

Aikido in Australia

Aiki Kai Australia National Newsletter

Volume 4 Number 4



*Celebrating 50 years of Aiki Kai Australia
1965 - 2015*

*and the legacy of Seiichi Sugano Shihan's
lifetime of teaching Aikido*

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Peter Morgenroth. Michael de Young. **WA:** Hugh Derham.

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All members are advised that Aiki Kai (Australia) is a signatory to the anti-doping policy developed by the Australian
Coaching Council and consequently all students are bound by the rules of the policy. A copy of this policy is available
on Coaching Council website.

NEW EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

*Aiki Kai Australia has had an equal opportunity policy drawn up. The policy contains
procedures to be followed should, for example, any person feel that they have been
victimised or sexually harassed. This policy is posted on the website. Should anyone
experience or have a matter of concern, they should contact Andrew Dziedzic to find
out the appropriate officer to speak to. All enquiries will be handled with the strictest
confidence and should discussion be needed Andrew will phone back at Aiki Kai Aus-
tralia's expense.*



Dan Promotions
January 2015

Shodan:

Diana Hope (Vic)
Trung Ly (Vic)
Scott Munday (Tas)
San Trang (NSW)
Lance Wilson (Tas)

Nidan:

Simon Andrade (Vic)
Heath Buscumb (SA)
Jo Juhasz (WA)
Sean Kelleher (Vic)
Jason Maling (Vic)
Alfredo Mori (Vic)
Gay Webb (Tas)

Sandan:

Russell Boon (Vic)
Peter Cook (Vic)
Mark Chenery (Vic)
Terence Cuming (SA)
Cathy Farrer (NT)
Yusuf Iqbal (NSW)
Richard Leong (Vic)
Paul Osborne (Vic)
John Wright (Tas)

Yondan:

Scott Eggenton (Vic)
David Ford (Vic)
Peter Henley (Tas)
Robin Misso (Vic)

Godan:

Linda Godfrey (Vic)

Rokudan:

Austin James (NSW)
Peter Morgenroth (Vic)
Michael de Young
(Vic)

Promoted to Shihan:
David Brown (Vic)
Roger Savage (NSW)



Honoured Guest:
**Ueshiba Moriteru
Doshu**

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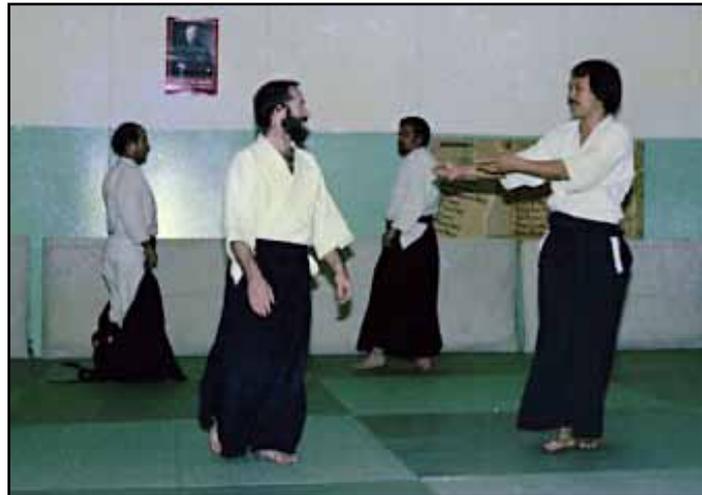


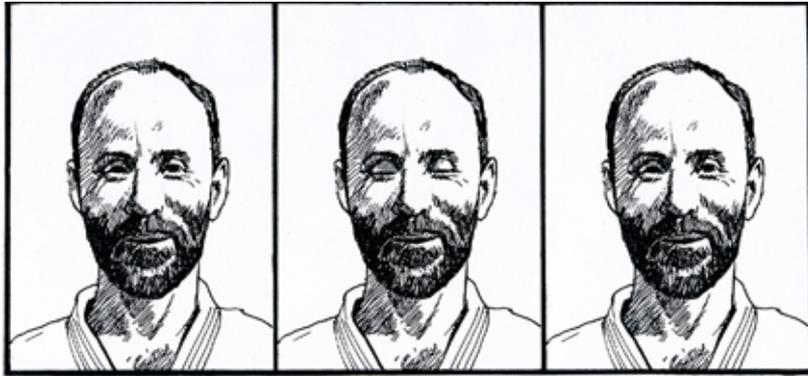
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Roger blinks

Roger (Shihan) Blinks

When Sensei Roger was appointed Shihan, I was asked to provide a background piece for the Aikido in Australia Journal. Daunting! I looked through back issues, photos, memorabilia etc, and found very little on Sensei Roger. In desperation, and as with most of my life, I turned to others for help. The key came from an unlikely source.

Many years ago when I was young, slim and had hair, one of our many talented artists, Margaret Carter, penned a cartoon entitled “Roger Blinks”. To me, it captured the essence of Roger Shihan – unknowable but not unapproachable, intense yet not heavy and serious and joyful.

It also suggested that the best way of approaching this was not to outline when Roger Sensei started, was graded, his long relationship with Sensei Sugano and the original group of Sensei’s students but to ask the people who train and share with him most frequently and steal (sorry- use as source material) their thoughts.

For the record, Roger Sensei started aikido in 1969 and trained with most of the original New South Wales students including Hanan Janiv Sensei, David Brown Sensei, John Rockstrom Sensei, Brian Dibblee Sensei and a host of others. Records of his previous gradings are sparse – I wonder what we did before the invention of databases. He has many passions, which he studies as assiduously as he does aikido. As far as I know, he is kind to gardens, children and animals as well as aikidoka.

I am not sure this will provide any better insight into my teacher and friend but, it may help while away the hours until your next training session or if your appetite is whetted, come to Sydney and find out for yourself. His class times are on the Aikido NSW website.

For any number of reasons I have chosen not to identify (unless specifically asked) from whom the following comments came but, you can take my word that they are all students or senior instructors who continue to study with Roger Sensei to seek a direct connection to Sugano Shihan through their training.

Author of article and plagiarist (sorry I meant researcher)

Austin James

Miscellany of Comments

“When I started, Roger was wonderful the way that he gently and considerately encouraged me. This was especially so given just how uncoordinated I was. Picking me up to take me to training when I didn’t have a car available, using me as uke during his classes, talking about Sugano Sensei and Aikido generally, encouraging me at National Schools, advising me carefully when I sought advice, all this was crucial to my development in Aikido.

Since then, he has always revealed paths to new insights and perspectives and presented challenges to examine what it is we are studying: all of these aspects encapsulate for me what it is to be a shihan. I owe Roger so much; it’s hard to thank him enough. What a richly deserved accolade for him to be designated a shihan!”

Andrew Dzedzic Sensei

“Heartiest congratulations to Roger Shihan. Our paths probably crossed when I started my Aikido training under Sugano Sensei in early 1972. In my later years in Aikido, I attended his class quite regularly, obviously he being my Sempai, and I find his classes most exhilarating and enjoyable, with much to learn and points to pick up. I don’t consider Roger my instructor but my friend and respected contemporary in Aikido. In my opinion, I think Roger’s Aikido is reminiscent to that as taught by Sugano Sensei as I remember it in my early Aikido days, simple and effective, and not stylised. Roger always encourages the students to “study” instead of mindlessly copying techniques he shows.



To me, Roger is an enigma (in a good sense of the word), private and yet open, quite like Sugano Sensei.”
George Lo Sensei

“Roger has always followed his own path, marching to the beat of his own drum. He is our senior instructor, but more importantly our senior student, and an example to all of us what lifetime study and humility really means.

He is our only remaining link to the early hell dojo era of Aikido in Sydney, and provides us with ongoing, quiet, leadership, informed by his experience of those early days. We are extremely fortunate that he has continued to train with us and teach us. For my part, I hope one day to be able to emulate his kotegaeshi, but must admit that progress has been slow. **Steve Armfield Sensei**

“Having moved from Melbourne, I had the pleasure and benefit of attending Roger Shihan’s classes for the last 15 years. When Roger is teaching, it is always evident that there is more going on between himself and his partner than the mere physicality of the technique - it always feels like Roger is showing us the ‘things that cannot be seen’ in Aikido. I assume it is because his level of understanding allows him to teach in this way that he has been recognised as a shihan. Roger Shihan’s teaching very much brings the spirit of Sugano Sensei to his classes.” **Wayne Shiel s Sensei**

“I would like to thank Roger Shihan for his instruction, and for passing on his experience from studying with Sugano Sensei since the early days in Sydney. I think that NSW is lucky to have such a high level instructor teaching here.” **Machiko Hirata Sensei**

“I feel this drawing could be my piece on Roger...for ever since I have known Roger, (see my photo circa Alfred Street dojo, Woollahra, 1975) that along with his humility, I feel that his Aikido has been a study of deep thought and a personal journey of understanding that we are privileged to try to understand as he shares his teaching with us... helping us to find moments of quiet clarity amidst the noise of our reality (well, the noise of my reality - don’t want to put words into other people’s mouths!)

It can be as elusive as the blink of an eye.
Maybe that has meaning too!

Roger is awesome!” Margaret Carter Sensei (and artist as well as allowing the use of her photos here.)





“Sensei Roger is our teacher what else is there to add?”

“Sensei Roger is one of the most humble, thoughtful, caring individuals I know. His diligent study and passionate exploration of all the possibilities aikido has to offer continues to inspire me to train harder. I treasure the regular opportunities to study with him, both at the dojo and sunrise beach training.”

“What I really like about Roger Shihan is that he values and puts a high emphasis on the way our dojo is setup and how we present ourselves. This is the most basic, but the most important point in Japanese culture which demonstrates your readiness and focus towards things.”

“I often just feel not really ready to be a worthy student in his classes quite yet, but having said that, I just as often feel humbled as he always makes me feel welcome regardless.”

“I am very lucky to be able to be part of Sensei Roger’s classes. His insight and continuing study of the techniques and practice of Aikido is inspiring, and a very big motivation to get up so early on a Saturday morning.”

“Roger Sensei’s teaching and being always reminds me of what I love about aikido - presence, deep inquiry and lack of ego. His classes help me return to centre and feel more connected to spirit. I am grateful to have him as a teacher and mentor.”

“Daunting task indeed... I’ve stared into the blank screen for the last ten minutes trying to condense 20 years of study under Roger Sensei in words, and have failed miserably.

“To me, Sensei Roger is a bit of an enigma. He is daunting, yet approachable; relaxed, yet unmovable (if I have not understood the lesson properly – which appears to be often). I like the centred-ness, spirit and insight in Sensei’s lessons. Still waters, that run very deep.”

“Roger Shihan; Quiet and unassuming and lets his aikido do most of the talking. What a conversation!!!”

“Through training under Sensei Roger, I have developed a great respect for him as a person, a teacher and mentor. Although a very humble and kind person, his power, energy, intensity and deep understanding of all the elements of Aikido show through in all his classes.

Sensei Roger has always shown an interest in us all to develop and improve in Aikido and within ourselves.”

“Through Sensei Roger I have come to appreciate how deep the study of Aikido is and how it permeates every facet of your life. His sincerity towards teaching has always inspired me to train and study with full commitment and desire to always learn more.”

“I see Roger as a teacher of life. I feel extremely lucky to have his understanding of the body, energy and the universe near to me. He always ‘opens’ my life. His example of continuous learning is inspirational and the light ahead on the Path.”

Final Comment from Roger Shihan

“You never teach for yourself, you teach for your teacher.”

As I inch closer to Shodan by Daniel Wilson



I was asked to write about my Aikido experience as I inch closer to shodan. Even though I have been doing aikido for a while now, I never got the chance to be taught by Sugano Shihan or see him in person.

I went to my first class in 2006, so the opportunity was there. However with a growing family there was less time and I slipped out of training after only a year and did not manage to return until 2010, when I could make some time on the weekends and go to the class that was held then at Olympic Park. Unfortunately it wasn't long before Sugano Sensei passed.

Now part of me will always regret not making that early effort, for 'missing out' and maybe having the chance of experiencing sensei's energy for myself. But that's life and we can only go forward, and now I've got to 1st kyu, thanks to students of Sugano Sensei who have absorbed that energy and are passing it on to students like me. And thinking about it, that's how it was always going to be, just as how we think of Sugano Sensei passing on what he learnt from O'Sensei.

I don't know how different my impression of Sugano Sensei would be if I had managed to get to some of the schools, apart from seeing him first hand, being a beginner and still trying to get a grasp on just the basic forms of the techniques, anything I might have seen could well have been beyond me putting into practice or properly understanding. I still have classes today that feel like that. Another image of Sugano Sensei is of an Aikido that is beyond anything I'm likely to know, with "incredible" energy and techniques that are over before you even realise they'd begun. In other words, as far as Aikido in Australia and elsewhere goes, Sugano Sensei was a master. And studying Aikido with Aiki-Kai is really a study of Sugano Sensei's Aikido.

So now I've done and seen a lot more Aikido and am more aware of the finer points, (of course awareness has nothing to do with ability) and can try to appreciate what Sugano Sensei taught his students. It was a lot!

There are two ways left for me to receive the teaching of Sugano Sensei.

Firstly of course is from his direct students (my Senseis). When a Sensei can recall how Sugano Sensei did a certain technique the last time they saw him, and how that technique

may have evolved over the 30 to 40 years they had been seeing him teach, you know that there was something special happening that was powerful enough to leave such an impression on so many people. This is the master-student relationship in the truest sense. I've heard Smibert Sensei talking a lot about Sugano Sensei's energy and legacy, and even though I've got no way of knowing for sure, I can feel this that energy is still strong, and in that sense I am being taught by Sugano Sensei.

The second way I can learn is through videos and the like. I haven't seen many, but I'm now at the point where I'll be making an effort to find more, this being the closest I can get to Sensei. This may also enable me to better appreciate what my own senseis are talking about.

I've just been to the 50th Anniversary Summer School and Smibert Sensei talked a lot of the legacy of Sugano Sensei and how it had brought us all together on this occasion and how we were now embarking on the next 50 years.

Now the 100th Anniversary will put me into my 90's, so I'll go out on a limb and say I probably won't be teaching. But what if I could? More likely, the people who are just starting Aikido now and have not trained with Sugano Sensei will be the teachers. In another 50 years it's going to be very different.

This 50th Anniversary Summer School (as well as most lessons at present) referred back to how Sugano Sensei taught a technique, whereas a Sensei teaching at the 100th anniversary will be drawing knowledge and experience from the students of the present direct students of Sugano Sensei. Without a direct connection will they be as inclined to teach Aikido as Sugano Sensei saw it?

While I know my experience is not unique and will become even more common, I'm a part of the evolution of Aikido in Australia, as it continues without Sensei.

For me, I appreciate that while I didn't get to see or train with him in person, I get to learn from many of those who did, and they've spent a great deal of time and practice analysing the essence of what was shown to them, which then comes to me. What I understand and appreciate from this lineage is that the connection to Sensei is strong, and that I am also his student.



A the request of the editor for a story about his recent visit to Malaysia Youz Iqbal was kind enough to send in the following brief report.

**Malaysian Aikido Association's
20th Anniversary**
Photos and text by Youz Iqbal

Maybe I can just briefly mention what I feel and excuse me for my bad English.

I planned for months to attend MAA (Malaysian Aikido Association) 20th Anniversary to experience my Aikido journey attending big seminar Outside Australia.

I couldn't attend the Indonesian Aiki Kai 30th anniversary due to a slowdown of my business activities last year.

However my main purpose to go is as below:

- 1- To commemorate Sugano sensei's legacy in helping setting up of the Malaysian Aikido Association 20 years ago.
- 2- To finally meet Waka Sensei and many seniors and international Shihans including our own Tony Smibert Shihan
- 3- To Support George Lo Sensei as I am one of his regular students attending his class in Sydney.
- 4- To do a photographic study on big event.
- 5- Meeting Aikidoka from many different countries (Japan, Hong Kong, Shanghai (China), Vietnam, Brunei, Singapore and our friend Matt Aitken who heads UAE Aiki Kai.

I was impressed to see how Malaysia prepared their anniversary; all I felt was Love all over the experience.

When I met them (Malaysian aikidoka) I instantaneously felt like I had known them for life and I never felt like a stranger over there.

To be more extreme what I can say is it felt just like I was born there.

The dinner celebration was spectacular, well- arranged and very hospitable.



During dinner celebration I found I am experiencing problem with cameras as I have no Proper Flash. So fortunately Adam Tou, the official photographer and an Aikido Student, happily lent me his spare flash without hesitation.

The training hall was fantastic and very professional; they even had two massive screens for video viewing.

They recorded the whole duration on professional video and sound.

The hotel I stayed at was good and very convenient; 5 min to China town, half an hour to Petronas twin tower and 1 Hr to airport.

Very good overall transport link and network and I found a lot of hotels around.

No complaints with the food — I am originally from Indonesia where food is similar, therefore for me the food was fantastic.

The free day with Waka Sensei going to "Batu Cave", Art shop factory and Pewter factory was a great bonding session.

Unfortunately 2 people had to go to airport and I couldn't join the rest of the group visiting the Twin Towers for photos.

Many of MAA team are coming to our 50th anniversary by the way, so is Singapore, and I also persuade other people I've met to come to our 50th anniversary.



**A Wonderful and Special Summer School
by Hans Belder**



I arrived a few days before the start of the Summer School in Melbourne and stayed in a hotel in the city centre, so that I could get used to the time difference and do some sightseeing. I had a great time walking about, I visited a couple of museums and the royal botanic gardens, went to the seaside and enjoyed the local food and drink. The weather was great and a nice contrast to the weather in The Netherlands, it was winter when I left with temperatures around zero degrees. My bald head got quite a sunburn. I had forgotten the sun in Australia is different from the sun in Europe...

By the time summer school started I was in tune with the local time. On Sunday I registered at the University College, got my set of weapons, checked in my room and met with several people I knew from previous visits and from Europe. The start of a summer school remains exciting for me, especially when abroad, but meeting with old friends contributes a lot to make me feel at home in no time.

I must say this certainly was a special summer school with so many aikidoka on the mat, and so many different teachers together with the presence of Doshu. Everything was very well organised and in case something had not been foreseen (which was pretty rare) a solution was neatly improvised. Well-meant thanks on my behalf to everyone who helped to make this summerschool such a success!

I found the atmosphere on the mat very positive. I trained with lots of people, most of whom I did not know both beginners and advanced. Everybody trained seriously and in a good mood, open to what the teachers were showing and open to one's training partner. In short, I found training very good.

I wondered beforehand what it would be like to be taught by so many teachers. When Sugano Sensei was still alive he would teach most of the summer school and his teaching would form sort of continuous story during a summer

school. With so many different teachers I wondered if this would lead to a more 'fragmented' school. However I found it quite interesting to see how different the angles of approach seemed to integrate during the week. And to see how Sugano Sensei's teaching lives on in his students.

Doshu's teaching was very precise, methodical and of technical perfection. His demonstration at the Embu I found the best of the evening.

And of course there was so much more, the forum on women in aikido that made me aware of some issues that I had not been aware of before, the lively celebratory dinner and the BBQ, the drinks and talks with so many people.

After summer school I went to Adelaide to stay with my friend David Scott Sensei. Another week followed of training and discussions about aikido, combined with good food and a couple of bottles of exceptional wine from David's wine cellar. I first met David at a summer school with Sugano Sensei in Wégimont Belgium in 1984. After that we kept in touch and visited one another several times in Europe and in Australia. A good example of how aikido can unite people all over the world!

The 27 hour return trip back home was a lot more of an effort than my trip going to Australia and the first couple of days my jetlag was worse than I could remember from previous trips. At the same time I also felt mentally quite refreshed and inspired and I was looking forward to training with the people in my dojo and to share my inspiration with them.

All in all I feel very happy to have had the opportunity to participate in this special summer school; it makes me look forward to hopefully being able to join another summer school in the future.

Hans Belder
President National Committee Aikido
Judo Bond Nederland



Hans Belder seated 2nd from left.

50th Anniversary Summer School: Some of the story behind the scenes...
Andrew Dzedzic, National Area representative.

I have been reading all the articles and stories about the 50th Anniversary Summer School, and looking at the hundreds of wonderful photos on facebook. This has led me to reflect that the scale of the success of this event was proportionate to the scale of the careful preparations which were made. I would like to acknowledge those who contributed to its wonderful success.

This School was certainly the biggest one we have ever staged, but it was also therefore one which required the biggest ever effort to be put into it. There were so many people involved on so many levels, that it would be very remiss of us if we didn't pay tribute to all of those who put so much effort into setting up and running the event.

At the outset, I have to stress that there is no way on earth that I could list all the people who contributed to the School preparation and running. There were also many who made spontaneous offers of help, whose efforts can't be recorded, but which still made a big difference, taken together. Even the clean-up afterwards was a mammoth affair, given the number of mats used. It is true we had a well-oiled team to run our "normal" Summer School, so there was a core of people who knew about the main jobs which needed to be done. However with more than twice the usual number of attendees and with 10 senior teachers from all over the world, as well as the Doshu and 2 otomo attending from overseas, the organization needed to make a quantum step upwards, in so many respects.

First of all, we asked that everyone from within Aiki Kai Australia make all of those Aikidoka from other organizations, both local and foreign, very welcome. So many locals went way out of their ways to do acts of great kindness to others coming to one of our Schools, many of whom were coming for the first time. Many visitors were overwhelmed by the consideration shown to them. It was truly wonderful to see this occur and I gratefully acknowledge all these many acts of kindness extended by members of Aiki Kai Australia. This proved naturally infectious, as many visitors naturally responded with gratitude, and in turn by doing what they could to help.

Secondly this also set the tone for an atmosphere of welcome on the mat as well, with all trainees from whatever school training co-operatively and non-judgmentally with those from other schools, and also with many attending classes with teachers whose classes they might not have otherwise considered attending. This seemed to provide an avenue for everyone to find out just what was being taught and trained in other schools, both within Australia and overseas. Many people, including some senior teachers, were very pleasantly surprised and even amazed by what they encountered being taught by other teachers, and were very pleased with the commitment to study and training shown in the classes. It seems some preconceptions or stereotypes may have been changed through this process, and many new friendships made.

Thirdly it's important to acknowledge those who had to organize accommodation and entertainment and logistics for the large number of senior teachers. Apart from the invited teachers, we had some other senior teachers attend (including most of our own) who were transported to and from the training venue, and trans-



ported to events in the evenings. There was also the appointment of local otomos for all the teachers who didn't have someone come with them to fulfil this role; the hiring of six mini-buses with a co-ordinated roster of drivers and passengers for each morning and afternoon, as well as arranging for them to be picked up from and returned to the airport. For the Doshu and his otomo, we had to set up a special team to look after them, and in this regard we have to make special mention of Machiko Hirata Sensei and Wayne Sheils Sensei who devoted their entire time to this aspect, down to every detail, and with no task too difficult or too small.

Fourthly, for more than a year before, there had been steady preparations made for the event: venue and accommodation bookings had to be made, invitations issued and air-tickets paid for, vehicles and buses booked, as well as setting up of a web-booking system and the event being properly publicised. With 400 attending, the huge job of setting up the system for and actually doing the pre-registration fell to Andrew Chambers; and during the School he and his team missed most classes in order to ensure that anyone who turned up to train at any time could be registered. The main burden for all the other preparations fell to Adrienne Cleaver, who managed to juggle the dozens and dozens of aspects of preparation on top of a full-time job. Particular aspects of the preparation relating to the logistics for the visitors, preparation of booklets for the school and for the embu, amongst many others, fell to John Rockstrom Sensei, who also played the key role in the setting up of the Embu at Federation Square. John, it should be noted, also shouldered the role of planning Co-ordinator, as he had during the tour for the last Doshu back in 1984, meaning he was pretty much full-time for the year leading up to the School. He and Victorian Area Representative Linda Godfrey Sensei and Adrienne Cleaver-Leong with the close-knit Victorian planning team were the people of whom we could clearly say "without them it would not have happened" about the whole event.

During the event itself, of course, many more people were enlisted to help, and many more "pitched in" as soon as they were asked to do so, and often just volunteered. For example, we had many who had volunteered to drive the several trucks to pick up the over 500 mats needed, also aided by co-ordinated teams at the various dojos from which they were collected and then helped by even more people at the venue who helped build the frame to hold this massive number of mats in place.

A special mention also has to be made about Darren Love and RaeMing Ong who arranged for a massive pre-order of keikogi's, weapons, hakamas etc from Iwata, then arranged to have them shipped and paid for, as well as importing a selection of gi's, weapons and hakamas etc to sell at the school – all with no financial reward for themselves. By virtue of this kindness, and due to the economy of scale involved in a large volume purchase, many have been able to buy quality Iwata products at a price not much different to what would be paid in Japan.

I must also acknowledge that all those 400 plus people who attended made the event what it was by their very presence and by the goodwill that they created on the mat, attending so many classes and events: without everyone being willing to make the effort to attend with such open hearts, we of course wouldn't have had the success we did.

In the final instance, we have to thank all the teachers at the School – whose willingness to come and to openly and generously share all they had to give reflected the open generosity of spirit globally exhibited at the School.

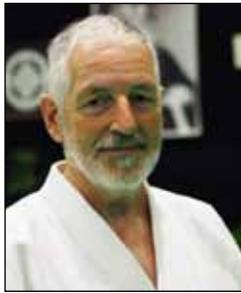
As regards the teachers from Aiki Kai Australia who had learnt their Aikido direct from Sugano Sensei, I believe we all remembered that the School could only have only taken place, and on this scale, thanks to Sugano Sensei's efforts for nearly five decades to teach those teachers, and to found and nurture the organization which has now become Aiki Kai Australia we know today.

Most especially, it was of course the Doshu's presence, his kind words of congratulation and his instruction that reminded us that it was through the efforts of the Ueshiba family that we had all joined together to strive towards the ideals which O Sensei had provided to the world to follow.

It should be noted that the following list is incomplete, since so many others helped in many and various ways.....if your name is missing, I apologise and assure you that we tried really hard to keep track of everyone helping out, no matter where.

ORGANISER TEAM

Linda Godfrey Sensei
John Watson Sensei
John Rockstrom Sensei
Robert Botterill Sensei
Adrienne Cleaver Leong



REGISTRATION TEAM

Andrew Chambers
Richard Nicholas
Richard Leong



REGISTRATION TEAM HELPERS

Guy Frippe Sensei
Ruth Treyde Sensei

**ACCOMMODATION GUIDES.
REGISTRATION ASSISTANTS
(AT UNI COLLEGE)**

Duncan Stevenson Sensei
Luke Hope
Diana Hope



DOJO MANAGER

Ray Oldman Sensei
Joe Giovinazzo Sensei



SUB DOJO TEAM

Leon Metzeling Sensei
Jason Maling

MAT PROCUREMENT

Susie Moorshead
John Watson Sensei



FINANCE

Alfred Camilleri Sensei



MAT BUILDING TEAM

Geoff Freeman Sensei, Michael Davidson, Meryl Gonsalves, Gerry D'Agostino, Anthony Chui, Lance Wilson, John Claxton, Brendan Pascoe, Chris Brain, Alfredo Mori, Alex Shams, Anthony D'Urso, Chris Paine, Chris Symons, Cliff Rowe, Ann Sofie Saville, Colin Saville, Fumiko Noguchi, Greg Giannis, Jason Maling, Jose Sicurella, Kei Murakami, Len Taylor, Li Lian Oi, Mark Chenery, Michael Spiteri, Rohan Harrington, Shraven Bhurton, Simon Andrade, Trung Le, Wilson, Yng Wan Yap

TRUCK DRIVERS

Justin Bree, Cliff Rowe, Andy Bunker

MERCHANDISE TEAM

Diana Hope
Luke Hope
Julie Boydell
Jason Wirthensohn

MERCHANDISE TEAM – IWATA

Darren Love Sensei
Raeming Ong
John Rockstrom Sensei

MERCHANDISE STORAGE & DELIVERY

Andrew Chambers
Maree Chambers
Adrienne Cleaver Leong
John Rockstrom Sensei
Bill Birnbauer
Diana Hope
Luke Hope
Linda Godfrey Sensei
Mark Matcott Sensei
David Bell
Duncan Stevenson Sensei
Alfred Camilleri Sensei

WEAPONS PROCUREMENT/ WEAPON HIRE

Linda Godfrey Sensei
Adrienne Cleaver Leong

WEAPONS BAGS PRODUCTION TEAM

Julie Boydell
Marianne Bell

HELPERS FOR TRUCK DRIVERS

Ross Illiopolous, William Bunker

MAT LOADERS – CAULFIELD – GLEN WAVERLY DOJO – CLIFTON HILL DOJO

John Watson Sensei, Jochen Schubert. Wyman Young Sensei, Bill O'Connor, Mark Chenery
Felicia Birman Sensei, Zigmund Pfau . Tony Durso, Alex Raystin, Brad Lane, Elliott Beniada, Jack Kopcowski, Connor
Turvey, Bora Radjonvic, Colin Saville, Frank, Melbourne University ladies 2, Anne – Sophie Saville, Gerry
D'Agostino, Trung Le, Alex Tojas, Lee-Lian Oi an another young woman from RMIT, David Bell, Ian Spence and his
conscripted son in law, Mark Turner, John Caxton., Chris Brain, Simon Andrade, Brendan Pascoe., Justin Bree, Bora
Radonjic, Ian Spence, Emily Hebbard, Connor Turvey,
Cliff Rowe, Julie Boydell, Ben Harwood, David Bell
Charles Addison Jason Wirthensohn Alex Raystin
Simon Pearce, Russel Boon

UNLOADING MATS AT CAULFIELD ON SATURDAY 24TH

Tony Naughten, David from Mount Eliza dojo, Justin Bree, Bora Radonjic, Ian Spence, Emily Hebbard,
Connor Tuvey, Cliff Rowe, Julie Boydell, Ben Harwood, David Bell.
(420 mats between the lot, a major effort)

DOCTOR TEAM

Robin Misso Sensei, Alfredo Mori, Simon Andrade, Frank Kimble

MAT CLEANING ORGANISER

Chris Schurmann

FLOWER ARRANGEMENTS / BONSAI

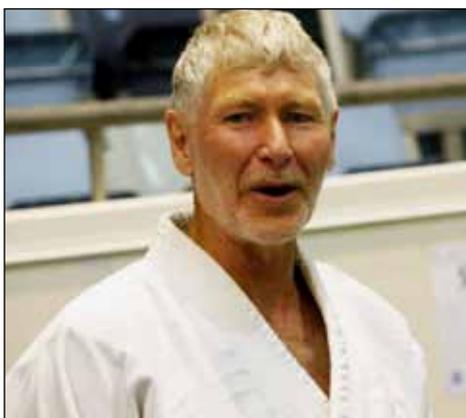
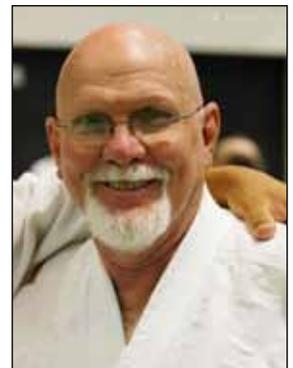
Beverly Webster

DOJO LUNCH HELPER

Adrienne Cleaver Leong, Alexander Rojas, Trung Le

DOJO MARSHAL TEAM

Duncan Stevenson Sensei , Ruth Treyde Sensei, Guy Frippe Sensei,
Peter Morgenroth Sensei, Michael Petery Sensei, Linda Fox,
Leon Metzeling Sensei, John Watson Sensei, David Scott Sensei
Felicia Birman Sensei, Zigmund Pfau .





PHOTOGRAPHY TEAM

Wyman Young
Tony Naughten
Jose Sicurella
Linda Fox
Youz Iqbal

GROUP PHOTO

Leon Metzeling Sensei
John Rockstrom Sensei
Round Rees
Elliot Beniada

TRANSLATORS

Kei Murakami
Machiko Hirata
Shravan Bhurton

SPECIAL GUESTS DRIVERS

Austin James Sensei
Wayne Shiels Sensei
Tristan Derham
Hugh Derham Sensei
Michael Nagle Sensei
Andrew Dziedzic Sensei
John Watson Sensei
Brian Johns Sensei

MEDIA LIAISON

Bill Birnbauer

DRUM TEAM

Wyman Young
Andrew Dickinson

CELEBRATORY DINNER ORGANISERS

Linda Godfrey Sensei

John Rockstrom Sensei
Adrienne Cleaver Leong
Joe Giovinazzo Sensei

CELEBRATORY DINNER USHERS

Beverly Webster
Julie Boydell
Annalise Bennett
Aaron Beutel
Alex Raytsin
Jose Sicurella

EMBU VENUE ORGANISERS

Felicia Birman Sensei
John Rockstrom Sensei

MAT BUILDERS - EMBU

Renee Allpress
Elliot Beniada
Annalise Bennett
Roman Goldine
Jonathon Marinatos
Tom Mason
Grant Read
Mark Read
James Read
Harry Read
Roland Rees

EMBU USHERS

Jikou Sugano Sensei
Andrew Dziedzic Sensei

SUMMER SCHOOL EXTENSION

TRANSPORT / VISITOR LIAISON

Tammy Kohn

DOJO / DOSHU SUPPLIES

Machiko Hirata Sensei
Wayne Shiels Sensei
Michael De Young Sensei

PRINTED MATERIALS

John Rockstrom Sensei
Bruce McGregor

AUDIO TEAM

Joe Giovinazzo Sensei
Joe Costa
Jason Wirthensohn
David Bell

OTOMO LEAD

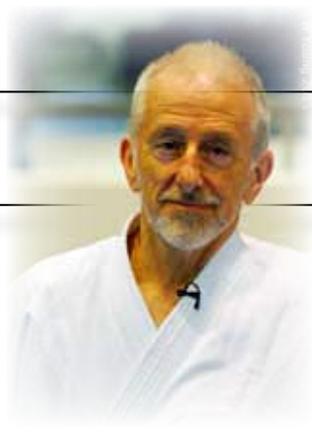
Michael Nagle Sensei

OTOMOS

Annalise Bennett
Aaron Beutel
Scott Seymour
John Robbins
Josh Taafe



Kokoro, Kokyu and Koshi
by Tony Smibert Shihan



One of the strongest impressions I still have of Sugano Sensei – and indeed some of the other great masters whose classes I attended over the years – remains the feeling that something special was about to happen every single time they walked onto the mat. In the case of Sensei, I experienced this over many years, and now try to find it within myself whenever I enter the mat in his absence. I'm not sure I can analyse what this 'feeling' is, but I do think there were very important elements that we can clearly identify as traditional budo principles.

The first of these is *kokoro* which, as I understand it, means 'heart' (and is closely linked to courage, and forthrightness, a kind of inner energy coupled with purity or integrity). You can feel the presence of a person who has *kokoro* – and even more so as you develop it within yourself. I remember Andrew Ross Sensei describing *embukai ukemi* for Sugano Sensei in the following way: "You don't want to attack him!" *Kokoro* is fundamental to *hanmi* and equips you to face your attackers and move courageously when attacked.

Next, there is *kokyu*. The word *kokyu* (meaning energy or breath-power) is sometimes used synonymously with the word *ki*, a word itself now so widely used and abused in many arts that it has somewhat lost its original purpose as a way to encompass not merely human energy, but also the much wider energy of the Universe. *Kokyu* is the physical energy which, coupled with intent and purity of thought, will enable you to spring forward from *hanmi*. It powers you in *suwari waza kokyu ho*, for example, and requires you to do much more than just sit there and feel that you are extending *ki*. I have a very early memory of training in *suwari waza* with a visiting yudansha who simply sat there and did nothing. When I asked why he wasn't moving, he looked at me in surprise and explained that he was trying to get his 'ki moving'. (Needless to say neither he, nor his ki seemed able to push anyone over...)

Suwari waza kokyu ho actually teaches you how to combine your intent and your energy with action, even when you feel trapped or pinned by an opposing force. We study the principle of *kokyu* in a range of *kokyu ho* (breath-power exercises) and we throw people down with *kokyu* in *kokyu nage* (literally breath-power throws). Standing in *hanmi* and suffused with *kokoro* Aikido has begun even before we move. *Hanmi*, *kokoro* and *kokyu* are vital elements so that, as OSensei declared, "Before the attacker moves it is already over..."

Koshi, refers to the centre of the body. It literally means 'waist' so that *koshi nage*, which many people think of as 'hip throws', are actually 'waist throws'. (Hip throwing is very different, and knowing this makes an enormous difference when you seriously study *koshi nage*.) In Aikido we make

use of *seika no tanden* (sometimes called 'the one point' and nominally identified as the centre of balance). Study of 'the one-point' and its relationship to *ki* was a very significant part of our study under Sugano Sensei in the 1960s and early 1970s. (Sensei's generation of *uchi deshi* were all taught by Koichi Tohei Sensei at Hombu, just prior to his departure to form his own school, the Ki Society where, with the focus on *ki* study, Tohei Sensei's art evolved into something rather different from Aikido as we know it.) In any case, the importance of *koshi* soon becomes clear when you've been training just a short while. In Aikido we talk about 'lowering *koshi*' (by bending the knees and lowering your hips) and we talk about 'maintaining stable *koshi*' (retaining stability and balance throughout a technique) and so on. And finally, when moving from a static posture, we talk about moving with *koshi* so that the whole body moves out as a single unit – centred, stable and connected. Aikido movement comes from the body, and when the body moves as a unit the feet will serve the body, not the other way around.

All of this might sound theoretical, or even confusing, but what it boils down to is the following: awareness of *kokoro*, *kokyu* and *koshi* is fundamental to the study of movement. *Kokoro* gives us the heart to face up to the challenge, *kokyu* the energy and co-ordination necessary and, if we move with *koshi* the body will then do so as a single unit. Perhaps this is what we can see from the very moment that the greatest teachers enter the mat. Technique is only a small part of what we can learn from them.



THANK YOU

It's over. Done. Fifty Years *and* an incredible Summer School, both incredible achievements and only made possible by the work of generations and of individuals.

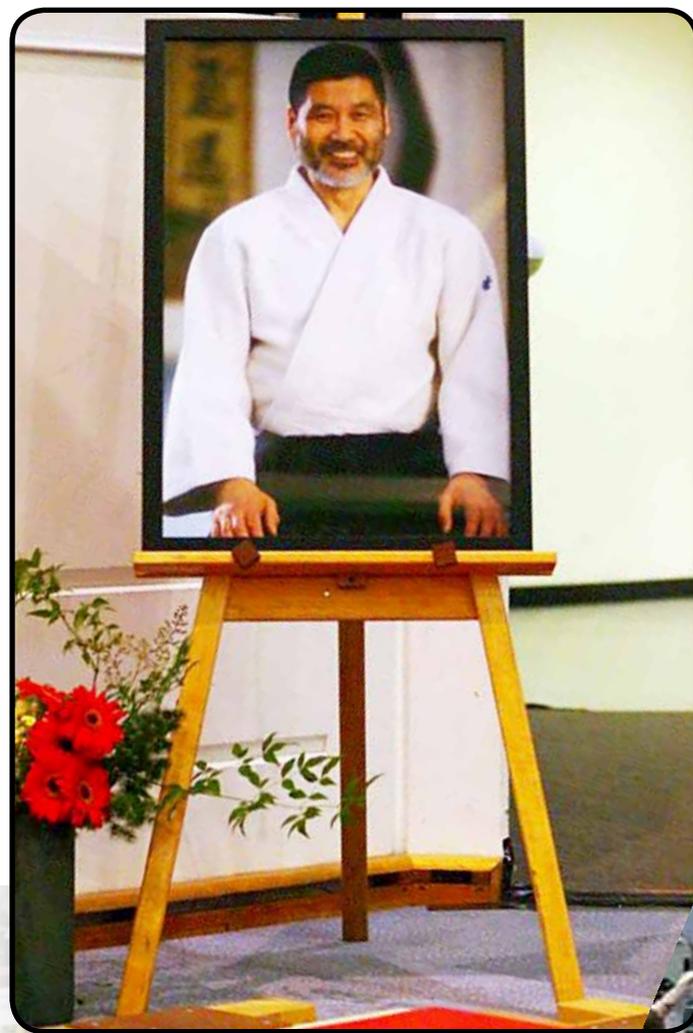
Aiki Kai Australia did not exist when I started training, so I've been able to witness the whole package, know the people who made it happen and then over the last two years see all of the work that went into the magnificent event that then celebrated those five decades. Some time I guess, I or someone else, will have to sit down and document the names of the many whose training, support, encouragement and hard work made those first 50 years of Aiki Kai Australia so successful. But this is not the time for that. As Andrew Dziedzic has already noted, the 12 months prior to our 50th Anniversary Summer School was distinguished by the efforts of an incredible group of people who put that milestone event way above a whole range of other things they might otherwise have been doing.

I want to add my own thanks to all involved. Like all of the other old-timers at the School I was wonderfully impressed and very moved by the spirit of friendship extended by one and all to each other, to our guests from overseas and the many trainees from groups outside of Aiki Kai Australia.

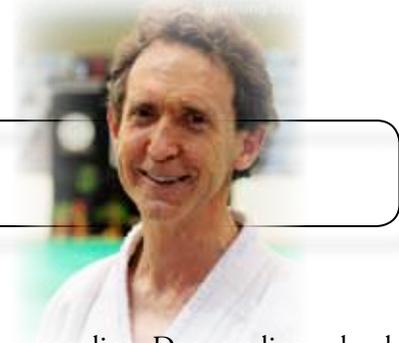
From what I saw, all of our visitors, from Doshu down, were overwhelmed by the spirit of the event. I think that Sugano Sensei might well have been greatly moved by your achievement. Everyone knows that there have been bigger events overseas, but I do not think that there have been happier ones, or any of them where the spirit of 'Aikido as a human family' was more evident or easily experienced.

On behalf of the Sugano Foundation, its Trustees and Fellows, thank you all.

Tony



Some Thoughts about the Dan Grading Process
by John Watson Sensei



I have had the position of Dan Grading Coordinator on behalf of the Technical and Teaching Committee (TTC) for some years now. I have written this article with the hope that it will clarify and help everyone, particularly instructors and candidates to better understand some aspects of the Dan grading process.

My role involves being the first point of contact on behalf of the TTC for all matters relating to Dan Gradings. It is my responsibility to collect and preview all the Dan Grading applications, to make sure that they are completed correctly and have all the necessary information for a decision to be made by the TTC in its function as the Dan Grading Committee. All of the members of the TTC meet formally to make all the decisions relating to the applications and I have no separate personal authority in decisions about the applications. Also I liaise with Aikido World Headquarters (Hombu) to submit the grading applications and facilitate the presentation of certificates and International Yudansha booklets. A couple of other things I do are to maintain Aiki Kai Australia's database of Yudansha (Dan ranks) and to keep attendance records for National Schools.

The TTC considers applications for Dan promotions by one of two methods - either by Test or by Recommendation. Very occasionally, a promotion is made by the three Trustees of the Sugano Foundation as a Special case. Such a promotion recognises someone with exceptional circumstances who is worthy of a promotion, but whose training record falls outside of the requirements of either of the two usual methods.

Promotions by Tests are generally straight forward for the TTC to consider, as there are clear prerequisites that candidates are required to meet to be able to do a test. If candidates meet all of the prerequisites they can do the test and the result will then depend on how they perform on their test. Copies of these prerequisites are available on our national website, and through Area Representatives or directly from me (johnwat@optusnet.com.au).

While promotions by test are for ranks from Shodan through to Yodan, an application for promotion by Recommendation can be made for any Dan level. Promotions for 5th Dan and above remain the prerogative of the TTC. Candidates for a promotion by recommendation must have a training record that is well in excess of all the prerequisites required for a test at the same level. Beyond this broad requirement there are no specific prerequisites for recommendations. The TTC considers each application for promotion by recommendation on a case by case basis.

As mentioned above, I am the first point of contact on behalf of the TTC for Dan Grading matters, and so

any questions regarding Dan gradings should usually be directed to me. If the matter clearly falls within the published guidelines, then I will respond to it directly, otherwise I will refer it to the TTC for consideration. The TTC meet formally via Skype very frequently, so most matters can receive a timely response. Usually Dan Grading Applications are considered at National Schools, although if necessary they are considered at other times. Certainly questions relating to Dan Gradings can be raised at any time. I would encourage everyone to plan well ahead of time when considering promotions, so that if there are any issues that need to be considered by the TTC, they can be considered well ahead of time. It is particularly important to check in advance the training records of candidates who are going to be tested, to ensure that they will meet the grading prerequisites and will be able to do the test. One of the most unfortunate occurrences is when candidates come to a National School, often after travelling from interstate or over long distances with the expectation of doing a test. After submitting their application they find out that they haven't met the prerequisites and so it is not possible for the TTC to test them. This is very disappointing for everyone concerned, including the TTC.

Another very important reason for planning well ahead for tests is so that the candidates can go through the 'forging' process of preparing for the grading. Passing the test on the day is only one part of the grading process. I believe that having a sustained period of intensive practice in preparation for a test is a very important aspect of the grading process.

While this article is about Dan gradings, I hasten to add that being promoted is not the purpose of Aikido and that one's rank is not the ultimate measure of one's progress, nor of one's enjoyment or a measure of the benefits that one may feel they derive from training. The role of gradings in Aikido could be the subject of a long and interesting discussion but is not within the scope of this article. In one sense, how one assesses one's development through Aikido is personal, and a matter for each practitioner. I have noticed however, that often students who choose not to do gradings, particularly in their early years of training, seem to plateau in their technical development – perhaps because they miss out on the extra focus that preparing for and undertaking a test gives.

Finally I would like to discuss a couple of aspects of the Dan Grading Prerequisites.

A common question I receive is about the prerequisite for attendance at a certain number of (complete) National Schools. For example for Nidan, the candidate must have

attended 2 (complete) National Schools since their Shodan grading. The question is whether the National School that the candidate is actually doing the test at, counts towards this prerequisite. The answer is yes it does. This means that in the case of someone applying for a Nidan test, the candidate needs to have attended one other complete National School since Shodan, as well as attending all of the National School where they will be doing the test.

Also the National School prerequisite is slightly different for Shodan than for the other ranks. For the other ranks, the National Schools are counted *since the last grading*, but for Shodan all the National Schools are counted *since the candidate began training*.

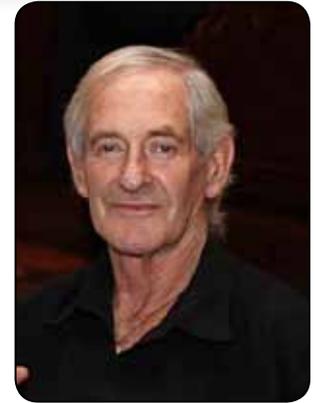
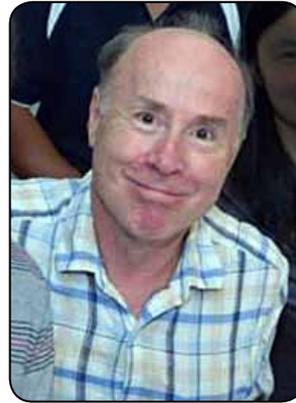
Another common misconception is that attendance for normal dojo training is counted as the number of classes attended NOT in days of training. It is only the number of days of training that counts. A 'day of training' is a day in which a person has participated in at least one class either as a student or as an instructor. Participating in more than one class on a particular day still only counts as one 'day of training'. I believe that at the heart of this requirement is the ideal that we should all train everyday, and thereby in one sense, integrate Aikido into our daily lives. Most of us do not meet this ideal of training everyday at a dojo. However development in Aikido as with most pursuits, is going to occur more readily through regular practice on different days in a week, compared with doing a lot of practice, on say only one day of the week. Recording 'days of training' rather than individual classes, recognises this idea.

Another point with 'days of training' is that, it is not only 'normal' dojo training that is counted in the total for the Dan grading prerequisite. It includes all types of officially recognised training such as TTC days, days of attendance at National Schools and special training such as mountain training or beach training. Further explanation about what makes a 'day of training' is given in a document that the TTC has recently prepared for all Area Representatives and Instructors.

There are currently, and I think always will be circumstances that the TTC needs to consider on a case by case basis in deciding whether the Dan Grading Prerequisites have been met. For example, should training overseas be counted towards the prerequisites? Similarly, what recognition should be given to the training done by students who began their training overseas, but have now moved to Australia to live? If a junior instructor is almost exclusively teaching, and almost never training under someone more senior, they may have met the required number of days but have they missed something important in their own development and training and so have they met the intent of the prerequisite? Would the answer to the last question be different for an instructor in a remote location compared to one who had fairly easy access to senior instructors in the city?

Finally I would again encourage everyone to contact the TTC well ahead of any gradings if they have any questions or are unsure about anything related to Dan Gradings.

Two Australians Newly Appointed as Shihans



During the recent Summer School it was announced that two Australians had just been appointed as Shihans by the Doshu.

The title of Shihan is issued by Aikido World Headquarters in Japan as the highest level of teaching qualification. The title is relatively rare outside Japan and the addition of these two new Shihans now brings the total number of Shihans in Australia to five. This is a very significant event that recognises the special qualities of the individuals concerned.

The two new Shihans are David Brown Sensei from Victoria and Roger Savage Sensei from New South Wales.

The title of Shihan is used in a number of Japanese classical and martial arts and generally refers to someone who is a master teacher or a model for that art. While different martial arts organisations may have different requirements, the title always denotes a teacher worthy of special respect and invariably takes many years to achieve.

About 15 years ago Aikido World Headquarters set out international regulations for the qualifications for instructors and formally defined their requirements for Fuku Shido-in (Assistant Instructor), Shido-in (Instructor) and Shihan. To be considered for promotion to Shihan, one must have held the rank of 6th Dan for a number of years and also demonstrated a very high level of proficiency in the practice and instruction of Aikido. Both of the new Shihans have made a significant contribution to the development of Aikido here. I am sure that everyone joins me in congratulating them on their achievement.

John Watson



Aiki Kai Australia 50th Anniversary
by Ethan Xan Lim (2nd Dan)

A 50th year anniversary is an incredible milestone for any organization and we were very fortunate to have been invited to participate in this joyous celebration. The friendship between Aiki Kai Australia and Aikido Shinju-Kai Singapore dated all the way back from when Philip Lee Shihan met with Tony Smibert Shihan at several occasions during official International Aikido Federation meetings in the 80's and 90's. In January 1999, Seiichi Sugano Shihan made his first visit to Singapore and continued to do so regularly in the following years, allowing all the students here at Aikido Shinju-Kai to enjoy his valuable teachings locally on our home grounds. Subsequently, from year 2000 onwards, our friendship with Tony Smibert Shihan blossomed even further as the two organizations continue to participate in each other's major seminars and events.

The significance of Aikido practice is in its training and what better way is there to celebrate an anniversary than to host a massive training event that gathers like-minded friends from all corners of the world. Apart from Tony Smibert Shihan, Robert Botteril Shihan, Hanan Janiv Shihan and several senior instructors from Australia, many worldwide high ranking masters were also flown in to teach at the week-long training seminar. Aikikai Australia have the great honour to have Aikido Doshu, Ueshiba Mori-teru Sensei to grace this specular event. Our very own Philip Lee Shihan was also given the prestige to teach amongst these prominent figures during the week. Yoshimitsu Yamada Shihan, who is now the Honorary Patron of Aiki Kai Australia, was regrettably unable to be present at the event but was very much spoken of during the week for his close friendship with Seiichi Sugano Shihan and guidance over the organization in the past years.

A total of 26 members in Aikido Shinju-Kai led by Philip Lee Shihan attending this auspicious event. Most of us were eagerly anticipating the intensive week of training, some of us could not wait to catch up with old friends, others were excited to make new ones and for the rest of us, it would have been the first time visiting a city that boasts four seasons in a day! The larger group of us who flew into Melbourne on the same flight on Sunday, 18 January, wasted no time in exploring the city and doing some holiday shopping before the event proper on the following day.

The official commencement of the 2015 50th Anniversary Sugano Shihan Summer School was kicked off by the first class on Monday morning, 19 January, conducted by Tony Smibert Shihan. The cool breezy weather that we had been graced with so far quickly turned into a comfortable, invigorating warmth as over 400 participants get active on the 600-mat training ground laid out in the main stadium of the Victorian State Netball & Hockey Centre. Smibert Shihan reminded us to train with the Spirit of Aikido as inculcated by Sugano Shihan, which is to remember that "Aikido is a Way. There is commitment and there is ob-

ligation. Do not abuse or misuse the art of Aikido. Study carefully, honestly and humbly. Respect your seniors and look after your juniors."

Training with both the local practitioners and overseas participants was an experience that was both pleasant and enriching. We were constantly reminded to be humble and to keep an open mind, so as to embrace the cultural difference and let the training sessions be as fruitful for everyone as possible. Even though there may be slight variations in the way we practice certain techniques or the styles of training that we are used to, the levels of energy and enthusiasm were constantly kept high among all participants, making the environment a very enjoyable atmosphere to train in for everybody. Deep friendships were borne out of the pep talks that we have during training breaks and after classes, with new friends that we met both on and off the mats.

Most of the time, we were very eager to further our understanding of what was taught in each class by catching up with the immediate students of the instructor who taught in the class before. It was heart-warming to see that the enthusiasm was reciprocated, especially after Philip Lee Shihan's class on Thursday morning, when other participants approached us to discuss what was taught during the class.

As the week progressed, the summer heat intensified but nonetheless, spirits were not dampened. Ueshiba Mori-teru Doshu flew in during midweek and taught in three separate classes over the last three days of the Summer School. For most of us, being able to train in Doshu's class was an opportunity that was not easy to come by and we thoroughly enjoyed the privilege.

Apart from training, other festivities were organized to celebrate the anniversary, such as the BBQ session and Documentary & Book Launch held on Tuesday evening, 20 January, and the Celebratory Dinner held on Thursday evening, 22 January, at the Langham Hotel. It was heartening to learn that Sugano Shihan had groomed more than 20 highly proficient senior ranking Aikido instructors in Australia itself, even more worldwide and that his legacy continues to influence global Aikido practitioners unwaveringly even after his passing.

The celebrations concluded with a public Aikido demonstration and Embukai at Federation Square on Saturday evening, 24 January. A spectacular Melbourne crowd was gathered to get a firsthand view of what Aikido was all about. All senior instructors, including Philip Lee Shihan, were given the opportunity to display what Aikido meant



to them during the Embukai, as opposed to the prior instructional demonstration. Ueshiba Morihiro Doshu's Embu was the last item which left all of us in awe.

As the 2015 50th Anniversary Sugano Shihan Summer School came to a close, we were very lucky to receive an extended hospitality by the friends in Melbourne. Philip Lee Shihan was invited to conduct a Post Summer School Seminar at the Clifton Hill Dojo on Monday evening, 26 January. The warm hospitality that we were greeted with made the sharing session a very memorable one.

Overall, it was an unforgettable experience for all of us from Aikido Shinju-Kai Singapore. In closing, we wish to congratulate you once again for this amazing feat, and also to give our best regards to Aiki-Kai Australia as you endeavour into your next 50 years!

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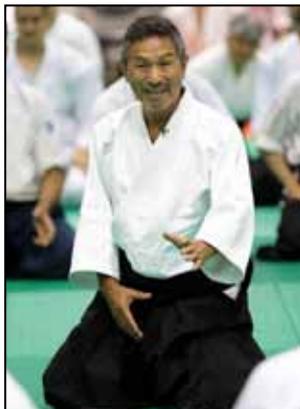
Celebrating 50 years of Aikido in Australia



Celebrating 50 years of Aikido in Australia



Some of the many faces of the people who came to celebrate our 50th Anniversary. There are several hundred more of these images on the Aiki Kai Australia Facebook page.





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Aikido in Australia
Aiki Kai Australia National Newsletter
Volume 4 Number 4



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