



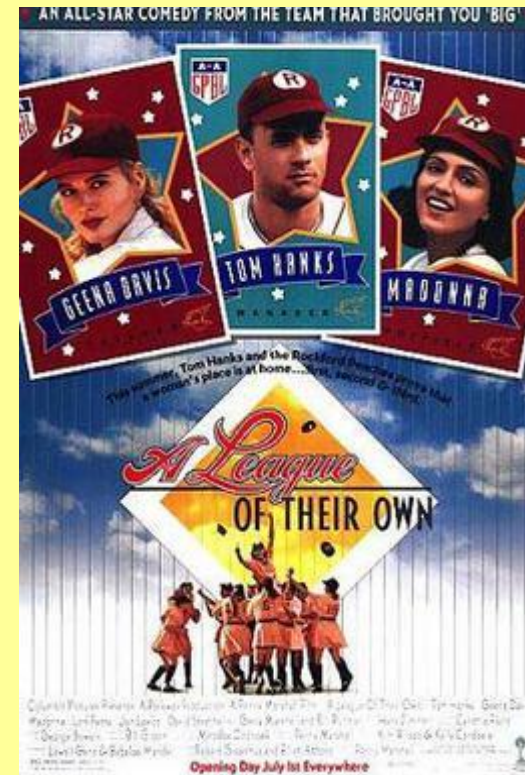
All-American Girls Professional Baseball League

World War II Homefront

A League of their Own - 1992



Girl's Midwest baseball league, 1945.
Wallace Kirkland—The LIFE Picture Collection/Getty Images



GROW IT YOURSELF

PLAN A FARM GARDEN NOW



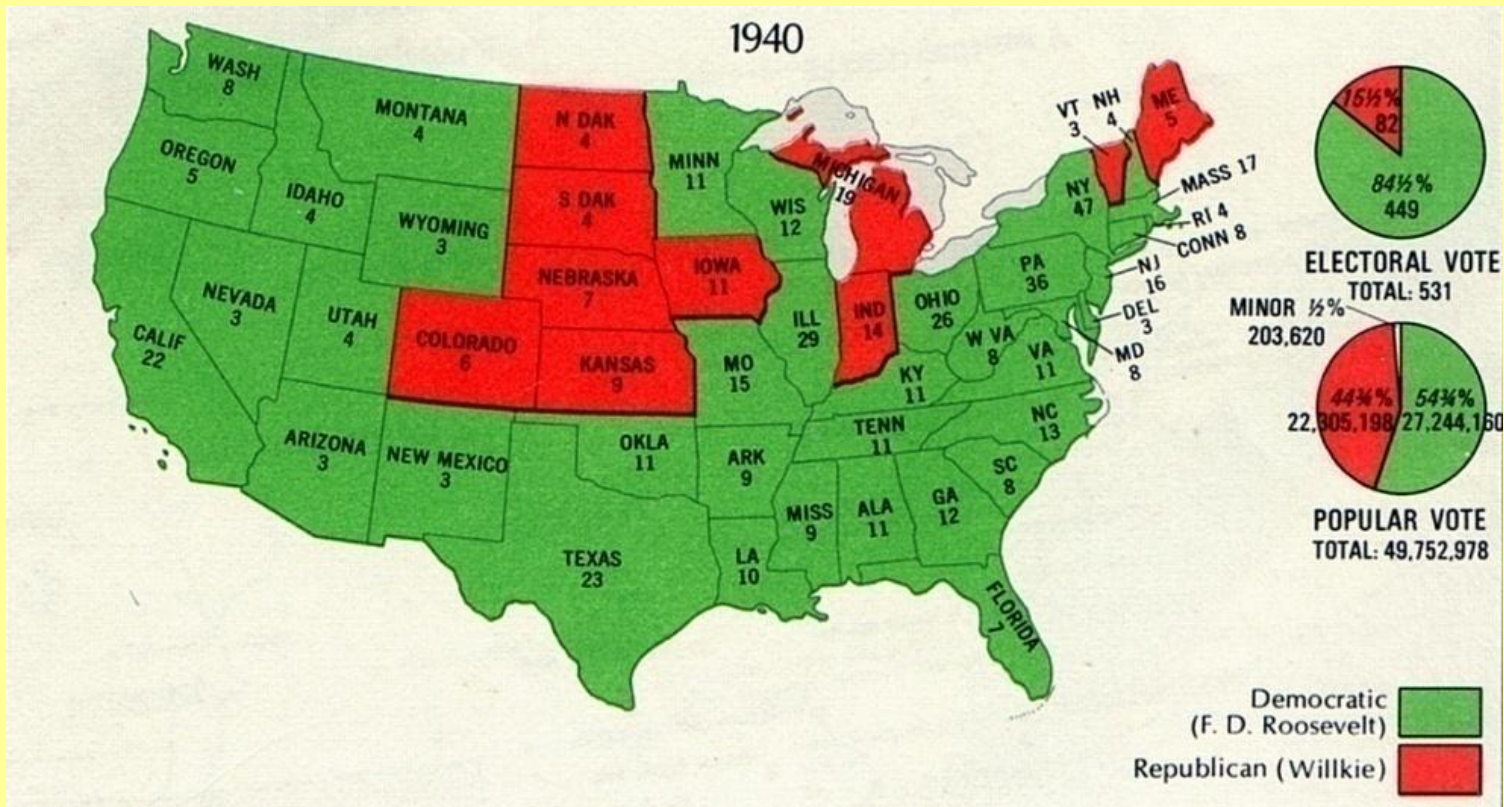
World War II: The Home Front

“The Arsenal of Democracy”

- America “officially neutral” as European war began
- FDR increased military production and skirted Neutrality Acts after Nazi victories
- FDR ran for third term
- Lend-Lease Act passed
- U.S. embargoed oil and scrap-iron sales to Japan



The Election of 1940



- FDR won unprecedented third term
- Defeated Willkie
- Both candidates considered “internationalists”

In this map of electoral results, FDR is indicated in green, Willkie in red

The America First Committee

- Formed in 1940
- An estimated 800,000 members at its height
- Most prominent member was Charles Lindbergh
- Advocated building up U.S. defenses and staying out of Europe's problems
- Dissolved four days after Pearl Harbor



Charles Lindbergh speaking at an
America First rally

Pearl Harbor

- December 7, 1941
- Carrier-based Japanese planes bombed naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
- More than 2400 Americans killed
- U.S. Pacific fleet temporarily crippled



The USS *Arizona* burns during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor

Pearl Harbor: The Nature of the Attack

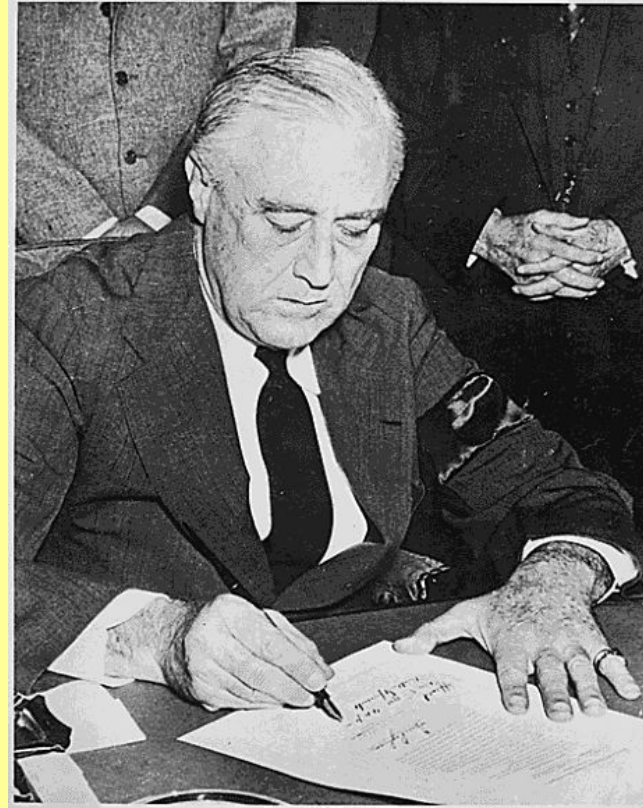


Japanese aerial view of
Pearl Harbor under attack

- Japanese intended to knock out U.S. military power
- Aircraft carriers followed less detectable northern route
- U.S. officials knew of a coming attack, but not at Pearl Harbor
- Not meant to be a “sneak attack”

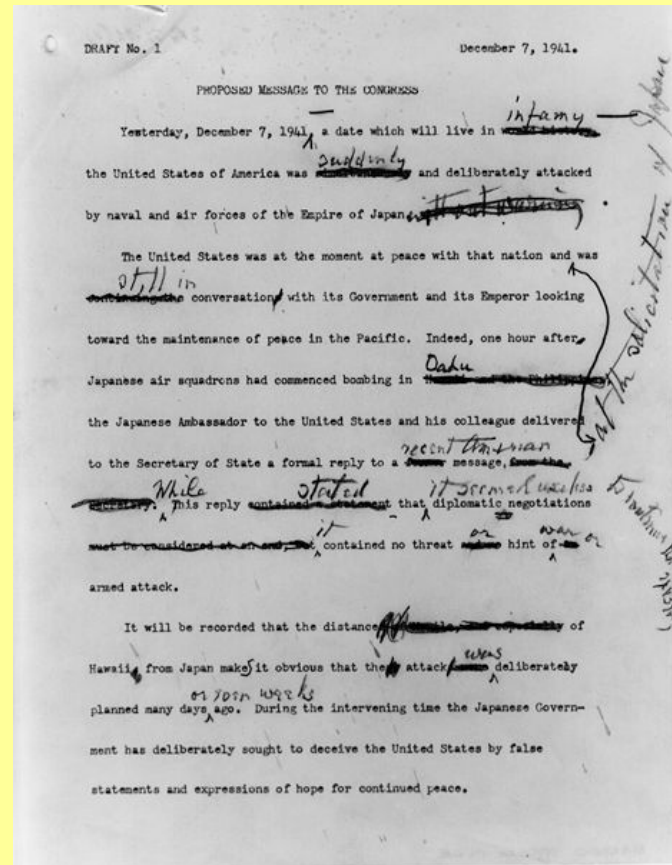
FDR's War Message

- Delivered to Congress on December 8, 1941
- Only one member of Congress voted against declaring war
- Germany declared war on the U.S. a few days later



FDR signs the
declaration of war with Japan

FDR's War Message: A Significant Change



- FDR changed the first line, which included the phrase, “a date which will live in *world history*”
- FDR's reading copy found after 43 years

FDR's annotated draft copy
of his speech

German Agents in the U.S.

- Four German agents landed at Amagansett, NY (June 1942)
- Four others near Jacksonville, FL
- Both groups had maps, explosives, cash
- Planned to sabotage factories, bridges, other installations
- FBI arrested both groups



Trial of captured German saboteurs,
July 1942

U-Boats in the Western Atlantic



A German U-boat

- Operation *Paukenschlag*
- East Coast essentially undefended
- U-boats sank over 500 ships in the U.S. defense zone, July–December 1942
- U.S. 10th Fleet fought against U-boats in western Atlantic
- Sank 65 U-boats in six months

Japanese Balloon Bombs

- Carried anti-personnel and incendiary bombs
- Floated to the West Coast
- Killed six picnickers in Oregon in 1945



A balloon bomb

Civil Defense

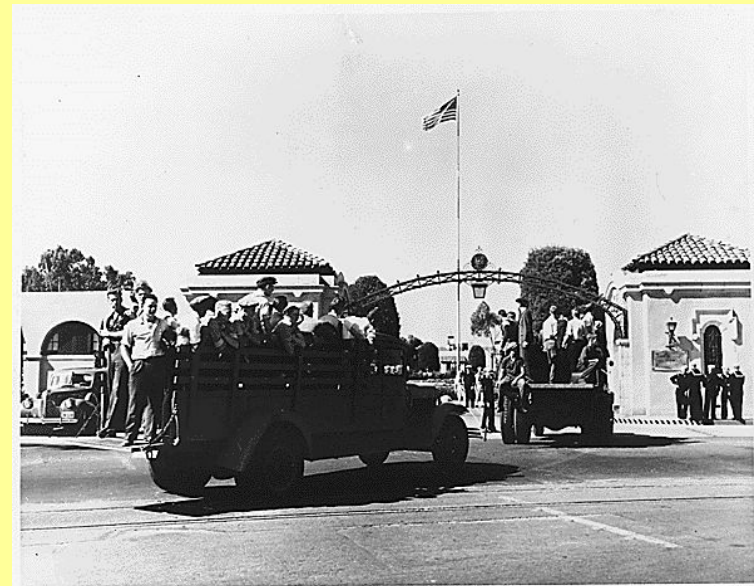


The WWII-era Civil Defense logo

- Fears of attack by Axis Powers on U.S. mainland
- Office of Civilian Defense
- Civil Air Patrol and Civil Defense Corps
- Performed various protective services

New Recruits

- Over 60,000 enlisted immediately after Pearl Harbor
- Military training facilities overwhelmed
- Not enough barracks or materiel
- Recruits processed, then sent to basic training
- Recruits broke down cultural and class barriers



Recruits arriving at the naval training center in San Diego

Basic Training



- Designed to build strength and stamina
- Obstacle courses, forced marches, marksmanship
- Instilled a strong sense of discipline

Army recruits practice calisthenics at
Camp Robinson, Arkansas, in 1942

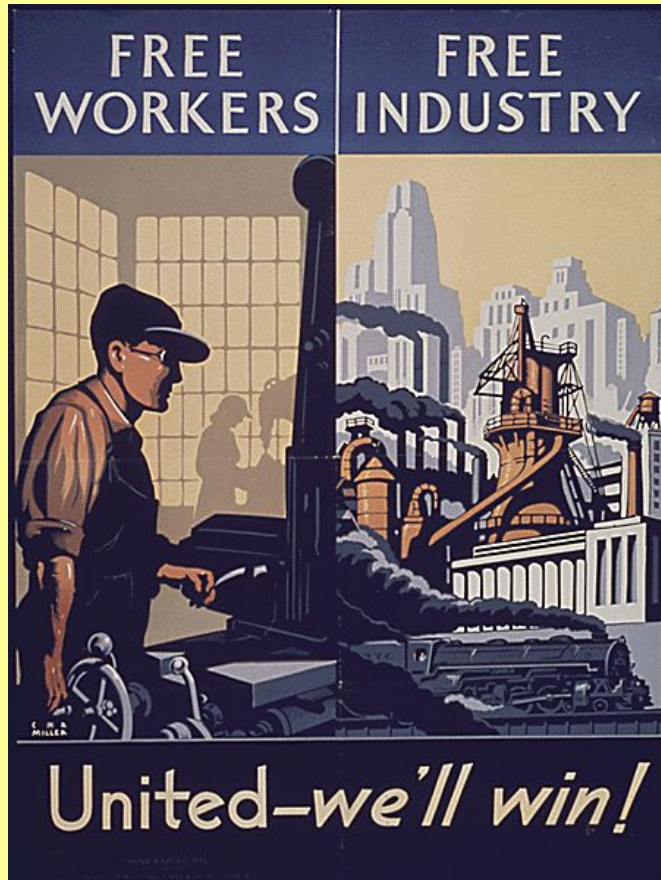
Mobilization of Industry

- “Dr. Win the War” replaced “Dr. New Deal”
- Many civilian industries converted to war production
- Manpower needed for defense plants
- Scarce goods rationed and price controls established
- Disputes between management and labor to resolve



Workers assembling an aircraft

“A Production Miracle”



- Axis Powers underestimated American production
- Many factories and businesses converted to war production
- New industries emerged
- Output significantly increased

Liberty Ships

- Usually cargo ships
- Developed by Henry Kaiser
- Featured welded hulls
- Many sections prefabricated
- By 1943, three entered service daily

During World War II, Brunswick, Georgia shipyards bustled with activity critical to America's war efforts. Between 1943 and 1945, the shipyard built 99 of these 447-foot cargo vessels

Photo # NH 98700 "Liberty" ship transport SS Carlos Carrillo off San Francisco, California, circa 1945-46



The SS *Carlos Carrillo*, a Liberty ship later made into a troop carrier



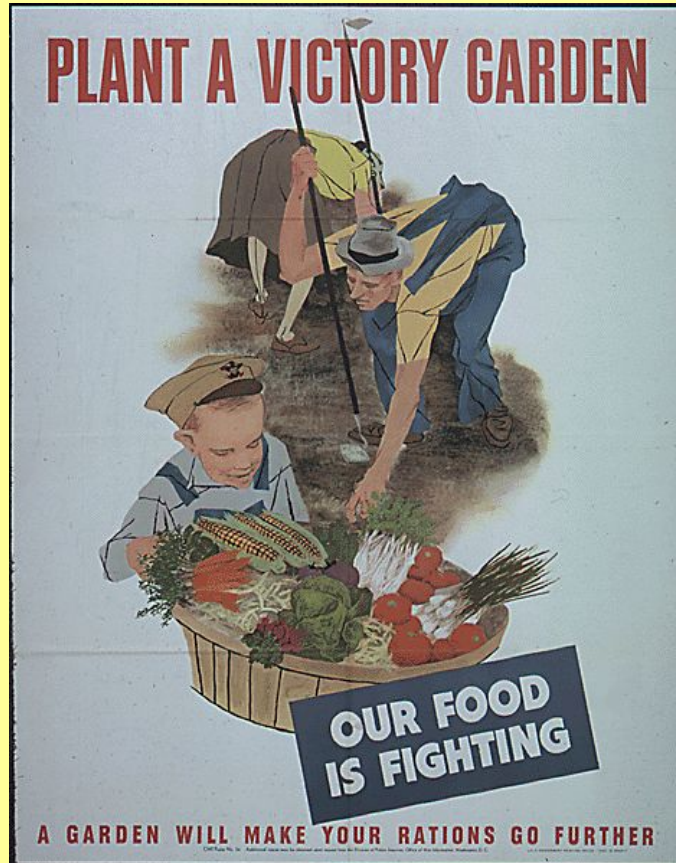
Ford's Willow Run Facility

- Built B-24 “Liberator” bombers
- World’s largest factory under one roof
- Produced 14 aircraft per day in August 1944



Workers at the Willow Run facility
assemble B-24 bombers, 1943

Victory Gardens



- Government urged citizens to grow fruits and vegetables
- Eased food shortages caused by rationing
- Nearly 20 million started gardens
- More than nine million tons of produces

A government poster promoting Victory Gardens

1940s Movies

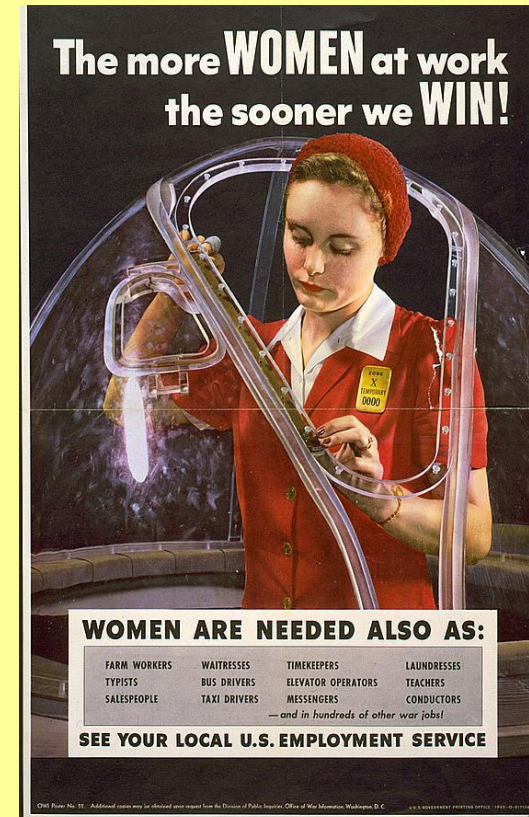


A scene depicting the Nazi propaganda machine, from one of Frank Capra's *Why We Fight* films

- Feature films included war themes
- Nazis and Japanese portrayed as buffoons or villains
- Patriotism also a common theme
- Characters such as Sherlock Holmes and Tarzan battled Nazis
- Documentaries by Capra and Wyler also popular

Women in the War Effort

- Took over many jobs for servicemen, most notably in heavy industry
- Some joined the military
- Altered family life, brought several drawbacks



A poster urging women to take manufacturing jobs to help the war effort

The Women's Army Corps



WAC Director Col. Oveta Culp Hobby
(right) confers with WAC members at
Mitchell Field, NY

- Marshall noted British success in using women for noncombat duties
- Congress created Women's Auxiliary Army Corps in 1942
- WAAC later renamed "Women's Army Corps"

WAVEs

- “Women Accepted for Voluntary Emergency Service”
- Navy program similar to WACs
- Did not serve overseas
- Nurses, clerical work, communications jobs



WHAT PAY DOES A NAVY WAVE GET?

RATE	Monthly Base Pay—Clear	Food Allowance*	Quarters Allowance*	Total Monthly Income
Apprentice Seaman	\$50.00	\$54.00	\$37.50	\$141.50
Seaman Second Class	54.00	54.00	37.50	145.50
Seaman First Class	66.00	54.00	37.50	157.50
Petty Officers	78.00 to 126.00	54.00	37.50	169.50 to 217.50

*(Unless food and quarters are provided by Navy)

PLUS \$200. for clothing, the finest medical and dental care, special tax exemption, low-cost Government life insurance, and free mail, reduced rates on transportation, theater tickets, etc.

DISTRIBUTED BY OWI FOR THE NAVY DEPT.
GRAPHIC NO. 7318

A WAVES recruitment poster explaining the pay scale for members

WASPs



Four WASPs receive final instructions as they chart a cross-country course

- “Women’s Airforce Service Pilots”
- Aviators Cochran and Love proposed idea separately
- Performed noncombat flight duties
- Freed male pilots for combat missions

Women in the Workforce

- Women were encouraged to work in defense plants
- Others grew Victory Gardens and helped with recycling for the war effort
- Generally earned less than male workers



Factory workers polish Plexiglas nose cones for A-20 attack bombers

“Rosie the Riveter”

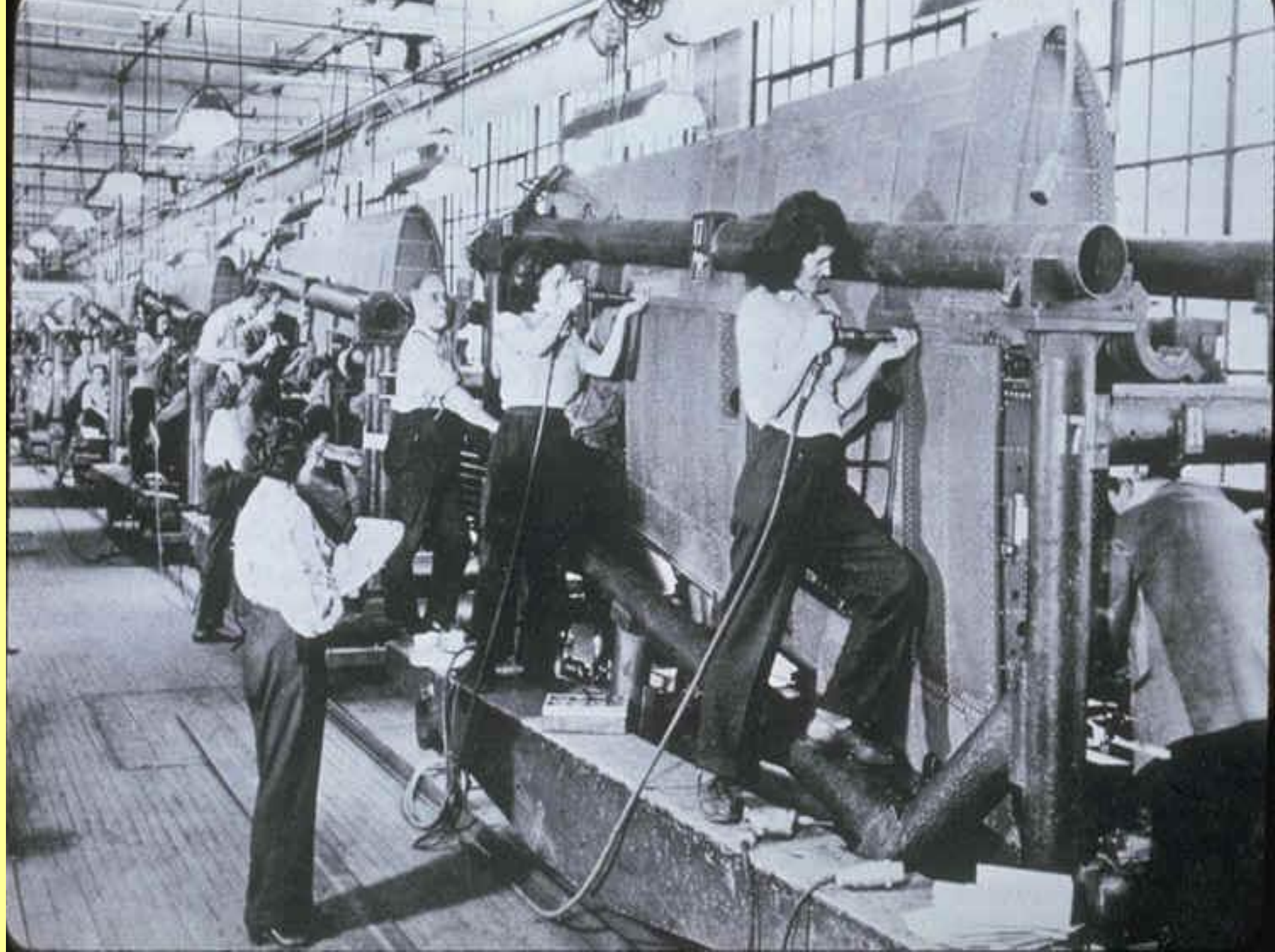


- A symbol of working women during the war
- Based on factory worker Rose Will Monroe
- Miller and Rockwell both created iconic “Rosie” images



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=55NCElsbjEQ>

This poster for the Westinghouse Corporation is frequently associated with “Rosie the Riveter”



Yes, there really was an AAGPBL

- *In late 1942, recognizing that World War II could affect professional baseball, chewing gum magnate and MLB executive Philip K. Wrigley had the idea to tap into the popularity of amateur softball and create a women's professional league.*
- *Rather than repurposing baseball parks such as Wrigley Field for non-sports-related activities (i.e. circuses, concerts, etc.), a women's league seemed like a viable solution.*
- *Wrigley set off to create and run the All-American Girls Softball League, which was originally formed and headed by three trustees: Wrigley, Paul Harper, a member of the board of directors and attorney for the Chicago Cubs, and Branch Rickey, president of the Brooklyn Dodgers.*



"No pants-wearing, tough-talking female softballer will play on any of our four teams."

At its height, the AAGPBL swelled to 15 squads throughout the Midwest, including the Kalamazoo Lassies, Chicago Colleens, Peoria Redwings and Rockford Peaches, the team that anchored "ALOTO." When the war ended in 1945, the league's popularity began waning, and the last game was played in 1954.



Caption from LIFE. Catcher Mary "Bonnie" Baker of the South Bend Blue Sox has five brothers, four sisters, all brothers play for the Canadian Baseball league.





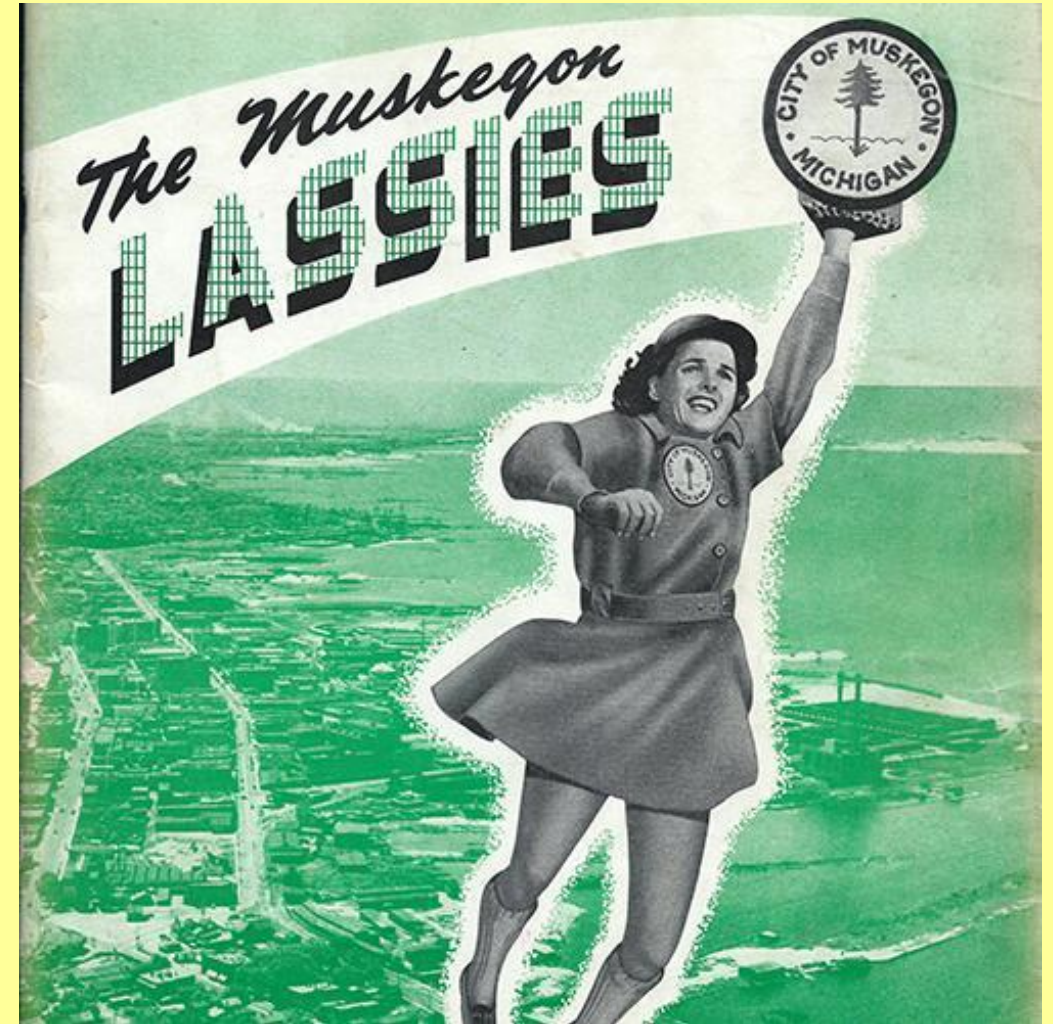
The real-life Rockford Peaches receive instruction from manager Eddie Stumpf in 1944. Getty



Caption from LIFE. All six teams of the league pose for a formal picture at season's start ... Eight of the players are married, three are mothers, many are engaged. A playing team consists of nine players, not ten as in softball. The league has a total of 96 players. Admission to games: \$0.74.

Wallace Kirkland—The LIFE Picture Collection/Getty Images

- Directed By: Penny Marshall (Big, Awakenings, The Preacher's Wife).
 - Big (also with Tom Hanks, if the first female directed film to gross more than 100 million dollars)
- Produced by: Elliot Abbot and Robert Greenhunt (Regarding Henry)
- Script: Babaloo Mandel and Lowell Gantz
 - City Slickers, Parenthood, Fever Pitch
- 2012- *A League of Their Own* was selected for preservation in the United States National Film Registry by the Library of Congress as being "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant".
- 2005: AFI's 100 Years...100 Movie Quotes: Jimmy Dugan: "There's no crying in baseball!" – #54
- Director Penny Marshall was inspired to make the film after viewing the 1987 documentary about the AAGPBL titled "A League of their Own" on television.
- Budget of 40 Million, box office returns of 132.4 million and this is against Batman Returns.



•**Geena Davis:** I didn't want to just be the girlfriend of the person who is having all the interesting things happen. And this is the ultimate example of that. I bring it up when I give speeches because I say, "I would rather play the baseball player than the girlfriend of the baseball player." And I'm lucky that I've had the opportunity

Director Penny Marshall, as told to The New York Times in

1992: I hadn't worked with so many women before. I thought it was something I should do. But I wasn't doing it just to do a women's picture. The problems as they're presented in the movie apply to both men and women. It's about, "Don't be ashamed of your talents." It's a universal thing.

All of the characters were fictionalized character and composites of some of the players in the league. Many say the real life personage of this or that player resembles the character of a certain player. Even the players themselves do not agree on who is most personified by the pitcher, "Kit," played by Lori Petti, or the sister, the catcher, "Dottie," played by Genna Davis. If you asked one of the old timers which one of them was Madonna, they will all raise their hand. Characters in the movie do resemble real life personages, but it is difficult to try and associate real life individuals to fictional movie characters. One item of note would be the third base coach who was an actual player in the AAGPBL. <https://www.aagpbl.org/resources/faq>



Pitcher Caroline Morris of Rockford Peaches, who pitched two no-hitters last year, uses a whirling pitch



Back, L-R: Mildred Deegan, Berith Melin, Marie Timm (Chaperone), Betty Jane Fritz, Irene Ruhnke, Dorothy Green
 Middle, L-R: Marjorie Peters, Olive Little, Dorothy Kamenshek, Gladys Davis, Eileen Bermeister, Muriel Coben
 Front, L-R: Mildred Warwick, Mary Pratt, Edward Stumpf (Manager), Helen Nelson, Betty Moczynski



Only two of the original four teams played all 12 years of the league's existence. They were the Rockford, IL Peaches and the South Bend, IN Blue Sox.

Rockford finished in the bottom of the standings with a record of 35 wins and 57 losses. Even so, the Peaches went on to win play-off Championships in 1945, 1948, 1949, and 1950.

- Geena Davis as Dorothy "Dottie" Hinson (#8, catcher/assistant manager)
- Tom Hanks as Jimmy Dugan (manager)
- Madonna as Mae Mordabito (#5, center field)
- Lori Petty as Kit Keller (#23, pitcher)
 - Kathleen Butler as Older Kit
- Rosie O'Donnell as Doris Murphy (#22, third base)
- Anne Ramsay as Helen Haley (#15, first base)
- Megan Cavanagh as Marla Hooch (#32, second base)
- Tracy Reiner as Betty "Spaghetti" Horn (#7, left field/relief pitcher)
- Ann Cusack as Shirley Baker (#11, left field)
- Bitty Schram as Evelyn Gardner (#17, right field) – Monk (Sharona)

<https://www.aagpbl.org/teams/rockford-peaches/1943>

"If you were hurt you played hurt. I broke my thumb one time and the doctor said, 'You're done for six weeks.' Four nights later I was catching." — Magdalen Redman

Dimmy
Crying? There's crying? There's
no crying in baseball. No crying. / 68
(getting angry again) When Rogers Hornsby was
my manager he once called me a
~~steaming~~, talking pile of pig shit.
And that was in front of my
parents who had driven down to from
Michigan for the game. Did I cry?
No. There's no crying!



Caption from LIFE. Outfielder Faye Dancer, Fort Wayne, is a heavy hitter. By league rule, skirts must be within six inches of the kneecap.
Wallace Kirkland—The LIFE Picture Collection/Getty Images

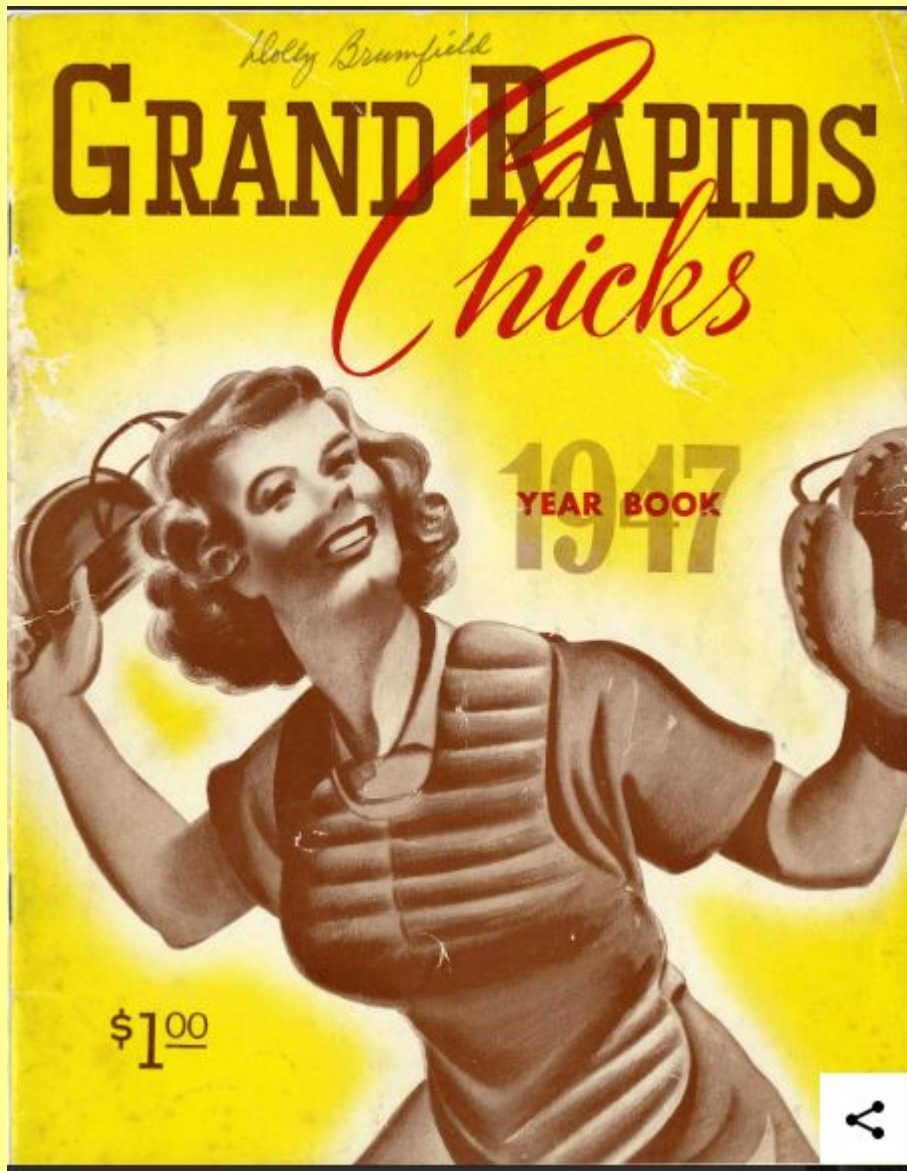


Connie Wisniewski, a Grand Rapids Chicks pitcher known as the "Iron Woman," set the AAGPBL all-time record in 1946 for wins in a season with 33. She would also finish that season with an ERA of 0.96, after tossing 40 complete games. (National Baseball Hall of Fame)



The Fort Wayne Daisies, pictured here in 1945, featured players like Vivian Kellogg and Audrey Haine. They played under manager Bill Wambsganss, a member of the 1920 world champion Cleveland Indians -- widely renowned for his unassisted triple play during the series.

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Caption from LIFE. Pitcher Annabelle Lee, Fort Wayne southpaw, hurled only perfect game (no opponent reached first) in league history.
Wallace Kirkland—The LIFE Picture Collection/Getty Images



Caption from LIFE. Anastasia Batikis, Belles' outfielder, is about to take a healthy cut during a practice game. Former big leaguers like Max Carey and Marty MacManus coach the teams.
Wallace Kirkland—The LIFE Picture Collection/Getty Images





Caption from LIFE. Faye Dancer pays for sliding into base with her bare legs protected only by a skirt rather than the male players' pants. "Strawberry" marks are painfully frequent.



Caption from LIFE. Penny O'Brian, Fort Wayne rookie infielder slides into third base. Sliding and bare legs are incompatible but girls do it regularly in their enthusiasm.
Wallace Kirkland—The LIFE Picture Collection/Getty Images

Producer Carl Reiner: I have so many interesting memories from filming. For one, that bruise on Renee Coleman [who played Alice Gaspers] from [sliding into base] -- that was real. That was not one pinch of makeup. She had that bruise for, like, 10 years.

Dorothy "Dottie" Kamenshek

former first baseman for the Rockford Peaches, as told to Marquette Magazine before her passing in 2010: In the beginning, we were only getting 500 people in the stands, and then it got up to 10,000, which is good for a town that supports minor league baseball. Eventually, we won them over. At first they just came to see the skirts, and then we showed them we could play.



Lavonne “Pepper” Paire-Davis

Playing catcher as well as shortstop and third base, she won pennants with all but the Millerettes, and her 400 career runs batted in tie her for fourth in league history. In 1950, she drove in 70 runs in 110 games for the Chicks.

I know what it's like for your dream to come true. Mine did. Baseball was the thing I had the most fun doing. It was like breathing. We played every night of the week -- doubleheaders on Sundays and holidays. ... Honestly, [I couldn't] tell you I knew the history we were making back then.





Billy Bean, MLB ambassador for inclusion: I was playing in the MLB when I saw the movie, and I didn't even think about it being [specifically for] women -- more so it was about the power of baseball and the healing components that bring people together. One of the things that it captured beautifully was the passion the players had. When you saw how much it mattered to them, it had a real, organic component to it. They didn't have to "play like men" but were great athletes who happened to be female. I just think there was a human element that showed an athlete is an athlete.

