

Biography of Violette Bushra

Elise Bushra

Violette Bushra was born on October 8, 1943, to Silvanus and Anisa. She had two siblings, but one sadly died at age seven. She was born and raised in the large city of Alexandria, Egypt. In the city, she lived in an apartment and had very close neighbors. When she was young, her father rented a beach house in the city of Ras El Barr, and she loved to walk along the shore.

Like any other child, she went to school. She found it very interesting and loved to learn. She liked math the best, and science was her next favorite subject. She didn't enjoy literature or history. She played basketball for a little while, but also didn't like it. She went to a French school from Kindergarten through high school. Instead of having one subject one year and another subject the next, she was taught everything each year, but only the difficulty changed. In 1956, the school found Egyptians that spoke French to teach there. Before this, they had people from France come and teach. This is where she met her best friend, Sonia, who now lives in Switzerland. They are still in touch, and Sonia just came to the US to visit her!

One of her first clear memories was when she was nine years old. In 1952, there was a massive fire in Cairo. The Cairo Fire, also known as Black Saturday, was an uproar that took place on January 26th. About 750 buildings were looted and burned. Many of the city's shops, cafes, hotels, restaurants, theaters, and nightclubs were completely destroyed. This did not affect her directly, but she could see Cairo burning from the balcony of her apartment.

Violette went to an Orthodox Church as a child. She read the Bible, and realized that what was being taught in the Bible was different than what she was learning at church. She started to ask questions. One of her friends invited her to a Presbyterian church, and she became a Christian as a teen and considers this the most significant event in her life.

In her spare time, she sewed and made dresses. She also liked to read, and her favorite book was *Les Miserables*. She loved to go to the movies, and since everything was very close, she could easily walk there. If she had to choose, her favorite movie would be “The Sound of Music.”

Later, she attended the University of Cairo, studied physics and chemistry, and got degrees in those areas. For her job, she never worked outside of the house.

Violette married Sarwat Bushra in December, 1965. Shortly after, in 1967, another very important historical event took place: The Six-Day War ("War of 1967"), also known as the June War, 1967 Arab–Israeli War, or Third Arab–Israeli War. This was fought between June 5 and 10, 1967, by Israel and the neighboring states of Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. This separated Violette from Sarwat for some time, and they decided to immigrate. First, they moved to England and stayed for some time. Finally, however, they moved to the east coast of the United States, and she lives there to this day.