



## AYNSW May - June Newsletter

Hello everyone.  
Here is the May- June newsletter.

### Grading Results

Congratulations to those who graded recently.

#### Adults'

On February 25<sup>th</sup> 2012

##### 1<sup>st</sup> Kyu

Gus Hill

##### 2nd Kyu

Andy Lam

##### 5<sup>th</sup> Kyu

Nathan Tartak

John Cuiuli

##### 6th kyu Senior

David Tsai

David Kraus

##### 7<sup>th</sup> Kyu

Junichi Shimoda

Seung Joon Lee

Johan Indahsz

##### 8th kyu

Adam Kerlake

Ed Pember

Amy Gavagmin

#### Adults'

On April 28th 2012

##### Shodan

Nathan Smith

##### 2nd Kyu

Adrian Banu

Arthur Kogan

##### 3rd Kyu

Karma Sherpa

##### 5th kyu Senior

Elisa Lazos

Mykola Kovalchuk

Michael Seufale

##### 6th Kyu

Andralia Vainga

Paul Farrell

Steve Aran

##### 7th Kyu

Campbell Douglas

##### 8th kyu

Joao Pequito

Adrian Ionita

**The next grading will be held on Saturday June 30th**

#### Aiki Kids'

On March 31st 2012

Junior 7th kyu jr

Ewan Edward

Leonidas Pegios

Junior 8th kyu jr

Declan Murphy

Aidan Leahy

Ilyas Caliskan

Miguel Gabua

Hailie Brown

## Housekeeping

It's better to arrive late than skip a class, but if you do find yourself running late please keep in mind some basic protocols.

- If you are arriving just before the class begins, wait at the Genkan (entrance) until the class bow to commence has occurred and people have stood up for warm up before crossing the mat.
- After changing enter the dojo and sit and wait for the teacher to bow to you before joining in.

## Aiki Travel

There are lots of chances to travel and train at the moment. Tom Seeto is making the most of opportunities with his round the world aiki globetrot, taking in dojo in Canada, the UK & Japan. Tom will be attending Takeno Sensei's seminar in London & Inoue Sensei's Seminar in Tokyo before returning to regular training here. Kirsty Bryant & Mykola Kovalchuk will also be attending Inoue Sensei's seminar in Japan.

We wish them all the best in their aikido travels and look forward to seeing them again on the mats in Sydney.

## Recent Seminars

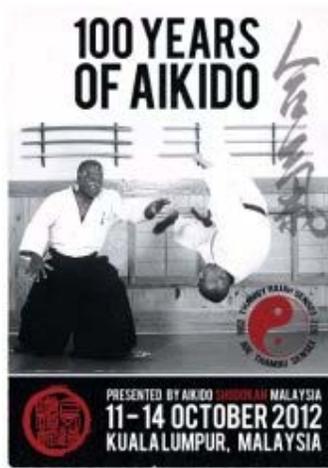
AYNSW recently was asked to run a series of seminars for kids from the charity Barnados ([www.barnardos.org.au](http://www.barnardos.org.au)). The classes are based on the Anti Bullying program Rock & Water with an aikido spin placed on them. The sessions were well received and despite it being school holidays all the kids completed their homework assignments reflecting on each session's content.

Currently we are doing a similar program with kids from the John Berne School. <http://www.johnberneschool.org>

*Up Coming*

Roseville Girls College      Thursday June 7<sup>th</sup> at Roseville College

## Aikido Gasshuku Malaysia



This October, from 11th to 14th, Aikido Shudokan will be celebrating 60th Anniversary of Thamby Rajah Sensei & 40th Anniversary of Joe Thambu Sensei in Aikido.

This will be a 4-day Training Camp, Public Demonstration & a Gala Dinner with Award Presentations in Malaysia.

An event not to be missed  
Book your place by email to [emma@aikidoshudokan.my](mailto:emma@aikidoshudokan.my)

## 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Demonstration

The dojo annual demonstration will be held on Saturday July 28<sup>th</sup> from 2pm. This is a great chance to introduce aikido to family and friends as all aspects of aikido training will be demonstrated and explained. The demonstration will be held at the dojo and entrance is free.

## Meditation and Well Being

A recent article in The Sydney Morning Herald online outlined results of a study by Sydney University on meditation and possible links to mental health & well being benefits.

(Read Full article) <http://www.smh.com.au/lifestyle/life/live-longer-be-a-log-heres-how-20120510-1yeza.html>

The article outlined a number of perceived benefits from the practise of meditation.

These included:

- signs of stronger telomeres, which play a part in protecting cells from ageing
- Strengthen the hippocampus, part of the brain associated with memory
- Stress-reduction leads to better metabolism & immune systems

(Read the published study) <http://www.hindawi.com/journals/ecam/2012/350674/>

We practise a seated meditative state for 5 min before each class. This is a point where we close off from the day's activities and turn our mind to training.

The weekly instructor class at Yoshinkan Honbu was a seated (seiza) class that usually ran for 60 minutes but occasionally was stretched to 100 minutes. This was a serious class with strict protocol. There was a period of meditation at the beginning and at the end. Throughout the entire class we did not move other than to bow (seated) or speak when asked a question.

The format of this class is loosely taken from the practise of Zen Buddhism and is quite hard mentally. When not meditating we had to concentrate to both keep our posture and follow the theme of the class as we could be called on to comment at anytime. It was very hard. I saw some big tough men cry in this class. It was hard to keep focus as the pain from sitting in seiza slowly increases. Through weekly practise I found my seiza (seated posture) improved as well as my mental focus.

I have found meditative states in other aspects of aikido. Repetition of simple movements is a form of meditation. When training with partners we should focus on the technique at hand and limit conversation to a bare minimum. Once the outlay of the technique is clearly known the mind can relax as it is not needed. This is not true when learning something new, but when in familiar territory the goal is to keep the form but relax. i.e. DON'T THINK

The ultimate mental state for the martial artist to obtain is known as MuShin 無心. The kanji is literally "no mind", but may also indicate "innocence" and from Buddhism "free from obstructive thoughts". The benefit for the martial artist is that when in "MuShin" you are literally in the moment. You cannot predict the attack or favour a particular technique, you can only move and react as events unfold. This makes you one with the attacker and immediately respondent to their form.

So now we know, based on the study at Sydney University, that by meditating we are working our way forward within the martial art of aikido and at the same time improving our own health & well being.

## Hansei (Reflections)

Recently AYNSW has been working with some local schools and charity groups that help troubled kids & teens. It was interesting to see how people responded to a few of the core ideas presented in aikido.

- Be grounded & calm
- Power comes through relaxation and control of oneself
- When confronted with trouble larger than we can handle move out of the way
- Be proactive not reactive
- Blend with the attacker to both avoid the strike & gain advantage

Kids who had never seen aikido before could grasp these concepts immediately and started putting them into practise. Further discussions led them to consider other elements of life where the ideas presented in aikido could be put to use. It was very satisfying to hear their positive ideas in discussion.

I never cease to be amazed by how a martial art that evolved from the battlefield can teach us lessons in life, humanity and relationships.

Beyond the physical techniques, aikido teaches us many things including discipline, pride without arrogance, and respect for both ourselves and others. With aikido, kids learn they need to cooperate in order to learn and to yield in order to gain advantage.

Thank you to those who have assisted with the programs recently. It has been good to see the dojo extending its connections with other local community groups and I am sure there will be more opportunities in the future.

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