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## Toshi Aline Ohta Seeger(1922 - 2013)



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Born in Munich, Germany in 1922 to an American mother and a Japanese father, Toshi Seeger, loving wife to Pete Seeger, died peacefully at home at age 91 on the 9th of July 2013.

Toshi's mother gave birth July 1st, 1922 while traveling in Germany. She entered this country at six months of age and took up residence with her mother, Virginia Harper Berry from Washington D.C. and father, Takashi Ueda Ohta from Shikoku, Japan. She lived in Greenwich Village and Woodstock NY in the 1920s, 30s, and 40s. Her parents and half sister Aline Dixon were a part of the theatre community and she grew up surrounded by art and theatre.

Toshi attended The Little Red School House in New York City and graduated from the High School of Music and Art in 1940. She was a community volunteer, festival organizer, writer, filmmaker, road manager, potter, loving mother, grandmother, great grandmother and aunt. She met her husband, folk singer and activist, Pete Seeger in 1939. They married in NYC in 1943, while Pete was on leave from the army.

Toshi passed away eleven days shy of their 70th wedding anniversary. Toshi and Pete were partners in every sense of the word. They collaborated on everything from building their log cabin and organizing festivals big and small.

This was made possible only through Toshi's tireless work, creative mind and meticulous organizational skills.

Toshi served on the New York State Council of the Arts and marched with Dr. Martin Luther King from Selma to Montgomery in 1965.

Toshi collaborated with Pete's manager Harold Leventhal on thousands of projects. She and her husband took their three children ages 17, 15 and 8 around the world, giving concerts and making field recordings and films in 28 countries.

In the 1960's she was instrumental in the early years of the Newport Folk Festival and helped discover bluesman Mississippi John Hurt.

Toshi was an untrained filmmaker. She co-produced, directed, shot and edited films about music from all regions of the country and the world. Many of her films are now at the Library of Congress.

In 1965, when her husband was no longer banned from all television, she produced a show called "Rainbow Quest" for Public Television. In 2007, at age 85, she executive produced the Emmy-award winning documentary, "Pete Seeger: The Power of Song."

Toshi co-founded the Hudson River Sloop Clearwater organization and Clearwater's Great Hudson River Revival. She initiated things that were rarely done at festivals in the 1970's and 1980's - such as recycling, wheelchair access and sign language interpreters.

Toshi will be remembered for her compassion, dedication to causes, as a matriarch within her family and local community, and for her cooking and elaborate organic garden.

While Toshi's work with Pete was recognized internationally, she was also very involved locally. Beacon Sloop Club's annual festivals - and could be seen each year whipping cream at their annual strawberry festival. Toshi's stone soup was the magnet that brought people to the Beacon waterfront which ultimately transformed the city dump into Riverfront Park.

She was a member of the Beacon Sloop Club, Southern Dutchess NAACP, from which she received a Freedom Award, Wespac, from which she received the Peace and Justice Award, The Dutchess Junction Firehouse Ladies Auxilliary, the Mid-Hudson Progressive Alliance and Clearwater.

Toshi will be greatly missed by all who knew her. She is survived by her husband, Pete, her son, Daniel (Martha) of Topanga, CA, daughter Mika (Joseph Bossom) of Tiverton, RI and daughter Tinya of Beacon, NY. Also, eight grandchildren, Sonya Cramer, Rufus Cohen, Tao Rodriguez-Seeger, Cassandra Seeger, Kitama Cahill-Jackson, Moraya Degeare, Penny Bossom-Seeger and Isabelle Bossom-Seeger.

Great-grandchildren, Dio and Gabel Cramer and Liam Oulton. She is also survived by many nieces and nephews on the Ohta, Dixon and Seeger sides of the families.

She was predeceased by her parents, Virginia Berry and Takashi Ohta, her brother Allen Homare Ohta, her sister Aline Dixon and a sister-in-law whom she raised as her own daughter, Penny Seeger.

A Celebration of her life is being planned for a date in the future.

Donations can be made to any of the organizations listed above.

Arrangements are under the direction of Jarett D. Quick at Libby Funeral Home 55 Teller Ave. Beacon N.Y. 12508

(845) 831-0179

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