

## Transmission within the Shotokai College

In ancient times, a classical martial style (ryu) was the property, literally, of its originator or of his descendants. The founder (*iemoto*) of a school or style designated his successor, who became the next headmaster or "owner" of the system. The line of succession was usually a familial one, father to eldest son. On occasion adoption might have been necessary to carry on the lineage. Other styles were passed down to a trusted disciple outside the family. Passing on a style in this way, limiting access to the highest-level techniques and principles to one's successor and a few selected students, served to maintain both the school's prestige and protect the headmaster's authority. In most cases, there was a strict limit to the number of people (usually only one, seldom more than a handful) who might receive these special teachings and techniques. It was imperative that the chosen individual possesses the highest level of technical skills and personal character.

In November 2009, Colin bequeathed **Certificates of Transmission**, for the first time in its history, to several of his most trusted students.

The wording of the certificate begins with an offer *"to contribute to developing a dojo that transcends the walls that surround it and bring the spirit of the Shotokai College to the community"*.

In his essay, *Tradition and the Individual Talent*, T.S. Eliot speaks of how great writers internalize the works of other writers and then add their own particular talent or genius to the tradition in order to take the art of expression in new directions. Much the same is true in martial arts. All students have been exposed to the "tradition" of the master, but it is a combination of intelligence, natural ability and correct training among certain students that allows for the art to be transmitted correctly.

In keeping with this wisdom, the Transmission Certificate includes the statement, *"I add my years of practice to your years of practice and I trust you will continue to offer them as a gift to those who follow"*,

Within the certificate, Colin expressed a desire, *"That your teaching will always flow from a love of practice, a passion for excellence and a desire to help people grow."*

Teaching Certificates were also presented to those students that Colin believes are capable of teaching the principles, (context *and* content) of the Shotokai College to others.

The students, upon receiving their certificates, were invited to sign them, to explicitly accept the invitation proffered. The recipients of this honour acknowledged the responsibility carried with the invitation: to put themselves in the place of most potential and immerse themselves in the 'practice of possibility'.