



AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA

THE HOGANS FAMILY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS

Hogans • Robinson • Holte
Family Histories Collection



Mrs. Bertha Holte, mother of Coach Thomas Hogans, Jr.

Photo Credit: Patti LaBelle with Laura B. Randolph, Don't Block the Blessings

COACH THOMAS HOGANS, JR.

Educator • Coach • Veteran • Community Leader

The late Thomas Hogans, Jr., of Green Cove Springs, was a popular, well-respected, and successful basketball coach at Paul Laurence Dunbar High School. During desegregation, he also coached for a couple of seasons at Clay High School, where he became the school's first African American head basketball coach.

He earned his undergraduate and graduate degrees from Florida A&M University and was a U.S. veteran. After retiring from the Clay County School System, "Coach" Hogans remained devoted to his family, community, and church. He was also known for his singing ability.

Coach Hogans was married to the late Jettie McCall Hogans. Their children were Velda, Sonja, Norma Hogans Fayson, and Anthony (Iris). His family also included his sister Patricia Edwards; half-siblings Patti Holte Edwards, famously known as Patti LaBelle, Jacqueline, Barbara, and Vivian; stepbrother Ulysses Hogans; several grandchildren and in-laws; and his godson, Curtis Francis.

A LEGACY IN EDUCATION & ATHLETICS

Coach Hogans died on Friday, August 24, 2007. His legacy of goodwill and achievement is commemorated through the naming of the Thomas Hogans Memorial Gymnasium. In 2001, he was inducted into the Florida A&M University Sports Hall of Fame for his basketball accomplishments.

HOGANS • ROBINSON • HOLTE FAMILY ROOTS

Thomas Hogans, Jr. and Patti LaBelle shared the same mother, Bertha Lee Robinson Hogans Holte. The family account states that Bertha first married Thomas Griffin Hogans, Sr. in 1930 in Clay County and later married Henry Holte in 1941 in Dade County. The blended Hogans-Holte family eventually moved to Philadelphia, where Patti LaBelle was born, while Thomas Hogans, Jr. returned to his birthplace of Green Cove Springs. Both Thomas Hogans, Sr. and Henry Holte worked for the Florida East Coast Railway.

A FAMILY LEGACY

The Hogans-Robinson-Holte story connects Green Cove Springs, education, athletics, railway history, military service, faith, and a family whose influence extended well beyond Clay County.

ARCHIVAL NOTES: The submitted history notes that some sources spell Holte as "Holt" and Hogans as "Hogan." It also gives conflicting death information for Bertha Lee Robinson Hogans Holte (1978 at age 61, and a later reference to 1989); that date should be verified. Grammar, punctuation, and formatting have been edited for readability while preserving the substance of the family account.