

# NEWSLETTER



No.174 February 2010

AIKIDO YOSHINKAN BRISBANE DOJO

Dojo: <http://yoshinkan.info>

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## January Report

New members 3

Total number of adults training 62

## Results of Getsurei Shinsa on 23<sup>rd</sup> January

Jun-3 <sup>rd</sup> Kyu	Jocelyn Fergusson	8 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Simon Horn	3Y9 step	Matt Carpenter
4 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Silverio Panganilo		Roger Yang	2Y10 step	Ryan Slavin
	Peter Hills	9 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Robert North	2Y7 step	Lawrence Monforte
6 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Simon Foley		Kin Hoong Chen		Francis Hollingworth
7 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Daniel Gort		Mark Kelly	2Y1 step	Kaido Mori
	Tomoko Urano			S3 step	Marek Coleman
		5Y9 step	Richard Diehm	S1 step	Oliver Bradshaw

## Events in February

### 1. Getsurei Shinsa

- Training starts, Friday 19<sup>th</sup> 7:15pm~
- Steps, Friday 26<sup>th</sup> 7:15pm~
- Shinsa, Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> 1:00pm~

### 2. This Month's Holiday

- Dojo's Holiday 1<sup>st</sup> March Monday

## Sharing the feeling of Black Belts

### Shodan

I would like to thank all the people who helped me for my black belt grading. Special thanks to sensei and my mum for being so patient with me and helping me out. I would like to thank all the senior black belts for helping me out since I started adult's class. I would also like to thank all the people in the dojo, for teaching me all kinds of stuff.

I have been doing kids class for nine years and three years for the adults class. The first six years of kids class for me was just mucking around, just wanting to play the fun games. In January 2007, I started the adults class, I thought they were going to thrash me. I was scared at first. Then I realized they won't hurt people who are short and skinny like a stick. I was aiming for my kids black belt while I was grading for my adults. I had Richard as my teacher when I was going for my kids black belt grading. I thought I was getting smashed back then, but now, if I think about now compared to then, he was going easy on me! Since I'm getting taller I can feel the strong techniques of Aikido Yoshinkan from the senior black belts.

The more training I do in Aikido Yoshinkan, I feel its more fun than being serious. When I started adults class, the usual techniques that used to work on the kids in kids class didn't work on the adults. All it did was getting me frustrated. But now I think that is fun, because if it's not working I'm not doing enough training. Feeling the strong aikido techniques from other people is also fun and interesting. In the future I would like to continue Sensei's master, Shioda Gozo's style. I would like to continue this style and hope it stays in Australia forever. I would also like to surpass my Sensei in the future sometime.

OSU!

**Kaido Mori**

## Sharing the experiences and thoughts of other students

### Living at the dojo for one year

Like many people in life I needed to get back on the path that I had strayed from, my life at this stage was full of holes that could not be filled with just any material activity or event I knew that to fill these holes I had to find something within.

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Aikido was already a huge part of my life, and my study and following of Tenrikyo had begun at this time, but there was just such a strong feeling of being lost, confused and in pain not knowing what life was about or not feeling the beautiful things that life had to offer. I loved doing and still do, practicing Aikido because it kept me going through these times of despair. The teachings of Tenrikyo also began a foundation of a connection to life and inner strength.

The reason that Aikido is not the only subject being discussed, and Tenri is also being mentioned is because they went hand in hand to my journey. Living at the dojo was an experience that I am so grateful for, because it felt like the doorway to the beginning of adulthood. Whilst there is still much more growing to be done it is a definite start. Sensei and Shuko had put much of their efforts into me even in what I think were very subtle ways and each day was always a challenge but one that had to be re-lived over and over in order to learn.

Waking up at 5:30am to pray and then commence cleaning was at first a challenge. Once I had finished doing my duties, which was generally scrubbing the shower and toilet and was finished off by vacuuming. But it was not over there; Sensei, Kaido and myself would then start cleaning the church, before 7:00 am service. Whilst all of this progressed Shuko would be in the kitchen preparing breakfast for her family, and I can tell you that I used to get so hungry from smelling that five star food frying and crackling in the pan.

My life up until recently had been a very lazy one, always avoiding work, or in a sense being afraid of hard work, which I believe, was a contributing factor into my straying. Getting up early to clean each morning taught me the value of using our bodies that had been given to us from nature and how using it in that state of mind gives us a sense of happiness and thankfulness that can brighten our day.

After breakfast Sensei and I would then begin cleaning the dojo which began with dusting and mopping the mats and the floors. To me it was a good way to see the dojo from a different point of view, and it was a view of valuing the place in which we trained, in the place that we all have experienced something wonderful, a place that we are all very blessed to have. I ask that next time you are on the mats to have a look past all of its physical elements of wooden weapons and foam mats and instead to see the underlying meaning of why we are all there. It is that presence of sincere effort we put into the place that reflects its unique feeling. The major efforts that Sensei and Shuko pour into it each and every day of the week, without an inkling of thought as to asking anything out of us, accept perhaps putting hard efforts into our selves and our training.

Training in Aikido every day was a dream that had come true, but like everyone there were good days, bad days and pure painful days where it felt as though I was just moving uselessly around the place. Things were hard at times, and there were times my act had to be picked up otherwise, it felt as though I was not keeping true to my self. But I did feel as though there were times that I had failed and others when I had success and times when I had felt the bite of disappointment or the delight of success in the events that occurred from day to day. It was so fortunate that I had been able to stay when I did because we had so many things happening that year. One rare event was the visit of Sensei Shioda the head of the Yoshinkan Aikido Federation. There were only a couple of times in my life that I had been so nervous about making a mistake, where I was pretty sure I was going to melt and this was one of them. Never had I even considered representing the dojo and Sensei in the way of playing a host to the head of our style, not only for self image but the image of Sensei and the dojo, what a scary time, but a good experience.

If anything however training and following Tenrikyo each day showed definite personal character flaws that needed addressing, and if I am not to careful even now these old problems could make a return. But I would like to mention that training with everyone in the dojo has helped me uncover these flaws and had made me work on them, and I must thank you all.

An area that I have made reference to repeatedly is Tenrikyo which is the belief or way of life that I had been introduced to me by Sensei and Shuko, that was the building blocks, combined with Aikido that gave strength and a measure of peace from within. It taught me to realize gratitude to all the

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things I had instead of the things I did not have or even need. To see that there is a life force that surrounds us and all things that exist on this planet, continually keeps it alive, and looks after the balance and flow of all things as well as emphasizing the importance of helping fellow human beings. My apologies if this is deep for some people, but these are the experiences that I would like to share with you about my time living here. It is a way of life that opens our eyes to all the beautiful things that we have and take for granted on this planet, even something as simple as a blade of grass can reflect the beauty and amazing life that exists. Without air we would not be able to breath, without water we would die of thirst and without food we would starve, these are the basic things that at a time I focused on and life seemed to be much brighter because I could see how fortunate I was. When things got hard at times physically or mentally when I stepped back and thought for a second and remembered I was very lucky to have a body to even use or a mind to think. Don't get me wrong some days I just plain felt sorry for my self ☺ but sometimes that does not help us progress. The help Shuko and Sensei had given me was infinite and I cannot thank them enough. But through their workings they opened my eyes to the beautiful nature we are all surrounded by.

Obviously living at the dojo meant that I had responsibilities to up hold for the place as well as my self. Shuko's cooking which I made reference to earlier was unfortunately only cooked for, like I said, her family, I had to cook for my self, which added an extra area of self dependence even if I was mainly living off rice, vegetables, sausages and chicken (But who can complain once I discovered that olive oil and soy sauce go very well together on rice☺). Even with the schedule that was put into place there was still always time to cook, cause if none was done then I did not eat. Something I had learned however after eating some rice and leaving a couple of single grains Shuko had said that we can not make rice, we can cook it and a farmer can grow it, but only nature has the power to make it grow and flourish, it is something I think about every time I eat any meal.

Another interesting event happened in the world of Aikido which was also a good opportunity and that was Takeno Sensei coming to Sydney. At these seminars we had trained for two-hour sessions twice a day, which was very fun because it meant we had to fit in major amounts of Aikido. However it was a very humbling experience, because I saw how much work I really had to do, so coming back to Brisbane was hard because of facing the reality that my personal skills were primitive. (And still are he he ☺) It should also be mentioned that upon returning home to the dojo, it was truly evident that we have a world-class school.

In regards to difficult times in training, we all have them, it is important to know that part of our progress depends on these hard times in order to grow stronger, we must push through the frustration and self disappointment, we all must over come these barriers. The training is not easy, which is an important thing because it means that we all get to make an epic journey, the ones we hear about in books, or in block buster films, just live in the journey, not only in the Dojo but in life. Our journey in the dojo is a piece, but an important piece to our over all path and adventure we all have the blessing of living. (So please train hard, and live well ☺) our destination will come; we do not need to worry about it.

I would also like to thank from the bottom of my being my beautiful and awesome parents, who had put up with my cheeky behavior and laziness. He he ☺. To my mother she is an amazing woman, and has taught me the value of strength of will and determination, (and some lessons may have been through countless smackings ☺) she is a very strong lady and someone whom I look up to. And to my father, who has always given me loving advice and understood things about my nature. Most of all I would like to thank them for supporting my decision to live in the dojo, even though they may have not understood, I love you guys.

Sensei, Shuko, all of my fellow students and the dojo had helped me a great deal, over come my life problems and had set me on a path again, without any of it, there would have been big problems. The only thing I ask is that we all train hard together to cultivate our spirits and our minds whilst building the skill level of the dojo. Respect each other and look at what we all have in number 10 Ferry Road, a place of true learning and adventure.

OSU!!!!!!

**Lawrence Monforte**