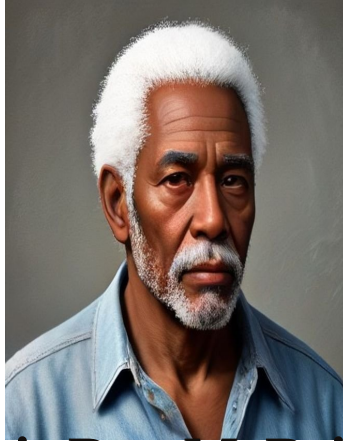




Otis Ray McBride

August 13, 1951 - August 30, 2026

Mobile, Alabama

Otis Ray McBride died in Mobile on August 30, 2026. He was seventy-five. Born there on August 13, 1951, he grew up knowing the bay as a workplace, not a backdrop, and he learned a weld before he learned a campus. A bead, he said, is a kind of sentence: it has to hold or the whole story is wet.

He spent thirty-two years in the shipyard, first as a helper, later as the man who could hear a bad fit before the gauge admitted it. He did not romanticize heat. He said the bay was beautiful from a bluff and dishonest from a dry dock, and that both facts could be true before breakfast. He taught younger men that a hood is not a suggestion, and that you do not leave a job for the next shift to find in the dark.

He married Claudine McBride in 1974. They raised two daughters in a shotgun that grew a garden of tomatoes against the lane. Claudine taught first grade. Otis grilled on a Saturday and considered gumbo a year-round crop if you were stubborn. After his back quit the worst tanks he still came out for a favorite hull, moving slower, swearing less, doing the same honest work.

Neighbors remember a man who wore a clean shirt to a dusty job, who could sit through a long offering without checking a clock, and who hummed while he worked as if the steel were a conversation. He loved the river at evening, a plate of shrimp he did not finish, and the particular quiet after a weld holds. He died in Mobile, in the heat he had always preferred to a clean cold. The yard is still there. Someone else will strike the next arc.

Services

A funeral in Mobile with one familiar hymn. A gift to a trade-school fund or a church pantry is welcome.

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