



## Toyoko Yoshizawa Driver M.D.

December 15, 1927 - September 1, 2016

TOYOKO YOSHIZAWA DRIVER, M.D.

BORN: 12/15/1927 DIED: 9/1/2016 88 YEARS

Father: Ryuma Obinata Mother: Shin Yoshizawa

Education: Tokyo Womens Medical College 3/31/1951

Worked in Gastroenterology and Obstetrics in Japan until 1957. From 1957 to 1974 it appears she worked a few different jobs as well being a mother to two boys. Worked as Prep Cook at Mo's in Taft from 1974 to 2016.

Married: Letus V. Driver 7/11/1956 Tokyo, Japan

Children: Robert L. Driver, Paul L. Driver

Preceded in death by Husband Letus (1987) and Son Robert (2013).

The period of illness was short. She noticed a slight pain in her left hip that over a month went from needing a cane to using a walker. On August 10 before her appointment to see her doctor about her leg, she fell and broke the left upper femur.

At Corvallis hospital it was noted that the break and pain history were not typical for her age. Upon further examination by CT scan it was discovered that cancer had invaded the right lung, left femur, right shoulder and adrenal gland. Testing of bone fragments taken during repair of femur bone confirmed Metastatic adenocarcinoma of the lung stage IV. Toy never smoked, however this type of cancer was most likely due to a genetic factor.

Having received the diagnosis she wanted to return home. After a short stay back in SNLH rehabilitation, which had to limit pain medication, she came home and went on hospice care. Hospice could permit her more pain medication.

Corvallis hospital provided good care for being short staffed according to Toy. Hospice experience was disappointing. Toy died at home with son in attendance, (as she wanted).

Having lived for 88 years there is so much to mention about her life. A few quick short stories to frame some things about her.

To most people she was known as Toy. This came about in 1974. At that time the manager at Mo's Taft ("Bi" I believe) heard about her and asked her if she wanted to work at Mo's. Bi finding Toyoko hard to pronounce shortened it to Toy. Toy started working making the cobbler and chowder at Mo's. A typical day would start in the early morning (5:30 AM) and end in the afternoon or late evening if it was summer.

For the first ten years Toy would walk to work and back home; a distance of one mile each way. She had to stand on a milk crate to stir the pots of chowder in the beginning. (Several years later when Mo's moved into the new building they cut the legs off the new gas burners to accommodate Toy's

height).

When Toy would go to work she would make an effort to bring a flower from her garden with her. Most days if the weather permitted she would spend a couple of hours maintaining the garden even after a days work at Mo's.

On her days off it would be common for her to spend eight hours in the garden. Working in the garden reminded her of growing up in Nagano, Japan, and working with her mother on the family land.

In Toy's garden can be found apple, plum, cherry, and quince trees. Raspberries, strawberries, gummi berries and boysenberries are also there. Toy especially liked the flowers in her garden, with preference for roses and peonies. Toy would enjoy walks in the woods and on the beaches when she had time.

Toy attended Tokyo Women's Medical College from April 1946 to March 1951. During this time her father died from cancer. (Toy's mother would also die of stomach cancer in 1974.)

After completing her medical degree she entered into the field of gastroenterology and obstetrics. Her medical school days and practice were something she always remembered fondly. (Later in life she would seek qualification to practice medicine in the USA. Other factors prevented this, mainly insurance and lack of a hospital to practice in).

While working in the Tokyo hospital she met a young M Sgt. Letus V. Driver of the Air Force who brought in a coworker with stomach pains. They married about a year later at the American Embassy in Tokyo on July 11, 1956.

Asked why she decided to marry him, she said it was the way he always offered to take care of shopping for supplies no matter whose guest they might be. This is perhaps why years later we would always go on a shopping trip to the grocery store just find the bargains and have a little fun.

From the late fifties to the mid sixties Toy traveled back and forth from Japan and the U.S., as her husband was stationed at various bases. Eventually, she took a four-month road trip across the US following many parts of route 66.

While in California the family heard about how beautiful the Oregon coast was. Driving up the Hwy 101 they came upon Lincoln City, and after renting an apartment for a few months decided to stay. That was September 1965.

Toy was a great reader of books and some rooms at home look like libraries. She had read many of the classics by Shakespeare, Steinbeck and others. She read about world history and religion, (read through the Bible three times), and even kept up on some of the latest news in the fields of biochemistry and science.

Toy use to paint in oils; generally pictures of birds or seascapes, only giving up painting as her arthritis got too bad. She also liked reviewing her language skills. While in medical school she learned German as many textbooks were written in it.

At home it was fun to download medical mystery videos and see if she could figure out the disorder before the end. (She usually got it right). This meant she was the first recognize the diagnosis of her son Robert's illness. And what her own diagnosis meant for her future.

Toy could be very strong willed, and if she had made up her mind on a subject it was not much use to talk about it further.

If I bought something too expensive for Mama I would have to return it or it went into the closet where it would not be touched for years.

While not too much into computers she did understand enough about YouTube to help with a recipe video. Sadly there just wasn't enough time it seemed to do more recipe videos. However, there was enough time to do some family history videos.

So many stories are lost now. Toy and a friend learned to drive while in Michigan. They practiced on deserted roads at the time.

And the neighbor lady in Denver who gave her an aluminum baking pan that is still in use today.

She met many people over her lifetime, such as Mr. and Mrs. Jennings who looked after Robert while she went to have a second son. Among her close friends was Eleanor (Eleanor's Undertow, whom years ago presented her with a cookie jar for a present. The cookie jar remained in the living room for years and Mama always said this would be her urn).

She always tried to thank people with a card or letter and made it a policy not to speak poorly of others. It was very rare when Toy would be upset, (I mean mad); both times it was due to a death in the family. Toy always put family first; even in the end, she was more concerned about the rest of the family than herself.

The same week she broke her leg, her nephew visited from Japan. This made her very happy because it reminded her of her brother who passed away some years ago from stomach cancer. Toy was the last of her brothers and sister to die.

At home she preferred to cook Japanese style food. Having cooked for a family of four most of her life it was hard to break the habit. Even when it was just two people for dinner she still cooked enough food for four people.

Mo's Taft treated her well over years and not too long ago dedicated a space in front for her years of work.

Toy lived long enough to see two grand children, Onawa L. Driver and James C. Driver, grow up. She would be upset to see so much written about her. Toy did not want any gathering for her. She got one though.

Her ashes were interred at Willamette National Cemetery on Tuesday September 6, 2016. A remembrance took place the following day at Mo's in Taft. She appreciated the visits and well wishes of friends.