



1st Year On from NZ & Friends

by Simon Puffett 23/12/2008

Well it is hard to believe that Christmas is nigh and a year has nearly gone by since I had decided to finally make good use of dual citizenship and my English heritage by departing NZ for the chilly shores of England.

You may well believe that undertaking such an adventure at the tender young age of 40 would be a walk in the park, but to be absolutely honest with you it was a little daunting to begin with. Nevertheless it has continued to be a great experience to date.

I have had the opportunity to visit several wonderful places and events here in the UK & Europe... just to name drop a few Scotland, Wales, Paris, Nimes, the French Riviera and Santorini in Greece and in the new year I will be going to Calais, Boston, Amsterdam and Ghana. Each month that goes by it is easy to add numerous other European capitals to the list of *"must go and see places"* that are just a hop, skip and a jump from London Heathrow. Naturally you can also be spoilt for choice as there are the many shows that you can go to at one of the countless London Theatre's in the West End.



A view from Westminster Tube Station at Big Ben

The concert events at the Royal Albert Hall are also in the category of *"should not be missed"*, not forgetting the spectacular sights or should that be tights of purely superb technique, balance and grace on display from the members of the Royal Ballet at the Royal Opera House... funnily enough I had never thought I would be so impressed by men in tights.

Perhaps you are beginning to wonder whether I have even given it a thought to go training between getting my fixes of culture and couture. Well, *"be still thou beating heart"* (impressive aye)... of course I have tisk tisk!

The obvious question that was lurking in the back of my mind before arriving in the UK was... *"would I find an organisation that would be comparable to Shinryukan NZ and yet provide me with an additional bonus of beneficial difference that could contribute to my development?"*

Aikido Shinryukan New Zealand

Hombu Dojo - 16 Aberfoyle Street, Mt Eden, Auckland New Zealand
P.O Box 11241 Ellerslie Phone 0064 09 379 3777 A/hrs 0064 021 779 179
www.aikidonewzealand.com



AIKIDO SHINRYUKAN

OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE AIKIKAI WORLD HEADQUARTERS, TOKYO JAPAN

Eureka! I'm thankful to say that finally after six months of visiting many Dojo's and attending several summer schools including numerous weekend seminars, I have found an organisation in which I can practice and continue to develop. The **Shin Gi Tai Aikido Society**, lead by Gwynne Jones Shihan, is extremely friendly and focused on personal development and in the belief of enjoying training with one another. The organisation is successful in attracting new comers to Aikido and also fellow experienced practitioners from all over. They also have many senior members and instructors who are fun to train with.

In the past 11 months I have witnessed my own technique change into what I would consider to be a more relaxed state of training and acceptance while practicing...*"could this be maturity I wonder..."* Alas I don't think so. However my technique has become more gentle yet increasingly precise, which I believe is a result of a tiny improvement in timing, combined with a larger dollop of less concern. That is concern of whether my technique will work or not, from an individual perspective (mine) or in the eyes of others.



Westminster Houses of Parliament across the River Thames

"...we shouldn't be afraid to experiment with our technique because to improve we must experience some failure to inevitably find success and to push forward the boundaries of technical improvement!"

Technically, Aikido is about learning what works best for you! Kihon Waza is the basis from which we all learn, so consider Kihon Waza to be the building blocks or foundation to your technique. From this stable footing we can eventually build upon and develop our own individual Waza, tailor made to suit ourselves as individuals, different heights, shapes and sizes and ways of thinking. Remember though, that if we should stray from the basic fundamental principals upon which our aikido technique is initially built, we will falter and our technique will look and feel more strenuous and difficult to apply then necessary, instead of relaxed and effortless.

To help with our improvement, aim to experience a vast variety of technical application throughout the Shinryukan organisation as this is very important. The greater the number of people we train with the more developed and adaptable our technique will become.

"Diversity and variety is the key... helping avoid complacency and to broaden our base of knowledge and technical experience".

Within Aikido Shinryukan NZ we are very fortunate to have one of the foremost authorities and leading Aikido teachers in the world. For the past 40 years Nobuo Takase Shihan has been at the forefront of Aikido in New Zealand. Responsible for and credited with teaching and educating numerous Aikido instructors present today to a highly technical and successful level. These men and women over the years have also committed to contributing to the spread of Aikido within NZ, Australia, New Caledonia, Samoa, China, Malaysia, Egypt, Scotland and the UK by either residing in these countries or being invited to teach during national seminars.

Aikido Shinryukan New Zealand

Hombu Dojo - 16 Aberfoyle Street, Mt Eden, Auckland New Zealand
P.O Box 11241 Ellerslie Phone 0064 09 379 3777 A/hrs 0064 021 779 179
www.aikidonewzealand.com



AIKIDO SHINRYUKAN

OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE AIKIKAI WORLD HEADQUARTERS, TOKYO JAPAN

With this fact in mind it makes absolute sense for each and everyone of us regardless of our grade, to make the effort to organise and rally our fellow members to go visit and experience the level of training that Nobuo Takase Shihan is renowned worldwide for demonstrating and teaching.

I can certainly assure you that though there may be many people practicing and teaching Aikido throughout the world, there are in fact only a handful of Aikido instructors worldwide who are capable of this level of expertise we in NZ, have become accustomed to receiving from Takase Shihan... *"so lets try not to be even just a little complacent because he is here within our own backyard"*. Take the advantage and the initiative to visit Hombu Dojo. Add to this by attending regional seminars and annual Gasshuku's every chance you get.



A Beautiful Sunset in the South of Wales

For when you decide to travel overseas you will most certainly derive value from visiting other dojo's and Aikido instructors, who all have their own thoughts, mixtures and ways of demonstrating and teaching Aikido... but the greatest value you will receive would be from recognising the value of instruction we all have available to us here in "God's Own Country".

So, on a parting note... I would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and an even more enjoyable New Year in 2009 by building new friendships and good honest training with one another.

I look forward to seeing you all at the 40th Anniversary in 2010.

Aikido Shinryukan New Zealand

Hombu Dojo - 16 Aberfoyle Street, Mt Eden, Auckland New Zealand
P.O Box 11241 Ellerslie Phone 0064 09 379 3777 A/hrs 0064 021 779 179
www.aikidonewzealand.com