





# richmond history



People have lived along the San Francisco Bay shoreline for thousands of years. The Huchiun, part of the larger Ohlone tribe, lived in what is now Richmond from Temescal Creek and Rodeo Creek. They established villages and subsisted on acorns, nuts, seeds, berries, game, fish and shellfish.



1823

In 1823, Don Francisco Castro was given 17,000 acres of land, becoming the first white man to settle in Contra Costa. The City of Richmond was established on a portion of Castro's land grant about 70 years after his death. (Pictured: Castro's daughter, Martina Castro Alvarado)



Farming expanded from family gardens to commercial market gardens grown by Portuguese, Italian and Irish immigrants.



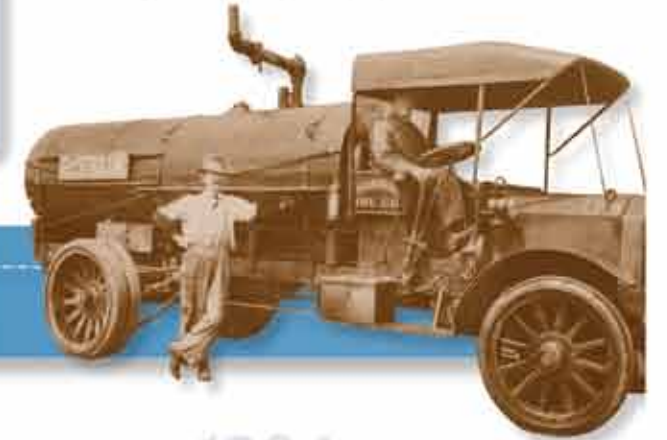
1860

Point Pinole is the last site of the Giant Powder Company, the first company in America to produce dynamite. Explosives were produced there until 1960 and were essential to mining, dam building and other construction projects throughout the western hemisphere.

With a population of 2,150, the City of Richmond incorporated August 6, 1905; by 1910 the population reached 7,500.

1902

The railroad catalyzed industrial and urban development with 2,000 people settling in Point Richmond. Standard Oil Company first produced oil nearby in 1902. The company quickly expanded to cover 1,800 acres, becoming the City's largest employer.



NATIVE AMERICANS

SPANISH MISSION PERIOD

MEXICAN PERIOD

AMERICAN PERIOD

1700

1800

1825

1850



1776

With the arrival of the Spanish in 1776, the Huchiun were forced to move to Mission Dolores and convert to Christianity. Many died of disease or were absorbed into other tribes.

Other than street names, no evidence of the Mexican period remains in Richmond. Close by in San Pablo the Alvarado Adobe stood until 1954. A replica was built in 1976 and serves as San Pablo's museum.

After Mexico won independence from Spain in 1821, large tracts of land in California were granted to military heroes and loyalists.



Around 1870, a shrimp village was established by Chinese fishermen at what is now Point Molate. For nearly half a century, fishermen lived and worked at Point Molate, capturing bay shrimp for local markets and international export.

1904



Richmond's trolley car service began in 1904 and ran until the early 1930s.



1821

1846



By 1859, the San Francisco market was made readily accessible to West Contra Costa ranchers by cargo shuttle-ferry service at Ellis Landing, where Captain George Ellis ferried freight aboard his two sailing vessels, the Sierra and the Mystery.

With the dispute over the Castro family's Rancho San Pablo finally resolved in 1894, real estate development began and Richmond changed forever when the Santa Fe Railroad arrived in 1900 with Point Richmond becoming the western terminus of the transcontinental railroad system.

1873



The East Brother Lighthouse was built in 1873 on East Brother Island just west of Point San Pablo. The building is the oldest in Richmond and one of only three remaining wooden frame lighthouses on the Pacific Coast. Today, it is a bed-and-breakfast.



1930



The 500,000 square-foot Ford Motor Company, constructed in 1930 was the largest assembly plant on the west coast and employed 800 workers. It is on the National Register of Historic Places.

▶ To support the war effort, women joined the workforce and exploded myths about their capabilities. They were called "Rosies" after a popular song called, "Rosie the Riveter." By 1944, women constituted 27% of the workforce in the Richmond shipyards. In addition to their contributions to shipbuilding, iron and steel, women throughout the nation also strengthened the war effort with work in other industries such as machine, auto and electrical parts plants, military supply, communications and food processing.



More than 21,000 public housing units were constructed during the war, providing shelter for more than 60% of Richmond's total population. By war's end, Richmond had the largest federal housing program in the country.

1945



In 1949, the Richmond Redevelopment Agency was created to plan the City's post-war transformation. Most wartime housing had been demolished.

! In 1949, the City constructed a new civic center, leading Richmond to earn the title "All American City" in 1952.

1958



◀ In 1958, Richmond was honored by a visit from the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., to the Easter Hill United Methodist Church.



The waterfront gained new life sparked by the Harbour Redevelopment Project bringing a new marina green space, housing, walkways, parks, lagoons, restaurants and office space.

1980



Richmond boasts 32 miles of shoreline and more than 3,300 acres of regional and state parklands that provide recreational opportunities and rich habitat for plants and animals. In addition to vast parkland resources, residents also enjoy the Richmond Greenway and 25 miles of the San Francisco Bay Trail.

INDUSTRIAL ERA

WWII HOMEFRONT ERA

POST WWII ERA

MODERN RICHMOND ERA

1925

1940

1950

1960

1915



In 1915, a tunnel was constructed through Point Richmond, allowing access to the developing waterfront. Businesses moved in, such as American Radiator, Pullman Palace Car Shops, Winehaven, Felice & Perelli Cannery and Ford Motor Company.

▶ Henry J. Kaiser established 14 child care centers in Richmond for mothers working in his shipyards. Following flu and pneumonia epidemics in 1941, Kaiser also created the Permanente Health Plan for his employees. By 1944, 92% of all Richmond shipyard employees had joined the plan with payroll deductions of 50 cents per week.



With the end of WWII, shipbuilding ended abruptly, with Standard Oil, the Santa Fe Railroad and the Ford Plant continuing to operate. But, in 1955 Ford produced its last automobile in Richmond.

1976



The 1.3 million square-foot Hilltop Regional Shopping Center was built in 1976.

1910



The first passenger ferry to operate between Richmond and San Francisco was the *Ocean Wave*.

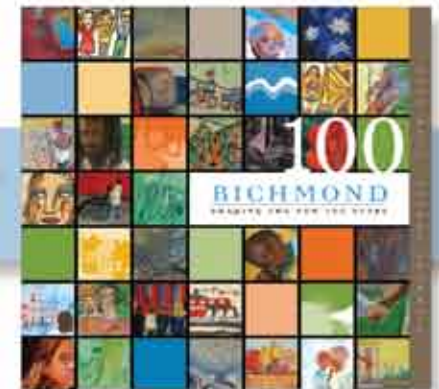
! World War II brought thousands of people from across the country to work at the four Kaiser Shipyards developed by Henry J. Kaiser. Between 1940-1943 Richmond's population grew from 23,600 to 93,000 creating a diverse, multi-ethnic culture and a boomtown atmosphere.



Of the 747 ships built at Kaiser, only the SS Red Oak Victory Ship survives today.



Point Richmond was one of the first communities built in the City. Because of its wealth of contributing significant historic structures dating from 1910 and earlier, Point Richmond has been designated as a National Register Historic District.



▲ The Next 100 Years....

★ Designated on the National Register of Historic Places

**SOURCES:**

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