

Southeastern US Ohara Chapter  
... our **First 50** years



Sources:

SEO scrapbooks

SEO History by Othello Ballenger (1980)

SEO newsletters

Assorted SEO business documents

Conversations

*the beginnings.....*



*Why did SEO Chapter Form?*

*Inspiration: beautiful art form*

*Hospitable environment*

*Catalyst*



# Environment.....1950s - 60s

- ❖ Wives of servicemen stationed in Japan
  - ❖ during, after WWII
- ❖ Exposed to, allured by culture of Japan
- ❖ Era when women at home until
  - ❖ Children out of nest
  - ❖ ..... more leisure time





Martha Plowden Neese

(Catalyst) SEO Founder

❖ Air Force officer's wife

❖ lived in Japan 11 years

❖ Student of Headmaster Houn Ohara

❖ .....eventually Grand Master

# At home in US - ikebana advocate

- ❖ Effective spokeswoman for Ohara ikebana
  - ❖ Traveled southeast - lecturing, teaching, organizing
- ❖ Established teaching studios in
  - ❖ Merville home - Orlando, FL
  - ❖ Summer home in Highlands, NC
- ❖ Writer







Since 1960  
**Stone Lantern**





# Ralph deVille Catalyst?

- ◆ Visited Japan on leave
- ◆ ....fell in love with art, culture of Japan
- ◆ Family summer home in Highlands, NC
- ◆ 1960- 2017 Opened, operated The Stone Lantern

STONE LANTERN

**Blue Group**

**Friday** **Rimpa**  
Sept 28th PM

Container: Two or three matching fan shape or one Sodeshi.

Kenzans: Four to five to suit your choice of container(s).

Display Board: Your choice to suit your container.



#60145  
#60145 Fan, 5" x 13", Black/Lt. Blue  
\$101 \$75.75 less 10%



#53242  
#53242 Fan, 6" x 14", Black  
\$105 \$78.75 less 10%  
We have only a couple of these on hand. They are no longer available

**Saturday** **Hana-Isho**  
Sept 29th AM Advanced - Combined Form

Container: Hibiki and Madoka matching or Heika and round suiban of matching color/texture

Kenzans: One ginko or one 3.5" round.

#48377 Hibiki, White, 11.5"H  
\$93 \$69.75 less 10%



#48376 Madoka, White, 14"D  
\$180 \$135 less 10%



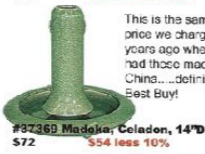
#60378 Hibiki, Lt. blue, 11.5"H  
\$81 \$61 less 10%



# Madoka, Lt. blue, 14"D  
\$180 \$135 less 10%



#37370 Hibiki, Celadon, 11.5"H  
\$42 \$31.50 less 10%



#37369 Madoka, Celadon, 14"D  
\$72 \$54 less 10%



Made in Japan so that is why they are so expensive compared to the celadon set on the far right which we had made in China.

This is the same price we charged 10 years ago when we had those made in China...definitely a Best Buy!

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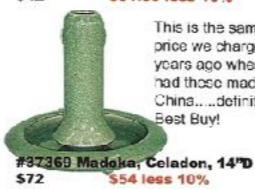
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STONE

**Blue Group**

**Friday** **Bunjin Moribana**  
Sept 28th AM

Container: Low bowl container of your choice of Chinese Influence, suitable for Bunjin arrangement; Minimum 11" diameter

Kenzans: Two total, to suit your choice of container.

Display Board: Your choice to suit your container.

Accessory: Your choice, in scale with your container, suitable for Bunjin arrangement.



#4 Chinese Footbath, 12" Long  
\$123.75 less 10%  
#49043 Stand \$45

#59754 Chinese B/W Bowl, 11" Diameter  
\$125 \$93.75 less 10%  
#49043 Stand \$28

#5 Chinese B/W Bowl, 14" diam.  
\$157.50 less 10%  
#49043 Stand \$21

#65092 Chinese B/W Footbath, 16" Long  
\$255 \$181.25 less 10%  
#49043 Stand \$63

Burl Display Boards Available at 50% off less 10%

# Southeastern US Ohara Chapter formation

❖ **AUGUST 1974**

- ❖ SC resident (Martha Neese) with core of 16 women from several states
- ❖ Officially chartered by **Headmaster Houn Ohara**
  - ❖ Met in Merville home in Orlando, FL
  - ❖ First president: Dorothy Merville
  - ❖ Advisor and teacher: Martha Neese
  - ❖ Constitution
  - ❖ Objectives

# Objectives of SouthEastern US Ohara Chapter

**To exchange cultural ideas;**

**To study and research the flower  
arrangements of the Ohara School of  
Ikebana;**

**To sponsor demonstrations, lectures, study  
groups and research of the  
Ohara School of Ikebana.**

# Early years...sponsored seminars

- ❖ Seminar locations varied - wherever members could find suitable locations
- ❖ Eventually settled in Highlands, eventually yearly ...(lure of Asian environment)
- ❖ Spring and summer, summer and autumn



Stone Lantern



1974...to present  
SEO: 100+ seminars!





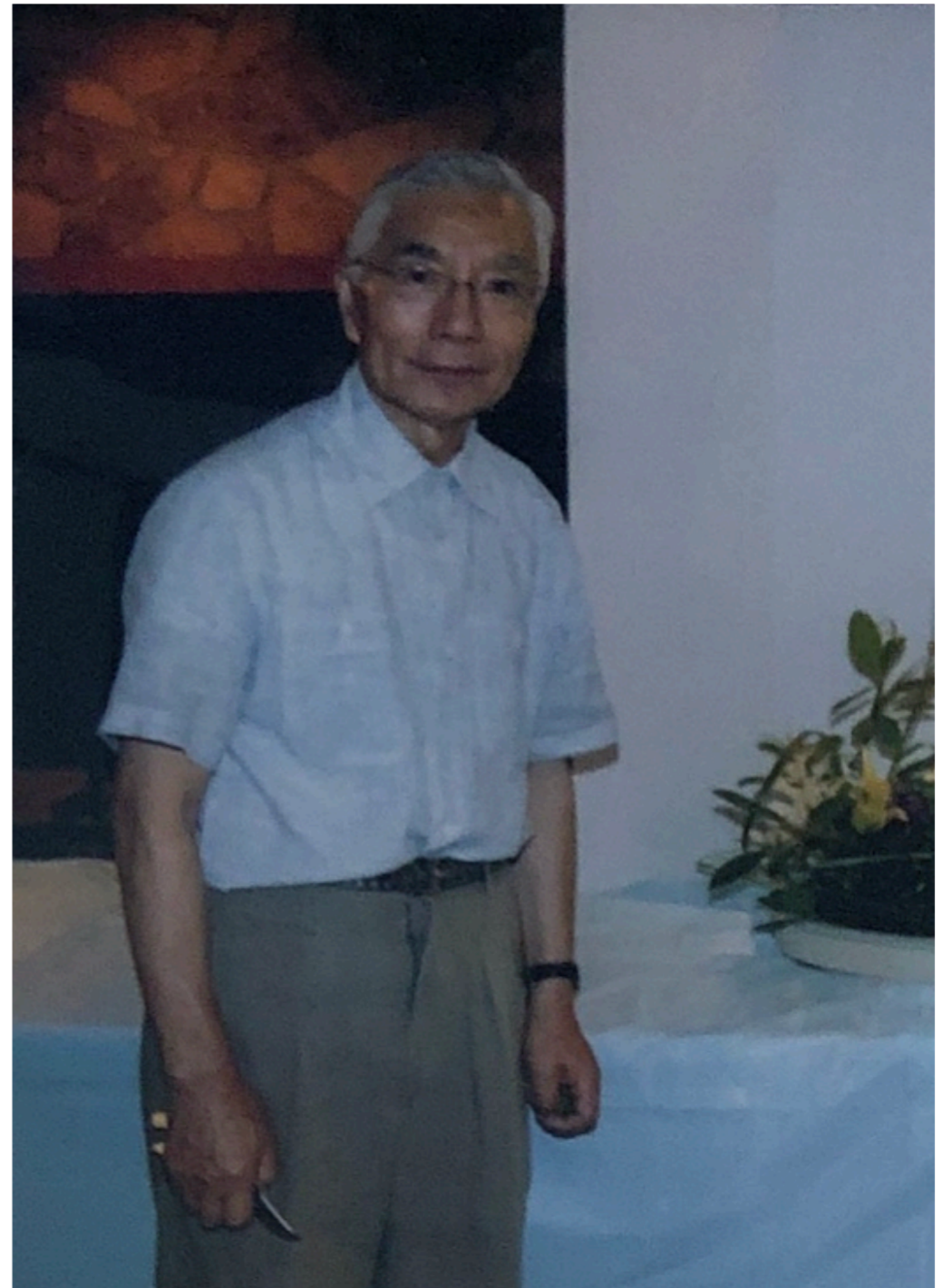


Inspiration:  
Sensei..... over the years

# Grand Master Martha Neese



Grand  
Master  
Matsuo  
Tomita



# Grand Master Betty Fuller Taylor



# Professor Akira Suzuki



# Grand Master Toshiko Yoshikawa



# Grand Master Ingrid Luders



# Grand Master Reiko Kawamura







Sub Grand Master  
**Jose Salacedo**



Sub-Grand Master  
Hiroko Mutsuyama

# Professor Akihiro Nishi





❖ Death of Martha Neese

❖ NAOTA at Clemson

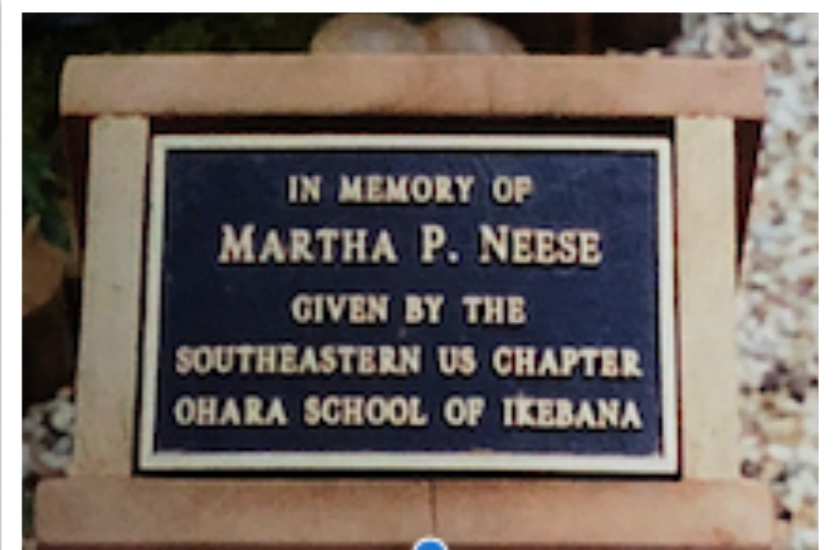
# Death of Martha Neese

May 27, 1996



Martha Neese, Mary Lib Saleh (daughter)

# Hudson Library in Highlands Garden Dedicatation



# SEO and NAOOTA at Clemson

## May 18th - 22nd, 2009



Dr. Judith Melton  
Sibbie Wilson  
Co-Chairs



Professor [Akihiro Nishi](#)  
Accompanied by Wakako Ohara

# NAOTA - Professor Akihiro Nishi!





Sustaining SEO from  
1974 to present

# SEO's guides: Presidents

- 19 women - including current, [Julia Van Huss](#)
- 5 active and present
- 6 living ([Judith Hansen](#), [Diane Harker](#), [Susan Thorpe](#), [Beth Bowers-Klaine](#), [Sibbie Wilson](#), [Julia Van Huss](#))
- 3 served 2 two-year terms ([Harker](#), [Thorpe](#), [Bowers-Klaine](#))
- 1 served 2 two-year terms and an interim ([Hansen](#))
- One served 3, two-year terms ([Sibbie Wilson](#))



## Maintaining SEO...

generous, dedicated VOLUNTEERS  
investing many hours....

- ❖ Board (President, Past President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer) = around 6,000 hours per year
- ❖ Newsletter Editor
- ❖ Seminar chairs...
- ❖ Actual work days



# Seminars.... what one needs

- ❖ Hours of advance planning
- ❖ Delivery
- ❖ Daily + set up + tear down



# Stalwart Ikebana husbands

- ❖ Webmaster, Russ Harker
- ❖ Eric van Huss





Tom Klaine (blue)  
Walt Orłowski (cap)



Michael Malott



❖ Alice and Joe



❖ Jane Newman's husband, George

**THANK YOU ALL!**

# SEO TODAY.....

- ❖ 57 current members....including
- ❖ 4 Life Members
  - ❖ (Diane Harker, Bettye Henderson, Mary Welford, Sibbie Wilson)
- ❖ 17 teachers; 10 active - teaching one or more students....
- ❖ 10 active teachers inspiring 84 students 🙌😊🙌😊🙌😊





Challenges...

.....for SEO's future

❖ YOUR legacies.....

❖ Containers

❖ Students



“Floating ...hither yon,  
the silent butterfly speaks  
through flowers, friendships.”

Betty Fuller Taylor,  
Winning Haiku that became theme of 1976 World Convention  
of Ikebana  
1972.

# 2024...our logo





# OHARA SCHOOL OF IKEBANA HEADQUARTERS

OHARA CENTER OF TOKYO  
7-17, MINAMI-AOYAMA 5-CHOME  
MINATO-KU, TOKYO 107-8607 JAPAN

OSAKA KENSYU KAIKAN  
WATANABE 6, 4-CHOME, KYUTAROMACHI  
CHUO-KU, OSAKA CITY 541-0056 JAPAN

## Congratulatory Message to Southeastern U. S. Chapter

It is my great pleasure to send my congratulatory message to the Southeastern U. S. Chapter of the Ohara School for its 50th Anniversary to be celebrated in April, 2024.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation to the Chapter Officers and members for their continued devotion to the Ohara School and efforts to promote the art of ikebana of the school in Southeastern U. S.

The success of the Southeastern U. S. Chapter and the secret to its longevity is not just in their skill arranging ikebana, but all the time and effort that they put into building a community. I would like to say thank you to all the teachers and members for their long years of service to the Ohara School and the Ohara community of Southeastern U. S.

On this special occasion of the 50th Anniversary, I sincerely hope that the Chapter will continue to grow through the harmony among the members and also serve the community through the love of flowers in the years to come.

I wish the Southeastern U. S. Chapter a great success of the celebration and a prosperous future.

小原流家元

小原宏貴

Ohara Hiroki  
Headmaster

April, 2024