



*Eiko Dai — picture by Robyn Furtado*

## Notes on the 2019 Daienshu

### *"Resonance with Nature"*

*By Ula Chambers*

Following the themes of the last two Daienshu : "Unity" (2017) and "Ibuki— Enjoying the breath of life" (2018), I was inspired by the idea that by allowing the breath of life/nature to resonate within us we may discover our unity with all things.

Often when I feel unbalanced, I find myself contemplating the nature around me: clouds, stars, trees, birds, animals, plants, or the water I have been reading about the positive health benefits of being in a natural environment and the Japanese tradition of tree bathing. Therefore the location for the Daienshu seemed like a gift, and was an integral part of our keiko, like a welcome kumite partner. Emerson College where we slept, ate and practised in the afternoons and early mornings, and Michael Hall the site of our morning practice, are both Steiner schools, where a love for the natural environment is evident. The grounds are thoughtfully planted with a wide diversity of trees and shrubs, bio-energetic water features and surprising secret pockets of beauty. The food is grown biodynamically to improve its energetic and life enhancing properties. When I visited the site last July I experienced there a deep stillness and an internal vastness. Joy at being surrounded by growing and living things and the respect that was given to them by the people that work there.



*Resonance with Nature  
Calligraphy by Minagawa Sensei*

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We were happy to welcome participants with a wide range of experience which added to the richness of our keiko, and reminded those of us who have been following the path of Shintaido a long time to practice with a beginners mind. Also participating was Robyn Furtado, a photographer and film maker who took photographs of our practice and interviewed people throughout the event about their experiences. When complete, this work will be part of the British Shintaido website.

### ***British Shintaido College:***

On Friday afternoon Eight members of the British Shintaido College gathered prior to the Daienshu to study together. The theme of the practice with Minagawa sensei was deepening our understanding of Jissen Kunitachi. We practised on site in Eurythmy hall, learning to manage space, time and breath through two forms of sword practice. We were welcomed to both the space and the theme of the event by Emerson College staff who had prepared the dojo and left a beautiful vase of flowers for us in the centre of a chair circle: Nature had come into our dojo.

Prior to the opening ceremony at Eurythmy hall participants had dinner together in the dining room of Emerson college's main building. It is a regular practice for all visitors to eat together, dinner being announced by an outside gong. Having taken our places, "grace" was read by a staff member from a book of poems/ reflections that brought our mind to the eating and sharing of food. The meal cooked by staff from home grown produce was then "introduced" to us. This was not only the name of each dish, but also the ingredients and where they come. This attention to mindfulness was completely in keeping with our theme for the weekend. We ate very well indeed and experienced some unusual dishes bursting with flavour.

The Daienshu itself started on Friday evening with the opening ceremony. Viola, the organiser of the event, introduced the staff and the theme, and we each learned a little about one another.

### ***Opening, Keiko 1***

The warm up was done on chairs both sitting down them and using them as supports. For those people who enjoy a little jumping Ula introduced Kaikyaku dai on chairs.

This was followed by an introduction to 10 point meditation – Minagawa sensei demonstrated the movements whilst Ula read out the names and explanations of the forms. We then formed a circle and did each of the 10 mudra (hand positions) in turns whilst Minagawa sensei made adjustments to postures and hand positions. Next we studied the foot positions for walking meditation; sliding the foot forwards, lifting the toes, stepping forwards on to the foot whilst lifting the opposite foot, and repeating the cycle. To aid balance and help us keep our vision out, we practised first with partners walking backwards, hand resting upwards on their upturned hand. Then we walked in pairs with the offering flowers hand position around the dojo, gradually lowering our breathing mindful of each movement until a deep hush descended. Following the closing circle, we left the dojo stepping into the night air, taking the stillness with us.

### ***Early morning, Keiko 2***

Our "greet the morning" practice was led by Peter Furtado at 7.00 am. It was a cold and frosty morning as we gathered in a tree enclosed space forming a circle. As the sun rose higher we were gradually warmed as we continued our keiko. It was a practice of Diamond 8 sei and Dai, with open hands so that everyone could participate. Peter gave a lovely gorei reminding us of the diamond in our centre. His final instruction was to imagine cutting through carbon atoms, gradually polishing the diamond within. As we cut across, right side, left side, birds flew around and between us as if following the direction of our cuts.



*Early morning keiko — picture by Robyn Furtado*

### Keiko 3

After breakfast we moved to Michael Hall and its spacious indoor dojo with a sprung wooden floor. We welcomed two new arrivals, and after the warming up Ula introduced Tenshingosō to people who had not practised before. The image of a stone sinking gradually into a well helped us reach a deeper un, followed by the gradual opening of ourselves like a flower in the sun into Ah – reaching to the sky and our higher being.



*Kim and Alex— picture by Robyn Furtado*



*Tenshingosō Dai— picture by Robyn Furtado*

Ah / Un was practiced with partners in sitting and in standing back to back. Following this we moved to I / O gathering our energies and pushing forward to the future before acceptance, and offering our life experience back to the universe. Using these forms we moved around the dojo in pairs changing partners in a continuous cycle. As we came back to quietness the group moved to a large outdoor dojo lined with rhododendrons and azaleas. We continued our practice with Aozora Taiso including the earth, sky and nature around us, gradually moving to a face to face kumite with partners, joining up with the others until half the group was responding with Ah to the Eh of the other group.

We finished with the whole group doing a Diamond 8 sei, recapitulating the morning practice.



*Margaret and Peter— picture by Robyn Furtado*

### Mock exam / Master class.

After lunch we returned to the Eurythy Hall where Peter Furtado was to present a Ni-dan Kenjutsu mock exam. Whilst Peter and his partner Alex were preparing, and the dojo was being set up, general participants were oriented to the meaning of mitori keiko – learning by watching.

Minagawa sensei sat as the examiner and Ula gave exam gorei. The examination became a Master class with Minagawa sensei giving direct feedback about the presented techniques and asking these to be repeated. It was inspirational to see the practice improve and mature before our eyes until the kumite became natural and fluid.

### Keiko 4

The next keiko followed on directly, with everyone moving around the dojo first with gentle jogging, moving koshi, interweaving and gradually relaxing and moving on to tachi jumping and ending in Tensō. Having calmed our breathing we moved on to wakame (sea weed practice) using the forms of Tenshingosō learnt



*Ula Chambers leading lighting the world— picture by Robyn Furtado*

earlier to initiate movement. From front and back gradually moving on to movement from the sides. To unify the breath and sensitivity of kumite partners, the initiating partner was asked to “listen to” and respond to their partner’s movement so the response flowed in both directions. We noted that for some people a movement that looked small on the outside could have a significant effect internally, whilst a big expansive external movement could indicate a restricted or controlled internal experience. As people got to know one another we went on to develop sensitivity to each other’s movement and to an “attack” coming from the side or behind, moving away as we felt the intention coming. We agreed that as the initiator of movement having a strong intention was helpful. This brought us to the practice of receiving a tsuki from behind, moving as we felt our partner’s intention, stepping to the side or turning as the tsuki reached us and following with Tenshingosō “I”, like water flowing along a riverbed. As people continued in the practice and became unified their faces became more open and soon everyone was smiling.

That evening after another delicious meal, we gathered for a social evening with snacks music and conversation. Minagawa sensei was presented with a handmade blown glass bowl on the occasion of his 70th Birthday and as a thanks for his teaching at the event. As we left for our sleeping quarters, the stars shone bright and heavy in the still night sky, and the aroma of blossoms filled the air.

### ***Early morning, Keiko 5***

The following morning was noticeably warmer and Peter offered to lead Taimyo kata in a secluded part of the grounds. Here was a miniature waterfall, a pond and many flowering bushes and trees. The morning chorus was in progress as we entered into Universal energy and enjoyed nature throughout the kata, breathing in and out, together with the breeze, unifying ourselves with heaven earth and the gardens around us.



*Peter Furtado— picture by Robyn Furtado*

### ***Closing Keiko, 6***

Our final practice started as before, indoors, in the beautiful dojo of Michael Hall.

We did a traditional jumbi taiso including partner assisted movements and stretches. Musoken arm throw (from Taimyo kata) on three levels allowed us to explore the space of the whole hall, and with partners receiving and responding to the movement.

The first part of the keiko centred around the images of internal resources or integrity being brought into the consciousness and out into the world. This was expressed through the practice of Tenshingosō “Eh” as





expressed in Taimyo kata. An image of energy rising inside us like magma rising from the centre of the earth, and flowing out into the world. A gentler image was a mole digging its way up through the earth to emerge into the light, pushing out the earth around it. Then using the image of an internal spark growing into a fire, we explored the combination of Tenshingoso “Eh” and “O” together (mochikae). Small movements became more expansive as we used the whole space. This movement was also done with partners – allowing a transfer of our inner inspiration to our partner.

As on the previous day we moved outside, where Minagawa sensei introduced the bokken to newer members and we did irimukae – following and receiving the bokken in various directions. We moved on to Diamond 8 sei in a group. As we faced up the dojo starting our cuts a herd of young deer ran across the dojo, leaping



*Practice of Diamond 8 Kata— picture by Robyn Furtado*

and bouncing in front of us, barely 10 metres away. Their movement flowed before us like a bubbling river as they passed on their way and appeared again up the hill. Everyone gasped and smiled with delight at this gift from nature.

We continued Diamond 8 practice with partners making the cuts to one or several people.

At the close of the keiko we followed Minagawa sensei in a deep Taimyo kata. Changing the rhythms and cadences of familiar movements, Minagawa sensei allowed the kata to be experienced in a new and mindful way, incorporating the nature around us.

## ***Sticky Ma***

At the closing ceremony people expressed some of their impressions of the event, and the place. We enjoyed the participation of new and unexpected practitioners very much and we were grateful for the support of more experienced people. Thanks were expressed to everyone concerned in the organisation who had contributed so much. As we had become unified by the practice it was naturally difficult to say goodbye. Luckily, the last delicious lunch allowed people to spend some more time in one another's company and also to take a final walk around the beautiful grounds. There was general agreement that the venue was welcoming and many people would like to come back.

## ***After the Daienshu***

I generally find that a light of happiness and gratitude has been ignited inside me by meeting and practising in nature with such sincere practitioners. Reflecting about our experience I wanted to share the words of the Dalai Lama and Aoki sensei which had been forwarded to me by Minagawa sensei. You will find them elsewhere in this edition of Taimyo.

Ula Chambers 

## **Force of Nature—a poem**

***By Geoffrey Warr***

The split is there  
At the core  
The truth inescapable  
The tree is here at the heart of our being  
A force, to push, to pull  
In opposite directions,  
Inescapable tension  
The stuff of paradox

We have no choice, but to strain upwards  
Thrusting leaves to the sky  
Striving for daylight, to bend on the breeze  
To inspire the gift of air  
And  
To push down into the depths of darkness  
To quench thirst and feed on earth's essence  
Seeking both the soft and easy path's through soil  
Whilst also binding our roots to rocks  
Creating attachments  
To foundations  
Where time can rest  
As if  
Wrapped in a blanket  
Or endless night

Geoffrey Warr (2017) 

## A Letter From Scotland

*Nagako Cooper*

Dear BS Friends,

I'm writing this now while you are having the BS Daienshu "Resonance with Nature" at the Emerson College. I heard that the weather in Sussex is clear today, so I imagine that you must be enjoying the keiko under the blue sky surrounded by the beautiful nature there.

I miss you all, it still feels strange not having the weekly Lightwave and Gentle Shintaido classes to go to. I now often go to the park nearby, surrounded by the hills in Glen Cairn to practice. The clock tower and a tree which I made a connection with help me to bring focus, especially with my sword practice. I'm looking forward to the next opportunity when I can practice Kumite and Kunitachi with you again.

Up here in Nithsdale area in Scotland, Shintaido has started to be introduced especially amongst children in this area. Through the Nithsdale Active Schools and Community Sports, David and I have delivered 3 weekly sessions of Shintaido introductory classes at Wallace Hall, Dunscore, Penpont and Closeburn Primary schools. We enjoyed meeting over 150 children in Primary 3 – 7 (8 to 11 years old) groups and their class teachers who also joined the sessions.



The energy which the children brought to those sessions were amazing! We focused on Tenshin Juso-ho exercises and introduced Tenshingoso, and showed Eiko & Sword forms at the end. The children seemed have enjoyed using voice and freedom of dynamic movements as well as giving & receiving massage. We realised that some of the children didn't have much stamina, and they needed to take a rest after 10-15 mins of practice. Still I encouraged them to join back in the group when they were ready, which most of them managed to do so.

There was one boy called Daniel who had lost his vision and hearing, joined the sessions in his wheelchair with his assistant teacher. I received a small device to wear so that he could feel the vibration of my voice through it somehow. Thanks to the strong support from his assistant teacher and with his willingness, he managed to join most of the programmes. When we did chest opening exercise with Kiai voice, Daniel managed to shout "HA!" with a big smile in his face! It was an unforgettable moment.




After Easter holiday, Julie from the Active Schools who organised the sessions sent out questioners to the students and the teachers at the 4 schools and we are now waiting to receive their feedbacks. We hope to start an after-school club if there are enough students who are interest to join.



I have also given a couple of informal Shintaido sessions to the colleagues and the volunteers at the Allanton Peace Sanctuary, which received positively. In June, we are holding “Living in Balance” – A Day of Workshops event, and “International Peace Festival” which is an annual event with live music, fair trade café, workshops and the Flag Ceremony. There will be interesting mixtures of workshops; tea ceremony, calligraphy, Yoga, Sacred Singing, etc., and I’ll be offering Shintaido sessions on the both events. Please contact me for further details if you are interested in joining.

We’re planning to visit Stroud in early August for a couple of weeks, so hopefully we could see some of you and maybe have a keiko together!

With warmest wishes,

Nagako 

## **Almondsbury Kenjutsu Workshop Series**

**By Peter Furtado**

Last year and this, Doshu Masashi Minagawa has been offering a regular series of workshops in which he has been introducing his newly developed kenjutsu programme known as Jissen Kunitachi. This means something like ‘practical management with sword’, and takes us beyond the formality of the older kyukajo practice towards something more complex or practical – while naturally remaining true to the humanistic, non-aggressive spirit of Shintaido.

The workshops, which are open to anyone who has serious interest in kenjutsu, have proved immensely popular, and the hall in Almondsbury is always crowded and focused with practice of the forms, the kata and the kunitachi. While Masashi emphasises staying soft, calm and grounded at all times, we are exploring how to put eiko feeling into each form we learn, making the kunitachi – and the entire day – feel dynamic, exciting and intense.



*Participants to the last Kenjutsu Workshop on the 30th June 2019— picture by Laurent Lacroix*

While Masashi is carefully introducing each of the 22 forms in turn and teaching the new kenjutsu kata, he is also making sure we understand not just the techniques themselves, but their relationship with other Shintaido and kenjutsu practice and philosophy. On each occasion that we go back over techniques we

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thought we had already learned, Masashi opens another door and shows us new depths, new resonances, new opportunities, that had previously been missed.

As a result, these workshops are a wonderful opportunity for anyone who has studied Shintaido for a while to renew our entire keiko, to discover new paths for approaching the depths of our extraordinary practice, and to take ourselves individually and collectively forward into the next decade.

Peter Furtado



**30th June 2019 Kenjutsu Workshop.**  
**Practice of Iwao, Tsubame Gaeshi (1 & 2) and Seichu-Ken**  
**Pictures by Laurent Lacroix and Charles Burns**



## May Peace Prevail On Earth!

*Shintaido at Allanton Peace Sanctuary, Dumfriesshire, Scotland*

*Ula Chambers*

Allanton Peace Sanctuary is set in the beautiful countryside of Dumfries and Galloway and this is where Nagako and David Cooper are working to promote an educational programme about peace to schoolchildren. Nagako recently led a well received programme of Shintaido for school children in 3 local primary schools (see separate article). Allanton is the European Sanctuary of the "May Peace Prevail On Earth International" an international NGO, founded in Japan and recognised by the United Nations. The work of the organisation is to bring peace awareness to every sector of society, transcending barriers of race, religion and political belief.

I was delighted to be able to visit Nagako and her family during the weekend of 22nd and 23rd of June, when the international world peace festival was held at Allanton. I attended with my husband Jeff and we participated in the festival activities. There was a wide variety of workshops on offer on Saturday 22nd June, including two Shintaido taster sessions led by Nagako. On Sunday 23rd there was entertainment, stalls with information about local community and other initiatives, fair trade food and further workshops (including Shintaido). This was rounded off by a beautiful flag raising ceremony, within a "henge" of peace poles, sending heartfelt wishes for peace to all the countries and indigenous peoples of the world.



*Ula Chambers's hokushin kokyuho with the "Peace Pole Henge" in the background.*

Nagako led three joyful taster sessions of Shintaido of 45 minutes each. The aim was for people to relax, express their energy, open their hearts and enjoy the movement. As the weather was very good, each session was held outdoors with a fantastic views of the surrounding countryside. The Saturday sessions were pre-booked with 8 people joining in each one. The Sunday session was open for anyone and as Nagako had created a happy and welcoming space, more and more people came to join in until there were 14 people including 2 children participating.

I was very impressed by how much can be shared in a 45 minute slot and how the essence of Shintaido can be expressed in the simplest movements.

For the first session the short warming up included creating energy inside us by rubbing palms, pointing at each other, the sky and the earth. Creating grounding energy and earth connection by stamping on the ground and clapping our hands. Expressing our generosity through Musoken arm toss with the image of sewing seeds across the earth and raising our energy through 3 level opening with the final kiai waking and encouraging us. We enjoyed Do-in self massage, and hugging heaven (hoten kokyu-ho) with image of a golden ball, and came back to quiet breathing through great bear (hokushin kokyu ho), with the image of a golden cylinder/ golden line.

From this Nagako introduced sound with movement using the Seven sounds of love – sounding SA RE GA MA PA DHA NI SA – on an upward and downward scale. The movements come from Tenshingoso and Taimyo and have been created by Minagawa sensei and Chloe Goodchild from the Naked Voice organisation, as kind of singing meditation using sacred sounds. People enjoyed expressing their voices and energy through the movements and focussing on their energy centres. We practised individually and in pairs facing one another. Then to finish there was a walking meditation around the henge circle, moving between the peace poles. Instinctively there was a connection between us making our offering of flowers and the nations named on the

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peace poles. It was a very moving element of the practice. We finished holding hands in a circle and feeling the energy moving between us until we came to stillness.



*Nagako Cooper leading hokushin kokyūho (Great Plough)*

The second session started with a similar warming up and then we studied Tenshingosō, starting from un and then moving backwards through the movements oh-Ih-Eh-Ah- Un. Once the forms were familiar we completed the sequence from beginning to end. Nagako and Ula then demonstrated the difference between the sei form with voice and the soft form with natural breathing. This prompted lots of questions and a discussion about different types of energy expression. Nagako invited participants to try both forms to feel the difference themselves. From there we made partners and enjoyed wakame taisō. Just as Nagako said Yame, the Gong to finish sounded in the distance. Perfect timing!

In the final session Nagako invited people to relax and enjoy the movement. It was very joyful – predominantly a gentle warming up with laughter, enabling unification between the people participating, the space and nature. We enjoyed partner movement exercises such as hip rotations, taiki-mai and short massage, shooting energy tsuki with kiai, finishing with hoten kokyū ho and hokushin kokyū ho, and standing in a circle open to the energy inside us.

There was very good feedback to Nagako from those who joined her sessions. Several people attended all three, and many commented about how the tension melted away and how relaxed they felt afterwards. One Japanese lady was impressed that the children joined in and wants to show her children some of the movements. One local person asked to do more of this joyful movement. It was a good chance to share simple, gentle Shintaido forms in a community of people who are already attuned to how positive energy can be transmitted and received.

Throughout the whole weekend people showed how they are active in building welcoming, peaceful and supportive communities. This is work that they are conscientiously committed to and believe in strongly. It was such a positive experience to see this work going on around the world, and to recognise that Shintaido fits perfectly in this work of nurturing the human the spirit!

I will certainly be visiting the centre again and enjoying Nagako's teaching.

Ula Chambers



## Taishi Minagawa's Junior Examination – 2nd April 2019

*Laurent Lacroix*

Taishi, Pam and Masashi Minagawa's 8 years old grandson, has been a regular at the Bath Bo Class. Of course as the class is late at night he can only attend when the next day is not a school day. Nonetheless he has been a very keen student of Bojutsu and Kenjutsu and it is a real pleasure to teach and practice with him.

So we all were very pleased when Masashi and Pam came up with the idea of a Bath junior examination. We all felt that it would be encouraging for him and an opportunity to show everyone his progress. The Bo curriculum is too difficult for young children, so a new curriculum adapted to them had to be devised. A program for 10 kyu was outlined by Masashi. It includes:

1. Dojo manners: Bowing with respect, listening to instruction, respect for other people and dojo.
2. Counting 1 to 10 in Japanese
3. Understanding the meaning of few important words: Seiza, Mokuso, Rei, Yoi, Kamae, Hajime, Yame.
4. Jumping with Bo (warm up) alone and with partner
5. Mochikae
6. Kami kaze attack.

It was a real honour when Masashi Minagawa asked me to join him as an examiner. My responsibility, I felt, was not only to find a way to help Taishi (such an examination must have been very intimidating) but also to give a fair and useful feedback.

However Taishi was probably more confident during his examination than me as a first time examiner. He passed with flying colours.

Laurent Lacroix



*Taishi showing his new certificate (shown on the right)*





## Notes on the KANGEIKO 2019, 5–6 January at Douai Abbey

*Led by Masashi Minagawa Sensei and Ula Chambers Sensei*

*Viola Santa*

As usual participants arrived on Saturday at lunch time in the white cottages and made themselves at home in our familiar and cosy self-catering accommodation. BSC (British Shintaido College) members had already attended a keiko led by Ula and Masashi that morning at Elstree School.

To formally start the Kangeiko we gathered in the common room for the Opening Ceremony. Peter Furtado, the event organiser welcomed us and explained who was in which group to prepare the meals that Dan had planned for us. Then Ula introduced the theme for this year's Shintaido practise "*Resonance with Nature*". She shared with us how she felt inspired to choose this theme during a walk in the park when, whilst practising Shintaido, she felt a strong connection with nature and noticed how this experience transformed her whole day!

She encouraged us to sense our own nature, to feel the quiet, to look inside. We may find inner strength, and something will later blossom. Quoting from Ula's words for the Kangeiko Welcome Pack: "It (winter) is a time to consider our own nature as individuals and human beings living in society with others. What can we find deep within ourselves to nourish and take us to the next stage of life?"

Ula explained, looking at the Japanese Calligraphy for "*Resonance with Nature*," Nature can be understood in two ways, as the outer nature (our environment etc) or our own nature/ true nature. Resonance can be understood as a vibration, and one could imagine sending love to family and friends and other Shintaido practitioners.



Finally she invited us to enjoy our practise together, which would be based on kenjutsu and meditation, as much as our inner nature was reaching for.

Susan took the warm-up for our first Keiko on Saturday afternoon in Elstree School Gym.

Ula led the first part of Keiko. We were holding our bokken in one hand making the Tenshingoso cuts A-E-I-O-U with internal sounds whilst moving backwards and forwards as if with the tide, then repeating the cuts holding the bokken in the other hand, then in the other. Next we made a big circle and did Diamond 8 cuts together with both hands on Bokken. We continued with Tenshingoso movements back and forth with the tides, as a group, in pairs, one-handed with bokken.

Then we made a circle, someone was sitting on a chair for support, some of us were kneeling and we connected with our hands whilst we did Tenshingoso with the intention of a prayer, thinking maybe of somebody in difficulty. This felt very moving and beautiful to do together. This was followed by doing Eiko on the spot.

Masashi led the second part of Keiko 1. First we did Diamond 8 Dai with bokken, walking through the space on our own, then with partner. Then we practised the cuts No 12 and 13 from the Jissen Kumitachi Program: Tsunami-omote in groups of 3 and Tsunami-ura in pairs, followed by Shoden no Kata and Chuden no kata.

For the Evening Social we gathered as usual after dinner in the cosy common room. It was a relaxed informal evening, enriched by treats provided by the party planner Geoffrey Fitch, we had balloons, glow sticks and even proper fireworks to celebrate the New Year! Our initial hesitation—close proximity to the monastery!—



# British Shintaido

## Kangeiko (winter retreat)

5-6th January 2019

# Resonate with nature

With Masashi Minagawa and Ula Chambers

Celebrate the start of the New Year, with three Shintaido practices (two outdoor, weather permitting) and shared living with Shintaido friends in a warm cosy cottage.

Begins Saturday 5th January at 12.45 pm with a light "bring & share" lunch, and finishes Sunday after lunch. (Or stay for the BS AGM 4-5pm)

Location: Douai Abbey, Upper Woolhampton,, RG7 8TQ

Price: £120 , or £100 early-bird (booked by 30th November). Contact: Peter Furtado [peter@shintaido.co.uk](mailto:peter@shintaido.co.uk) or 07967 396 984

was outweighed by great excitement and all rockets were fired into the night sky! During the evening Masashi shared interesting stories and details in relation to Japanese tradition, Diamond 8 cut, calligraphy, sound vibration etc. Despite some note taking this information is difficult to recall and may deserve a separate article at some point in the future! For example, the number 8 is very significant in Japanese culture. The calligraphy for 8 contains all different 8 brush strokes (there are only 8 different strokes) and people practise by writing 8. It also symbolises infinity. In relation to Diamond 8 cut Masashi emphasised the importance of Tenso and the line down from Tenso to heart, also that it is important to pause before the final cut. Sound vibration

(Kotodama) is given great significance in Japanese culture, as a means of communication with spirit(s). Other people also shared interesting experiences they had during Shintaido practise over the years.

Sunday early morning practise was a choice of meditations: Shoko outside or Kongo-i inside. Most people did Shoko and one or two did Kongo-i.

For Keiko 2 (led by Ula) the weather was good and we practised outdoors on the sports ground next to the gym. After a gentle warm-up we did Taimyo part 1, then part 2- modified in pairs. Taiki Mai was practised on our own, with others and with nature.

With bokken we moved across the length of the field (sword pointing forward ?), lifting the bokken when we felt moved to do so, for a Dai Jodan cut, with Taiki Mai feeling. We made the "field" shorter and shorter, first looking up when lifting the sword, then looking forward during lifting of the sword. Next we practised in pairs variations of cuts, using the first movement of Shoden no Kata as defence, and Tsunami cuts, starting by making a good connection first, pointing swords towards each other from a good distance. It was clarified that in defence moves with two cuts, the first one is most important and should be effective, the second one is there if necessary.

Masashi shared his latest thoughts on the difference between Diamond 8 Sei and Dai.

In D8 Sei we face forward, all cuts are straight lines. In D8 Dai our eyes follow the sword and the cut is a continuous line. In Diamond Mudra position the elbows point out in D8 Sei, elbows are lowered in D8 Dai. Suggestion for the transition from Diamond Mudra to Seichu-Ken: drop the shoulders, feel like a stone is dropping down to the centre of the earth, then feel the energy rising, spine and neck lengthen, then cut forward.

When practising D8 Sei with open hands, only practise one side (the first one) and before the last cut separate hands to lift to Tenso from both sides of the body (similar to Ah in Tenshingosō).

We finished in a circle doing Diamond 8 Dai together twice, with bokken.

After this there was the option to continue with advanced practise of Shoden no Kata and Chuden no Kata.

After Lunch, back at the white cottages we had our closing ceremony, where participants shared their impressions from the weekend, some examples: enjoyed learning a new Kata (Chuden no Kata); finding a deepening in Keiko through the support of the Senseis; feeling a boost of positive energy, struggle met with kind heart, a feeling of "home from home;" loved the fireworks!; there was a magic to the event, like emerging into the sunlight; etc.

Ula said she really enjoyed the event and how it is interesting to teach. A challenge is having an idea and then circumstances change all the time, one has to manage this. She appreciates having Masashi for guidance and to work together as a team. She thanked people for their sincere Shoko practise in the morning outside and learned much from watching.

Masashi continued to say a bit more about resonance and the calligraphy used for the theme. He explained that a certain letter/ calligraphy used on top of letters in Japan symbolises opening a treasure box and seeing a message from the divine. He said we are pioneers always opening new ways!

I feel we had a very enjoyable gathering, practises were very inclusive of people of different levels of ability and it allowed us to learn something new with each other in a very supportive atmosphere. By the end everyone seemed refreshed and renewed. A good feeling to take away into the new year!

Just a final comment to say that due to various circumstances I only managed to write this report with a 6

month delay, using the notes I made at the time. I apologise as they may be some mistakes and omissions. It is a less personal, more factual account due to time having passed, but I hope it helps participants to remember and give people who couldn't make it a useful overview of another well received and much appreciated Kangeiko.

We are looking forward to next year's Kangeiko to refresh and nurture ourselves at the beginning of the year.

Viola Santa

## **Kangeiko 2020: A New Format**

*By Charles Burns*

Ever since 2003 British Shintaido has welcomed in the new year with a one-night kangeiko event at the White Cottages in Douai Abbey. We will do so again in 2020, but regular fans of this event will notice a change in the format.

This change was initially brought about by the Douai monks, who unexpectedly imposed a 2-night minimum fee for cottage bookings. After getting over the initial shock, we thought about it and decided that perhaps it's not be such a bad thing after all. We have always packed a lot of keiko into our one-night events. However, there is no doubt that a two-night event will be both more relaxing and enable us to do more, going deeper into the theme of our practice.

So, this is our provisional plan for this year's kangeiko.

The event will start with a BSC keiko on Friday afternoon, followed by tea, chat and supper at the cottages. BSC members will be asked to arrive soon after lunch, with others arriving for registration around tea time. The BS AGM, to which all BS members are invited, will be held on the Friday evening after supper.

The kangeiko proper will begin on Saturday morning, with two Saturday keikos and a final keiko on Sunday morning. There will also be the usual early-morning taimyo and shoko practices, as well as our famous new-year party on the Saturday evening. The event will finish after lunch on Sunday, when we can clear up the cottages. A major advantage of this arrangement is that we won't need to hold our AGM after the event, on Sunday afternoon. People have often commented that this meeting is awkwardly timed.

Being a two-night event will inevitably make it more expensive than previous years. However, we hope to keep costs down by self catering, and by offering generous early-bird discounts for BS members. BS will be supporting costs for the BSC keiko and AGM on Friday. I will be sending out publicity and registration forms in the autumn. In the meantime if you have any questions or suggestions, please do get in touch. I very much hope everybody will feel able to support this new format.

Charles Burns: Kangeiko organiser for 2020

## **2020 Vision: A Management Team Update**

*By Charles Burns*

The BS management team has been discussing a vision for 2020. In particular, how best to support BS members who wish to attend various important events taking place this year and next. It promises to be an interesting year ahead. How should we prepare?

2020 is a quadrennial year. This means there will be an international Shintaido event. The next ISP International will be held in Japan in November 2020. Prior to that ESC is holding a ground-breaking event in Reims in November 2019. In between these events BS will hold its own kangeiko and daienshu events as usual.

In the autumn 2016 edition of Taimyo (no 59), soon after the last international event in France, I published a long article about the difficult creation of a new international Shintaido organisation (ISP) which held its

first general meeting at that event. Since then, we have seen just what a necessary change it was. ISP has gone from strength to strength and is doing great work. We can, at last, see just how important a functioning international organisation is in developing a coherent world view of Shintaido.

Both the 2019 ESC and 2020 ISP events promise an opportunity to experience this international coherence at first hand. BS would like to encourage as many members as possible to attend both events, as well as our own events in the UK. Accordingly, we have been discussing the subject of sponsorship for 2019/2020. So many events do represent competing demands for sponsorship, and BS has a rather smaller “pot” than we might like to draw on.

The last time there was a major international event so far from home was in 2012: the IS event in San Francisco. In 2012 BS was able to make several thousand pounds available to support members who wished to attend, helping them with travel costs. This made a big difference to the number who did attend. We achieved this by offering sponsorship to those who attended both the international event and our own daienshu taking place during the same year.

In 2020—due to declining BS membership and a number of recent loss-making events—the total fund will be smaller. Nevertheless, we would still like to encourage attendance at the event in Japan.

Our total sponsorship fund for the coming year will be in the region of £2500. This assumes there are no other drains on BS funds between then and now, and that all our own events make a profit (or at least break even). The management team would welcome proposals from members about the best way to allocate this fund, and just what our 2020 vision should be.

Charles Burns, BS Treasurer



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## Examination Report

Examination took place on 2nd April 2019 at Bath University.

**Examiners: Masashi Minagawa, Laurent Lacroix**

### Bojutsu

Taishi Minagawa

Junior 10 Kyu

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## Contacts & Classes 2019

*Please Visit the events pages on [www.shintaido.co.uk](http://www.shintaido.co.uk) for further details*

### Contacts

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### Local Contacts

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### Local Contacts (continued)

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Stroud 'Gentle Shintaido'	Susan Lacroix	07590 368 998	slacroix@btinternet.com

### Regular Classes

*Classes led by current BS instructors. Shintaido classes and their venues may change, so please check before attending an unfamiliar class.*

<b>Tuesday</b>	Bath, University of Bath.	8.00–9.30pm	Bath Bojutsu Club
<b>Thursday</b>	Stroud, The Endowed School Upper Hall Walkey Hill, GL5 3TX	10.30–11.30am	Gentle Shintaido
	Brighton, The Manor gym.	8.15–9.30pm	Shintaido
<b>Friday</b>	Lansdown Hall, Stroud, GL5 1BB	2.00–3.30pm	'Lightwaves' Class
	Reading, Clayfield Copse playing fields	7.30–8.30am	Shintaido/Bo tutorial
<b>Weekends</b>	Specialist classes with any BS Instructor. Available by appointment.		

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## British Shintaido Diary 2019–2020

<b>1st September 2019</b>	<b>Kenjutsu workshop at Almondsbury Hall, Bristol, led by Masashi Minagawa.</b>
<b>29th September 2019</b>	<b>BSC Autumn Keiko 10am–4pm. Cholsey Pavilion, Station Road, Cholsey OX10 9PT</b>
<b>1st to 3rd November 2019</b>	<b>ESC Gasshuku in Reims (France) "Sharing the essence of Shintaido." This event is open to all shintaido practitioners.</b>  <b>For further info: <a href="https://esc2019test.weebly.com">https://esc2019test.weebly.com</a></b>
<b>1st December 2019</b>	<b>Kenjutsu workshop at Almondsbury Hall, Bristol, led by Masashi Minagawa.</b>
<b>3rd January 2020</b>	<b>BSC Autumn Keiko 10am–12pm. Venue tbc</b>
<b>3rd to 5th January 2020</b>	<b>Kangeiko 2020, White Cottages, Douai Abbey. Sensei: Nagako Cooper &amp; Ula Chambers</b>  <b>Further info: <a href="mailto:charles@shintaido.co.uk">charles@shintaido.co.uk</a></b>
<b>8th March 2020</b>	<b>Kenjutsu workshop at Almondsbury Hall, Bristol, led by Masashi Minagawa.</b>
<b>5th to 7th June 2020</b>	<b>Daienshu at Emerson College, Forest Row, East Sussex including BSC practice on Friday afternoon, times t.b.c.</b>

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*Resonance with Nature  
Calligraphy by Minagawa Sensei*

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**Taimyo Next Issue—** Spring 2020. Thank you to all who contributed articles. Please send further articles, pictures and ideas to [newsletter@shintaido.co.uk](mailto:newsletter@shintaido.co.uk)