

From the Media Officer

An invitation

We are now in our 6th edition of the newsletter and we have enjoyed some very interesting and inspiring articles in past editions. The life and soul of any newsletter is the interest shown in it and the contributions made to it; as such if we are to provide something worthwhile we need a wide and varied content that can only be provided by a wide and varied audience that will participate and provide articles. I encourage you all to consider putting on paper your thoughts on training, a report from a seminar, your most influential teachers or anything that would be of interest to the wider Aikido community. We shall continue to provide this newsletter but the quality of the content has to be down to those who read (and write) it so please get your articles to me at any time and we shall place them in our database and get them published. I look forward to reading what you, the BAB members, have to say and hope to have a bumper issue out for the summer. Send your articles to: mediaofficer@bab.org.uk.

What are our reasons for training?

The reason that we train is a personal one and we all have our own areas that we wish to focus on improving.

When they were first practiced martial arts had a very specific aim and that was to enable the practitioner to WIN in a battle to the death! We obviously do not want to spend many hours training in a martial art and find that we are defeated in the rare instance that we need the skills to defend ourselves; however, training involves far more than simply learning how to win in a fight. If we just want to be able to win a fight then there may be better ways to spend our time than studying Aikido?

We should think about our training goals as a whole and try to understand that winning is not just about beating an opponent but also about trying to make yourself the best you can be. Physical skills alone simply are not enough. Someone with the greatest skill the world has ever seen is useless if they do not have the strength of character to remain calm in the face of adversity. And, there is always someone bigger, stronger, faster or more skilful than you somewhere.

So our training should also aim to develop a strong mind and an immovable spirit – that of a warrior. Even better we should aim to win any battle before it begins. In order to do so we must rid ourselves of negative attitudes and reactions such as anger, fear, jealousy, and hate to name a few. Further, we should change our approach from one of trying to win to one of trying to avoid defeat - to understand this statement needs much thought and a change of perspective.

When one is trying to win then one takes some unnecessary risks in order to defeat the opponent; if you are focused on not losing then you have the ability to sit back and wait for the opponent to make a mistake which you are able to exploit.

Yet this is still a little bit short of our ideal. We should be aiming for an even higher level than that of winning or even not losing – we should be aiming to win without fighting or as Sun Tzu stated in his book “The Art of War” (reviewed in the February newsletter!) the highest level of warfare is to win without fighting.

Our martial art is known in Japanese as Budo or martial way. The symbol for BU which means martial is written:

The kanji character for Budo, which is a combination of the characters for 'war' and 'martial'.

This is made up of two characters:

The kanji character for Conflict, which is a combination of the characters for 'war' and 'martial'.

Conflict

The kanji character for Prevent, which is a combination of the characters for 'war' and 'martial'.

Prevent

So we can see that our legacy is one of learning to better ourselves so that we might be victorious in our endeavours without ever having to fight to achieve our goals. Maybe you could incorporate this in your own training?

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.

Aikido and the Omoto religion

Aikido has always been a difficult or even an impossible martial art to describe. With talk of love alongside a potentially lethal method of self-defence, it will always appear to be a contradiction of terms. I am not a religious person, more of a Humanist, so I'm not interested in promoting religion but this should be raised within the Aikido context. O Sensei's recurring theme is love but it could be described more accurately as divine love. By using the prefix divine it can transcend to a much higher spiritual level where I believe it should be. Although I have trained for almost 40 years in Aikido I have never looked deeper into how O-Sensei came to emphatically promote love and compassion within Aikido. In my heart I knew this to be true but these were my personal feelings and as such were never pushed onto other students. I am constantly amazed by how Aikido magically gathers together students that are sincere, helpful or, just plainly put, 'good people'. There will always be exceptions to these but without them their Aikido can never be complete or reward the student in so many aspects of life away from the dojo.

Most have heard something about the moment O-Sensei came to the realisation of universal love and the power of the universe and some may be aware of his involvement with the Omoto (also spelt Oomoto) religion but it may well be that without Omoto there would be no Aikido. In 1926 it was Onisaburo Deguchi that suggested to Ueshiba that he renames his martial art Aikido, aiki meaning the spirit of divine love.

I had heard of Omoto during my training although it has never been mentioned by any of my instructors and I thought that the relationship between Aikido and the Omoto religion was only of a minor significance and therefore only a short phase of O-Sensei's life. I have recently read 'The Great Onisaburo Deguchi by Kyotaro Deguchi' as I felt I should try to understand the relationship between Omoto and Aikido

Not the easiest of books to read, especially as I was originally looking for Aikido links rather than just understanding Omoto. There are claims in the book of forecasting the future and references to aspects of Japanese that I do not have the knowledge to prove or disprove. It was only when concentrating on Onisaburo himself that a picture would unfold.

I have put into my own words snippets of information that I hope you may find interesting.

Onisaburo Deguchi, family name Kisaburo Kichimatsu, and I will refer to him only as Onisaburo.

Onisaburo was born 22nd August 1871 and died on 19th January 1948

I have added a few dates that help define among other aspects Onisaburo's strength of character:

The Omoto religion came into being in 1892 when Nao Deguchi had a vision that she must change the world and Onisaburo joined Omoto in 1899.

There were two Omoto persecutions the first being in 1921 and the second in 1935. Both of these involved the incarceration, of around 6 months, of Onisaburo amongst others. The general charge was lese majesty (a crime that undermines the offender's government [treason, high treason]). It wasn't until 1945 that the government declared that Omoto was innocent of any charges.

Morihei Ueshiba was a mystic as well as a martial arts expert. In 1919 he moved to Ayabe to study under Onisaburo Deguchi. Almost at the end of Ueshiba's study of Omoto he had a revelation and wrote, "*At that moment I was enlightened: the source of budo is God's love – the spirit of loving protection for all beings*".

For the Aikidoist the visit to Mongolia in 1924 is of particular interest. In Mongolia on June 21st Onisaburo and Ueshiba with four other followers were handcuffed and arrested.

The war records states that Onisaburo and Morihei Ueshiba, the master of Aikido, were chained together. It was decided that they should be shot on the spot, and were led to the place of execution. Onisaburo composed three farewell poems for himself and composed poems for the other followers. However, while waiting for the sentence to be carried out, the execution was called off. One story was that the guns suffered repeated failures. It was in fact concerns that the executions of these well known Japanese may lead to an international dispute.

In 1925 Onisaburo established the 'Jinrui Aizenkai', or universal love and brotherhood association, that is devoted to humanitarian work. The first meeting involved representatives from Islam, Buddhism, Futen, Christianity and Taoism among other sects.

This is only a very short insight into Onisaburo and selected for the significance to Aikido. Anyone that has been training in Aikido for a few years may find the following true for all good Aikido clubs and organisations:

Good friends are made that may last a lifetime

You might have more Aikido friends than in all other of your life activities

An association or club leader could be your biggest confidant and will display fairness, compassion and spirit that will move from hard to soft under differing circumstances

An allegiance to a club/association that is difficult for you to understand

My opening paragraph stated that Aikido is difficult to explain and none of these words will make it easier for anyone outside of Aikido to understand. It may help Aikidoists realise what Aikido really is, even if you can't explain it, inside you know.

Although these are the fundamentals of the Omoto religion it could have been written by O-Sensei:

The Omoto rules of learning

God is the spirit which pervades the entire universe, and man is the focus of the workings of heaven and earth.

When God and man become one, infinite power will become manifest.

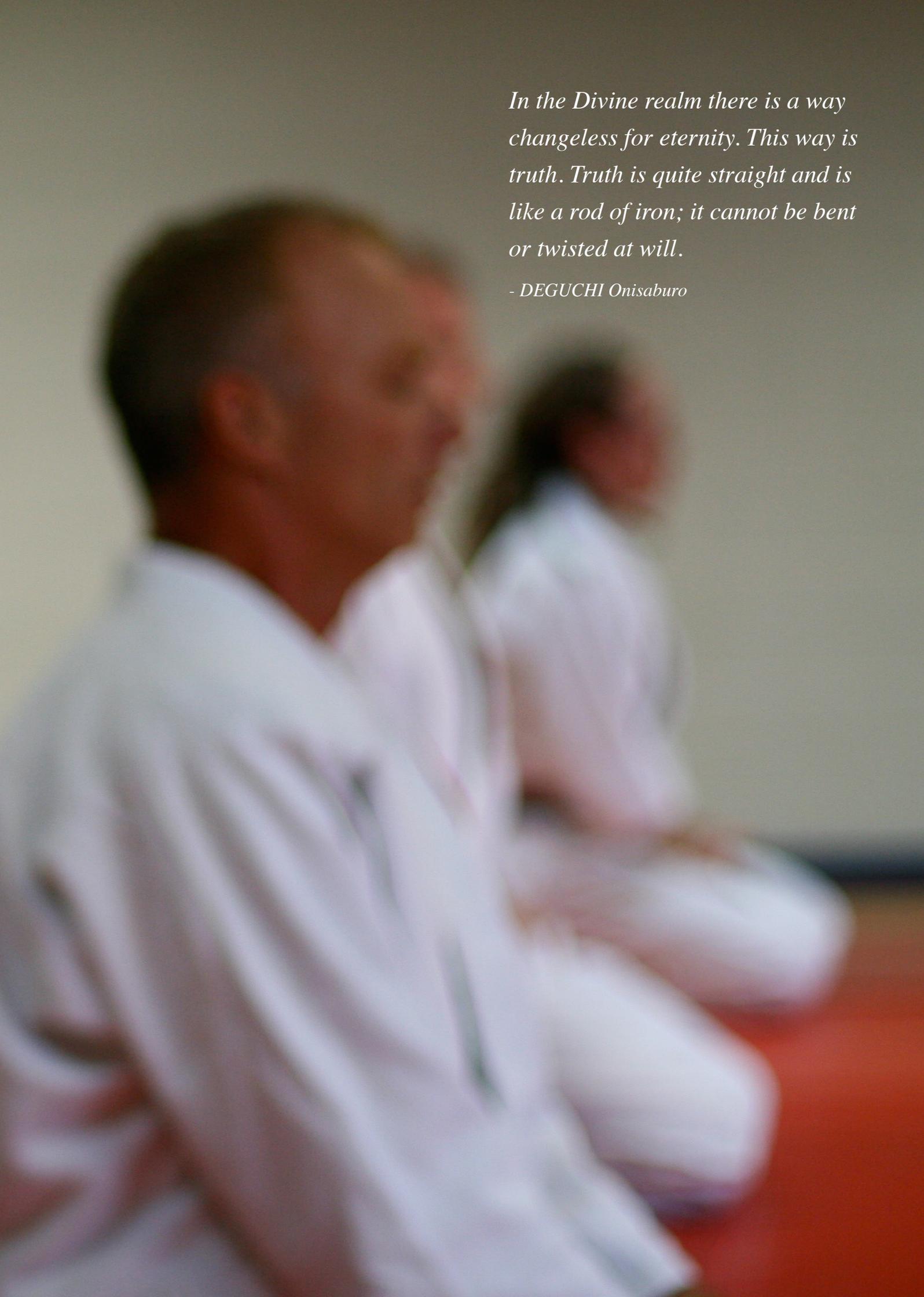
Observing the unerring activities of all things, we see the energy of the true god.

Recognising the essential nature of living beings, we see the spirit of the true God.

Quote from Dave Allen, Irish comedian

"May your God go with you"

Grev Cooke, Yama Arashi UK



*In the Divine realm there is a way
changeless for eternity. This way is
truth. Truth is quite straight and is
like a rod of iron; it cannot be bent
or twisted at will.*

- DEGUCHI Onisaburo

Sensei Garry Masters promoted to 7th Dan Yoshinkan Aikido Instructor

Kenshinkai Yoshinkan Aikido UK is proud to announce the promotion of Sensei Garry Masters to 7th Dan Yoshinkan Aikido Instructor.

Garry recently received his 7th Dan Yoshinkan Aikido Instructor level from Yasuhisa Shioda Sensei, who is the son of the founder of Yoshinkan Aikido, Soke Gozo Shioda Sensei. Garry was previously graded to 6th Dan Yoshinkan by Kiyoyuki Terada Sensei in the UK in April 2002 and 5th Dan Yoshinkan by Kyoichi Inoue Sensei in France in 1996.

Garry began practising Yoshinkan Aikido in 1978 under the tuition of David Eayrs, founder of Ken Shin Kai and a founder member of the British Aikido Board. Over the years Garry has accumulated an extensive knowledge of Yoshinkan and various other styles of Aikido, receiving additional tuition from Francis Ramasamy (David Eayrs first instructor in Malaysia) and attending seminars taught by Kiyoyuki Terada, Morihiro Saito, Takafumi Takeno, Toshishiro Obata, Kyoichi Inoue, Tsutomu Chida, Yasuhisa Shioda and many others.

In addition to this Garry has also gained experience in Iaido, Shoto, Jodo and Tanjo winning the first ever Jodo championship held in England (Mudan Section) in 1986. Garry has given many Aikido demonstrations, including displays for Prince Andrew, the Japanese Naval Squadron, Malaysian Sports Minister, Japanese Consul, British Aikido Board and regional television.

Garry was the Chief Instructor of Ken Shin Kai, from 1985 to 1996. In 1996 after David Eayrs left England to establish Yoshinkan Aikido in Russia, Garry was elected as Principal Coach & Chairman of Ken Shin Kai and is recognised as the second highest Yoshinkan Aikido Instructor in the UK.

All of this has been achieved by Garry, despite the fact that in view of a heart condition, and having suffered a brain haemorrhage, he had been advised not to participate in any type of sport or physical exercise from a very early age.

Ken Shin Kai meaning 'The Association of Strong Heart, Mind and Spirit' was established in Portsmouth, Hampshire by Sensei David Eayrs. In 1963, David was serving in the Army and whilst in Butterworth, Malaysia he started practising the art of Aikido with a small group of Malaysians. David was informed by the group leader that if he really wanted to understand Aikido he must meet an instructor living on the island of Penang, Shihan Francis Ramasamy. Francis took David on as his only student until the establishment, with the help of David, of his first Dojo at the Minden Barracks, a British garrison in Georgetown, Malaysia, in 1965.

Three years later David was posted to Berlin where he began teaching Aikido to Army students and at the Municipality Academy of Police. David left the Army and returned to England in 1967 and began teaching Aikido to a small number of private students.



Photo: Kenshinkai



Francis Ramasamy with Gozo Shioda, the founder of Yoshinkan Aikido

In 1968 David was awarded Shodan by Gozo Shioda and two years later he opened his first club at Denmead in Hampshire.

Sensei Ted Stratton who had left Malaysia, prior to David, to return to the UK, after studying Yoshinkan Aikido under the tuition of Thamby Rajah Sensei (the founder and head of The Shudokan Institute of Aikido), arranged a meeting with David to discuss a mandate from Gozo Shioda to develop Yoshinkan Aikido in the UK. David and his students taught and practised Yoshinkan Aikido under the Shudokan name for many years before David decided to establish his own association in 1985, in the name of Kenshinkai. David worked hard to establish many Dojo's and many of his students are now Instructors in their own Dojo's around the world. David continues to develop Yoshinkan Aikido in Moscow, Russia where he now resides.

Francis Ramasamy (a.k.a Francis Sammy) has accumulated an extensive knowledge throughout his many years involvement in martial arts. In addition to Yoshinkan Aikido Francis has also studied Muay Thai, Judo, Tomiki Aikido, Jujitsu, Kendo, Kenjutsu, Wado and Iaijutsu.

Francis was awarded the best foreign student and the most disciplined foreign student award for his vigorous training at the Yoshinkan Hombu Dojo during the winter season in Japan, together with the elite Tokyo riot police task force.

Francis is one of the very few in the world today to have his 5th and 6th Dan certificates hand written by Gozo Shioda himself, and he made Malaysia proud by winning the best foreign team in the all Japan Yoshinkan Aikido Demonstration.

In Yoshinkan Aikido, the emphasis is on the study of fundamental movements and solid basic techniques as well as gaining philosophical insights into the conduct of life and human relationships. Yoshinkan Aikido as a martial art is non-competitive and non-violent. Cooperation and harmony are more important than aggression. Timing and control are more important than strength. With the development of solid basics,

Yoshinkan Aikido provides a means of self-defence without undue aggression.

Budo Seminar

with

Robert Mustard Sensei

and

Toby Threadgill Sensei

15–16 September 2012

9:00am – 4:00pm

Dartford Judo Club,
Cotton Lane, Dartford, UK

Email: info@meikyokai.co.uk



Events calendar

28 Apr 2012 to 28 Apr 2012

Ki and Aikido for All

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20265

29 Apr 2012 to 29 Apr 2012

Three Rivers Aikido Tai Sai Friendship Seminar

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20279

05 May 2012 to 07 May 2012

British Ki Society Spring Seminar

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20310

05 May 2012 to 06 May 2012

Tomiki Aikido Summer School 2012

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20257

12 May 2012 to 13 May 2012

Foster Sensei Memorial Course

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20277

19 May 2012 to 19 May 2012

Celebration Course

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20287

25 May 2012 to 27 May 2012

Maruyama sensei European Tour - UK Leg

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20296

26 May 2012 to 26 May 2012

Ki and Aikido for All

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20266

27 May 2012 to 27 May 2012

Pascal Jesset Aikikai Seminar

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20313

09 Jun 2012 to 10 Jun 2012

BAF Yu Ko Kan Killingworth Seminar

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20302

10 Jun 2012 to 10 Jun 2012

Kai Shin Kai Traditional Aikido

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20273

10 Jun 2012 to 10 Jun 2012

Lancashire Aikikai General Aikido course

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20293

30 Jun 2012 to 30 Jun 2012

Ki and Aikido for All

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20267

13 Jul 2012 to 15 Jul 2012

Sensei Pat Hendricks Seminar 2012

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20258

14 Jul 2012 to 14 Jul 2012

BAF Yu Ko Kan Killingworth Seminar

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20303

15 Jul 2012 to 15 Jul 2012

Kai Shin Kai Traditional Aikido

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20274

15 Jul 2012 to 15 Jul 2012

Mimuro Sensei course

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20292

21 Jul 2012 to 27 Jul 2012

Birankai Europe Aikido Summerschool

http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20309



*I stand in the mountain stream,
So pure! The splashing sound of
water against the stone,
Yet where is the person,
Who with such purity can speak
of the Way,*

- Morihei Ueshiba

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

Useful links:

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

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

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