



The Shotokai
College:
Karate-do The
Peaceful Way

The Shotokai College Newsletter *Summer 2011*

Chairman's message Don Chidede



The Peaceful way

Spring Camp 2011 heralded the dawn of a new era for the Shotokai College. Set for the third year in a row in the village of Menil Sur Saulx in the idyllic country side of North East France, this Spring Camp was important for many reasons, to be revealed in the rest of this newsletter.

As usual, the peaceful surroundings, the energy in the dojo combined with expert teaching and open learning produced weekend of magnificent practice. Outside the dojo, the sense of community and connection grew as well, as we socialised among ourselves and with our hosts, Ken Waight and the team at the Green Forest Centre. This was all captured on film by two filmmakers from Chicago, Adrian Galli and Matthew Rivera, who managed to seamlessly blend with us as they recorded the weekend.

Colin Reeve, leader of the Shotokai College, used Spring Camp to launch the new definition of what we do in the Shotokai College, '***the Peaceful Way***'.

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Transmission

The Shotokai College is all about striving for excellence in the martial arts. Over the past few years the advanced teaching and learning methods developed by Colin Reeve have resulted in a quantum leap in the skills of the people who have been privileged enough to be a part of this tremendous wave of learning.

Accordingly, several senior members of the organisation have been recognised by Colin for having attained a level of practice and teaching which transcends the grading system. In recognition of this, the following were awarded Certificates of Transmission at Spring Camp 2011. This is the highest award available within The Shotokai College.

Mary Ann Harding

John Turner

Jim Reid

Roger Henderson

Steve Culshaw

Maria Marfleet

Graham Smith

Karen Stone

Mark West



Within the certificate, a hand crafted scroll, Colin requests that *'our teaching will always flow from a love of practice, a passion for excellence and a desire to help people grow'* whilst we *'contribute to developing a dojo that transcends the walls that surround it and to bring the spirit of The Shotokai College to the community in which you live'*.

Mastery 2011



Mastery is an intense period of learning, designed to take the learner to the next stage in their development. Through regular practice, reading, projects (in groups as well as individuals), presentations and a challenging exercise regimen, Mastery participants were taken on a rollercoaster ride of highs and lows, physically, mentally and emotionally. And at the end we can look back on the ride, and reflect on how we have explored the edges of our comfort zones, pushed past those boundaries and expanded the sphere of what we thought was possible.

This year the Mastery course was combined with a Teacher/Leader programme, which is aimed at producing the teachers and leaders of the organisation for tomorrow.

Congratulations to the following for completing Mastery 2011 at gold level and receiving the following Teacher Leader certification.

	<u>Teacher/Leader Level</u>
Ian Carr	5
John Dagnall	5
Robert Dellner	5
Dawn Fear	5
Simmi Kalsi	5
Aleena Baksh	4
Pal Kalsi	3
Paul Waters	2
Annette Nethercott	2
Dave Hollinshead	2
Don Chidede	2
Donna Chilvers	2

Spring Camp Reflections

Ian Carr

Time has flown by since Spring Camp and I have been away from practice for some weeks, owing to family and work commitments. However, the Mastery programme leading up to Spring Camp, and the weekend itself have helped me to deal effectively with some fairly tricky and sensitive situations!

I will return! In the meantime, I have now had some time to reflect on the weekend in France and to jot down a few thoughts. The community of learning, sharing and living with the Shotokai college is indeed a unique and life enriching experience. The environment, the practice, socialising and re-fuelling all combine to provide a rich and rewarding experience which lives on throughout the year.



The lead up to Spring Camp provided valuable learning's which all played an important part in the weekend. Mindfulness and Liquid Networks are two things that have stuck with me! As individuals we are always connected and the liquidity of those connections is important at physical, mental and emotional levels in order for us to get the best out of our relationships.

I have learned a lot from these past few months and Spring Camp was a fantastic way to express some of those learning's and to apply them to my life in a more effective and peaceful way.

An amazing Spring Camp once again. The place you go to be the real you and to grow in so many ways ~ Annette Nethercott

Adrian and Matthew

Adrian Galli and Matthew Rivera from Chicago, Illinois are two filmmakers who went to Menil with the Shotokai College to make a series of films about what it is that we do.



Adrian is the director/producer of Onyx Creations (www.onyxcreations.com) and Matthew is the cinematographer.

Spring Camp was fantastic! So much learning, exploring, fun and laughter - Donna Chilvers



They spent the weekend of Spring Camp filming and taking beautiful photographs (all the ones in this newsletter, for example) with a view to telling the story of the Shotokai College to people all over the world. **The DVD will be available to buy at Summer Camp, 2011!**

Spring Camp Reflections (Continued)

Dave Hollinshead

Contemplating Spring Camp

---Gong---

Once; Change without changing,
Twice; Path revealed,
Thrice; Comes too soon.

---Open Window---

Peaceful practice escapes,
Kitchen aroma encroaches,
See the possibility.

---Wine Glass---

Half empty,
Laughter flows,
Sun sets
and it is full again.

---Just Be---

I am
present,
I notice
and it is gone.

---GFC---

A hero of old,
A new family,
A common path,
A magic place.

---Baggage---

Hardest lesson?
Nothing to pick up,
Something to release.

---Modelling---

A body of learning,
A body to learn,
Learn to embody,
Anybody.



Karen Stone

ReminiScence

How I remember Menil days

Through Spring camps long completed.

Each unrepeatabe, unique

And each one countless times repeated.

Of all these days

When one rejoices in the impression

That time has stopped, there grows in years

An unforgettable succession.



An incredible few days of intense practice and contemplation. Perfectly balanced to fully absorb the learning on offer - Robert Dellner

Spring Camp Reflections

(Continued)

Dawn Fear

Preparations completed- time booked off work, family organised with list prepared of who needs to be where and when, emergency contact numbers available and my phone with no ability to work once left the UK! What more do I need to do than to get in the car and head south to start my journey.

Why am I here was asked on the Friday evening- the answer for me was so simple- I came last year and having had the experience there was no way I could miss being a part of Spring Camp 2011. For me it is a wonderful opportunity to be me with no external distractions- a time to be relaxed, focused and find myself a chance to practice, to learn, progress and grow.



What is the string I need to pluck to make my kata perfect? For me it is simple I just need to 'let go' and focus on the simplicity, doing one thing at a time and being there for it. I realise that focusing on the simplicity of the moment will ensure that I not only give everything but also gain everything from each moment. I found that when I 'let go' I was so open to the learning and gained so much from the experience. This was confirmed in one simple practice wherein one instant lapse of concentration I stopped 'letting go'.

Blindfolded I was led around the dojo, initially I felt relaxed and fully trusting I had no fears and just followed and then in an instant I had lost that focus and before my blindfolded eyes all I could see was a stone wall and I was physically unable to move, unable to let go I could not allow myself to be led.



The art of letting go and gaining everything from the moment had in an instant gone from being so simple to an impossible task. A short time to refocus and we recommenced the practice and my trust returned. Clearly my string is the ability to let go and remain in that state to gain the most from the gift of the teaching on offer.

Menil is a beautiful place with an indescribable atmosphere which evokes emotions and an even greater than normal eagerness to learn.

The spirit in the dojo and the surroundings together with the closeness of true friends has once again provided me with so much learning, encouragement, warmth and pleasure I already know that, come what may, I will do whatever it takes to be there for Spring Camp 2012. I look forward to sharing the experience with everyone all over again.

I can still hear the laughter. The weekend was an extraordinary time. Every practice had such a special, intimate atmosphere and I feel privileged to have experienced this time with such a group of inspiring and wonderful people - John Dagnall

Richard 'Tricky' Wilson

By John Dagnall



A member of the Shotokai College since its inception, Tricky has practiced martial arts in one form or another for over forty years.

Born in the east end of London, Tricky lived within a stone's throw of West Ham's football ground, Upton Park. Tricky now runs his own electrical contracting business and lives in Slough, Berkshire with his wife and three children.

Tricky began his lifelong association with martial arts in 1969 at the age of eight when his family moved out of London to settle in east Berkshire. He joined a Judo club in Maidenhead and practiced there for over four years. He was then in and out of clubs for a few years trying Aikido and full contact karate, until in 1979 he joined a Shotokai Karate club in Slough which came under the umbrella of Harada Sensei's organisation. After three years Tricky took over running the club and increased its membership tenfold.

He began his association with Colin Reeve in 1984/85, practicing with Colin twice a week at the same time as running the Slough Club. In 1986 he joined Colin's Shotokai Foundation and then about four years later became a founding member of the Shotokai College.

Tricky became a 1st Dan in 1982/3, a 5th Dan in 2000, and in 2009 was awarded a certificate of transmission.

John Dagnall spoke with Richard just before autumn camp 2010.

JD: *"How did practice differ 20 years ago?"*

RW: "Practice was pretty brutal and very much concentrated on physicality and the external. Also there were very few girls taking part, so everything was testosterone fuelled. If you practiced around correct posture for 3 hours and weren't either physically sick or in tears at the end of it, everyone thought you hadn't tried hard enough.

Practice methods now are much more refined and we have far more understanding as to how people's bodies work. It wasn't until I started practicing with Colin that I paid any attention to the internal side of practice.

It also seems that people are now taking up karate much later in life and practice methods have to allow for this. I think we would lose people if we were still square bashing like we used to."

JD: *"What advice would you give to someone new to karate?"*

RW: "Throw yourself into it and practice as often as possible. It is also important to realise that karate is a dynamic and fluid art, not static and stiff."

JD: *"... And to someone who has been practicing for a few years?"*

RW: "You will at times feel that your development has stopped and you are not progressing. This is the time when you should try harder. You should also start to analyse yourself and not think that someone else is always going to point things out and come up with a solution for you. The best thing that happened to me was when I started teaching. It forced me to do things better."

JD: *"How does karate benefit you in your life outside the Dojo, have you changed over the years?"*

RW: "I have become a lot calmer, more tolerant and less aggressive. I'm in a far better place because of karate, and could very easily have slipped off the rails without it. I have also benefited enormously since teaching methods have become less aggressive. Ten years ago I was only satisfied if I caused a few tears in practice, but not now."

Richard 'Tricky' Wilson (Continued)

JD: "A few quick fire questions."

JD: Favourite food?

RW: Bacon and eggs.

JD: Favourite drink?

RW: A mug of tea.

JD: Favourite kata?

RW: Kanku Dai.

JD: Favourite film?

RW: "Enter the Dragon" and "We were soldiers".

JD: Favourite TV?

RW: "24" and "Only Fools and Horses".

JD: Favourite read?

RW: Anything by Tom Clancy or Bernard Cornwell.

JD: "So where do you see yourself in 20 years time?"

RW: "Who knows? I hope I'm still practicing, but if not I'll still be making a nuisance of myself in and around the Dojo!"

A Sad Goodbye...



I'm sad to have to let you know that we are say goodbye to one of our own. Aleena Baksh is leaving Reading for Sweden. I know I speak on behalf of everybody in the community when I say her infectious smile will be sorely missed by us all and that we wish her all the best! Ses snart!*, Aleena!

* "See you soon" in Swedish, Google tells me.

Coming Soon!

Look out for the following which are Coming your way very Soon:-

The Peaceful way - a film, book, and workbook based on the quintessence of the Shotokai College. They will describe how we practise *'an eminent non-aggressive martial art that teaches not how to fight, but how to live without having to fight. This art empowers practitioners to success - not through aggressive behaviour, physical strength or domination, but through stimulating one to play in the field of full awareness'*. You'll be able to buy all of these at Summer Camp, 2011.

Website - Look out for the launch of the brand new College website, rebranded 'The Peaceful way'.

Events

Donna Chilvers

We are busy finalising the events for the remainder of 2011 so please keep an eye out for updates to ensure you don't miss out.

There is a **One Day Course** taking place in Ascot (Cheapside Village Hall) on **Saturday 30th July** and all grades are welcome.

We are very excited about our annual trip to Bedford for **Summer Camp**. Registration is now open so please ensure you do not miss the deadline to secure your place! Dates for Summer Camp are **20-25th August**.

DATE CHANGE: Our annual **Summer BBQ** will be held on the **3rd September** - families are welcome at this event which enables everyone to **socialise, drink, eat** and be merry (venue - Palm Hills, Ascot).

Autumn Camp will take place on the weekend of **12-13th November** (venue TBC)

The **Christmas Party** will take place on the **17th December** at The Palm Hills in Ascot.

A request from me to all of our members:

The Committee is committed to the growth of The Shotokai College and to ensuring we continue to identify ways of supporting our 'world famous' tag. One element of our work as a committee is to ensure we are as efficient as possible and that we support and provide great service to members.

As part of my personal quest to help achieve this, there are a couple of things you can do to help me in my role.

Deadline Requests:

If you could respond to event deadline requests in a timely manner it would be a big help to me. I set deadlines so that I can be efficient and proactive when planning the detail of events and so that Colin is aware of who is attending an event and can therefore plan the practice. As I am sure you can appreciate much work goes on behind the scenes to make the events successful and therefore I really need for you to respond with requested information within the stated deadline.

Payment of Course Fees:

We also changed the way we collect practice fees for events (weekend courses, Summer Camp, Spring Camp, Autumn Camp, One Day Courses etc). We now require that all fees are paid in advance of an event (unless otherwise agreed). We have done this for two reasons – one is so that we are more efficient with our administration and accounting, and the other is so that everyone (including the committee) gets to practice without having the background distraction of administration.

I appreciate there are sometimes mitigating circumstances that prevent you from confirming attendance or paying fees on time, but if you could call or email me to let me know that would be a great help.

Your cooperation is very much appreciated!

Donna