

THE DEATH OF DOSHU

Kisshomaru Ueshiba

Mr Kisshomaru Ueshiba passed away on January 4th 1999 at the age of Seventy-seven.

There are many Aikidoka around the world who have experienced the Doshu's teaching either directly by attending his classes in Japan or when he has visited different countries around the world, or indirectly by using his books, especially his book *AIKIDO*, (published by Hozansha in 1969), as a source of reference and inspiration.

Doshu came to Australia in 1984 to help celebrate the 20th anniversary of Aiki-Kai Australia. He toured the major cities which included demonstrations and seminars at the National Gallery in Melbourne, The Sydney Opera House and National Stadium in Canberra. His visit is fondly remembered by many Australian Aikidoka who still speak of it years after the event, and especially now that he is no longer with us.

This issue of *Aikido Australia* is dedicated to the memory of The Late Doshu, Kisshomaru Ueshiba, and expresses the thoughts of Australian Aikidoka who have been inspired by him.

The Late Kisshomaru Ueshiba



image modified from the cover of his book
The Spirit of Aikido.
Published by Kodansha International, 1984



The Late Doshu, Kisshomaru Ueshiba, with his son Moriteru, in front of the commemorative statue of O-Sensei at Tanabe, Japan.

Kisshomaru Ueshiba was born in Ayabe in June 1921. He was the third Son (and only surviving son) of Morihei Ueshiba, the founder of Aikido.

Kisshomaru studied at Waseda University, majoring in Political Science. He also studied Aikido from childhood, having the greatest exponent and master of Aikido, his father Morihei Ueshiba, as his teacher.

Kisshomaru became general director of the Aikikai Foundation Hombu Dojo (the World headquarters) in 1948.

After the death of his father in 1969 Kisshomaru became the 2nd Aikido Doshu, a hereditary title meaning Master of the Way.

He became president of the International Aikido Federation, in 1975, a post he has held since that time. He also holds a civil post with the Japan Diplomatic association. His passing will be mourned by Aikidoka all over the world.

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Summer school '99.

A report by John Litchen.

Before training began there was a moment of sadness. Shihan Sugano announced that Doshu Kisshomaru Ueshiba has passed away the previous week, (January 4th 1999) and that he had been at his bedside when this happened. He also said he would be returning to Japan at the end of the week to attend the public funeral, and that he would express on behalf of all the members of Aiki Kai Australia, our deepest sympathies to the Ueshiba family. There was a short period of silence during which most of those present contemplated on the way Doshu's teachings had affected them. Then the training began.

This Summer school, though it seemed less crowded than other years was a great success. Shihan Sugano introduced an added dimension to the training which created more movement and much greater emphasis on focus and awareness. He demonstrated specific exercises to develop focus. The exercises were not static but were created by both Uke and Nage responding to attacks and defenses. Some people appeared confused at first but once they grasped the concept that the role of Uke and Nage were interchangeable, that technique was created by their response to each other, everything went well. There was more concentration and awareness in the training than I had seen in previous years, due to the fact that Shihan Sugano was emphasising a higher level of training.

Teaching certificates were presented the day before the black belt gradings which meant the actual gradings could be done fairly quickly. Questions were also taken early instead of at the close of the Summer school because Shihan Sugano had to leave almost immediately after the gradings to attend the Doshu's funeral in Japan.

The final training sessions were taken on the Saturday morning by Hanan Janiv Sensei and Bob Botterill Sensei. At the end Bob Botterill thanked everyone for attending the Summer school and announced that Moriteru Ueshiba, the son of the Late Doshu Kishomaru Ueshiba had been chosen as the new Doshu.

In lieu of the Yudansha training day that Shihan Sugano was to take at Clifton Hill dojo on Sunday, a special day of training was to be held in honour of the late Doshu. Everyone was invited to attend.

This day was well attended with many of the interstate visitors coming to train before leaving for the airport to return

to their respective States. The first session was taken by Bob Botterill Sensei who explained how the teachings of the late Doshu and the concise writing in his books had inspired him. He wanted us to concentrate on Ki and precision in our training. He asked us to do the techniques demonstrated, slowly and with as much accuracy as possible, concentrating on being precise with each part of the movement.

Hanan Janiv Sensei on the other hand remembered a different aspect of the late Doshu. He recalled how the fluidity and precision of the late Doshu's technique seemed to embody within it a lightness that gave the impression of floating. He wanted us to concentrate on being light and fluid so as little effort as possible was needed to execute a technique.

Both sessions seemed to go by very quickly with everyone putting a lot of concentration into trying to achieve that Bob and Hanan wanted us to do.

Then it was over, and people were being ferried out to the airport. Everyone left with joyous memories of their training with friends they don't see often enough, perhaps coloured by a hint of sadness at the death of the late Doshu Kisshomaru Ueshiba.



Shihan Sugano heading for the lawn in front of the dojo to prepare for the official photo shoot. Everyone who attended Summer School 99 received a copy of the group photo. This sets a precedent that other Winter and Summer schools should follow.



The third Doshu Moriteru Ueshiba

Moriteru Ueshiba...

...as Dojo Cho has visited Australia 4 times: twice as a special Guest instructor at our National Summer Schools, as part of a special team to demonstrate Aikido at the Japanese Pavilion during Expo 88 in Brisbane, and more recently in 1996 when he visited the new Canberra dojo where he gave a magnificent demonstration of Aikido. He also assisted in the celebrations to mark 30 years of Aikido in Australia. As a result of these visits he has gained a lot of friends in Australia.

That he has become the new Doshu is only fitting given the fact that he is the grandson of O-Sensei, Morihei Ueshiba, the founder of Aikido.



I Remember ...

It was in Oxford, England in 1975 that I first met and trained with *Doshu Kisshomaru Ueshiba*. I was a young shodan at the time. *Doshu* was on a European tour organised by the European Aiki-Kai. I remember *Doshu* had a slim build, and did not look very strong. However, When I started to train with him I was surprised to find he had very powerful technique. After the course there was a demonstration. Performing in the demo were *Tamura Sensei* from France, *Chiba Sensei* from the U.K., *Kanetsuka Sensei* also from the U.K., and *Doshu*.

Doshu's Ukes on that day were his son *Moriteru Ueshiba*, *Suganuma Sensei*, and a few others.

It was fantastic to be a part of the demonstration and to watch *Doshu* in full flight.

I am pleased to have known him in his heyday. It was truly a memorable moment for me.

Graham Morris.

Graham Morris Sensei, is the Area representative for Queensland.

...Just his lightness...

I don't have extensive memories of *Doshu*, just his lightness.

I saw him a number of times and attended his classes. More than anything else I remember his technical and timing ability to deal with the *tsuki* attack with a *jo* where he moved to his knees and the opponent flew over his back. This meant he had to close an enormous gap. I can still see a vivid image of him performing that and I think of it as something which might have been particularly unique to his ability.

I remember feeling very self-conscious trying to talk to him. While in Canberra he wanted to see particular statue in the Sports Institute so he could take a photo. I took him, then made the mistake of assuming he wanted me to show him more of the institute. He only wanted to see *that* statue. He was happy to return to the car and be driven back.

I was very impressed with how attentive *Sugano Sensei* was. *Doshu's* visit to Australia taught us a lot about attentiveness and protocol.

Doshu's book (*Aikido. Published in English by Hozansha in 1965, later updated and re-published in 1985*) is our main reference for the NCAS syllabus, so

we are still using his techniques in a very real and practical way for our Government Accreditation.

His contribution to Aikido will always remain with us in this and many other ways. Hanan Janiv

Hanan Janiv Sensei is ACT Area Representative, a member of the TTC (*Technical Teaching Committee*), and Director of National Coaching Accreditation. He is Aiki-Kai Australia's representative on the Australian Martial Arts Council.

Doshu's Funeral

A first hand account

by Vanessa Castellano.

At the beginning of this year when we came back to Japan after a holiday in the USA, we found our answering machine full of messages announcing the death of the *Doshu* just two days before. (January 4th)

He had died, aged 77, at the Kokuritsu Medical Centre in Tokyo. An all night Shinto vigil had already taken place at Hombu Dojo the night before we returned, and the funeral service was due to take place that very day, also at the Hombu.

As we live near the dojo, I went to the ceremony, groggy from jet lag and under the shock of the news. Even though everyone knew he had not been well for a long time following treatment for cancer, and that teachers had cancelled overseas Aikido seminars in the event that he would pass away during their absence, it was still a shock to all of us, and there was a deep feeling of loss emanating from the large crowd assembled for the funeral. Over 2,200 people had already participated in the vigil.

I went to sign my name and offer a condolence envelope under the canopy specially erected outside the dojo, then joined the large queue of people formally dressed in black.

Having never been to a funeral in Japan, and with no idea of proper procedure, I was nervous. Moreover, this was a Shinto funeral which is unusual in itself. Most Japanese tend to get married with a Shinto ceremony, but their funerals are usually held according to Buddhist rituals. Luckily I met a Japanese friend in the queue who explained what to expect according to information he had obtained from a book.

When our turn came to enter the building, we took off our shoes, and were given a number before we proceeded upstairs through the men's change room and into the dojo. The walls had been draped in white cloth, and a few metres in front of the altar ceiling to floor cloth cordoned the ceremony area. In front of it was a large framed photo

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Remembering *Doshu*...

Like most of my generation I first became aware of the late *Doshu* in the mid 1960's through his book *AIKIDO*, at that time one of the few books available in English. It remains a *classic* and I still treasure my original copy. *O-Sensei* was still alive and the major living presence in the Aikido world then, so we only heard of *Kisshomaru Ueshiba* as *Waka Sensei*. (I don't think I ever heard him referred to as *Dojo Cho*).

Later, when *O-Sensei* died in 1969, we became aware of the new *Doshu*. So by the time I first went to Japan in 1975, I was very excited about the prospect of training at Hombu and attending his classes. I arrived in Shinjuku very late at night, expecting to stay with my friend *Keith Townsend* who had told me he lived "right next door to the dojo." In fact the house next door is the *Ueshiba* residence... I was poised to knock on the door and wake the *Doshu* and his family(!) when luckily, someone passing by explained my mistake.

The next day I attended *Doshu's* class. He was sitting at the back of his office, but overhearing that I was *Sugano Sensei's* pupil from Australia, he immediately came out to greet me, an act of politeness which I have never forgotten, and which I felt was his natural manner; very impressive. I remember my first class: he came round to everybody, and took the time to show me some point or another. Again I was very impressed, and grateful. Consequently I always felt a personal connection from the first time I met him.

I remember a funny thing happened on my next visit to Japan in 1977. I spent two months at Hombu in Tokyo then went to Kyoto for a while, taking photographs for a school book I wanted to write. I felt I should tell him why I hadn't been at the Dojo, so I rehearsed a speech which I hoped would elevate my limited Japanese to the level of communication to explain what I had been up to. This time I asked for him at the office, and he once more politely greeted me, then listened attentively while I regaled him with the scale of my photographic project. After class an English speaking Japanese guy came up to me and said, "**Doshu asked me to come and ask you why you took all those fish to Kyoto.**" (Those who know Japanese will understand my mistake. I had used the verb 'to take' and mixed up the words for photo — *shashin*, and raw fish — *sashimi*.)

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On Instructing Aikido — Part Two

by David Scott

The editor would like to apologise for splitting this article into two parts. Before reading this second part I urge you to go back to the previous issue and re-read the first part, and in particular take note of the painting of a circle with a dot in the centre as reference to this image is needed while reading part two.

What themes have I been returning to lately?

Technically I have been exploring the connection between Irimi Nage and Ikkyo, and contrasting this with the practice of Shiho Nage. These techniques have been emphasised by Sugano Sensei as fundamental to the art – Kihon Waza [basic technique]. Considerable practice has been Suwari Waza in order to emphasise the need to move the body in a coordinated way. I have also been practicing the Bokken — both Suburi and paired practice — linking these basic movements together in a sequence. I have been reflecting upon the relevance of these movements to empty handed practice.

Conceptually or metaphorically I have been reflecting on a number of ideas that essentially amount to different ways of looking at the same thing.

I am intrigued by **the painting of a circle with a dot in the centre** that appears in Japanese calligraphy. (*Ed. Please refer back to previous issue where Part one of On Instructing Aikido appeared*) O-Sensei drew pictures of this kind when explaining Aikido. I recall looking at a photograph of such a drawing by O-Sensei and asking Sugano Sensei about it. I was marvelling at the symmetry of the circle I had assumed O-Sensei had drawn by hand. I recall my embarrassment when Sugano Sensei pointed out, what was obvious to anyone really looking at it, that it had been traced around a circular object. This painting has come to represent something fundamental in my understanding of Aikido. Despite its two dimensions, it has depth for me. I have been looking lately at the relevance of this image to my training. “Are they [the students] sick of hearing about it? Does it have depth for them?”

The dot piercing the very centre of the space between us identifies the spot through which we establish our connection. We are in relationship to one another. Without this relationship there is no Aikido. The point of physical contact between us defines the Ma-ai [the distance at which Aikido takes place] and establishes the point of connection from which techniques unfold into Omote and Ura Waza. It is also from this point that our body position in relation to Uke is defined as Ai Hanmi or Giyaku Hanmi. We train at different distances varying the point of contact and creating techniques with different timing. The dot is not a fixed point.

The notion of penetrating the centre of space seems embarrassingly masculine. I wonder what role my gender plays in the fact that I have this view. Despite my uncertainty, I explore this idea. Initiating the movement is like drawing the dot. Typically I choose to think of the movement as starting here; it does however depend on where you choose to punctuate the process of our connection. I look for the feminine. I find the circle. All possibilities are contained within, and emerge from the dot in the circle. From a single point emerges the many. Aikido, I theorise, progresses more readily if we start with the masculine and develop the feminine. These principles must come together in a harmonious balance.

Exploring the more esoteric of O-Sensei’s teachings [eg. Kotodama or sound spirit] we find that the dot is identified with Su, the seed sound of the universe — the vibration at the beginning of the creative process. According to my understanding of Kotodama, the vibrating dot becomes the circle and it is divided by the cut of the

sword — creation. The sounds creating the circle emerge in the sequence “su”... “oo” ... “o” ... “a” ... and the division down the centre occurs with the sounds “e” and “ii”. Sometimes we match these sounds to a movement in our practice. We start with the sound “su” from a safe distance. **As we close the distance between us Aikido takes place.** Many techniques emerge. The end of the technique is punctuated with a focused “ii”.

Another image I am fond of, is that of **the cross – fire and water** – reportedly, for O-Sensei, symbolic of the creation of divine technique. The (*Kanji*) characters for fire (Ka) and water (Mi) in an abbreviated form together make the homophone Kami, the Japanese word for deity. In the eastern cosmology, defined by Yin and Yang, fire is masculine and water Feminine. In our movements we bring together fire (the horizontal) and water (the vertical). This seems unnecessarily mystical. Why not say: “Blend together movement in both vertical and horizontal planes”, that is, move through three dimensional space? I feel that saying “bring together fire and water” is more instructional. It implies some mystery and encourages inquiry. In these metaphors, I find something essential to Aikido, that is missing if I talk only of the geometry of the movement. Sugano Sensei has spoken of fire and water, and O-Sensei did. I also talk of fire and water. “I wonder if the students wish I didn’t.”

Today we look at **Ikkyo**. There are many ways to conceptualise what we are doing when we are practicing Ikkyo and **what we think affects the way we move**. Many instructive metaphors echo the power in natural phenomena. A useful image for Omote is that of an ocean wave rolling up and onto a beach. An image for Ura might be that of a tornado or the more considerate

whirlwind. Sometimes I think of these images and the things that follow.

In Ikkyo we close the distance, penetrating the centre of space, pushing forward from our centre. We establish a connection with Uke and **control their movement from inside them. I suggest uprooting the trunk of their tree rather than swinging in their branches.** We do this by linking ourselves to Uke and moving our own centre. We generate power in the technique through our focus, the coordination of our body movements, the movement of our hips, variations in our position between *Heaven and Earth*, and through the orientation of ourselves in relation to others. We bring together **three key centres** — that within ourselves, that within them, and that between us. All three come to move as a coordinated unit. Just as the moon moves around the earth, and together they move around the sun (in a dramatic universe), so it is with the techniques of Aikido.

We move as the universe moves. I am trying to organise myself in relation to another moving body in such a way that the techniques emerge from our movements. We are both moving as the technique emerges. Although the conclusion we reach does leave them more vulnerable than me, I am not in a fixed position throwing my partner. While I must give them the attention they require, I must not be overly concerned with them. Throughout, I seek to maintain a safe position. This requires an awareness that our movement is taking place within a certain context. The pattern of objects in the space around us is constantly changing and I need to take account of this. I should be able to move freely between Omote and Ura.

Another notion I have adopted for contemplation and brought into my practice is that of **“the breathing universe”** – the rhythms of **expansion and contraction and the pauses between.** Examples include, the pattern to my breathing, contraction and extension, reaching and retraction, the rhythm of our movements, looking inside and outside, stillness in contrast to movement, and the ebb and flow of my energy and creativity. The connection to other ideas is apparent – the focus of the dot and the expansion to the circle. Water – reaching up to Heaven and down to Earth, fire – reaching out to the other and drawing into myself.

We practice **Irimi Nage.** Investigating **rhythm.** Our engagement is in response to my invitation, I attempt to extend out to meet Uke and draw them into my centre and send them out again. In the middle of the technique we bring the three centres (from the moment of our connection) together as one. Uke’s centre is tied to mine so that the movement at my centre is transmitted to Uke, thus allowing the creation of the technique. This I believe, is the meaning of the term used by O’Sensei, **Ki No Musubi**, to refer to the notion of tying together in a knot the Ki of both Tori and Uke. If the movement of Tori and Uke are conceptualised as waves, then Uke’s pattern is following Tori’s but it is slightly out of phase with it.

“What are the rhythms in this movement? What happens to the breath? Where is the breath held?” Normally we let the breath take care of itself. Doing so I find it hard to notice its movement. A rhythm often emerges in the pattern of our practice together – left - right ... left -right ... left -right. As soon as we notice this we break it up, punctuating our movement with new timing and different distances. We must also escape the **tyranny of Aikido by numbers** – two for me , two for you – counting of any kind. There is however, a grammar to our movement and it is punctuated more with commas than with full stops. In the stream of our consciousness that maintains our connection, there are no full stops – There is **no time for tea! Even the smallest opening might be our undoing.**

We practice the last exercise of the class – **Tai no Henko** – to gently stretch the spine.

At the end we again sit quietly. We are in Seiza with our hands in the meditative Mudra [hand position] opposite to that of Zen meditation. The fingers of the right hand rest on top of the fingers of the left, and the tips of the thumbs touch. Both hands rest in front of the One Point. We look inside. “You should be able to notice your inner energy calming down.” When you exercise your inner energy builds up. We are returning to a balanced state. When I am sitting calmly and with less unnecessary tension, I shift my hands to my thighs and again look at the students. The feeling is now different. As a group we seem more coherent. Some stillness comes from exhaustion. *Just sitting* remains difficult and is still disturbed by our looking. Despite this the connection is

there. We have limbered up, warmed up our joints, stretched our muscles, met one another and confronted things in ourselves and others we normally would leave alone. We have paused for a moment to calm down and punctuate this practice.

The class ends formally with the appropriate bows.

We have had the opportunity to expand ourselves and are now given the chance to carry our accomplishments into other areas of our lives. If we fail to do so, surely there is little point to it. **“Why come to training only to fall over, stand up and fall over again? ... Aikido needs to make a difference in our lives.”** The changes need not be radical. We will probably still recognise each other in the street. “What determines how different we will be? What enables Aikido to make a difference? Has it made a difference to you?”

More importantly, I need to continue to inquire whether it has made a difference for me.

Acknowledgments:

I would like to thank Christina Boerema without whose support I could not write and Bruce Shaw who has tried hard to convince me to write English!

Illustration and photography (in part One, see previous issue of Aikido Australia). The photograph of Sugano Sensei was taken by Stephen Hardachre. The other photographs were taken by Hugh Derham. The illustration was provided by Grant Noble.

David Scott Sensei, a Clinical Psychologist, believes that inquiry and self reflection are essential to Aikido Practice. We are grateful that he has chosen to share with us some of his personal reflections. David trains in Adelaide. He is the Area Representative for South Australia, and may be contacted by Email, scottboe@camtech.net.au or by phone / fax on (08) 8390 3322.



Visit by Shimamoto Sensei

by Dave Kolb

In early March 1998, Queensland members were able to renew their friendship with Shimamoto Sensei from Japan.

Together with his wife, he was on a week long visit to the sunshine state and we were lucky that he managed to include some practice amongst his visits to the beach, theme parks, and what can only be described as a full on assault on gift and souvenir shops.

Holding 7th Dan, Shimamoto Sensei is the director of the **Toyonaka Shosenji Dojo** in Osaka. In daily life he is a Buddhist priest in charge of the Shosenji Temple which also serves as a family home and Aikido dojo. In 1994 Shosenji celebrated its 30th anniversary as an official branch of the Aikikai Hombu Dojo and has more than 200 members training at the main dojo as well as at other locations in Osaka.

This was his second visit after having led a group of students here in 1994. Australia appears to have made a good impression on the whole family. This includes his son Tamayuki who has visited several times, including the 1996 Summer School, and coming for his honeymoon last year.

Shimamoto Sensei took classes in Brisbane and Warwick as well as the Gold Coast. As a leading student of the late Osawa Sensei he is always keen to impart not only technique, but also the spirit of Aikido that he inherited from his teacher

Some of the important topics he covered are:

Shizentai

In Aikido it's really important to always maintain shizentai, a relaxed and natural posture. Nage needs to be relaxed when leading Uke or trying to move when held firmly. The most obvious area is the shoulders which raise up and become tense when we try to use strength. When this happens Nage becomes unbalanced and cannot apply techniques. We need to be particularly aware of this when training with very large or strong partners who can unbalance us easily (physically and mentally) if we try to use strength against them. Keeping both a natural posture and natural mind is essential in those situations.



Wrapping

Shimamoto Sensei used the analogy of wrapping to explain how we should approach our training and take care of our partners. In Japan gifts or important objects are always carefully wrapped to protect them and accord proper respect. In Aikido we are dealing with a human being which is infinitely more important than any material object. Therefore, our technique needs to be such so as to carefully guide our partners to the mat, and pins and controls should have the nature of wrapping or protecting something precious.

5 points to consider for Irimi Nage.

Sensei related five important points to observe when performing irimi nage as taught by the founder. These are:

- **Shikaku ni hairu.** Initially enter positively to your partner's dead point.
- **Nami ga uchikaesu yo ni.** Your body and arm movement should be like a wave breaking and flowing to the shore.
- **Ude wa tetsu no wa no yo ni.** Your arms should resemble a ring of iron.
- **Okina aite wa tatande nageru.** If your partner is big, fold him/her down and throw.
- **Yubi wa shita ni mukete.** In the finished position after the throw, fingers should be pointed downwards.



Before leaving for Japan Shimamoto Sensei was happy to answer a couple of questions for readers of this newsletter.

Q. Sensei, can you tell us a little bit about Osawa Sensei?

A. I first started training under Osawa Sensei when I was a University student about 1956. Especially in later life Sensei (Osawa) had big flowing movements, and actually that sort of technique is even more difficult because you have to maintain a really strong centre to control your partner.

In a way his technique was like a large river. On the surface the current appears to be gentle and slow moving but the centre is deep, fast and powerful and can move large stones easily. One of the lasting impressions I have of him was not long before he died. Even though he was really sick he insisted on performing at the annual All Japan Demonstration. He did a really strong performance even though he had bandages stuffed underneath his gi, and there were nurses and a doctor just beside the mat waiting for him to finish.

We often refer to the shapes of the circle, square, and triangle in Aikido. When you are young it's fine to be like the triangle, really sharp and sort of hard. But you should change as you get older. I'd say that Osawa Sensei was rounded like the circle although he still retained the strength and sharpness of the square and triangle which were always just below the surface.

Q. You've been to Australia two times now. What's your impression of Australian students?

A. When I first came here I had no idea what to expect. I imagined that I would have to teach people about really basic concepts of Aikido and Japanese Budo, but as soon as the first class started I knew that I would have to change what I planned. It was obvious that everyone had been taught correctly and that many people were really quite advanced.

In Japan a lot of people practice Aikido purely to become physically strong, or even to just look good, but I am impressed with the way that people here are really trying to study the deeper aspects of Aikido. Even if I do something difficult which is beyond their present abilities, students seem to accept it and do their best to learn and understand the concept. I've made a similar observation when I've visited Europe. Australians though are really open and friendly, and as a result we really enjoyed coming here.

If anyone is visiting the Osaka area, foreigners (especially from Australia) are most welcome at the **Shosenji Dojo**. For

information regarding location etc, feel free to contact Dave Kolb in Brisbane on (07) 3891 2121 or email dkolb@powerup.Com.au.



Photo credits:

The photo on top of the second column was taken by Dave Kolb. Sensei Shimamoto and his wife are enjoying Noosa National Park. The other photos were taken at the Gold Coast dojo by John Litchen. Bottom of the second column shows Kokyu Ho from Katatetori. This column shows a throw from an arm lock.(Ude Nage)
Uke is Dave Kolb.

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of Kisshomaru Ueshiba surrounded by flowers and offerings of fruit and vegetables. To the left, three Japanese musicians played Koto, while to the right were the Doshu's widow together with his son Dojo Cho Moriteru Ueshiba, his wife and children. They stood by the exit and bowed to each visitor as they left the dojo after performing their respects in front of the Doshu's photograph.

At the entrance Shinto priests dressed in grey kimono with traditional black Shinto hats gave each of us a large twig from an auspicious plant to which pieces of white paper in the shape of a lightning bolt were attached. We then placed them on a table piled high in front of Doshu's photograph after bowing and clapping our hands silently.

The ceremony in the dojo took about ten minutes after which we went back downstairs to claim our shoes. As we left the building we were each given an envelope containing a sachet of salt, symbolising purity.

People who had already performed their farewells were standing in groups outside. After about an hour, when everyone had finished, the coffin was brought out carried by senior teachers and placed in the funeral car.

As the car left, followed by three busses of relatives, teachers and close friends, to go to the crematorium, I felt very sad. Though Doshu had stopped giving classes before I started regular training at Hombu, and I had only seen

him in demonstrations, I was sad just thinking that he would not be in the office any more; that I would never again see him sitting there reading his newspaper, or talking with the staff, or occasionally catching his eye to say hello as I came in. He had a very kind way of looking at people and he was sincerely loved as well as respected by all the teachers and students. An exceptional human being with a transcending spirit had left us and in a way I felt as if I had lost my own grandfather.

The following Sunday a public farewell was held at the Aoyama Funeral Parlour. Again it was a Shinto ceremony similar in procedure to the one held at Hombu. More than 3000 people came including numerous leading Japanese figures and many overseas instructors. The queue this time seemed endless. We had to wait about two hours and I was glad to have my nice warm overcoat on such a cold day.

After this ceremony many of us went to a nearby restaurant for a kind of impromptu last vigil and talked about Aikido, heard stories of the Doshu and other teachers from the senior students, and generally shared our grief.

Vanessa Castellano is a former member of Brisbane Aiki-Kai. She moved to Japan 4 years ago for work and to further her practice of Aikido. Sharing an apartment with her partner Angus Thompson in the heart of Shijuku, she is only a stones throw away from the Hombu Dojo and daily practice.

EDITORIAL

Every magazine and newsletter evolves over time. If you have kept your copies of Aikido Australia as I have you will see this progression. Due to some very hard work by John Rockstrom and Stephen Coull, *Aikido Australia* has become a highly respected newsletter/magazine of which every member can be proud. It looks professional, it feels professional, and the superb quality of the articles certainly reflect this professionalism with their content.

I now have the task of editing *Aikido Australia*, and I would like to thank the previous editors for setting extremely high standards for me to follow. I feel that this issue lives up to those standards with the thought provoking articles included. David Scott has contributed many fine articles over the years and this feature article, *On Instructing Aikido*, is no exception. It needs to be read more than once.

This newsletter will continue to offer *philosophy and instruction to members, news and comment by senior instructors, and general articles from students*. Do remember that this is your newsletter, that it is for everybody from the highest level to the beginner, that it reflects the thoughts and ideas of all who are studying this wonderful art. The newsletter needs articles, stories, and photographs, so please don't be shy. Contribute something. The more there is to select from the better the newsletter will be.

Please note: all contributions will be edited to fit into the space available and to suit the style of the newsletter. Letters of comment, suggestions for future articles, and submissions should be sent to the address below.

c/o John Litchen, **PO Box 3503, Robina Town Centre, QLD 4230**. Phone Fax 07 5578 8748.

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It seemed to be one embarrassment after another. My next memorable experience happened in his class when Carmel (now my wife) was also training. I made the fatal mistake of 'instructing' her in how *nikkyo* *should* be done, and Doshu must have seen this because he came over and subjected me to the most painful *nikkyo* I have ever experienced while quietly explaining to Carmel how easy it was to apply on me. It hurt so much all over my entire body (something I still wonder about) that I instinctively went back to my Judo days (something I still shudder about) and found myself frantically tapping on Doshu's ankle in order to submit. Once again, **having committed yet another social blunder**, I was immediately grateful that Doshu took in very good stead.

But it wasn't all bad. I was lucky enough to be used for *ukemi* by Doshu on a number of occasions and I remember admiring his grace, compassion and restraint in dealing with all sorts of people from around the world. He could apply a technique with surprising force and always managed to blow away even 'difficult' *ukes* with just the right amount of effort. He never overdid it. His Aikido was graceful, artistic and precise. His movements were beautiful to watch. He could (amazingly) demonstrate, then pick up a microphone to speak without losing his breath at all, and he carried out his functions as Doshu with great dignity yet never projected arrogance.

As the years passed I was able to share in his welcome in Australia. He visited my parent's home for dinner (I don't know what he thought of Mum's macaroni-cheese!) and I was able to sit and talk with him on many occasions. In the years to come he always remembered I was vegetarian, sent greetings to my wife and parents, and welcomed me to his house a number of times. I was fortunate to visit him with Sugano Sensei, his son Moriteru, the present Doshu, and of course, saw him at all sorts of other functions where he was officiating.

I've held a few 'senior' positions in the organisation of Aikido. Because of Sugano Sensei I have always regarded service and loyalty to the Ueshiba family to be fundamental. Thankfully, I never felt that my loyalties to Doshu were wasted because he had clearly given his life to Aikido: a life of service in a position which I guess he was obliged to inherit.

Compared to many others I hardly knew him, but because of his manner, and manners, I came to feel that he was my

Doshu too, and that whatever job I was asked to do in the IAF, was in part an opportunity to assist him in his responsibilities.

I last saw him at the end of last year — painfully thin and obliged to move everywhere with an oxygen bottle, supporting himself on the arm of his son, the present Doshu. He opened and closed our meeting (the IAF Directing Committee / Superior Council) and I don't believe there was a dry eye in the room as he entered to take his place at the head of the table.

Clearly near the end of his life and when he should have been resting, this slight, elegant man made the effort to attend, and to address us in struggling breaths. His thought were, as usual, crystal clear, and his speech was not of the past, but of the future. He asked us to ensure this would be harmonious and positive, He spoke as if he would be training along with us, and in my heart I think he will be.

Tony Smibert

Tony Smibert Sensei is the National Area Representative for Australia, Vice President of Aiki-Kai Australia and a member of the TTC. He is also 1st Vice Chairman of the International Aikido Association, Japan.

Tasmanian Snippets

by Surmani Rose.

In February our State Training was conducted by Sensei John Karas (Launceston) with Sensei Ken Trebilco (Hobart) taking the weapons component. Sensei John referred to Doshu's great contribution to Aikido, and used the training to extend our ways of thinking by varying manner, intensity and complexity of practice, whilst catering to beginners as well as advanced students.

In March Sensei Tony Smibert conducted an Aikido demonstration with six of his most stalwart on the grassy town oval at the annual country Meander School Fair. There was snow in the wind from the Tiers as it blew dramatically into their hakamas, and the crowd was irresistibly torn away from the cow pats lotto and the funny hats competition to gaze in wonder. Sensei Tony explained that he tried to make the demonstration inviting to onlookers rather than intimidating and drew two volunteers from the crowd as part of the demonstration. The intrepid Andrew Ross, however, wondered afterwards if a few *koshinages* would not have gone astray.

In Sensei Tony's Deloraine class prior to the demonstration he spoke of Doshu being the one who formalised and systematised Aikido.

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