

# THE TO-KEN SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN

for the Study and Preservation of Japanese Swords and Fittings



Hon. President: B. W. ROBINSON, M.A.; B.LITT.  
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## PROGRAMME 89

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER, 1975

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### FORTHCOMING MEETINGS:-

Monday January 5th, 1976 at 1930 hours in the Princess Louise, High Holborn. To get there - take the underground to Holborn (Kingsway), turn west, cross Kingsway and the P.L. is 75 yards down the road on the left hand side.

The subject of the meeting, with our newer members in mind, will be the classification of swords by their different mountings. All those No-Dachi would be of great help explaining things, so bring them along to Chris Allen's talk-in.

Monday February 2nd will include a no commission auction, a kind of late January sale, so if you wish to buy, or sell, come along. There will also be a talk by Mike Mortimer on the difference between Japanese and European weapons, their construction and use.

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### The November Meeting

This was to have been on the theme of "peonies" in Japanese art and we were to have an ancillary discussion on "swords that are not swords". There were twenty eight members present and a glittering array of swords, the like of which I have not seen at a To-Ken meeting for some considerable while.

It was indeed fortunate that so many items were present, as Mr. Iida and Mr. Katsuyama (Toga-san to his friends) were unexpected guests. Mr. Iida is President of the Token Shunju Press, which produces a monthly newspaper in Japan, and he has also written several authoritative books on swords and related subjects. He is considered to be one of the foremost appraisers in Japan, where he also runs several sword societies. Mr. Katsuyama is one of Mr. Iida's students, and based in Holland where he owns a Japanese restaurant. He is also a fourth dan at Kendo, and acted as translator throughout the evening.

With such knowledgeable guests present, it was decided that a brain-tapping session was perfectly justifiable, and the meeting was made over to a Kantiæ with Mr. Iida appraising the swords that were present. This Mr. Iida agreed to do and after distributing some copies of his current newspaper around the room, he took the floor.

He first expressed his pleasure at being present, and said how surprised he was that so many were present, more than in several of his Japanese societies. He said that he had not heard of us in Japan, but that he would certainly like to put us in his paper (fame at last!). He realised that all the swords present, whether good or bad in his eyes, were very dear to their owners, and that he would, therefore, treat them with the greatest of respect.

First of all, said Mr. Iida, he would look at each sword in the same manner, and that the method of appraisal was as follows :-

- 1) Holding the sword at arm's length, look at the curve of the blade (zori), in order to date it. Be sure that you know whether or not the sword has been shortened, as this may effect the overall shape.
- 2) Next examine the ji-gane, as this will determine in which province, or which school made the sword.
- 3) Finally, hold the sword up to the eye, and point it towards a naked light. This is the best way to see the hamon and thereby determine the characteristics of the individual smith.

If the sword is good on all three points, it has quality.  
(Unfortunately this assumes the blade to have a good polish which is not always the case).

The first sword to be examined by Mr. Iida, he said was from the late Muromachi period. The polish was unhappily, not good, and therefore, the details of the blade were difficult to see, but the ji-gane appeared to be very good. Although the sword was mume-mei, Mr. Iida considered that the sword was made in Yamoto and a product of the Togai school. The saya of this sword was of the ribbed type known as kizami-saya and they are highly thought of in Japan as they are so difficult to make. The fuchi-kashira on this sword were genuine soten and of very good quality.

The next sword to be examined was a katana which Mr. Iida considered to have been made during the Senkoku-jidai (the age of wars) which was during the Muromachi period. It was of the Bizen Osafune school and, he thought, probably made by Morimitsu. In fact the nakago was inscribed Sukemitsu, which Mr. Iida thought on reflection, was probably correct.

At this stage he went on to explain, that the different shapes of blades, were due to the different styles of fighting. For instance, the previous sword examined would have been used in a single handed style that relied mainly on slashing techniques, hence a light slender blade. The swords of the later Edo period, however, tend to be heavier and straighter than earlier swords, as at this time, two handed stabbing techniques were more favoured.

The third sword to be appraised was a katana in shira-saya. This sword was O-suriage (greatly shortened) which Mr. Iida said was a good point even if this meant the removal of the mei, as was the case here. It had a very complicated hamon (Hinka) with active sunegashi, and it was probably Yamoto-den but possibly early shinto.

This was followed by an interesting gendaito in shin-gunto mounts. Gendaito, for the uninitiated, are modern swords (made in Showa period); but unlike the arsenal blades are traditionally made, although the hamon is usually weak. This particular sword, said Mr. Iida was signed Yasunori, a smith who was now dead, but who had earned some acclaim whilst alive. The sword, in the opinion of Mr. Iida was made at the famous Yasukuni shrine in Tokyo. This he could tell because the character Yasu in the smith's signature was not the one he normally used, but was the same as that in Yasukuni. (The Yasukuni shrine was built by Emperor Meiji to honour all those brave souls who died in helping Japan become a modern nation after the restoration. It became a shrine to house the kani of all soldiers killed in fighting for Japan, and during World War II a common catch-phrase before battle was, "see you at Yasukuni"). In answer to the question from a member, "How are gendaito thought of in Japan?" Mr. Iida seemed a little evasive. He said that there were gendaito in Japanese collections, but nobody collected only gendaito, shinto and shin-shinto blades were the most popular.

The gendaito was followed by a dirk blade that Mr. Iida studied at length. The blade, which was of hira-zukuri form was very excellent. It had a well carved horimono which according to Mr. Iida was carved by the swordsmith himself. This is called Hori-do-saku. The sword had saka-gunome hamon and was made in the Nambokucho period, probably early Oyei around 1380. The blade was genuine and made by Bizen Osafune Morishige who was a well rated smith of this time. The blade itself was in a broken-saya, and clearly demonstrated the need to draw a sword cutting edge uppermost, as any other method would probably have resulted in a nasty cut hand.

The next item was another hira-zukuri dirk, this time in shira-saya. Mr. Iida had previously stated that he would give an honest appraisal and his opinion and his opinion may have caused the owner of this sword a mild shock. The sword had a European polish, was mune-mei, and according to Mr. Iida, Showa-to.

The third dirk, again in shira-saya was also of hira-zukuri form, and stopped Mr. Iida in his tracks. There followed a lot of untranslated chat between Mr. Iida and Mr. Katsuyama. Mr. Iida said the sword was made by, as the mei stated Bishu Mihara Shigeyasu and was of the very highest quality. He proceeded to take an oshigate in order to record the sword on his return to Japan. He enquired after the owner who came forward clutching his Jayo Certificate which brought guffaws of laughter from all present, including Mr. Iida. Apparently in the 'untranslated chat' the question was asked, "Why is such a good sword in this country, and not in Japan?"

The next sword was one of those brought along for the "swords that are not swords" discussion. It was a wooden short sword and called a Tetsu To Boku (iron sword tree). It was made during Meiji and purely for decoration. This was followed by a helmet breaker called Hachiwara. Mr. Iida gave a demonstration of how it would be used on one of John Anderson's spectacular helmets, but I am glad to say, did not carry the demonstration to its ultimate conclusion. These Hachiwara are very rare when they come complete with saya, as this one was, and this example was made in the Edo period.

Then came a number of tsuba; a very good Norishige, a Yagane Mitsuhiro who made his name with 100 monkeys tsuba and a very good Choshu tsuba. No fakes yet said Mr. Iida. Next came a tsuba that had Alan Bale stumped, but who thought it may have originated from Nava. In Mr. Iida's opinion it was probably Kaniye, but not of the first generation, (hard luck Alan).

Mr. Katsuyama came leaping across the room, like a ninja with a shariken stuck in him, at the next sword. It was a magnificent tanto by Hizen Tadayoshi and Mr. Iida was convinced that it was a first generation example. The blade was suriage, with a wide suguka hamon and itame-hada and of excellent quality. The koshirae did justice to the blade, being of dark red lacquer and once again, of first class quality. After Mr. Katsuyama had recovered from the shock he resumed translating.

The only yari blade was next on the agenda and it was of the socketed type with shira-saya. It had a gold mei which read Kishu Ju Naomichi and this, said Mr. Iida was a real fighting spear.

An eye stopping tanto followed the yari. Both the koshirae and blade were excellent said Mr. Iida. The blade was signed Akihiro which, unfortunately said Mr. Iida was Gi-mei. The sword was definitely made in Muromachi period and Akihiro worked in Nambokucho. Mr. Iida showed

the owner of the blade the way in which a correct Akihiro signature would be cut and the differences with the one in question. Tagane, or small burs along the chisel strokes are the way in which Mr. Iida was able to say immediately, that this, although an excellent blade, was Gi-mei.

Another of the swords brought along for the "swords that are not swords" discussion was the next to be examined. This was a Boken of good quality, complete with a kogai and decorated with a dragonfly motive. Apparently it is very rare to find Boken with kogai and this particular example was probably the property of a well-to-do merchant. In answer to a query from a member, Mr. Iida explained that a wooden sword was often worn at Cha-no-rya (tea ceremony) when one had to leave one's real weapon at the entrance. The dragonfly motive is supposed to illustrate the spirit of the warrior; as in the same way a dragonfly can only fly forwards, so should the warrior attack, with no thought for what is behind him.

Brought along to the meeting with the "peonies" theme in mind, the next sword had Mr. Iida taking of oshigata again. His opinion was that the mei, Ise (no) Kami Kunisada Saku, was genuine and that this man was the father of the famous Shinkai. The Koshirae were also of the highest quality and dated from the mid-Edo period.

There were several other interesting items, including a hairy Kabuto with bullet test marks, one of John Anderson's daimyo's kabuto and several assorted swords and tsuba. All in all a magnificent collection of varied and interesting objects, that certainly did not waste our guests time.

The meeting closed with the Chairman inviting Mr. Iida to become an Honourary Member of the Society. Mr. Iida responded that he would be delighted to accept and that he would send us several copies of his newspaper containing his article about us, complete with photographs that Mr. Katsayama had been popping off all evening. In response to an earlier plea for more literature in English, Mr. Iida said he would endeavour at least to have the above mentioned article printed with a translation.

The meeting closed at 2200 hours.

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Anyone interested in Japan and her culture, will no doubt know of the great civil wars between the Taira and Minamoto clans called the Gempei. A famous classic, recording these events was written, called the Heike Monogatari, and what follows is an extract from this classic.

The Taira forces (the Heike) were in pursuit of the Minamoto and had chased them towards the Uji Bridge. The Prince in question is Minamoto Yorimasa.

## THE FIGHT AT THE BRIDGE

The Prince fell from his horse six times between Uji and Miidera, because he had no sleep the previous night, so they tore up about six yards of planking of the bridge at Uji and he entered the temple of Byodo-in and rested there awhile. The men at Roku-hara, learning that he was fleeing to Nara, started off in pursuit to take him and put him to death. Crossing over Kobatayama, about twenty-eight thousand men in all, they pressed on to the bridge-head of Uji. Perceiving the enemy were at Byodo-in they raised their war-cry three times, when they were answered by that of the Prince's men. The vanguard seeing the danger, raised a cry of alarm: "Take care! they have torn up the bridge! But the rearguard paid no heed and pushed them on with cries of "Advance! Advance!" so that some two hundred horsemen of the leading company fell through into the river and perished in the stream.

Then the warriors of both sides, taking their stand at each end of the bridge, began a duel of archery, and on the side of the Prince, Oya-no-Shuncho, Gochiin-no-Tajima, Watanabe-no-Habuku, Sazaku, and Tsazu-ka-no-Genda shot so powerfully that their shafts pierced the enemy through both shield and armour. Gensammi Nyado Yorimasa, knowing in his heart that this fight would be his last, went forth in a suit of armour of blue-and-white spots worn over his long sleeved court hitare, purposely wearing no helmet on his head, while his son Izo-no-Kami Nakatsuna wore a suit of black armour over a hitare of red brocade, he also leaving his head bare for greater ease in drawing the bow.

Then Gochiin-no-Tajima, throwing away the sheath of his long halberd, strode forth alone on to the bridge, whereupon the Heike straight away shot at him fast and furious. Tajima, not at all perturbed, ducking to avoid the higher ones, and leaping up over those that flew low, cut through those that flew straight with his whirring halberd, so that even the enemy looked on with admiration. Thus it was that he was dubbed "Tajima the arrow cutter".

Another of the soldier-priests, Tsutsui-no-Jomyo Meishu, wearing armour of black leather over a hitare of dyed cloth, and a helmet of five plates, a sword in a black lacquered sheath at his side and a quiver of twenty four black feathered arrows on his back, his bow also being of black lacquer, gripping his favourite white handled halberd in his hand, also sprang forward alone on to the bridge and shouted in a mighty voice: "Let those at a distance listen, those that are near can see; I am Tsutsui Jomyo Meishu, the priest, who is there in Miideru who does not know me, a warrior worth a thousand men? Come on anyone who thinks he is someone, and we will see! "

And loosing off his twenty-four arrows like lightning flashes, he slew twelve of the Heike soldiers and wounded eleven more. One arrow yet remained in his quiver, but, flinging away his bow, he stripped off his quiver and threw that after it, cast off his foot gear and springing

bare footed on to the beams of the bridge, he strode across. All were afraid to cross over but he walked the broken bridge as one who walks along the street Ichijo or Nijo of the Capital. With his *maginata* he mows down five of the enemy, but with the sixth the halberd snaps asunder in the midst and flinging it away he draws his sword, wielding it in the zig-zag style, the interlacing, cross, reversed dragon-fly, waterwheel, and eight-sides-at-once styles of fencing, and cutting down eight men; but as he brought down the ninth with an exceedingly mighty blow on the helmet, the blade snapped at hilt and fell splash into the water beneath. Then seizing his dirk which was the only weapon he had left, he plied it as one in the death fury.

Now a retainer of Ajari Kyoshu, Ichirai Hoshi by name, a man of great strength and courage, was fighting behind Jomyo, but as the beams were so narrow he could not come alongside him, so placing a hand on the neckpiece of his helmet, he shouted: "Pardon me Jomyo, this is no good," and springing over his shoulder to the front fought mightily until he fell. Ichirai Hoshi being killed, Jomyo crawled back again and retired to the Byodo-in where he sat down on the grass before the gate, stripping off his armour, counted the dints of the arrows that had struck him.

There were sixty-three in all, but of these only five had pierced through, and none of the wounds being very severe, he treated them with cauterizing; then covering his head and changing his clothes, using his broken bow as a staff he went down on foot to Nara. Following the example of Jomyo the soldier monks of Miidera with the Watanabe clan of Gensammi Nyudo's men vied with each other in pressing forward over the beams of the bridge, and fought till sundown, some returning victorious and some after being wounded, cutting themselves open and jumping into the river.

Then the commander of the Samurai, Kazusa-no-Kami Tadakiyo, came to the Commander-in-Chief of the Heike forces: "See here", he said "the battle on the bridge is very fierce; we ought to ford the river, but after the rains of the fifth month neither man nor horse can live in the stream; shall we go round by Yodo, Moarai, or Kawachiji? What is to be done?"

Then Ashikaga Matataro Tadatsuna, a young man in his eighteenth year spoke, saying: "Why not leave the samurai of India or China to go to Yodo, Moarai or Kawachiji, for that is not our way. If we don't rout the enemy that confront us here, the Prince will get away to Nara, and then you will have all the forces of Yoshino and Totsugawa to deal with and that will be no light affair. On the boundary of Musashi and Kozuke there is a great river called Tonegawa, and there the Ashikaga and the Chichibu are always fighting each other, and on one occasion, when the front were attacking at Nagai ford and the rear at Koga-sugi ford, a certain Nitta Nyudo of Kozuke, who was coming to the help of the Ashikaga from the Sugi ford, being told by them that the Chichibu had destroyed all the boats that had been provided to cross, exclaimed: "If we do not ford the river here it will be a disgrace to our reputation as Samurai; to be drowned is but to die. Forward then!" and using their horses as a raft they forded the river.

As the Samurai of the East Country say: "Keep your face to the enemy, and when separated by a river, shun the swift rapids by the bank. This river is neither more nor less swift and deep than the Tonegawa, so come along sirs," and he plunged into the stream. Ogo, Omuro, Fukasu, Yamakami, Nawa-no-Taro, Sanuki, Hirotsuna, Shirodaiyu, Onodera-no-Zenji Taro, Heyako-no-Shiro, and among the younger men, Obukata-no-Jiro, Kirifu-no-Rokuro and Tanaka-no-Sota immediately dashed in after him with some three hundred men behind them, shouting the Ashikaga war-cry. "Put the heads of the weaker horses downstream, those of the stronger upstream!" he shouted. "If the horses keep their feet give them the rein and let them walk, but if they get off their feet let them have their heads and swim them; if you are washed downstream stick the but of your bow down into the bottom; join hands and go across in line; if your horse's head gets down pull it up, but don't pull it up too far or you will fall off backwards; sit tight in the saddle and keep your feet firmly in the stirrups. Where the water is slow and deep get up over the horse's tail; don't shoot while in the water; if the enemy shoots don't draw your bow in return; keep your head down and your neck-piece well sloped upwards, but not too far or you will be shot in the crown of the helmet; be light on the horse and firm against the stream; don't go straight across or you will be washed away, keep obliquely to the stream." Thus advising and encouraging them he brought the whole three hundred rapidly across without losing a man.

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The December meeting was devoted to the subject of Mon. There were several examples at the meeting including a lacquered arrow case with a stylised 'wing design' mon, several swords and tsuba. There was also a magnificent Kuniyoshi Tryptich of Yoshisada at the battle of Hyogo. For proliferation of Mon this was unsurpassed. The talk was by our Chairman, Mr. John Anderson and I quote him verbatim:

Having said wildly that I would give a talk on Mon and knowing even then that my knowledge of the subject was scanty, I have delved further into the intricacies of the subject and have discovered I know even less than I supposed. This being so, if any of you thought that I would give you an easy way to trace that elusive little Mon on your favourite sword or armour, you are in for a big disappointment.

For a start there is little written in English and what the Japanese have written seems at times to be downright contradictory. Such facts, as are known, seem only to prove how difficult it is to trace a particular Mon, however, I will at least tell you a little about Mon in general.

First, let us get clear what a Mon is. The only word that can correctly describe it is badge, and words like crest or coat of arms are totally incorrect. It is simply a design adopted by a



family as a means of recognition and as such in the local confines of period and province I don't doubt it worked very well but, viewed as we do from a distance in time and with the whole of Japan to consider, it is of little use.

Most people seem to be of the opinion that Mon first came into being in the 14th century, however, there is mention of their use from at least the early 12th century. However, their appearance particularly on weapons and armour seems pretty rare until the end of the Muromachi period when their use seems to have snowballed.

In the earlier periods, their use was almost entirely restricted to the court and military families; but during the 17th century they were adopted by many other classes including merchants, geisha, wrestlers and actors and later still business companies and even towns had a Mon. There is even at least one British company, the Caribonum carbon paper people, who use the stylised wild goose, Karigane, as a trade mark.

The choice of Mon seems to have been completely arbitrary and at the owners whim. There are many stories of how a particular design came to be chosen; probably the most famous is of Tokugawa Hirotada, Iyeyasii's father who while resting after a battle and feeling hungry was served rice balls on a plate on top of which 3 AOI leaves had been arranged by his host Honda Masatada. Hirotada, possibly impressed by Masatada's courtesy and as a mark of respect adopted the design as his family badge. Another charming tale is of NAMBU MORIYUKI who during a campaign against the AKITA was resting and drinking Sake when he saw two flying cranes mirrored in his cup, hence the Mon of the Nambu. In a like manner Mon were sometimes presented and an example of this, to take one at random is the story of the Heike and Genji wars when Minamoto Yoritomo was hiding in a tree and was being pursued by Kajiwara Kagetoki. At the crucial moment two doves or pigeons flew out of the tree enabling Kagetoki, who had secret leanings toward the Minamoto cause, to persuade his followers that no one could be hiding there. Later Yoritomo presented him with the Mon of two pigeons.

Families of sufficiently high rank would have two or three Mon while the lesser samurai and others only one. In the case of those of higher rank, Kuge and Daimio the main Mon (Jomon) was used by the main members on all important occasions, and in the case of a Daimio, would be carried by the soldiers of the lower orders in the form of Sashimono or on Do and Jingasa. Those retainers of officer rank would, of course, use their own. The lesser Kayemon was used on less formal occasions or in conjunction with the Jomon.

Mon were hereditary and most sons took the Mon of their father and so branch families would bear the same Jomon as the mainline house or perhaps differenced in some way. However, this did not always follow and there are many instances of branch families bearing entirely different devices and completely unconnected ones bearing the same.

Although in 1642 an edict from the government under Iyemitsu called for all military families to register their Mon, one assumes to bring a little order to what seems to have been a chaotic situation, no dictates on the choice of design seems to have been laid down.

In all my years of study I must say that in most cases it is almost impossible to pin down a single Mon to a particular family. There is much more chance if the object bears two or more designs, but even then it is not always certain. I have one armour which has three Mon and apart from saying with certainty that the family is Matsudaira, the branch remains a mystery. Most objects have only one Mon and when one examines the pitfalls it becomes more and more difficult. Take a famous design like the Kirimon. Apart from the Emperor it was used by Taiko Hideyoshi, four Kuge families, one Daimio as Jomon and seventeen as Kayemon, and this does not include ordinary samurai families. Another example is the popular 3 comma Mon, this was used by at least eight Kuge, fourteen Daimio and one Samurai and this is only a rough count, and does not include the many variations on the theme. It also happens to be a lucky emblem and appears on roof tiles and other places with no family connections at all.

Some families do play the game and are the sole users of a design, the famous Soma of Nakamura in Mutsu with the prancing horse and the Mori of Saiki in Bungo with the single solid arrow flight are two that spring to mind.

When one looks at the designs of Mon there are in fact only about 160 basic motifs using animals, birds and feathers, insects, geometric designs, inanimate objects, trees, flowers, shrubs and characters. These basic designs are so cleverly used adapted and "differenced" that one book on Mon I have here tonight shows over 3,600 different badges. The subjects are sometimes naturally recorded and sometimes so stylistically interpreted that the original object is hard to define. A number of designs are free standing and others enclosed within one of about ten different outlines, the circle being the most popular.

In nearly all cases it is the design that is important. Colour plays no part with the exception of banners and ship sails where sometimes Mon of the same design are differenced by being shown on a

different coloured ground. In earlier periods colour seems to have predominated over Mon designs as evidenced by the red and white of the Minamoto and Taira. As with European heraldry there are exact ways of describing Mon and this in the past has led to some confusion. There are a number of Moncho books to be had which were made for the use of artisans, painters, lacquerers, metal workers and the like to show Mon designs and which describe the designs only.

I recently had a letter from someone who had an armour on which was a Mon described by him as that of the Maruninarabi family which he had traced in a book of Mon. The formal description of the design Maru Ni Narabi-Taka No Ha or two hawk feathers side by side in a circle.

I find Mon a most absorbing subject, but I fear it will be some time yet before there is any concise and easy to use reference book.

#### AMERICAN SWORD SHOW

The Northern California Japanese Sword Club is sponsoring a sword show in San Francisco from July 28th - August 1st, 1976 in conjunction with a shinsa by the Toen Sha of Japan.

The Toen Sha is one of the three main groups in Japan whose Certificates of judgment on blades and fittings are most highly respected. Information on all pieces submitted, will be provided, regardless of whether or not a Certificate is earned. The shinsa team will probably be made up of four judges, two of whom are as follows :-

- 1) Mr. Kosuke Murakami who studied under the late Kosson Honami. After the war he became a shinsa member of the NBTHK and later formed the Toen Sha of which he is Chairman.
- 2) Dr. Katsuma (Suiken) Fukunaga who is also a member of the Token Hozon Kai shinsa team. Dr. Fukunaga publishes a bi-monthly journal and has written several books on swords and koshirae.

The Toen Sha issues three papers of Certificates:

White	-	Jo Saku	-	Indicating good work;
Beige	-	Jojo Saku	-	Indicating very good work;
Green	-	Saijo Saku	-	Indicating excellent work.

In addition to the shinsa other events of interest that will be happening at the same time are :-

a) Athletics Events: including exhibitions of Kendo, Kyudo, Iai-do and Taiko (drums).

b) The Maibutsu Room: in which top quality swords and armour will be on display.

c) Seminars: (Taking the form of question and answer sessions) On the subject of :-

i) Retempering by Keith Evans

ii) Tsuba judging by Robert Haynes

iii) The Californian Club Sensei, John Yumoto will conduct a general question and answer session on swords.

d) Lectures on the following subjects:-

i) The five traditions of Koto blades by Mr. Kosuke Murakami

ii) The development of Hizen blades by Dr. Katsuma Fukunaga

iii) Sword Polishing (lecture & demo) by Robert Benson

iv) Chinese origins of Gotowork & nanako by Robert Haynes

v) The Jakushi School of Tsaba smiths by Michael Quigley

vi) Introduction to armour by George Phebus.

vii) The historical development of Sanwai Tactics and weaponry by Dr. Benjamin Hazard.

viii) Sword-making (transportation will be arranged to make a one day trip to the forge of Keith Austin in Yuba City, California.

e) The Nobu Hira Tanto

Keith Austin (Nobu Hira) is the only true Kaji (Japanese sword maker) involved in the profession in the U.S.A. He will make a tanto in honour of the show. Keith studied his craft for many years in Japan as a student of the late Sadatsugu Takahashi, the first swordsmith to be designated as a living national treasure, and then with Yuki Hira the second swordsmith to be given that honour.

Beginning now, you are invited to purchase tickets to become the owner of this blade. The donation for each ticket will be 2 dollars - 50 cents (U.S.) Ticket stubs will be sent to you on receipt of your cheque and the draw will be on July 31st, 1976. and it is not necessary to be present to qualify for the draw.

Cheques should be sent to :

The Token Kai of Northern California - Tanto fund  
c/o Roger Dunn,  
89 Parkside Drive,  
Berkeley, California 94705  
U.S.A.

The Tanto will be polished by the club polisher, Mr. Kiyoshi Yamashita, who will also make the shira-saya. In addition an unusual oshigata of the entire blade by Mr. John Clark, a club member and experienced oshigata artist. The oshigata will then be matted and framed by Mr. Ichiro Morita, another club member and professional framer.

- f) Film Festival of Samwai films each night of the sword show.
- g) Auction: on the Monday following the sword show at Butterfield Viewing will be on Friday, July 30th to Sunday August 1st.
- h) Swap Room: A room will be set aside (for at least one and possibly two days) for buying, selling and trading. A fee of 5 dollars will be charged for those requiring table space, and registrants only will be permitted to partake.

The show is, of course, an expensive venture. Any donations will be gratefully received and 10 dollars will also see you a member of the Northern Californian Sword Club for 1976. Please send all donations to :-

The Token Kai of Northern California  
c/o Ichijo Morita,  
820 West Hamilton Avenue,  
Campbell, California 95008  
U.S.A.

For further information of fees etc. please contact Mr. Roger Dunn (address under Nobu Hira paragraph)

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OSHIKATA

A reminder to members who may have difficulty in reading nakago (tangs) through inadequate references, if they care to send an oshigata (a rubbing of the tang) to the programme secretary, he will send you all the available information on the smith or inscription. Please remember to make a rubbing of the whole nakago, and not just the inscription.

The committee would like to take this opportunity of wishing you all a happy and prosperous new year, and here is a point to ponder for 1976 :-

Nan-in, a Japanese master during the Meiji era, received a University Professor who came to enquire about Zen. Nan-in served tea. He poured his visitor's cup full, and then kept on pouring.

The Professor watched the tea overflow onto the tatami, until he could restrain himself no longer. "It is full up. No more will go in!" "Like this cup" Nan-in said, "you are full of your own opinions and speculations. How can I show you Zen unless you first empty your cup?"

(Zen Flesh, Zen Bones)

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RESIGNED:

Mr. E. Newman

SUBSCRIPTIONS

As announced in the last Programme (No.88) all subscriptions will be due on March 1st each year on and from March 1976.

Will those members in arrears with their subscriptions, please send to the Secretary the appropriate proportionate fee to cover the period up to the end of February. This may be calculated on the basis of the current subscription rate of 16.7 pence per month for corresponding members and 29 pence for full members.

The monthly rate for members in the United States and in Canada is 50 cents and 83 cents for those receiving Programmes by airmail.

It is greatly regretted that, owing to the tight financial margin, we no longer can afford to send Programmes to members who are in arrears.