

Preserving
the diverse
heritage of the
Greater Richmond
Community



The Red Oak is available for dinners, private parties, and tours. During your visit you will see:

- **Galley**—See the only intact original Victory ship oil-fired range. Visit the officers' and crew's mess to see where they dined.
- **Captain's Cabin**
- **Radio Room**—fully restored, original equipment
- **Wheel House**
- **Engine Room**
- **Museum and Gift Shop**

From our decks, enjoy a fantastic view (weather permitting) of the San Francisco skyline. After your visit to the Red Oak, be sure to enjoy nearby historic Point Richmond!



S.S. RED OAK VICTORY

RICHMOND CALIFORNIA



"Problems are only opportunities in work clothes."

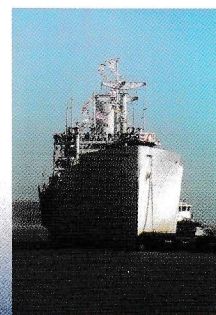
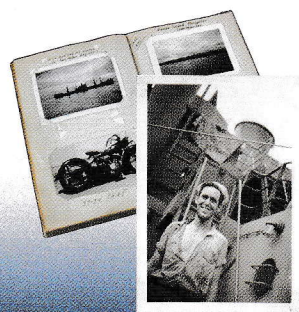
—HENRY J. KAISER (1882-1967)

The S.S. Red Oak Victory was one of 747 ships built at the Kaiser Shipyards in Richmond, California between 1941 and 1945. Named for an Iowa town that lost the highest number of GI's per capita during World War II, she was launched from Shipyard One on November 9, 1944. With a new hull design and steam turbine engine, the Victory class was faster than its predecessor, the Liberty ship.

Designed as a merchant ship, the Red Oak Victory uniquely served for one and one-half years as a commissioned U.S. Navy ammunition ship. Following World War II, she was

released from the Navy and served as a cargo vessel during a time spanning the Korean and Vietnam Wars. In 1968, the Red Oak was retired to reserve status in the "mothball" fleet in Suisun Bay, California.

Recognizing the extraordinary opportunity to restore a vital symbol of Richmond's home front achievements, the Richmond Museum Association sought to rescue the Red Oak Victory from being scrapped. Their efforts were rewarded in 1996 when Congress passed legislation authorizing the conveyance of the ship to the Association.



TIMELINE

1930

1940

1950

1960

1970

1980

1990

2000

Circa 1939-40: Germany invades Poland; Great Britain declares war on Germany, thus starting World War II. U.S. agrees to initiate a shipbuilding program to assist Great Britain.

December 20, 1940: British Purchasing Commission contracts with the newly organized Todd-California Company, in which Henry J. Kaiser has an interest, to rapidly construct a shipyard and 30 *British Liberty Ships* in Richmond, California. The *Ocean Vanguard* (the very first ship built at the Richmond shipyard) is launched August 16, 1941. Kaiser organizes Permanente Metals Corp. to acquire Todd-California.

1941-42: Japan attacks Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 and the U.S. enters World War II. Kaiser completes four shipyards in Richmond, making it a boom town with an influx of thousands of men and women seeking work.

December 31, 1941: Yard Two launches the first Richmond-built *Liberty Ship* (*S. S. James Otis*) for the U.S. Maritime Commission.

1943: U.S. authorizes naval architect George G. Sharp to design a higher performing vessel, called the *Victory* class, the first of which, the *Ethiopia Victory*, was launched in Yard One on April 20, 1944.

September 11, 1944: The keel of the *Red Oak Victory* is laid in Yard One.

November 9, 1944: The *Red Oak Victory* is launched.

December 5, 1944: The *Red Oak Victory* is commissioned as a Navy ammunition ship and departs for ports in the WWII Pacific Theater.

Circa 1945: Following the surrender of Japan, the *Red Oak Victory* returns troops and supplies to the U.S.

May 21, 1946: The *Red Oak Victory* is decommissioned at the Maritime Reserve Fleet in Seattle, Washington.

July 1947: The *Red Oak Victory* is deactivated and stricken from the Navy list in July 1947, then leased as a general cargo vessel to the American Mail Lines who prepared the ship for merchant service operation by the Alaska Steamship Company.

Circa 1951-65: The *Red Oak Victory* is reactivated to serve in the Korean War as a Merchant Marine vessel, carrying cargo between the West Coast and Korea-Japan. In 1958, it carries emergency grain cargo to India and Pakistan.

Circa 1966-68: The *Red Oak Victory* serves in the Vietnam War making 13 trips from the West Coast to the Pacific Theater.

December 1968: The *Red Oak Victory* is deactivated and preserved in the Suisun Bay Reserve Fleet in Benicia, California administered by the Maritime Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation.

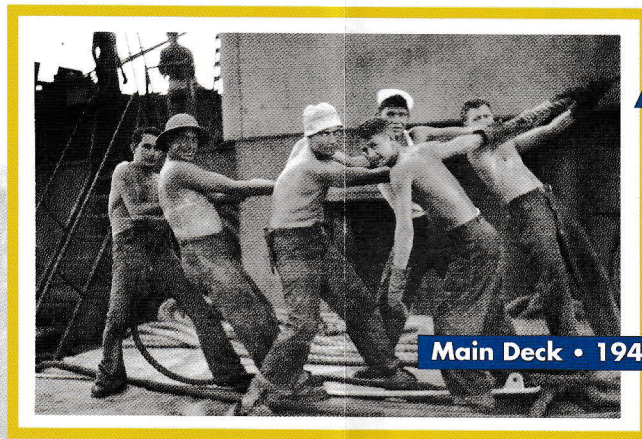
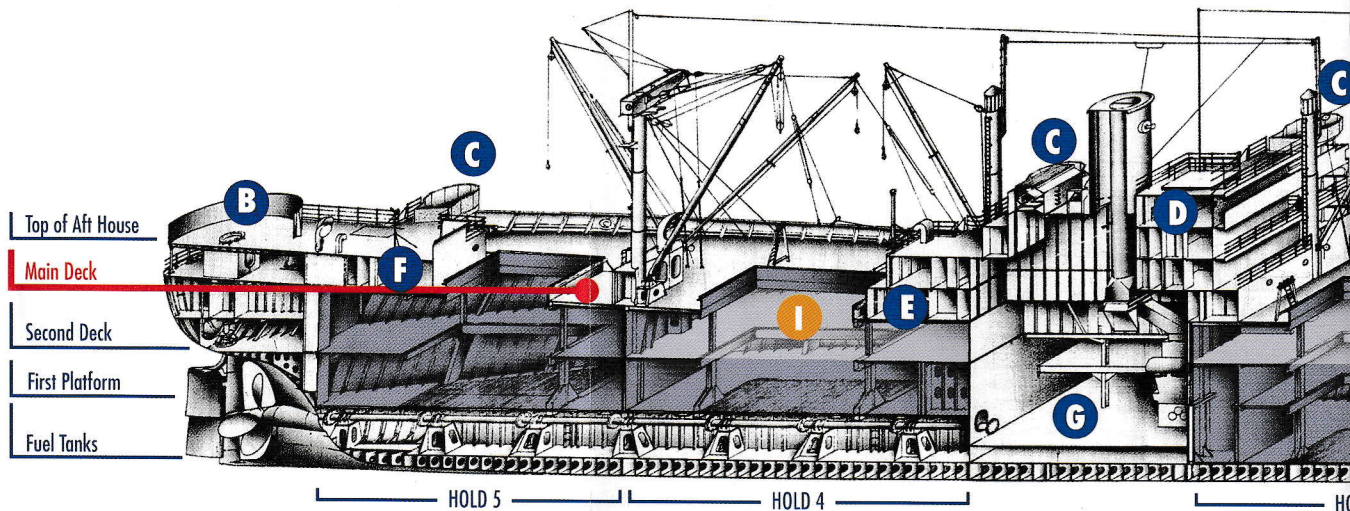
October 2, 1996: Congressional legislation passed authorizing the conveyance of the *Red Oak Victory* to the Richmond Museum Association.

September 20, 1998: The *Red Oak Victory* is brought home to Richmond escorted by tugboats, a fireboat, vintage aircraft, sail boats, and hundreds of celebrants.

1999 & Beyond: Restoration efforts are underway, thanks to a large and enthusiastic body of experienced volunteers who are contributing hours of labor toward making the vessel fully seaworthy for Bay cruises. The ship is also a popular site for visitors to the new Rosie-the-Riveter WWII Home Front National Historical Park in Richmond.

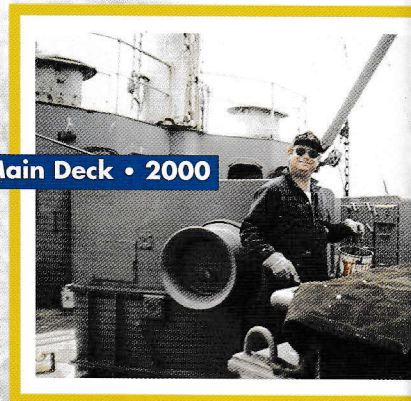
Photos (left to right): 1. Churchill and Roosevelt at the Atlantic Conference, 1941; FDR Library, NARA 2. Henry J. Kaiser; University of California's Bancroft Library, Henry J. Kaiser Collection 3. Payday—Richmond Shipyards, 1942; © Dorothea Lange Collection, Oakland Museum of California, City of Oakland. Gift of Paul S. Taylor 4. S.S. Red Oak Victory Launch Day, 1944; © Edna R. Reiley Family Collection, Richmond Museum of History (RMH) 5. Typical Launch Day Program Cover; RMH 6. 1944-47 Journal of Red Oak Victory sailor, James A. Smith; RMH 7. Red Oak Victory Comes Home, Sept. 20, 1998

S.S. RED OAK VICTORY



Main Deck • 1945

All hands



Main Deck • 2000

The S.S. Red Oak Victory is docked a short distance from the site of her proud launch during World War II. Here, she tells a story to future generations of how our nation's men and women in the armed forces and on the home front responded to the forces threatening democracy and made sacrifices that must never be forgotten.

Destined to become a fully operational ship, the Red Oak is now serving as a floating historical museum and a site for special events, conferences, and ceremonies. Her restoration has captured the hearts and energies of a diverse community of volunteers, including historians,

engineers, shipyard workers, veterans, merchant mariners, and students.

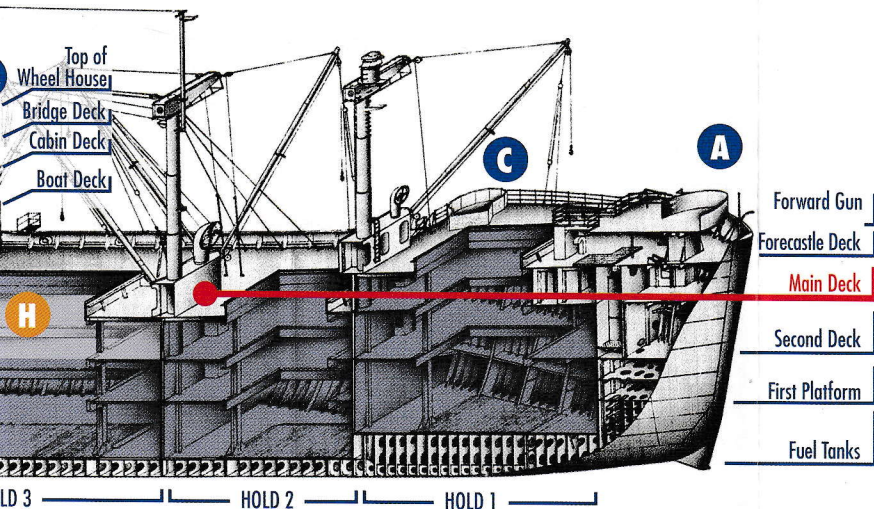
The S.S. Red Oak Victory needs many hands to bring back the glory of her earlier days. A ship's restoration, maintenance, and operation are demanding and on going. Your help is needed. The job is big, but no contribution—be it labor or monetary— is too small.

Join us! We welcome you aboard.

RY

LEGEND

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| A 3-inch Forward Gun | D Wheelhouse | G Engine Room |
| B 5-inch Aft Gun | E Galley | H Banquet/Meeting Room |
| C 20 mm Gun (ea. side) | F Armed Guard Quarters | I Museum/Gift Shop |



SPECIFICATIONS

VC-S-AP2 Cargo Vessel
 U.S. Navy Hull No. AK235
 U.S. Maritime Commission Hull No. 544

Compliment

World War II: ± 80 persons
 Korean / Vietnam Wars: ± 40 persons
 Length overall: 455' 3"
 Breadth: 63'
 Draft loaded: 26' 7"
 Cargo capacity (5 holds): 453,210 cu. ft.
 Fuel oil capacity: 802,767 gallons
 Cruising speed: 15.5 knots
 Propulsion: single screw with a two-stage turbine
 Rated horsepower: 6000
 Cruising range: 12,000 to 14,000 miles

IT'S A FACT... The S.S. Red Oak Victory is the only preserved World War II vessel of the 747 ships produced by Henry J. Kaiser in the Richmond Shipyards.

Is on deck!



✓ YES! Sign me up.

- I WANT TO VOLUNTEER; please contact me.
- I would like to receive information regarding planned giving or endowment gifts.
- Enclosed is my contribution of \$ _____.

Name (as you would like to be acknowledged) _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ E-Mail _____

For Credit Card Payment Only: Please charge my: Visa Mastercard
 Acct. No.: _____ Expiration Date: _____

All contributions are tax-deductible to the full extent provided by law. Please make checks payable to *Red Oak Victory Project*. Mail to: P.O. Box 1267, Richmond, CA 94802.

Thank you.

P.O. Box 1267, Richmond, CA 94802 • www.ssredoakvictory.org • ship tel: 510-237-2933

RICHMOND CALIFORNIA S.S. RED OAK VICTORY