



# AUSTRALIAN KENDO RENMEI

*Kendo - Iaido - Jodo*

## PRESIDENTS REPORT TO NATIONAL COUNCIL DELEGATES and MEMBERS, FOR ACTIVITIES IN 2013.

### Vale: Michael Payne



Michael Payne sensei, Kendo Renshi 6 Dan, passed away on 18 February 2013. Payne sensei was the Chief

Instructor of Sydney Kendo Club for many years. Over the years, Payne sensei taught and encouraged many kendo players and champions. His passing was a major loss and is sadly missed by the AKR and New South Wales Kendo community.

### Vale: Betty Lawley



Betty Lawley passed away on 14 May 2013. Betty, 79, was awarded a Life Membership of the AKR, in

appreciation of contribution toward building kendo in Australia since the 1960's. Betty was the wife of the late Rex Lawley, the first AKR President and one of the founders of Australian Kendo and the mother of former Australian Kendo Champion, Steve Lawley (Pictured with Betty).

### Vale: Dr. Yahiko Kadono



Dr. Yahiko Kadono sensei, passed away in early June 2013. Kodono sensei was an effective and generous supporter of

Kendo and Iaido in Australia in the 1990's. Many members are grateful and will remember well, his generosity and willingness to open his thoughts and to improve our Iaido with his teaching.

Dear Delegates and Members,

I am privileged to report to you on events and activities conducted or facilitated by the Australian Kendo Renmei Incorporated, during the calendar year of 2013.

### MEMBERSHIP

The AKR concluded 2013 with a stable but growing membership. At the end of 2013, our membership report shows that we had a membership total of 1100 (1059), a growth of 3.9%. Of those, 895 (838) were registered for kendo, 254 (260) registered for Iaido and 114 (131) registered for Jodo. The gender mix was 78.6% men, a growth of 3.1% and 21.4% women, with a slightly higher growth rate of 6.8%. Report copies are available to members from state associations. 2012 figures in brackets.

### FINANCES

The AKR has separate accounts and budgets for each of – the Executive Committee, Kendo Board, Iaido Board, Jodo Board and the Australian Iaido and Jodo Championships event. The various accounts are intended to be used to achieve the plans of the Committee and Boards, to facilitate and support the further development of our members skills. At the AKR conference held each October, each entity presents an updated three year budget for approval by National Council.

The financial activities of the AKR have produced regular surpluses, or profits, for over ten years.

Overall, the AKR generally operated within our means during 2013. If we have produced a surplus, those surplus funds will be distributed to facilitate activities to benefit the further

development of the kendo, Iaido and Jodo skills of our members.

The AKR Finance Report for 2013 will be externally audited and is separate to this report. Copies will be available to members from state associations or from the AKR Secretary after our Annual General Meeting on 16 April 2014.

### MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL and INSURANCE

Membership renewal time is in June each year, when memberships and insurance premiums are due to be paid by the 30th. The AKR co-ordinated player accident, instructor and public liability insurance scheme continued for the fourth year. Since we introduced the national insurance scheme, the savings to members have been significant, with the 2011/12 premium alone producing a saving to members of \$11,000, compared what was paid in 2009.

### 22nd AUSTRALIAN IAIDO CHAMPIONSHIPS and 13th AUSTRALIAN JODO CHAMPIONSHIPS

21-25 January 2013. Venue – Tasmania.

As usual, the first AKR event for the year was the combined Australian Iaido and Jodo Championships, Seminar and Grading Exam. Training was overseen by a Japanese delegation headed by the AKR Technical Advisor for Iaido – Katsuo ODA sensei, Iaido Hanshi 8 Dan and our Technical Advisor for Jodo – Kuniaki NAGAYAMA sensei, Iaido Kyoshi 7 Dan and Jodo Kyoshi 7 Dan, with Keizo INOUE sensei Iaido

Kyoshi 8 Dan, Tetsuo OHARA and Hisao TSUCHIYA also providing valuable instruction. The Championship results are recorded on the AKR website and show that all states were fairly represented across the placings.



## SECOND OCEANIA WOMENS KENDO SEMINAR

23 & 24 February 2013.

Venue: Sydney, New South Wales.

We were very fortunate to have the seminar again conducted by highly regarded Satoko KANZAKI sensei, kendo Kyoshi 7 Dan, Tokiko ABE sensei, kendo 7 Dan with the assistance of Mai MIKAMI, Kendo 4 Dan.

A total of 44 participants attended the seminar, similar to the first seminar in 2011 (46 participants), with 1 kendoka attending from China.



## 38th AUSTRALIAN KENDO CHAMPIONSHIPS, GRADING and SEMINAR

29 March – 2 April 2013.

Venue: Sydney, New South Wales.

The AKR Kendo Board and the All Japan Kendo Federation jointly funded the attendance of Mr., Mr. Tatsuaki KOSAKA, Kendo-Hanshi 8 Dan and Mr. Shinji SHIMIZU, Kendo-Kyoshi 8 Dan, to attend as Seminar Instructors, Advisors for the Championships and as Chief Examiners for the Kendo Grading Exam that followed.

The Championships were well attended, with over 100 members competing. At the following Seminar, KOSAKA and SHIMIZU sensei provided excellent instruction to more than 40 trainees over two days.



## AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITY GAMES KENDO COMPETITION and SEMINAR:

28 & 29 September 2013, the Unigames kendo event was held. It was again very well supported by university kendoka, with more competitors than at an AKC! The AKR Kendo Board supported the event by facilitating the attendance of Australian sensei and senior members for

shinpan and other duties. Some Kendo Board funds were allocated to assist with transport and accommodation.

## SECOND SPORTACCORD COMBAT GAMES

18-26 October 2013.

The Kendo competition was held on 21 & 22 October 2013 at St. Petersburg, Russia. This event is one of very few opportunities for Australian kendo players to test their skills against the worlds' best kendoka in a highly challenging and internationally competitive situation.

AKR was invited by the FIK to submit one player each for three of the competition categories - Men's Youth Individual, age 18-25; Men's Individual 5, 6 or 7 Dan, age 26-55 and the Women's Individual, 3, 4 or 5 Dan, aged 21-40.

Following observation at the recent 38th Australian Kendo Championships and further consideration, the AKR Kendo Board and Executive Committee, selected the following players to form the Australian Squad for the Games. Kelvin Tran (NSW) – Men's Youth Individual competition; Kirby Smith, (NSW), a multiple Australian Open Kendo Champion and Australian Kendo Team member for World Kendo Championships was selected for the Men's Individual competition and Vivian Yung (NSW), a former Australian Women's Kendo Champion and Australian Kendo Team member for the World Kendo Championships, in the Women's Individual competition. Congratulations to Kelvin Tran as a recipient of a Fighting Spirit Award.

The cost of all transport and accommodation was provided by the host country, which is a commendable gesture.



## AUSTRALIAN KENDO TEAM COACHING POSITIONS

On 8 May, 2013, the AKR Kendo Board announced the selection of the Australian Kendo coaching team to lead the campaign to the 16th World Kendo Championships. Australian Kendo Team Coach; Arpad Maksay (Vic); Australian Kendo Team Assistant Coach; Kate Sylvester (Vic) and Australian Kendo Team Manager; Bonnie Lai (NSW).

We wish the new coaching team every success for the campaign of preparation for the 16th WKC, to be held in Tokyo, Japan on 29-31 May 2015.



L to R: Coach: Arpad Maksay; AKR President, Richard Ward; Team Manager, Bonnie Lai; Assistant Coach, Kate Sylvester.

### SHOGO, DAN and AWARDS

The award of a shogo level is an important development in the career of any kendo, iaido or jodo player. The attainment of a Shogo award in Australia requires a number of AKR and other organisations criteria all to be met, including being 6th Dan for at least a year and other stringent requirements. The final step is for an examination paper to be then assessed as successful by an examination panel.

An exam for Renshi was conducted in Tokyo, by the All Japan Kendo Federation on 26 November.

All Australian candidates were successful. Katsumi Kuramochi sensei (Qld), Kendo Renshi 7 Dan; John Isaacs sensei (Qld), Kendo Renshi 6 Dan and Janet Griffiths sensei (WA), Jodo Renshi 6 Dan.

In April 2013, two AKR members were examined in Kyoto and passed. Peter Szwarcbord sensei (Vic) for achieved Kendo 7 Dan and Greg Nicholas sensei (Qld) achieved Kendo 6 Dan.

In August, Chiharu Fukomoto (WA) was successful in his challenge for Kendo 6 Dan.

Claire Chan (Vic) for successfully met the challenge of an iaido 6 Dan exam in Tokyo in November.

Congratulations to all!

A Commendation Award was made to Hiroshi (Harry) Shinoda (Vic), Kendo 5 dan in recognition and with appreciation of his generous contribution to the activities of kendo in during his employment posting in Melbourne.

### OVERSEAS SEMINARS

#### Summer School

In most years, from the end of July, the AJKF host a Summer Seminar for Foreign Kendo Leaders. The trainees travel to the Gedatsu-kai Centre in Kitamoto City, Saitama Prefecture, a short trip north of Tokyo. Once there, the AJKF provide trainees with a local travel subsidy, all accommodation and food, plus an excellent modern kendo dojo for 10 long days of very intense kendo learning. The AKR Kendo Board assists our members attendance with a subsidy. The 2013 Summer School commenced on July 26, continuing to 2 August.

Kenji Sugimoto (Vic) and Chiharu Fukomoto (WA) were both selected by the AJKF from a list of 4 candidates submitted from the AKR. They joined about sixty other kendoka from around the world for the Seminar. After the seminars conclusion, Chiharu Fukomoto passed an exam for Kendo 6 dan and Kenji Sugimoto achieved Kendo 5 dan.



### International Kendo Federation (FIK) Asian Zone Kendo Referee Seminar

Taipei, Taiwan 15 - 17 March 2013.

In support of our efforts to improve Australian kendo by up-skilling kendo shinpan, the AKR Kendo Board contributed to the cost of attendance at the seminar of Ho Young Choi (NSW), Yuji Sano (NSW); Joe Semmler (ACT); Noriko Matsumoto (Vic); Colin Minter (NSW) and David Cunningham (ACT).



### EXAMS IN JAPAN

During the course of 2013, thirty-eight AKR members were examined for kendo, iaido or jodo from 4 to 7 Dan in Japan.

The AKR Iaido and Jodo Boards provided a subsidy of \$400-500 to some members, to assist with their costs to attend the iaido and jodo exams in Japan. This arrangement is now discontinued.

### EXAMS IN AUSTRALIA

It is increasingly difficult for AKR to be able to assemble panels for an examination above 4 Dan. The AJKF also have a strong view that, particularly for 6 Dan and above, such grades should be only examined for in Japan. So even with their support, AKR may not be able to examine for 6 Dan as frequently as we would like. We ask for members understanding on this issue.

### IT and SOCIAL MEDIA

The AKR has virtually all of our archives and records stored on a web server. All policy documents are also publicly accessible on the AKR website. Our other records are behind a password protected entry, but are generally available to any member. Your State Secretary will be able to

either provide the information that you may seek or advise on how you can access the archive. The AKR website continues to develop.

AKR also has a presence on facebook and twitter, which are used for immediate updates of competition results and similar and to promote announcements that are posted on the AKR website.

The website log shows it received 24,685 unique visitors and a total of 44,188 visitors during 2013. The facebook page has 348 likes; posts usually reach 200+ people, with one topping 900 views and another over 4000. The AKR twitter feed has 620 followers.

The aim for the website, facebook and twitter presence is to be a useful source of updates and information for members and the public.

As an exercise, AKR also used various web tools and payment systems for sale of publications; registration and payment to attend the Oceania Women's Seminar and to register as a shiai-sha for the FIK Shinpan Seminar

#### LINKS

[kendoaustralia.asn.au](http://kendoaustralia.asn.au)

[facebook.com/KendoAustralia](https://facebook.com/KendoAustralia)

[twitter.com/AustralianKendo](https://twitter.com/AustralianKendo) user @AustralianKendo

Oceania Womens Seminar [registration](#)

Shiai-sha [registration](#)

[Sales](#) of "The Progress of Kendo, Iaido and Jodo in Australia"

Managing membership and monitoring members eligibility is an increasing challenge. To address that we are actively researching various web options for membership management and related tasks.

#### AKR NATIONAL COUNCIL

The governing body of the AKR is National Council, the members of which include the four Executive Officers, plus a Delegate from each state and each of the Kendo, Iaido and Jodo Boards.

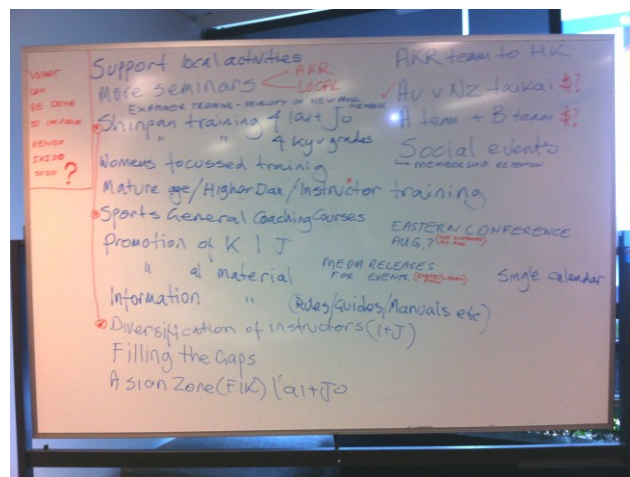
While the Executive, Board chairpersons and Delegates are in contact frequently on various issues, we also meet formally twice a year.

Our 2013 Annual General Meeting and Executive Committee election was held by teleconference for on 14 April 2013. The meeting was mainly procedural matters, such as to consider the finance report and audit.

The annual AKR National Conference and General Meeting of National Council was held on Saturday 19 & Sunday 20 October 2013 in Melbourne.

The conference activity includes considerable efforts on policy improvements, planning for future activities, budget planning and approval. The notes and minutes are available from state secretaries or the AKR Secretary.

An example of white-board use to assist a brainstorming session is below. Click [here](#) for a larger version.



Back row: Christine Cash (TSR); Hayami Aboutaleb (SAKR); Brendan Kee (ACTKR); Thomas Seggie (NSWKA); Stelios Polichroniadis (VKR); Kenji Sugimoto (VKR observer and AKR Support); Jeri James (WAKR); Kevin Humphrey (QKR). Front row: Marcus Lee- Steere (Iaido); Russell Lawrence (Jodo); Joe Semmler (AKR Vice-President); Richard Ward (AKR President); Malcolm Martin (AKR Treasurer); Brian Brestovac (Kendo). Absent for photo, Vivian Yung (AKR Secretary; Hoey Yin Goh (VKR observer and AKR Support).

#### CONCLUSION


I would like to thank the various Championship and Seminar Organising Committees, for their effective good work to achieve an excellent series of events in 2013.

I would also like to thank all Delegates and members of the AKR National Council for their input, suggestions and efforts to improve the activities of kendo, iaido and jodo in Australia during 2013 and previous years.

Integral to the activities of the AKR is the Kendo, Iaido and Jodo Boards. I would like to thank the respective Chairpersons, Kendo; Dr. Brian Brestovac (WA), Iaido; Dr. Ah-loi Lee (WA) and Jodo; Russel Lawrence (WA) for their efforts, support to members activities and for their advice.

Lastly, I would like to sincerely thank my colleagues, Vice-President Joe Semmler; Secretary Vivian Yung and Treasurer Malcolm Martin for their contributions, which are valued highly and appreciated.

All the above named are diligent, work hard in their spare time, solely to improve the opportunity for our members.

  
Richard Ward  
President  
8 April 2014