



A program of the National Park Foundation. NATIONALPARKS.ORG

*When America went to war,
American women went to work...
and changed our nation forever.*



**NOW A NEW NATIONAL PARK IS
COLLECTING STORIES TO SHARE
WITH FUTURE GENERATIONS**



A NATION MOBILIZED

Early on a Sunday morning, Dec. 7, 1941, 183 Japanese warplanes appeared over the home base of America's Pacific Fleet—Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. Within hours, their surprise attack resulted in the destruction of 18 U.S. warships and 188 airplanes, as well as the deaths of 2,433 American soldiers and sailors.

The nation was stunned—it was the first time a foreign enemy had attacked the U.S. on American soil. Denouncing “a day that will live in infamy,” President Franklin D. Roosevelt summoned the nation to war.

But as record numbers of American men volunteered to join the armed forces, who would “man” the assembly lines to build that arsenal? Who would drive home the rivets that fixed the armor that shielded the tanks that fought the battles?

AMERICA'S WOMEN STEPPED INTO THE BREACH

Wives and mothers, schoolgirls and secretaries: through the factory gates poured an army of female workers, untrained but unbowed. Picking up the tools of their absent sons, husbands and brothers, some six million women joined the war effort, helping to build the planes, bombs and tanks that would win World War II. But they did more than build weapons: they carved out powerful new roles for women in American society—proving that women could do the jobs long thought of as “man’s work,” and opened doors for the generations of women that followed.

**WARTIME NEEDS SHATTERED TRADITIONAL
GENDER ROLES; BEFORE THE WAR, VERY
FEW WOMEN HAD UNDERTAKEN HEAVY
CONSTRUCTION JOBS SUCH AS WELDING.**

MARGARET SOUPE WHITE/TIME LIFE PICTURES

AS THE WAR RAGED ON,

Rosie the Riveter Became an Icon

More and more women took places on the assembly lines and Americans began to appreciate this new character on the national stage: the gutsy, productive woman worker.

Before long, the fertile energies of American pop culture produced an archetype of this strong new female, in the character of Rosie the Riveter. Like such mythical characters as Paul Bunyan and Johnny Appleseed before her, Rosie embodied the virtues most admired in her day: this working woman was strong, self-sufficient, patriotic and plucky.



DAPHNE KESSELI/RETNA/GETTY IMAGES



MARGARET BOURKE-WHITE/TIMELIFE PICTURES

AS MORE WOMEN TOOK JOBS, THE RIPPLES OF CHANGE RAN THROUGH SOCIETY. THE FIRST CHILD CARE CENTERS SPRANG UP NEAR FACTORIES TO HANDLE THE NEEDS OF WORKING MOTHERS.

BY WAR'S END IN 1945, SOME 6 MILLION WOMEN WERE WORKING IN WAR-RELATED INDUSTRIES; THE PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE ROSE FROM 20% IN 1941 TO 36% IN 1945.

The character of Rosie first appeared in the 1942 song "Rosie the Riveter," written by Redd Evans and John Jacob Loeb and recorded by big-band leader Kay Kyser. The lyrics told the story:

*All the day long,
Whether rain or shine,
She's a part of the assembly line.
She's making history,
Working for victory,
Rosie the Riveter.*

The song caught on, and soon a real-life Rosie brought the character to life. Hollywood star Walter Pidgeon, making a promotional tour of the giant Ford Motor Company aircraft assembly plant in Ypsilanti, Michigan, met a riveter on the production line named Rose Will Monroe. Soon Rose was starring as herself in a government film promoting the war effort.

The Rosie character gained a tighter grip on the public imagination when Norman Rockwell created a Rosie the Riveter character that appeared on the cover of the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1943. The rolled-up sleeves, the can-do attitude and the polka-dot bandana—official headgear of the Women

Ordnance Workers—also found their way onto propaganda posters, newspaper ads and government brochures. America loved Rosie!

BUILDING NEW ROLES FOR WOMEN

The image of Rosie the Riveter rang true because it reflected an authentic sea change in American society. Across the nation, hundreds of thousands—and then millions—of women were punching into work every day in factories, shipyards and munitions plants. The number of women in the American workforce increased by more than 50% over the war years.

As First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt toured the nation's factories, she heard countless success stories involving women workers. "I hardly saw a man who did not speak to me about the need for women in production," she is quoted as saying in Doris Kearns Goodwin's engaging



account of the wartime home front, *No Ordinary Time*.

As Mrs. Roosevelt also observed, the necessities of war were breaking down racial, as well as gender barriers as African-American, Asian and Hispanic women joined white women along assembly lines formerly filled mainly by white men. And the first support systems for working mothers were created, as childcare centers—a new concept—were built adjacent to the plants.

"We didn't care about the money. We all did what we could do for the war effort. We felt patriotic and felt that we were doing our part."

"Rosie" Barbara Brown Manakoff, California

The army of "Rosies" shattered the definitions of what women could achieve, and what girls could dream. Though many of the women workers of this "greatest generation" would put down their tools to raise children after the war years, their achievements laid the foundation for the revolution in women's roles that has followed.

REMEMBERING ROSIE,

A New National Park

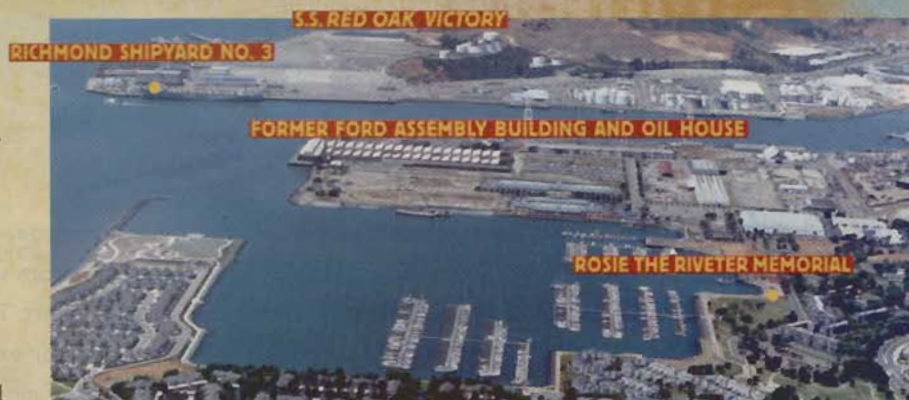
7oday, a new National Park—to honor the working women and men of World War II and tell their stories for generations to come—is rising amid the shipyards and factories where they labored.

The **Rosie the Riveter/WWII Home Front National Historical Park** is now taking shape in the port city of Richmond, California. This sleepy seaside town was galvanized by the war effort, swelling in three years from an agricultural byway with a population of 20,000 into a pulsing, productive metropolis of 120,000, most of whom worked on this site. Set amid the old Kaiser Shipyards and former Ford Assembly Building where legions of “Rosies” helped build the ships and tanks that won the war, the Park will celebrate the workers on the home front, bringing their stories to life in the setting where they took place.

This vast waterfront Park—150 acres on San Francisco Bay—will include several fascinating components. Already open is the **Rosie the Riveter Memorial**, an open-air “landscape sculpture” that includes photographs, timelines and memorabilia of the workers during World War II.

Also open to the public is the **S.S. Red Oak Victory**, one of 747 “Victory” and “Liberty” ships built at the Kaiser Shipyards, where 90,000 workers labored in the most productive shipbuilding facilities of the war. Near the shipyard, visitors will be able to tour two historic child care centers, the first of their kind in America. The centers are still in use today.

In the future, guests will begin their tour at the visitor center in the former **Ford Assembly Building**, a 1939 architectural gem designed by Albert Kahn. With ribbon-glass windows running its full quarter-mile length, this vast, 500,000-square-foot structure will house the Park administrative offices, the main exhibit space and interactive computer displays where visitors can access digital archives, as well as a restaurant and jazz center.



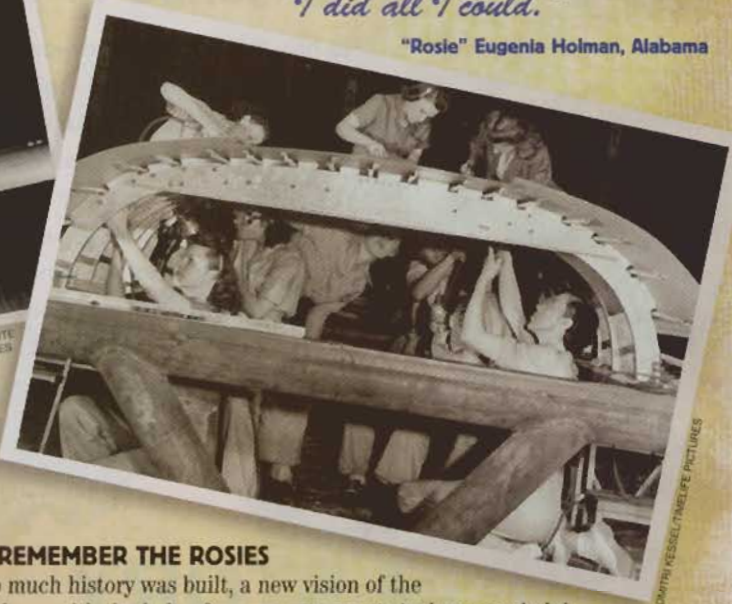
ROSIE THE RIVETER/WWII HOME FRONT NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK—150 ACRES ON THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY—WILL INCLUDE A NUMBER OF FASCINATING COMPONENTS.



MARGARET BOURKE WHITE
TIMELIFE PICTURES

“When...(my husband) and my brother and my cousins and all the other boys came back home, I wanted to be able to look them in the eye with a clear conscience and say, ‘I did all I could.’”

“Rosie” Eugenia Holman, Alabama



DAVID KESSEL/TIMELIFE PICTURES

HELP US REMEMBER THE ROSIES

Here, where so much history was built, a new vision of the past is taking shape with the help of a corporate grant. And you can help! Park officials are eager to gather the recollections and memorabilia of former workers on the home front, and they're inviting all citizens to help gather these stories.

To find out how you can help build this National Park, visit www.ford.com/go/rosie or call or 800-497-6743

Presented by



A TIME Special Advertising Section produced by TIME Marketing.

Creative Services Director Liza Greene; Writer Kelly Knauer; Art Director Andrea Costa; Production Cindy Murphy

American Women Have Always Understood

HARD

Preserving Our History

Like the thousands of Rosies it employed, Ford Motor Company played an important part in the war effort on the home front. During WWII, Ford Motor Company's Richmond, CA, factory was converted from automobile to tank production to support the war effort. Today, Ford is reaching out to the public to help collect mementos and stories that will be available for exhibits and research in the Rosie the Riveter/WWII Home Front National Historical Park Visitor and Education Center. The Visitor and Education Center will eventually be housed in Ford's former Richmond building.

Ford Has Always Understood the Importance of Women

Prior to 1940, only three women had worked at Ford's Richmond plant (a daytime telephone operator and two typists). But as more and more men headed off to war, Ford's managers quickly learned that women made excellent industrial workers – in fact, in certain tasks they even concluded that women were superior to men! During the closing months of the war, Ford hired an increasing number of people of color and women, as workers who had migrated to California to work in wartime industries headed home. Today, Ford continues its commitment to diversity in the workplace and empowering women to achieve. It's no coincidence that Ford Motor Company was named one of *Working Mother* magazine's 100 Best Companies for Working Mothers in 2002, or Corporation of the Year by *DiversityInc* in 2003.

SHARE YOUR STORY

A Salute to the Efforts on the Home Front

Ford Motor Company is a Proud Partner with the National Park Foundation in supporting the Rosie the Riveter/WWII Home Front National Historical Park. As part of our effort to preserve our national heritage, we are seeking stories, memories or anecdotes about the wartime home front embodied by "Rosie."

If you, or someone you know, participated in the home front or has a Rosie the Riveter experience, memento, anecdote or memory, Ford would like you to share it. Your stories, artifacts and information could become a feature or exhibit of the Rosie the Riveter/WWII Home Front National Historical Park. You may be contacted by the park to provide more details about your experience.

LABOR

Ford Motor Company Celebrates the Accomplishments of Women

“ You must tell your children, putting modesty aside, that without us, without women, there would have been no spring in 1945. ”

Inscription from the Rosie the Riveter Memorial

The Rosie the Riveter/WWII Home Front National Historical Park is the first national historical park to commemorate and celebrate women's contribution to the war effort through their industrial efforts on the home front. Throughout the early 1940s, over 6 million women from all backgrounds and from all over the country worked at industrial jobs that challenged traditional notions of women's capabilities. The "Rosie the Riveter" image of these overall-clad, tool-wielding women provided the nickname for all women who worked in wartime industry.



Helping to find and tell these stories is all part of the way Ford is helping the National Park Service build the site to help educate future generations.

Log on to www.ford.com/go/rosie or call 800-497-6743 and share with us your personal stories and descriptions of your artifacts from this important period in both American and women's history.



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AMERICA'S NATIONAL PARKS