

# “ROSIE” PRISCILLA ELDER

*Richmond Kaiser Shipyard #3 Electrician 1943-1945*



Priscilla Elder was born in Iowa on March 23, 1920, the 3<sup>rd</sup> out of 11 kids. Priscilla’s brother Tony was a gunnar’s mate on the USS Dewey that arrived at Pearl Harbor to tend to the injured survivors after the Japanese attack. Her husband Donald was drafted and shortly thereafter and served in Europe under General Patton in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army. (Another brother Fred was in the Army Medical Corps.)



Her older sister was working as an Electrician in the Kaiser shipyards in Richmond, CA., and told Priscilla that there was an urgent need for war workers out there and that she should come as soon as she could. So at the age of 22 she moved to Richmond with her 22 month old son. Her twin sister would soon follow and both would get jobs as Electricians, wiring circuit-boxes that were installed on troop transports built in Shipyard #3. Priscilla would also be called upon to work in the tool bin, checking tools out to the workers and grinding the beads off of the welders’ stingers.



Priscilla was able to live in the wartime housing that sprang up around Richmond. In the picture at right she and her son are standing in front of their top floor apartment at 1401 Virginia St., (@ 14<sup>th</sup>). Her older sister lived in the apartment below it with her family. (The iceman was making deliveries and Priscilla asked him to take this picture, you can see the ice block on the porch that he had to set down first). Priscilla’s son was able to attend the Maritime Child Development Center which is still in use today.



When her older sister moved away, Priscilla moved to San Francisco to live near other relatives and would then commute by ferry to the shipyard in Richmond, walking from her apartment on 1058 Fell Street to the Ferry building (a distance of 3 miles) but would treat herself to a trolley ride home when she arrived back in San Francisco at night. Priscilla and her son would enjoy fun times at Golden Gate Park on the weekends as their apartment was just down the street.



Priscilla finished out the war years at the shipyard but her job would soon be made available to the returning war veterans. Although she went back to Iowa where her husband joined her after his discharge from the Army, Priscilla had fallen in love with California and by 1955 she had convinced her husband to move to California.

