



## Mr. Jerome Romeo Fernandes

November 9, 1939 - October 3, 2020

Jerome Romeo Fernandes, 80, of Plant City, Florida, born on November 9, 1939 in Georgetown, Guyana, entered into eternal rest on October 3, 2020. He enjoyed life, fishing, traveling, farming, coaching, and spending time with the family, his great spirit that motivated and inspired everyone will be his legacy forever. He was a United States Army Veteran and retired manager for Tampa Electric Company. He is survived by his loving wife of 47 years, Mrs. Muriel Fernandes, mother; Elaine Fernandes, children; Valerie, Jerome, Lauren, Jeffrey, Natashia, Jason, Jonathan, and Elaine, siblings; Michael Fernandes, and Laraine Fernandes, 25 grandchildren; 1 great grandchild, and many other family and friends. A celebration of life will take place on Saturday, October 17 at 3:00 P.M, where the family will received friends starting at 2:00 P.M at Hopewell Funeral Home 6005 South CR 39, Plant City. Per family request, Mask are required. Committal with military honors to follow at Hopewell Memorial Gardens Plant City. Expressions of condolence at [HopewellFuneral.com](http://HopewellFuneral.com)

# Cemetery Details

## Hopewell Memorial Gardens

6005 County Road 39 South  
Plant City, FL 33567  
(813) 737-3128  
office@hopewellfuneral.com  
<https://www.hopewellfuneral.com>

# Previous Events

## Visitation

OCT 17. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

Hopewell Funeral Home  
6005 County Road 39 South  
Plant City, FL 33567  
(813) 737-3128  
office@hopewellfuneral.com  
<http://www.hopewellfuneral.com>

## Celebration of Life

OCT 17. 3:00 PM (ET)

Hopewell Funeral Home  
6005 County Road 39 South  
Plant City, FL 33567  
(813) 737-3128  
office@hopewellfuneral.com  
<http://www.hopewellfuneral.com>

# Tribute Wall



“ Hopewell Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Mr. Jerome Romeo Fernandes



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**Hopewell Funeral Home** - October 15, 2020 at 09:18 AM



“ Sacred Duty Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. Jerome Romeo Fernandes.



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October 16, 2020 at 10:19 PM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. Jerome Romeo Fernandes.



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October 16, 2020 at 06:23 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue* was purchased for the family of  
*Mr. Jerome Romeo Fernandes.*”



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October 16, 2020 at 12:18 PM

“ IN MEMORY OF ROMEO

*Mom Elaine, Muriel, Family, Immediate and extended, All The Clan of the Cummings, Friends:*

*Romeo was my eldest cousin and to my mind, my older brother. My oldest friend.*

*As a family, we were all fiercely sufficient and independent unto ourselves, from the time we arrived in Queens, NY in the late 1940s. Our family, The Generation as I call it, were the guardians of our universe, and got where we are because of our upbringing, and lessons learned in the hot tropics and cold city streets.*

*Our family may not be perfect, but it is as worthy of respect as any other immigrant family in the USA. Never doubt that.*

*I choose to remember Romeo, your son, brother, husband, father, grandfather, great grandfather, in-law and friend, as he was long before he passed. I see him as I knew him, and that will never change.*

*He had flair. I respected him, as he was eldest of the cousins. When we were children, he always had a plan, sometimes for Michael who was fast of hands, and sometimes for me who was fast of feet. As for Laraine - well, she was too smart for nonsense.*

*Romeo loved and he was loved. This is how I see him. And who would dare to disagree?*

*Romeo is with the ancestors. St. Peter has no choice but to let him through the pearly gates, or risk the wrath and biting tongues of Ruth Cummings and Aunties Carmen and Sheila.*

*I am sorry Romeo has departed, but he has left us with lasting memories. Surely, more of them are happy and joyous, than sad. Every now and then you will find yourself smiling or laughing while*

*recalling something he said or did. Memory is the assurance of eternity.*

*Romeo is no longer in pain and he now is on high with the ancestors, father, grandparents, aunts, and uncles who loved and cherished him.*

*With those ancestors, he now watches over us. This I believe to be true.*

*Finally, we have to give thanks to Romeo's caregivers and there are none more worthy than Muriel and all of his children.*

*God bless Romeo, and God bless each of you. Walk good upon the earth.*

*Condolences,  
Monty, Gail, Ayanna and Jamal VanSluytman*

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**Bernard VanSluytman** - October 16, 2020 at 11:28 AM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. Jerome Romeo Fernandes.*



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October 15, 2020 at 11:50 PM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. Jerome Romeo Fernandes.*



October 15, 2020 at 11:39 AM



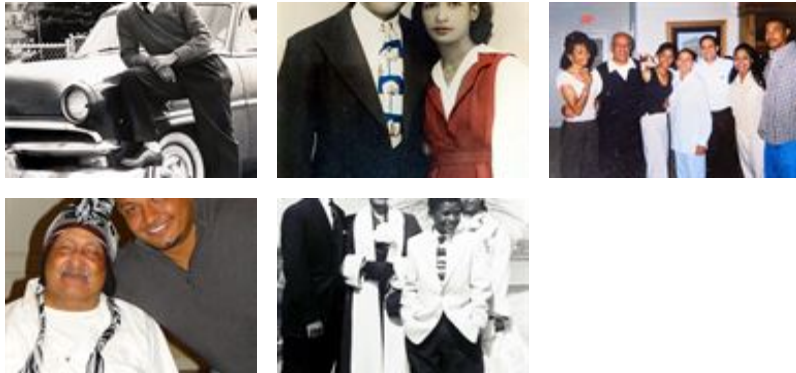
“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. Jerome Romeo Fernandes.*



October 15, 2020 at 10:08 AM



“ *90 files added to the album Life Tributes*



**Hopewell Funeral Home** - October 15, 2020 at 09:11 AM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mr. Jerome Romeo Fernandes.*



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October 15, 2020 at 12:38 AM



“ *With love from Staffy and Tommy VanSluytman purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Mr. Jerome Romeo Fernandes.*



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**With love from Staffy and Tommy VanSluytman** - October 14, 2020 at 10:18 PM

“ To Muriel, Mom Elaine, Loreta, Todd, Elaine, Tosha, Jonathan, Jason, Valerie, Jerry, Lauren, and Laraine, Michael, and the many grandchildren, friends, cousins, and extended family members, I would like to extend my condolences to you all but most of all I would like to commend Muriel, Elaine, Todd, and the other FRONT LINE family caregivers for your years endurance, sacrifices, and team work and - in the final days - working hard to make Romeo's final moments as comfortable as possible.

Romeo was the eldest of our immigrant family's children to be raised in this country. For my parents who knew very little about raising kids in this country, he served as the family navigator and advisor on dealing with all things Big City America. For myself and other cousins born here he was - at times - a surrogate parent whenever we got out of hand or tried to pull wool over our parents' eyes with our "Yankee" ways. He was a street wise New Yorker but I do believe - in listening to his conversations - that his heart always beat with a longing for his beloved Guyana. It was reflected in his talk light banter, his talk of Guyanese food, and his overall love of life.

When I called my son to tell him of Romeo's passing, he responded that he felt a kind of relief in knowing that his suffering was over because: "My memories of Uncle Romeo was all about fun and good times. I could not imagine seeing him sick or disabled." He went on to tell me about all the fun he had had with him in New York and here in Plant city along with the kids.

On the evening of my sister's passing the Hospice chaplain told me that: "Your sister is safely in the arms of the ancestors." The chaplain was of Nigerian origin. She told me that she was raised Christian but she - like many in her country still hung on to their cultural roots as it pertains to death and dying. They do not see "death" as we do here. They refer to it as a "transitioning" of the spirit that is not out of reach somewhere but right here in our hearts and minds when we stay true to their spiritual legacy.

So, as Tommy tried to explain to me, this should not be a time for mourning the loss of a husband, father, brother, friend or cousin, but as an acceptable celebration of a spiritual transition and a tribute to

*his memory and spiritual legacy.*

*Staburn A. VanSluytman*

*Thomas A. VanSluytman and Viola VanSluytman (including Neveah and Max)*

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**Stalburn A. VanSluytman** - October 14, 2020 at 10:08 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Mr. Jerome Romeo Fernandes.*



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October 14, 2020 at 09:40 AM



“ *P.S. I meant to mention that the picture of the kid with the cowboy outfit & the gun is me...Rome was about 12ish & bought me the gun with money he saved up. He was always thoughtful that way for all of his life.*

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**Marvin Johnson** - October 13, 2020 at 04:45 PM

MJ

“ It's times much like this that so many of us are forced to reflect...the reflections are often very superficial (e.g., good times we shared and variations of those many good times) and usually they are so many that they can't begin to define the essence of a relationship. Then, there are the reflections that run deep...so deep that much of it may never be told or understood. Our times have been both the former and the latter, as cousins and friends. One of my fondest memories, primarily because of its uniqueness was our journeys to Guyana some 26+ years ago, as each was an experience we savored jointly and individually...Guyana was his original home and for me it was the home of my closest of family since birth...I always felt my Guyanese roots deeply and our trips reassured me that I was right, despite being a yankee.

Rome never skimped on sharing, a gracious host and the life of a party, everyone loved him, even when he wasn't so lovable. You never knew what he'd have in hand when he visited...once he showed up with a TV for my office because he heard my TV just went out a few days before. As the elder of our generation, he was the first born in BG and I was the first born in the USA...Mama never let us forget that.

Rome was a simple man in many ways, old traditions meant a great deal to him and much of his life served as his base and foundational rock. He was a proud and fearless man who stood by his family and friends without hesitation or reservation...countless times he stood with me and always reassured me that he was with me. Despite our near decade age difference he never made me feel like just a kid once I grew up. As a young kid I longed to be in his presence (often hiding in his car's back seat floor until caught - once in the 50s I made it all the way to him picking up a date before he hurriedly took me back home) and he never rushed me away. Rome knew the difference between friend and associate in ways that seem lost on too many of the youth of today.

I will miss my dear cousin and old friend...the loss of my mother

*(2009) has been my greatest loss in life, now Rome - there was a time that I felt like they both would live forever. Words alone can't explain it so I won't try, suffice to say it's a loss that will stay with me until my end. There remains only 4 people alive who have known me as long...sadly, too few remain who really knew Rome.*

*May all of his/our family remember him generously and accurately, as is truly one of the last of his kind and certainly the last of his kind in our family. He was rewarded with a particularly large family of offspring and us blood kin - he cherished them/us all and glowed with pride from their/our very existence. We'd speak of the old days and how so much has changed...families living far apart, not knowing every kids name anymore, etc. (he seemed to always remember better than most). I insisted that my boys called him Uncle Rome despite him being their 2nd cousin...we discussed that many decades ago and decided it was a sign of respect we would carry forward.*

*Lastly, I am particularly grateful to dear Muriel who kept him with us far longer than he would have made it without her devotion and endless care...he fought hard to remain with us, but his time to rest won out. Again, Rome's passing is a major event in our family history, certainly different for each of us, but nevertheless significant. I curse this Covid era that prevents the kind of joyous celebration we could have all enjoyed, with family coming from near and far - he so deserved it.*



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**Marvin P Johnson** - October 13, 2020 at 02:13 PM

MF

“ Will always remember how you helped keep our family together when we came to live with you in Bricktown. And our summer visits when you lived in Saint Pete's (sic).

Your life lessons have lasted through the decades. The most important of which was that ...

"You need to learn how to select your thoughts just the same way you select your clothes every day. This is a power you can cultivate. If you want to control things in your life so bad, work on the mind. That's the only thing you should be trying to control." - EG

And when life throws you a mixed bag ... learn to make army goulash and move on with your day. You and everyone around you will be better for it.

We will miss your kindness, your strength, and your humor. A true brother in arms, Uncle, and friend.

Love,  
Nephew-Cousin Mark



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MFJ - October 13, 2020 at 05:53 AM