

East Brother Fog Horn

The official Newsletter of East Brother Light Station www.ebls.org

Volume 4, Issue 2

March - April 2007

Global Warming!

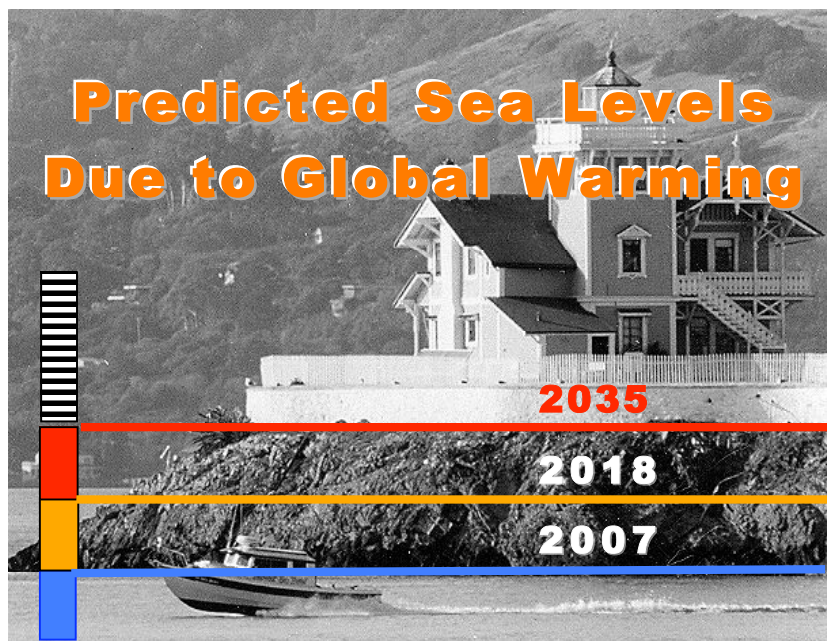
Preparations at East Brother for Predicted Rise in Ocean and San Francisco Bay Levels



On what is believed to be an initiative by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, heavy equipment has shown up at East Brother Light Station to begin an effort to raise the elevation above sea level from the existing 13 feet to 26 feet. This initiative will eventually apply to every light house on the west coast with a completion date of 2078. All structures on East Brother Island will be jacked up and fill material placed under them. It is estimated that it will take approximately 6 million cubic yards of heavy rock to raise the level of the island.

Once the rock is in place, new foundations will be constructed and the buildings will be lowered on to them.

The grounds will then be returned to their former condition. The work is expected to take six months and cost \$46 Million Dollars.



Scientists are hopeful that the rise in sea level will be less than anticipated however they warn that if efforts to limit the greenhouse gases are too little or too late, the consequences will be enormous.

East Brother hopes a benefactor will come forward to help us install solar panels in a sufficient amount to zero out the use of electricity on the Island so that no dependence on polluting sources will be necessary and thereby reduce our contribution to the carbon dioxide gases produced through commercial generation of electricity

The American Crane Company has one crane on-site and two more expected within the next few weeks. Note the first barge load of rock waiting to be off loaded onto the island.

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ON PAGE 2.**



**GLOBAL WARMING IS REAL - RAISING THE LIGHTHOUSE IS NOT
HAPPY APRIL 1st!**

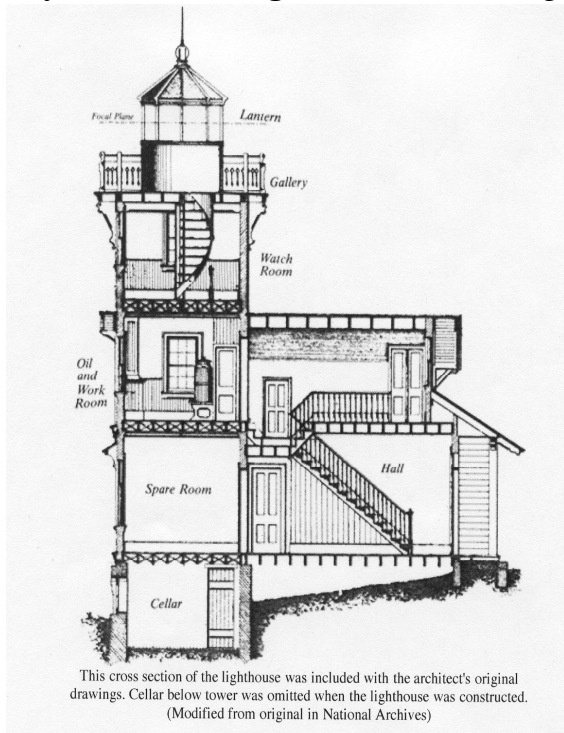
HAPPY BIRTHDAY EAST BROTHER LIGHT STATION March 1, 1874 - 133 Years of Service!

In May 1873, requests were sent out for bids to grade the site and build a lighthouse and fog signal building on East Brother Island on the east side of the Strait of San Pablo. On July 24, the firm of Monroe and Burns of San Francisco was hired for the sum of \$17,637.65.

East Brother Light Station was Commissioned on March 1, 1874, a notice of which was printed in "Notice to Mariners No. 7, of 1874" Issued by the United States Treasury Department, Office of Light-House Board, Washington D.C., January 1874.

A 10-inch steam fog signal is being installed on the island, at its eastern end, 150 feet from the light-house and machinery will be contained in a small wooden building, painted the same light buff color as the light-house keeper's dwelling.

By order of the Light-House Board. Signed Joseph Henry, Chairman



NOTICE TO MARINERS.

(No. 7, of 1874.)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA—PACIFIC COAST
CALIFORNIA.

Flashing Light and Steam Fog-Signal, on East Brother Island, off Point San Pablo, in the Straits of San Pablo, connecting San Francisco and San Pablo Bays.

Notice is hereby given that a flashing white light will be exhibited, on and after the evening of March 1, 1874, from a structure recently erected on the western end of the small island off Point San Pablo, in the Straits connecting San Francisco Bay and San Pablo Bay, and known as the East Brother.

The apparatus is of the 4th order of the system of Fresnel, and will show white flashes, at intervals of 30 seconds.

The tower is square, of wood, and is attached to the keeper's dwelling, which is also of wood.

The focal plane is 37½ feet above the base of the building, and 62½ feet above the mean level of low water.

In clear weather, the eye, being elevated 15 feet above the water, the light should be seen at a distance of 13½ nautical miles.

The dome of the lantern is painted red, the remainder of the structure of a light buff color.

The geographical position of the light derived from the Coast Survey, is as follows:

Latitude, 37° 57' 39" North.
Longitude, 122° 26' 01" West.
Magnetic variation in September, 1873, 16° 24' East.

The following are the compass bearings, and distances in nautical miles of prominent objects:

Penole Point, N.E. by N. ¼ N., distant four and three-tenths miles.
Point San Pablo, N.E. ¼ E. distant three-tenths of a mile.
East tangent to Red Rock, S. by E. ¼ E., distant two miles.
West tangent to Outer Castro Rock, S.E. ¼ S., distant two miles.
West tangent, Southampton Shoal, S.E. by S. ½ S., distant three and five-tenths miles.

Wharf at San Quentin, S.W., distant two and four-tenths miles.

The Sisters, Eastern Rock, N.W. by N. ¼ N., distant one and five-tenths miles.

A 10-inch steam fog-signal is being placed on the island, at its eastern end, 150 feet from the light-house and the machinery will be contained in a small wooden building, painted the same light buff color as the light-house keeper's dwelling.

Due notice will be given of the commencement of this signal.

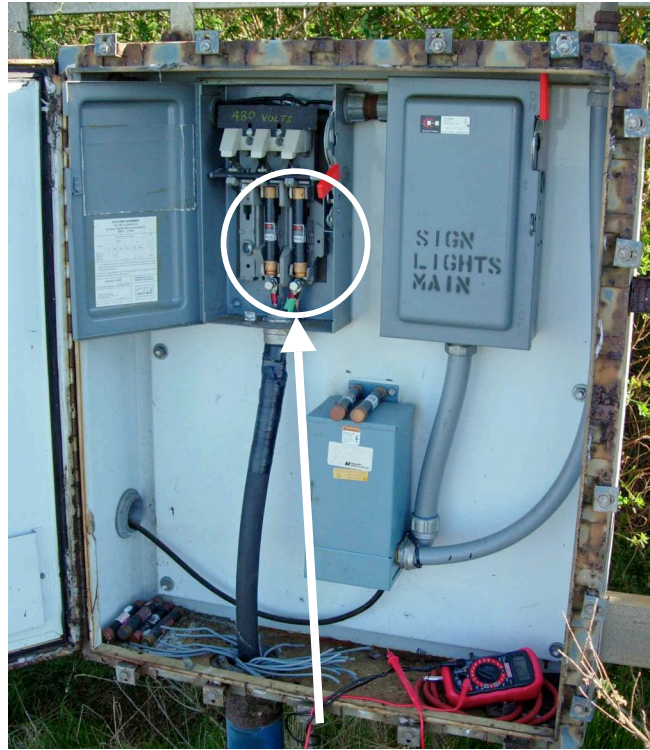
BY ORDER OF THE LIGHT-HOUSE BOARD.
JOSEPH HENRY,
Chairman.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE LIGHT-HOUSE BOARD,
Washington, D. C., January 31, 1874.

Total Island Power Outage A power outage occurred at 1840 hrs on January 12. This day was one of a bitter cold front dropping down from the north. North and west winds with a sustained velocity of 35 knots were recorded. The Island had a full house of ten guests and the electric heaters were all going full blast. We only have 30 amps to work with. Most modern home have one hundred, or even two hundred amp services. Captain Elan attempted to track down the cause of the outage with no luck on the Island side. He started the Island's 30 KW World War II generator to provide for the electrical needs until the problem could be solved.



Tom opens 480 volt electrical panel



The culprits

The next day, Saturday, was a scheduled Wickies Work Party day and as volunteer arrived to go the Island, Board Prez Tom Butt and board member Pete Martin checked the shore side end of the underwater cable to the island. Lacking tools and a multi tester with a dead battery, they were forced to return to Point Richmond to gather the necessary equipment and returned to the shore side electrical panel. When they opened the main panel, they determined that both 30 amp fuses had blown! The old fuses were removed and new ones installed. At 10:37 hrs, 14 January, the main panel switch was thrown, a surge of electrons filled the underwater cable and power was restored to the island.

Leak Patrol



The good news is that the leak in the foyer to Walter's Quarters has been stopped. The bad news is that one of the windows in Walter's Quarters leaks when we have a strong southerly storm. A new window has been ordered.

The leaks from the copper decking on the widow's walk around the lantern room have decreased.

Sources of some the leaks into the pantry have been identified. Kristen gates said that she found one that she could see the dog in the room below.

Kristen Gates sealing the concrete base of the south diaphone over the foyer to Walter's Quarters.

Flags and Flagpoles



Four months ago, the halyard on the Island's 60 foot flagpole gave way and until the January, 2007, Wickie Day, there was no one who could take on the replacement 60 feet above ground.

That is why you see a group of onlookers admiring the temporary flag on the light tower.

In the photos below, Tom Butt (white shirt) and Tom Tobin (a new Wickie in the maroon shirt) are seen atop a scaffolding, preparing to feed a new nylon halyard through the pulley.

Tom would not allow the scaffolding to be taken down until the pole has a fresh coat of white paint. Weather permitting, that might have been done by the time you read this.



Oddities Collected by Captain Katy



Tahitian War Canoe. Think they paddled all the way over?

The Keepers Vacation in Belize

We chartered a 35 foot catamaran from San Pedro, Belize with a bunch of family (my sister, her boyfriend, my dad, his girlfriend, my aunt, and my 3 year old cousin). In an effort to make the trip more affordable, we invited a few too many people, so Elan and I ended up sleeping outside under the stars (and occasionally the rain).



We spent a fantastic week on the boat with fisherman paddling up to the boat selling lobster and conch, great snorkeling (sharks, rays, manatees, dolphins and coral reef!), excellent sailing, and a bit too much sun. We celebrated Elan's birthday on Caye Caulker - I tried to make a birthday cake on the boat, but it somehow ended up upside down on the floor...

Next we headed inland for some adventure; we went on a great cave expedition into Actun Tunichil Muknal, an ancient Mayan ceremonial site deep inside a cave. This was a really amazing trip - first a hike through the jungle, fording a river in 3 places, then a swim into the cave entrance and about 3 hours of rock climbing and swimming up inside the cave to get to the area where Mayans made various sacrifices to their gods for things like ending drought and better crops. (yep, even remains of some human sacrifices!)



Finally, we ended with a Zip Line tour through the jungle canopy, a trip to a butterfly farm, and a few Mayan ruins before we headed back home. We had a blast! I don't think we could have possibly squeezed any more fun into two weeks. It went fast, but we're glad to be home and ready to get back to work. -Katy

Window Washing

East Brother Island, Point Richmond California



Last September Sean & Lindsay of Windows Across America contacted the Innkeepers to ask if they could come out and wash the windows in the lighthouse. Arrangements were made and they came out on Wickie day with their tools and ready to go to work.

Sean and Lindsay travel the country washing windows on historic buildings from coast to coast. Be sure to look at their web site. They have a route they follow each year, they have been doing this for a number of years now, that usually begins in Florida, works its way west, then north to war Seattle. When they are not traveling, they live in Englewood, Colorado.

1-866-558-3197 www.windowacrossamerica.com

Secrets of the trade that Sean and Lindsay shared:

1. Oxalix acid or barkeeper's friend loosens and gets the bad stuff off if needed.
2. A Razor Blade scraper scrapes off the rest.
3. Mix one tablespoon of dish soap : 1 gal water, scrub the window, squeegee and wipe dry with a clean towel.



Notice professional tool belt Lindsay is wearing.



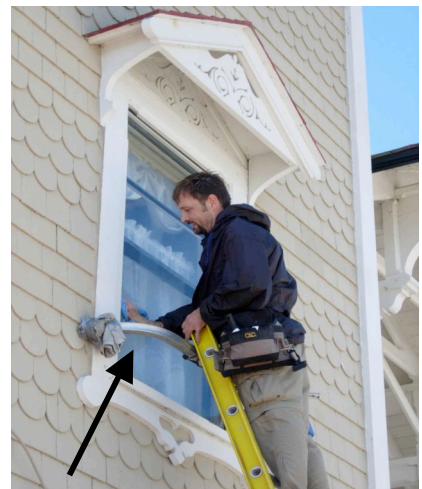
A 4 inch razor blade scraper gets the salt off the windows



Priscilla does windows too.



Sean does the high work and carries specialized equipment like the ladder stabilizer above, and of course all of the professional window tools with them.



EBLS Sponsorship

Friends of East Brother Light Station Sponsorship Drive – We need your help! Maintaining a 133 year-old historic lighthouse on San Francisco Bay is very challenging. Since 1971, dedicated volunteers have worked tirelessly to meet that test. Our charge from the Coast Guard is to maintain the facility and make it accessible to the public. We believe we have met that mandate, however, it takes money, a lot of it!

Here's how you can help:

- Become a sponsoring member. Perhaps you or your company would like to sponsor one of the needs on our Wish List. It's easy, simply call 510.236.7435 and ask for Tom or go to www.ebbs.org and look for "Sponsorship. All donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.
- Become an overnight guest. This is having your cake and eating too, everyone wins with this!
- Become a volunteer. Do you have special skills such as fund raising, newsletter editing, construction, welding, Electrical, painting, boat repair, or let your imagination be your guide.

Sponsorship Levels

Friends of East Brother Light Station membership starts at \$25.00, additional benefits are available for the following sponsorship levels. www.ebbs.org

Individual Sponsorship Levels & Benefits	Deckhand	Boat	Chief	Captain	Commandant	Admiral
Support level	\$100 - \$249	\$250 - \$499	\$500 - \$999	\$1,000 - \$2,499	\$2,500 - \$4,999	\$5,000+
EBLS Web Member listing name of individual or family	*	*	*	*	*	*
Listing on email blasts to previous guests	*	*	*	*	*	*
One Year Passes	2	4	6	8	10	12
Website Sponsorship page listing	*	*	*	*	*	*
* "Admiral" a member of "Wishes Army" (donation capped at \$10,000 from one or a member of EBLS)	1	1	2	2	4	4
* "Admiral" to attend EBLS one day event	2	2	2	2	2	2
Special replicas of EBLS	small	small	small	large	large	large
Room discounts			10%	20%	Free room for 2 nights	Two free nights

To view this chart at full size, please go to WWW.EBBS.ORG There are rewards for becoming a sponsor!

Wish List:

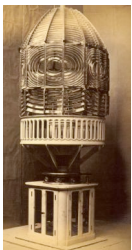
A desperately needed under counter **commercial dishwasher/sterilizer** and the electrical work needed to install it. \$5,000

A **new roof** (see Leak Patrol above) for the main lighthouse building, or a professional roofer who can help identify and repair numerous small leaks that are threatening to damage some areas of the interior.

A complete **upgrade of our shore side electrical power service. Licensed electrician, Contractor, or Donor required.** This equipment has corroded over the years and is now at a point where it is may become unreliable or unsafe. Additionally, the present service allows for only 30 AMPS of power to run the entire island. By upgrading we can bring the service to near 100 amps that will both supply more adequate power, and do so safely.

Replacement or repair (Sheet metal expert) we have a \$15,000 bid (depending on copper prices) WHICH MEANS WE EITHER NEED THE FUNDING OR A VOLUNTEER COPPERSMITH. The copper decking on the widow's walk around the light tower. This may be the original copper work that now has many small holes (say leaks) in it.

A **New Gangway** on our dock to facilitate boarding by island guests.



A **Solar** array to offset increasing costs and to provide "green power" independence.

A historically correct replica of a third order Fresnel lens and install it in the light tower. Exact replicas of the original Fresnel lenses are manufactured in the mid-west and are available by special order. Probable cost-\$30,000

Marine artifacts that would add to the historic value of the Light Station

Go to www.ebbs.org and just follow the prompts or to talk to a real live lighthouse lover call Thomas Butt, Board President - East Brother Light Station, 510.236.743,

Partners in History

From time to time, we will feature Partners in History who are located in or around the City of Richmond CA. Richmond contains a wealth of historic sites that are often overlooked by locals as well as visitors to the greater San Francisco Bay Area. This month, we'll take a look at the Red Oak Victory

A (partial) Chronology of the SS Red Oak Victory *Prepared by Steve Gilford and Robert McGill*

February 10th, 1941 – National Guardsmen of Company F, 34th Infantry Division from Villisca and Company M, 168th Infantry Division from *Red Oak, Iowa* are mobilized for active duty.

November 8th to November 11th, 1942 – The first Anglo-American land, sea and air offensive of North Africa, 'Operation Torch' begins, led by Major General George S. Patton, Jr., Army Western Task Force commander.

November 8th, 1942 – First American casualty of 'Operation Torch', Victor Butz; a member of Company M, 168th Infantry Division is killed in action.

August 15th, 1944 – The keel for United States Maritime Commission Contract number, MCV-544 is laid down at the Permanente Metals Corporation Shipyard number 1, located in Richmond, California.

October 31st, 1944 – MCV-544 is scheduled for launch, but delayed. November 9th, 1944 – MCV-544 is christened RED OAK VICTORY and launched at 10:00 am by Mrs. Edna Reiley, wife of W.S. Reiley, M.D., Mayor of Red Oak, Iowa.



December 5th, 1944 – RED OAK VICTORY is commissioned as USS RED OAK VICTORY (AK-235) at 1:40 pm with Lieutenant Commander John S. Sayers, USNR assuming command. AK-235 is assigned to the 8th Service Squadron, United States Pacific Fleet (COMSERVRON 8).

December 14th to December 23rd, 1944 – USS RED OAK VICTORY undergoes shakedown and sea trials along California coast January 9th to January 11th,

1945 – Loaded ammunition at Port Chicago Navy Ammunition Depot, Concord California.

For more of this chronology, please go to:<http://www.richmondmuseumofhistory.org>

This article appeared on page E - 1 of the San Francisco Chronicle

RICHMOND Bringing a rust bucket back to seaworthiness

WWII cargo ship is being lovingly restored, right down to its steam engine

Carolyn Jones, Chronicle Staff Writer

Monday, February 12, 2007

Charles Stephens points a noisy power tool called a needle gun at a 3-foot-square slab of steel and, inch by inch, hour by hour, blasts away the rust. "You hate to see a beautiful piece of metal go to waste," said Stephens, 71, wiping the sweat from his forehead. "Instead of seeing it melted down into oblivion, you want to restore it," he said. "You want to see it glide across the water." Someday, that chunk of steel might part the waters once again.

Stephens and about 50 other volunteers -- mostly retirees and veterans -- are toiling seven days a week to restore the Red Oak Victory to its former glory. The goal: get the creaky old steam engine running for the first time since 1968 and sail the vessel from its berth in Richmond to the Golden Gate Bridge. "I'm not sure when that's going to happen, but we're going to keep working on it," said Stephens, a retired electronics inspector for Lockheed. "I hope so, anyway." Hope is what powers the Red Oak Victory these days.

The World War II cargo ship -- the sole survivor of the 747 vessels built in the Richmond shipyards -- is spotted with rust and peeling paint. Not long ago, owls roosted in the great gray funnel. To those devoted to restoring it, the Red Oak is as beloved as the Queen Mary 2 or the Jeremiah O'Brien, its celebrated cousin docked across the bay at Fisherman's Wharf. Managed by the Richmond Museum of History, the Red Oak is the crown jewel of the Rosie the Riveter National Historic Park. "You'll never see one like it again," said Jim Waite of Richmond, a retired machinist

who spends his days trying to resurrect the Red Oak's massive steam engine. "We need to show people what it was like. Even if we just take it to the Golden Gate and back, it'd be worth it." The Red Oak's volunteers consider themselves the ship's modern-day crew.

Some work in the engine room, others scrape and paint, some make lunch in the galley. A few technicians got the Morse-code radio working, and they sometimes chat with their cohorts on the Jeremiah O'Brien. The "chief engineer" is 88 years old. At least one volunteer, John Bates of Visalia, sleeps on board occasionally.

"Every now and then my wife tells me, 'It's time for you to go back to the boat,' " laughed Bates, a retired school maintenance worker. "I like it though. It's fun and interesting and educational. It's a real eye-opener." The Red Oak was built in 86 days in the Richmond shipyards, the busiest ship producer in the United States during World War II. It was christened the Red Oak after the farming hamlet of Red Oak, Iowa, which lost more servicemen and women per capita than any other city in the United States. The mayor of Red Oak came to Richmond for the launch, and in a spray of champagne, the Red Oak Victory slipped into San Francisco Bay on Nov. 9, 1944. The ship's role in World War II was short-lived, however. The Red Oak made only one voyage before the war ended. It hauled ammunition and supplies to the Ulithi atoll in the South Pacific, a coral reef where hundreds of U.S. ships were preparing for an invasion of the Japanese mainland. By 1945, the ship was mothballed.

When the Korean War broke out, the Luckenbach Steamship Co. leased the Red Oak as a merchant marine vessel. Again, the Red Oak hauled ammunition, food, medicine and other supplies -- including, in one case, 3,000 tons of Lone Star beer -- across the Pacific. Then it was back to the mothball fleet until the Vietnam War. The Red Oak's only brush with combat occurred in the Saigon River, when the Viet Cong's guns left a dent in the hull. Porthole covers were added to the cockpit to protect the crew from gunfire.

The Red Oak's final cruise was to Saigon in 1968, after which it was retired to the mothball fleet in Benicia and, like hundreds of other World War II vessels, appeared headed for the scrap heap.

Enter a group of Richmond history buffs, who asked Rep. George Miller, D-Martinez, in 1992 to help them get a World War II ship to restore as a monument to the city's home-front efforts. "The federal government said, 'OK, fine, pick a ship,' " said Jerry Souza, a retired San Rafael police officer who now volunteers on the Red Oak. "I don't think the group had much of a choice. The Red Oak might have been the only one left." The Red Oak got its reprieve because, due partly to the limited action it had seen, it was in the best shape of all the mothballed ships in the fleet.

By then, the Red Oak Victory was a hulk of rust and peeling paint, but volunteers were undeterred. In 1995, they began scraping, stripping, painting and raiding other mothballed ships for spare parts, preparing to bring the ship home. In 1998, it was ready. Towed by two tugboats, the 456-foot, nearly solid steel vessel returned to its birthplace at the Richmond waterfront.

Like the day in 1944 when the Red Oak was first launched, the mayor of Red Oak, Iowa, was on hand for the homecoming.

"It was quite heartening," said the mayor, James Johnson, who was a kid in Red Oak during the war. "I remember the time when all that happened -- the telegrams coming down, people just standing around waiting for telegrams. I was thrilled as punch when I heard they were going to restore the Red Oak. It's quite a thing here."

To raise money for the restoration, volunteers hold pancake breakfasts, Fourth of July picnics and dances on board. The public is invited to tour the ship and, if so inclined, help scrape paint. But even before the restoration is complete, the Red Oak is an invaluable historic resource, said Jeff Nilsson, executive director of the Historic Naval Ships Association in Virginia.

"There aren't any more left. Those old ships are going by the wayside fast and furious," he said. "But they're a part of the maritime history of this country. The Navy in the 1940s was so instrumental in winning the war -- this is a living museum to that time."

E-mail Carolyn Jones at carolynjones@sfnchronicle.com.

This article appeared on page E - 1 of the San Francisco Chronicle

SS Red Oak Victory 1337 Canal Blvd., Berth 6A Richmond, CA 94804 Ship Phone: 510-237-2933 Email: info@ssredoakvictory.org Richmond Museum of History Phone: 510-235-7387

