

MIRROR

The Richmond Museum Association Newsletter

Richmond Museum of History

Fall 2016

SS Red Oak Victory Ship



Thanks for sponsoring Bouquets, Big Hats and Bow Ties!
Stewart's Rose Manor Funeral Service

El Cerrito Florist, Annie's Annuals & Perennials, Your Beautiful Life Photography

The Richmond Museum of History will be free on Saturday, Sept. 24, in honor of Museum Day Live! organized by the Smithsonian Magazine.

More information can be found at: <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/museumday/museum-day-live-2016/?no-ist>



*The Red Oak Victory Ship sports a second gangway and a newly-paved dock. Thanks to the Crew for fitting the new gangway and to **Maggiore & Ghilotti** and **Dutra Materials** for the great-looking dock. Open Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.*

In This Issue:

Classroom on the *Red Oak* p.8

Historian Steve Gilford in Petaluma p. 6

Movies on the *Red Oak* p. 2

Last Pancakes of the year p. 5

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends:

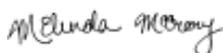
The Richmond Museum of History is winding down from an exceptionally busy summer! Once again, the Museum was a work site for the City of Richmond Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) during summer 2016. Evelyn and I were delighted to host three local youth to work 100 hours each, sponsored by the City of Richmond. The SYEP staff helped maintain the rose garden and compile finding guides, assisted with special events and helped greet Museum visitors and volunteers. Thank you to the City of Richmond and the staff of the SYEP for a great summer.

The latest exhibit at the Richmond Museum of History was truly a community effort. Longtime Richmond resident Inez Brooks-Myers (retired Curator of Costume and Textiles at Oakland Museum of California) co-curated the exhibition. Our SYEP students worked hard as exhibitions assistants, helping us create custom mounts for the historical hats in the exhibit. The opening reception on August 7, 2016, was very well-attended and we were delighted to be joined by Girl Scout Troop 31806. I want to personally thank RMA Board Member Ms. Lydia Stewart of Stewart's Rose Manor Funeral Service for sponsoring the reception. Many thanks to Mr. Michael Henry of Your Beautiful Life Photography for capturing so many lovely images of our beautiful community at the reception. If you were unable to attend the reception, please consider coming by the Museum to see the "Accessories, Accessories, Accessories" exhibit, which will be on view in the Seaver Gallery through the end of 2016.

The staff of the Richmond Museum of History took part in the 2016 Rosie Rally on August 13 when our community broke the record in the Guinness Book of World Records for the most people dressed as "Rosie the Riveter." Thank you so much to the staff and volunteers of the Rosie the Riveter/World War II Home Front National Historical Park for organizing such a wonderful event that was enjoyed by so many!

In closing, I remind you that the RMA is making great strides to become even more transparent with our finances, so you can better know how your donations are being spent. The board, staff and volunteers are proud to have audited financial statements for 2014 and 2015 compiled by local accountant James Richardson, CPA. The audited statements confirm that we abide by the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). If you have any questions about the RMA finances please do not hesitate to contact me at (510) 235-7387 or melinda@richmondmuseum.org. I recognize you have a choice when supporting charitable organizations and I thank you for your support of the Richmond Museum Association. I hope to see you soon aboard the *S.S. Red Oak Victory* ship or at the Museum.

Sincerely,



Melinda McCrary



At the Rosie Rally: Camryn Wilson, one of the Summer Youth staff, and Evelyn Santos.

THE RED OAK NEEDS YOU...

...to be a greeter. It's a hard job -- you have to smile and welcome visitors to a great adventure. We especially need help on Saturdays and Sundays. Call the Ship at (510) 237-2933 for more information or to volunteer.

WRIGHT REALTORS®
"The Right Choice Since 1968"

Jeffrey Wright
Broker - CalBRE #00697289

10290 San Pablo Avenue, Ste. 101
P.O. Box 1398
El Cerrito, CA 94530
jeff@thewrightbrokers.com
(510) 232-2901 Direct
(510) 526-0121 Office




M.A. HAYS CO., INC.
Quality Insurance and Service Since 1912

John Ziesenhenn
Broker
Lic # 0675383

232 BROADWAY
RICHMOND, CA 94804
(510) 235-0353 EXT. 14

JOHNZ@MAHAYS.COM
WWW.MAHAYS.COM
FAX (510) 235-5058

COMMERCIAL • RESIDENTIAL • LIFE • MEDICAL

THE PRESIDENT SPEAKS

by Jeff Wright

As I was giving some thought as to what I wanted to share with the readers, the word “synergy” entered into my mind. Synergy [sin-er-jee] is defined as the interaction of elements that when combined produce a total effect that is greater than the sum of the individual elements, contributions, etc.

The Richmond Museum Association is in the midst of a highly-synergistic environment, and this is great news! In my capacity as president of the RMA, I have a comforting feeling to work with a group of people who are committed to growing the Museum into a coveted, brilliantly-cut, dazzling diamond that will reflect its sparkling light throughout the community. The individual elements, talents and contributions that everyone brings to the table enhance the “whole,” thus contributing to that synergy.

The August 7, 2016, opening for the Museum exhibit “*Accessories, Accessories, Accessories*” was a fine example of what can happen when synergy is at work. The Museum staff, under the direction of Executive Director Melinda McCrary, was able to present the community with an interesting as well as a fun exhibit, as evidenced by the attendees both young and old who got into the spirit of the event by donning their hats and accessories to attend the exhibit, which featured many hats, shoes and accessories from the early 1900s. I even wore my panama fedora, bow tie and two-tone shoes. The efforts of Museum staff, working in conjunction with a great friend of the Museum, textile expert Inez Brooks-Myers, who lent her time, talent and resources, along with RMA board member and fashion maven Lydia Stewart, lending her time, talent and resources as the exhibit sponsor, resulted in a synergy that helped to create a great opening reception.

The same can be said for the highly-successful event that took place on the *S.S. Red Oak Victory* ship on July 3, 2016, to celebrate Independence Day. The Ship’s crew, under the guidance of Johannes Hoech, the Director of Ship Operations, worked together beautifully, utilizing a multitude of talents to present an outstanding event for the community aboard the Ship. The *ROV* and our new neighbors at the Rigger’s Loft Wine Company both planned our events at the same time in a coordinated manner so that the public as well as each venue could benefit by the synergy of all of the elements coming together. The end result was a win for everyone involved. Even our great friends of the Ship, Mayor Kwon Min Ho and his delegation from Geoje City, South Korea, added to the occasion when Mayor Kwon delivered a speech aboard the ship in his native language with his translator interpreting.

As more people discover the Museum and benefit from the synergy of the engagement of our leadership, staff, volunteers and members, as well as the association and relationships that we have with other groups such as the National Park Service, Convention and Visitors Bureau and our great new neighbors

next to the Ship, the Riggers Loft Wine Company, we will all enjoy a richer experience as a result of the combined interaction of all of these elements.

Please tell your friends and family about the Richmond Museum Association. The Richmond Museum of History is located at 400 Nevin Avenue, and our single largest artifact, the *S.S. Red Oak Victory* ship, is located at 1337 Canal Blvd., Richmond, California. There are currently volunteer opportunities available at both locations. For information about volunteering at the Richmond Museum of History, contact Melinda McCrary, melinda@richmondmuseum.org, and for information about volunteering aboard the *Red Oak Victory* ship, contact Johannes Hoech, johannes@redoakvictory.us. Come on out and experience history and make some new friends, too!

3RD THURSDAY HOME FRONT FILMS ON *THE RED OAK VICTORY*

Movies of the World War II era shown on our own World War II ship is one of the great pleasures of being part of a National Historical Park. Add to that the Ranger in charge, Craig Riordon, who shares insight and secrets about the movies, the stars and the times, and it is an adventure.

The Password is Courage (1962)

October 20th at 7pm

Dirk Bogarde stars as legendary Sergeant-Major Charles Coward, a British POW who thwarts the Germans at every turn.

Defiance (2008)

November 17th at 7pm

Daniel Craig and Liev Schreiber portray the Bielski brothers who join Russian resistance fighters and endeavor to build a village in a Belarusian forest in order to protect themselves and 1,000 Jewish refugees.

Miracle of the White Stallions (1963)

December 15th at 7pm

Robert Taylor stars as Alois Podhajsky, a man determined to save the Lipizzaner stallions from disaster during WWII.

Boarding is at 6:30 PM. There is no fee but you are encouraged to make a donation of \$10. And don’t forget the popcorn and other refreshments available.

HOW ONE THING LEADS TO ANOTHER

by Steve Gilford

While driving out on a rural stretch of Petaluma's Bodega Avenue, I noticed a small brown sign by the side of the road. Curiously, it displayed two odd words whittled somewhat crudely: "Marine Perch." For a week or so, the words resonated in my head until I realized that this might be the name of a ship, the *S.S. Marine Perch*. It only took a moment in my files to discover that the *S.S. Marine Perch* was a World War II troop carrier built in the Kaiser Richmond yards, and in Yard Three, perhaps in the graving dock where the *Red Oak Victory* is now berthed. I also learned that after the war the ship made several Atlantic crossings, bringing refugees from Europe to the United States. If the sign, "Marine Perch," was related to that ship, there might be an interesting story there.

When I pulled into the dirt driveway next to the sign, I was stopped by a fence and gate.

Since I had no other way of getting the attention of the occupants of the house, I pressed the remote locking button on my car key to get the familiar "Meep-Meep" sound. A moment later a woman in late-middle age appeared. She asked politely what I wanted and I told her about seeing the "Marine Perch" sign. She was a tenant in the house but knew the home had once belonged to a couple who had come to America on that ship. When they passed away, the house went to their three sons, who still owned it. "Would I be interested in getting in touch with them?" She had contact information for one of them. I jumped at the opportunity. In a few minutes, she was back with the phone number of the nearest son, a lawyer in the Central Valley.

On the next day, I reached him in his office and explained that I am a historian and wanted to talk with him about the *Marine Perch*. He began by firing questions at me, not in a hostile manner, but it still felt like a gentle cross-examination.

"Have you written any books?"

"What are the names?"

"Where did you go to college?"

"What was your major?"

"Did you get an advanced degree?"

There were probably twenty questions like this before he said, "You sound genuine, what can I tell you?"

He told me the story of his parents who had been living in a small village in Poland. His father had been in the Polish cavalry, but in 1939, after the German invasion of Poland and the defeat of the Poles, had returned home to his wife. However, he was still a trained soldier who was familiar with guns and military tactics.

Four years later, the Germans came to his village and started collecting Jews and putting them on trains. Apparently he knew that the destination was someplace he did not want to go, and with a group of 80 men and women, they took to the woods. For the next two years, he was a guerilla fighter. His band struck the Germans over and over again. It was tricky, though, because many Poles were collaborating with the Germans. Since he knew who the Polish collaborators were, and since he had now teamed up with Russians who were acting as guerillas, the pro-Nazi Poles as well as the Germans wanted him and his group dead. His mother was severely wounded in a fire and carried the scars with her for the remainder of her life. By the end of the war, out of the original 80, there were only six alive.

When the war was over, word got back to a relative already in the U.S. who arranged to get them out of Europe. Six weeks later, this man, his wife and their 1½-year-old son were aboard the *Marine Perch* headed for New York. It was that son who was telling me this story.

Speaking to me from his law offices, he described some items he had framed on his wall. They made his story even more vivid. Displayed there were the tickets for their life-changing voyage on the *Marine Perch* and the Green Card issued the day they arrived in New York.

I am not clear yet why the family immediately left New York to settle in San Francisco, where before long they had an apartment and the former cavalryman and guerrilla fighter was employed as a seamster for an upscale women's clothing manufacturer. When he had saved enough money, the family bought a chicken ranch and moved to Petaluma.

The father's new schedule was punishing: up at 4:00 a.m. to feed the chickens and catch the train from Petaluma to San Francisco. After a full day at work, he'd return home to the chicken ranch chores and try to be in bed by 10:00.

After several years of this, he was able to rent and to buy additional farms, expanding his chicken-ranching business so much that he could quit the job in San Francisco. He and his wife raised three boys in that house with the "*Marine Perch*" sign. They were justifiably proud that all the sons went to college and are all professionals. Although none of the family lives in Petaluma today, they honor the memory of their parents with a scholarship awarded in the family's name to a deserving Petaluma High School senior.

I've invited the family to visit the *S.S. Red Oak Victory*, not only to see where the ship that changed their lives was built but to remind us that vessels built here continued to shape our world even after the guns of WW II fell silent.

FROM THE SHIP

by Johannes Hoech

August was a quieter month on the *S.S. Red Oak Victory* after all the frenzied activities of July, starting with our fabulously successful July 3rd event. In preparation for July 3rd, the crew went all-out and we accomplished several firsts, like installing the second gangway and new lighting in the movie theatre. In July we did not have a pancake breakfast, but conducted several organizational meetings to lay the groundwork for a successful 2017. Not as glamorous as the move back in March or the July 3rd event with the P-51 fly-by, but the kind of stuff that keeps the Ship running smoothly and that's starting to bring in much-needed funds.

For example, we kicked off with a fundraising meeting and submitted our first matching grant application in awhile. We also continued working on the new welcome shack that will create a shipyard look and feel on the dock, welcoming visitors and also allowing us to collect money before folks enter the Ship. And we implemented a new electronic collection device called "Square" so we can easily accept credit card payments in the Gift Shop and on the Ship. The purser began the implementation of a cloud-based accounting system so we can keep track of our money. And the list goes on.

In September, we'll be focused on four core priorities:

1. **Recruiting volunteers** – That's our highest priority, and if you know of someone who wants to help us on the Ship, please send them our way.

2. **Fundraising** – As I said, we sent out our first matching grant, and now we're working with the Museum to structure an overall fundraising function and also launching some grassroots fundraising like online funding sources, as well as contacting high network individuals. And of course, if you have a spare 100 Grand or a cool Million lying around, give us a call....

3. **Lighting off** – All of this is aimed at getting us ready to "light off" the engine, i.e., fire up the boilers and put steam pressure in the engine room. That will be a slow, very well-thought-out process for which, however, we do need some cash as well as some more volunteers—hence, the above two priorities.

4. And last but not least, we need to ensure that we continue to **comply with all the regulatory requirements** and safety laws. We are working with the U.S. Coast Guard, for example, to ensure we renew our COI, and the crew undergoes safety training regularly.

These four priorities will remain unchanged throughout the remainder of 2016 and should guide us into 2017. Of course, we will continue with other projects, e.g., needed maintenance, etc., but top of the list will be those four priorities. The goal is to light off as soon as it's feasible, which – when it happens, not if - will be one grand achievement!

RICHMOND MUSEUM OF HISTORY GOES TO WASHINGTON D.C.!!

by Melinda McCrary

This July, I was proud to represent the Richmond Museum of History as a scholarship recipient at the 21st Century Museum Leadership Skills Seminar co-hosted by the Smithsonian Affiliates and the Museum Studies Department at George Washington University.

The two-day seminar was an experience of a lifetime where I joined about 20 colleagues from all over the United States and Europe to learn skills that will help me bring the Richmond Museum into the 21st century and beyond. The faculty covered topics such as fundraising and donor stewardship, critical conversations, leadership techniques and community engagement. The time I spent with faculty and colleagues was invaluable as I continue my growth and self-reflection as a museum director and leader. I am very grateful to have spent an entire day on the National Mall visiting all of the Smithsonian Museums!

I am so excited to apply what I saw and learned to make the Richmond Museum of History a better place for our great community.

Thanks so much to Evelyn Santos and all the Museum volunteers for doing a great job managing the Museum while I was in D.C.!

LAST PANCAKE BREAKFAST FOR 2016

Last chance to enjoy the best breakfast around before it disappears for another year!!

The last Pancake Breakfast of the year is October 9th. Breakfast is served from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and includes scrambled eggs, pancakes, sausage, bacon, orange juice and coffee. And enjoy a mimosa for a small extra fee.

It's the best deal in town for a breakfast with a million-dollar view!

Tickets are \$9 for adults and \$5 for children aged 8 and younger. Ask about the Breakfast Pass: six breakfasts for adults, \$45, kids \$25, a saving of 16% and no expiration date.

CLASSROOM *RED OAK VICTORY*

By Angelo Barone

Almost five years ago, the Coast Guard's senior traveling inspector, Marc Cruder, noted at a meeting of the San Francisco Society of Port Engineers, that in ten years, none of the heritage ships (museum ships) will be underway.

Those of us involved in the West Coast museum ships as volunteer mariners, took issue with his comments. We said, "These ships are sound and in as good a shape as when they were first built!" Inspector Cruder did not argue this fact but noted that it wasn't the sea worthiness of the vessels he was commenting on but the lack of qualified and licensed Mariners to run them.

Wake up call!

This was not lost on those of us aboard the *Red Oak Victory*, as we have been filling in aboard the *Lane Victory* in Long Beach for over two years. The *Lane* at the time was a fully operating Victory ship but didn't have enough documented Mariners within their own organization for the USCG to let them get underway. So the *Lane* reached out to the Mariners within the museum ship community for help.

Chief Engineer Greg Blasquez, Fireman / Water tender Paul Wuestrwald and I, as the electrician and oiler, have been filling in aboard the *Lane* for two years. The *Lane* would pay to fly us down, pay for our airport parking in Oakland and pick us up and drop us off at the Long beach airport.

Nonetheless, it was time to take action and come up with a plan. In early 2014, I called for a meeting aboard the *Red Oak* of all the West Coast museum ships' management teams. Our folks, along with the *Jeremiah O'Brien* Liberty ship's and *Lane's* management teams, met to strategize and formulate a plan to create our own "in-house" Mariners. From that meeting it was decided that we would petition the National Maritime Center, the USCG organization that dictates policies and regulations for Mariners, to help us create our own training programs and school that will allow us to train, test and qualify our own licensed officers and crew.

John Nichols and I decided that we needed to convince the N.M.C. to allow us to create an approved training center aboard both the *O'Brien* and the *Red Oak*. At first the N.M.C insisted we have a separate course for each ship as the ships' engine plants are different (steam engine vs. steam turbine) but we convinced them we needed Mariners that could work both the Liberty- and Victory-class vessels and the training would include both ships' propulsion systems. They eventually agreed that this was appropriate and made sense.

John Nichols did the heavy lifting and wrote the course and got it approved. He and Paul Abrams, one of the licensed engineers on the *JOB*, taught the Fireman / Water tender (Boiler operators) course over many weeks to three crew members from the

O'Brien and three from the *Red Oak*. We now have six newly-minted credentialed Mariners to help keep the Ship underway!

Within the next few months we will be giving a second course called "Oiler" QMED (Qualified Member of the Engineering Department) to six more of the volunteers and the classes will be held aboard both the *O'Brien* and the *Red Oak*. With a little luck, next year we will be also offering a Third Engineer, Steam, Officer's program for both ships!

Now that the *Red Oak* has been certified as a classroom and training center by the Coast Guard, the door is open for more maritime courses and training programs aboard the Ship in the future. And, with the continued hard work of the crew and volunteers, these ships will continue to sail!

RECENT ACQUISITIONS TO THE PERMANENT COLLECTION:

D. Lantis: 18" x 20" Oil on canvas original artwork of Richmond unrest (1968)

M. Rubins: Photograph, warehouse men, Richmond Shipyard #1 (1941-1945)

C. Gill: Eva Mae Doll Co. notecard



MUSEUM WISH LIST

Paper shredder
Extension cords
Folding chairs
Power strips
Photo scanner
Hand tools for gardening (claw, clippers, spades, watering bucket)

If you can donate these items or contribute toward their purchase, please call the Museum at (510) 235-7387.

RED OAK WISH LIST:

- Succulents
- Spill kit
- Emergency locker w/lid, 3' x 4'
- 2 ink cartridges
- AA batteries
- LED penlights/laser pointers

If you have questions about these items or about how to get them to the Ship, please call the Ship at (510) 237-2933.



Become a Member Today

And Receive These Benefits:

- « Free admission
- « Quarterly newsletter
- « 10% discount in gift shops
- « Membership card
- « And more:

- ___ \$35 **Rheem Ave** --
Individuals 62 & over and students
- ___ \$50 **Potrero Ave** –
Individuals
- ___ \$100 **Cutting Blvd** –
2 adults/2 youth –Benefits above
& invites to member only events
- ___ \$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

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

___ **I Would like to volunteer**

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Date: _____

Join at www.richmondmuseum.org or mail

a check to RMA at:

Richmond Museum Association

P.O. Box 1267

Richmond CA 94802

WADSWORTH GLASS INC
Full Commercial & Residential Glass Service
Storefronts · Windows · Doors
Custom Shower Enclosures
Specialty Glass · Mirrors · Screens
Free Estimates
Lic. 835822

510-223-7380
510-223-1159 fax info@wadsworthglass.com

www.wadsworthglass.com
3927 San Pablo Dam Rd, El Sobrante, CA 94803


STOCKTON HISTORICAL MARITIME MUSEUM
HEMEL OF THE
USS LUCID

David Rajkovich
PRESIDENT
4290 Cherokee Road
Stockton, CA 95215
(209) 993-8302
daveff@aol.com

STOCKTONHISTORICALMARITIMEMUSEUM.ORG



P.O. Box 1267
Richmond, CA 94802

Join the Richmond Museum Association on social media! We are on Facebook under Richmond Museum of History and SS Red Oak Victory (2 separate pages). We are also on twitter @richmondhistory.

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

Officers

Jeffrey Wright, President
Sandi Genser-Maack, Vice President
John Zieshenne, Recording Secretary

Directors

Rich Chivers
Steve Gilford
Desiree Heveroh
Tom Horsfall
Patricia Pearson
Vinay Pimple
Lorraine Regier
Karen Stephenson
Lydia Stewart
Marsha Tomassi
Virgil Weekes

Museum Staff

Melinda McCrary, Director
Evelyn Santos, Museum Technician

Appointed Chairs

Karen Stephenson, Membership

The *MIRROR*

Lynn Maack, Editor
Contributors
Sandi Genser-Maack
Johannes Hoech
Melinda McCrary
Angelo Barone
Steve Gilford

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

(510) 237-2933 for information and Tour Appointments

Richmond Museum of History

Open Wed-Sun, 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

400 Nevin Avenue

Mail: P.O. Box 1267

Richmond CA 94802

(510) 235-7387 for information and Tour Appointments

Visit our website at www.richmondmuseum.org