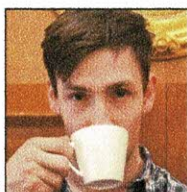


Alexander V Gheorghiu

Gen Ei Kan Celebrates 20 Years of Aikido before Dignitaries

The camp was over before we had time to look at the clock. One class simply flowed into the next; one day into the following. This is perhaps due to the high standard of teaching we had and the elegant timetabling which kept us warm and ready, but not burnt out or depleted. The invited teachers were Daniel Brunner Shihan (Ryu Seki Kai, Switzerland), Chris Mooney Shihan (Ei Mei Kan, United Kingdom), Piotr Masztalerz Sensei (Wroclaw Aikikai, Poland), and Jenny Flower Sensei (Athens Aikido, Greece). The range on the mat went from Robin (6th Kyu, Sho Gi Kan, Switzerland), who has been training six months, to Brunner Sensei, who has been training for fifty-six years.

All summer camps are sweaty, but this one left you drenched after a few minutes in seiza due to extraordinary heat south Germany boasts in the summer. Nonetheless with a series of steady warm ups in the mornings and well-placed weapons classes, we made it through relatively unencumbered; and every so often there would be a fresh breeze which would cleanse the air of the dojo, our namesake - Biran.



Alex Gheorghiu

I chose the name Birankai. Biran is a Buddhist term meaning a cosmic storm that occurs in the moment before cosmic order shifts. It is a force of recovery, spontaneously manifesting itself to restore order. The storm can be powerful and violent. Yet, at the same time it is one that heals through cleansing and purification.

-T K Chiba, 'The Bowl of Biran, Heavenly Gift'.

This is our Aikikai, the summer schools have a unique way of bringing us back together as one school, one community. In this spirit, the camp will be partly remembered for the inspirational visit of the Turkmen. Many within the organisation do now know of our central Asian connections to Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan and, consequently, were bemused at the visit by four highly trained aikidoka from the latter country.

Mooney Sensei began the camp by opening and centering the body through stretches and breathing, and then proceeded with fundamentals - classic Aikido, or, perhaps, Aikido with class. This set the tone for the summer school.

Brunner Sensei taught sword work every day, working through the kumi-tachi exercises, showing how different possibilities erupt, depending on the actions of the uke-tachi. His classes culminated

with blending sword work and body art, a demonstration of the nature of aikido.

"The penetrating brilliance of swords

Wielded by followers of the Way

Strikes at the evil enemy

Lurking deep within

Their own souls and bodies."

*- Morihei Ueshiba (O-Sensei),
The Art of Peace*

Flower Sensei's classes were a constant reminder of the five pillars of Chiba Sensei's school - centeredness, connectedness, wholeness, liveliness, openness. Her lessons, whilst dynamic, showed how clean tai-sabaki, clear cuts, and a heavy centre makes for some truly inspirational aikido.

Masztalerz Sensei taught several jo classes, which memorably pushed beyond kihon by asking to perform suburi eg, nagashi uchi, or kata eg, sansho one part one, not quickly, but definingly and continuously. He also showed a catalogue of wonderful conditioning exercises for ukemi.

The camp also served to celebrate twenty years of Gen EI Kan, whose dojo-cho is Alexander Broll Sensei. A twenty-minute demonstration class was delivered by Mooney Sensei in front of several dignitaries, including members of

Photo: Achim Goldemann



parliament, the mayor, the chief of police and representatives of organisations supporting disabled people. The class hit right at what Aikido is all about, with breathing exercises to begin, and then the classics such as suwari-waza shomen-uchi ikkyu, tachi-waza shomen-uchi irminage, yokomen-uchi shihonage, katate dori aihanmi kokyu nage etc. Many of those participating in the class were as blown away by it as the people watching. Professional is the only word which comes to mind. Massive thank you to Broll Sensei for his many years of teaching in Landau, and a sincere wish for many more.

The seminar closed with Mooney Sensei wrapping the week up with a message about what we are doing here, which touched all ranks, all ages, and



Photo: Achim Goldemann

all the people on the mat; the message of the poem above, masakatsu agatsu - true victory is self-victory.

Congratulations to Birankai Deutschland and the Landau dojo for running such an impressive camp, and thank you to all the invited teachers for such

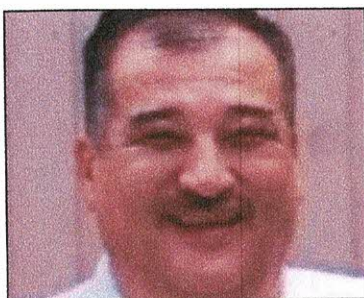
wonderful classes, and all the other teachers and seniors for their continued support on the mat. ☺

Alexander V Gheorghiu 3rd kyu
Ei Mei Kan, Central Aikikai, British Birankai

Muhammet Sensei

Japan gives Friendship Awards

Photo: Achim Goldemann



On 24 July 2018 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan gave a series of awards to 'individuals and groups with outstanding achievement in international fields, in order to acknowledge their contributions to the promotion of friendship between Japan and other countries and areas.'

This year included people such as the President and CEO of Ambrose, President of the Olympic Committee of Slovenia, and the Former Chair of the Centre of Japanese Studies at UC Berkley, alongside our own Shamuhammet Annamuradovich Baylyyev the director of Lachin-Ai aikido dojo Ashgabat in Turkmenistan. ☺



Photo: Achim Goldemann

Max Jung, Sophia Habath and Cedric Goldemann

Landau, Germany Summer School closes with Resounding Success - The Mayor, a Bundestag Representative, a Brass Band, Kegs of Beer and a BBQ

From 21-25 July 2018, 72 Aikidoka from all over Europe and even from as far afield as Cuba and Turkmenistan came together to practise together their passion - the martial art of Aikido - in the small city of Landau in the German state of Rheinland-Pfalz.

For us, it was a great feeling to train together with all these people, and also to talk with them and learn more about them, their lives, and their homelands.

This great feeling was a stark contrast to the events of just a few weeks earlier: after extreme storms, the city of Landau was flooded, and the Gen Ei Kan Landau Dojo with it! With our planned venue closed for months of repair works, the entire event had to be re-planned at short notice for an alternative venue. Of course, achieving this meant a huge additional effort, but it was well worth it.

The classes of the various Senseis were full of variety, and each teacher shone a light on Aikido according to their own style and manner. Daniel Brunner Shihan showed above all the process of a direct encounter with the Bokken. Chris Mooney Shihan's classes were filled with his typical dynamism mixed with thought-provoking ideas for us to ponder over later. Jenny Flower Sensei put special emphasis on the encounter between Uke and Nage, as well as Nage's control over the attacker during the execution of the technique. Here there was a lot for both beginning and advanced students to work on. Piotr Masztalerz Sensei trained our ki to a special degree in his lessons, by emphasizing energy, efficiency and a straight

posture. The teachers' work did not end there: during the breaks, all the teachers present at the Summer Camp met in a Teaching Committee to exchange ideas.

The highlight of Monday afternoon was a Nidan examination - successfully completed!

On Tuesday afternoon began the celebrations for the Twentieth Anniversary of the Landau Dojo. The invited special guests were treated to a short, intensive, and clearly structured Aikido class. Alexander Broll Sensei gave an address reflecting on his life course and the life of the Dojo. This was an especially touching moment for us. Chris Mooney Shihan also gave a moving speech about his first encounter with Alexander Broll Sensei and the inspiration he draws from their encounters with one another. The other speakers - such as the Mayor of Landau Dr Ingenthron, Bundestag Representative Mr Hitschler, State Parliament Representative Mrs Schneider, and the Managing Director of the State's Disability and Rehabilitation Sport Union Mr Röttig - all expressed their respect for Alexander Broll Sensei and the important contribution to the community that the Dojo makes.

In the evening, the last of the Summer Camp, the celebrations drew to a close with the help of a brass band, a barbecue grill, and kegs of beer.

We had many great experiences and would like to thank all the teachers who have given us so much new and important things on our way. Many thanks also to all participants who made such an effort to come to Germany and Landau to share their passion



Max Jung



Sophia Habath



Cedric Goldemann

for Aikido and who are so open to encounters and learning new things.

We look forward to the next encounter, in whatever country it may take place.

With deep thanks. ☺

**Max Jung 2nd kyu
Sophia Habath 2nd kyu
Cedric Goldemann 3rd kyu
Birankai Aikido Gen Ei Kan
Birankai Germany**