

豪州尺八会

AUSTRALIAN SHAKUHACHI SOCIETY

Nr 24 March 2006

ASS P.O Box 63 Woodford NSW 2770



Greetings. This longer newsletter reports on the very recent Australian Shakuhachi Festival held this year in Canberra. There are pictures taken at the Festival throughout the newsletter.

In this issue there a new section on Jinashi and long flutes.

We are fortunate to have a short article by a former student of the late Nishimura Sensei and some beautiful pictures of his flute made by Nishimura with some exquisite carvings on it – one of the Master's many talents.

There is also an article by the organizer of the First European Shakuhachi Festival Kiku Day.

Rileys report on ASF 2006 is on pages 9 and 10 as it has a table which did not fit into the two column layout.



OUR NEW COMMITTEE

Founder: Dr Riley Lee
riley@rileylee.net

President: Stuart Ransom
sands@hypermax.net.au

Treasurer: John Holmes
johnholmes@ozemail.com.au

Secretary: Bronwyn Kirkpatrick
bronwyn.kirkpatrick@bigpond.com

Newsletter: Graham Ranft
ranftg@inet.net.au

Publicity Officer: Adam Simmons
fatrain@adamsimmons.com

We now have a full time secretary and I'd like to thank John Holmes for all the work he did whilst Bronwyn was in Japan. [Ed.]



Matama

Feruya

Kakizaki

NEW NEWS

SHAK & SURF - HAWAII SHAKUHACHI FESTIVAL 9-12 November 2006

The second Hawaii Shakuhachi Festival will be held on 9-12 November 2006, at the Music Department of the University of Hawaii. Surfing can be arranged, waves permitting, at nearby Waikiki.

Accommodation has been secured at East-West Center, a short walk from the Music Department. Accommodation costs will be nearly half of what it would be in hotels. More information about costs, schedule, etc. will be featured in future newsletters and on the ASS website.

This is an excellent and unique chance to combine your surfing with shakuhachi.

Little known 'fact' #1: many Edo komuso were excellent surfers, snorkelers, and ocean swimmers.

Little known 'fact' #2: a number of present day shakuhachi professionals also surf.

*Little known 'fact' #3: there has **NEVER, EVER** been an instance where a shakuhachi has cracked or split while being played on a surfboard.*

NEWS BREAK: Get out your long-term diaries. Dates for the **World Shakuhachi Festival** have been set. The Sydney Conservatorium of Music has been booked for the week of **3-9 July 2008**. This booking is 80% firm (the remaining 20% depending in part on the NSW State Government, the owners of the facilities, who must sign off on the entire 2008 schedule).

NOTICE: ASF06 Festival Shirts for sale.

The few remaining ASF06 Blue polo shirts will be sold at cost: \$20 plus \$5 pp per shirt.

For information about which sizes are remaining and/or to order via credit card, contact Patricia: 02 9976 6904; fax 02 9976 6905



ASS AGM 13th February 2006

- Meeting opened at 8.40am. Number present – 15.
- President's address was delivered by Carl Rathus.

Carl summed up the function of ASS and thanked John Holmes and Graham Ranft for their continued efforts as Treasurer and Newsletter Editor respectively. Carl thanked ASF 2006 organisers in Canberra; Andrew and Molly; Adam Simmons PR; the teachers and Riley and Patricia for a successful ASF 2006.

- Nominations were opened for office bearers.

Carl Rathus stepped down as president and Stuart Ransom was nominated and accepted as the new president of ASS. All other office bearers remained the same.

- The new President elect, Stuart Ransom, took the chair.
- John Holmes delivered the treasurer's report. Report accepted.
- Bronwyn Kirkpatrick delivered the secretary's report.

Bronwyn raised the issue of whether non paid up members of ASS should continue to receive the ASS newsletter via email. A motion was passed and accepted that non paid up members should continue to receive the newsletter via email, as it doesn't cost the ASS anything and is available on the web anyway and that email reminders should be sent to lapsed members to pay their dues.

General Business

- Graham Ranft thanked John Holmes for his support and assistance with the newsletter over the past year. John Holmes thanked Graham Ranft for his continued efforts in editing the esteemed newsletter. Stuart Ransom suggested that we all contribute to the newsletter; especially David Dixon, who will begin a column entitled "David's Drivel" to document his experiences in Japan.

- Rupert Summerson suggested that ASS keep an archive of photos for marketing and publicity purposes. Graham Ranft will act as collection point. The issue was raised of possibly hiring student photographers at future ASFs.
- Noel Allanson thanked the current committee members and past President Carl Rathus.

WSF 2008

Riley Lee delivered a report on the current status of WSF 2008 organisation.

- The Sydney Conservatorium of Music has been booked, with the Conservatorium acting as co-sponsors of the event, which dramatically reduces the cost of hire of the venue.
- The template for WSF 2008 will be based on WSF in Boulder, Colorado in 1998 and other past WSFs.
- Approximately 400 participants are projected with a projected approximate budget of \$400 000.
- WSF 2008 will be co-coordinated by WSF committee and ASS.
- The festival will comprise of 30-40 events; several small public concerts; main public concert; large group workshops by main teachers; academic papers; shakuhachi making; basic techniques etc.
- Accommodation will be similar to WSF in New York in 2004; a hostel type venue within walking distance of the Conservatorium; possibility of a travel agency deal to handle accommodation.
- Major costs will be the airfares for the top performers.
- The Opera House main hall as a performance venue is considered to be an important draw card in attracting people from Japan and the US. It is hoped that some people will pay their own way for the opportunity to perform at the Opera House. The Opera House cannot be booked until 2007.
- What needs to be done now is to plan the plan;
- Funding opportunities need to be investigated and applications started now; Australia Council; Ministry for the Arts; City of Sydney; Festival Australia; Japan Australia Foundation; Commercial Sponsors; Sponsors

in kind. Riley Lee has assembled a package and has begun meeting with funding bodies.

- Other incomes will come from paying participants and ticket sales; there will be no koto stream but there is a possibility of the festival occurring concurrently with a taiko festival.
- **NOW** - Grant writing; Website creating - English/Japanese; Logo; Commission - a Commissioned “big piece” by an Australian composer, with the possible inclusion of a children’s choir would become a publicity vehicle and boost ticket sales.
- Grant writing – Riley Lee; Planning – Margaret Tung; Logo – send ideas.
- Proposed that **ASS** should develop its own website in addition to the creation of a WSF 2008 website. Accepted. John Holmes will look into getting a webmaster.
- **ASS** will hold a low key festival and an AGM before 2008.

Meeting closed at 10am.



Feruya Teruo eating a 0.5 salad roll

ASF06 a Report

Stuart Ransom

Returning from the Australian Shakuhachi Festival in Canberra last month, although a little weary, I felt as inspired and enthusiastic about the instrument as ever.

This was partly due to the wonderful camaraderie, inspiring teachers, great concert, fine surroundings and hospitality, but largely due to the fresh group of beginners.

I enjoyed being involved in teaching them and being part of their introduction into the instrument..

I feel the national gathering is critical in the further advancement of playing standard, knowledge, growth and promotion of the ongoing and evolving shakuhachi tradition, of which we are all a part.

It was requested that we have another festival next year, a simpler affair to get together. I think this would be an important thing to sustain the national enthusiasm and so we'll keep you posted on potential dates and venue, aiming for minimal effort with maximum effect. It would also be a great opportunity to update the planning and organisation for The World Shakuhachi Festival in Sydney in 2008.

While mentioning WSF 2008, I would ask if anyone has any ideas or contacts for sponsorship, funding, media or if you have a special talent or skill that could assist in any aspect of the organisation please let Riley or a committee member know.

I would like to thank those who encouraged me to accept the position of president of **ASS**. What a title. I look forward to joining the existing elected office bearers to provide an ongoing service to all members.

Breath wishes.....Stuart



The Long Flute



This is a new section devoted to the longer shakuhachi incorporating ji-nashi and European news. I hope to make this a regular feature.

There is a report by Kiku Day, who is organising the first European Shakuahchi Festival, and a short article by Tilo Burdach – former student of the late Kyotaku player Koku Nishimura Sensei.

Tilo's flute made by his teacher is shown left.
[Ed.]

Why did I start to play kyotaku, why this style?

Tilo Burdach

<http://www.tilopa.de/english.htm>

The answer to this question is really a series of 'coincidences' which happened to me 20 years ago. I didn't realize then how much they would change my life.

One day I bought a very badly made shakuhachi-like reed flute from a hippie on a fleamarket on the island of Ibiza and found that I loved playing it. 2 days later I met a student of Koku Nishimura who told me I could write to him and ask him to send me a real kyotaku. Three months later I sat in Koku Sensei's house and started studying honkyoku music with him. I kind of fell in love with this unusual, humorous, wise and crazy master. So it seems I didn't have much of a choice in all of this. It just happened.

On the other hand, the ground was prepared well for something like this through my previous life. I had started my search 7 years earlier getting in

touch with different kinds of meditations and spiritual masters. I was (and still am) deeply into T'ai Chi and sitting meditations like vipassana and felt very much attracted to Zen. So I was familiar with the idea of combining body, mind and spirit in a meditative endeavour, of engaging in an activity totally with all my heart (as Koku sensei used to say: *isshokemmei*) to become empty and specifically using the breath as a bridge between the conscious and the unconscious....

Step by step I went deeper and deeper into playing *kyotaku* until I also started making them 10 years ago.

The picture below shows the *kyotaku* which Koku sensei made for me. It's name is 'kyu ryu' (empty sky). A few years before he died, when I visited him, he asked me to leave the flute with him over night. Next morning the flute had this beautiful carving of a butterfly – referring to my bamboo-name 'kocho' (empty butterfly)...



The First Pan-European *Shakuhachi* Summer School 19th – 22nd of July 2006

School of Oriental and African Studies
(SOAS), University of London

In both Australia and North America, there have been networks of *shakuhachi* players for a while. Thus players know of each other, can contact each other and festivals and summer camps are being organised. There has been no attempt to organise a *shakuhachi* event across the many borders in Europe so far. There are *shakuhachi* organisations within countries such as Holland, Switzerland and Czech Republic among others. However, I believe it is important we begin to cooperate. It is time we get together, know each other and work together and support each other.

By coordinating our efforts we will manage to reach a wider public and raise the awareness of this beautiful, mystic flute. We are hoping that by creating a space for all *shakuhachi* players to get together not only across Europe's many borders but also across styles and guilds, so we can enhance the interest for this beautiful instrument.

Whatever approach to the instrument one chooses to take, be it Buddhist, for meditational purposes or purely musical, it is an instrument that many can share and enjoy.

The aim here at the SOAS Summer School is to create an environment where many of the different schools and styles of *shakuhachi* and approaches to the instrument can meet in peace and enjoy the differences. Participants can choose the style they wish to study and follow that course in *honkyoku* (the traditional Zen Buddhist repertoire), *san/shin-kyoku* (ensemble music from the 19th century to today accompanied by *shamisen* (3-string long-necked lute) and *koto* (zither), *min'yō* (folk song) and the *shakuhachi* in rock and jazz. This is an opportunity to try something new.

Presently we have 3 types of *honkyoku* styles represented: Kinko style taught by Michael Coxall and Gunnar Jinmei Linder, Dōkyoku taught by Jim Franklin and Véronique Piron, and Zensabō is taught by Atsuya Okuda, the founder of this *ji-nashi shakuhachi* style, and Kiku Day.

The Kinko and Dôkyoku teachers will also be teaching *sankyoku* and *shinkyoku*. Since it is the first time we are organising such an event, we have tried to make use of as many 'local' European teachers as possible. We will be joined by the string players: Masako Okuda, who is the 3rd heir to the Seiha Ikuta School, teaching *shamisen* and joining the accompanying group; Satoshi Utanoichi Okuda, *shamisen* and *koto*; Michiko Iwamoto, *koto*. We also have Clive Bell teaching *min'yô* and improvisation, and Brian Tairaku Ritchie from the US has kindly offered his help to teach *shakuhachi* in jazz and rock. With the addition of Clive and Brian we have a very wide approach to the *shakuhachi*. We did not manage to have *tôzan* and *meian* players represented this time. However, Tilo Burdach, who is a student of the late *kyotaku* player and national living treasure Nishimura Kokû and Vlastislav Matousek from Czech Republic who has studied *Myôdanji Taizan* ryu may join us for workshops and concerts. Other workshop presenters will be Philip Horan showing us his approach to playing Celtic music on *shakuhachi*, Jim Franklin on breathing techniques and Gunnar Jinmei Linder on *shakuhachi* history.

We have tried to plan our schedule so people can follow a course all 4 days or perhaps break it up in two days of each course. That means participants will be able to learn and work away with new pieces and have tuition both group and individual.

We will have a variety of concerts. The first evening is going to be a social gathering and 'open microphone'. The second evening will be the teacher's concert. We will have a wide range of styles here, so I hope this is going to be a great concert.

The third evening is a concert solely by our Japanese guests, Atsuya Okuda, who will play *honkyoku*, followed by both solo and ensemble performances by the string players. The last evening is reserved for students to present pieces they have learned during the course of the 4 days. The gala evening is thus reserved for the students as this is a 'summer school' and the students and their progress is the focus.

Hopefully we can create a European Shakuhachi Society, which can have sub-branches in the different countries. We feel *shakuhachi* playing in Europe is moving towards something new and

exciting. If any of the more experienced Australian *shakuhachi* players would like to give us advice, please email us:

shakuhachi@soas.ac.uk

More information about the shakuhachi summer school:

<http://www.shakuhachisummer-soas.com/>

More information about the music summer schools at SOAS;

<http://www.soas.ac.uk/summermusicschool/>



MORE PICTURES FROM ASF 2006



Beginners Concert



Guess who?



No guessing...



5 Teachers



Kaoru Kakizaki



Main concert



Stan' Kakadu' Richardson and friends



Neck waving posture correction



Concentration



Beginners on the lawn



Assembled



Teruo Feruya with a real shakuhachi



The great morning awakening Ro-buki

There were many pictures. I hope these give some idea of the flavour of the occasion. Unfortunately I did not receive any of Stan Richardson - the other teacher whose presence at ASF 2006 greatly enhanced the weekend. These pictures will be archived by ASS. If you have any more please send them to me or Riley- emails on first and last page. [Ed.]

*Pictures by:
Bill Butler, Janusz Sysak, Kirsty Beilharz,
Lindsay Duggan, Matt Yeldham,
Wendy & Ray Mercer.*

ASF06 Canberra ACT 10-13 February 2006

Organisers' Report

What a great Shakuhachi Festival we had in Canberra. Those of us who attended will, I am sure, agree that it was a weekend well spent. Below are some figures that Patricia has gleaned from the records. We note with pleasure that every state and territory of Australia was represented at ASF06.

ASF06 total attendance: 77

Shakuhachi students: 56,
 Regular Students: 37
 Absolute Beginners: 19

Shakuhachi teachers: 9

Koto students: 4
 Koto and shamisen teachers/performers: 4
 Non-participants: 2; Admin/staff: 1; yoga teacher: 1; total: 4

	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	JAPAN	USA
Regular	4	13	1	5	1	1	5	1	6	
Beginners	8	6			1		3	1		
Shak tutors		2		2			1		3	1
Koto tutors		1							3	

	Females	Males
Shakuhachi	23	33
Koto	3	1
Teacher/ shak	1	9
Teacher/koto	3	0

Total number of workshops: 40 Approx. number of pieces taught in workshops: 33

Shakuhachi workshops – 33 (including 4 for ABs)
 Koto workshops – 7

Total number of scheduled private lessons: 56
 Approximate paid attendance of Festival Concert: 150

The additional 70+ ASF participants also in the audience made for a full house.

The venue and accommodation were excellent, for which we thank Noel Allanson for his initial research and selection. University House is the conference centre and accommodation for visiting academics at ANU. The facilities, food and accommodation were all very good. The Great Hall, where the Festival Concert was held, is a beautiful acoustic space and so convenient, as no travel time and arrangements were needed.

There were enough breakout rooms to accommodate all of the workshops, with virtually no noise spill over, a true bonus for our music festival.

ASF06 was so successful mainly because of the hard work done by all of those involved. As befits **ASS**, a non-profit organisation, so much of the work was done voluntarily, including but not limited to, Andrew

MacGregor, the Canberra committee (Rupert Summerson, Noel Allanson, Graham Ranft), Adam Simmons, our publicity officer, to mention but a few. And the work continues, notably by Patricia and ASS treasurer, John Holmes (financial report will be ready soon).

It must be remembered that all of the tutors heavily subsidised ASF06. The fees paid to these dedicated people were much lower than what the teachers would normally charge for their teaching and performing duties. Also, the overseas teachers were not paid for their airfare. The generosity of the teachers enabled the Festival to maintain the extremely low shakuhachi student/teacher ratio of about 6/1. Many thanks to all the teachers.

One of the few disappointments of the Festival was one of the invited tutors, Christopher Blasdel not being able to attend due to a sudden illness. He has recovered now, and we look forward to his attending future ASF events. He is already involved in the planning of WSF08; we will be seeing a great deal of him in 2008.

The next Australian Festival will be held in Manly NSW sometime early 2007, date TBC. In anticipation of the World Shakuhachi Festival in 2008, this will be a modest affair compared to ASF06, though, it is hoped, just as rewarding.

Patricia and Riley Lee

27 March 2006



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