



Bertha Carmen Hodge

July 15, 1952 - September 9, 2024

Bertha Carmen Ford Hodge, a virtuous woman of strength, faith, and resilience, was born on July 15, 1952, in Havana, Cuba, to her devoted parents, Caridad “Cachita” Harris Ford and Charles Ford. As the middle of three daughters, she was raised in a large, close-knit family that instilled in her a deep sense of loyalty, warmth, and compassion—values that defined her entire life. Family was the heart of who Bertha was, and her unwavering love for those around her became the guiding force in everything she did.

As a child, Bertha was active and rambunctious, always finding ways to avoid her chores, often convincing others to do them for her. She had a knack for causing a stir, especially on trips to the dentist, and developed a unique language with her sister Elena that they continued to use well into adulthood. A self-proclaimed tomboy, Bertha was fiercely protective of her family and friends, always ready to stand up for them. Despite her tough exterior, she had a soft spot for her father, Papa, and her Uncle Telly, who she believed could see no wrong in her, a feeling she cherished deeply.

In 1968, Bertha and her immediate family, including her mother, sisters, grandfather, cousin, and aunt, were able to join their relatives in New York City. Bertha quickly adapted to life in the U.S. and pursued her education, earning both her Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in Education from Adelphi University. She began her career teaching various grades in elementary

schools across New York but eventually found her true calling as a kindergarten teacher. Bertha's classrooms were always full of creativity and plants, and she was beloved by colleagues, students, and their families. It wasn't uncommon for her to take students home, caring for them as if they were her own and including them on family trips.

In New York, Bertha met the love of her life, Ian Hodge, and the two were married on July 1, 1985. Together, they built a life surrounded by family and welcomed two daughters, Tabitha and Shamala. Bertha adored her granddaughters, Olivia Tiana and Arianna Alani. Olivia was her shopping partner and constant companion, and Bertha was so proud of all her achievements, always eager to share them with anyone who would listen. For Arianna, Bertha's love was unconditional, and her eyes sparkled with pride whenever little Arianna called her "Chemy," her unique version of "Grammy."

Bertha retired in 2006 and moved to Orlando, Florida, to be closer to her sister Elena and her aunts, Emma and Maria. Florida became the gathering place for family Christmas celebrations, and when her aunts passed away, Bertha's home became the heart of the holiday festivities. She loved Christmas, and her elaborate meals and beautifully crafted Christmas village displays were annual highlights, with many asking for photos and videos of the display each year.

Bertha's love language was acts of service. Whether it was cooking a favorite meal, gifting someone she knew, or offering a ride, Bertha was always available to help, no matter how tired she was. She spent her later years growing even closer to her family, often chatting daily with Elisa, Mirtha, Rose, and Jannet. In her final days, she was able to enjoy one last family celebration on the weekend of August 9, 2024.

Bertha is preceded in death by her husband, Ian Hodge; her parents, Caridad

and Charles Ford; her sister, Elena Ford; her aunts, Celia Harris, Emma Hendrickson, Isoline Harris, Doris Crow, Enid Shelton, and Maria Falloon; her Uncle, Telly Lawrence; and her cousin, Olga Farquharson.

She is survived by her two Daughters: Tabitha Hodge of New York and Shamala Hodge of Apopka, FL; her three Sisters: Rosa Harris of New York, Adita, and Eliza Ford of Cuba; her four Brothers: Reinaldo, Rafael, Daniel, and Leonardo Ford of Boston, MA; her Granddaughters: Olivia Hodge and Arianna Taylor; her Nieces and Nephews, Tiesha Saunders, Steve Saunders, Jonathan, Qwinten, and Jayden James and Patrick Ford; her Cousins: Abdiel, Mirtha, and Emmanuel Erin, Alberto Falloon, Jr., Arielle, Zion, and Zayah Freels, Jannet, Isaiah, and Adrienne Jones, Alex, Dione, and Valarie Farquharson, Alicia Zayas and Olivia, John and Robert Almagro Sr., Ody and Lola Galloway. Also mourning her loss are Tariq Taylor, Sandra, and Ricky Bradshaw, and her Uncle, Alberto Falloon.

Bertha leaves behind many extended family members and friends who will miss her dearly and look forward to reuniting with her in Heaven.

Cemetery Details

Edgewood Cemetery ~ Apopka

141 South Edgewood Drive
Apopka, FL 32703

Previous Events

Visitation

SEP 18. 10:30 AM (ET)

Sheeler Oaks Spanish Seventh-Day Adventist Church
1822 Sheeler Avenue
Apopka, FL 32703

Service

SEP 18. 12:00 PM (ET)

Sheeler Oaks Spanish Seventh-Day Adventist Church
1822 Sheeler Avenue
Apopka, FL 32703

Tribute Wall

MT

“ Mrs. Cathy Brown & Team planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Bertha Carmen Hodge.

Mrs. Cathy Brown & Team - September 17, 2024 at 12:51 PM

MT

“ Mrs. Cathy Brown & Team purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Bertha Carmen Hodge.



Mrs. Cathy Brown & Team - September 17, 2024 at 12:51 PM