

### The Shorinjiryu Shinzen Kyokai

- A Gathering of the Shorinjiryu Family
- Largest Group of Shorinjiryu Practitioners Worldwide
- Exchanging, Knowledge, Spirit & Friendship

# Shorinjiryu Shinzen Kyokai Shorinjiryu Shimbun

## Special Greetings from the Instructors

On behalf of all my students in Florida and New York I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a great holiday season and a healthy, happy New Year.

John A. Mirrione, Kyoshi  
Shorinjiryu Kenkokai Karatedo

G'day to Shorinjiryu Friends Around the World

While there seems to be a million people shouting doom and gloom; I believe that 2009 has the potential to bring a lot of opportunity.

The opportunity to enjoy the love of family and friends.

The opportunity to train in a wonderful style of karate.

The opportunity to learn from our teachers, who have given so much of themselves to Shorinjiryu.

The opportunity to practice with friends, building ever-stronger friendships.

The opportunity to learn more about ourselves.

The opportunity to give back to society. I trust that 2009 brings you all happiness, health and opportunity!

Cheers

Des Paroz, Renshi  
Public Relations Coordinator -  
Shinzen Kyokai  
Shorinjiryu Kenyukai Watanabe Ha  
Karate Australia

### Seasons Greetings, Happy Holidays to all the members / friends of The Shorinjiryu Shinzen Kyokai

"And the Grinch, with his Grinch-feet ice cold in the snow, stood puzzling and puzzling, how could it be so? It came without ribbons. It came without tags. It came without packages, boxes or bags. And he puzzled and puzzled 'till his puzzler was sore. Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before. What if Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store? What if Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more." ~Dr. Seuss

Indeed, also in the study of Shorinjiryu Karate-do...it surely means a little bit more!

I would like to ask, or direct your thoughts to the Abacus (Soroban in Japanese). For through the centuries old "Abacus" we have a wealth of knowledge and promises to be gained; especially in areas of cognitive development. So too, with the study and promise of Shorinjiryu Karate-do!

Manny Hawthorne, Shihan  
London Shorinjiryu Kenshin

Greetings and best wishes to all for the festive season from Down Under, may you all have happy and safe holidays. We often think about our extended Shinzen Kyokai family and the great times we have had together and we miss you all.

Unfortunately, due to distance, time and cost constraints, we can't be with you as much as we would like but you are always in our thoughts. Share a thought for us when we fire up the Barbie on Christmas Day while sweltering in 30C+ heat. You are so lucky. Happy Holidays.

Jim Griffin, Shihan  
Shorinjiryu Kenyukai Watanabe-Ha  
Australia

Shorinjiryu Ake no Myojo Budo, Morning Star Martial Arts in Maryland, wishes all karate-ka, their families and loved ones, a happy and safe holiday season, and a safe, happy, and prosperous new year. Practice hard, but remember that as we increase our ability to do damage, we increase our obligation to be considerate and kind, not just during the holidays, but all year round. Happy Holidays!

Peter M. Hiltz, Renshi,  
Web Master Shinzen Kyokai  
Shorinjiryu Ake no Myojo Budo

Greetings from Shorinjiryu Kudaka. On behalf of our group I'd like to wish everybody a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year. On a personal note, rather than a pep talk allow me to say how thrilled I am that the democratic process is alive and well

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

### 2009 Calendar

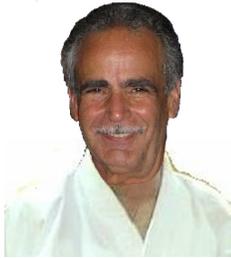
A complete 2009 Calendar will be sent out shortly. However, here is a brief tentative list of events for the New Year.

January 3, Saturday	Imperial Dragon Rededication Class
January 17, Saturday	Junior Black Belt Promotional Ceremony - Brooklyn, NY
January 24, Saturday	15th Invitational Island Budokan Bogujutsu Tournament, LI, NY
February 8, Sunday	Referee Clinic - Brooklyn, NY
March 7, Saturday	Winter Regional - Brooklyn, NY

March 7, Saturday	Koshiki Clinic offered by Michel Laurin, Kyoshi - Sherbrooke, Canada
April 25, Saturday	6th Annual Kenyukai Watanabe-ha - Baltimore, Md
May 24, Sunday	13th International Koshiki Shindo Budo Kwai - Saint-Jérôme, Québec,
June 20, Saturday	Fathers' Day Recognition Tournament - Brooklyn, NY
October 11, Sunday	23rd Annual International Shorinjiryu Shinzen Shiai - NY, USA

## From the Desk of the President

by Myron M. Lubitsch, Hanshi



Each year I tend to say the same thing, where has time gone? Well, this year is no different, where has the time gone? We have seen a number of well attended In-house events, a new tournament format by

Shihan Manny, a great event hosted by Shihan Dan, another superb event hosted by Kyoshi Michel, the 22nd International Shinzen Shiai the showcase of the Kyokai, any number of clinics and the surprise 50th birthday of Shihan Dan. We were very saddened at the passing of the wife of Doug Roberts, Hanshi and our condolences went out to him and his family. We were and are concerned at the loss of jobs 10/7/2008 by a number of our students.

Speaking of Shihan Dan, he and I are planning for a greater number of interesting events geared to educate and foster growth and I am certain that the Chief Instructors are planning events geared to the same goal. On a personal vane, I would really like to be able to visit more of our affiliated schools next year.

But, I do not want to take up too much of your time, just allow me this opportunity to thank all the instructors who gave of their time, effort and expertise to support the

functions of the Shinzen Kyokai.

Thank you, the students of Shorinjiryu who have devoted your time, sweat and aching muscles to train in this special system of Karatedo known as Shorinjiryu. And, finally, special thanks for all the parents who volunteered their time to support the work of all the dojos.

I wish everyone a very happy, healthy, prosperous New Year filled with hope that next year will prove to be a better year than the last.



## An Incredible Honor

"In October of 2008 Shihan Brian Berenbach was awarded the title of Distinguished Engineer by the Association of Computing Machinery. The ACM is the premier worldwide organization for computing professionals and, typically, it awards the honor to very few people. In 2007, for example, only 7 people worldwide were inducted. In order for an engineer to qualify for consideration he or she must have

fifteen years of professional experience, must have made a significant accomplishment in, or a significant impact on, the computing field and must have eight endorsements from well known colleagues in the field.

Shihan Berenbach, a senior researcher with Siemens Corporate Research, was awarded the honor for his many years of work in the field of requirements engineering in both industry and academia. He has

lectured at universities worldwide, including schools such as MIT and the Technical University of Munich, has been a committee member and chair at many international conferences, and has been widely published in technical journals. This coming September, for example, he is the Industry Track Chairman for the 17th IEEE International Requirements Engineering Conference in Atlanta."

## From the Desk of the Vice President

by Dan Hayes, Shihan



Congratulations to all on a very action packed year! Many promotions, events and great times shared and endured. This is what the Shinzen Kyokai is about and we are making it happen. Myron Hanshi and I are looking forward

to offering more and improved opportunities to share, learn and grow together. Clinics in Kumite, Weapons, Judging and others are on the fire as well as our usual premier tournaments!

Another year is gone and a celebration is due. We are shedding our old skin and coming in a new vibrant student, person and organization. So Omedeto! This is your

time for Matsuri - a celebration of passing and change! So let's take some time this January to look back fondly and studiously at 2008 and see what we can be proud of and look to see what we can improve. Shed the old you and embrace the New Year with all the opportunity you are open to.

Kompai!

## Special Greetings by Benninal Abdelkader, Sensei

*je suis très ravis de votre lettre et je suis satisfait de votre travail dans la branche de sorinji ryu voila maintenant vous occupé une place très respectable pour moi ici en*

*algerie je suis votre federation de sorinji ryu par internet pour connaitre beaucoup mieux vos activité je vous ais promis de resté fidèl envers vous vous avez un grand résulta et je souhaite que vous allez loin dans votre branche j'ai vu votre organisation qui est formidable ainci votre programe de compétition je vous souhaite une bonne réussite vous et votre équipe derigean athlète compétiteur et pour terminé je n'oublirais*

*jamais le geste qui ma honoré moi e t mon pays en levant nbotre drapeau merci maitre de tous mon coeur au paisir de lire et a la prochaine.*

I am very happy about your letter and I'm very satisfied about the work you do in the Shorinjiryu organization. You occupy a very respectable place for me here in Algeria, I follow your Shorinjiryu federation via internet to know what you guys are up to.

I promised you to stay loyal to you, you have shown great results and I wish you make it a long way with your organization. I saw that your organization is formidable and your tournaments. I wish you good luck to you and hope your team does well in tournaments, to finish I will never forget the gesture that honored me and my country by raising our flag.

I thank you from the bottom of my heart until next time.

## The Kyokai Patch

Are you wearing the patch with pride? Are you wearing it at all?

The Kyokai represents a statement of family and solidarity. If you need

one please contact us for your order.

## Special Greetings from the Instructors (cont'd)

CONTINUED FROM FIRST PAGE

in the States. My personal opinion is that the election of Barack Obama as PE has averted the world from catastrophe, redressed long standing grievances in America and is finally "walking the walk" of the American constitution founded over 200 years ago. We in the martial arts, Shorinjiryu especially, learn early on, to appreciate men and women for their effort and see beyond colour and religion. Being of Irish, Jewish and Jamaican ancestry (oye, what a mix!) I'm especially happy and proud of Americans. What a great time to be alive!

Brian Aarons, Hanshi  
Shorinjiryu Kudaka

On behalf of Kudaka we wish everyone a happy holiday and all the best in 2009. Take care.

Doug Roberts, Hanshi  
Shorinjiryu Kudaka

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to all Shorinjiryu Karateka from all of us  
At Central Jersey Karate.  
John Salasko, Shihan

Shorinjiryu Central Jersey Karate  
On behalf of the Cornwall Ken Sei Kai Martial Arts Academy, I would like to extend to all of the Shorinjiryu Family our warmest wishes for a safe and happy holiday.

Tom Bellazzi, Shihan  
Shorinjiryu Kudaka

Well, my fellow karatekas, now that the year has ended and we look forward to the next year, just remember all the hard work and dedication you have given or lack of and begin your journey anew so that this year you may become a stronger person in mind and spirit. Even though there are many challenges approaching, with the help of your family, friends and karateka who support, you can reach for a brighter future. Hope to see and work with you all!

Yesenia Santiago, Sensei  
Shorinjiryu Kenryukan

Dear Karateka,  
As we look towards the New Year, we find ourselves at a momentous moment in human, and world history! It is clear that at this

moment society must come together to face the challenges ahead. Americans must acknowledge the cultural diversity, that makes this country great, and work towards a better future for all Americans... this philosophy mirrors what we in Shorinjiryu have practiced all along!..."martial mentality" includes that, "if we have to do something, we can do it!"..."we come together to grow together!"...with a mutual concern, for each others benefit!... and that "together" we can accomplish greater deeds, than any individual can alone!

Domo arigato,

Shihan D'Avino  
Shorinjiryu Kenyukai

Season's greeting to the Shinzen family and their families. I hope your holidays are filled with merriment. May the New Year bring you good health and happiness and be filled with diligent practice!

Troy Lester, Shihan  
Shorinjiryu Kenryukan

## Commemorative Video

We are pleased to announce that the superb commemorative video created by Shihan Vincent Capers Jr.,

*The Chronicle of Shorinjiryu* is still available. This video details the past 3 plus decades of Shorinjiryu in North

America and is a must for serious students of Shorinjiryu. Please contact us with your order.

## You Know What You Know by John A. Mirrione, Kyoshi

Up until this time I have not seen much written on this subject so I decided to tackle it. At one time or another most of us have overheard opinions as to why someone was promoted and or given a special title. There are critics and there are well wishers. I, for one, am not always tolerant of the critics. To demean a teacher, senior or a peer is to demean oneself.

From time to time I have heard the question - what is legitimate ranking and who has it? The history of the Martial Arts shows that most likely Judo's Kano started the ranking system with Karate's Funakoshi following. The Japanese government created an association ( Dai Nippon Butoku-kai) in 1895 to oversee the martial arts. Upon the founding of this organization, the criteria for membership was very simple. A school must use Japanese characters instead of Chinese when writing the word karate, wear a standard uniform, set up tournaments and a black belt ranking system with testing. A few years later, they would bestow titles on such masters as Mabuni, Otsuka and Funakoshi. All were pretty much based on records of achievement and contributions. In 1936 Okinawan masters, Miyagi, Kyan, Motobu and Gusukuma decided to adopt some of Funakoshi's ideas to popularize karate. In 1971 the Federation of All Japan Karatedo Organizations (F.A.J.K.O.) was created. They gave a time line and age for promotion to rank along with a corresponding title for fourth degree and higher. This format was adopted by the Shorinjiryu Shinzen Kyokai upon its creation. The Kyokai grants Shorinjiryu schools membership in its organization after review by its officers. Each year at the International Shorinjiryu Shinzen Kyokai Tournament, Dan grading and titles are awarded to those who have contributed to the growth of Shorinjiryu.

In the Okinawan traditions it was customary to pass on the style/school to a senior student, however,

the Japanese would give it to their eldest son. Sometimes the title Soke was used to describe this inheritor. If you practice a traditional martial art you would look to a parent organization or your seniors for upgrading. It is likely that seniors are the officers of the parent organization who award teaching certificates and titles. Of course, this does not mean that a karateka could not upstart his/her own organization and award rank. History has not been kind to some of those who decided to 'go it alone', so to speak. They were either deliberately or unintentionally omitted from the annals of karate history. It is possible that some of these karateka made some important contributions to the Martial Arts.

In 1945, during and just after World War II was over, the originators of some styles perished. After WWII Chotoku Kyan (primary teacher of Kaiso Kori Hisataka) died and some of those he tutored ventured out on their own. A few of those students were given licenses and/or permission to teach by him or their other masters and subsequently established their own schools (shorinjiryu, chito-ryu, and isshin-ryu, etc). They taught most of the basic principals that their teachers passed on to them. Other karateka developed their own systems modifying what they learned and sometimes combining different martial arts. Okinawa was not a very big island so it was short distance between Naha, Shuri and Tomari. It was not uncommon for karateka to go from one town to another studying different disciplines.

Shorinjiryu Kenkokan Karate was formally introduced to the USA in 1964 at the New York Worlds Fair and then to Canada. In the 1960's, Shorinjiryu Kenkokan Karate teachers gave some promotions to their earlier students when they won First Place in Shiai at a tournament. At the First North American Shorinjiryu Tournament in 1968, the brown belt winner was promoted

to Shodan and won a trip to Japan to study with Master Kori Hisataka. In the early 1990's Hanshi Hisataka once again came to the USA. He was invited by Shinzen President Myron Lubitsch to give a 2 day clinic in both Koshiki and Shorinjiryu. Hanshi Lubitsch opened the doors of his dojo to all who wished to participate. At the conclusion of the clinic Hanshi Hisataka promoted several seasoned practitioners to higher dan levels (licenses to teach) after witnessing their progress and many years of dedication to Shorinjiryu. Over the years he has given several clinics which have resulted in qualified karateka being promoted. This is unlike what you see in some clinics outside Shorinjiryu where the person giving the clinic awards rank and /or certificates in appreciation to those who attended and paid a large fee. It is important to note that individual schools of Shorinjiryu set their own criteria for promotions. It is understood that the highest regard is given to good character and moral values. Those receiving Black Belt ranking are expected to continue their studies.

In the 1950s and 60s, several American servicemen returned from Asia with black belt ranking after a short period of training and were recognized as being Masters after they opened their own schools and/or created their own systems. No one would argue with them that they had no talent or that their ranking was premature or bogus. From these early innovators of karate styles came others under them who then promoted others under them, so on and so on. Thus, we now have hundreds of schools and styles. What if you are a descendent of someone whose teacher's teacher awarded themselves a high Black Belt rank? Are you legitimate or not? The answer to this question may be very simple. It could all be as it was in the past. You are what your peers see you as. If you are respected and recognized by your peers to be adept at karate, then

## Sunshine News

Marriage Congratulations  
Sensei Yesenia Santiago and Nick  
– Kenryukan

Engagement Congratulations  
Nidan Doreen and Jeff– Kenryu-  
kan  
Shodan Alberto and Shodan  
Laudy– Kenryukan

Graduations – Upper Level  
Shodan Henry Chicaiza – Medical  
School and is now an MD.– Ken-  
ryukan  
Nidan Ian Rosenblatt – University  
of Connecticut  
Jimmy Lynch - SUNY Stony  
Brook.

Special Congratulations for Victoria  
Sarant who graduated from Ward  
Melville HS and is currently at-  
tending St. Andrew's University in  
Scotland.

Black Belt Promotion Recognitions  
at the 22nd Annual International  
Shorinjiryu Shinzen Shiai  
**Fifth Degree Black Belt - Ren-  
shi**

Janet Bayer – Kenkokai

**Sandan – Third Degree - Sensei**

Christian Hernandez  
Doro Konate

**Nidan - Second Degree Black  
Belt**

Ian Rosenblatt - Kenkukai  
Christopher Vacca - Kenkokai  
Brett Watson – Kenshin

**First Degree Black Belt**

Alberto Colon - Kenryukan  
Laudy Diaz - Kenryukan  
Kevin Gutierrez - Kenryukan  
Annette Lopez - Kenryukan

Raymond Ponce DeLeon, Jr -  
Kenryukan

Sarai Ramos - Kenryukan

**Junior Black Belt**

Kohai Shodan Abigail Coleman -  
Kenkukai  
Kohai Shodan Patricia Skrzypek -  
Kenkukai

The following have been promoted  
by their respective schools and  
notice was received after the last  
Shinzen Shiai. It is anticipated that  
they will be recognized by the Shin-  
zen Kyokai at the 23rd International  
Shorinjiryu Shinzen Shiai to be held  
on Sunday, October 11, 2009.

**Seventh Degree Black Belt**

Shihan Tom Bellizzi -  
Kudaka

**Jr. Second Degree Black Belt**

Olga Gonzalez – Kenryukan  
Jose Gonzlaez, Jr. – Kenryukan

**Jr First Degree Black Belt**

Quinton Kilbourn - Kenshin

**Special Birthday Notice**

Congratulations to Dan Hayes, Shi-  
han upon his 50th Birthday. He was  
surprised his students at a party  
held in Long Island. Special guests  
included Watanabe, Hanshi and  
Lubitsch, Hanshi, Brian Berenback,  
Troy Lester, Vincent Capers, Jr and  
Page Cristis all Shihans, this in ad-  
dition to black belts from Maryland  
and New York. A good time was  
really had by all – special thanks  
to Hayes, Shihan's students for the  
work they did in making this event  
a surprise and a food fest

Congratulations to Sensei Larry  
Foisy upon the opening of his new

dojo Shorinjiryu Shindo Budo Sher-  
brooke. His new dojo is located at  
167 rue Aberdeen, Quebec Canada  
J1H 1W1 and he can be contacted  
at 1-819-829-0294. He is proud of  
his mirrored 2800 sq ft half tatami  
and half wooden floor dojo and  
invites all to visit.

Congratulations to Shihan Tom Bel-  
lazzi upon the opening of his new  
Cornwall Ken Sei Kai Martial Arts  
Academy.

**Our Rising Star in Hollywood**

We are very proud of the ac-  
complishments of Kyoshi Michel  
Laurin, founder and chief instructor  
of Shorinjiryu Shindo Budo Kwai,  
in his work in the world of films.  
He has acted in numerous films  
including Foreign Policy, The Red  
Circle, Mosaic Project, Extreme  
Justice and many others. He has  
also made guest appearances on the  
small screen and his future in the  
acting arena is as strong as his kicks.  
While he has been successful and  
hopefully his success will continue  
long into his future, he still main-  
tains that his first love is Karatedo.  
Well done, Kyoshi Michel.

Welcome New Members

**Beninal Abdelkader, Sensei**

Dojo association des arts martiaux  
Algeria

**John Salasko, Shihan**

Central Jersey Karatedo

**Anthony D'Avino**

Kenyukai Club

## You Know What You Know (cont'd) by John A. Mirrione, Kyoshi

you are. A piece of paper does not necessarily qualify you for leadership or to be a sensei. Do you still practice and learn or are you just a paper chaser looking for validation to feed your ego? Shorinjiryu Shihan Fred Marcus always says: it does not matter what rank or title you have or claim to have. YOU KNOW

WHAT YOU KNOW'. Someone who is adept will know who is not.

Look up to and respect your seniors. It is their opinion of you that matters most. Practice, learn, demonstrate, compete, contribute, be respectful, humble and strive for perfection. Always remember you have not gotten to where you are

today all by yourself. Shomen ni rei, Sensei ni rei and Otagai ni rei.

## Epitaph by Daniel Hayes, Shihani

"In memory of a once fluid man crammed and distorted by the classical mess."

I remember reading this in an article published in BB magazine around 1976 I believe. It is a quote taken from a tombstone presumably in the backyard of the famous Bruce Lee. His "innovative and pragmatic approach" along with his newly adopted philosophy were and still are favored by many in the Western culture. Perhaps that was his intention from the very start? I do consider myself to be somewhat innovative and pragmatic but a traditionalist in every sense of the word. Mr. Lee on the other hand grasped instant success and fame via his newly adopted insight. I remember his famous "three inch punch" and his new Jeet Kun Do (style of no style) which is a contradiction in itself. His principles of training began to have a system of formulated practice. His short sets (yakusoku kumite) which were developed to help with reaction skills seemed curiously familiar to me? His stances (kamai) were pretty consistent? It does remind me of the unifica-

tion of the "karate" of Okinawa in the guise of SHOTOKAI, now JKA Shotokan. Originally this system of practice was meant to teach many to a point of competency so they could eventually explore more complete or founding systems. Jeet Kun Do was supposed to emphasize the individual in all martial practice and adapt the practice to the situation and abilities of both / all participants... sounds vaguely like "dokuji gyo seki".

So what is my point? I guess I have harbored a thorn in my side for over 25 years upon seeing this (at best) ignorant / arrogant statement.

I am embarrassed at its childish acceptance and inception. How so? Well consider that Mr. Lee would not have come to the conclusions, skill or understanding had he not had all those years of extremely classical training himself. Not only in Dai Gi Xuan (Taichi Chuan) but many years with the Grandmaster of VinTsun, Yip Man. The man who taught him the three inch punch! He studied a myriad of other classical Chinese arts under various

headmasters and after gaining much skill and assimilating a unified understanding (Sanchin, Naihanchin, Nijushiho) he turned his back on them. Perhaps this was after realizing no one in his Western mind was going to take the time to practice all those ridiculous dance steps and communist cultural gimmicks...

We practice classical steps (as he did) to become competent enough to become fluid! He sold out the arts and was cast out as a result. I do believe in much of what he says but I do believe first and foremost that without the training of our predecessors we can not surpass them.

Hence our dojo motto here at the Island Budokan, Structure equals freedom... freedom without structure equals chaos (and limitation).

Practice hard the system of your Sensei's Sensei and learn it 100%. Adapt it to yourself but do not allow your ego to deny your students the opportunities your teachers afforded you.

Omedeto

## The Kata of Shorinjiryu - Nijushiho no Sai

by Des Paroz, Renshi

Few people have probably heard of the kata called “Nijushiho no Sai”, but most senior Shorinjiryu practitioners practice it. Most people only know the kata as “Sai Kata”, “Sai no Kata”, or more recently, “Kudaka no Sai”.

From the outset, I'd like to state that this article is perhaps a little less academic than previous ones in the Kata of Shorinjiryu series, with fewer references, for the simple reason that there is little published information on the form and its history. However it is an important form in our system, and it's my hope that through this article, the origins of another part of our style can be explored, and perhaps we will return to using the original name for the form.

For as long as I've been practicing Shorinjiryu, this form, in all its variations, has been one of the most interesting to watch a skilled proponent performing. It is long and flowing, and contains quite a variety of techniques, including a range of strikes, thrusts, trapping moves, sweeps, evasive movements, throws and even kicking techniques.

In his 1976 book, *Scientific Karatedo*, Hanshi Masayuki Hisataka demonstrates this form, along with the Bo Kata and a Sai Bo no Kumite. No reference is given to the origins of either kata, but there is some generic information about the development of the use of weapons in Karatedo, along with a short discussion on the value and practice.

In this book, Hanshi Hisataka gives a brief explanation of the sai as being a three pronged end of a harpoon, “separated from the shaft and hidden behind the forearms; they were used to block a sword attack, breaking its blade with a rapid twist of the wrist; they could also be thrown at an opponent”. I'd like to discuss this more a little later, as I believe that an important aspect of the application of a sai is overlooked.

In his 1994 book *Essential Shorinjiryu Karatedo*, Hanshi Hisataka further explains that the sai is important in the Shorinjiryu system as it is a primary short range weapon, with the bo (6 foot staff) being emphasized for long range applications, and the jo (4 foot staff) or sword being used at medium ranges.

In *Essential Shorinjiryu Karatedo*, Hanshi Hisataka also discussed primary research that he and I conducted that indicated that Sanda “Ufuchiku” Kanagusuku (1841-1926) was the likely primary teacher of weapons methods to the founder of Shorinjiryu, Shinan Kori Hisataka (1907-1988). Although Hisataka Sensei credits Ufuchiku Kanagusuku with being predominately the source of bojutsu instruction, I believe that it was more likely he was the source for sai and jo techniques and forms, with the bo techniques more than likely coming from the Hisataka family lineage.

The reason for my belief is the Kanagusuku, a senior ranking police officer (the name “Ufuchiku” is a police rank roughly equivalent to Commissioner) and the last chief body guard to the last Okinawan king (Sells, 2000), was credited with popularizing the practice of his favorite weapon, the sai (Bishop, 1989), as well as the jo. Evidently his curriculum also incorporated other weapons such as the bo, but the sai and to a lesser extent the jo are the weapons Kanagusuku was known for. One of his nicknames was “Saijutsu nu Kani Usumeii”, Okinawan for Sai-techniques Kanagusuku (Hokama, 2005).

Shinan Kori Hisataka (c.1963) spoke of the sai being a weapon of Chinese origin used to defend against a longer weapon called the “seiryuto” or blue dragon sword. It took me a while to find out what type of weapon a “seiryuto” is, until I found a reference to that being an alternative name in Japanese to the

“bisento”, or kwan-do, broad bladed sword on the end of a staff.

In Okinawa, the sai was never a weapon used by commoners. Being made of metal, a scarce commodity in Okinawa, the sai was reserved for the peichin class of families who were largely responsible for civil law enforcement. In other words, the sai was the Okinawan police officers' weapon of choice (Murakami, 2000), and roughly the equivalent to a truncheon.

Used by the police, the sai was commonly carried in threes, not pairs. Our Shorinjiryu sai kata (Nijushiho no Sai) is supposed to be performed carrying a third sai tucked away in the rear of the obi (Hisataka, 1976), although many branches of Shorinjiryu use only a pair of sai (Hiltz, 2006).

Now that we know a little about the sai as weapon, let's see what we can uncover about our sai kata. As mentioned, the sai kata has traditionally just been called “Sai Kata” (Hisataka, 1976 and Hiltz, 2006) or “Sai no Kata” (refer to Hanshi Watanabe's DVDs). If we review Shinan Kori Hisataka's c.1963 book, we can see that he refers to the kata as “Sai no Kata (Nijushiho no Sai)”.

If you then look at the kata, you can clearly see that the empty handed form of Nijushiho no Kata is reflected in the techniques and sequences of the sai no kata. It's my belief that it is likely that Shinan Hisataka blended the saijutsu he had learned (from Ufuchiku Kanagusuku and others), and combined these with the Nijushiho template.

More recently, the name Kudaka no Sai has been used, particularly by the Kenkokan school. The name was chosen by Hanshi Hisataka when a yudansha student asked him why there was no formal name for the kata, and then suggested it would be a good opportunity to commemorate the founder of the style. It was subsequent to this

## Acorns & Trees by Peter M. Hiltz, Renshi

Over my years of Shorinjiryu study I've learned that two things must remain paramount in my training and teaching. The first is to always analyze what I'm doing, that is, look always for the bunki in my kata – and even kumite - because what I as taught, and what I teach, is only a part of what is there. It is a fact of Shorinjiryu that each form may be interpreted differently based on an offensive or defensive focus, distance, or timing. I must always return to my forms to look for hidden meanings or interpretations, or to see how I might take a technique as given in a kata or kumite and apply it, or a variation of it, to a given situation. It is quite educational to ask, without changing a move, what else it might be.

The second thing comes from history. Age, as they say, might not bring wisdom, but it does bring perspective. Over my years, through being away from the hub of the Kyokai, I am in a unique

position to compare and contrast what I was originally taught to what I see others now do. It is stating the obvious that forms are different between Shorinjiryu schools. This is wonderful. I've seen new kata and kumite, some traditional, some adapted, some recently invented. I've seen exciting new flavors of material I know from 30 years ago and have brought back from the annual Shiai more than one new kata or interpretation of a familiar one. I happily pass these on to my students. I also pass on to my students that history is important and that they should understand what their teacher was taught, what is currently being practiced in their dojo, and what variety is out in the larger community. What they are required to do, and what this small essay asks you to do, is to continually investigate and explore the "history" of the kata and kumite they practice. I require them to know not only what I teach them, but also

what I was taught when the two might be different, and the reason for the change. In this way the past is preserved and they can keep form and technique, kata and kumite, as close to their teacher's as possible. My challenge to you as students of all ages and ranks is to adopt this strategy. Revisit with your teachers your first teachings. Compare their performance with yours and actively try to duplicate them. Strive to return your form to their form. Don't just accept what is acceptable. While it is impossible to become a clone of your teacher, striving to be will purify your knowledge of Shorinjiryu and minimize the natural tendency of Shorinjiryu to have an increasing "standard deviation". Ask your teacher if what you do today is what he or she did 30 years ago. Be sure you add variations but never substitute variations.

In this way, Shorinjiryu can insure the acorn does not fall too far from the tree.

## The Kata of Shorinjiryu - Nijushiho no Sai

by Des Paroz, Renshi

conversation that Shinan's book was referenced to find the original name.

So there we have it – one kata, several versions and almost as many names. I personally prefer the use of the original name, Nijushiho no Sai, out of respect for the legacy the founder left us, and in particular the clue to its origins.

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**Shorinjiryu Shinzen Kyokai**

P.O. Box 210160

Woodhaven, NY 11421

**Phone:** 718/647-4157

**Email:** MMLShihan@AOL.COM

**Visit us on the web:**

[www.shorinjiryu.org](http://www.shorinjiryu.org)

**President**

Myron, M. Lubitsch, Hanshi

**Vice-President**

Dan Hayes, Shihan

**Editor**

Brian Berenbach, Renshi

**Graphic Design & Layout**

Vincent Capers, Jr., Shihan

**Web Master**

Peter Hiltz, Renshi

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