

Annual Dinner

Don't miss the Trust's biggest fundraiser of the year, *Growing a Rosie Future*, on Saturday, April 7, 2018, from 5:30 to 10:00 pm at the Berkeley Country Club in El Cerrito. Special guest Jerry Di Vecchio, respected food editor for *Sunset* magazine for 40 years, will provide a decades-long perspective on Victory Gardens. Tickets are \$190 each after March 19. Purchase tickets online at rosietheriveter.org or call us at 510-507-2276 for more information.



In Memoriam

In the fall and winter of 2017, the Trust and Park lost four of its dearest volunteers, who contributed thousands of hours to the success of our park and to visitors' education and enjoyment. Two of those volunteers were original WWII Home Front workers, "Rosie" Priscilla Elder, age 97, and "Roger" Bob Hinds, age 97.

Priscilla Elder was one of 11 children of Italian immigrant parents. When Priscilla's husband went to war, Priscilla and her twin sister Angie decided to learn how to be riveters. Their older sister, working as an electrician in the Kaiser shipyards, let them know workers were urgently needed.

So at age 22, Priscilla moved from Iowa to Richmond and became an electrician, wiring circuit-boxes installed on troop transports. Priscilla's son, Charles, was cared for in the innovative childcare centers established for shipyard workers by Henry Kaiser. In recent years, Priscilla has shared stories of her war-time home front life with thousands of Park visitor as a regular Friday Rosie docent. Priscilla's lovely face will be missed, along with the wonderful stories she shared.

Bob Hinds was born in Berkeley in 1920 and began building boats at the age of 15. Although young when war broke out, he was asked to stay home because he had essential skills needed for war production. From 1941-42 Bob built the launching ways at Moore's Shipyards in Oakland before he was hired at Hunt's Marine Service in Richmond. There he became a supervisor at the age of 21 and began overseeing the building and maintenance of 30- to 50-foot patrol boats, rescue craft, and command boats, for the Army Transportation Service (ATS). He officially joined the ATS in 1943 as a Tugboat Captain and then later became a Fireboat Captain till the end of war.

After joining the ranks of our Friday docent regulars, Bob regaled visitor with tales of the immense activity on the waters of the Bay Area during WWII and methods of boat building, which he knew so well. He maintained his love of woodworking and mechanics, restoring old cars. We will miss his enthusiasm and interesting tales.

In addition to our Rosies, **Sandi Genser Maack** and **Sally Green**, two of our long-time docents—both volunteers extraordinaire in multiple organizations in their communities—passed on last year. We will miss them too, but the spirits of all of these very special people continue to fill our Visitor Center with sunlight, and we know they are still lending their inspiration to us all.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Ranger Betty Reid Soskin has become a legend as a national park ranger. Having joined the National Park Service at age 85, Betty's abilities as a storyteller and her unrelenting quest for truth have helped form Rosie the Riveter, and expanded the way that history is presented to visitors. Her example has inspired rangers young and old as she has visited other parks throughout the nation, spoken at hundreds of events, been interviewed by major media celebrities such as Oprah and Arsenio Hall, and introduced President Barack Obama at the Christmas Tree Lighting at the National Mall.

As many of you know, we have been working on capturing Betty's work and impact on

high-quality film with two goals: a) to make a documentary film about her quest and far-reaching influence, and b) to capture a treasure trove of footage that we can continue to use in projects to inspire new audiences. As Betty says, she is "changing the world 48 people at a time," and we hope our film and future media projects will change the world even faster and for the better.

We are still raising funds to complete the project, with a goal of \$50,000, and with a \$25,000 match already in place. The film is headed toward completion by mid-summer. We will keep you posted on the premiere and other screenings. Many thanks to all who have helped to keep this project alive!

—Marsha Mather-Thrift

Remembering Richmond's Native American Boxcar Village

They are remembered today as the "Boxcar Babies"—so-called because they are among the last generation of children to have been raised in a unique Native American village, transplanted from an ancient New Mexican pueblo into a 20th century boxcar community in the heart of industrial Richmond.

The story of Richmond's Boxcar Village lives on today only in the memories of a dwindling generation of Laguna and Acoma Native Americans living in and around Richmond and at the pueblos near Albuquerque, New Mexico. From 1880 to the 1980s, their ancestors helped build and maintain the Atchison Topeka and Santa Fe rail lines between New Mexico and Richmond. Beginning in the late 1930s, when Richmond's war-related industries kicked into high gear, these Native American families lived in a tight-knit, tradition-bound community of boxcars arrayed along unused sidings at the vast and bustling Richmond Terminal.

The boxcar housing was initially intended to be temporary, to accommodate a large influx of Laguna and Acoma migrant workers who came to Richmond to meet the wartime demand for rail workers. The jobs—well-paid, dependable work throughout the Great Depression and the war years—were ensured to all Laguna men in fulfillment of an 1880 gentlemen's agreement between the tribe and the railroad that allowed the AT&SF to build across reservation land.

The boxcars were lined up in parallel pairs, with an H-shaped passageway between them, and partitioned into bedrooms and a basic kitchen. Some families constructed outdoor, beehive-shaped brick ovens for cooking traditional breads and stews. A pair of boxcars were joined together to form a traditional kiva, or community meeting hall, for ceremonial events like weddings and dances. A regular program of sacred dances and traditional rituals was soon established, keeping

to the same ritual schedule as the home pueblo. The children—known as Boxcar Babies—attended nearby schools, quickly learned English, and most mixed easily with local white children.

Beginning in the 1950s, residents were given formal leases on their boxcars at a rent of \$1 a year, along with the right to have their homes towed back to New Mexico when they retired. By that time, most of the 25 or more homes in the village had been upgraded with indoor plumbing, showers, linoleum flooring, and the cars had been taken off the tracks and their wheels removed. In the early 1960s, when the railroad offered to move families into newly built modular homes, most opted to stay in their boxcars.

Bertha Hicks—a Boxcar Baby and newly-retired administrative assistant at the Rosie the Riveter/WWII Home Front National Historical Park—arrived in Richmond with her mother and grandmother in 1941, joining her father, who was

CONTINUED ON BACK

Linking History to Protecting our Planet and Parks

During WWII, people of all backgrounds in the U.S. stepped up to help win peace in a catastrophic time of war. Now our parks and natural resources are similarly threatened by a rapidly-changing climate. A new kind of home front effort is needed—one in which every citizen does their part to overcome this global challenge.

Thanks to a grant from the California Coastal Conservancy, the Trust has partnered to develop an educational unit for our *Every Kid in a Park* program that stimulates fourth graders to think about the links between WWII History and protecting important natural resources like San Francisco Bay.

The Trust provides transportation funding to bring underserved school groups to the park, where rangers engage the students in interactive learning as they experience a healthy one-mile hike on the Bay Trail and visit two WWII exhibit sites. Each youngster learns the rich natural history of the Bay and how the local food web may be impacted by changing temperatures and sea level rise. In addition, a "We Can Do It" hand out in Spanish and English, with tips to cut our energy footprint, goes home to every parent.



The Richmond Boxcar Village, from the personal photo collection of Bertha Hicks.



calendar

Rosie the Riveter/WWII Home Front National Historical Park

march/april 2018

Visit the RORI homepage for up-to-date event and tour schedules at nps.gov/rori/planyourvisit/calendar.htm. Call the Visitor Education Center to confirm for special programs at 510-232-5050 x0.

* Seating is first come/first served. Tickets are issued at front desk 1 hour prior to program. Prior arrangements are required for groups larger than 10. Call 510-232-5050 x0.

** Space is limited. Reservations required. Call 510-232-5050 x0.

MONDAYS

The Port Chicago Disaster and Aftermath

3/26, 4/9 @ 2:00 pm (30 minutes)
What kinds of questions were sailors and civilians asking after ten million pounds of explosives blew up in Concord in 1944?

TUESDAYS

"Of Lost Conversations"*

3/6, 3/13, 3/20, 3/27, 4/3, 4/24 @ 2:00 pm (1 hour)
Park Ranger Betty Soskin shares her experience as a young African American woman during WWII.

WEDNESDAYS

Richmond Bus Tour with a Park Ranger**

3/21, 4/18 @ 10:30 am (2 hours)

Hop aboard with a park ranger for an overview of the park sites located throughout the City of Richmond. A short tour of the Maritime Child Development Center is included.

What We Wore During the War

3/21 @ 11:00 am (1 hour)
The war changed everything including fashions which changed to meet new needs: leather, wool, and nylon were needed by our fighting forces, so we made do on the Home Front. We'll have a look at the clothing worn by working men and women, children, and even Hollywood stars!

The Cartoon War from Disney to Dr. Seuss

3/28 @ 2:00 pm (1 hour)
Boosting morale during WWII took many forms including comic books, editorial cartoons and movie cartoons. Experience some of the favorites enjoyed by kids, GIs, and workers on the Home Front.

Warbling through the War Years

4/18 @ 2:00 pm (1 hour)
Dancing the jitterbug, laughing to silly tunes—and mending broken hearts: music during World War II helped us get through fearful times. We'll see

and hear how we listened through samples from radio, records, and the movies.

THURSDAYS

"Of Lost Conversations"*

3/1, 3/8, 3/15, 3/22, 3/29, 4/5, 4/26 @ 11:00 am (1 hour)
See Tuesdays for description.

Blossoms and Thorns

3/1, 3/8, 3/15, 3/22, 3/29, 4/5, 4/12, 4/19, 4/26 @ 2:00 pm (1 hour)
A docent from the Japanese American Citizens' League screens the documentary *Blossoms and Thorns* about Richmond's pre-and post-war community of flower growers and nursery owners, and shares from their experiences in a WWII incarceration camp.

Spring Home Front Film Festival

Films shown aboard the historic SS Red Oak Victory. Boarding begins at 6:30 pm. For info and directions, call 510-237-2933. Free admission; a \$10 donation is suggested to help preserve and maintain the ship.

Everything is Illuminated (2005)

3/15 @ 7:00 pm
A young man from Chicago travels to Ukraine to and the woman who saved his grandfather's life during WWII. He hires a local guide and during their journey together they discover things about themselves, each other and their families' past.

Das Boot (1981)

4/19 @ 7:00 pm
Considered one of the best submarine movies ever made, this may also be the best film from the German perspective of WWII.

FRIDAYS

Rosie Meet and Greet

3/2, 3/9, 3/16, 3/23, 3/30, 4/6, 4/13, 4/20, 4/27 @ 10:00 am – 12:00 pm & 1:20 pm – 2:00 pm
A group of civilian WWII docents share their stories in an informal setting at the Visitor Center. Here is your chance to ask the experts about life and work in the Richmond Shipyards.

Rationing on the Home Front

3/16, 4/13 @ 12:30 pm (30 minutes)
During WWII, Americans were asked to sacrifice in support of the troops, and this was evident daily at the dinner table. Listen to stories about the Federal Government's rationing program and how it affected families on the Home Front.

SATURDAYS

"Of Lost Conversations"*

3/10, 3/17, 3/24, 3/31, 4/7, 4/21, 4/28 @ 2:00 pm (1 hour)
See Tuesdays for description.

The Women Back Home**

Saturday 3/10 @ 11:00 am (1 hour)
Using original letters, Catherine Ladnier and a few theater students from Mills College will explore the lives of the women on the home front as their men served their country overseas.

Henry J. Kaiser: "Build 'Em by the Mile and Cut 'Em off by the Yard"

3/31, 4/28 @ 3:30 pm (1 hour)
Join author Steve Gilford for a presentation about the extraordinary life of ship builder Henry J. Kaiser, an industrialist who was a loyal friend to (organized) labor.

SUNDAYS

She Built Ships**

Saturday 4/14 @ 11:00 am (1 hour)
Local author Jeane Stone will highlight stories of love, loss, prejudice, courage and sacrifice from her historical novel about the Richmond Home Front, the Port Chicago Explosion and the incarceration of Japanese Americans before, during and after WWII.

Rosie the Riveter Memorial: A Closer Look

3/4, 4/1 Drop-in @ 11:30 am (1 hour) (Rain cancels)
Visit Marina Bay Park (Melville Square), site of the Rosie the Riveter Memorial. A docent will answer questions and introduce the memorial.

Bay Trail Walk

3/11, 4/8 @ 2:00 pm (1 hour) (Rain cancels)
Take a leisurely stroll and explore home front history with a park ranger.

Hitching a Ride: Next Stop Shipyards Two

4/8 @ 1:00 pm (1 hour)
Join Park Ranger Kaylan Hager as he discusses the many different methods of transportation people took to the shipyards during WWII; how they got around gas and rubber rations and how doing more with less is still relevant today.

A Second Gold Rush: Migration to California, 1940-45

3/18, 4/29 @ 2:00 pm (1 hour)
Join UC Berkeley Professor of History Emeritus Thomas Metcalf for a presentation about how the unprecedented migration during WWII created the California we know today.

We Can Do It... Today!



ROSIE THE RIVETER TRUST

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rosietheriveter.org

RORI National Park Visitor Education Center
Open EVERY DAY 10:00 am to 5:00 pm
(Closed Thanksgiving, December 25, & New Years Day)
1414 Harbour Way South, Ste. 3000 (Oil House)
Richmond, CA 94804 • 510-232-5050

Maritime Child Development Center
1014 Florida Ave., Richmond, CA 94804

Craneway Pavilion
1414 Harbour Way South, Richmond, CA 94804

Rosie the Riveter Memorial
Marina Bay Park, Richmond, CA 94804

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ROSIE THE RIVETER TRUST
Rosie the Riveter Trust is the nonprofit membership organization dedicated to building a community to preserve Park historic sites and to honor the women and men of all backgrounds who labored on the Home Front, inspiring some of the most profound social changes in our history.
510-507-2276 • rosietheriveter.org

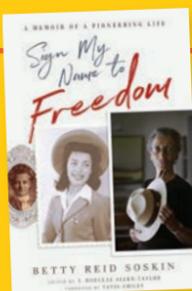
OUR PUBLIC AGENCY PARTNER
The National Park Service was created in 1916 to preserve America's natural, cultural and scenic treasures and to provide for their enjoyment by future generations.



ROSIE THE RIVETER
The Rosie the Riveter/WWII Home Front National Historical Park was established in 2000 as the flagship Park to tell the World War II Home Front story.
510-232-5050 ext 0
nps.gov/rori



Don't miss Ranger Betty Reid Soskin's newly-released book, *Sign My Name to Freedom: A Memoir of a Pioneering Life*, chronicling the remarkable life that led her to become the nation's oldest park ranger!



Rosie the Riveter Trust
P.O. Box 71126
Richmond, CA 94807-1126

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THE RIVETER

News from Rosie the Riveter Trust supporting the Rosie the Riveter/WWII Home Front National Historical Park • **spring 2018**

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

already working at the terminal. She was almost 5 years old, fresh from the Laguna Pueblo, and she spoke little English.

"Moving into a boxcar was different," she recalls, "because we had had a regular house back in New Mexico. But it was fun. We had a kitchen, bedrooms, wood stoves, electricity. It was a home. I have nothing but wonderful memories of my childhood."

Bertha Hicks returned to New Mexico to attend an Indian boarding school after six years at Richmond's Peres Elementary, but she came back to Richmond High and her boxcar home to graduate in her senior year. By then, the first wave of post-war industrial layoffs was sending some village families back to the home pueblo, and more followed over the next decade. By the late 1970s and early '80s fewer than four boxcars remained occupied, and in 1986 the railroad officially ended the leases and the last cars were dismantled and buried under an asphalt parking lot.

Fortunately, residents' memories of the village have outlasted the boxcars. The Regional Oral History Office at UC Berkeley's Bancroft Library has recognized the unique character of the Boxcar Village and, in partnership with the national park, recorded extensive video interviews with a number of former residents. To view this compelling series of videos, visit rosietheriveter.org/our-work/rosie-home-front-histories.

FROM THE PARK SUPERINTENDENT



We are moving into the spring with changes here in the park! Superintendent Tom Leatherman is on a 4-month detail in Seattle as the Deputy Regional Director.

Tom returns near the end of April, and I depart for Utah, where I've accepted the position of Superintendent at Capitol Reef NP. We are continuing the third year of the *Every Kid in a Park* program through the continued successful partnership between the park, The Rosie the Riveter Trust, UC Berkeley, and the West Contra Costa USD. It's a wonderful experience seeing this new crop of Richmond and San Pablo 4th graders coming through the visitor center and learning about democracy's rich wartime history. *Rosie's Girls* summer camp planning is in full swing. And finally, as Ferry service between Richmond and San Francisco starts up in October, we will work closely with the City and WETA to promote the park and the history of Richmond. It should be an exciting year, so please come by and visit!

— Sue Fritzke

Hot of the presses: *Sign My Name to Freedom* now available in the Visitor Center Gift Shop!