



Barbara Aleene Howell

July 13, 1932 - March 8, 2025

She arrived early and was the last to leave the party

Barbara Aleene Howell was born to Clarence E. “Rusty” and Alice E. Martinsen in Colville, WA. Barbara’s premature birth allowed her family to make the cross-state move to Port Angeles, WA. Her father had been reassigned as a Customs Immigration Officer, and later Point Roberts, and eventually Blaine WA.

Barbara graduated from Blaine High School. While attending Blaine High School, she met a young man, Donald Howell, and a loving relationship developed. Don and Barbara were married in October 14, 1950 at St. Joseph’s church, Ferndale, WA, while Don was in the U.S. Navy.

January 1953, Don and Barbara settled in North Bellingham, where they bought a farm and grew stock, crops, and seven children. Many great memories grew from vast family gatherings where all were welcomed.

Barbara was a loving wife and mother who made lunches to get the kids and Don off to work and school on time. She also ran the farm including milking the cow, picking eggs, harvesting the chickens, growing and preserving produce from the garden and fruit from the orchard.

Barbara organized and hired the field crew for the strawberry harvest and bean picking.

Her physical strength was not to be ignored either. She was able to hoist a full bag of oats on each shoulder and toss them into the truck with ease.

Barbara was an active member of St. Joseph's Catholic Parish in Ferndale. As a member of the Altar Society, she assisted with cleaning the building, the altar linens, progressive dinners and decorating the Church for holidays and special occasions. She also hosted card parties and made quilts for homeless shelters. As generous as she was with meals and clothing, she was equally ruthless when it came to cards.

Barbara and Don were active parents in their children's athletic lives from wrestling matches to field events. They participated in getting covered bleachers for Ferndale High School.

Holidays at the farmhouse were legendary. Meals were delicious and plentiful. Her table always had space for folks who stopped by to visit. Barbara's outstanding apple pie will always be a family favorite.

As the children grew and left home, Barbara took a job as the "lunch lady" at North Bellingham School. After Don and Barbara retired, they moved to Forks WA. It is from there that they took up serious RV Travel. Together they travel from Forks to Fargo and from Albuquerque to Alaska, and every State and National Park in between.

After Don's passing, Barbara returned to North Bellingham to be near children and grandchildren, all of whom gave her great joy over the next 12 years. Barbara passed peacefully on March 8, 2025, surrounded by loving family members.

She was preceded in death by; her parents, siblings, husband Don, her sons Richard and Philip, and grandson Andrew Jenkins. She is survived by her children; Bob (Mary), Don (Robin), Mary Jenkins (Charles), Chris (Kate), and Fred (Laura), eleven grandchildren and numerous great grandchildren, and a great great granddaughter.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held on Tuesday March 18, 2025 at 10:30am at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Ferndale, WA. A reception in the Hall at St. Joseph's will immediately follow the Funeral Mass.

Burial Committal will take place on Wednesday March 19, 2025 at 10am at Greenacres Memorial Park, in Ferndale, WA.

Tribute Wall

CW

“*Barbara Howell played a big role in my early years. Several of us “Madison’s” would ride our bikes to their place every day during early summer for strawberry picking. Barbara made sure that we picked every ripe berry, leaving no red one behind, that we didn’t squish them, and that the boxes were filled to the right level. She tolerated all of our transistor radios blasting our favorite songs. And when it began to rain – yes, even a single drop – we’d “head to the barn”. She’d give us a few minutes and then come tell us to get back to work. Truly fun times. Well, except for the cow that would chase us.*

She was a wonderful, strong, and kind woman. Thank you for your kindness, Barbara. I’m sure my Mom will be one of the first to greet you in heaven.

Cindy (Madison) Wilson - March 14, 2025 at 12:00 AM