

# “ROSIE” MARY TORRES

*Moore’s Shipyard, Oakland Journeyman Welder 1942-1945*



Mary Schevchik Torres was born in Doren, PA., on May 26, 1923. It was a nice quiet town with few jobs. On December 7, 1941 the Japanese planes bombed Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt declared and war and lives were changed forever. Most of Mary’s classmates started to enlist in the service and Mary wanted to help do something to win the war. She saw an ad in the local paper that McClellan Air Force Base in Fairfield, CA., needed women to work at the base. With only a few months until graduation, Mary



decided she would go to California. A week after graduation, while her parents were at church, Mary gathered her graduation money, some food, packed a suitcase, left a note



saying she was leaving to look for a job and caught a bus for a 5 day trip to California. Although she was only 18 and traveling alone with no knowledge of what lay ahead, she was one determined young lady!

Upon arrival in California she found a room, located the Air Base and started work. Five months later she saw another ad for workers needed at Moore’s shipyard in Oakland. She once again picked up and found work as a Welder where she was sent for a weeks’ worth of training. Mary was asked to take a small test and upon passing she was put to work as a tacker (spot welding). After 6 months she took & passed her Journeyman Welder’s test, which would include lots of shell welding (\_\_\_\_\_).



During her time at Moore’s, Mary and her boss Frank fell in love and were married. Since you could not tell people apart when they were wearing their leathers (welding outfit) and welding helmets, Frank and Mary decorated Mary’s welding helmet so that it would be easier for Frank to spot her on the floor! Mary worked at Moore’s from 1942 until 1945 when Moore’s started laying off all women workers as returning male war veterans would have first choice at any jobs.

Mary was now a housewife while Frank hired on at a larger shipyard and continued as a foreman in the shipyards until he retired after 48 years of service. They raised two sons, invested in the stock market and were able to purchase a bowling alley in Fremont. Ten years later they sold it and Mary became a beautician, with clients today\_\_\_\_\_



Mary and Frank were married for 62 years before his passing in 2004. Today you can find Mary at the Rosie the Riveter WW2 Home Front Park in Richmond, CA where she will greet you with a big smile saying, “Hi! I’m one of the Rosies!”

