

Aikido Center of Los Angeles **Aiki Dojo**

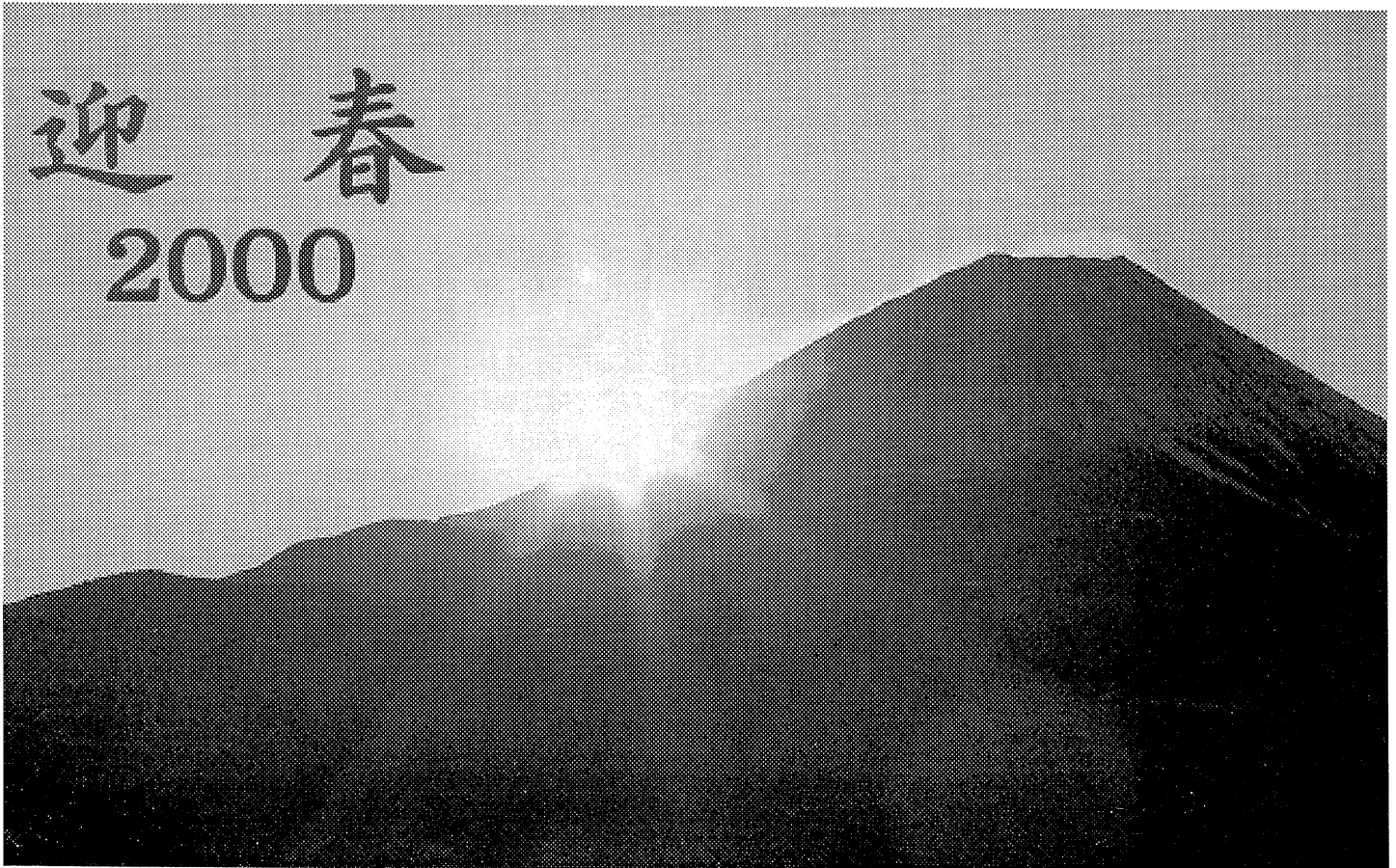
The Aikido Center of Los Angeles, 940 East 2nd Street #7, Los Angeles, CA 90012. Tele: (213) 687-3673
Affiliation: The Aikido World Headquarters, 17-18 Wakamatsu-cho, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, Japan
Los Angeles Sword & Swordsmanship Society Kenshinkai Headquarters
Office of the President: Nanka Yamanashi Kenjin Kai Southern California Yamanashi Prefectural Assoc.
Member Los Angeles Police Department Martial Artist Advisory Panel

\$2.95
Donation

January 1, 2000

Volume XVIII. Number 1.

Happy New Year



Wishing Everyone The Very Best
of the New Millenium 2000

Members of the Aikido Center of Los Angeles
Rev. Kensho Furuya, Chief Instructor

Sensei's Greetings: Mixed Blessings

I have waited to the last minute here to give you good news that we have saved our Dojo but as of this moment, we don't know anything. It is very frustrating and vexing. There are moments when I imagine the worst.

We made the money to pay off everything and we are only asking for a long lease so we can continue to maintain our dojo here in Little Tokyo. I want to continue to teach Aikido here in our tiny little corner of Downtown Los Angeles. There is really nothing more I want. But our landlord says "it's just business," it has nothing to do with the community. Perhaps this is so. We are a Dojo, we are not a business. Is it true that everything in this world must be run by money? Must Aikido also become a business? It is true that people measure you by your success - especially financial success. Who wants a "poor" friend, anyways, I suppose.

In this last months and weeks I have been thinking hard about my life. I was never raised on the importance of money. My grandfather and great grandfather were very proud of their samurai lineage and disdained money. My grandfather never carried money, it was all handled by my grandmother. One day, his son (my uncle) shamed him by half-jokingly saying to him, "if you don't carry any money on you, you are like a beggar!" From then on, my grandfather always carried several thousands of dollars cash in his pocket. He didn't carry it because he liked money or because he wanted people to think he was rich. He carried it because he didn't want to be shamed again. It was a question of honor.

I always used to wonder about my father. Although he was the poorest of all relations in my family clan, he always paid for family dinners, etc. My rich relatives never paid for anything! My father always, said, "Friends are more important than money." He died very poor but with many friends; was it worth it? I always thought so many took advantage of him. He didn't mind being poor, I shouldn't either. I was very offended later when I heard that his "friends" considered him a "fool" because he did so much for everyone but never made a dime. I wonder if I am following in these same footsteps. Is it my fate, destiny or is it my DNA, or both?

When I was very young, I knew I wanted to become an Aikido teacher - there was nothing else in the world I wanted; more than anything, I wanted to become good in Aikido. My other dream, of course, was to enter the priesthood but I always thought of that as an "absolute" impossibility. Becoming good in Aikido, I thought, was just a "near" impossibility. Here, maybe, I have a chance.

When I told my teacher I wanted to devote my life to Aikido, he said that I must be willing to endure a life of poverty.

I promised that I would. And thus, I set myself up (all by my myself!) for a life of struggle and disappointment. And here I am today. I have become somewhat recognized in Aikido as a teacher. I have become an ordained priest. I have made a rather nice Dojo (for which I have a little pride). I have achieved many of my life's goals - including, very much indeed, poverty!

What do I want in life? Of course, I want all war to cease. I want all children in the world not to be hungry and have a good education. Of course, I want the environment back to what it was before our Industrial Revolution. But as my own selfishness dictates, I want to teach until the day I die, write a few good books, become wiser, become a good priest and produce many, many, many good Aikido students.

As an artist, I expect many rough times. We have many ups and downs. As I grow older, however, the ups are less high, the downs are more deep.

I was always deathly afraid that I might fail as a teacher, but I never thought that my downfall would come as a failure to be a good businessman. I never thought of myself as a businessman, I am not a good businessman, I don't think I ever could become a good businessman. It "ain't" in me.

What has made recent events so difficult in addition to worrying about the fate of the Dojo, is that possibly, probably, hopefully inconclusively, I am a bad teacher. It's a normal process of a dojo, of course, but some black belts have left, some black belts now have "attitude." Many black belts transferring in from other dojos have not assimilated well, much less well than I thought. A general lack of respect and appreciation grows more and more among people today. Students in general have a different attitude towards this art. I must say, at this point, not everything in this world must be purely for one's personal and selfish enjoyment. Aikido and Iaido is extremely enjoyable, rewarding and profound but, - at a very much higher level. Why aren't you, why isn't anybody, willing to go the extra mile?

We are human beings. Must we act like viruses? We live to destroy. If we don't destroy, we are in turn destroyed. Viruses always evolve into something worse or they disappear. Speaking of this evolutionary process. I noticed the other day on the Discovery Channel that many animals stand on their two back legs when they are angry or want to threaten or are ready to fight. Bears do it, even timid deers do it. I realized that humans have evolved into the permanent "fighting" stance - always on their two back legs - ready to attack others.

We must not become "animals" but continue to evolve and grow as human beings, interested in the continuing process of self-development.
Sensei

New Year Schedule

December 31-January 2nd.
Dojo closed for the Holidays.

January 3rd.
First Practice of the New Year.

January 6th. (January 4th)
2nd Doshu's 1st Anniversary Memorial
Service. 2nd Doshu's Mourning Period
ends for our Dojo.

January 15th.
Demo at the Little Tokyo Public Library.

January 16th.
Kagami-biraki Official Opening.

February 4th
Memorial Service for the Late Bishop
Kenko Yamashita.

March 26.
Sword Lecture.

April ()
Cherry Blossom Festival.

April 26th.
31st Memorial Service for the Founder of
Aikido, Morihei Ueshiba O'Sensei.

July
Obon Festival.
Lotus Festival.

August
Nisei Week Japanese Festival.

Congratulations

SPECIAL PROMOTIONS For the New Year 2000

3rd Dan
Dr. Cheryl Lew

2nd Dan
Mark Ty

1st Dan
Mari Masumori
William D'Angelo
Jim MacDonald

IAIDO KENSHINKAI
5th Dan
Ken Watanabe

Welcome

Master Adam Hsu

Traditional Wushu Association
Taipei, Taiwan

January 10-13th

* * * * *

Karita Naoji Sensei

February 13-15th

Becoming Beautiful By Just Becoming Yourself

It is such a minor matter that it is hardly worth mentioning but this rather insignificant subject really caught my attention somehow and really made me think about many things. As I was walking to my calligraphy class the other day, some of the workers at the Japanese American Cultural & Community Center pointed out a somewhat unusual occurrence. For most people, I think it must be a matter of no consequence, but, for me, at that moment, I was deeply impressed.

One of the maintenance men who knows me very well said, "Look, look, Sensei, look at that tree! Don't you see anything unusual about it?" I looked but it looked like a rather ordinary tree growing at the outer edge of the Japanese garden and sticking out a little over the fence by the walkway. "Look again," they said.

I looked one more time, rather impatient to get to my calligraphy class, when I noticed that one branch of this dull gray tree was turning black.

"Sensei," they asked, "why do you think this branch is becoming so dark?" I didn't have the slightest idea. It is just an ordinary branch, I thought, which is part of an ordinary tree sticking out in a very ordinary way over a very ordinary fence by an extremely ordinary walkway. Yet, it was becoming very black and, with a little imagination, a little more unusual, a tad more outstanding than the rest of the tree.

My good friends explained the mystery to me. The tree, by no will of its own, just happens to be the halfway point between the retirement residence and 2nd Street, the hub of Little Tokyo. As the old folk make their way to the market, it is just at this halfway point they lose their breath and must take a short rest. In taking a little breather before they start off again, they hold onto this not so spectacular branch for support and strength. It is the oil from the hands of the elderly as they take a short rest which has begun to turn the branch into something of note, something remarkable, something that some people may even call humbly "beautiful."

The branch, just because it is a branch, with no will or intention of its own can be so helpful to others. And, in helping others can become so beautiful. We should become like this branch. Just by our existence we can help others and give them support. We don't need to impress others with our strength or prestige or power. By just being ourselves, we can be so helpful and useful. It is important for everyone to understand, I believe, that we have a purpose in life and a duty just by our being - and, many times, we don't even realize it ourselves. I believe this branch was put there by God.

I think this branch is very special and I am so happy my friends

pointed it out to me. I would have never understood it, unless I, too, were old and feeble and in taking this same route home, found support like many others in this branch myself.

Although this branch is blessed to be born in a place to be so useful. We, ourselves, are a thousand times more blessed. We have arms, legs, a consciousness, a will, a brain and we can do so much more than a solitary, immobile branch of a tree. This means that we must do a thousand times more good than the branch of this tree. No, ten thousand times, a million more times good.

Some Types of Good Are No Good

One of the main problems with most people, I believe, do not really know what "good" is. Most of us think that good is "what is good for ourselves." "If it is good for me, what is wrong with that?" they say. "If I don't think about myself, nobody else will!" they argue. As surprised as most people will be, this is not acceptable. As Aikidoists and martial artists, we must do more than others to show our best effort. To receive the teachings of O'Sensei, to be able to hold a samurai sword, yet, act like everyone else, fighting, bickering, hating, and being jealous of each other is unforgivable.

The good that we know is not "good" enough. We still don't know what good is. We may never know because it is so beyond us. We can only get a hint of it, be humble and try very hard in our own lives before we can even see it.

So many people come to me and try to impress me or get on my good side because I am a "so-called" teacher or chief instructor. Just to get on somebody's good side is not good. To be a good Aikidoist, to be a good Iaidoist, to be a true martial artist, sometimes even putting one's personal interests aside for the good of others, is what makes me happy. I don't know why this is so hard for people to understand? Seeing people practicing hard, working together well, showing respect and appreciation to the art and really trying to understand Aikido, this is what makes me so happy.

Fighting, bickering, showing jealousy and selfishness, always, feeling sorry for one's self, especially on the mat, makes me so sad because it means that they do not have the slightest idea what Aikido is all about.

Budo Study-General Mtg. Schedule Change:

We will reschedule our Budo Study to the first Wednesday of the month and combine it with our General Meeting. All students, especially senior students and black belts, are urged to attend. Attendance also counts to your promotion. This is the opportunity to ask questions and participate in the Dojo. *You should be interested and involved.*

Important Sword Lecture

Suzuki Kajo Sensei

*Token Hakubutsukan
Japan Art Sword Museum
Tokyo, Japan*

**March 26th
Talk on Japanese Swords
Hotel New Otani
4:00 - 5:30pm**

**Cocktail Hour
5:30 - 6:30pm**

**Welcome Party
Reception
6:30 - 8:30pm**

Further details up-coming.
RSVP required for the Reception.

Dojo Donors List Life Members

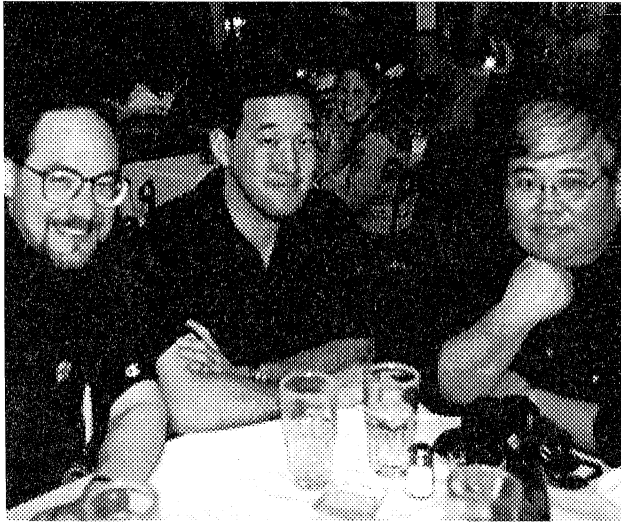
Katsumi Kunitsugu
Madam S. Kansuma
Shrfu Adam Hsu
Mark Ty \$1,300.00
Hon. Peter Lichtman \$1,000.00
James Doi, PhD. \$1,000.00
Dr. Cheryl Lew \$1,000.00
William D'Angelo \$500.00
Larry Armstrong
Rev. Tetsuo Unno
Dr. Taitetsu Unno
Norman Lew

Honored Members & Friends

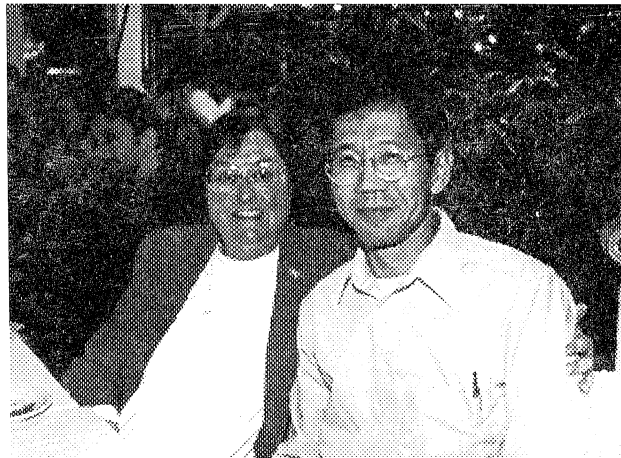
Dr. George Nakashima
Jim MacDonald
David Ito
Peter Kirsch-Korff
Ken Watanabe
Tom McIntyre
Mari Masumori
Paulina Kawasaki
Tom Williams
Lisa Ito

Dojo Christmas Party December 4.

Our Annual Christmas Party took place at the Twin Palms in Old Town Pasadena.



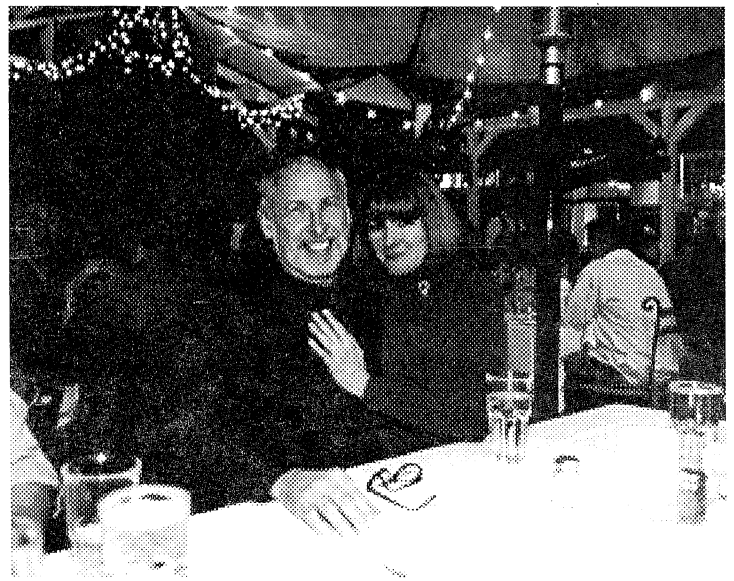
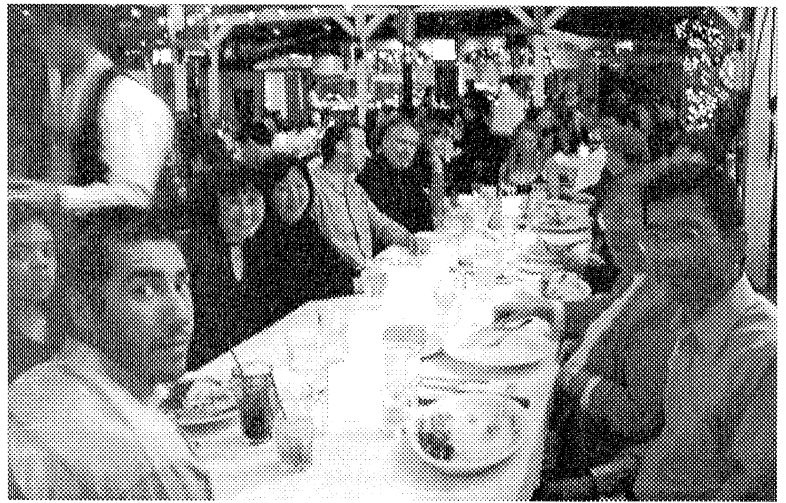
Ken Watanabe and Peter Lichtman with Sensei.



Mr. & Mrs. James Doi.



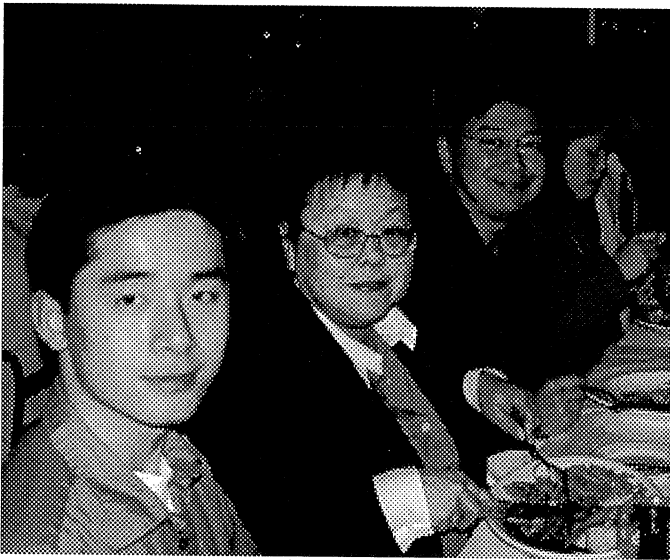
Mr. & Mrs. Adam Bennett.



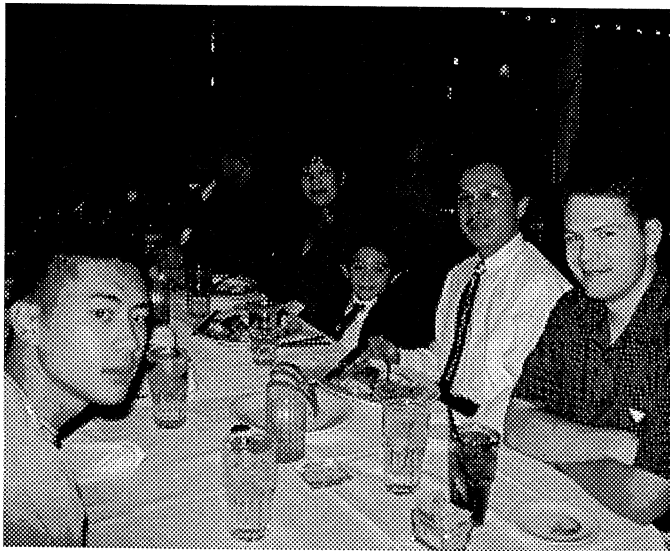
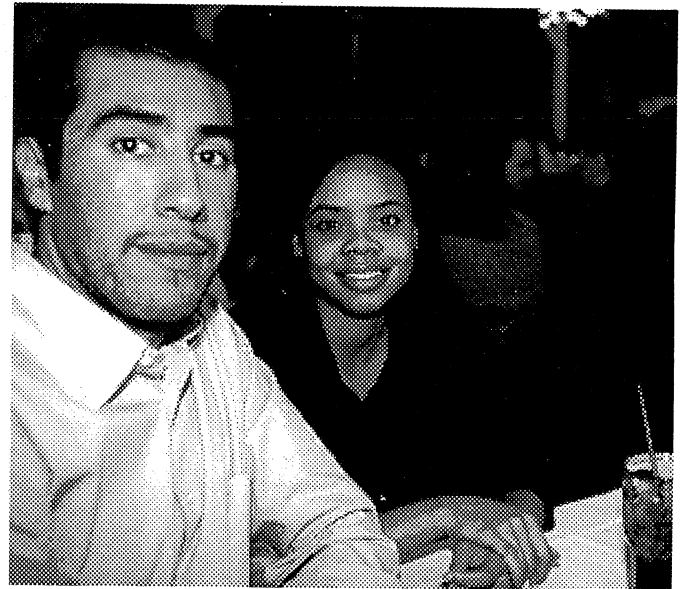
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Armstrong



Aikido Center of Los Angeles
NEWSLETTER



Mark Ty, Cheryl Lew & Dean Sadamune



New Year's Greetings:



Happy New Year! from students of the Kodokai Salamanca Dojo.



New Year's Greetings from Japan. This is the year of the Dragon. Sword guard with rain dragon by Yasuyuki. Late 1800's.

Terry Yuan Sensei Holds Successful Calligraphy Exhibition Chinese Cultural Ctr.



Sensei with others students of Terry Yuan Sensei. Exhibition in December at the Chinese Cultural Center in Rosemead. Many congratulations to Yuan Sensei on a very successful and well attended exhibition.

All students: Please make sure the Dojo has your most current telephone numbers, e-mail address and home address. All records must be kept current. See Cheryl or Ken Watanabe for



Sensei with Terry Yuan Sensei, calligraphy master, and Ito Rinban, head of the Higashi Hongwanji Temple in Little Tokyo.

2000 Special Thanks: Madam Kansuma

We would like to express our very heartfelt thanks to Madam Kansuma for her generous donation to our Dojo Fund Raiser. We really appreciate her support and guidance. Madam Kansuma is one of the veteran masters of Japanese classical dance in this country, a great and respected teacher.

Thanks to Kats

Also, Sensei would like to express his deepest thanks to Katsumi Kunitsugu of the JACCC for her great help and guidance in helping us with our Dojo Fund Raising and helping us to renew our lease. Sensei deeply appreciates her friendship and thoughtfulness for the Dojo.

Monthly Dues Policy

Monthly dues are due at the first of the month. If you cannot be in the Dojo by the 1st, please mail in your dues directly to the Dojo.

Monthly Dues: 1st of the Month

Late Fees:

If not paid by the 5th: \$20.00

If not paid by the 15th: \$35.00

If one month dues are missed:

First & Last Month's Dues required
to rejoin Dojo.

If more than one month delinquent:

First & Last Month's Dues
& Membership Fee required
With Sensei's approval.

Leave of Absence:

Leave of Absence notice is required for
absences more than one week.

This is strictly required for Black Belts.

If students demonstrate continued tardiness in payment of dues, they will be subject to expulsion without refund or make-up classes. No exceptions.

For Black Belts: Months counted as late will NOT be counted as attendance towards their Dan promotion. No exceptions. Attendance at monthly seminars, meetings, events and Budo Study Classes will also be counted towards your promotion. ACLA

Sensei's Wish List for 2000

- 1. All students renew their effort and conviction to practice harder.*
- 2. All students be humble, modest and considerate of each other and learn how to work together giving the other person the advantage.*
- 3. All students not to think only of personal gain but ask what one can do for the growth of the Dojo and the happiness of all its members.*
- 4. All students to preserve the teachings, traditions, and heritage left by O'Sensei, the Founder of Aikido. Never to forget the contributions of 2nd Doshu.*
- 5. All students to follow the new Doshu and support his work.*
- 6. All students to help Sensei maintain a smooth running and high level Dojo where everyone can come to training seriously.*
- 7. All students to forget their egos and correct their attitudes.*
- 8. All students to become a role-model of the best of yourself for all others.*
- 9. All students not to seek out the minimum one can do, but focus on the maximum one can do and go further.*
- 10. Learn Good Aikido. Learn Good Iaido.*
- 11. Respect your Seniors. Respect your Juniors.*
- 12. Practice to become your Best Self, not your Worst Self.*

Kensho Furuya

How Did We Do in '99

Gary Myers, Iaido Kenshinkai

The end of the year and the beginning of a new one is a time of reflection, to look back over the past year to see what we have accomplished in Iaido over the last year, I think that people have a hard time measuring group progress in Iaido because it requires such a single-minded focus. It is hard enough to assess our own progress let alone how the group as a whole is fairing. But I do think often about how the group is progressing and what can be done to accelerate the rate of improvement.

On the positive side, I would say that we are progressing as a group. We have added new members who are diligent in their practice and are sincere in studying. The majority of our Iaido group practices at every opportunity which is one of the most important measurements to a teacher that students are sincere. (By the way this measurement doesn't end when the student reaches a certain Dan level.) The group seems very compatible with one another and willing to help each other in training. So I would say and I hope Sensei agrees, that all the individuals in Iaido right now provide that important mix of attitude, willingness and compatibility needed for Iaido to grow. Just as the composition of soil in a garden has to be just right for things to grow properly, the right mix of people are essential for a proper learning environment in Iaido. This balance and mix is a very delicate one. Sensei is acutely aware and sensitive of this delicate balance and tries very hard to maintain it both in Iaido and Aikido.

As far as a status report is concerned: A majority of students have been taught all the Shoden Level of Muso Shinden Ryu and are now in the process of learning and refining their techniques. Several students have begun to be taught the first techniques of Chuden. A majority of the group has been taught the first half of Toyama Ryu. We have so much to learn and so many layers to penetrate. It is a journey that is both exciting and daunting at the same time.

Now, for the other side of the coin, I would have to say that our rate of progression is glacial. We know that not everyone learns at the same rate. There is also the added challenge that we all don't begin at the same time so our levels of progress are different. But these differences are eventually leveled out over time. In the old days, it was easy to figure out who didn't get the lesson right, they simply didn't come back from the battle or the duel. Today, it isn't a matter of life or death and therefore that motivation and necessity to grasp the technique as soon as you can is no longer a factor. I feel that we should be progressing faster as a group.

There is one area in which we all should have learned by now (except for the very new beginners) and those are the fundamental we practice during the warm-up exercises. These are

the first things we learn after the grip and are the fundamental elements for all techniques. Iaido like other martial arts is a building block approach, the fundamental must be learned first before true progress in the technique is realized. It is here that one only needs look to see how far a class has progressed. The warm-up exercises should be just that, something that we do for ten/fifteen minutes tops to warm up and then move on to the actual techniques, giving us an additional fifteen minutes of practice. The majority of problems in Shoden are related to fundamentals. Therefore the majority of the group is holding itself back by not properly executing the fundamentals.

When it comes down to it, the progress of the group is comprised of your individual efforts and the group's lack of progress is a result of those individual egos. You might consider how your progress impacts the group, but your ego doesn't care. You as an individual may realize that your Iaido has suffered by not practicing, but your ego says your doing great. My point is everyone will begin to get better quicker when their center expands beyond the self to include the group. This is even more critical as the group gets larger. You have to be considerate of the group and your place in it, because to do otherwise might result in an accident, which is something no one wishes to experience.

One last topic I would like to touch on is whether you consider yourself an active or passive student. This doesn't mean whether you are physically present or not. It has more to do as to whether you are mentally present. Iaido is something that you cannot passively learn. You will not get good in Iaido unless you are mentally active, enthusiastic about practicing, and fully embrace the teaching. You cannot get it through osmosis. It won't all of a sudden come to you in a flash. What you get out of it is the effort both mental and physical that you put into it. If you examine Sensei's efforts as a student of calligraphy you will see an active student. So as the year closes we should all ask ourselves what kind of student do we want to be going into the 2000's, passive or active? Our group resolutions for the New Year should be to become more active students, be considerate of your fellow students, and be humble in your progress.

Let me wish you all a very happy, healthy and prosperous New Year and a productive one in Iaido in 2000. Thank you.

Gary Myers, Iaido Kenshinkai

Editor's Note:

One of the the most profound and thoughtful articles ever written by a student for this Newsletter. I hope all Iaido and Aikido students will take Gary's article to heart. Traditional training is more and more difficult to understand today because it does take the whole group into consideration over the self. Today, we put our selves over the group and "I" means "#1." To master the sword, we must become "one" with the sword and we can't do this with our tremendous egos carried in our heads.

With Different Points of View

Santiago Garcia Almaraz, Kodokai Salamanca Dojo

In this last year, in which I am very lucky to open my dojo, I am growing in different ways, something I didn't realize as a student. When we were children, we dreamed about becoming doctors, firemen, policemen, astronauts and even Aikido teachers (and Aikido students at the same time).

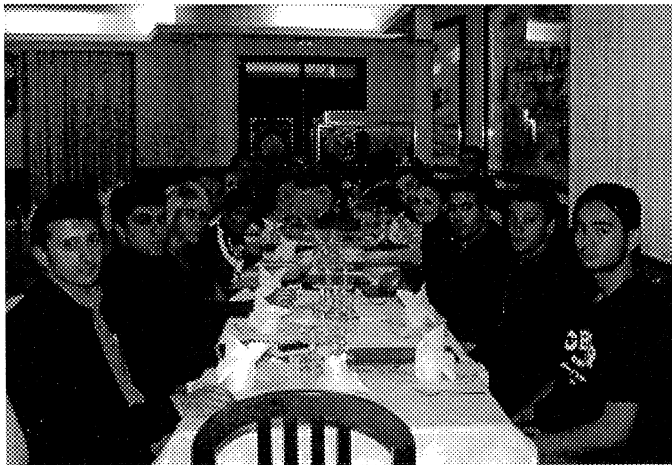
Although this was not my fantasy, here I am, trying to make my own life and that of my students' a little more interesting. I am trying to improve through this opportunity that life offers me through the Aikido world.

When the student and teacher work together in daily classes, the point of view of both, are different. This seems reasonable to me. The student comes to the dojo to learn Aikido. The teacher comes to the dojo to teach Aikido. The difference, however, is not that big.

The teacher can learn from the student the same time he is explaining the techniques to him. The teacher learns the students' desires and motivation and tries to make each class something to enjoy.

The student, at the same time, learns of the techniques from the teacher, of course, but also something he can use in life and perhaps the essence of Aikido drives him further.

This relationship between students and teacher is basic not only in Aikido practice, it's common in all disciplines in life. But, in something so important and basic, yet to understand it. And some teachers, who have high levels in Aikido, haven't learned it. For that rea-



Celebrating their 1st Anniversary.

I'm all right with my teacher: Rev. Kensho Furuya. He thinks, that you teach to do good for the student, not to be a great teacher. Nobody would not to forget that always, there is something to learn even if you are eighty years old.

Like a teacher and student that I am now (maybe more student than teacher), it's sad when sometimes the student realize that the teacher uses him for his own self-promotion. When the teacher spends more time to get money than to teach, or when he uses the students for some political reasons. For these things, the meaning of the relationship is lost and the student is disappointed. I think that no one can be a good teacher at the same time he worries about his own P.R.



Santiago with Mark Ty in Los Angeles.

For this reason sometimes the students think that the teacher is guilty for not giving motivation and demand that their teacher stay in the Dojo more with less concern for outside public relations. The teacher must try to look after his students and conduct them into the Right Way of Aikido. He must teach everyday with his dream as if it was the very first day.

But not all this is the teacher's work, and not only he must give his knowledge to the students. At the same time, the students must try to do the same thing

for the teacher. They come everyday to the dojo. They must help the beginners and all others who come to the dojo. This is a good way to help themselves remembering that one day they were beginners too. Cleaning the Dojo and talking to other people about the dojo and Aikido can help very much and can be mutually beneficial. All you need is "good intention" and "will power."

I feel so lucky to be able to learn from Furuya Sensei and I count on his support although I can only travel to Los Angeles once a year for a few days of practice with him and his students. He makes me feel a little part of the the Dojo and a part of his students. But sometimes I see the students change. They become selfish and they forget about the things the teacher has given to them. They forget their beginnings when Furuya Sensei trusted them and gave them his knowledge.

As I am a student and a teacher at the same time, I have the advantage of two points of view. I am very sad when I see somebody, who could be such a great Aikidoist (and a good person at the same time) move away, a little more each day, from the teachings of Furuya Sensei and can see their lives transforming into something poor and trivial. It could be good for these people to have these feelings which as students they do not feel.

One time, someone said, "When you want to do something, you can find the way. When you don't want to do something, you can always find an excuse." This is a good teaching for all students. Some students believe that they know everything in Aikido so no one can correct them and there is no more to learn. They don't pay attention in class, they blame the teacher or accuse the students of being too clumsy and cannot roll or remember the techniques. They cannot see that in giving to other students that they receive everything in return and can enjoy the practice more. I think that it is very selfish that some blame others for their own mistakes.

Sometimes students do things only to please the teacher. This is not good for the teacher or student. One must not do just to please another but one must not practice Aikido for selfish reasons either. Con't.

Aikido Center of Los Angeles NEWSLETTER

E-Mails: Hard To Find A Dojo

My name is Rafael Valverde, and I am in the US Navy stationed in Great Lakes, Illinois, I reside in Chicago. I just read your book "Kodo: Ancient Ways:" and I will say that you clarified a few things for me. However, I respectfully come to you for some advice.

A few weeks ago, I visited a Chicago based Aikido dojo. Unfortunately, I walked in with the wrong attitude; my heart was in the future because I was thinking about the ends and not the means. This was funny to me because just a few days before I decided that I wanted to study the art just for the practice, not for any rank, but just for the inner development - nothing more.

But as I sat there, I could only think about the amount of time that would need to devote to this art to become proficient (my ego took over mercilessly).

The things that you wrote about in your book allowed me to understand poor attitude was not unique. In fact, it seems to be a normal human reaction, but which must be dealt with appropriately. And a true master will be able to guide the student during these times. I also noticed that the attitude in the dojo was not very serious. I felt that they were horsing-around quite a bit.

In sum, I do want to learn. I want to practice without a head. I want to learn about my self. However, I do not know how to proceed. I've read books, done research on the web, visited training halls, and looked in the yellow pages, but I am stuck. I do not know where to find a Dojo or even an instructor who will teach me the martial arts in a traditional/serious fashion. I would like to practice with a true artist who is serious and willing to teach me the inner aspects of the martial arts as well as the physical. But it seems to be very hard to find out who-is-who when many schools give me the feeling that they are not devoted themselves, but seem to be showy all-technique schools.

I understand that the master/student relationship is truly unique and cannot be formed by an outside party, but I hope that you will be willing to point me in the right direction. Anything will help. Thank you. Very Respectfully, Rafael Valverde.

I read your book on martial arts called "Ancient Ways." The question I have is that I am 37 years old is that too old to do an art?
Kgpadron@aol.com

Letters:

Wanted to be sure to wish you and your Center a very Happy New Year - actually, New Century!

Time is flying by as usual, and we did not get to visit your school, but I hope we will this coming year when you have some festivities.

Sifu Manuel was hit by a van while crossing the street, but because of his kung-fu training and his stunt training, he survived without anything broken, even tho his body was quite badly bruised. The paramedics could not believe their eyes - it would have been bad; he could have been killed or hurt very badly, so he was very lucky. We hope to see you again before too long, Respectfully,
Annabelle Nye
6906 Sunset Ridge Ct., West Hills, CA 91307-3840



From Savannah, Georgia. the Cotton Exchange:
I'm here in Savannah doing a film and missing practice like always. I hope to be there by the end of December, Best Wishes, Ismael Araujo, Jr.



Sensei with his calligraphy at Shrfu Terry Yuan's Calligraphy Exhibition at the Chinese Cultural Center in Rosemead on December 4th. Sensei has been studying about one year.

Farewells

Elizabeth Gray Vining: Quaker Who Tutored Japan's Emperor-to-Be

Reprinted from the Los Angeles Times. December 7, 1999
By Elaine Woo, Times Staff Writer

Japan's young emperor-in-waiting had been currently instructed on what to say to the American woman who would become his tutor.

Say it was very good of her to come so far to teach you, his chamberlains told Crown Prince Akihito.

But before the meeting, Elizabeth Gray Vining, a children's author from an old Philadelphia family who became the first foreigner allowed inside the living quarters of the Imperial Palace, had sent the prince a box of American confections. It was a precious gift in the war-battered Japan of 1946, when sugar was a scarce commodity and candy a rare luxury even for royalty.

So Akihito, excited as any boy of 12 would be, forgot his prescribed speech. "thank you for the candy," he blurted out.

The chamberlains were horrified. But not Vining, who would spend much of the next four years encouraging independence in her tradition-bound student.

"I knew right then, she said, "that we would get along very well."

Such candor became the trademark of an enduring friendship between the Quaker schoolteacher and Japan's 125th emperor. The unusual bond, maintained through correspondence, phone calls and occasional visits, was broken with Vining's death last month, more than half a century after she undertook her teaching assignment.

Vining died Nov. 27 at a Quaker retirement community in Kennett Square, Pa. She was 97.

She called her tutelage of Akihito "a fairy story" in the 1952 book she wrote, "Windows for a Crown Prince." "It's a fairy story," she wrote, "that a quiet Philadelphia Quaker should have been picked up and carried halfway across the world and dropped in the middle of the oldest and most mysterious court in the world."

This is how the story began: A group of 25 American educators had traveled to Japan to conduct a study on postwar education. During a meeting with the head of the group, Emperor Hirohito made a request for "an American schoolmarm" to teach his son.

Hirohito had two requirements. He wanted a woman, "because he didn't think the crown prince had had enough feminine influence in his life," Vining told The Times in 1967. Akihito in keeping with imperial custom, was separated from his family at the age of 3 and

raised by other adults in the imperial household. He saw his parents only once a week.

The other requirement was that the tutor be a "Christian, but not a fanatic," said Vining, who took this to mean that the emperor had no desire to see his son converted to Christianity.

Hirohito's request was relayed to the American Friends Service Committee, which was active in Asia; Vining worked for the group in Philadelphia. The head of the Japan desk thought Vining would be perfect for the job, but she was about to leave for a writers colony to work on a book, and dismissed the idea outright.

She relented the next day, saying she would accept the job if it was offered but "would not lift a finger to apply for it."

Some weeks later, the offer came. In October of 1946, she found herself on a former warship - "an awful old bucket" - sailing for Japan.

Her instructions on arriving were simple. "I was told, 'We want you to open windows to a foreign way of life for our crown prince,'" Vining recalled. She said she did not view the job as "selling America" to Japan's future leader, but she did feel the need to "set him free - to teach him how to have fun."

She tutored him privately and at the school he attended with the offspring of nobility. One of her goals was to expand his contacts with other children, so she invited Akihito and his classmates to her Western-style home one afternoon a week.

She gave each of her pupils an English name to break down formality and encourage more democratic interactions. Akihito initially was not receptive: Vining called him Jimmy, to which he replied, "No, I am the prince."

She and her royal charge read a biography of Abraham Lincoln, discussed Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolence and shared hopes for world peace.

She called parent-teacher conferences with the emperor and empress, once telling Hirohito in frank terms that he needed to see his son more often. Hirohito had confided that he hadn't felt worthy of a closer relationship because of his shame at being unable to prevent Japan's involvement in WWII.

On the eve of Akihito's crowning as emperor in 1990, Vining recalled her former pupil as "a good student, very bright and very nice." She predicted that the man she taught as a boy would not be a carbon copy of his father. "He wasn't hidden away like father was," she said, "He will be much more visible, more like Queen Elizabeth."

Her liberal influence may have found its most dramatic expression in Akihito's choice of a bride. Not an arranged marriage, as tradition would have mandated, but the product of a love affair, the union of Akihito and Michiko Shoda, the daughter of a milling company owner, took place in 1959. Vining was the only foreign guest. Later, when the imperial couple had children, they chose to raise them by themselves.

In the years after she left Japan, Vining resumed her career as a writer, Con't.

Aikido Center of Los Angeles NEWSLETTER

Vinning continued:

turning out 29 books in all, half of which were for children. She held to her pacifist beliefs, shocking the Japanese when they learned of her arrest on the Capitol steps during an anti-Vietnam War protest in Washington.

The schoolmarm and her celebrated pupil remained in touch through the years, including an emotional reunion during his trip to the United States in October 1987. They exchanged birthday greetings, and Akihito sent her photographs of his family at Christmas.

When the imperial couple paid an official visit to the United States in 1994, she was invited to a White House reception by President and Mrs. Clinton. Vining, then 91, declined because of the frailties of age. Instead, she chatted on the phone with the emperor, who turned to an aide afterward and commented, "She sounded like she was doing very well."

Do More Than Pray, Dalai Lama Says

Reprinted from the Los Angeles Times, December 9, 1999.
By Deane Murphy, Times Staff Writer

South Africa: Exiled Tibetan spiritual leader tells religious gathering in Cape Town that action is needed to bring change in troubled parts of world.

Cape Town, South Africa - In a stern message for the 21st century, the Dalai Lama said Wednesday that religious people must do more than offer prayers if the world is to become a better place to live.

"Change only takes place through action," said the exiled Buddhist spiritual leader of Tibet. "Frankly speaking, not through prayer or meditation, but through action."

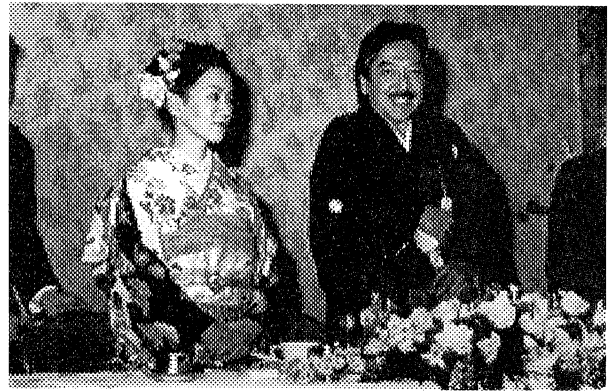
Addressing an interfaith conference of nearly 7,000 people from around the world, the Dalai Lama urged the spiritually minded to get off their knees and become directly involved in solving conflicts. New ideas and visions, he said, will be useless in the coming millennium if they do not lead to change.

He suggested that the meeting here of the Parliament of the World's Religions - an organization he helped rejuvenate in 1993 after a century of inactivity - send delegates to war zones to "study and try to make a contribution."

Religious people have a particular obligation to intervene when conflicts are waged in the name of religion, he said. While they hold no monopoly on goodness, believers have a responsibility to promote human values, he said.

"The new millennium itself is nothing special: day and night, sun and moon will come just the normal way," he said. "But if you make good preparation for the new millennium, the new millennium can be more peaceful."

The call to action came during the closing session of the parliament's weeklong assembly. It was the third meeting of the Chicago-based organization, which has its roots in a gathering in 1893 of the world's major religions. The next session is scheduled for 2004.



Best Wishes

Our Best Wishes goes to Tomoko and Brian Kito tying the knot in December. Congratulations! Brian is the third generation successor to Fugetsu-do which was established by his grandfather in 1903. It is the oldest business in Little Tokyo. Brian is also the life-blood of our Little Tokyo Public Safety Association formerly known as the Greater Little Anti-Crime Association.

The parliament has no legislative powers, and anyone willing to pay the registration fee could serve as a delegate. About a third of the delegates came from the United States, leading to complaints of American heavy-handedness.

"The conference seemed to be dominated by white American men," the Rev. Cedric Mason, a South African delegate, said to a roar of approval from the audience at the closing session. "It is not a question of sincerity; it is a question of (how) thinking can be wrong."

At a news conference, the Dalai Lama also criticized the parliament, telling reporters that it was "not very useful" and "does not have much meaning." He reiterated his wish that delegates tackle more substantive issues.

Parliament officials said they weren't put off by the complaints. Bawa Jain, director of international affairs at the Interfaith Center of New York, said the Dalai Lama's remarks were more inspiring than hurtful.

"His message is taken with deep reverence," Jain said. "He's telling us, 'You've done the talking - now go back and make a difference in your communities.'"

South African religious and political leaders also called for more involvement by religious people in helping turn around the world's poorest continent. Roman Catholic Archbishop Buti Tihagale of South Africa said religious groups had done much harm to the continent but that they have the capacity to do good as well.

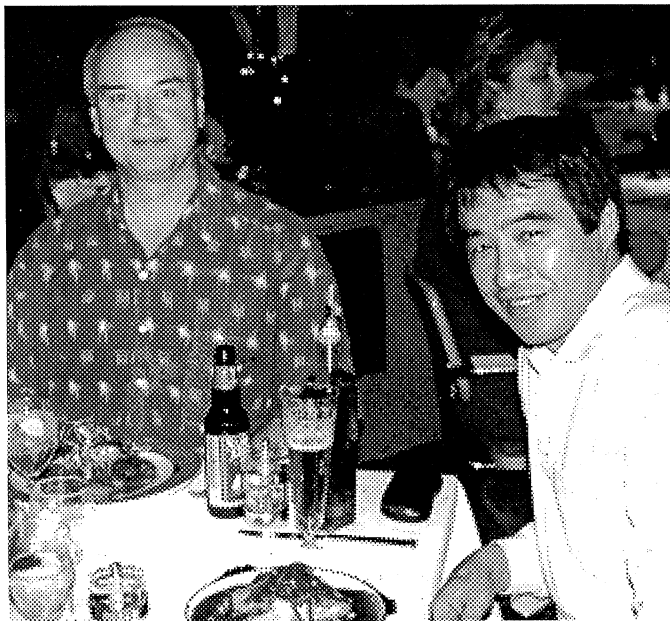
Earlier, former President Nelson Mandela said that religion had played a crucial role in bringing an end to South Africa's apartheid system of racial separation.

"My generation is the product of religious education," he said, "Without these religious institutions, I would never have been here today."

CONGRATULATIONS Gary Myers Celebrates 14 Years In Iaido



Gary Myers just celebrated his 14th anniversary in Iaido at the Parkway Grill in Pasadena with other members. Cheryl Lew recently celebrated her fifth anniversary in Iaido as well.



Gary Myers with Naoji Karita Sensei from Tokyo, Japan. (Sensei is taking the photo.) Karita Sensei is a well known sword polisher in Japan who visits Sensei about three to four times a year. Karita Sensei is scheduled to visit again in February, 2000.

Our Best Wishes

**15th Anniversary
Omiya Dojo, Saitama, Japan
Isamu Ichizuka Sensei**

Best Wishes

Our Dojo's 25th Year Anniversary
1974 to 1999

Rev. Kensho Furuya's
40th Anniversary In Aikido & Iaido

10th Anniversary
Ordination as Zen Priest

1st Anniversary of Kodokai Salamanca Dojo

On October 4th, Santiago and his students celebrated the first Anniversary of the dojo. They prepared a demonstration of Aikido and Kempo Karate. Santiago's students worked very hard because it was organized without their teacher. Santiago was in Los Angeles training with Furuya Sensei at the time. The results were excellent.



Their special guests were Mr. Yajima and his wife, important representatives of the Japanese House which opened recently in Salamanca. Many Congratulations and Best Wishes for the Future.

LETTERS:

12-16-99

Dear Furuya Sensei:

having read your interesting and informative book, KODO, would it be possible for you to inform me as to if you are to write any more books along the same lines. If so, would they be available in England and when would they come out?

You did mention the Chinese classic, "Bubishi." I would like to obtain a copy of this so, is it translated into English

I Caddy

64 Victoria Rd., Wednesfield, Wolverhampton, WV11, I RZ
England

In Memoriam: Faubion Bowers: Writer, Soldier Helped Save The Grand Kabuki

Reprinted from the Los Angeles Times, November 26, 1999

Faubion Bowers, 82, an American writer who helped preserve Japanese Kabuki drama. Bowers was a military aide and then a civilian censor under Gen. Douglas MacArthur immediately after World War II during the American occupation of Japan. In 1948 and 1949, Bowers was the official censor of Japanese theater and came to regard himself as its sponsor as well. Occupation authorities sought to ban Kabuki as a relic of a feudal society. But Bowers said it was an art form worth preserving and was later credited for its survival. Kabuki, which began in the 17th century, involves popular themes, highly ornamental costumes and stylized music, dancing and acting. Bowers studied piano at the Juilliard School, and went to Tokyo to teach at Hosei University in 1940. During the war, he was a Japanese interpreter for the Army and rose to the rank of major. Bowers was influential in popularizing the Asian arts in America. On Nov. 16 in New York City of a heart attack.

Editor's Note: Kabuki actors were out of work after the war and literally destitute. Some were jailed as criminals. Many famous Kabuki actors today remember eating meals at Faubion Bowers home in their youth.

Gladys Yang: Translator of Chinese Literature

Gladys Yang, 81, who translated and promoted Chinese literature for an international audience. Yang, a British citizen who spent most of her life in Beijing, was the first student to earn a degree in Chinese literature from St. Anne's College at Oxford University. With her husband, Yang Xianyi, she devoted herself to a career in translating modern Chinese literature for the Foreign Language press, the magazine Chinese Literature and other publishing houses. Among her major translations were "A Dream of Red Mansions" and the works of satirist Lu Xun. Like many resident foreign experts, Yang was persecuted and jailed during the tumultuous 1966-76 Cultural Revolution, when foreigners and intellectuals were reviled by iconoclastic ultra-leftists. Her only child, a son, died during the violence of that era. On Nov. 18 in Beijing.

From Hacienda La Puente Dojo: Practice Safely

By Tom Williams, 2nd Dan

Recently, an incident on the mat made me stop to consider one of the prime directives of all martial arts: to protect yourself at all times. After being pinned with Ikkyo, I began to get up and was accidentally kicked in the face. Nothing like a sharp blow to the nose to get your attention!

This experience was a painful lesson that pointed out a place where I was vulnerable to attack. Although it was purely accidental, I realized

that my inattention to the potential danger at this moment left me open to injury.

One area that I think all of us who are studying Aikido could concentrate on improving is our ukemi. Ukemi is more than just giving up and falling down. There are certain principles at work for the uke just as there are for the nage.

First of all, our ukemi should protect us from being injured. I think this requires that we practice, repetitively, the ukemi for different situations (front roll, back fall, break fall, receiving ikkyo, nikkyo, sankyo, etc.) until we are competent and comfortable. I really think that it takes thousands of repetitions. So if you aren't practicing, say, breakfalls at some point in almost every class, you probably aren't going to master that skill.

Then, beyond just more practice, we need to continually refine the ukemi so that it becomes better technically. One practical piece of advice I can give is to relax more. Everyone is too stiff. There is too much tension in your muscles. You can't be sensitive enough to feel your partner's every flow and respond appropriately when you tighten up.

Also, we need to cut down on anything extra that we add to it beyond the minimum of what is necessary for the particular ukemi. This means that most of us try to do too much. Less is definitely more in ukemi. Work on paring it down to the essentials, conserve energy and don't waste motion.

Then use your sensitivity in ukemi to understand what the aji is doing to your balance. This is where you can really improve your throwing and pinning techniques. You have to keep your attention focused on the entire interaction with your partner, even while you are falling in the air.

Finally, most people cut off the connection with their partner too soon. Physically, this means that you let go or release your grip before you really should have. Mentally, it means that you have given up and aren't really present anymore.

With Different Points of View continued:

This kind of student never lasts very long and soon leaves the dojo.

As a student, I must practice at my own decision and for what I wish and from my personal motivation.

Like a teacher, I would like to see my students practice Aikido not to please me. First for themselves - with sincerity. They should enjoy with the teacher and all other students. Everyone can learn together.

Finally, I hope, with these words, some students will think about this, despite their busy lives. I wish my sensei, Furuya Sensei, more happiness in this New Year, surrounded by all of his students who want to learn from him and respect him as much as they should.

My thanks to Sensei. Thank you,
Always, your student,

Santiago Garcia Almaraz
Kodokai Salamanca Branch Dojo
Salamanca, Spain

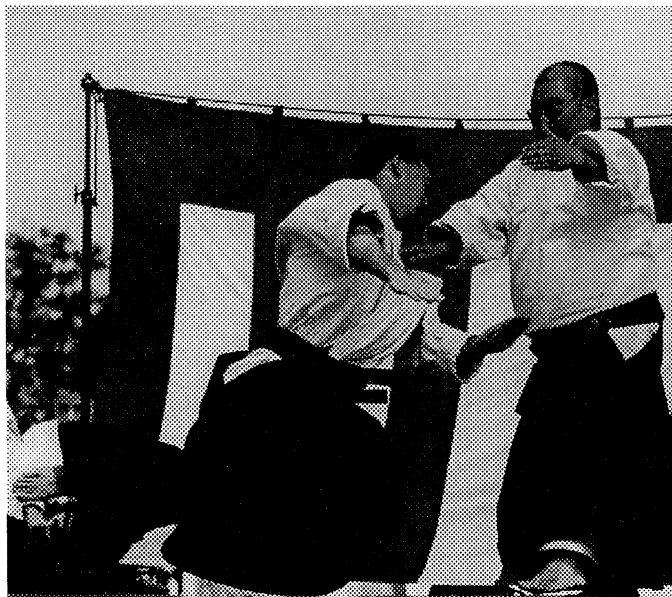
Aikido Center of Los Angeles
NEWSLETTER

Welcome To The Aikido Center of Los Angeles



Aikido Center of Los Angeles

**This Year Is
Our Dojo's
25th Year
Anniversary
1974-1999.**



Reverend Kensho Furuya, 6th Dan

Dojo Supplies

Official Dojo Jackets

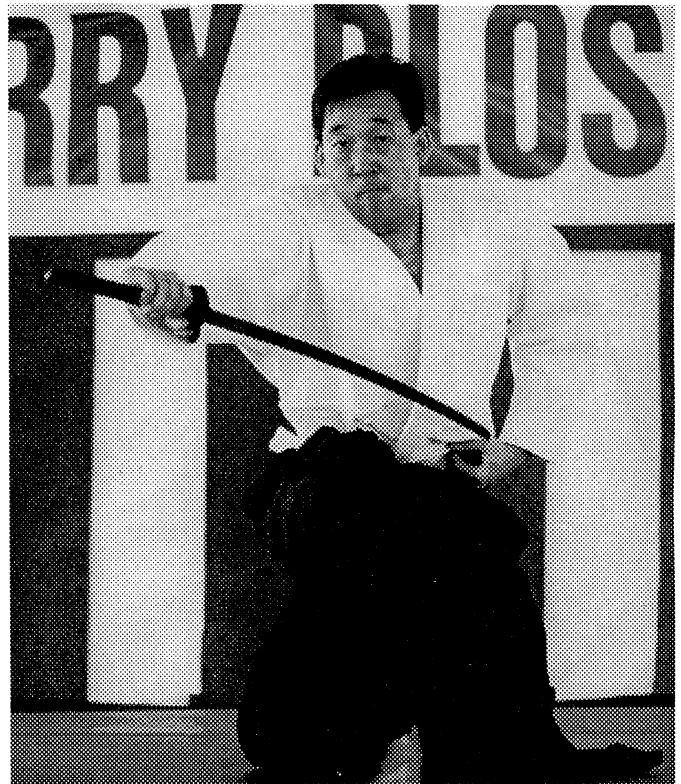
Now available on a custom order basis. Designed by Land's End, nylon in bright yellow with the embroidered Dojo logo. They are very comfortable and great to wear for demonstrations. \$55.00 each.

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Aikido Center of Los Angeles
NEWSLETTER

Martial Arts • Philosophy • Japanese Culture

KODO

Ancient Ways

Lessons in the Spiritual Life of the Warrior/Martial Artist

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by Kensho Furuya

KODO

Ancient Ways:

Lessons in the Spiritual Life of the Warrior-Martial Artist

Rev. Kensho Furuya

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aikido

by Kisshomaru Ueshiba



Highly Recommended Reading:
AIKIDO

By Doshu Kisshomaru Ueshiba
Doshu's book is one of the best books available today on Aikido technique. Strongly recommended.

羅府合気道学院古風道場
AIKIDO CENTER OF LOS ANGELES

NEWSLETTER

The Aikido Center of Los Angeles, 940 E. 2nd Street #7, Los Angeles, CA 90012. Tel: (213) 687-3673
Aikido: The Aikido World Headquarters, 1118 Westwood Blvd, Beverly Hills, CA 90210
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April 1, 1997 Volume XV, Number 4

In This Issue:
San Francisco
What's New
Visiting Master Adam Hou
Check Out the Latest Technique
New San Francisco Aikikai
Dojo Treasure Arrives From Japan
Visiting Master Adam Hou

At the Aikido World Headquarters Aikido

ACLA DOJO NEWSLETTER

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規範 合気道 基本編

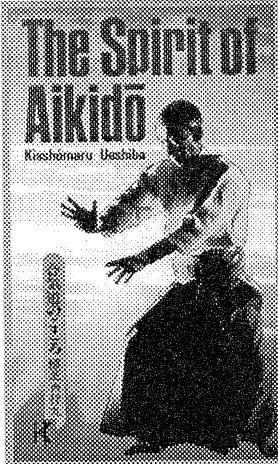
合気道 編者 桂芝吉 著
監修 桂芝守 著

150万合気道人のバイブル!
全世界合気道の権威・桂芝吉 先生と
桂芝守 先生による初の合気道教科書!
昭和48年合気道・出版芸術社——発行

KIHAN AIKIDO

Fundamental of Aikido

By Doshu & Dojocho Moriteru Ueshiba
The latest reference book on Hombu Aikido by 2nd & 3rd Doshu with excellent photos on all of the basic techniques. Referred to as the "Aikido Bible."



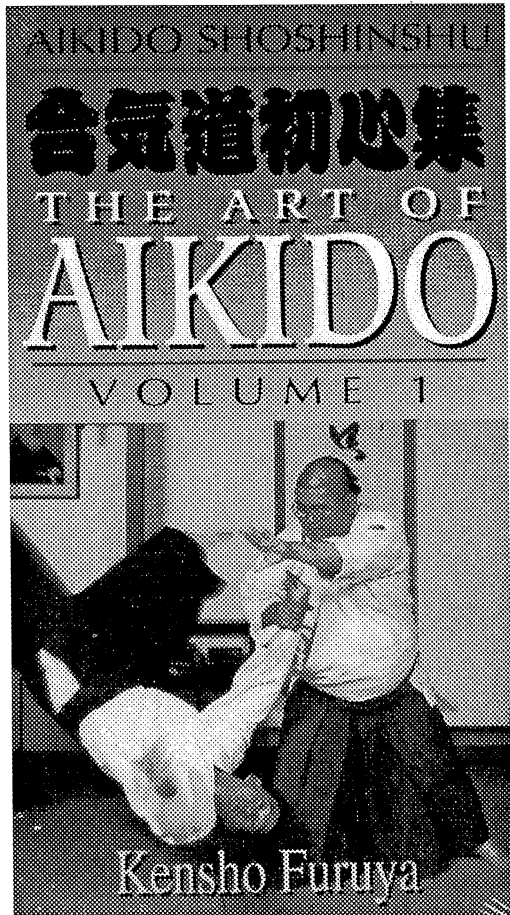
THE SPIRIT OF AIKIDO

By Doshu Kisshomaru Ueshiba
An important book on the philosophy and historical background of Aikido's development. Translated from the Japanese - *Aikido no Kokoro*. Difficult but an important source on Hombu Aikido.

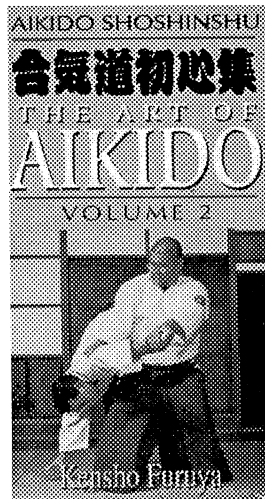
The Art of AIKIDO

Aikido Instructional Video Series in Nine Volumes

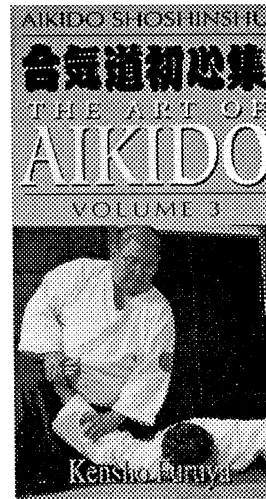
"Top Rated" - Karate Illustrated, *"Impressive Scope"* - Aikido Today, *"Exhaustive"* - Aikido Journal *"One of the Best"*



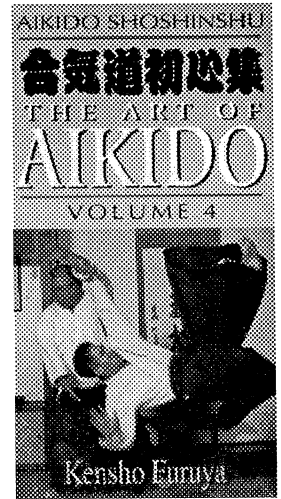
This video series is considered to be the most comprehensive and detailed instructional video on Aikido available today. Rev. Kensho Furuya, 6th Dan, Chief Instructor of the Aikido Center of Los Angeles, is a student of the late Kisshomaru Ueshiba Doshu of the Aikido World Headquarters. He began his training at the age of ten and celebrates over 40 years in Aikido. He studied in Japan in 1969 and the Aikido Center was established in 1974. Rev. Furuya is also an ordained Zen priest, a Brody Multi-Cultural Grant recipient, and was honored with a federal grant from the Carnegie Project of the National Defense Act to attend Harvard University in 1969. He is listed in the Who's Who and a board member of the LAPD Martial Artist Advisory Panel.



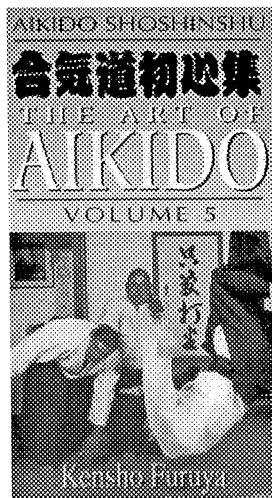
Basic Techniques
Throwing & Joint Techniques
Ikkyo, Nikyo, Sankyo, Yonkyo & Gokyo



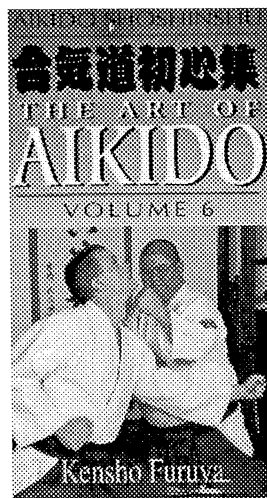
Ukemi-Breakfalling
Basics Continued
Free Style Techniques
Tenshin. Ki. Breathing.



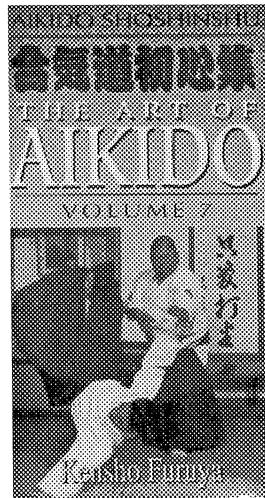
Katatetori Ryotemochi:
Ryotetori: 2-hand.
Reigi-saho: Etiquette.
Koshinage-Hip throws.



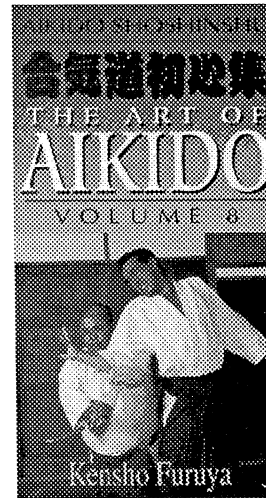
Suwari-waza. Gokyo.
Hanmi-handachi. Kokyu-dosa.
Katatori: Shoulder.
Multiple attackers.
Five-man Freestyle.



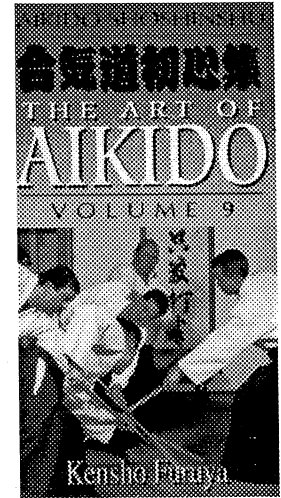
Tsuki: Strikes & Punches
Yokomenuchi: Strikes to the side of the head & neck.



Shomenuchi: Direct strikes.
Ushiro Katatetori Kubishime:
Chokes from behind.
Ushiro Ryotetori, Ryohijitori,
Ryokatatori.



Atemi-waza: Striking
Defense against kicks.
Tanto-tori: Knife defense.
Aiki-ken: Sword Training
Fundamentals.



Jo: Basic long staff
Fundamentals.
Complete 1st Degree
Black Belt Examination

Aikido

TRAINING SCHEDULE

Adult

BEGINNING & OPEN

Monday thru Friday Evenings

6:30pm-7:30pm

Monday, Tuesday &

Thursday Evenings

7:45pm-8:45pm

Saturday & Sunday Mornings

10:15am-11:15am

Saturday Mornings

9:00am-10:00am

CHILDREN'S CLASSES

5 - 16 yrs old

Sunday Mornings: 9:00am-10:00am

Affiliation

AIKIDO WORLD HEADQUARTERS

Aikido So-Hombu Dojo - Aikikai

17-18 Wakamatsu-cho

Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, JAPAN

We are committed to the study and practice of the teachings of the Founder of Aikido, Morihei Ueshiba and his legitimate successors, Kisshomaru Ueshiba Doshu and the current Moriteru Ueshiba Doshu. All Dojo members are members of Hombu Dojo Aikikai. We hold no other affiliation; we are a not-for-profit school.

ATTENTION:

Please be very cautious of people misusing Rev. Kensho Furuya Sensei's name and the name of the Aikido Center of Los Angeles to promote themselves and their schools but have no connection with us, whatever they may imply or infer. We have experienced many such cases in Los Angeles and worldwide and we sincerely apologize for this inconvenience.

Aikido Center of Los Angeles

Iaido

TRAINING SCHEDULE

**TRADITIONAL JAPANESE IAIDO
SWORDSMANSHIP**

Saturday & Sunday Mornings

8:00am-9:00am

IAIDO INTENSIVE SEMINAR

Every 2nd Saturday of the month.

6:30am-8:30am

**AIKIDO & BUDO
DISCUSSION GROUP**

Every 2nd Wednesday of the month.

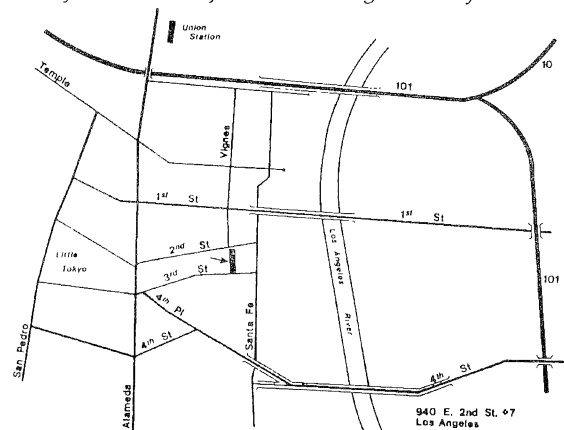
7:45pm-9:00pm

Group Study & Discussion

Aikido philosophy, Japanese art & culture, martial arts, & Japanese sword appreciation. Everyone is welcome.

About the Dojo:

We are endeavoring to maintain the highest standards of training while preserving the True Spirit of Aikido. We hope you will appreciate our efforts and undertake your training with devoted and committed energy. Your efforts, we believe, will be greatly rewarded. We welcome you to an ancient and profound art. We welcome you to our Dojo. Everyone, beginners and active Aikido students alike, are cordially welcome to join our training. Thank you.



We are convenient to most major freeways. Enter private lane at Vignes and 2nd Streets. We are one block west of Santa Fe Ave. and several blocks east of Alameda in Little Tokyo. The **Easiest Way:** From Alameda go east on 1st St and make right turn at Vignes. Do not turn on 2nd St. but go straight into the private lane. Look for the garden.