The Riveter Fall 2016

In Their Honor

Colonel William B. Colgan, USAF Ret. In honor of Anita Allen Colgan
California State Capital Museum of California, in honor of Ranger Betty Soskin
California Province of the Society of the Sacred Heart, in memory of Mathilde McCutliffe
Debra Eastridge, in honor of my grandmother who was a Rosie in Mobile, Alabama.
Ronald and Barbara Forsstrom, in memory of Patricia Forsstrom
Daniel Gilman, in honor of Bernice O'Brien
Kathleen Glenn, Irene Lorraine (Castro) Glenn
Donna S. Lewis, Mr. & Mrs. Peter M. James, and Mr. & Mrs. Christopher Lewis, in honor of Edith Marie Christofferson
Robert Luca, In honor of Angelina Luca.
In honor of Amanda Mosesman.
Frank Nelson, in memory of my mother, Jessie Myrtle Nelson
Delores Profit, in memory of Nola Davis Fuller.
Rosanne Seratti, in honor of Rose L. Cunningham, a former Rosie the Riveter.
Cheryl Smith, Happy birthday to “Rosie” Vivian Page
Rhonda Thom, In the memory of Mary Elizabeth Humphrey (Purdy), who was quite a woman.
Evelyn Wright, In honor of Elvise Irene Layne.
Cindy Young, In honor of Mildred Dodson.

Anonymous Fund - East Bay Community Foundation
Chaverlon
Ekso Bionics
Fluke Tool
Jamie Miller
JATEC – Women’s Group of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Moving Picture Technicians, Artists and Allied Crafts
Kaiser Permanente
Kaiser Permanente
Dean and Margaret Lester Foundation
Marina Bay Neighborhood Council
Mechanics Bank
NatureBridge
Pacific Gas and Electric Company
Wefts Fargo
West Contra Costa Unified School District

“Thank you” former Congressman George Miller and donors who gave $2,775 to send Rosie’s Girls to Yosemite this year!

Att: Government Employees! Sept. 15 – Dec. 15th

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES CAN SUPPORT OUR UNIQUE NATIONAL PARK through the 2016 Norcal Combined Federal Campaign. If you, or anyone you know, works for a federal government agency, you can now support the Trust’s programs for youth, public education, and historic preservation through the Combined Federal Campaign and payroll deduction. When making your gift, be sure to indicate Rosie the Riveter/WWII Home Front National Historical Park, PSC#23359.

Legendary Interpreter Captures Nine Decades of Insights

The iconic face of Rosie the Riveter has come to embody the spirit of the WWII home front - thanks in part to the efforts of the Rosie the Riveter/WWII Home Front National Historical Park. But as surviving Rosies will acknowledge, that face is not the complete home front story. The bigger story is the phenomenal social change that transformed the face of American society in the space of a few short war years; the story of intense, often painful struggle among home front workers for women’s rights, workers’ rights, and economic and civil rights for African-Americans and the poor. Those struggles didn’t begin or end on the WWII home front, but they put those movements on a fast track that dramatically reshaped life in America.

That’s the story that the Park was created to tell, and it’s a story that no one has been better able to convey than Betty Reid Soskin, the 94-year-old African American park ranger (and great granddaughter of a slave) whose mesmerizing presentations at the Park’s Visitor Center have made her into a local, national, and international legend. Although she was never a Rosie, and never saw a WWII ship under construction, her ability to relate the core meaning of the home front experience derives from her adult life work as the center of the vital social transformations WWII engendered and accelerated.

“We’re blessed to have Betty here to explain the complex meaning of the World War II home front as only someone with her experience can tell it,” explains Marsha Mather-Thrift, Executive Director of Rosie the Riveter Trust. “And so, it’s more important than ever to document her story for the next generation. We need to have Betty’s face, words, and insights with us forever.”

Toward that end, the Trust has committed to raising $150,000 (with at least $40,000 to be raised by the end of 2016) to produce a production-quality documentary on the story of the home front as the incubator of social change. Betty Reid Soskin’s unique vision will provide the central narrative, with respected scholars and historians contributing other parts of the story. The Trust and the National Park Service will collaborate on the film, which is intended to be shown at the Visitor Center, at film festivals, and on network television. The initial filming is now underway (thanks to an initial $10,000 seed grant from Kaiser Permanente) under the direction of filmmaker Doug McConnell of the Bay Area’s Convergence Media Productions, producer of NBC TV’s popular “Open Road” series and other TV and film projects. To support this timely project, contact Marsha Mather-Thrift at mmather@rosietheriveter.org.

Rosie’s Girls Carry ‘We Can Do It’ Torch

Thirty young Richmond residents showed that the spirit of Rosie the Riveter is alive and well through their participation in the Park’s Rosie’s Girls camp program this summer. For the eighth year, these rising stars spent six weeks exploring trades, jobs, and activities often considered “non-traditional” for women, and in late July, celebrated their accomplishments at a festive graduation ceremony.

Families browsed colorful carpentry and welding projects completed at camp, and then cheered on the beaming Rosie’s Girls as they collected Merit Certificates from the office of Congressman Mark DeSaulnier and special “We Can Do It” gifts from new National Park Service Pacific Region Director Laura Joss.

We’re blessed to have Betty here to explain the complex meaning of the World War II home front as only someone with her experience can tell it,” explains Marsha Mather-Thrift, Executive Director of Rosie the Riveter Trust. “And so, it’s more important than ever to document her story for the next generation. We need to have Betty’s face, words, and insights with us forever.”

Toward that end, the Trust has committed to raising $150,000 (with at least $40,000 to be raised by the end of 2016) to produce a production-quality documentary on the story of the home front as the incubator of social change. Betty Reid Soskin’s unique vision will provide the central narrative, with respected scholars and historians contributing other parts of the story. The Trust and the National Park Service will collaborate on the film, which is intended to be shown at the Visitor Center, at film festivals, and on network television. The initial filming is now underway (thanks to an initial $10,000 seed grant from Kaiser Permanente) under the direction of filmmaker Doug McConnell of the Bay Area’s Convergence Media Productions, producer of NBC TV’s popular “Open Road” series and other TV and film projects. To support this timely project, contact Marsha Mather-Thrift at mmather@rosietheriveter.org.

For young women entering sixth through eighth grade, Rosie’s Girls provides a space for girls to take positive risks, discover new interests, and forge lifelong friendships. This year’s campers got to meet real “Richmond Rosie” docents and NPS Ranger Betty Reid Soskin at the Park, as well as twenty-five role models at a Career Day including women in pipe welding, tool design, robotics engineering, and fire and police work, who talked about overcoming challenges and blazing new trails for working women.

Rosie the Riveter Trust is proud to provide full scholarships to all Rosie’s Girls participants, and continues to develop ways to support former campers, now in high school. This summer, the Trust partnered with Richmond Art Center to create a program for Rosie’s Girls graduates to earn stipends while creating a permanent traveling exhibit. See pictures at www.rosietheriveter.org/our-work/youth-programs.

Betty Soskin leading a tour of Marina Bay
Well by now I am guessing that you know We Did It!!! More than setting the record for the most people dressed as Rosie the Riveter, we re-launched the Home Front Festival to coincide with the Rosie Rally and were able to highlight what the City of Richmond has to offer. We had food trucks, a nice mix of local music, and over 28 different local and regional organizations sharing information about the work they are doing to support the community and the park. We are beginning to wind down on Centennial events, but we are looking forward to launching our next 100, and are excited about some of the things on the horizon. We are planning to host the rally and festival become an annual event, so we are already having discussions and planning for how to make next year’s celebration even better. Our Every Kid in the Park program will also continue, bringing the new crop of fourth graders in Richmond to experience the park visitor center and walk on the Bay Trail – for many the first time they will experience some of the most profound social changes in our history. We hope to see you in the coming year for more programs and events in the park.

—Tom Leatherman

2016 Rosie Rally Photos by Dorothy Ahren and Lisa Rote