



# Hiroko Howell

September 28, 1928 - March 6, 2021

Hiroko Howell

1928 - 2021

Hiroko Howell, 92, passed away peacefully on March 6, 2021. She was born on September 28, 1928 to Shigetaro Matsumoto of Kobe, Japan. After graduating from high school, she attended an English language college, which enabled her to obtain a civil position with the U.S. Air Force at their Exchange at the Osaka Air Force Base, during the Korean War. There she met the love of her life, Thomas Edwin Howell, who was in the U.S. Air Force and stationed at such base. She first knew him as "Tex" and they enjoyed a marvelous courtship in Japan, before marrying on May 8, 1953.

After they had their first child, Joey in Osaka, they moved to Plainview, Texas, where Edwin took over his family's farm and where Hiroko and he enjoyed a fabulous marriage of over 43 years, before he passed to be with our Good Lord in 1996. While he farmed, she focused on their children until they were school age; and then she became a manager at Kristi's boutique, where she thrived in dressing ladies and their daughters for their proms and special occasions. There, she endeared herself to families throughout Plainview and the surrounding area by the personal warmth with which she embraced each customer, her superior sense of style, and her knack of knowing and keeping them in their cost comfort zone.

Hiroko and Edwin were a very active couple, including being very active and serving as Sunday School teachers at First Baptist Church and being in various bridge, square dancing and other clubs and organizations. Hiroko was a very engaging person who often took on the passions of others in her love for them, which she slowly but surely did with Edwin's passion for the Dallas Cowboys - in the most recent decades, she has become a particularly impassioned and rowdy fan - we think that she is doubling down for Edwin!

Hiroko and Edwin had 2 other children upon moving back to Plainview, Becky and David. From their unwavering faith in God, a strong love of family and a great sense of community, the Howells taught their children faith, patience, perseverance, tolerance and the appreciation of others, whatever their background or status. Also, they also modeled generosity almost to a fault to their children and others, by donating, always volunteering

to be the one to pay, providing outsized gratuities, taking their homemade custard, divinity, datenut loaf, and other favorites to friends, and in many other ways.

Despite her diminutive size at 5'2", Hiroko was a very powerful, enthusiastic and spirited woman, who survived a series of great difficulties throughout her life, which one would never know upon meeting her. As one of her grandchildren said, "Anyone who met our Nana would never forget her spirit and would remember her as one of the favorite persons that they ever met." Such difficulties began when she was 6 and lost her mother in childbirth and then lived through the air raids of World War II. In the last few decades of her life, she survived the early losses of her husband and youngest son and also survived breast cancer and heart surgery.

One of the greatest difficulties for her was permanently leaving her family and moving half way around the world from Japan to Texas, in the wake of World War II, where it was not particularly popular for those whose countries were on the other side of the war. Hiroko rose above the differences and actually used it to her and her family's advantage, by accepting early on invitations from various schools and organizations to share her Japanese heritage, where she wowed everyone with her ebullient personality and radiant beauty, by sharing the rich heritage and culture of Japan, and in displaying her beautiful kimonos, fans and other items from her homeland.

As Hiroko always said, books were her friends from the time she was 6; and she continued to be an avid reader to the end of her life. She also loved to dance, square dancing with Edwin, choosing line dancing as her exercise class in the last decade of her life, and being one of the last persons off of the dance floor at the recent wedding of one of her grandsons. She was also a brilliant card player, who was a Life Master in bridge and continued to place in the top 3 places consistently in her local bridge clubs through the last times that were allowed pre-Covid.

Whenever there was an outstretched hand or a need, Hiroko was the first to grab it and the first to step up; she was a woman for all seasons, a woman to emulate, and all of her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren aspire to do just that in honor of her and the legacy of love that she instilled in each one of us. No doubt that God said with great pride and joy when Hiroko stepped through the Pearly Gates, "Well done, my good and faithful servant." We will all aspire to be the type of servant that Hiroko Howell was every day of his life, in emulation of how she was inspired to live by the greatest servant who has walked on this earth, Jesus Christ, Hiroko's Lord and Savior.

Hiroko was preceded in death by her parents, her husband Edwin and her son, David. She is survived by her beloved children, Joey Howell and wife Linda, Becky Bagley and husband Damon, and Jinx Howell, her daughter-in-law and wife of David, and her grandchildren and great grandchildren, Miko Jennings and husband Jason, their children Brooklyn and Decklan, Chelsea Bagley, Katie Howell and partner Blake Mann, their son River, Rowdy Howell, Riley Howell, Zach Howell, Mitchell Howell and wife Cheyenne,

Marshall Howell and Grace Howell, and numerous nieces, nephews and other relatives. The family will have private family memorial services for Hiroko Howell at a future date. She will be laid to rest next to her husband Edwin in the historic Plainview Cemetery in Plainview, Texas. In lieu of flowers in memory of Hiroko Howell, donations may be made to a charity of your choice.

# Comments

---



“ Becky, I'm so sorry for the loss of your mom she was always such a good and kind person, and always so sweet to your friends!! I remember she would always tell me " Betty you have such beautiful hair" she will be dearly missed!! Praying for your whole family during this very sad loss!!

**Betty Joslin Williams** - March 10 at 08:01 PM

---



“ So sad to hear this! I grew up playing sports and pick games with David. His mom was always nice

**Richard Branam** - March 10 at 11:14 AM

---



“ Is so sorry for your loss. She was such a sweet lady to be around. I will always remember her beautiful smile. You all are in my prayers, love you bunches. Teresca Wenger.

**Teresca Wenger** - March 10 at 03:03 AM

---



“ I'm so sorry to hear this news. I loved Hiroka. I worked with her at Kristis the summer I was 19. Such a sweet lady and a great example.

**Nanette Holley** - March 09 at 08:22 PM

---



“ Joey, I'm so sorry to hear about Your Mom's passing. I loved her sweet spirit and her laughter! She was one of my favorites!  
Marca Mote Morris

**Marca Mote Morris** - March 09 at 08:08 PM

---



“ Hiroke was a beautiful person inside and out. Lots of laughing when exercising. I feel blessed to have called her friend

**Stella Goyne** - March 09 at 07:58 PM

---



“ I grew up in Plainview with Joey and Becky. Also grew up with the Howell family in FBC, Plainview. Loved shopping at Kristi's. Hiroko was the best when it came to helping me and my mom and sister pick out clothes. Hiroko will be missed.

**Barbara Burke Powell** - March 09 at 07:08 PM

---



“ Prayers for the family in their loss of a sweet woman.  
It was a privilege knowing & working with her at Kristi's. Always a delight to be around! Will miss her joy & laughter.

Sheila Luster Johnson

**Sheila Johnson** - March 09 at 07:05 PM