

Message from the Media Officer

This is the biggest and best newsletter to date thanks to the many BAB members who have taken time to offer articles. It is encouraging to see the broad and varied content which is starting to reflect the diversity of our membership. Please help us to keep this momentum going by continuing to support this publication and get your articles to the media officer; we want to hear what is going on out there! Not all offerings have made this edition but we will keep any that we have received and make sure they make future editions.

Furthermore, we are also enjoying a greater involvement with our facebook page with members starting to become active on there. Thanks to Shaun Hoddy, White Rose Aikikai, Dan Daly, and all the others who have started to use this facility. This is a great (and free) way to communicate to other members and the page could become a fantastic resource for promoting your club and events as well as keeping in touch with what is going on.

Please go to <http://www.facebook.com/BritishAikidoBoard> and like the page if you have not already done so and start to use it.

It is most gratifying that after 2 years we are beginning to reach our members but we could still do much better, please encourage your club members to read, contribute and enjoy our resource materials. Here's to the next newsletter being even bigger and better.

To all the Senseis out there why not share your knowledge and thoughts by giving us something to publish in our sensei's corner feature?

A big thanks to all who contributed.

Mick Mercer

If you have a news story, an event, or a view you would like to contribute to the newsletter, please feel free to email it to us at: mediaofficer@bab.org.uk.

Please see the last page for further details on how you can contribute.

High honour for Aikido pioneer

On Friday 3rd August, former Heathrow airport porter, Haydn W. Foster, was posthumously graded 7th dan by Shihan T K Chiba, a senior representative of the Aikido World Headquarters in Japan. This award was given in recognition of Haydn's significant contribution to Aikido for over 50 years. During this time, he was a major pioneer of the art and helped to spread it throughout the UK. After a short ceremony, the certificate was presented to his widow Alice, and to his grandson Paul Foster-Dent.

Among Haydn's many achievements were that, during the 1960s, his 1st and 2nd dan certificates were two of the very few in the UK which were signed by O-Sensei, the founder of Aikido. Haydn also played a major part in the first major martial arts demonstration held at the Royal Albert hall in the mid 1960s. In 1973, he founded the Institute of Aikido, and was one of the founding members of the British Aikido Board, the governing body for Aikido in the UK. Haydn was the senior instructor at the Hut dojo in West London, the birthplace of Aikido in the UK, where he continued to teach until his death in 2011 at the age of 83. His grandson, Paul, continues to teach at the Hut dojo.



Chiba sensei, Mrs Alice Foster and Paul Foster-Dent (the grandson of Haydn Foster)



Hiroshi Ikeda Sensei in the UK – a Dream Come True.

My interest in Aikido started with sensei Tom Moss in Coventry during the early 90's. Sadly, Tom passed away in 2003 but he was very instrumental in wanting me to seek out new teachers and always wanted to see what new ideas I'd picked up when returning from visiting another teacher. I met and trained with countless teachers during those years however one teacher peaked my interest above all others, his name? Hiroshi Ikeda.

I first met Ikeda sensei in 2000 and travelled over to see him after everything I'd heard about him and had seen in a video I'd bought from the USA. It all looked like it came to him so easily and seemingly without a great deal of effort or movement, it actually looked fake! Suffice to say, I grabbed, I fell, I grabbed harder, I fell harder, I looked confused, he laughed! All these years later and I am still feeling the same things and he is still, to me at least, one of the few Aikido teachers who is advancing the art of Aikido - taking it to new places and seeking new heights. If you never trained with Ikeda sensei then please grab hold of the man. He will change your perception of what Aikido is with no shadow of doubt.

Ikeda Sensei was born in Hachiojima, Tokyo in 1950 and currently holds the rank of 7th dan. He began aikido training under Mitsugi Saotome while a student in the aikido club of Kokugakuin University and entered Saotome's Reimeijuku dojo in 1970. Relocated to Sarasota, Florida, USA in 1976 and taught in Florida from 1978-79. In 1980 he moved to Boulder, Colorado and established the Boulder Aikikai.

My dream was one day to be able to invite Ikeda sensei over

to the UK for a seminar. I asked most times I visited sensei and he always said he'd come but that he was a little busy that year, so, maybe he'd come the following year. If you don't know Ikeda sensei then he's probably one of the hardest working teachers in Aikido and probably the most travelled. I'm proud to say that after many many years of asking, Ikeda sensei finally said yes.

We were very grateful to be able to host a seminar with Ikeda sensei in April 2012 for the first time in the UK. We brought 120 or so people together from 27 different groups and several different countries. The comments from a lot of the people who attended were along the lines that it was the best seminar they'd been to, that his Aikido was exceptional, that he's also a very funny guy – not only that but he's so approachable, he was sat in the hall as we were putting the 500 or so mats out quite happily chatting away to people.

I will be eternally grateful to Ikeda sensei for teaching and spending a week with me in my home, watching, talking and demonstrating Aikido constantly – even whilst on a train to London. And for all the coffee we shared – sensei runs on caffeine and you would be ill advised to ever suggest decaf – he used to wear a death before decaf t-shirt.

I managed to ask Ikeda sensei if I could consider him my teacher now, he said yes – that was another dream come true for me. Even better news is that sensei will be back in 2013.

Hopefully see you there.

John Burn, Chishin Dojo – Coventry



Igarashi Kazuo Shihan

Igarashi Sensei was born on March 24th 1946 in Niigata prefecture in Japan. He was shy when he was a boy and wanted to practice a martial art to develop his personality so, like many other Japanese students, practiced Judo at high school.

In 1964, Igarashi Sensei entered Meiji University in Tokyo to study politics and economics and where he viewed a demonstration of Shorinji Kempo and Aikido. It was at that time that Igarashi Sensei says “Aikido attracted my heart”. Kobayashi Yasuo Shihan was the instructor of the Meiji University club which he established in 1955 after graduating from Meiji University.

Although Kobayashi Sensei is ten years older than Igarashi Sensei the classes had plenty of energy. Igarashi trained six days a week with each class lasting two intense hours. At Meiji University club the hierarchy is very strict - a culture that still exists today.

Because Igarashi Sensei was small in stature, Aikido appealed to him more than Judo. He felt that he could never beat a bigger opponent. However with Aikido, he felt there was more to it than size alone. Igarashi Sensei looked at the senior teachers including Kobayashi Sensei, Tohei Sensei, and Kisshomaru Sensei and all were small in stature like himself but all actively involved in Aikido which impressed him a great deal. Another aspect that appealed to Igarashi Sensei was that there was no competition. He was more interested in how to create, grasp and use Ki. For him, Aikido had and continues to have, a certain mysticism that Judo didn't have.

Igarashi Sensei was fortunate enough to practice under the former Doshu Kisshomaru who he thought had incredible skill, however on the several occasions when he saw O'Sensei he thought he was beyond belief. Igarashi Sensei recounts when

O'Sensei would enter the dojo someone would shout 'stop' and everyone would kneel down to welcome him. O'Sensei would then throw his residential students around and then tell philosophical stories.

Igarashi finished University and began working as an editor for a publishing company specialising in engineering publications. The publishing house was very busy and Igarashi Sensei had little or no time for practice and could only attend special events like end of year practice. After working hard for five years Igarashi Sensei began to wonder whether this was the right life for him. So he decided to quit his job and beg Kobayashi Sensei to allow him to become a live-in student paying for living expenses and teaching fees.

Time passed at the dojo and after a short time Kobayashi Sensei stopped Igarashi Sensei to ask what he wanted to do in the future and whether he wanted to become a professional teacher? At that time Bruce Lee was releasing his very popular movies and demand for martial arts in Japan and Europe was growing. Igarashi Sensei was unsure how secure a job as a professional Aikido teacher so he decided to also train as an acupuncturist as a back-up career. After three years he was qualified to practice acupuncture. The knowledge of pressure points and meridians was useful and could be applied to Aikido.

As Kobayashi dojos expanded into different areas and Igarashi Sensei shared the teaching schedule along with Kobayashi Sensei. Igarashi sensei enjoyed the life as a live-in student sharing time with his teacher. As Aikido spread across the world Igarashi Sensei began to teach in Europe, Scandinavia, Australia and Canada which he continues to this day.



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New Years Day Misogi

Plymouth School of Aikido invites anyone with spirit and a touch of insanity to join them at their New Years Day Misogi on 1st January on Wembury Beach.

They have been running a New Years Day Misogi for 25 years and a Mid-Summer Misogi for 23 years. Sensei David Worsley started this insanity, when he was dared to do the same as the Japanese martial artists.

The 4-day Mid-Summer Misogi includes Aikido training, weapons and archery (long bow and composite).

Last year they camped out under the stars at a farm in the middle of Dartmoor, cooked on an open fire and BBQ, built a sweat lodge and an archery range. The 4 days culminate in total immersion in a very cold, fast flowing river, called the Cowsick!!

For further details see: <http://www.plymouthaikido.co.uk/>



Participants in the Mid-Summer Misogi

8th Dan Awarded

Robert (Bob) Forrest-Webb has been awarded 8th Dan by The British Aikido Association.

Bob says:

“It is now 68 years since my interest in the martial arts began with Judo at a Liverpool club, I am hoping that with a bit of luck I’ll manage a full 70 years! As I’m 83 now maybe that’s a little optimistic....still, I was on the mat at our club in Monmouth last night so, maybe.”



Bob Forrest-Webb with Tetsuro Nariyama Sensei (8th Dan JAA)

Coaching Milestone

Who would have thought that just 25 years after its creation, the British Aikido Board would be celebrating the accreditation of its 2000th Coaching award.

With a membership of almost 9500 the latest analysis shows that there are 2166 BAB members with a coaching award, including 22 CL2 Certificates and 88 at CL3.

This is a great achievement and excluding junior members (2618), who are not eligible for coaching awards represents 31.5% of the Board’s members.

It is also encouraging that students wishing to take the coaching qualifications remain high with over 500 passing within the last 2 years.



2000th Coaching Certificate issued in 2011

Neil O’Connor recently became the recipient the 2000th full coaching award and to mark this milestone Neil was presented with a certificate and hakama by the BAB Board.

Neil started Aikido in 1999 whilst at university and trained at a number of clubs. He is currently a member of the Shinwakai and intends to remain there thanks to excellent tutelage of Jack and Marill Poole. Neil said, ‘An observation that I am pleased to report from my journeys in aikido is that each time I have turned up at a new club I have always been warmly welcomed and accepted by the members. The sense of community within aikido is something that I really value. I hope that now I have my initial coaching qualification I will be able to continue this ethos, welcoming and helping to train new participants.’

New BAB Coaching Award

For a few years there has been a requirement for the BAB to provide a one-day coaching refresher course. The course content was recently finalised and 8 tutors attended and all are now able to deliver this course to all associations. This is called the Coaching update course and available to all BAB students holding CL1, 2 or 3.

Virtually all governing bodies except the BAB provide mandatory update course hence the introduction of this course. Although this is currently a voluntary course in the future it may become a mandatory requirement.

Grev Cooke
BAB Coaching Administration Officer

Events calendar

23 Nov 12 to 25 Nov 12

Aikido in Kent Association

Aikido in Kent Association Winter School

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20341

24 Nov 12

White Rose Aikikai

Traditional Aikido Seminar Open Course

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20363

24 Nov 12 to 25 Nov 12

Iwama Shin Shin Aiki Juku UK

Matt Hill 5th Dan Open Course

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20362

25 Nov 12

Lancashire Aikikai

Lancashire Aikikai Aikido course

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20262

30 Nov 12 to 02 Dec 12

Iwama Shin Shin Aiki Juku UK

Extreme Winter Woodland Aikido

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20364

01 Dec 12

British Aikido Federation

BAF Yu Ko Kan Killingworth Seminar

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20305

01 Dec 12

Brighton Ki Society

Ki and Aikido for All

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20271

01 Dec 12

British Birankai (British Aikikai)

Aikido Weapon Course

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20353

08 Dec 12 to 09 Dec 12

Shin Gi Tai Aikido Society

Shin Gi Tai Open Course

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20368

13 Jan 13

Kai Shin Kai

Traditional Aikido Course, Open to All

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20354

If you wish to contribute...

Any text for newsletter articles should to be sent in one of the following formats: Word, .doc, .rtf, or plain text.

Any images need to be sent as either a JPEG file at as high a resolution as possible or as a high resolution PDF. But please bear in mind that most email system have a limit of 10mb file size.

Please send your newsletter text and images to:
mediaofficer@bab.org.uk

Sensei's corner

Aikido – does it work?

I hear this question many times and I am told it features regularly in discussions on the web amongst those who enjoy demonstrating their knowledge from an arm chair.

It really is a very poorly thought out question, on two levels really. First of all what does the question mean? Does it mean could you win a fight using Aikido, or could it mean could you avoid a fight? The question could mean does Aikido keep you fit, or even does it provide you with tools to live your life in a more positive way? Surely “does it work” depends on what the student is looking for. I think the kind of people that like to discuss such matters are referring to fighting. If that is the case they really are demonstrating their lack of knowledge of Aikido. The truth is, in answer to all the above questions, is that Aikido “could do”.

The second point I bring to bear on this question is that if it must be asked in relation to anything it may provide us with, then the question really must be re-phrased. Does Aikido or Karate or Judo or Kung Fu work is not the correct question. The question should be “can the practitioner make it work for the purpose they need”?

I have heard many times during my decades of practice, of people who have studied a martial art for a few months or even a year or so and complain that it didn't help protect them in a conflict they somehow managed to get involved in. The truth is that they didn't have the skill to deploy the art in such a way to avoid conflict, or prevail in conflict. Then rather than accept responsibility for making the wrong choice or not training diligently they simply blame the art, it's much easier that way.

Trust me..... there is nothing wrong with the art, any art for that matter, as long as it is taught properly. They may provide you with a different set of tools, but in the end they are all capable of getting the same results. Consider a hand pistol and a shot gun, they can both do the job but in different ways. It's relatively hard to hit a target with a pistol compared to a shotgun, but the pistol is more subtle. It really does depend on the user as to the level of success. There is nothing wrong with the weapons, they both work just fine.

So does Aikido work? Well it can do, but that is down to you. Are you ready to put in the work? Are you able to keep going when the easy thing to do is to quit? Are you prepared to be painfully honest with yourself and stop making excuses? Are you able to swallow your pride and demonstrate a little humility and compassion? Are you willing to be mindful of the needs of others and be prepared to put your needs second from time to time? Can you listen to your teacher and invest your trust? If you can do all of these things then Aikido can provide you with the means to achieve anything you want too, I speak from experience.

There are many who are ready to pass judgement, yet have little knowledge. As Mustard Sensei says after every seminar, “all the answers are on the mat”.

Ken Robson shihan,
Shudokan Institute of Aikido International

Useful links:

BAB website: <http://www.bab.org.uk/>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/BritishAikidoBoard>

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