

The Arsenal of Democracy in Oakland County



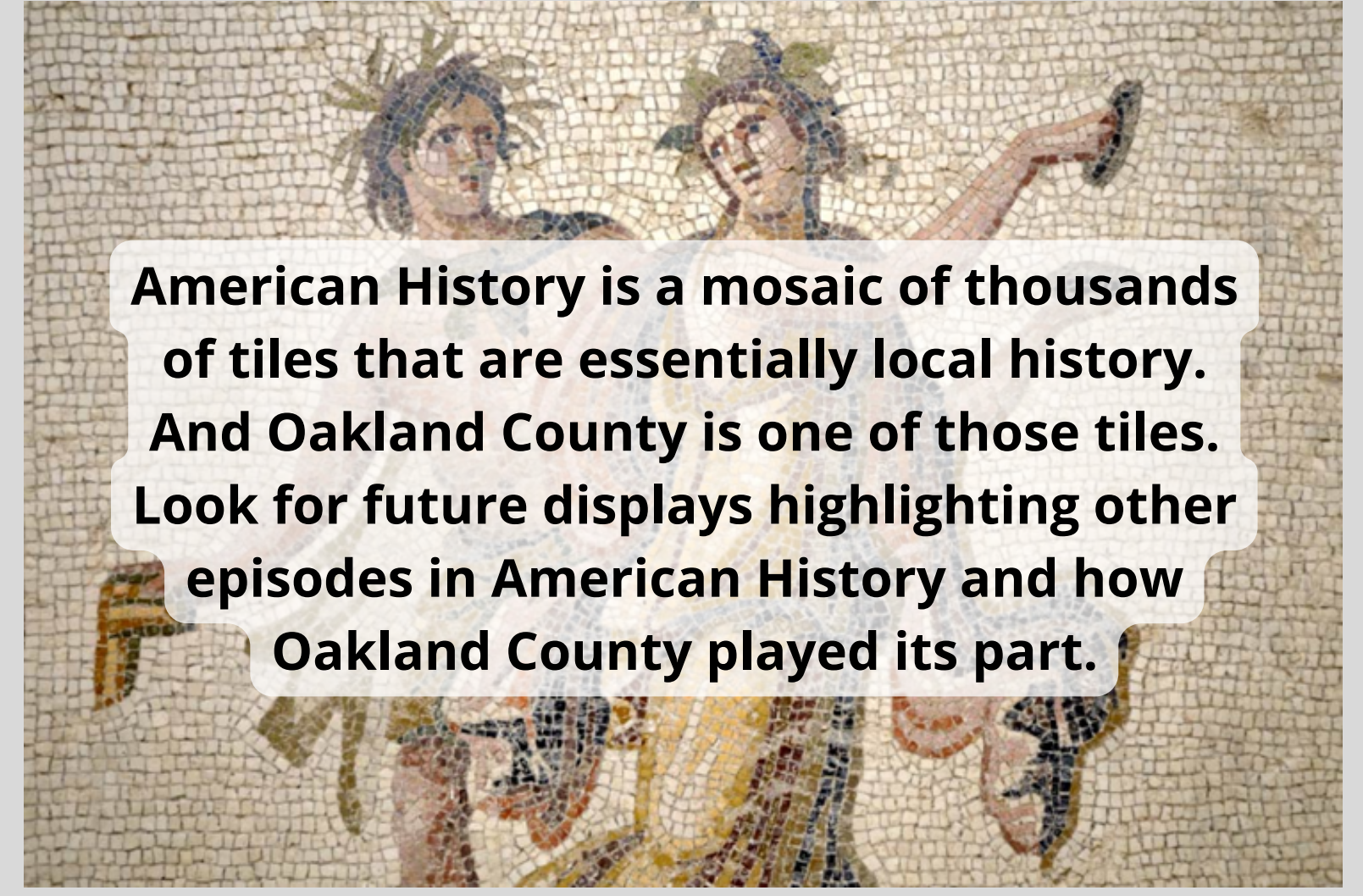
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www.oakgov.com/historic

The Allies were successful in World War II largely because of their industrial capacity, particularly that of the United States. The gamble Germany and Japan took was that they could achieve victory before that productive power took effect. They were wrong.

System	Allies	Axis	United States
Tanks and Self Propelled Guns	227,235	52,345	102,410
Artillery	914,683	180,141	257,390
Mortars	657,318	100,000+	105,055
Machine guns	4,744,484	1,058,863	2,679,840
Military trucks	3,060,354	594,859	2,382,311
Military aircraft total	633,072	278,795	324,750



American History is a mosaic of thousands of tiles that are essentially local history. And Oakland County is one of those tiles. Look for future displays highlighting other episodes in American History and how Oakland County played its part.

American production was a national achievement that resulted from the contribution of people and companies all over the country. No single area, however, was more important than southeastern Michigan...the center of the American auto industry. And Oakland County played its part.

In Pontiac, General Motors plants made:



15,000 DUKWs -
75% of all those made

<https://weaponsandwarfare.com/2015/08/23/dukw/>



9,000 anti-aircraft guns
of several types

Courtesy of General Motors Media Archive



300,000 2 1/2 ton trucks -
60% of all such vehicles used
by the American Army in Europe

<https://veteransbreakfastclub.org/deuce-and-a-half/>

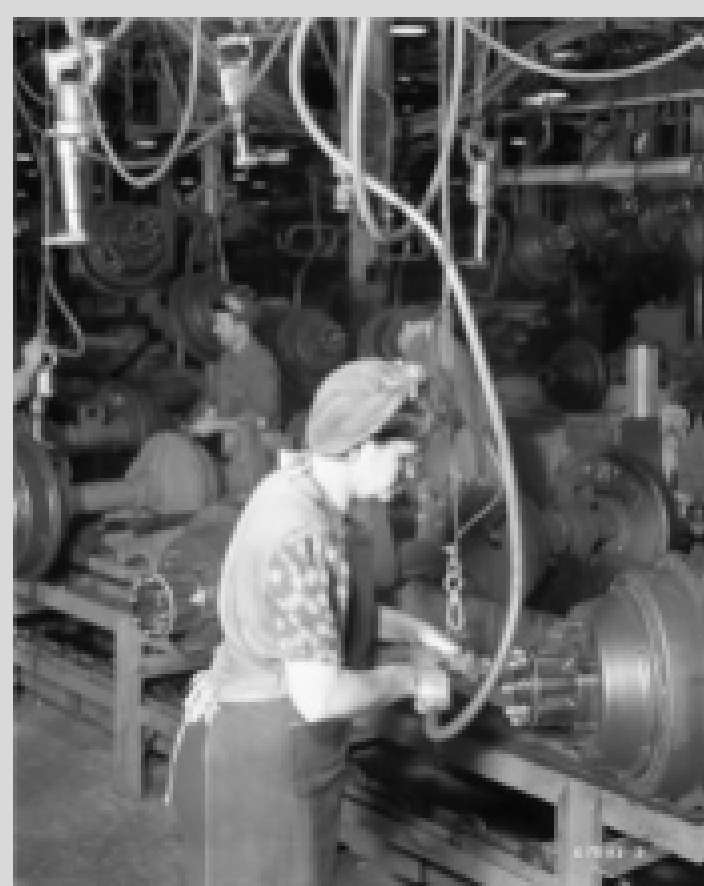
Plus:

- Torpedoes
- Armored cars
- Parts for diesel engines that powered tanks and landing craft
- Thousands of rounds of artillery ammunition



Small Suppliers Made Their Mark, Too

National Twist Drill (above) made machine tools to produce armor for the US Navy. It is now a National Historic Site on Tienken and Rochester Roads. Michigan Seamless Tube (below) made parts for the aircraft industry. They still operate in South Lyon. Both won coveted E-Flags for production excellence. These were awarded to less than 5% of the 80,000 companies involved in war work.



Rosie the Riveter at GM Truck and Coach

Courtesy of General Motors Media Archive

Solutions to Labor Shortages

To accomplish this feat of production American industry needed to replace the workers who had gone off to war. Women were hired and migrants from other parts of the country, particularly Tennessee and Kentucky moved into Oakland County. In addition, African-Americans were given employment opportunities from which they had previously been excluded.

The new war workers needed housing. Trailer camps were one solution.

Trailer Camp Will Help Solve Labor Problem

Government Has Invested Large Sum of Money in Establishing It

The South Lyon Government Trailer Camp southwest of the Michigan Seamless Tube Company plant is practically complete except for one third of the sidewalks, and this week John W. Graham, project engineer, will turn the camp over to Elmer Swack, housing manager. The trailer camp was established by the government, at the request of Michigan Seamless Tube Company, to house immigrant war workers. Already several persons