

## *The Lure of South Jersey: The Resettlement of Migrants*

- **Exhibition dates: 8.20.17 – 1.07.18**
- **Thurs., 9.21.17, 6 – 8pm: Opening Reception, *Third Thursday***
- **Wed., 10.11.17, 12 pm: Lecture by Paul Schopp - *By Rail to the Promised Land***
- **Wed., 10.25.17, 12 pm: Lecture by Mark Demitroff - *Ethnic Settlements in the Pines***
- **Sat., 11.4.17: *Migration in a Minute* - Share your story with us (3 minute oral histories)**

Stockton University's Kramer Hall, The Noyes Museum of Art, and the South Jersey Culture and History Center have collaborated in an effort to raise awareness of South Jersey's long-standing cultural diversity, cultivated through successive waves of immigration and migration.

Since the earliest days of European colonization in South Jersey, the area has provided homes to people of diverse religious, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds. The history is rich, engaging, and less well known than it might be. With this exhibition, we hope to raise awareness within the wider community of this history of diversity along with its lasting impact on our area. Presenting cultural contexts, it offers a background to some of the underlying social causes of emigration and migration such as poverty, war, famine, persecution, and political exile.

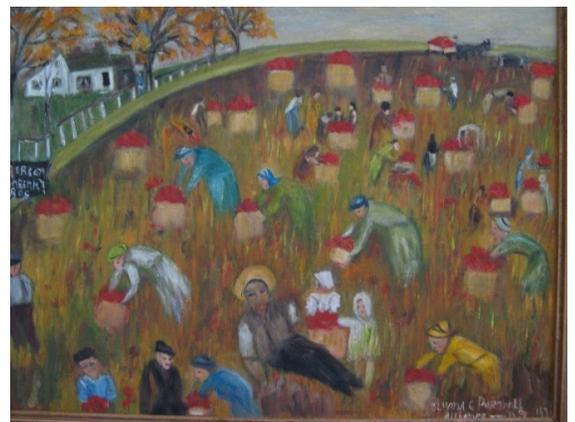
The museum interprets the stories of immigrant communities through paintings, works on paper, photographs, sculpture, documents, and literature. The displays contextualize an empathetic understanding of migrants and immigrants both past and present.

### Highlights of the exhibition:

- Artist **Floretta Mostovoy's** subjects were her neighbors, many of them **African Americans** who settled there during "**The Great Migration**," of 1910 to 1970, in search of work in the resort. Her paintings remind viewers of the affinity between **African Americans and Jews** through their common heritage of oppression and shared fear of random violence.



Floretta Schiff Mostovoy,  
*Mother, Son, and Father*, oil on masonite



Bluma Rappoport Bayuk Purmell,  
*Peterson's Cranberry Bog*

- One of many immigrant stories is that of **Bluma Bayuk's** family. Following the assassination of Czar Alexander II of **Russia** in 1881, a series of pogroms targeted Jews, beginning a wave of emigration. Bayuk's father, Moses, was the cofounder in 1880 of the **Alliance Colony** in Pittsgrove, Salem County, NJ, the **first Jewish agricultural community in the U.S.** Taking up a brush in her 80s, Bayuk's "memory paintings" depict daily life on the farm.
- The town of **Woodbine** was established in 1891 by Baron Maurice de Hirsch (1831-1896), a German philanthropist. De Hirsch dedicated his fortune to assisting the wave of **East European Jewish refugees** coming to the United States to flee the pogroms of **Russia**. Woodbine was developed as an agricultural colony under De Hirsch's auspices, and the early settlers built the Brotherhood Synagogue brick-by-brick, then restored as **The Sam Azeez Museum of Woodbine Heritage** by Michael Azeez in memory of his father in 2000.
- Historic artifacts in the exhibition include an 18<sup>th</sup> century Cossack sword of Damascus steel from the collection of the **New Kuban Museum**. Located in Buena, NJ, the museum was founded by **Cossacks that fled Communist Russia** after World War II.
- Immigration and naturalization documents of **Italian, English, German, Norwegian, Austro-Hungarian, and Cossack** immigrants from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries give context to the lengthy process of becoming a U.S. citizen.
- During World War II, people of Japanese ancestry, mostly legal U.S. citizens, were imprisoned in **internment camps**. Thousands of interned **Japanese Americans** were relocated to **Seabrook Farms**, in New Jersey, to work in the food processing plants. After the war ended, many stayed in the area. Jishiro Miyauchi, a former internee, painted *Heart Mountain Relocation Center* in 1945, depicting the internment camp in Wyoming where he was imprisoned during the war.
- **Chun Yan Hilyard** emigrated to Egg Harbor Township from **Mainland China** after receiving a degree in Fine Arts. She is known for her exquisite work using landscapes, still lifes and portraits using oil paints, charcoal and pastels.
- **Contemporary mixed media sculptures** by **George Lorio** offer commentary on the desperation of immigrants, growing racial division, wealth inequality, and environmental decline in the U.S.
- **Books written by immigrants, migrants, their direct descendants, and those who recount their stories** provide a more personal background, elaborating on the multitude of experiences.



Steven Easton, *Woodbine Brotherhood Synagogue*, kiln-cast red glass

### **The First Indian Reservation in America: Brotherton**

The arrival of **Europeans** to America devastated the **Lenni Lenape Native Americans**. By 1745, non-natives totaled 60,000 while the indigenous population had dropped from 10,000 to less than 1,000 people due to alcoholism, disease, and forced migration. After being driven out of their settlement and cheated out of their land, life for the remaining Lenape proved untenable and chaotic.

In 1755, the New Jersey Colonial Assembly appointed a commission to deal with the Lenape's grievances. In 1778, this commission entertained a proposal from the Lenape that they be allowed to settle on land they reputedly owned in what is now Shamong, containing 3,000 acres at Edgepillock. The tract included a cedar swamp, sawmill, and hunting grounds, as well as access to fishing grounds along the coast. The government drafted a deed granting the Lenape ownership of what became known as Brotherton.

Ministers of the Great Awakening of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, like Jonathan Edwards and his protégés, took interest in offering pastoral care to the Lenni Lenape. In 1747, one of these protégés, John Brainerd, became the resident minister of Brotherton. Under Brainerd's guidance, the village soon hosted a meetinghouse, schoolhouse, blacksmith, gristmill, and trading post. The residents totaled just 100 Lenape people.

In 1781, Brainerd's death resulted in a downward spiral for Brotherton residents. In 1801, the Mahican Indians of Oneida Lake, New York, sent an invitation to the Lenape to come live with them. The Lenape accepted the invitation and petitioned the New Jersey state legislature to sell their lands to fund relocation. State officials agreed, using the proceeds to hire wagons to drive the remaining 83 residents 275 miles to Oneida Lake, ending the saga of what was arguably the first Indian reservation in the nation.

### **African American Migration to Atlantic City**

Shortly after the completion of the Camden & Atlantic Railroad in 1854, hotel construction ensued in Atlantic City. **African Americans** arrived on Absecon Island to work in the new hostelrys. In 1860, just twenty black Americans resided on the island – most of them living in the hotels in which they worked. During the remainder of the century, this population grew and settled in what would become known as the Northside. As in the rest of pre-civil rights era America, Atlantic City's people of color suffered discrimination, deprivation, and institutional racism. By the turn of the century, African Americans comprised 95 percent of all hotel and recreational workers.

With the advent of the 20th century and discrimination still rampant, the Northside developed in a way remarkably similar to Harlem, New York, with jazz clubs and other nightlife venues proliferating through the neighborhood. Whites flocked to these attractions, rubbing elbows with the very same people they discriminated against once the sun appeared. Chicken Bone Beach, once intended to keep people of color off of the “whites only” beaches, located at the foot of Missouri Avenue below the Million Dollar Pier, is just one manifestation of the racial animus African Americans faced in “America's Playground”.

Jacob Lawrence, born in Atlantic City in 1917, was an African American painter who was especially well-known for his innovative collages depicting African American life. His *Great Migration Series* is a sixty panel series of paintings about “**The Great Migration**”, when African Americans migrated from the south to the north, in search of jobs and a better life. Some of his work is on view at the Atlantic City Library.

In the 1960s, much of the Northside's historic fabric was lost to successive waves of urban renewal projects, leaving many stretches of blocks devoid of buildings. The casino industry's arrival in 1978 provided new employment opportunities for the city's African American population. Today, Atlantic City's total population comprises 40 percent African American, 37 percent white, (35 percent of whom are Spanish-speaking), 16 percent Asian and the remaining made up of other ethnic minorities.

### **Russian-Jewish Immigration in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century**

Following the assassination of Czar Alexander II in **Russia** in 1881, a series of pogroms targeted Jews. These systematic, violent persecutions prompted many Jewish families to leave Europe, beginning a wave of **Russian-Jewish** immigration. Though many began their lives in the tenements of major cities, there was a strong desire to leave the confinement and crowded conditions of the urban landscape as the numbers of immigrants began to steadily increase. Some Jewish community leaders proclaimed that recent immigrants needed to make themselves self-sufficient to ensure their survival, as well as prove themselves to be more than beggars or beneficiaries. To accomplish this, families received funding from organizations such as the Baron De Hirsch Fund and the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society to acquire land and establish agricultural colonies. Though many were initially ill-prepared for farm life, with most of the settlers being scholars or tradesmen, they swiftly adapted to their new way of life. The Jewish Encyclopedia of 1901 declared that, of the more than 100 such colonies established in America, the ones in New Jersey were the most important.

### **The Sam Azeez Museum of Woodbine Heritage**

The town of Woodbine was established in 1891 by Baron Maurice de Hirsch (1831-1896), a German philanthropist. De Hirsch dedicated his fortune to assisting the wave of **East European Jewish refugees** coming to the United States to flee the pogroms of **Russia**. Woodbine was developed as an agricultural colony under De Hirsch's auspices, and the early settlers built the Brotherhood Synagogue brick-by-brick, providing themselves with a place of worship that had been denied to them in their native Russia.

The synagogue was restored as The Sam Azeez Museum of Woodbine Heritage by Michael Azeez in memory of his father in 2000. The Museum's mission is focused on the reduction of hate and prejudice, continuing the original colony's shared values of education, religion, tolerance, and inclusion.

### **Internment of Japanese Americans**

During World War II, between 110,000 and 120,000 people of **Japanese** ancestry, most of whom were U.S. citizens and lived on the Pacific Coast, were forcefully relocated and imprisoned in internment camps in the western interior of the country. Of these internees, 62 percent were legal United States citizens. President Franklin D. Roosevelt authorized these actions in February of 1942, shortly after Imperial Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor. Following an investigation launched by President Jimmy Carter in 1980, it was recommended that the government pay reparations to the survivors and their heirs. President Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 into law, which formally apologized for the internment and authorized a payment of \$20,000 to each camp survivor, admitting that the actions were based on "race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership."

### **Port Norris**

It is likely that the first **European** settlers in Port Norris were the **Dutch and the Swedes** who traveled up the Delaware River in 1638 and established themselves on the banks of the Maurice River. The river received its name from the *Prins Maurits*, a 17th century Dutch sailing ship that was burned by the Native Americans and sank in the surrounding waters.

Gabriel Thomas, a member of the Society of Friends, was one of the earliest immigrants to reach Pennsylvania. He traveled in 1651 on the ship "John and Sarah" from London to New England with Henry Smith as captain. Thomas states in his book *Prince Maurice River* (1698), that "...Swedes used to kill the geese in great number for their feathers only, leaving their carcasses behind them." In 1743 a Swedish church was built on the site of the Maurice River where missionaries preached after the American Revolution.

There is little evidence of large numbers of **Native Americans** in Port Norris. Many of the Native American tribes were nomadic, however, there is one settlement on the west side of the Cohansy River that is said to be the place of death of a Native American chief who was buried in a coffin on the limbs of a tree. That site is now known as "Coffin Point." Gabriel Thomas explains: "the Dutch and Swedes inform us that they greatly decreased in number... the Indians themselves say that two of them die to every one Christian that comes in here."

### **Mauricetown**

Mauricetown was originally settled by the **Swedes** in 1730 and known as Mattox Landing, named after its owner Luke Mattox. It was used predominantly for shipping tomatoes, lumber, iron and cordwood. There was no significant settlement until John Peterson settled in Mattox Landing and then the land began to develop further, including houses and a church. In 1814, three brothers under the name of Compton owned the town and renamed it Mauricetown after the river flowing beside it. The **Dutch** knew this river as the "Maurits River", which is Maurice in English. The land was heavily relied on for local sea trade via the Delaware River. In the latter half of the 1800s, 61 boats were built in the villiage and the town became home to the many captains who sailed up and down the coast.

## Millville

Located in Cumberland County, New Jersey, Millville came to be when Joseph Smith and his partners created the Union Estates Company in 1776, purchasing 24,000 acres of land and then established a number of lumber mills down the Maurice River. “Millview” then received its name due to the abundance of mills and factories that were located on the land.

Given that southern New Jersey has an ample sources of silica sand (quartz that has been broken down through the work of water and wind into small particles), James Lee, an **Irish** immigrant, was able to create the areas first glass factory in 1806. Lee was the son of Francis Lee who came from **Belfast, Ireland**, to Pennsylvania. In 1799, Lee built his first glass factory, called Eagle Glass Works, in Port Elizabeth, New Jersey. He then built the factory in Millville, which he named Glasstown. Millville is now known for its glass works and the factory stood as the oldest continuously operating glassmaking company in the United States for 193 years until it was demolished in 1999.

**Bluma Bayuk Rappoport Purmell (1888 - 1997)** was born in 1888 and grew up on the **Alliance Colony** farm in Pittsgrove, Salem County, New Jersey. Her father, Moses Bayuk, a **Russian-Jewish immigrant**, was the cofounder of this **first Jewish agricultural community in the United States** in 1880. After growing up on the farm, Bluma was a longtime resident of Atlantic City, before moving to Philadelphia for the remainder of her life. She didn't begin painting until her 80s. Well-known for her contributions to the folk art movement, she led a diverse and full life, working as a Red Cross nurse, tobacco packer, mother, operating several boarding homes in Atlantic City, and a nursing home in Ventnor. In her 90s, she co-authored her autobiography *A Farmer's Daughter: Bluma*. With most of her work recalling life on the farm, or “memory paintings,” she painted until she was 100 years old. Her artwork has been exhibited nationally by the Smithsonian Institution. Bluma passed away as a supercentenarian at 109.

**Chun Yan Hilyard (1964-2009)** was born in **Mainland China**. Her father, Pei Ke Chai was a famous watercolor artist and teacher and a major influence on her artistic pursuits. At a young age, Chun Yan received many major awards and her work was shown at China's Five State Fine Art Exhibition. For her medium of choice it would be between oils, charcoal or pastels. While living in China, she taught art to children and acquired a degree in Fine Arts. Upon emigrating to the United States, she became a part of the southern New Jersey arts community and developed an impressionist painting style, creating still lifes, landscapes and portraits.

**George Lorio, Artist:** Lorio attributes his excitement for color, form, and all things visual to his upbringing in New Orleans, a place which he describes as a “world of extremes”. Later, living on the Mexican border for over a decade shaped his view of culture and social responsibility. Following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, Lorio felt the sudden urgency of world politics and promptly abandoned his elegant, nature-based sculptures for more topical work. With his current mixed-media works, he is hoping to generate discussion and social engagement, eventually leading to a dialogue which may build solutions to the world's mounting injustices. His use of toys juxtaposes decidedly adult commentary with children's playthings.

*I use a narrative of social engagement to generate discussion. My images subtly arouse concern with visual prods into issues related to class, immigration, gun control, and ecology. – George Lorio*

**Larissa Silva, Artist:** Silva is a first generation American, motivated by her own family's story to pay tribute with her work to the countless immigrants who have shaped our nation. In 1951 Silva's paternal grandfather fled **Oslo, Norway** after World War II upon realizing that the country, under German occupation, had little opportunities to offer him and his family. Along with his seven year old son, Svein Erik Vetne, he fled to America to begin their new lives. Silva's work, *Shapely Woman*, represents

immigrant women, strong and resilient, who brought with them the stories of their past, both painful and beautiful. Silva is pursuing a degree in Art Therapy degree.

**Summary:** Together, these pieces create a broad overview, by no means complete, of immigration and migration and its continuing impact on our lives. The following resources were vital to this project. Visit their websites or locations to learn more:

- **The Sam Azeez Museum of Woodbine Heritage**
- **Seabrook Educational and Cultural Center**
- **Alliance Cemetery and Alliance Colony**
- The New Kuban Museum: 521 Weymouth Road, Buena, NJ - Open by appointment
- **South Jersey Culture and History Center**
- ***Small Town, Black Lives, by Wendel White***
- ***The Northside: African Americans and the Creation of Atlantic City, Nelson Johnson***
- ***Clarence, by Stephanie Baruffi***
- ***Farmer's Daughter, by Bluma Bayuk Rappoport Purmell***

**References:**

<https://www.cumauriceriver.org/reaches/pg/narratives.cfm?sku=33>

<http://www.historicportnorris.org/history-18th.htm>

<https://www.millville.org/Page/46>

<https://www.antique-bottles.net/showthread.php?410637-James-Lee-s-Glasstown-Millville-New-Jersey>

<https://www.glassbottlemarks.com/whitall-tatum/>

**The Noyes Museum of Art of Stockton University: [www.noyesmuseum.org](http://www.noyesmuseum.org) , (609) 626-3420**

**The Noyes Arts Garage of Stockton University: [www.artsgarageac.com](http://www.artsgarageac.com) (609) 626-3805**

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