



# Seabrook Educational & Cultural Center Bulletin

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Hours: Monday - Thursday 9:00 am - 12:00 noon  
Additional visiting hours by appointment



Vol. 3, No. 41 Summer 2022

## Annual Appeal Issue

### By Beverly Carr, SECC Executive Director

While looking into why and how Upper Deerfield Township was created on February 23, 1922 many resources were reviewed by those of us working together on the event, among these were newspapers, oral history, historic commission minutes and I became increasingly more aware of unused resources related to the history of Seabrook, whether it be the Farm, cultures, public places that supported the families of Upper Deerfield Township such as churches, schools, cemeteries, and cultural resource surveys undertaken by the township and others at various points in time. Historians and those with special memories and resources initiated conversations and became more involved with the project and SECC. Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of UDT in April was a rich experience for many and so we continue to look at what it was like 100 years ago in this issue!

A message that I would like to share is this— Seabrook Educational and Cultural Center is special because it was a grass roots effort to create a space where history can be remembered, researched and discussed. This place was created, literally, by those who lived the experience, who had the special skills to make these installations with their own hands, spending their own money. They were professionals in their fields and they were Seabrookers, grateful for what they learned here as they grew up. Seabrookers return often to see themselves, and those they lived with, on the walls of the exhibit space. If they don't see what they are looking for they can share with us. We would love to have the artifacts but caring for items takes money.

For the 100th Anniversary we added an exhibit space that focuses on the African American communities of Seabrook, included that information on a township tour, and we continue to collect items and funds to properly house, stabilize/preserve artifacts and staff the Center.

A little known fact is that in the 1980's UDT also had an idea that a type of farm museum should be established here and they contribute annually in-kind to sustain the Center which was dedicated to the residents of UDT in 1994. You should know that your donations are annually matched by grant funds!

Aside from asking you to support SECC following lingering Covid challenges that began in 2019, a year that we did not solicit from you, I would like to share that during my time here, almost a decade now, one of my most rewarding tasks is assisting researchers who are looking for any confirmation of when and how their families lived here, what they did for Seabrook Farms, where they came from and went off to afterwards. With each request, I've learned something new about Seabrook!

A defeated researcher may feel that information does not exist but it does, so do not believe it!

As a researcher myself and a patron of various private, public and governmental archives, research requests are performed here in the same manner and logged at SECC and I can tell you that the use of company publications and oral history here has only been slightly undertaken by a few patrons.

Be encouraged to spend the time it takes to read oral transcriptions and publications because these are primary and secondary sources very much yet to be discovered, analyzed, questioned and interpreted.

I am reminded of a Bazooka bubble gum comic strip in which a young boy had lost an item and he was looking for it under a light post, rather than where it actually could be found- because, as he explained, the light was better under the lamp post. So often, like this boy, we sometimes default to looking only where convenient and we do it without much of a commitment.

Discovery by record searching requires preparation and time by the researcher and the facility. Why not prepare to be amazed by making appointments in advance; an archivist will pull the right materials, register you as a researcher, follow up with you should something of interest come to light after your visit but most of all, be prepared to sit, read and discover the voices of those who left this personal history for us! This is possible at SECC with your ongoing support!

As our honorable Mayor Crilley, pronounced to our SECC volunteers, SECC is the gem of the township.

Hoping to see you on Saturday, July 16 at SECC & OBON!

**SATURDAY IN SEABROOK— JULY 16, 2022**  
10AM-4PM VISIT SECC, 1325 HWY 77  
5-8PM OBON FESTIVAL, 7 NORTHVILLE RD.

Seabrook Buddhist Temple

# OBON

## FESTIVAL

Bon Dancing \* Taiko Drumming \* Meditation Garden  
Bake Sale \* Crafts \* Origami \* Calligraphy

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Saturday, July 16, 2022 \* 5pm to 8pm \* 9 Northville Rd, Seabrook NJ

**Life Before Chase: Seiki Murono**  
**Extraordinary Beginnings for an Illustrious Life**  
Reprinted from [Chase Alumni Association](#), June 22, 2022

**Seiki Murono** turns 78 today—on the anniversary of D-Day. One can only imagine his parents' emotions that day, as Seiki entered the world in an internment camp in Crystal City, TX, amidst more than 1,000 Japanese-Peruvians who had been forcibly deported from Peru under pressure from the United States.

Would they have believed that their child would become a college football hero and a senior vice president of Chase Manhattan Bank?

Genzo and Hisako Murono were both from Kyoto and emigrated separately to Peru in about 1930, marrying there. Mr. Murono worked for his uncle who owned La Pluma d'Ora, a successful sporting goods store, in Lima. While there were waves of anti-Japanese sentiment and violence in the Peruvian capital even before Pearl Harbor, the outbreak of war in the Pacific changed everything. The United States, fearful of a fifth column in the sizeable Japanese community in Peru (and smaller groups of Japanese ex-pats in other Latin American countries), forced the deportation of some 2,200 Latin Americans of Japanese heritage to U.S. internment camps as enemy aliens. Mr. Murono was sent first, followed by his wife and her two small children.

"My father felt more Japanese than Peruvian and considered himself uprooted, but he never thought he would fight for the Japanese," Seiki said.

The Muronos had lived comfortably in Peru, with two homes and 5,000 acres of property. All their property, possessions and business interests were confiscated by the Peruvian government. Now they were making 10 cents an hour at Crystal City. As internment camps went, it was not the worst, though, with stabs at self-governance and facilities for recreation, education and religious activities.

After the war, the Muronos could not go back to Peru, and they did not want to return to post-War Japan.

"My father wanted his three kids to get a college education, to pursue the American dream," Seiki said. Despite having lost his comfortable life at the hands of the Americans and Peruvians, his father harbored no bitterness.

"My father was a saint," said Seiki. "He just saw the positive. My mother had a tougher time."

The Muronos and other of the Japanese-Peruvians remained in Crystal City until 1946, when Charles Seabrook, owner of Seabrook Frozen Foods, realized there was a cheap and possibly grateful labor force to be had in these detainees as well as Latvians and Estonians refugees fleeing Communism.

The Muronos moved to the company town, Seabrook NJ, working long shifts for minimum wage.

"This town in southern New Jersey was a melting pot," Seiki recalled. "Local whites and African-Americans all lived together in harmony. We didn't experience any prejudice. All the teachers bent over backwards to help us assimilate. One teacher in particular, Jane Owen, taught me proper English and gave me career guidance. She was the one who suggested international banking." And even though there weren't many Japanese role models in U.S. professional sports, nearly every kid in Seabrook played football, baseball and basketball.

Seiki followed in his older brother Eisuke's footsteps playing football at Bridgeton (NJ) High School and then, on scholarship, at Franklin & Marshall (F&M), a small liberal arts college in Lancaster, PA. (Eisuke broke his leg playing football at F&M; the surgeon who operated on him suggested a career in medicine. Eisuke would earn a PhD in endocrinology and publish some 72 research papers.)

F&M had a far less diverse student population than Bridgeton High, with only a handful of Asians. Teammates would stand up for Seiki when he would be the target of an ethnic slur from an opposing team. Nobody messed with F&M's star quarterback and standout baseball player!

"I couldn't have played football at the big football program schools," he said modestly. "If you were doing well in school and in sports, you were accepted."

After graduating from F&M with a business degree, Seiki played pro football in White Plains in the Atlantic Coastal Ball League and for the Long Island Bulls, a secondary team of the New York Giants. Meanwhile he was commuting to American University in Washington, DC to earn an MBA in International Business.

"I knew my limitations," he said. He left football behind and started at Chase Manhattan in 1968, in the Global Training Program.

"Chase was a true meritocracy," Seiki said. "My father told me, 'You should be paying Chase for this training.'" Among Seiki's Chase positions before retiring as a senior vice president in 1985: Head of Middle Market Lending for the Northeastern US, CEO, Southeast Asia, for Consumer and Private Banking, Asia Pacific CEO for Private Banking and President of the Chase Manhattan Trust Company of California.

Since leaving Chase, Seiki has served as Chairman of the Board of the Millennium Bank in San Francisco and President and CEO of California Business Bank. He was a director for both Millennium Capital in Shanghai, China, and Synzyme Technologies, a California biotech company. He became a partner and managing director of Boyden Global Executive Search where he headed the firm's west coast financial services search practice. He and his wife, Lynette, live in San Francisco.

"My father would say, 'Don't set too many expectations for yourself. Whatever you are asked to do, do the best possible job. Treat people with respect, play by the rules. The outcome will be positive if you live by those rules.'"

Asked about the current wave of anti-Asian prejudice in the United States, Seiki said, "Throughout my life I haven't seen anti-Asian attitude, even today, I see it on the news, but I haven't experienced it. I'm just so grateful for the people I grew up with and worked with, like my father. I just have such a positive view of the goodness of people. If you treat them well, you'll be a function of how you carry yourself, how you see yourself."

## 2022 ANNUAL APPEAL

Due to a 600% cost increase to print envelopes we ask that you use this form.

Please mail this form to SECC, 1325 Highway 77, Seabrook, NJ 08302

If you prefer to make your gift online using a credit card or PayPal® please visit our website, [seabrookeducation.org](http://seabrookeducation.org), and click on the **Donate** button.



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Individuals \$35.

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Family \$50.

Sponsors \$250.

Benefactors \$1000.

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*Thank you for your annual contribution!*

### History From The Pioneer Newspaper- 100 Years Ago

*Another Bootlegger Held for Trial. Cornelius Lewis of Big Oak Farm charged with illegal sale of liquor and it is claimed that the fellow has been pretty busy lately. Justice J. Ellsworth Long held him in \$2000 bail for a hearing.*

*The Men Who Make NJ Highway. Representing the state highway commission C.F. Seabrook. Until he was a member the larger municipalities were always able to obtain the biggest allotments of the moneys available for improvement, and this section of the state was not receiving anything like its proportional share of hard surface road building.*

*At Seabrook Farms: Mr. and Mrs. P.S. Duffield entertained a party of young folks at the Seabrook Farms in honor of their daughter Alma's fifteenth birthday. The early part of the evening was spent in progressive games.*

*At Seabrook Farms: A very pleasant Christmas Eve was spend at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Irving Bonham of Seabrook Farms. The oldest son of Melvin Mixner has the measles. The grounds about the new school building are being put in shape to grade. The house in which Mr. Nesselrod is living will be moved off and the trees are being cut and the brush burned. Mrs. Nesselrod and children have gone to Shiloh to stay with her people until the house is moved again and ready to be occupied.*

#### MUSEUM AND ARCHIVE ACQUISITIONS

- ◇ Amme, Ron, Pittsgrove, NJ: Japanese language books
- ◇ Chestnut, Joan and Bill, Bridgeton, NJ: Publications by Bill Chestnut
- ◇ Rieti Andrea Bianco and Dante, Bridgeton, NJ: Publications and advertising
- ◇ Loper, Barbara, Bridgeton, NJ: Sheet music stamped *Displaced Persons Center*
- ◇ Ono, Janice, Reno, NV and Ono, Dana, Concord, MA; Publications and DVD's belonging to donor's father, Frank Ono
  - ◇ Shropshire, Vicki, Pittsgrove, NJ: Seabrook Farms cufflinks
  - ◇ Viire, Helgi, Bridgeton, NJ: Maps (2) of European occupied zones, 1941.

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President: Bruce Peterson  
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Eevi Truumees

Trustee Emeritus: Barbara Morella, Ed.D.  
Executive Director: Beverly Carr



Funding has been made possible in part by the New Jersey Historical Commission/Department of State and the Cumberland County Board of Chosen Freeholders through the Cumberland Cultural and Heritage Commission and the New Jersey Council for the Humanities.



**COLLECTION SPOTLIGHT: [seabrookhistory.org](http://seabrookhistory.org)**  
**A display opened in conjunction with the 100th Anniversary of Upper Deerfield Township focusing on the African American community of Seabrook Farms.**

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Dear Contributors,

It is a pleasure to invite you to the Seabrook Educational and Cultural Center, Inc.'s (SECC) thirtieth Annual Meeting of Contributors.

SECC is supported by volunteers who provide invaluable services to make the museum a success, such as our Advisory Board, auditor, tax advisor, legal counsel, artifact donors, docents, consultants and officers. Your generous support by tax deductible contributions have made it possible for SECC to be recognized nationally for its mission to preserve and make known the unique history of Seabrook.

Sincerely yours,

*Bruce J. Peterson*  
President SECC

**Your philanthropy helps to insure our future!**  
**Call our office for options (856) 451-8393**

### NOTICE OF MEETING

The Annual Meeting of Members of the Seabrook Educational and Cultural Center, Inc. a 501(c)3 public supported organization will be held on Tuesday, July 12, 2022, at 4:30 p.m. for the following purposes:

\*To elect the officers/trustees for the ensuing year as nominated:

Beverly Carr  
Larry Ericksen  
Ingrid Hawk  
Rev. Dale Johnston  
Masaru Nakawatase  
Donna Pearson  
Eevi Truumees

\*To act upon such matters as may properly come before the meeting.

Members of record at the close of business on April 13, 2022 will be entitled to vote with respect to this solicitation.