

The MIRROR

The Richmond Museum Association Newsletter

Richmond Museum of History

Summer 2016

SS Red Oak Victory Ship

THE SS RED OAK MEETS THE USS IOWA IN 1945?

Red Oak Victory crew member John Trtek has embarked on a fund-raising mission by creating a piece of historical fiction involving the *ROV* and the battleship *USS Iowa*. John's creation is to be a 42" x 24" painting of the two WWII ships together in San Francisco Bay in 1945. Since the two ships never actually met here during the war, the painting will be historical fiction. In actual fact, on January 11, 1945, the *Red Oak* steamed out of SF Bay to Pearl Harbor. On January 15, 1945, the *Iowa* sailed into SF Bay for repairs. Ignoring the difference in their arrival and departure days, John created the scene as if the two ships met on the same day in the SF Bay. The scene will be in the afternoon, with the fog coming in from the ocean and creating a soft, diffuse image of the



John's initial rendering of his painting.

Golden Gate Bridge. Sunlight will be glowing through the fog, highlighting the *Iowa* and backlighting the *Red Oak*.

John's inspiration for the work was the *Iowa's* visit to the Port of Richmond in 2012. The ship sailed past the *ROV* twice, both entering and leaving the harbor. Since that time, John has been coordinating with Jonathan Williams, President of the Battleship Iowa Museum, to present the painting to the Governor of the State of Iowa in early 2017. Williams believes the painting will stimulate significant donations to both ships from not only the State of Iowa, but from other donors as well. After all, both ships are dedicated to Iowa: *USS Iowa* for the state itself, and *SS Red Oak Victory* for the town of Red Oak, Iowa. Let's hope for some support to keep these monuments alive.

When he finishes the work, hopefully by this fall, John plans to show it on the *ROV* for a week or two, then take it down south to the *Iowa*, where its crew will frame it, make a brass plaque for it, then ship it to Iowa for the presentation.



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FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends:

The Richmond Museum Association (RMA) is looking forward to an exciting summer 2016! Museum staff is working to bring the Museum to the community while the Seaver Gallery is prepped for the next exhibit opening in early August. RMA had a booth at the KPFA Crafts Fair in the Craneway on June 18 and 19. A selection of the WWII Home Front Challenge quilts was on display through the course of the weekend and attracted lots of attention from fair-goers.

Dedicated interns and volunteers are progressing steadily through the first phase of the inventory of the permanent collection. The inventory methodology was created by Patricia McCloy (Museum Studies, John F. Kennedy University) and Evelyn Santos (RMA museum technician) and employs an iPad to collect information on every object and catalog card in the collections storage areas. The list will be imported into PastPerfect, museum software, where important details can be added to each record. The collection inventory project has only begun and will be ongoing for some time; however, it is encouraging to watch it progressing.

Check out the RMA website at www.richmondmuseum.org for the latest news and events for the Richmond Museum of History and the *SS Red Oak Victory*. We hope to see you soon at the Museum or aboard the Ship! As always, thank you for your continued support of the RMA.

Best wishes,
Melinda McCrary

PANCAKE BREAKFASTS ABOARD THE *RED OAK*

You have three more chances to enjoy the best breakfast around before it disappears for another year!!

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

Never been to a pancake breakfast aboard the *SS Red Oak Victory*? Our regular patrons will tell you 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.

Plan ahead and meet your friends:
August 14th - Summer Fun
September 11th - Grandparents' Day
October 9th - Fleet Week

8TH ANNUAL HOME FRONT FILM FESTIVAL ON *THE RED OAK VICTORY* IN HISTORIC SHIPYARD # 3

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.

Movie dates are the 2nd and 4th Thursdays in the summer. This year's theme is "*The View from Here: How Hollywood Shaped the Home Front View of the War and the World.*"

Movies are shown in Hold #3 at 7:00 p.m. Doors open at 6:30. Refreshments are available at a most reasonable price.

July 14 "*Casablanca*" (1942), starring Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman. Our annual screening of the most-beloved movie from the WWII era and the greatest romantic movie ever made. Come dressed as your favorite character!

July 28 "*Bombardier*" (1943), starring Pat O'Brien and Randolph Scott. Veteran pilots train young cadets to become bomber pilots and lead the new pilots on a dangerous mission.

August 11 "*Bride by Mistake*" (1944), starring Laraine Day and Alan Marshal. A wealthy shipyard owner devises a plan to find a husband who is not interested in her money.

August 25 "*The Canterville Ghost*" (1944), starring Charles Laughton, and Robert Young. The WWII version of the Oscar Wilde story about cowardice, bravery and redemption, complete with American jazz and a darling Margaret O'Brien.

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JULY 3 & 4 On The ROV!

Two Days of Independence Day Celebration on the SS Red Oak Victory



The Traditional **Red Oak Victory July 3rd Event**

- Rare P-51H Mustang Flyby after Dinner
- City of Richmond Fireworks Display
- Explore the Decks of the Red Oak Victory
- Visit the Riggers Loft Wine Company

6PM to 10PM • \$45 per person
Including Dinner from 6 to 7:30 PM

Only 150 Tickets Available! They are going fast!

***Call the Red Oak Victory at (510) 237-2933
to reserve your tickets today!***

Red Oak Victory July 4th Event

Watch the Fireworks all over the Bay Area

6PM to 10PM • \$10 per person

No Reservations Needed



For more information about these two Events:
<http://richmondmuseum.org/ss-red-oak-victory>



GOINGS ON ON THE *RED OAK VICTORY*

by Johannes Hoech

On May 21 my kids and I celebrated my birthday with a cruise on the Jeremiah O'Brien. Of course, I showed up at our "competition" in full *Red Oak Victory* regalia, and – not surprisingly – was met with a fair amount of good-natured ribbing by their crew: "We heard your ship cruised recently ... into a new berth," "Does she run yet?" and so on, to which I of course replied in kind.

It was all very good-natured, but what surprised me more than the ribbing was all the compliments and all the words of encouragement that followed their friendly teasing. "We heard you're close to lighting-off," "It seems you're on the move and things are happening," and "It would be great if both ships could go and steam together." When our competition talks about us like that, that's when I realized that the word is spreading that the *SS Red Oak Victory* continues to build up a head of steam and more and more things are happening thanks to a great board and a great crew of volunteers.

Well, if you're curious, here's what's been going on aboard the *Red Oak (ROV)*:

1) We're upgrading the visitor experience:

The docent and marketing teams created four new tour options with new pricing, from the traditional self-guided tour to an exclusive "Captain's Tour" where we pull out all the tour stops, so to speak, including a gourmet meal. The marketing team redesigned a new onboard experience and soon visitors will be welcomed by a "shipyard-looking," period-authentic, corrugated metal welcome shack on the dock next to the *ROV*. Two gangways will lead visitors to the Ship, part of the Coast Guard requirement to allow a larger number of visitors on board, where in true Navy tradition they will be welcomed at a Navy podium where the lead docent greets visitors in an official *ROV* outfit. And the entire *ROV* staff will continue to make the *ROV* the warmest, friendliest and most welcoming historic ship in the Bay Area so that kids and adults alike will recommend visiting the *ROV* as a fun pastime to all their friends.

2) We're increasing the number and size of onboard events:

A big July 3rd and 4th celebration weekend will be the first of the new generation of events. The whole Ship is working feverishly to get ready for this enlarged event: I already mentioned the second gangway, and in addition we're creating new emergency exits, new lighting, more secure railings, the works. We've struck up a very collaborative relationship with the newly-opened Riggers Loft Wine Company next door, and the July 3/4 combined celebrations will be the first time both organizations are working together to provide a unified "Richmond Harbor Experience" to what will likely be hundreds of visitors to the area. After the July 4th celebrations we have queued-up several more events for the summer and the fall, and will of course be continuing our popular pancake breakfasts on every second Sunday morning between April and October. And we are expanding the number of custom events for large groups and organizations, such as the Navy's Sea Cadets or the E Clampus Vitus group of wine connoisseurs. Bookings for weddings and corporate events are also on the rise.

3) We've started fundraising:

Over the last six months we created a detailed project plan outlining most of the tasks to be completed to return the Ship to operational status so we can plan the associated funding requirements. For the purposes of prioritizing all the tasks needed to complete the restoration, we divided the time between now and operational status into seven phases, the first three leading to the above described lighting-off. Phases 4 and 5 will see the Ship in and out of dry dock, and the remaining 2 phases will restore her to fully operational status. At current estimation, our planning says we will need to raise about \$390K to light-off, a further \$1.5M to \$2M to go through the dry-docking experience, and another \$1M to \$1.5M to become fully operational. The first two funding applications will have gone out by the time this article is published and we are hopeful that with an increased influx of money later this year or early next, we can accelerate the *ROV*'s restoration greatly.

4) The Engine, Deck and Electrical Departments continue to be busy:

The Engine Room continues its march toward lighting-off, with a few remaining boiler repairs being some of the remaining technical items in the way of that pivotal event (for those of you not deeply steeped in nautical lingo, "lighting-off" refers to the firing of the boilers to make steam capable of powering the steam turbines for the first time since 1968). The Deck Department has re-organized the dock area, disposed of hazardous materials, and continues with the never-ending battle against the ever-present rust. And the Electrical Department is revamping the Theater with new lighting, including dimmers on all lighting and new exit paths and signage, performing crucial maintenance duties, as well as important compliance-monitoring tasks.

5) And last but not least, there are many other activities:

Many other activities are going on, and I don't want to be remiss in not mentioning them. Here are some of them in no particular order: We are starting actively recruiting more volunteers (get a hold of our new recruiting buttons you can wear or hand out), our Radio Department continues to delight visitors with their ability to use the *ROV*'s 1944 radio and Morse code to send SMS and email messages to 2016 recipients, the model club has recently completed and installed the period-accurate collection of the *ROV*'s battle ribbons on the deck house below the *Red Oak Victory* name plate, the Marketing Department has started defining the messaging for local and later nationwide PR campaigns, and a combined effort has restored our ultra-unique Diesel-fired stove in the main galley to the point where it can continue to be used for our popular pancake breakfasts. Where else in the SF Bay Area can you get a pancake breakfast cooked on a bona fide Diesel stove - I mean, come on???

So, as you can see, in that spirit, our intrepid crew has been super busy. And to get even busier and finally see her sail again, we need more volunteers. That's where you come in: We need YOU! And if you can't help, we need your friends. We're on the move, won't you join us?"

SHIP'S RIBBONS, MEDALS DISPLAYED

by Charlie Moran, Engineering Department



We finally installed the campaign medals that were authorized for the *USS RED OAK VICTORY* when it was operated by the U.S. Navy during WWII and those authorized for the *SS RED OAK VICTORY* when it was operated as a Merchant Marine cargo ship during the Korean and Vietnam wars of the 1950s and '60s.

I have visited many U. S. Navy museum ships and have gone on to many of their web sites. Believe it or not, we were the only one that didn't display any campaign medals on the exterior of the ship. After doing some research, I found two sources of information that would guide me to building a display of our

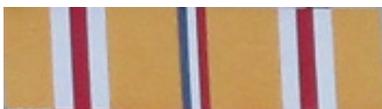
own. The sources that I used were NavSource and Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. We have mounted matching displays on the port and starboard sides of the Bridge Deck.

I want to thank Jan Keizer for all his invaluable help towards this project and to Johannes Hoech for giving the go-ahead to do it. I would especially like to thank our ship's carpenter, John Terrell, for his exceptional carpentry and positive attitude in this endeavor. And my thanks to Oscill Maloney, *ROV* Ship Keeper, for helping to install it, and to Jeff Matthews for photographing it.

American Campaign Medal



Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal



World War II Victory Medal



Philippines Liberation Medal



US Merchant Marine Korean Service Medal



US Merchant Marine Vietnam Service Medal



United Nations Service Medal



Republic of Korea War Service Medal



NEXT UP IN THE SEAVER GALLERY:

ACCESSORIES, ACCESSORIES, ACCESSORIES!



Embellished cloche from the permanent collection, ca 1920s.

The permanent collection of the Richmond Museum of History contains a significant assortment of all things textiles. In an effort to showcase the variety and quality of artifacts in the Museum's textile collection, the next exhibit in the Seaver Gallery will feature 20th-Century accessories. The exhibit will highlight the Museum's extensive holdings of women's hats, shoes, jabots, gloves, jewelry and purses, among a variety of other items ladies used to decorate their outfits. A selection of men's accessories from the permanent collection, including hats, shoes and neckties, will also be included in the exhibit.

Thank you to esteemed local textile expert Inez Brooks-Myers for her significant contribution to the exhibition. The show would not be possible without her knowledge and input.

The exhibit will open with a FREE reception at 2:00 pm on "Richmond Day," Sunday, August 7, 2016. The theme of the opening reception is "*Bouquets, Big Hats & Bow Ties,*" and we encourage all attendees to wear your best accessories and dress to impress. Richmond Day commemorates the incorporation of the City of Richmond on August 7, 1905.

RED OAK VOLUNTEERS EXCEL

by Angelo Barone

Many volunteers have come across the gangway of the *Red Oak Victory* over the years. Some have stuck around a long time; some not. Some have used the experience to launch new careers in the maritime industry.

Through The Anchor Program (TAP), where local youth get exposed to the shipping industry or crew members get their mariner documents for the first time or get renewed to help operate the Ship, the *Red Oak* has proven to be a great place to start and get the training needed to succeed as a professional mariner. One of our TAP crew, Pierre Griffin, is now sailing with MSC on a pre-position ship in Diego Garcia that holds supplies to support our military around the world.

Pierre never fails to stop by and visit the *ROV* whenever he is home in Richmond. He considers himself a proud *Red Oak* crew member for life.

Recently, our longtime volunteer Docent Matt Mitlo, who has been sailing as a Wiper for Matson Shipping Company, has up-graded his credential to QMED – Any Rating. (QMED stands for "Qualified Member of the Engineering Department.")

What is unique with Matt, as many of the crew have their QMED, is that he whipped through all seven examinations in two days! This is completely unheard of! His new QMED ratings include: Electrician, Oiler, Fireman / Water tender, Refrigeration Engineer, Pump man, Machinist and Junior Engineer.... From the RMA and the *ROV* crew, a big "Well done, Matt!"

Is there is a down side? What if Matt becomes a full-time mariner? Well I guess we will be seeing less of his smiling face at the Docent's table where he has been a mainstay and valuable asset for many years.

Fair winds and following seas, Matt!

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UPDATE ON THE RESTORATION OF THE MURAL

by Melinda McCrary

In September 2015, the Richmond Museum of History negotiated a 25-year loan with the United States Postal Service and took possession of a mural that hung in the Richmond Post Office from 1940-1976.

Richmond: An Industrial City was painted by famous muralist Victor Arnautoff, who is known for his role as artistic director at Coit Tower. The mural features a conglomeration of notable Richmond landmarks including the old Richmond High School, the railroad, several buildings in the Point, and the refinery.

The Museum retained Anne Rosenthal, local art conservator, to examine the mural's condition and create a plan to display it. Overall, the condition of the mural is very good, considering it survived being misplaced and sitting in inches of water for an extended period. Ms. Rosenthal's study resulted in a formal condition report that outlined several phases of treatment required to extend the life of the mural. The paint on the face of the mural has lifted over time resulting in interlayer cleavage, a technical term that describes how the first layers of paint separate from the canvas, causing damage to subsequent layers. After the loose paint has been reattached, the canvas will be turned over and the adhesive will be removed. The canvas was glued directly to the wall of the post office lobby with an industrial adhesive. The glue needs to be removed to protect the integrity of the canvas and allow the mural to lie smoothly when framed. The adhesive is lead-based and notoriously tenacious, so it will require a significant effort to remove it. The conservator will need to wear a respirator to protect herself from the harmful dust with lead particles and use a lift to access the center portion of the canvas.

Removing the adhesive is likely to cause paint on the front to loosen so another round of paint consolidation may be required. The final step will be to stretch the canvas and decide the best method to frame and hang it. The total cost to fully restore and hang the mural has yet to be determined, however, it is believed to be in the tens of thousands.

Ms. Rosenthal is highly sought-after for her talents by significant institutions like the San Francisco Maritime Museum, so she agreed to take on the project but only as her schedule allows. The mural remains laid out on her work table until she can dedicate time to it in late June. After the first phase of work has been completed, she will provide a more concrete figure for the total cost to make it ready for display. Many thanks to Anne for taking on the project when she is already so busy.

In the meantime, Museum staff is working diligently to raise the funds required to fully restore the mural. I have been soliciting speaking engagements at service clubs and special events throughout West County. Dr. Robert Cherny (emeritus, history, SFSU) generously presented a lecture on May 14 at the Richmond Public Library, an event that raised a significant amount for the restoration fund. It was exciting to see a grandson of Victor Arnautoff in the audience. We ventured into the world of crowdfunding and created a GoFundMe page to raise money for the restoration (<https://www.gofundme.com/arnautoffmural>). The Museum is planning at least one additional event (possibly more) to raise funds for the restoration effort. We are also appealing to nationwide corporations and foundations which support treatment of fine art to contribute to the restoration fund.

If you would like to donate to the restoration effort, please contact us at (510) 235-7387 or melinda@richmondmuseum.org.

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ROSIES COME TO THE *RED* OAK VICTORY

by Gary Elliott

Mother's Day aboard the *SS Red Oak Victory* was an unqualified success, with six Rosies, volunteers at the Rosie the Riveter/WWII Home Front National Historical Park Visitor Center in Richmond, and their families and friends at the Pancake Breakfast. At 0900 hours, the first Rosies started coming aboard. They always attend events in their specialized and unique (cute) uniforms. They were all there by 1000 and were served their pancake breakfasts in the crew's mess. The other visitors on the *ROV* always converse with the Rosies as their stories are historical, compelling, and always very interesting.

After a very enjoyable breakfast of Italian sausage, scrambled eggs, bacon, three hot cakes, slices of apple, and all the coffee and orange juice they wanted, they ventured to the aft-house where the amateur radio station, NY6CI, was on the air in conjunction with the ARRL-NPOTA and the National Park Service.

NY6CI was set up earlier in the morning and in operation so the Rosies would be comfortable and warm when they got there. After climbing over the door combing, they were able to sit down in the former gun crew's quarters and see how the NY6CI, *ROV*, NPS and the ARRL-NPOTA worked together to bring about a once-in-a-life-time event. Contributing to an event that will never happen again was my goal of having one of the Rosies talk on the amateur radio. Rosie Marian Sousa, 94, accepted the challenge and hit the PTT button. Following the script that was provided, she was able to make contact with an amateur radio station in Arizona. After a few more contacts by me, the Rosies left to mingle with the other visitors on the *ROV* there for the Pancake Breakfast.

With the help of NPS volunteer DJ from the Rosie Visitor Center, there was much video of the Rosies doing what the Rosies do: entertaining and informing the public of their lives as Rosies during WWII. Hopefully this will go viral on You-Tube, as the convergence of these Rosies that helped build the *ROV*, being able to come to the *ROV* 72 years after being "Rosies," and being able to talk on the amateur radio airwaves was a once-in-a-life-time experience. Celebrating the 100-year anniversary of the NPS with the combination cooperation between the American Radio Relay League and National Park Service, my primary goal for this ROSIES-*ROV*-PCB-NPS-NY6CI event was met: to have one of the Rosies communicate via amateur radio.

Mission accomplished. I thank all who participated.

Regards,
Gary Elliott, **wa6kcp for ny6ci**



Gary Elliott with Rosie Marian Sousa. Mother's Day Pancake Breakfast on the Red Oak.



Rosies with Gary



Rosies on the Red Oak

BE PART OF THE ROSIE RALLY 2

Richmond broke the Guinness World Record last year, only to have the Michigan Rosies break it again... Let's take it back!

Join us Saturday, August 13th, 2016, for the Rosie Rally!

Rosie the Riveter/WWII Home Front National Historical Park, along with Rosie the Riveter Trust, the City of Richmond, and other great partners, are hoping for a turn-out of **5,000** to help us break the record for the most people dressed as Rosie the Riveter in one place!

After we break the record, the party will continue with the Home Front Festival in Marina Bay Park until 4:00 pm with music, food and fun! Marina Bay Park is at the corner of Regatta Blvd and Melville Square in Richmond, California.

WHEN: Saturday, August 13th.

Rosie check-in starts at 10:00 AM.

Arrive before 10:30 AM to be counted by Guinness.

WHERE: Craneway Pavillion, Ford Assembly Plant
1414 Harbour Way South, Richmond
(Next door to the Rosie Visitor Center).

WHO: Everyone can participate! Bring your friends!

UNIFORM REQUIRED:

- A red bandanna with polka dots, worn in the traditional "Rosie" style
- Dark blue collared shirt and dark blue pants OR --
- Dark blue coveralls
- Closed-toed black or brown shoes or boots
- Red socks

Get your "Rosie Rally Pack" with red socks and a Park bandanna at the Visitor Center.

Your ad could be here.

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___ \$500 **Barrett Ave** -- Benefits above

& exclusive tour & luncheon with museum curator & ship captain

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The Red Oak "Sail-on-the-Bay"

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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.

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Red Oak Victory Ship

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