

A Poem for Mother

By Dick Underwood
(Modified to read "mother" instead
of grandma.)

Mother, you were just a girl,
So many years ago.
You had your loves and had your
dreams,
You watched us come and go.

You watched us make the same
mistakes,
That you had made before,
But that just made you hold us tight,
And love us all the more.

We haven't always thought about
The things that you have seen.
To us you've just been 'Mother',
No thought of who you've been.

But we remember now in love,
Your life from start to end,
And we're just glad we knew you,
As Mother, and as Friend.

*A tribute from your daughter,
Dian Williams*

HONORING THE LIFE OF
Shirley Eleanor June Rhodes

JULY 11, 1944 - MAY 10, 2020



SATURDAY, MAY 30, 2020
1 P.M.

TEMPLE & SONS FUNERAL DIRECTORS CHAPEL
2801 NORTH KELLY AVENUE
OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73111

OFFICIATING: REV. CALVIN LUBIN
TRUE VINE MINISTRIES
3701 SPENCER ROAD
SPENCER, OK 73084

The Uniqueness That Is Her

Shirley Eleanor June Cato graced this world with her presence on July 11, 1944. She was the 11th child of 15 children born to Theodore R. Cato and Ethel Lee Jones Cato in Vernon, Oklahoma.

Shirley's early childhood was spent in Vernon, OK where she attended Vernon and Hanna Public Schools. She played basketball at Hanna High School, which she stated, "she was pretty good." However, in 1960 the "big city." was calling her name. So, she left School and moved to Oklahoma City, where she earned her high school diploma Through The Central Manpower Program while working for her favorite cousin, Florence Jones-Kemp at her eatery, so-named, Florence's Diner.

Shirley accepted Christ at an early age and was baptized at the Walker Chapel AME Church in Vernon, OK. Once she moved to Oklahoma City, she united with True Vine Baptist Church in Spencer, where she remained an avid member until her health failed.

During her many weekend visits to Vernon with her sister Effie, Shirley met and fell in love with this quiet, handsome man named Peter Rhodes, who would frequent her hometown of Vernon all the way from Wetumka, OK. Shirley affectionately called him "Pete", "Peter

Rabbit", or she simply called him by his full name, Peter Rhodes.

Later, Shirley briefly moved to Tulsa where she lived with an older sister and brother-in-law, Nadine and Nathaniel Tyson. After some time, Shirley would move back to Oklahoma City and marry her beloved "Pete". To this union, six children were born.

Shirley was an amazing wife, mother, grandmother, and woman of God. To know her was to love her. She never met a stranger. She was going to talk to you and find out who your people were; especially if you looked like you could be related.



The Uniqueness That Is Her

Shirley loved her church, her music (The Williams Brothers gospel group and the Blues), and her pictures; she had thousands of pictures that she had taken. If you needed a picture for whatever reason or occasion it was guaranteed that she had it. She did not mind making you a copy; however, if you borrowed them, you'd better make sure you brought back her original!

Although she loved these things, she loved her family most. This was apparent by her joy in organizing basketball games for the Vernon Reunion every Memorial Day Weekend, co-forming the Davis family reunion, helping with the first Cato reunion that is almost 30 years strong now, or how she would always call to check on you, or bring you a sweet potato pie, strawberry cake, or potato salad. She made sure you were informed of who your relatives were – she did this best by posting on Facebook (once she mastered it, she had it). She especially loved her Grandkids, and Great-Grandkids because you were sure to see them in tow no matter how many there were and when you did, they were known as "those Shirley Rhodes grandkids!"



Shirley worked several years for Honeywell soldering metals and alloys. Later, she became a cook at Twin Hills Country Club. After a few years of working for Twin Hills, she used her skills to open her own family restaurant, Shirtier's. Once Shirtier's closed she spent her time as a homemaker until her health failed. Once she suffered a massive stroke in May 2019, she along with her husband moved to Loganville, GA to live with her beloved daughter, Sabrina and son-in-law, Jessie who took care of her until her transition.

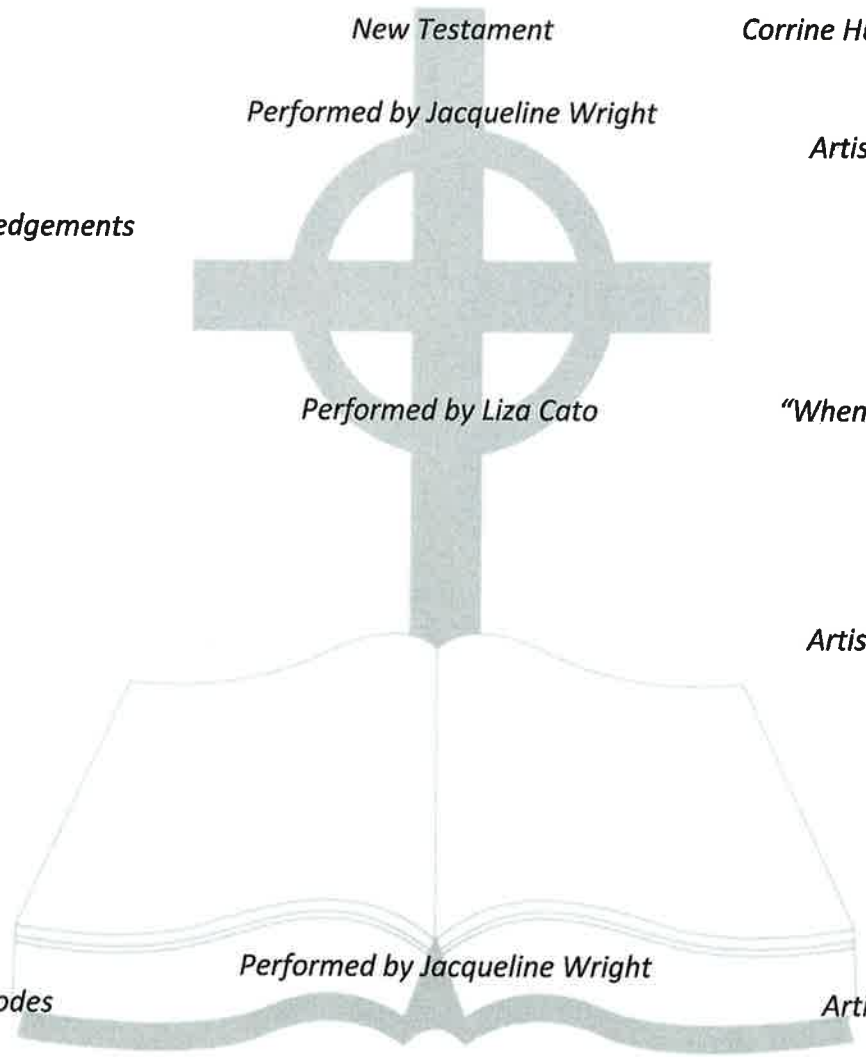
Shirley was preceded in death by her sons Derrick and Haskell Rhodes, great-granddaughter Shaniya Williams, parents, Theodore and Ethel Cato, siblings, Rosa Lee Cato, Ralph Cato Sr., Cynthia Mitchell, Nadine Tyson, Arthur Cato Sr., Verdis Cato Sr., Anice Alexander, Beatrice Grant, and Clifford Cato.

Shirley leaves to cherish her memories, her husband Peter Rhodes; her children, Sanford Rhodes (Gail), Dian Williams, Sabrina Tanksley (Jessie), Antwine Rhodes (Janice); 18 grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren; three sisters, Altha Fay Fields, Wyona Bowie, and Effie Guyton; two brothers, Robert Cato (Liza), and Bennie Cato (Angela), and a host of nieces, nephews, other relatives, and friends.



Celebration Service

| | | |
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| Processional | Ministers, Funeral Directors, Family | |
| Selection | "Near The Cross" Artist: Mississippi Mass Choir | |
| Prayer | Rev. Vickie Thompson | |
| Scripture Reading | Old Testament New Testament | Pastor Gail Lewis Corrine Huffman, State Supervisor |
| Selection | Performed by Jacqueline Wright | "Be There" Artist: The Williams Brothers |
| Resolutions/Acknowledgements | | Renika Veals |
| Reflection Reading | | Read Silently |
| Selection | Performed by Liza Cato | "When The Gates Swing Open" Artist: Otis Clay |
| Remarks | | Limit to 2 minutes |
| Selection | | "I Don't Know Why" Artist: The Williams Brothers |
| Words of Comfort | | Rev. Calvin Lubin |
| Video Tribute | | DeMarco Robinson Producer |
| Special Tribute from son, Antwine Rhodes | Performed by Jacqueline Wright | "Walk Around Heaven" Artist: Mighty Clouds of Joy |
| Parting View | Temple & Son Funeral Home | |
| Recessional | | |



Flower Girls

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| LaShay Rhodes | Treva McNeill |
| Shemesha Rhodes | Brenda Sumpter |
| Aria Williams | Jania Rhodes |
| LaShanda Rhodes | Cathy Stevenson |

Pallbearers

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| Marco Williams | Kentrell Williams |
| Rene Williams | Marcell Williams |
| Aubrey Williams | Haskell Rhodes, Jr |
| Elijah Pierce | Corey Bennett |

Honoraries

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Sanford Rhodes | Gail Rhodes |
| Antwine Rhodes | Janice Rhodes |
| Jessie Tanksley | Vickie Thompson |
| Landrell "Donte" Williams | Gail Lewis |



Internment
Hillcrest Memorial Gardens
Spencer, OK

Expression of Gratitude

We the family would like to take this opportunity to express our most sincere thanks and appreciation for all acts of kindness and expressions of sympathy extended during our hour of bereavement. May God bless each and every one of you.

The Peter & Shirley Rhodes Family

Our Thoughts Of You

Her Grandchildren

Grandma,

Thank you for all that you have done for us over the years. I will love and miss you always...

Marco (Dian's son)



Grandma,

You were a shining light for our family that will shine eternally. Things won't be the same now that you are gone, but my memories of you will never be forgotten. The summers spent at your house helped shape the man I am today. I will hold onto

and cherish those memories forever. Your grandson...
"Rene Ren" (Dian's son)

When I think about my Grandma, Shirley Rhodes, I think of family. From the mighty, mighty, Cato's to the Rhodes and everyone in between. She took pride in her family. Say anyone's name in the family and she knew them, she knew her family. She loved going to reunions, because she loved being around family. She would throw the best Fourth of July parties, for her family. She was always there, for her family. Last but definitely not least, she loved her family! That's what I will always remember about my grandmother. She brought family together and made memories that will last forever. I will forever love her and my family for that...Haskell Lydell Rhodes, Jr. (Haskell's son)



Grandma,

Thank you for being such a focal point of my childhood. There are so many memories that were made under your roof that I will cherish for the rest of my life. You are the reason that all the grandkids have an unbreakable bond that will always be there no matter how far away we are or how long we go without seeing each other. Your love, your personality, and your energy will be severely missed from this family. But we'll find comfort in the countless stories about you that we all share and knowing that your spirit will always be with us. You've been the reason for so many memories. Now may your memory be the reason for so many more... Love Corey (Kim Winston's son)



Our Thoughts Of You

Her Children

Mom, how can I say thanks for all you've done for me? Things so undeserved yet you did to prove your love to me.... Thank you for your unconditional love and support. Thank you for coming and staying with us for a month to help me get settled when I moved to Georgia. Thank you for coming to visit us most Christmases so we would have family to celebrate with. Thank you for all the memories you have given my kids by allowing them to come spend every summer with you although you had a house full of grands. Thank you for your dressing and sweet potato pie recipes. Mostly, I thank you for being a wonderful mother and grandmother and for caring enough to teach us about family. I love and miss you dearly... your daughter, Dian



Mom, you were the matriarch of our family. Thank you for the devotion and the unconditional love that you gave to my family. We shared many hours of heartfelt and memorable conversations and indulged in laughter when others said, "Here comes Shirley and her Bebe grandkids!" I will always cherish the sound of your voice saying "Brina" even up until your final days. I love you and you will forever be in my heart mom...your daughter, Sabrina (Brina)

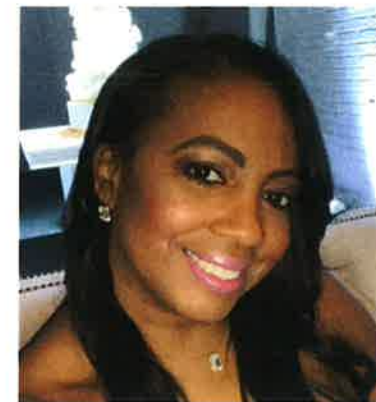
P.S. Tell Haskell and Derrick I love and miss them!



Son- & Daughters-In-Law

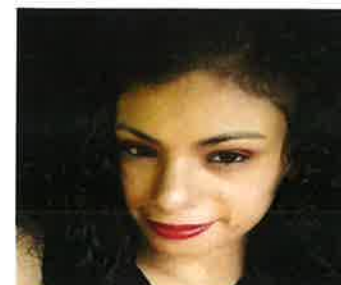


Mrs. Rhodes, You were no stranger to no one. Your witty remarks and your genuine ambiance brought joy and laughter. You were relished by many...I love and will miss you dearly, but I know you are in your Glorious Mansion, Robe and Crown that peace and love will always abound forever...
Jessie (Sabrina's husband)



Mrs. Shirley my mother-in-love. You have been a beautiful example of unconditional family love. I thank you for continuous love and support that you always gave to me and my children. You will forever hold a special place in my heart. Thank you for

introducing me to "The Williams Brothers." Loving you always...Kim Winston (Haskell's wife)



Grandma,

I will always remember the bright smile you would give us every time we would visit you in Oklahoma. The family tree was always very important to you, you never missed an opportunity to explain how a person was related to the family and how it is important to always be together and love one another. You also loved taking pictures of everybody, I love that because I'm the same way! I am so happy that you are so loved and got to meet your great-grandchildren. Rest in Peace grandma, you will always be missed.... Andrea (Sabrina's daughter-in-law)

Our Thoughts Of You

Her Grandchildren



Grandma,

Writing this has been like trying to surf with a cookie sheet during a hurricane knowing that I can't swim. My adrenaline is pumping as I fight with my grief. I know that I've gained another angel, another voice of reason when I feel like I'll implode. You will be my silent cheerleader when no one in this world knows that I even need one. Still, losing you feels unreal, like I'm a Martian succumbing to gravity of my own home. Walking steadily is so foreign, I am gliding through different emotions effortlessly. However, today, I remember that you are a piece of the puzzle of my life. Without you it wouldn't have been complete. So, as I cry and cry, I remember you taught me about no tears in heaven. I take the time to look up and smile. I'm so grateful God gave us you. I love you... LaShay (Derrick's daughter)



Dear Grandma,

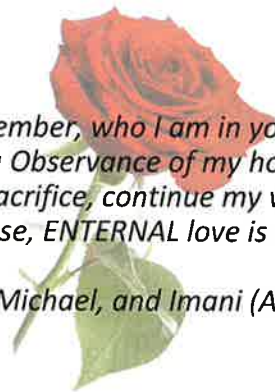
You had unconditional love for our family, and I will strive to be the kind of mother and grandmother you were to us. I will love and miss you forever... Aria (Dian's daughter)



Rose for a Rose

R is for Resilient, Remember, who I am in you.
O is for Oak, be strong Observance of my honor
S is for Safe, Selfless Sacrifice, continue my works.
E is for Elegant as a rose, ETERNAL love is out of loving you!

Janice (Wife), Jabriel, Michael, and Imani (Antwine's family)



Grandma,

You are the glue that holds this family together, the rock that keeps us grounded, words cannot express how much you mean to us all. Though you won't be here with us anymore, I know you will continue to guide us from above. Our true guardian angel.
~Love you forever Grandma~ ... Kentrell (Sabrina's son)

Our Thoughts Of You

Her Grandchildren

Grandma,

Thank you for always being there for us and giving us the gift of love and family. You were the protector, the strength, and the shelter of this family. You were always the one we could lean on no matter what. Today you are gone but you left us with a lifetime of memories that will never be forgotten. You will always be in our hearts and minds. I will love and cherish you forever. I love you and miss you dearly.... Donte (Sabrina's son)



The one word I'd use to describe Shirley Rhodes, my grandma, is strong. She was physically strong. She could knock anyone over with one playful push from her powerful hands. That strength matched her strong, talkative personality. Her voice demanded you to listen as she spoke. She was never short on words and only spoke the truth. She was always open and honest about everything no matter who she was talking to. I loved that most about her. She was strong-willed and strong-minded because of her strong faith. I've never met a person more righteous and moral or someone more willing to defend her beliefs, especially when it came to family. She loved her family and did everything she could to help most of us. She was our rock. She was truly a special woman. There could never be another Shirley Rhodes. But while she was here, she gave us all pieces of her amazing strength and continues to do so in Heaven. I love you grandma... Aubrey (Dian's son)

Grandma,

You are the rock of our family. You kept everyone together and reminded us how loved we are. I always found it funny how you could remember every single cousin and how they were related to us but could never remember to take your keys out of the door after unlocking it. You helped raise me and all your grandchildren. I will always cherish our memories together. I love you grandma.... Marcell (Sabrina's son)



Grandma,

I wish I could have heard your voice one last time. You were unknowingly my confidante & one of my best friends. I knew I could always come to you for your supportiveness and just spending time with you making you laugh & smile was one of many joys we shared. Our family will never be the same without our matriarch, but we will forever cherish and honor all the beautiful memories we have with you. I love you grandma. Your Grandson,
-Elijah Pierce (Sabrina's son)



Continued



Continued



Her Reasons for Living – Her Heritage



The Many Facets of Shirley Rhodes

Casual Cool



Sunday Best



Celebrations



The Many Facets of Shirley Rhodes

Always, Family First




Her Reasons for Living

Her Heritage




Haskell Rhodes
1.7.1966 – 4.11.1990




Derrick Rhodes
8.8.1969 – 7.16.1989