

Ryu Dojo 20th Anniversary Celebration!

This year marks 20 years since the original number 1 dojo at Ryu Headquarters was built in Urayasu. To mark the occasion, a special seminar was held on Monday the 13th of January along with a party and the annual New Years Kagamibiraki demonstration.

Held at nearby Chuo Budokan, the special seminar was attended by around 120 students and was taught by Ando Sensei and guest instructor Susumu Chino.

Students were divided into two groups and each instructor taught each group for half an hour before changing groups. After that, both groups joined into one and each instructor taught the whole group for 15 minutes each.

This was a rare opportunity for Ryu students to learn from Chino Sensei and to train with his student from Hayabusa Aikido.



Chino Sensei teaches some seated kokyunage techniques.

Seminar with special guest instructor, Susumu Chino.



Students in Ando Sensei's group study tENCHINAGE.



Group picture with all students after the seminar.

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Ryu Dojo Kagamibiraki



Ando Shihan demonstrates at the annual Ryu Dojo kagamibiraki ceremony.

Ando Sensei followed Professor Kohama's speech with remarks about all the new classes now available at Ryu Dojo starting from late 2019, giving students more opportunities to experience those small joys!

After his speech, Ando Shihan gave a short, dynamic demonstration before handing out high level dan certificates.



After the special seminar, students moved to Ryu Dojo for the annual kagamibiraki ceremony and demonstration. The kagamibiraki started at 11:50 am and as well as all the students who had attended the special seminar, the crowd swelled to include other guests who hadn't attended training but had arrived for the Ryu Dojo 20th Anniversary party. Passers-by in the street also stopped to watch from outside the dojo windows, where standing space had been prepared. The ceremony was opened with a speech by Hirohisa Kohama.

Professor Kohama is Professor Emeritus at the University of Shizuoka; the author of several books; a special advisor to the Ryu World Aikido Federation and a member of the Ryu Urayasu Branch. He spoke about the small joys of aikido - those little moments when you have a flash of understanding something you didn't understand before or of suddenly being able to do something you weren't able to do before.



Professor Hirohisa Kohama.

Visitors from Brazil



In January, we were happy to welcome visitors from Brazil at Ryu.

Marcio Welb Sensei from the Aikido Yoshinkan Nintai-kan Dojo visited Japan with his family and spent some time training with us. He also tested for and passed his 2nd dan. Congratulations!





Susumu Chino Sensei gives a speech at the 20th Anniversary Celebrations at Ryu Dojo.



Artwork gifted to the dojo in celebration of 20 years. Dragons created by one continuous brush stroke.



Group shot of all guests at the celebration.

Mochi tsuki tanren training

Mochi tsuki is the Japanese tradition of using a heavy mallet to pound rice into sticky paste to make rice cakes. The rice can be eaten savory with toasted nori and soya sauce or sweet with sweet bean paste. This year, Ando Sensei attended the mochi tsuki event at the local elementary school in his capacity as chairman of the PTA. Unfortunately, there weren't enough volunteers there to pound the amount of rice prepared.

No problem! Ando Sensei went back to the dojo and grabbed extra volunteers off the mats at Saturday morning training and roped them in for some extra tan ren training.

Afterwards, students from the elementary school, their families and people from the neighbourhood enjoyed eating the mochi together.



Ryu Dojo 20th Anniversary



Monday the 13th of January was Coming of Age day in Japan. This is the day when all citizens who turn 20 in that year are celebrated with a special coming of age ceremony. In Urayasu, that ceremony is held at Disneyland. On this special day around 120 people filled up both the number 1 and adjoining number 2 dojos to celebrate Ryu Dojo turning 20!

The celebration opened with speeches from VIP guests including House of Representatives member Sonoura Kentaro, Urayasu City Council Chairman Arata Takara and Susumu Chino Sensei.

After the speeches, guests enjoyed special celebratory bento boxes. Those there to celebrate included past and present students; representatives from Ryu affiliate dojos and clubs around the country as well as those who have helped over the last 20 years to make Ryu what it is today. This was an opportunity to catch up for people who trained together in the early days of Ryu but don't often manage to see each other anymore and there was a lot of reminiscing.

Every year, the MVP from amongst Ryu affiliate dojos and clubs is announced and the MVP award for 2019 went to Yoshinkan Aikido Soryu.

Finally guests were treated to a slide show of photos from 20 years of aikido at Ryu - hilarious for some of the more recent students to see instructors and sempai in their bygone days and bygone fashions...



Flower arrangement at dojo entrance, sent in congratulations.



Akira and Miyuki Mitsuhashi of Yoshinkan Aikido Soryu accept the Ryu MVP award for 2019.

21st Annual Winter Training at Ryu Dojo

20 years of Ryu Dojo means 20 annual winter trainings! This year was the 21st Annual Winter Training at Ryu Dojo and over the 10 days of training more than 50 students challenged the early morning and cold to attend. Each day a different instructor teaches a series of techniques. Training is fast-paced with 8 techniques taught over an hour class but it's a great opportunity for students to train with instructors they don't normally get a chance to train with.

The theme of this year's training was "masakatsu agatsu" or "true victory is self victory".

After class every day hot drinks were served, either coffee or sweet amazake.

Local TV news station J:Com stopped by to film training and interview some of the students attending. [Check out the news report here.](#)



Aikido at Kojimachi Junior High School

In January instructors from Ryu Dojo were once again invited to teach a special Aikido course as part of the curriculum at Kojimachi Junior High School in Tokyo. Students from 1st - 3rd year take a total of 6 one hour lessons with a short test at the end, with the score counting towards their evaluation in PE. With such a short time and a lot of techniques to get through, we have to distill the movements down to try and convey their essence and efficiency as quickly as possible. We also try to teach a little of the theory of Aikido and how it is expressed in the basic movements and in the techniques and how that theory can be applied in real life: at school; at work or in a basic self defense situation. It's always fun to work with the energetic students and it's no surprise that Kojimachi Junior High and it's headmaster are known for their progressive approach to education.



RWAF Associate Dojo: Greece Tenjin Aikido Dojo Imittos

Congratulations to RWAF Associate Dojo Greece Tenji Aikido Dojo Imittos for moving into their new privately owned space in February this year! We wish them good training in the new dojo. [Contact them here](#) if you are in Athens and feel like training.

