



Tribal Hostess Bertha Karras



Bertha Lucille Karras was born to Mark Jacobs Sr. (*Káshkhwei*) and Annie [Paul] Jacobs (*Sxhaalghén*). She was the fifth of seven children (Harvey Jacobs Sr., Mark Jacobs Jr., Hamilton Jacobs, Ernie Jacobs, Franklin Jacobs and Wally Jacobs) and attended the government school and Sheldon Jackson High School.

She is *Dakhl'aweidí* from *Keet Hít* (Killerwhale House) in Angoon and her Tlingit names are *Kh'udéi* after her maternal grandmother, and *Ghuneiteen* after Fannie Friday, and also *Át Woogóodi Áa* (Walking Lake) from a story in her clan's migration. She is *Deisheetaan yádi* (child of the *Deisheetaan*) through Mark Jacobs, Sr. (*Káshkhwei*) whose father Noble Johnson (*Toonáxh*) was *Teikhweidí* making her a *Teikhweidí dachxhán* (grandchild).



Bertha first met her husband Peter John Karras at a dance 70 years ago. They were married for 65 years before he passed away and together they had eight children, five surviving (Pamela Eby, Peter Karras Jr., Mike (Cindy) Karras, and Cass (Stuart) Pook, Ernie (Stacie) Karras, with 15 grandchildren and numerous great-grandchildren.

For many years, Bertha and her husband ran Karras Bed & Breakfast in Sitka which was well-known and sought after for the gourmet breakfasts that they served every morning. Today, with the help of her family, Bertha operates Karras-Day-Bed, but no longer operates the B&B. She previously worked in the cannery, as a telephone operator for the Sitka Telephone Co. and at the Alaska Lumber & Pulp Co.

Bertha and her husband Pete not only ran their B&B together, they traveled to Greece to look for his family connections and also went to Japan where they met with the Ainu people and shared her clan's killer whale history.

As her husband's health began to fail, Bertha stayed by his side and took excellent care of him until his last breath. Her love and attentiveness to her family is evident still and can be seen in her daily activities. She loves each of her family members equally.

Bertha served as a Tlingit & Haida Sitka Delegate for more than 25 years. During her time as a Delegate, she also served on the Enrollment Committee where her knowledge of family trees, Tlingit names, Tlingit language, and connections proved invaluable to the enrollment process. Bertha retired as a Delegate in 2017 so that she could spend more time with her husband and family. She remains active in community activities and family events.