



明澄庵会

MYO CHO AN KAI NEWSLETTER

No. 33

FEBRUARY 2011

Myochoan's Roji (Tea Garden) and one of the Chozobachis



REFLECTIONS ON "THE DEPTH OF CHADO" BY DR. KOICHI OKAMOTO

Doctor Okamoto encourages us to recognize and reach "the depth of Chado" by accomplishing the following:

1. Understanding of all procedures
2. Understanding of all utensils including the history and purpose
3. Knowledge of Higher Procedure with proper mental and spiritual conditions
4. Abundant Training of Chado

Although these are important, the most important aspect is the one that is within the deepest heart of the individual. This is not apart from one's other experiences but tied to living life itself.

He said that if you wish to find a good utensil (which is not about the cost or monetary value of it), you must have a sincere desire to find it and continue to search for it. If you want it to fit with your deepest idea or desire, then you will find it. Life is not only chance but it is an extension of your attitude and conduct every day. If you believe, then it will happen. When I think about my life, (and not only with Chado), I must admit that I agree with him.

Soju Ward

UPDATE ON MARTY PARKER

As of the end of January, we are happy to report that Marty Parker has recovered completely from the heart attack that he suffered in December.

SEICHU, ENNO, MUGEN-KI CHAKAI ON 27 June 2010

This memorial ceremony honors Gengensai Seicho, Ennosai Techu, and Mugensai Sekiso, the 11th, 13th, and 14th generation Grand Masters of Urasenke. The ceremony began with Hana-yose-no-shiki (flower offering) by the students in the Honseki (eight tatami room)..



The hanging scroll, done by Koyasan Sanpoin Kusanagi Zenko Daisojo, shows the Japanese character for "flower."



After Hana-yose-no-shiki, Shokyaku (first guest) Dr Martin Neft was served usucha (thin tea) in the Honseki (eight tatami room) by Teishu (host) Shoko Takegoshi and Hanto (host's helper) Kyoko Hata.



The guests moved to the Ryurei room where Ward Sensei was Shokyaku and Ann Pestalozzi, who came all the way from Murphys, was second guest. Usucha was prepared by Patricia Payne and served by Marcia Ferris.



Students and guests of Ward Sensei

CALIFORNIA WAKI KYOKAI'S SEINENBU ON 4 SEPTEMBER 2010



On September 4th, the California Waki Kyokai's Seinenbu hosted a casual summer tea gathering. Guests enjoyed usucha in the 8-tatami room where the seasonal theme was expressed through cool imagery to counter the late summer heat.
Soshin Nitta

The Yoritsuki (entry) Tokonoma's hanging scroll was done by Jiku, the incense container is a wooden boat and the paper fan has a picture of (Asagao) Morning Glories.



The Honseki Tokonoma had a special hanging scroll with calligraphy by Ward Sensei's father, Kangetsu-in.

Furin Ya Hisashi Ni Sagaru Matsu No Eda (the sound of ringing chime, look up to the eaves, see the pine branch)



Ward Sensei is first guest as Soshin Nitta prepares tea. Shoko Takegoshi was hanto



Members of Seinenbu and guests with Ward Sensei.



Special sweet for this Chakai was made by Nobuko Clark

After tea, California Waki Kyokai and Myochoan kai members and their families enjoyed a delightful pot luck dinner at Ward Sensei's home. After dinner, Ward Sensei's students helped her celebrate her birthday.

We were also happy to welcome back long time member, Dr. Steve Vilter, who had been working in Alaska and then New Zealand for several years.

NEW YORK CONVENTION (attended by Ward Sensei and Katie Nitta) 17-19 SEPTEMBER 2010

New policies for overseas groups include:

Gyotei teachers will be visiting the Urasenke groups in the United States and Canada.

Support for Urasenke groups to help each other.

Teaching introduction to philosophy, cooking, and other aspects of Tea in addition to the ceremony will be encouraged.

Reflections on our trip to New York to attend Urasenke's North America Meeting

I would first of all like to thank Urasenke, Mrs. Ward, and the California Wa-Ki Association for making my participation in this meeting possible. This was my first trip to New York City, but it did not feel foreign because it was filled with many familiar faces from Urasenke. Also familiar was the way Urasenke always manages to bring a feeling of being back in Kyoto at all of its functions. The weekend was made even more pleasant because its main purpose turned out to be the realization of many of the things our group has been hoping for. Hounsai Daisosho was so kind to send Fushida Gyotei to teach at Myochoan several years ago. Hounsai Daisosho and Mr. Sekine's announcement that Urasenke intends to reorganize North America to operate more like Japan heralds the beginning of more of this support.

Our time in New York began by attending a meeting with all the other representatives of North American groups, which was led by Hounsai Daisosho and Mr. Sekine. At this meeting we learned of Urasenke's intent to create a North America office in New York City to coordinate the collaborative efforts of the groups and teachers sent from Japan to expand and augment Urasenke Chado in North America. Hounsai Daisosho and Mr. Sekine emphasized their desire to give groups in North America the opportunity to engage in all of the activities and programs they want.

After this meeting I felt like I could see the future of Myochoan-kai stretching out before me filled with new activities, new students and other expansions. The rest of the weekend in New York was filled with a lovely kenchu (tea offering) at St. Peter's Catholic Church, celebratory banquets and chakai, but our thoughts were busy with plans for our own group's future.

One of my major concerns for the long-term future of Myochoan-kai has always been financial independence. Mrs. Ward spends more of her own money to keep Myochoan going than I think everyone really realizes. I have often puzzled on what our group can do to support itself independently. Having such active support from Urasenke will lay the groundwork, along with achieving non-profit status, to propel Myochoan-kai into a bold new future.

Katie Nitta

BECOME A MEMBER OF MYO CHO AN KAI

Myo Cho An Kai is Ward Sensei's organization, dedicated to practicing and promoting awareness of Urasenke Chado. Members have the opportunity to take lessons in Chado from Ward Sensei and to participate in tea gatherings and other activities throughout the year. Members also receive the Myo Cho An Kai newsletter. To become a member, please contact Sensei Ward (916-663-3436).

A gentle reminder that 2011 dues should be paid now.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Tea Demonstration on 5 March at Del Oro High School, 3301 Taylor Road, Loomis, CA during the Japanese Festival

Rikyu-ki Tea Gathering on 27 March, Seichu-ki Tea Gathering in June or July, and Seinenbu Tea Gathering in September at the Myochoan Tea House in Penryn

SOTAN-KI CHAKAI 13 NOVEMBER 2010

Sotan-ki Chakai is a memorial tea gathering that honors Sotan, the third generation Grand Master of Urasenke.



In the Tokonoma of the Honseki room, the hanging scroll, done by Koyasan Sanpoin Kusanagi Zenko Daisojo, shows the Japanese character for "flower." This Jiku is used for most of the memorial chakais.



Shokyaku Ward Sensei and Jikyaku (second guest) Donna Couch watch Shoko Takegoshi clean the natsume.

Although the Ro season starts in November, for this chakai we decided to use "Naka-Oki" temae, which is one of the Furo procedures.



The Jiku (hanging scroll) in the Ryurei Tokonoma was done by Hounsai-Daisosho "The wind and moon are deep in the autumn mountain".

Shokyaku (first guest) Dixie Jennings-Teats received usucha from Nobuko Clark in the Ryurei room.



Students and guests of Ward Sensei at Sotan-ki. We were happy to Dixie and Mabrey. Tricia brought a guest.

JOYAGAMA 30 DECEMBER 2010

Ward Sensei hosted Joyagama, the final tea gathering of the year for the Myochoan group, is a time to share tea with friends and family and enjoy memories of the past year. It is a time to welcome the New Year as we bid farewell to the old. The students practice all year and then share what they have learned by choosing the room and procedure that they want to do.



Nobuko Clark chose to prepare usucha in the Honseki. Special guests included Reverends Dixie Jennings-Teats and her husband Rob Jennings-Teats who came from Carson City, Nevada and Mabrey Scott who came from Vacaville. Soshin Nitta hosted usucha in the Ryurei using Misonotana. Shoko Takegoshi hosted usucha in the Diameseki.



Students and guests with Ward Sensei



Noriko Nagato and her husband Takeshi Misaki, Dixie and Rob Jennings-Teats, Shoko Takegoshi and Soshin (Katie) Nitta enjoy the traditional end of the year meal featuring Toshi Koshi Soba, the long, thin buckwheat noodles. Symbolically, the very long noodle connects the person eating it from the end of the old year to the beginning of the New Year. The evening was a beautiful celebration of the year past and the year to come.

Special thanks to all who helped with the dinner, particularly Takeshi who washed all the dishes after the meal.