



News from Rosie the Riveter Trust supporting the Rosie the Riveter / WWII Home Front National Historical Park

Thank you!

Our warmest thanks for each and every gift! Space only permits us to list a few of the gifts from November 15, 2018 through November 8, 2019.

\$20,000 and Above

California State Coastal Conservancy
International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Ship Builders, Blacksmiths, Forgers and Helpers AFL-CIO; International Brotherhood of Boilermakers Local 549, and Western States Boilermakers Marguerite Fund of the East Bay Community Foundation

\$10,000 – \$19,999

Anonymous Fund of the East Bay Community Foundation
Chevron Richmond
City of Richmond
ECIA Grants, City of Richmond
Fund for People in Parks
National Park Foundation

\$5,000 – \$9,999

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Daughters of Sally Green
Dean & Margaret Leshar Foundation
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Kaiser Permanente IT
Kaiser Permanente Northern California
Mechanics Bank
Mountain Hardwear
Northern California Carpenters Regional Council
Permanente Federation
Wells Fargo Foundation
Zulu Nyala Group

\$2,500 – \$4,999

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Wells Fargo Bank

\$1,000 – \$2,499

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IBEW Local Union 332
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Plumbers & Steamfitters, Local 159

Plumbers, Steamfitters & Refrigeration Fitters UA 393
Point Richmond Optometry
Jamie Miller and Stephen Purser
Sheet Metal Workers Local 104
State Building and Construction Trades Council of California
Virginia and George Scott Tandy
Travis Credit Union
Trefethen Family Vineyards
Jim and Eileen Vohs
Wareham Development
Kyle Wichelmann
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\$250 – \$999

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Anonymous, Wells Fargo Advisors
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Christopher Bowen
Lois Boyle
Janet Brown
Anne Cadwell
Carpet & Linoleum Layers Local 12
Rosa Casazza and John Thiella
Century Club of California
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Michelle Mercer and Bruce Golden
Anita Mermel
Joan Morgan
Janet Mortensen
Flora Ninomiya
Nonprofits' Insurance Alliance of California
Ann Nutt
O'Connell Family Wines
Pat and Sherri O'Driscoll
OPEIU International

CONTINUED ON BACK

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



For more than eight years, building Rosie the Riveter Trust's version 2.0 has been my most important, complicated, and exhilarating career challenge. Having built the base for Rosie 3.0, it is now time for me to step down at the end of January 2020. Until then, I will work to craft a smooth passage for my successor.

I came to the Park attracted by Rosie's Girls and the opportunity to inspire youth with the extremely important history of democracy's progress. I also came inspired by women's new roles during WWII, and the toughness and bravery of those who had created opportunities for my generation that our grandmothers, and often our mothers, sadly, never enjoyed.

My time here has been graced by so many wonderful people—The Rosies, Betty, staff, docents, board members, volunteers and of course dedicated Trust members, donors, and philanthropic supporters. Each of you has made a tremendous difference in helping this park grow and thrive and reach new audiences every day!

The National Park staff is a treasure—an incredible and dedicated group, admirable for what they provide, often against the odds, to each and every visitor who comes seeking new knowledge, a vision of a shared America, or the life-changing experiences to be had in any one of our U.S. national parks. Thanks to you all for a wonderful eight-plus years!

— Marsha Mather-Thrift

Blossoms and Thorns

The remarkable arc of social change that began during the war years did not happen spontaneously or without difficulty.

That is why Flora Ninomiya, a docent at the Rosie the Riveter/WWII Home Front National Historical Park, shares her experiences with visitors each week, describing her life as a young girl during the years before and after Franklin D. Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066, which forced 120,000 people of Japanese background into prison camps in six Western states.

"There were 20 Japanese farms in the flower business in Richmond before the war," explains Flora Ninomiya, whose family grew roses in their greenhouses. Before WWII, Richmond was a semi-rural place where Japanese immigrants and their American-born Nisei offspring were at the heart of a peaceful and thriving cut-flower trade.

But as the need for ships and other war-time production turned Richmond into an industrial boomtown, the city became an epicenter for growing suspicion of Japanese immigrants and Japanese American citizens.

As a result of Executive Order 9066, Flora Ninomiya was sent away and detained at a camp in Granada, Colorado, with her extended family except for her father, who was held in a different camp for 2½ years until he was allowed to rejoin his family. She recalls life in the barracks with no running water, surrounded by barbed wire and guard towers; farms to supplement the government food with fresh fruit and vegetables; groups for sports, art, and crafts.

After four years of being detained, Flora, then 11, and her family returned to Richmond. Fortunately to find their home and business intact, they were able to resume normal life, thanks to assistance from a generous neighbor, Francis Aebi, while they were in the camps. When it had become apparent that relocation was imminent, Flora Ninomiya's father had paid a visit to Mr. Aebi, who agreed to take care of their business and also those of two other families during the time they would have to spend in camps. Mr. Aebi then kept the business going enough to pay the property taxes so that the properties remained in their owners' names.

"Another part I only learned as an adult was that my family had a mortgage on the property with Mechanics Bank." The president of the bank during the relocation years, E.M. Downer, Jr., had apparently quietly put the mortgage on hold, not discussing it with his family or employees.

According to Flora, of the 20 Japanese families who operated greenhouses in Richmond before the war, every family except one returned to Richmond after the war. Most had mortgages with Mechanics Bank. The one family that had their mortgage at another bank lost their farm while they were interned and unable to keep up with mortgage payments and property taxes.

"Two men of conscience made a world of difference to my family and the other family farmers. Their actions enabled us to return home, with our business intact."

Back in Richmond after the war, Flora found school was easy because of the classes that were organized in the camps. Though she was not ostracized by others at school, she could not talk about the camps for many years. "My only regret is that I didn't speak up until I was an adult."

Flora Ninomiya now makes up for lost time by sharing her stories of this traumatic episode at the Visitor Center, filling in overlooked chapters in the WWII Home Front experience after screenings of the documentary film, *Blossoms & Thorns: A Community Uprooted*.



Flora Ninomiya. By Mike Gallant, NPS.

Quiet Allies

Rauly Butler, Executive Vice President, Director of Retail Banking at Mechanics Bank, also shared this anecdote about Mechanics Bank's wartime dedication to its community.

In the days of WWII, E.M. Downer, Jr., the president of Mechanics Bank, was easy to spot around Richmond, as people knew he wore a fresh flower each day. What they didn't know was that those flowers came from a Japanese nurseryman with whom Mr. Downer was quite close.

During the war, there were multiple examples of Mr. Downer's dedication to the community in time of crisis. After the war, more stories came to light. One in particular revealed that he had sought out prominent local Japanese business people who had a lot to lose and were about to be detained in Relocation Camps. As the stories go, Mr. Downer purchased their assets and later returned them after the war, enabling them to salvage their businesses and livelihoods, as was the case with Flora Ninomiya's family farm.

December 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 calling 510-232-5050 x0. For groups over 24, special arrangements are required.

SUNDAYS

Tickets Over the Rainbow

12/8, 12/15, 12/29 @ 2:00 pm (1 hour)
After serving their country, many gay soldiers and sailors were denied veterans benefits they had earned. This gave gay people a reason to build community, organize, and fight, and visible LGBTQ+ identities as we know them today began to take shape.

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

12/22 @ 2:00 pm (1 hour)
Join UC Berkeley Professor of History Emeritus Thomas Metcalf for a presentation about how the Great Migration during WWII created the California we know today.

WEDNESDAYS

Games and Toys for Girls and Boys

12/11, 12/18 @ 2:00 pm (1 hour)
Kids need and deserved the thrill of opening presents, whether for birthdays or for holidays. Even the war didn't change that! We'll open a whole bunch of toys together, all dating back to the war years.

THURSDAYS

Blossoms and Thorns

12/5, 12/12 @ 2:00 pm (1 hour)
A docent from the Japanese American Citizens' League screens *Blossoms and Thorns*, a documentary about Richmond's pre-and post-war community of

flower growers and nursery owners, and shares from their experiences in a WWII incarceration camp.

And the Oscar Goes to... Oscar-winning WWII Films Aboard the 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.

The English Patient (1996)

12/19 @ 7 pm (2 hours, 42 minutes)
The winner of three Academy Awards, and starring Ralph Fiennes and Juliette Binoche, this film tells the story of a nurse treating a badly-burned man near the end of WWII where she learns his story and learns to heal her own scars as she helps her patient.

FRIDAYS

Rosie Meet and Greet

12/6, 12/13, 12/20, 12/27 @ 10:30 am and 11:30 am (35 minutes)
A group of civilian WWII docents share their stories. Ask the experts about life and work in the Richmond Shipyards. Please watch the orientation film, *Home Front Heroes*, at 10:10 am or 11:00 am before seeing the Rosies!

Rationing on the Home Front

12/6 @ 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

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

12/28 @ 3:15 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.

2020 Dates to Save!

Saturday, February 22

7:00 pm
Presidio Theater
99 Moraga Avenue
San Francisco

Join us for a screening of *No Time to Waste*, our new documentary film that tells the story of Betty Reid Soskin, the nation's oldest national park ranger. For ticket information, watch rosietheriveter.org/events.



Saturday, April 26

4:00 pm
Craneway Pavilion
1414 Harbor Way South, Richmond

Celebrate our 20th anniversary with us at the **Rosie the Riveter Trust Annual Dinner** and help support the work of the Rosie the Riveter/WWII Home Front National Historic Park. Check our website in early 2020 for sponsorship details and tickets.

We Can Do It... Today!



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info@rosietheriveter.org • 510-507-2276
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
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THE RIVETER

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

FROM THE PARK SUPERINTENDENT



We are excited to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the park's establishment in 2020! As we look forward in anticipation, we can't help but reflect on how much we have accomplished in that time. In 2000, the new park had one employee, no budget, no visitor center, no offices, no museum collection, and we struggled to find anyone who even knew anything about the park! Many of the park sites were in danger of being lost to neglect and deterioration, and few people in the community understood the extent and importance of the contributions of Richmond during the war. Jump ahead 20 years and we have close to 20 employees, a Visitor Center that is open every day, over 20,000 items in our museum collection, over a dozen restored historic structures throughout the city, more than 70,000 visitors a year, visits from nearly every 4th grader in our city to learn about the history, and over a dozen partners helping us preserve the sites and stories of the park. Wow!

The City of Richmond not only understands the important contributions of its residents during the war, it also uses the Rosie image throughout the community as a symbol of the *We Can Do It!* spirit that began 75 years ago in this very place. The "City of Pride and Purpose" should be proud of what it accomplished during WWII, and should be equally proud of the work it continues to do to honor, preserve and carry on the legacy of that work today. I am fortunate to work with everyone in the community to carry the legacy forward, and I thank you all for helping to build this National Park.

— Tom Leatherman

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

- OPEIU Local 30
- Overseas Adventure Travel
- Ellen M. Pechman
- Sandra Peters
- Regina Phelps
- Lorelei and Todd Piantadosi
- Plotkin-Oren Family Philanthropic Fund
- Sandi Potter
- Vincent and Cheryl Resh
- Katrinka Ruk
- Charlotte Sakai
- San Francisco Fire Department
- San Francisco Labor Council
- Randy Schekman
- Tino and Mary Serrano
- Courtney Shepler
- Elizabeth Smith
- Enoyse Sommer
- Susan Stevenson
- Teamsters Joint Council 7
- Teamsters Local 315
- United Educators Of San Francisco
- Valley Women's League
- Judith Voigt
- Warriors Community Foundation
- William Wick
- Joyce Willis
- Bruce H. Willock
- Teresa and Aaron Winer
- Pam Zahedani
- Anna Zara and Robert English
- John and Monique Ziesenhenn

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



WWII Home Front
National Historical Park

To learn more about the Japanese imprisonment during WWII, check out these great movies that feature interviews and photos from the people who lived through it: *Blossoms and Thorns* and *And Then They Came for Us*. Both films are available at the Visitor Center and the Japanese American National Museum website.

