

NEWSLETTER

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AIKIDO YOSHINKAN BRISBANE DOJO

Dojo: yoshinkan.info Facebook: facebook.com/BrisbaneYoshinkanAikido/ Twitter: twitter.com/YoshinkanAikido

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|--|-------------------|------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| June Report | | | | | |
| New members 1 | | Total number of adults training 51 | | Total number of children training 41 | |
| Results of Sogo Shinsa on 23rd & 24th | | | | | |
| Jun-Godan | Jason Williams | Jun-3rd Kyu | Van Morris | 5Y4 step | Lawrence Monforte |
| Jun-Nidan | Joel Delaney | 5th Kyu | Rebecca Qiu | 3Y9 step | Cameron Blake |
| Shodan | Viktor Ovcharenko | | Tejaswini Badre | 3Y8 step | Murray Booth |
| 1st Kyu | Lily Crampton | 7th Kyu | Ana Cuthbert | 2Y9 step | Stephen Cuthbert |
| | Charles Delaporte | 8th Kyu | Liam Cantwell | 2Y8 step | Andrew Crampton |
| 2nd Kyu | Louis Chatfield | | Errin Rodger | | Dominic Hogan |
| | Greg Burley | 9th Kyu | Andrew Mai | 2Y4 step | Roland Thompson |
| | Duong Thai | | Anthan Mai | S2 step | Neale Windress |
| Events in July | | | | | |
| 1. Getsurei Shinsa | | | 2. This Month's Holiday | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training starts, Friday 21st 7:15pm~• Steps, Friday 28th 7:15pm~• Shinsa, Saturday 29th 1:00pm~ | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dojo Holiday: Saturday 8th (Sorry everyone, due to a special occasion for Sensei's religious reason)• Dojo Holiday: Monday 31st | | |

A little more knowledge for your Aikido

A spirit of Bushi-do

The annual demo season is coming closer again for this year. I thought of writing something to do with demonstrations from my experiences to encourage you and provide motivation to train for it. I searched my memories to find a good episode of some amazing techniques, possibly from Master Gozo Shioda or Mr. Scary Takeno Shihan, but could not recall any. Instead, an episode from the spiritual aspect of Budo hit me.

Although I have written about this story before, I would like to mention it again to confirm the importance of learning Budo for our lives, that I believe in. The Headquarters of Yoshinkan held a yearly demonstration which all the instructors and many students from all over Japan gathered. After the demo, a seminar for all the instructors was open to teach, nothing special, but all the basics like angles and percentage of shifting weights for basic movements and techniques to standardise Yoshinkan techniques nationally. At the opening of the seminar, Inoue Dojo-cho (the top instructor of the Headquarters then) began with a question to all the instructors, "Everyone, did you fold your clothes neatly after you changed to *dogi* for the demo yesterday and today for this seminar? Or, did you fold your *dogi* properly after you demonstrated yesterday?" Everyone's faces were puzzled. So, he continued saying, "Clothing protect your body from the cold and the heat. Your *dogi* protects your body from the training. We should treat them nicely with respect and gratitude. That's the way of budo-ka (Budo practitioners.)"

I was very impressed with his words and I felt that was the reason I loved Budo that emphasised the spiritual aspect above all. The essence of training Budo is not about learning skills to beat the opponents but giving oneself the appropriate disciplines to train and cultivate one's mind and spirit. While the purpose of training in MMA types is to win the matches and beat the opponents, the purpose of training Budo is to train one's spiritual respect to grow as humans that improves and enhances one's life itself in the end.

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When we can develop a sense of gratitude by looking after our clothes and *dogi's* with respect each time we train Aikido as Inoue Sensei said, we can gain the habit of thanking and respecting anything and anyone in our lives. The attitude of thanking our training partners on the mats sets our minds to thank our partners at home naturally. Besides, we start appreciating our society more as our minds get humbler instead of finding all sorts of complaints towards it; and we wish to be of use to society selflessly out of deep gratitude. This kind of person receives recognition of having a samurai spirit in Japan and well respected. When a student asked me what was Bushi-do for me, I answered, 'cleaning the dojo toilet' which became like a Zen riddle (I wrote about this before.) The point is that doing a job that others do not wish to, contributing oneself for other people unselfishly, out of gratitude towards the dojo and the training is a way of samurai spirit, I believe.

A man whom I thought was a true samurai in this modern era was Shojiro Ishibashi, the founder of Bridgestone Corporation, the world's biggest tyre maker, as you know. Around the time of World War II, he expanded his tyre factory to Java in Indonesia but it was forced to shut down and draw off after Japan lost the war. It was an accepted practice or normal for any business of the defeated countries to destroy their facilities as they left to make sure they were not usable because it was painful to give away their asset with no compensation. Therefore, American troops got a big surprise when they went into the Bridgestone factory. Everything inside of the factory was cleaned thoroughly as if new and all the machinery was tuned and lubricated to be used straight away. All they simply needed to do was turn the machines on.

The leadership of American military force located in Japan was puzzled by this behaviour of the Japanese company and called in Shojiro Ishibashi for questioning. What he answered was that they owed people in Java so much while they stayed there, and to repay obligations to people in Java, they wanted to leave the factory in the best condition. The American military leaders were astonished by his words and impressed at the same time. They understood that this little Asian man was worth trusting for his faith in holding a strong sense of gratitude - his code of conduct. Later on, American leaders decided to offer the reprocessing of used tyre entirely to Bridgestone Corporation, the company recovered its business productivity and performance from these orders. The company today is very well acknowledged worldwide for contributing to society by providing reliable and high quality products.

We, Japanese people, call this kind of person a 'samurai' for maintaining a firm faith in contributing to the public good out of respect and gratitude for other people, and being prepared to sacrifice one's life for the faith. In other words, this is the spirit of Bushi-do. I, who train and teach in 'Budo', respect the spirit of Bushi-do very highly and always wish to follow the path of Bushi-do. I believe that the heart and essence of learning a 'Budo' is about achieving spiritual growth by mastering, through the physical training of the art, a way to be always respectful, grateful, unselfish and humble to anybody and to anything. Pursuing this path, we gain trust and respect from others naturally which improves and enhances our life significantly.

Well, believing in this faith, I fold my *dogi* and clothes neatly, clean the dojo with a humble mind and try to deal with others in a respectful and grateful manner, every single day. This is my Bushi-do.

Osu,

Michiharu Mori