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Funder spotlight

One of the primary original unions in Henry Kaiser's Shipyards, the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Ship Builders, Blacksmiths, Forgers and Helpers, AFL-CIO, contributed mightily to build the ships that won the war. Decades later, they are dedicated to a mission of inclusiveness and efforts to build a better life for skilled workers from all backgrounds. We thank them for being our 2019 Premier Sponsor!

In their honor

Carolyn S Bedford: In honor of *Hilary B. Parkhurst, Clay B. Bedford III, Thomas A. Bedford*
David C. and Dion S. Aroner: In honor of *Betty Reid Soskin*
Diane Hedler: In honor of *Margaret (Peggy) A Harrison*
Mitchell Bonner: In honor of *David Jerome Bonner*
Sheila Higgins: In honor of *Marie Davies's birthday*

Leave a Legacy

Your legacy gift to Rosie the Riveter Trust will:



Preserve stories of the WWII Home Front



Inspire today's youth with the We Can Do It spirit

For more information, request our **Easy Ways to Leave a Legacy** brochure or contact Marsha Mather-Thrift at mmather@rosietheriveter.org.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



As you read this newsletter, several of our Rosie docents, now in their 90's, will be in France for the 75th Anniversary of D-Day and the Battle of Normandy. One of them lost a brother in that battle and she will see his grave for the first time. The Rosies' efforts to get to this celebration are being supported by the Trust and by many individuals, but most importantly, by grateful French citizens, thanks to a wonderful French woman who visited our park. This fact speaks to ties created out of moments of crisis by acts of kindness, dedication,

and global commitment. People helping people. People who care about peace and working together for the common good. Ordinary people who did extraordinary things, motivated by the need to help others. Some of our docents are unable to travel due to health, but they are no less extraordinary or less honored. We hope our efforts to capture all the facets and struggles of that era will illuminate the good and the bad moments Americans have lived in, and found a way to progress through, inspiring all of us to keep working toward greater unity and greater good in the world.

—Marsha Mather-Thrift

World War II opens the door to women Boilermakers

If you wanted to join the Boilermakers union in 1893, you had to be a "white, freeborn male, citizen of some civilized country." The language of the organization's constitution at the time was clear—and it wasn't unusual.

To say that times have changed is, thankfully, an understatement. Today, men and women from all races, religions and manner of makeup are members of the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Ship Builders, Blacksmiths, Forgers and Helpers, AFL-CIO.

As with many industrial and manufacturing trades, World War II was a major catalyst to officially opening the Boilermakers' membership door to women—and shipbuilding was the key. Before World War II, there were about 3,000 union Boilermakers working in California's Bay Area. By 1943, there were more than 150,000 in the Bay Area and over 300,000 on the West Coast in total. Around 20 percent of them were Rosies.

Though women had unofficially affiliated with the union for years, it was the growing number of women working in ship yards and other Boilermaker industries that finally turned the issue of admitting women members into a formal amendment proposal. In 1942, the Boilermakers' Executive Council passed the amendment, which was approved.

According to the Boilermakers' history book *Grace Under Pressure*: "Local lodges immediately began admitting women. In fact, evidence suggests that some lodges may have been admitting women prior to the resolution of 1942, despite the constitutional ban."

There were, of course, still many challenges. "Women and people of color faced a hostile work environment and were victims of discrimination and prejudice," said Boilermakers International Vice President-Western Section J. Tom Baca during a recent Rosie the Riveter annual fundraiser. "Boilermakers resisted change as much as any other union; and despite the Rosies being a big factor in the U.S. winning World War II, as soon as the men returned, women were laid off.

"But the Boilermakers have never forgotten our history, thanks to great women leaders like Ranger Betty Reid Soskin."

It's also why the Boilermakers commissioned a film about Betty Soskin (visit vimeo.com/203342642). The film captures her story as a woman of color who worked in a segregated Boilermakers "auxiliary local" at the Kaiser Shipyards.

"Where we are now is a far cry from where we were in 1942," Soskin says in the film. While men still far outnumber women in the Boilermakers union, women are ascending into more leadership roles.



Boilermakers International Rep Erica Stewart.

"As a woman working in a very male-dominated industry, there have been some very tough times," says International Rep Erica Stewart, who is a past president of Local 693, describing her journey as a welder at the Ingalls Shipyard in Pascagoula, Mississippi. "I've been on the deck plate, I've pulled that welding box around, dragged those hoses and climbed ladders...There has been a very big change. We now have more women in leadership roles—VPs, general foremen and superintendents.

For more information, visit boilermakers.org.

Stories to Inspire Annual Dinner

The best event ever! No one wanted to go home! These words sum up our 2019 benefit event, *Stories to Inspire*, which raised more than \$140,000 for youth programs. In a swirl of wonderful 40's-inspired costumes and Rosie the Riveter outfits, guests mingled at the Berkeley Country Club, enjoying breath-taking views of the Bay, and talking with WWII era Rosies, skilled in welding, drafting, and other essential wartime work.

Jon Jarvis, former National Parks Director, captivated all with a fascinating look at the multiple national park sites established to tell long-overlooked stories. Since Rosie the Riveter/WWII Home Front National Historical Park is devoted to telling the many diverse stories of the Home Front, it is one of these important national park heritage sites.

One consistent theme was the importance of inspiring young women to take on unfamiliar roles. The Northern California Carpenters brought their

CONTINUED ON BACK

june – august 2019

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

*Reservations for seats—including the wait list—must be made in advance by phone. Please call 510-232-5050 x0. For groups larger than 24, special arrangements are required.

SUNDAYS

Rosie the Riveter Memorial: A Closer Look
6/2, 7/7, 8/4 Drop-in @ 11:30 am (1 hour; Rain cancels)
Visit Marina Bay Park (Melville Square), site of the Rosie the Riveter Memorial—a very thoughtful public art sculpture of a World War II cargo ship under construction along a 450-foot timeline. A docent will be available for one hour to answer questions and introduce the memorial.

Bay Trail Walk
6/9, 7/21, 8/11 @ 2:00 pm (1 hour; Rain cancels)
Take a leisurely stroll along the Bay Trail and explore home front history.

A Second Gold Rush: Migration to California, 1940–45
6/23 @ 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.

Days of Crisis: A Century of Events that Changed America
7/7 @ 2:00 pm (1 hour)
History takes sudden turns. We'll consider several major occurrences that had profound and lasting impact on our country's life and fortunes.

MONDAYS

The Port Chicago Disaster and Aftermath
6/17, 7/1 @ 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"
6/4, 6/11, 6/18, 6/25, 7/2, 7/9, 7/16, 7/23, 7/30, 8/6, 8/13, 8/20, 8/27 @ 2:00 pm (1 hour)
Park Ranger Betty Soskin shares her experience as a young African American woman during WWII.

WEDNESDAYS

Warbling through the War Years
6/12 @ 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.

What We Wore During the War
6/26, 8/28 @ 2:00 pm (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

7/17 @ 2:00 pm (1 hour)
Cartoons are for kids! Cartoons are for grown-ups! Cartoons are funny! Cartoons are serious. Share an hour seeing how talented artists saw life through exaggeration.

Homefront Propaganda During World War II

8/14 @ 2:00 pm (1 hour)
War is waged with many kinds of weapons. Some motivate positive action. Others create fear. We'll look at the range of propaganda used during WWII.

THURSDAYS

"Of Lost Conversations"
6/6, 6/13, 6/20, 6/27, 7/11, 7/18, 7/25, 8/1, 8/8, 8/15, 8/22, 8/29 @ 11:00 am (1 hour)
See Tuesdays for description.

Blossoms and Thorns

6/6, 6/13, 6/20, 6/27, 7/11, 7/18, 7/25, 8/1, 8/8, 8/15, 8/22, 8/29 @ 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.

Annual Home Front Film Festival

7/11, 7/25, 8/8, 8/22 @ 7:00 pm
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, but a \$10 donation is suggested to help preserve and maintain the ship.

FRIDAYS

Rosie Meet and Greet

6/21, 6/28, 7/5, 7/12, 7/19, 7/26, 8/2, 8/9, 8/16, 8/23, 8/30 @ 10:30 am, 11:30 am, 1:15 pm (45 minutes)
(Cancelled: 6/7, 6/14)
Most Fridays, a group of civilian WWII docents share their stories at the Visitor Center. Ask the experts about life and work in the Richmond Shipyards. Please watch the orientation film, *Home Front Heroes*, at 10:00 am, 11:00 am or 1:00 pm before seeing the Rosies!

Rationing on the Home Front

6/7, 7/19, 8/2 @ 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"

6/1, 6/8, 6/15, 6/22, 6/29, 7/6, 7/13, 7/20, 7/27, 8/3, 8/10, 8/17, 8/24, 8/31 @ 2:00 pm (1 hour)
See Tuesdays for description.

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

6/22, 7/27, 8/24 @ 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.

Rosie Rally 2019!

Saturday, August 10
11:00 am – 4:00 pm
Craneway Pavilion,
Richmond



Join us for this spectacularly fun, family-friendly, and **free**, festival event. Enjoy activities for all ages, great food, costume contests, dancing and more! Shuttles available. More info at: rosietheriveter.org/events/rosie-rally

We Can Do It... Today!



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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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THE RIVETER

News from Rosie the Riveter Trust supporting the Rosie the Riveter/WWII Home Front National Historical Park • **summer 2019**

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

younger generation of women. Accepting the Premiere Sponsor award, the Boilermakers' Tom Baca highlighted the young women and men of color who are actively recruited by the union. For the Trust, the focus was on *Rosie's Girls*—our national park trade-skills and life-skills summer camp that gives girls a chance to check out non-traditional career options.



Northern California Carpenters with WWII Rosies.

FROM THE PARK SUPERINTENDENT



The beginning of 2019 has been a time of transitions for Rosie the Riveter WWII/Home Front National Historical Park. When the year started, the Park was closed due to the lapse in appropriations...at a time when people would normally be visiting over the holidays. We hope that those who were not able to visit then will still come to experience the important history shared at the Visitor Center every day.

At the same time that the park was closed, we got word that our long-time lead ranger at the park, Elizabeth Tucker, had accepted another job. Elizabeth was hired in 2003 as the third employee at the park, and worked to help build the park from the ground up. She was instrumental in developing resources before we

even had a visitor center, including creation of the way-side exhibits along the Bay Trail and helping to build awareness of the park throughout the community. As the park grew, she was a crucial part of our team in developing exhibits and the films, helping to launch our new Visitor Education Center in 2012. Elizabeth worked tirelessly to make sure that the park shone, capturing and sharing many untold experiences that are now a core to the inclusive stories we tell at the park today. She built a world-class docent program, allowing us to effectively operate our visitor center 7 days a week, 362 days a year...which we could not do without our docents. The list of Elizabeth's contributions is lengthy, and we will miss her smiling face and dedication to this park. Please join me in thanking Elizabeth for her years of service, and wishing her the best of luck in her new adventures.

– Tom Leatherman

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

Get your Rally Pack for the 2019 Rosie Rally! Packs are only \$8 (\$10 on day of Rally), and each comes with a pair of red socks and a red and white polka dot bandana. And coming soon just in time for the Rally: "Be A Rosie" Costume Kits!



Check them out at the Visitor Center Gift Shop!