom row of keys rather than the top row. So, more accurately, it actually has a "werty" keyboard. Unlike most modern keyboards, every key on The Chicago had two characters (besides the standard lower- and upper-case letters)—both a letter and either a number or a special character like a punctuation mark, dollar sign and so forth. There were two "shift" keys; a "CAP" key to alternate between lower- and upper-case letters, and a "FIG" key to shift from a letter to a number or special character.

Black with white keys, this typewriter is made of steel and has a cast iron base and keyboard surround. It is 16 inches wide, 6 inches high and 10-1/2 inches deep and weighs about 15 pounds. Although in need of cleaning and oiling, the Museum's typewriter seems to be in working order. The carriage moves with each keystroke, albeit sluggishly, the inked ribbon reels turn, advancing the ribbon, and a bell in back rings when the carriage reaches the end of a line, signaling it's time to return the carriage back to the start position for the next line.



At upper left is the single hammer that moves up and forward, striking the type sleeve seen at center, beneath the inked ribbon. Note the raised type on the sleeve. Ribbon supply reel is at right.

The Chicago was neither the first nor the only typewriter of its type. The one-hammer, or "single-element," style of typewriter was marketed by other companies, either with type elements similar to the Selectric's that struck the paper, or stationary elements like the Chicago's that were

struck by a hammer. The Chicago's immediate predecessor was the Munson typewriter, which was first marketed in 1889. In 1898 the Chicago Writing Machine Company bought the manufacturing rights from Munson and changed the name of the typewriter to The Chicago. The Chicago Writing Machine Company marketed its typewriters under various names, including "Draper," which was sold by Sears, Roebuck and Co. and Montgomery Ward in the early 1900s.

The Museum's typewriter was donated in 1966 by Mrs. Della Kinshella. 1966 ... the timing; do you suppose The Chicago was retired, to be replaced by an IBM Selectric?

Richmond Museum Association, Inc.

Museum open Wed-Sun, 1-4 p.m.
400 Nevin Ave., P.O. Box 1267
Richmond CA 94802
(510) 235-7387

Richmondmuseumofhistory.org

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The Richmond Museum of History is a 501 (C) 3 non-profit educational organization. Gifts and donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.



Admission:

Members: Free
Seniors/Students: \$1.00
General: \$2.00
Children: Free w/adult

Richmond Museum Assoc., Inc.
P.O. Box 1267
Richmond, CA 94802

HELP RAISE THE ANCHOR!

CERTIFICATES OF INVESTMENT

We have launched a *Red Oak Drydock Campaign*. Savings Certificates, redeemable for passage on the Ship's first cruise after dry dock, are now being sold at \$20 each. The first cruise requires six (6) certificates, which will have an appreciated value of \$150 -- the cost of the first cruise. Certificates must be purchased by December 10, 2011, and are available in the Ship's Gift Shop, or by calling the Ship's office at (510) 237-2933.



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DATED MATERIAL -- PLEASE EXPEDITE DELIVERY

Return Service Requested