

NEWSLETTER

No.247 March 2016

AIKIDO YOSHINKAN BRISBANE DOJO

Dojo: <http://yoshinkan.info>

Facebook: <http://bit.ly/dojofb>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/YoshinkanAikido>

February Report					
New members 6		Total number of adults training 59		Total number of children training 47	
Results of Getsurei Shinsa on 26th & 27th February					
5Y6 step	Matt Carpenter	S5 step	Andrew Crampton	S3 step	Roland Thompson
3Y3 step	Cameron Blake	S4 step	Kent Windress		
Events in March					
1. Sogo Shinsa			2. This Month's Holiday		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training starts, Friday 4th 7:15pm~• Steps, Friday 18th 7:15pm~• Shinsa, Saturday 19th 1:00pm~			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Easter Holiday: 25th Friday ~ 28th Monday		
			3. Children's class		
			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This term of children's class ends on Thursday 24th March and restarts on Thursday 14th April.		

Coffee Break

Youtube, the modern way of promoting Aikido

One day last year, a burly young male came over to see me. He told me in a placid tone that he watched my demonstration on Youtube as it showed up in the 'recommended' section while he was browsing Bruce Lee videos, and he was very impressed with my techniques. He even said it was a great honour to meet me, as he offered a handshake! Well, though I knew I was just a humble Aikido instructor of a small dojo I felt as if I was a movie star or something. I even thought of hugging him (which I have practised enough by now) in return for his wonderful compliment. You know, I got carried away a little. People are commonly susceptible to flattery, or I am so especially. He joined, and took his first lesson. I was absolutely looking forward to his future; since he had youth and a good build it was easy to picture him to be a strong Aikido-ka. However, never count your chickens before they hatch. The saying is always right; he never came back afterwards. I waited for him to turn up day after day as if waiting for one's sweetheart, but no, my love was turned down. Alright, look for another one then!

YouTube began around 2005 and it became popular very quickly. Douglas, one of our IT experts in the dojo uploaded my demo video originally when there were not many Aikido clips yet. Since then we have uploaded my annual demo footage every year. Disclosing myself on the internet meant I had to be prepared for receiving not only compliments, but abuse too. Despite my dislike of being a target of vicious criticism, uploading my Aikido clips on Youtube is a practical way of advertising. While marketing Aikido is my biggest reason to expose my Aikido on the Net I have another reason. It is because I wish to express my Aikido that I learned from Master Gozo Shioda to those who have trained or are training Yoshinkan Aikido in Japan.

To my regret, the present techniques trained at the Headquarters of Yoshinkan are quite different from what I learned directly from Master. The time when I was teaching as well as training at the Headquarters Master was still very active. He was determined to maintain the standard of his Aikido style and therefore he checked/corrected the instructors' techniques very strictly. He demanded of us that we change our mistakes at once on the spot where he found them. He kept improving and developing his techniques to be more efficient based on reason, the principle and mechanics of Aikido.

NEWSLETTER

I remember, around the beginning of my uchi-deshi life, I watched with my senior uchi-deshi an old movie of Yoshinkan Aikido featuring Master in 1960's. Although his techniques were powerful and amazing they came from his forced strength but not from the Aikido principle; they were quite rough and bare without being sophisticated. My senior said in bitter amusement, "This is the old style." The techniques relied on physical strength are no good because they will not work on those people who are superior in size and power. Hence, the way I judge my technique is whether it works on a man bigger and more powerful than I am. As long as I strictly keep to this judgement method I believe I cannot go too wrong, becoming satisfied and content with my Aikido.

The current instructors at the Headquarters, however, discarded the Aikido that Master and his then uchi-deshi developed and worked out together for thirty years and they decided, instead, to teach the Aikido that Master was performing in the movie in 1960's, believing that was the right and traditional Aikido. I definitely disagree with this. It is such a great regret to inherit the wrong Aikido by misunderstanding our Master's heritage. Their decision is a pure retrogression. Uploading my Aikido on Youtube has an aggressive purpose of questioning their Aikido at the Headquarters and of asserting what I believe is correct as the Yoshinkan Aikido.

In a book Master wrote he mentioned that he had a concern about the future of Aikido in Japan that young Japanese people were less interested in Budo and its training, on the other hand, more and more overseas students, especially Westerners, were eager and diligent to learn the Japanese martial arts. So, the day may come when Japanese people may have to learn Aikido from foreign instructors. Well, when I was teaching at the Headquarters in Japan I worked hard to maintain the art for Japanese people to dispel Master's concern. Yet, now I am in Australia, teaching Aikido to Australians, I would be happy to fulfill his concern, aiming to lead the best Yoshinkan Aikido dojo here in Brisbane.

It is my great pleasure to have Japanese people traveling to Australia to learn Aikido and Australians visit Japan to teach Aikido. Although I thought it was a faraway dream we actually welcomed a Yoshinkan student from Japan last month who found us through browsing Youtube. He was impressed with our annual demo clips and wished to check it out by feeling the techniques directly, whether this Aikido was a true heritage of Master Gozo Shioda or not. As a result, he was so satisfied that he came over all the way from Japan, spending his savings and time, to feel and experience Aiki-waza directly from me for ten days. The excitement he had from feeling Aiki-waza was something he expected, but he was more amazed that even some Brisbane students were able to perform a sort of Aiki-waza too. Being the Japanese he was, it was pure shock.

He asked me to come to Japan to teach his Yoshinkan fellows too and he was determined to plan a seminar inviting me in future. I was simply pleased at his offer since this could be the reverse-import of Aikido I was dreaming of. Although the plan would face difficulties due to the territorial dispute among Japanese instructors, I am still hopeful for the possibility. Well, this is all thanks to YouTube! I value YouTube and its influence with high appreciation and will keep using it proactively. Moreover, as we train Aikido steadily and continuously with diligence and passion, one day we shall announce proudly that the true successors of Master Gozo Shioda's Aikido exist in Australia.

Osu!

Michiharu Mori