

HUNKERING DOWN

seido shibus weekly blog
during isolation



SEIDO SHIBUS WEEKLY BLOG

"People say nothing is impossible, but I do nothing every day." —*Winnie-the-Pooh*

Introduction

The purpose of this 4-edition blog is to provide a platform for some of our Seido Shibu members to share feelings, updates, stories, helpful tips, and share a little part of themselves to motivate others through this unprecedented time of suffering and uncertainty as a result of COVID-19. Yes, we have included some light-hearted humour as keeping spirits uplifted and strong is equally as important as maintaining virtual unity when families are isolated from immediate family members and loved ones.

Our social unit has been downsized to a 'bubble'. The word bubble usually has a positive connotation and there are worse terms that could have been used, but this is tough, and it will get tougher, particularly for our unemployed and poor.

We will sit more, as our window to the world is now our laptop. We will eat more, as never before have we been confined to live in perpetual proximity to the pantry and fridge.

We know how to train. This will be our strength. We will not lose our daily practice. Keep it close. Keep it sacrosanct.



Osu and a very warm greeting to you all from He Manu Hopukia Marae, where we are basking in sunshine, with the odd shower or two. We are blessed to have the Devonport Dojo based at a Marae and Papa Kainga where several branches of our whanau live. Great advantage for always having someone to talk to and be with during our lockdown.

A few days before the lockdown we held a whanau hui where we all talked about our apprehension of what is ahead of us. After a few tears were shared we got down to the business of “house rules” and what each of us will be doing now that we finally have the “time” to do something for ourselves.

Write some songs, learn to make pottery, get fit, paint the buildings, set up a pod caste, tidy up my stuff, were just a few of the things that came out. We will all get together at the end of the week to see how it is all going.

Some of us are walking at the beginning each day in the morning and when we get back we head over to “Café Hannah”, she has a coffee machine in her kitchen. Legend.

A few tips, if you already don’t have them, set aside a room or “safe” place in your home where anyone at any time can have time out to lie on the floor, scream at the top of their lungs or just sit and enjoy the quiet. If you don’t have a spare room the laundry or garage will do but make it comfortable so it feels good and not like the “naughty” chair.

Over the next few weeks even the best of relationships may get a little brittle so pre-plan this stuff and make sure everyone is involved in the process and the decision making. Our words have a “tapu” once they are out there you cannot take them back. Sometimes we just need to stop. A good thing to do. Just stop, the moment will pass. The tide comes in, the tide goes out.

If you have youngsters, good luck. I must say we are missing our moko’s already. On the youngsters please don’t be tempted to take them to a playground, the equipment has the potential to be covered in the virus. Our daughter lives next to a Play Centre, and she has had to put up signs and tell people to move on. Be wary of the amorous intent of your teens. Great time to hook up and, well we all know the rest as we lived it.

Nga mihi aroha ki a koutou, be kind to each other and let’s have one hell of a Dojo session when we get to the other side.

Sei Shihan Danny Watson. Devonport Dojo.



*Kyoshi John Esposito,
Sei Shihan Danny Watson,
Teresa Watson,
Kyoshi Ceri Evans
[C. 1982]*

Thoughts from Dhammapada The Sayings of the Buddha

Choices

We are what we think.
All that we are arises with our thoughts.
With our thoughts we make the world.
Speak or act with an impure mind and trouble will follow you
As the wheel followed the ox that draws the cart.

We are what we think.
All that we are arises with our thoughts.
With our thoughts we make the world.
Speak or act with a pure mind.
and happiness will follow you.
As your shadow, unshakable.

In this world hate never yet dispelled hate.
Only love dispels hate.
This is the law.
Ancient and inexhaustable.

*Question: How does this relate to our current situation?
What can we love? What can we let go?*



*From the book
'Dhammapada'
The Sayings of the
Buddha'*

Hunkering down in political terms can subtly mean,"control all movements" of people or, "make sure people do as they're told".

In this instance , these statements refer to what has occurred in the household of a known aged person who shall remain anonymous.

Because the Covis 19 virus supposedly effect the elderly the most , this theory took the notice of this person's two daughters where paranoia and concern for safety for the person ruled over all other issues. Prior to the lockdown, the girls, and visualize Chairman Mao's red student army, stormed into the dwelling, sat in front of "old" person and set out rules of behavior and conduct to avoid catching the dreaded "lurgie".

Rules set out and demanded were:-

- 1. No leaving the property. No matter what.*
- 2. No shopping. All supplies needed will be delivered.*
- 3. No driving. Car must remain in garage at all times.*
- 4. Wash hands frequently.*
- 5. Have hand wash facilities readily on hand for visitors to use.*

The "old", being wise, naturally nodded agreed to all terms, knowing that to disagree would exert anger and wrath from Chairman Mao's soldiers, and then possibly be punished by many strokes from the "cat of nine tails". On their departure, thoughts enter one's head one of which defiance prevails, eg, "young whipper snappers", being treated like a child, told what to do, the groans of discontent grows out of all disproportion, to the extent that thinking becomes distorted.



One activity that this "old" enjoys is to walk, sorry stagger, up a set of steps, approximately 280 of the one 3 x weekly, and having done them, to meet with comrades for a coffee break.

Am usually at the steps around 6/ 6.30am, allows time for "training" to arrive for coffee around 7.15.

However, thought about the curfew of conditions set out of the above, but the urge and need for exercise overcame all else, so snuck out very early, did steps, had coffee with mates, solved many problems of the world drove home, feeling quite smug. Until!! Daughter no.1 came around to chastise the "old". How she found out about the misdemeanor will never be revealed but to be scolded by one's daughter carries no pleasure. Then after D1 leaves D2 arrives and the "old" has to endure the same torture all over again.

To end the story, love prevails, all is forgiven , with the exception that if he episode is repeated, the girls will have an ankle bracelet fitted. Knowing them that would be no idle threat.

So now " old" will grab Teddy Bear, seek a place nice and warm to HUNKER DOWN

Osu.

This person wishes all the very best of wellness to each and every member of Seido, stay positive retain your patience and sanity, seek onto every book and cranny for the light and funny side of all issues.

Keep laughing, and the smile on your faces. Remember the yin/yang, hard/soft, that with every adversity , there is an opportunity.

As a side issue, this lockdown reminds me a little of conditions experienced during WW2. Many things were rationed, but at least nobody fought for toilet paper.

Sei Shihan Gavin Lowe, Christchurch

WISDOM FROM SHIBU

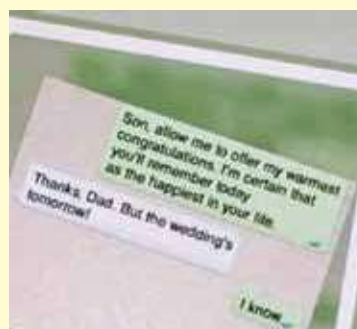


Struggling to
get your wife's
attention?

Just sit down and
look comfortable.



I tried donating blood
today...**NEVER
AGAIN!!!**
Too many stupid
questions. Who's
blood is it? Where did
you get it from? Why
is it in a bucket?



Kindly supplied by Sei Shihan
Neil Mathieson

From Across The Ditch - the US of A

Osu Hanshi and Christchurch Dojo,

I'm imagining for plenty of you, your lockdown will be a mirror of mine-battling the 11 and 15yr olds to finish their online schoolwork. Not easy!

Hope you are all managing to do a combination of giving yourselves some well needed relaxing, and getting some outside time as well.

No real complaints here, we are on our second week of schools being closed. One week of lockdown so getting used to it all. We're not sick, we have food in the fridge, the car filled yesterday. We still have jobs for now, but will see what happens in the next few weeks. I'm sick of movies, and can't understand why I still don't find time to read my book.

Listening to the Country's daily briefing by the President. One poor Doctor who stands behind him, has to listen to an appalling and rambling delivery of fact and fiction, interspersed with the word "tremendous" at least 7 or 8 times-we count:>)) Very jealous of your Jacinda handling this Virus, the rest of the planet watch and learn.

I find the News from Reuters and hope for the best. Go for bike rides around the neighbourhood, wave at people we know, then ride home. We left NYC 2 years ago so the space feels good here right now.

Today I made a video of myself reading "Kapai The Kiwi" book for my school's Kindergarten 5/6 yr olds. Hope they like it-who wouldn't:>))

Stay well, and wishing you all the fastest path through this!

That first day back at the dojo will feel amazing...but not if you can't do pushups anymore because you've been sitting at home eating all the pies:>)) Make sure you do a bit of secret training while noone's looking.

*Osu and Love to All,
Meredith Sawers Pretto
USA*



Where did the karate gi come from?

The karate gi is relatively new and has been in common usage since about the 1920s. It takes its influence from both the judo gi (which is made of much heavier fabric), and the hakama (something similar to a kimono, but with trousers). Traditional training clothes were favoured for being light and hardwearing, and allowing freedom of movement – similar to that of farmers and fishermen at the time.

Due to the striking resemblance to sleep wear, a common story suggests that this was used to maintain secrecy. During 13th century life in Okinawa, possession of weapons and the practice of martial arts was prohibited and so many exponents were forced to train at night. If authorities caught individuals engaged in training, they could simply claim to be in their pyjamas and avoid prosecution.

Are there different styles of gi?

According to Karate's Supreme Ultimate: The Taikyoku Kata in Five Rings, there are three main 'styles' of gi; Kata, European, and Japanese. The Japanese cut will typically have shorter sleeves compared to that of the European version which favours full length in the top and trousers. One explanation for this suggests the Japanese cut exposes the foot and hand formation, allowing one's technique to be better visible to their instructor.

White is the most common colour of karate gi, however black is sometimes favoured depending on the style and dojo you train in. The first karate gi was a beige colour, for no reason other than the material that was being used in its production.

How did we get a modern gi?

The modern karate gi is largely accredited to Gichin Funakoshi (founder of Shotokan and considered the grandfather of modern karate). Marian Stricker (Wear: Origin and Meaning of Martial Arts Uniforms), suggests his design pulled together elements from judo, traditional Okinawan workwear, and incorporated it into a uwagi (jacket) and zubon (trousers), held in place with an obi (belt).

Karate historian, Dave Lowry suggest that when Gichin Funakoshi was implementing the karate gi, there was a lot of western influence in Japan which demanded more modesty, and this is a reason for longer sleeves and trouser legs in the modern gi. This is a possible reason for the ties at the base of the uwagi to stop it coming undone during practice.

What about the obi?

The obi, or belt, is a striking recognition of a karate-ka's experience and skill. A popular story suggests that over time the unwashed obi becomes more faded and changes colour to a brownish yellow hue from all of the hours of sweat. This is signified today by the dying of the obi, and why in most martial arts styles, brown belt is typically the final colour before one earns their black belt.

*Senpai Hamish McKay
Christchurch*



Gichin Funakoshi

When the time comes, take action

What a few weeks it has been. I've been displaced from my office for more than a fortnight, finished the second of our 100% online classes tonight and know that things will continue to change and we will be faced with more and new challenges with each passing day.

It was so surreal, from the moment I noticed the news starting to get a little grim and the cases start to skyrocket in Queensland, I knew that things would change and fast! But in the next week the days passed and Australia ambled along... nothing changed, except I felt on edge, like the world was on the brink of disaster.

All the same, we prepared. In that week we tested streaming our classes from the dojo, with one black belt training from home and a junior green belt trying it out also. At the end of that week, we knew our days of teaching in the dojo were numbered.. two days later, we were forced to close.

In a way, I was happy that we were made to close. The speculation was over for us, we knew what was expected and what we knew what we had to do, and most importantly, we could protect our students. The hard part about closing, being the number of contradictory directives issued by the government, putting people into a state of limbo. I am happy to see New Zealand go into a lockdown, not only for their sake and the sake of my family and friends, but it may be the push the Australian Prime Minister needs (who does not want to be "one-upped" by New Zealand's response to the crisis) to take the steps that are required, here.

Closing the dojo didn't mean that Seido Sunnybank was closed.. we're a community, not the four walls we train inside. We came together as a community, held a meeting that had as many online attendees as in person. We discussed our ideas and asked our community for thoughts, concerns and ideas of their own. A lot of people, parents and students, expressed how thankful they were that they could keep training and keep connecting with each other, even when we couldn't be with each other.

What we've done

- met as a community, involving all students and carers in the discussions and planning
- surveyed our students to gauge interest of our activities going forward
- tested, trialled and delivered our first online classes

What we intend to do - from our members feedback

- call it 'physical distancing' and encourage continued social connection
- continue our timetable online and trial "breakout rooms" to break the class up for focussed training similar to in the dojo
- create helpful video content for students to practice or workout at a time that suits them
- have a buddy system, where small groups of students keep in regular contact with one another to check in and keep up morale
- organise virtual lunches/afternoon tea catchups to provide that community feel
- encourage family members to join in the training with their partners and children
- promote our online offering to new families who need a home workout and an escape from their working or schooling at home
- keep our minds open to new ways of learning and connecting and keeping our spirits up during this tough time

Seido Mobile Dojo

I've really enjoyed having signed up to Honbu's mobile dojo. It's very exciting to be able to see Kaicho, Nidaime and Senpai Meg teaching and demonstrating Seido classes, which I've only rarely (in 2006 & 2016) been able to attend in person.

The other content posted by Honbu and Johshin Honzan seniors is also very interesting and worthwhile - it has given me a lot to consider when teaching my own classes, from adults all the way down to wee wees!

The most important thing to remember is that we are all in this together. We are all facing the same disruptions to our training and lifestyle and most people's occupations and schooling are not in a good place right now. As Seido karateka and martial artists we must step up and help our broader communities.

When the time comes, take action. Whether it be to stay at home or to reach out to a friend or motivate yourself to train remotely - you'll know what is required, so when the time comes, take action!

Osu

Senpai Sam

Seido Sunnybank, QLD Australia



2016 Go-En welcoming dinner

MANTRAS

PERSONAL MANTRAS

The rule I live my life by ...



Why tip toe thru life
Only to arrive safely at
Death

Jun Shihan Andrew Davey

Love the God of all Gods,
drink the wine,
and let the world be the world.

Kyoshi Ellen Hampson



Keep your head up
and your heart open.

Go slowly.

Sei Shihan Neil Mathieson



Death is inevitable,
But to die one has to live.
So, live.

The rest will take care of itself.

Hanshi Renzie Hanham



Persist in following your dreams.

Anything is possible.

Jun Shihan Bu

Do not despise the snake for having no legs
for who knows,
one day it may turn into a dragon.

Kyoshi Nicky



**"It is easier to stay fit than get fit get"
[and I don't mean elite fit or anything like
that, but a healthy level of fitness
and movement].**

Kyoshi Ally Morris, Christchurch



**"If you look behind you,
then you will fall over".**

[What's already happened is in the past and you can't change it. With a positive attitude, "onwards and upwards", whatever problems that arise in the future will seem minimal].

Sei Shihan Peter Searle, Christchurch



From Te Awamutu

When the government introduced Covid level 1 restrictions the Te Awamutu dojo introduced hand washing and social distancing into classes. Self defence and yakosokus were done without partners and there was no sparring. When the level 3 restriction was telegraphed classes were cancelled.

A 2nd kyu grading had been scheduled for March 28th for a student who was due to return to Finland with her parents in April to live. She and her mother had been students at the dojo for three years and were excellent, committed karateka. Both were green belts.

At short notice the grading was brought forward to March 25th at 5.00pm. The only people present were the student, her mother who she was socially isolating with, two Kyoshis and myself. Self defences and yakosokus were done with imaginary partners and there was no sparring. As an alternative to sparring the student had fifteen 90 second rounds without stopping on the bag. The first round was a hand combination, second a hand combination starting from the opposite side and third a kicking combination. This sequence was repeated five times. In all other respects the grading was what you would expect of a 2nd kyu grading.

The student was very grateful that we had found a way for her to grade despite Covid 19 and we were happy that she had been able to achieve the milestone. Five hours later level 4 came into effect.

I see that other dojos have put classes on line and I commend them on their innovation.

This virus is perhaps a lesson in how we may need to operate in the future. Perhaps Nature is warning us that we can not go on treating the planet the way we are.



Osu

Sei Shihan Michael McIvor

Osu

I think one of the best ways to see out the isolation period is to keep busy and set some time aside to train.

It might mean quite a change from your usual options... but be creative and you may find it a beneficial way to pass the time and not turn your 6-pack into a large 1-pack.

I don't have a punching bag at home... I never needed one before.... but I did have some wood, screws, a pad, and too much time on my hands.

The outcome was the virtuoso shown in the pic attached.

Yes, I accept it is more Quasimodo than Cinderella, and it needed some extra weight to keep it on the floor when I hit it hard... however it works and now I have a punching platform to train with.

We still have room in most houses or garages to train, from kata to full works-outs, and weights can be pretty much anything you can adapt in your house.

Have fun coming up with both the means and the motivation :)

Kyoshi Kim, Christchurch



I heard it on the Grapevine....

We've already seen some of the creative and innovative ways dojo members are staying in touch and continuing their practice in whatever shape or form seems relevant at present. Another way that we're planning to keep in touch is through a 'Grapevine' or 'Telephone Tree' system. Seniors in the dojo will be making calls over the next few weeks to all members, just to keep connected and see how people are doing. Enjoy having a chat to someone you may not have spent much time with outside the dojo! Osu, *Jun Shihan Bu, Christchurch*

Plum Blossom

The plum blossom is Kaicho Nakamura's family emblem and was chosen by Kaicho as the Seido insignia. The three circles signify love, respect and obedience. The characters on the chest patch translate as "Seido Juku." "Sei" means truth, honesty and sincerity; "do" means way; and "juku" means a small place where one goes to study, learn and grow.

The botanical name for the plum blossom is *Prunus mume*, and it is more closely related to the apricot than the plum family. Known in Japan as "Ume" (kanji: 梅), they are a symbol of refinement, purity, nobility, and a reminder of past love. As it flowers in late winter/early spring, the plum blossom is seen as a symbol of winter and a harbinger of spring. The blossoms are loved for their elegance as they bloom vibrantly against the winter snow, while their fragrance subtly pervades the air. Because it blossoms in the cold winter, the plum blossom is regarded as one of the "three friends of winter", along with pine, and bamboo.

Plum blossoms are often mentioned in Japanese poetry as a symbol of spring.

***When everything has faded they alone shine forth,
encroaching on the charms of smaller gardens.
Their scattered shadows fall lightly on clear water,
their subtle scent pervades the moonlit dusk.***

***Snowbirds look again before they land,
butterflies would faint if they but knew.
Thankfully I can flirt in whispered verse,
I don't need a sounding board or winecup.***

poet Lin Bu (of the Song Dynasty (960–1279))

Prunus mume originated around the Yangtze River in the south of China and was later introduced to Japan and other Asian countries. In Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese cooking, the fruit of the tree is used as a flavouring for alcohol, as a pickle and in sauces. In Japan, a drink is made from green plums which tastes sweet and tangy, and is considered a cold, refreshing drink. Plum wine is a Japanese alcoholic drink made by steeping green plums in "shōchū" (clear liquor).

Japanese tradition holds that the Ume functions as a protective charm against evil, so the Ume is traditionally planted in the northeast of the garden, the direction from which evil is believed to come. Nowadays, "hanami" (flower viewing) usually refers to cherry blossom viewing. However, the practice of flower viewing is thought to have begun with plum blossoms in the Nara Period (years 710–794). Ume are often planted outside of Japanese shrines and temples. Some of the best places to view plum blossom in Japan is the Nara Park in Nara and Osaka Castle Park in Osaka.

Senpai Jennifer Dray, Christchurch



Here are some thoughts / ideas to help you through this time:

Aim for 9 hours sleep, No driving to school / work means more time to rest, especially when our stress levels are elevated we need more rest.

Drink 3-4L of water a day

Move every 30 mins

Do body weight workouts at home

Lift weights wherever possible - if you do not have some weights then - you could fill milk containers with water / or you may have water containers at home you could use. Fill a back pack with books and just that ! It is amazing what we have at home that we can use.

Eat nutrient-dense whole-foods

Try not to snack - aim for more satiating meals

Write down 4, 8 & 12-week training goals

Get some fresh air daily. Go out for a walk, run or bike ride.

Write down what you would like to practice daily for karate - have a plan.

Monday: Pinan Kata's

Tuesday: Seido Kata'setc

If people have a bag or pad at home (and someone that can hold it for you) then I am happy to post some pad / bag work routines to do if any one needs ideas.

Kyoshi Ally Morris, Christchurch





Hunting and Gathering

I have long held a deep hankering for the land and subsistence living. I consider myself a gatherer, not a hunter. Sure, I was involved in hunting when much younger on the Coast, as was everyone, and was part of a group that would hunt red deer almost every weekend up the Maruia Valley. Most often I was the passive hunter of the group. I am primarily a vegetarian now and the notion of hunting or even preparing an animal for the table does not appeal. However, I would be one of the first to admit that we can never turn our back on these skills. I killed my first animal for the 'table' at 11 years old, with my father's guidance. I last euthanized an animal about 8 years ago. I am grateful that my early life experiences included learning these skills.

It's well known that for 95 percent of our time on this planet we call home, we [our evolving species] have fed ourselves by foraging, hunting and gathering food from our own natural environments. Our earlier ancestors foraged for millions of years so this skill and potential mastery is embedded in our DNA. In an ideal world, we would be able to reach out and master these skills again, should we need to.

Vege Gardens – the 'domesticated forage'

Right now, those people who have maintained viable vegetable gardens will be wondering how we can safely share produce with others – old staples like marrows, zucchinis, potatoes, silver beet. I know I am. For others, it might be a timely reminder to use some of this time at home to prepare a plot of soil for planting, and then order seeds online in the hope that somewhere, someone in the world, will deliver them promptly. Your soil is healthy, just sleeping and waiting for seeds. Yesterday, I tried to order seeds online to grow my favourite pumpkin, the Rouge Vif D'Etampes, the most popular pumpkin in the Parisian markets in the 1880's, still popular now, and commonly known as the Cinderella Pumpkin. My

grandmother introduced me to this pumpkin. Her father was French. As it happens, the seeds were sold out yesterday, but I hope to find another supplier. It is so important to have a vegetable garden; as important as having savings in the bank – or savings buried somewhere – typical West Coast style. Did you know that Constantinople survived eight years on its extensive gardens when under siege in the late 14th century? My daughter has an established vege garden and it's wonderful to see my grandsons out there caring for it, and harvesting, when the time is right. I am a *laissez-faire* gardener in that if the seed/plant has the inclination to sprout and grow, it sprouts and grows. I am not out there every day, weeding. In fact, I rarely even plant a potato as simply leave some in the ground for the following year. What I do provide is good soil as have built up a good compost base over a long period of time with old hay, horse manure and lawn clippings. I rarely have to water my garden as the compost maintains the perfect moisture content for growth. I want to pay tribute to my nephew Shane [former Shibu office manager] who planted many of the plants in my garden one afternoon in early Spring. One of his lovely dogs had dispatched one of chickens the day before so his act of remorse has resulted in a particularly fine harvest for me this year!



Today, I want to introduce some of the many foraging options we have in New Zealand. We live in a rich and plentiful land. Yes, the rural dwellers have a bit more to harvest but there is still plenty of green space in the cities where you can harvest tasty morsels. You just need to know what to look for.

Chickens

First, the magnificent chicken, not exactly foraging I know [the chickens are in fact the foragers], although I did 'acquire' four new chickens and one rooster to add to my brood this week. My neighbour now lives elsewhere and his 'blissfully free' chickens had been cheekily crossing my boundary for weeks developing more feral habits by the day. Digging and scratching up soil all over the place. My neighbour hadn't been able to catch them, so I gladly took up the challenge and voila, here they are, tucked away to train as egg producers. Sei Shihan Neil and Moira have chickens – many city-dwellers do – very useful during these times and if treated well, chickens will lay during the colder months. If they don't lay – well – they know what will happen ...

Acorn Coffee

Another magnificent specimen, the mighty oak tree. We have ripe brown acorns all over Canterbury right now and am sure they can be found across wider New Zealand. Easy to harvest and fun for children to harvest, did you know we can make coffee out of the nuts? In the next edition there will be a photo of me drinking roasted acorn coffee from my oak tree, hopefully smiling and not grimacing.

You need to remove the tannic acid by leaching it out of acorns in a pot of boiling water. You will need a few repeated changes of water. Continue doing this until the water does not turn brown after you have strained and replaced it. You can also place one tablespoon of baking soda into one litre of water and leave the acorns to soak in the baking soda infused water for 12-15 hours. A Native American method is bagging the nuts and allowing them to soak in a clean, flowing stream for a few days until no brown-coloured water can be seen. Peel the ripe, processed acorns, once leached. Divide the kernels. Place in an ovenproof dish and cover. Roast in a low heat oven to dry slowly. Once roasted (light, medium or dark), grind. Raw acorns can be stored for a long time without spoiling which increases their value, being a "process as needed food resource". You can also make acorn flour to make breads, muffins. This seems like 'too much work for too little produce' for me, so haven't attempted to do this. Those of you keen on pickles – you can pickle acorns using an olive recipe.

Watercress

The entire watercress plant is edible – leaves, stalks and even the flowers. Only the roots are best left alone as they don't taste great! Everything else can be eaten raw or added to your favourite dish to add a peppery flavour. You will find watercress in streams and drains. If in a city environment, ensure the drain is clean and the water is flowing. Plus, watch for any sign of chemical spray – i.e. wilting and browning off.

Coprosma

Karamu (Coprosma) berries. All the five species of N.Z coprosmas are edible. Quite tasty in fact. Coprosma is part of the coffee family, and you can make coffee out of the seeds. Very small seeds. I haven't tried this yet, but may do once I perfect my acorn coffee.

Harakeke Seeds

Again, the seeds are highly edible. When white or green they are sweet and meaty. When black and shiny they are bitter. The sweet ones are nice on their own or sprinkled on a salad. The easiest way to extract the seeds from the pod is to snap it in the middle and squeeze the seeds out from each end. Again, you will find Harakeke all over New Zealand. The flower shafts are great fire lighters when dried off in late summer. You can snap the shafts easily and use as kindling wood. Fallen cabbage trees leaves are a real nuisance in my garden but these are also great firelighters. I regularly tie up a bundle for my logburner.

Crab Apple Jam & Jelly

These tiny ancestors of our cultivated apple have small, round fruit that look like tiny red xmas lights in trees in late Summer. They may be tiny and a little sour, but you can make some amazing recipes with the fruit of the crab apple tree. Crab apples have a very high pectin and acid content which makes them ideal for setting fruit jams and jellies. The birds leave my tree alone for some reason, so I always have plenty of time to harvest the fruit.

Crab Apple Liqueur

If you're a fan of fruit liqueurs, make this. It's intense with the appliness of crab apples and you'll end up with a deliciously golden liqueur with a rich taste. Perfect for a Winter evening by the fire. I have listed the ingredients and method. Very easy to make.

- 30 to 40 crab apples (washed and halved)
- 1 litre gin or vodka
- 200g caster sugar

Fill a large preserving jar three quarters full with crab apples. Pour sugar over and add gin or vodka. Add any remaining crab apples to the top and seal. Steep for one to two months. Turn the jar daily for the first week and now and then afterwards. Strain liqueur through two or three layers of muslin and decant into a bottle. Leave for another month or so. You can use the exact same recipe for Walnut Liqueur, using green walnuts. I have not made this, but an Austrian friend has done so.

Elderberry Wine

It's almost elderberry time – we know elderberries and the English grape. They will be fruiting across New Zealand. I consider them a weed as they grow everywhere and always in the wrong places, but they are useful. After picking you will want to remove the berries from the stems, which are slightly toxic. The easiest way to remove the elderberries from the stems is by combing them with a fork. Once you have the berries de-stemmed it is time to clean them. Fill a large bowl with cold water and add the elderberries. The ripe and mature berries will sink to the bottom. Any green, damaged berries will float as will any leaves and insects. Remove the bad berries and debris with a sieve. After cleaning, if you are not planning to make wine straight away you can freeze the elderberries in a freezer bag. Wine recipe next week. Did you also know that elderberry syrup has been used for hundreds of years to treat influenza? A recipe for this next week also.

Field Mushrooms

A little like the elderberries – it is almost field mushroom time. Now again, mainly a rural foraging opportunity, but occasionally you find a fairy circle at the base of a tree or on lawns, sports fields and grass verges in Autumn. I am expecting to find some in the paddock today. The rain we are getting right now along with the lower temperatures will promote the growth. The common field mushroom [*Agaricus campestris*] is a safe and widely eaten gilled mushroom very similar to the cultivated button mushroom. Just like commercial mushrooms, the gills change from pale pink to dark brown as the cap grows. Did you know that people who collect mushrooms are known as mycophagists? Please remember that correct identification is important as most fungi can't be eaten. If in any doubt, take a photo on your phone and email it to SeidoShibu_sec@outlook.com

Do enjoy your foraging – good for the soul – the experts say that there an unspoken, deep meaning to foraging that adds something to our well-being. I can vouch for that. Look in your back yard. Check the local park. You may even find some late ripening blackberries.

Please note all photos are from Kyoshi Ellen's garden apart from the Rouge Vif D'Etampes pumpkin.

Isolation Down South

Osu, what can I say, we are all in uncharted territory at the moment and this is the new normal. The way I see it, sure it's going to be tough, but short term pain for long term gain. If we stick to the rules we will get through this.

I've been keeping in touch with some of the members from the club, some are using their backyards, lounges, basements, bedrooms and practicing their Bo work, katas whatever the space allows. It is very important for our health - mental and physical that we continue with some form of exercise, whether it's a walk, run, weights or karate especially with the current situation as this will help reduce the chances of becoming sick.

There is no excuse as to why we cannot practice our karate, or do some form of exercise or whatever but this is also a time that we can learn new things, read or get some of those jobs done around the house – or not!

Me, well I am lucky (?) enough to be able to work from home, take Lockdown Day 1, up at 8am, off to work (down the stairs) turn on the computers, put toast in the toaster, read the paper, back to work, sun came out so shot outside, up the ladder, along the scaffold and did some painting on the house, then back in, answered a few more emails, back outside, split and cut a heap of firewood, back inside answered a couple of calls and emails, a couple of reports then pumped the bike tyres up and went for a bike ride – busy day! My intention and for my sanity is to keep up the fitness, the karate but also the social interaction albeit by skype, Facebook or phone with family and friends as this as mentioned is the new normal for at least the next 4 weeks.

Remember though, by the time you read this it will be day 5 or 6, the novelty may have worn off somewhat, remember to give those confined with you and part of your "bubble" a bit of space, not because of the virus but for their sanity (and yours).

We will get through this, take care

" It's not what happens to you, but how you react to it that matters" - Epictetus



*Osu
Sei Shihan Kelvin Lewis
Dunedin*

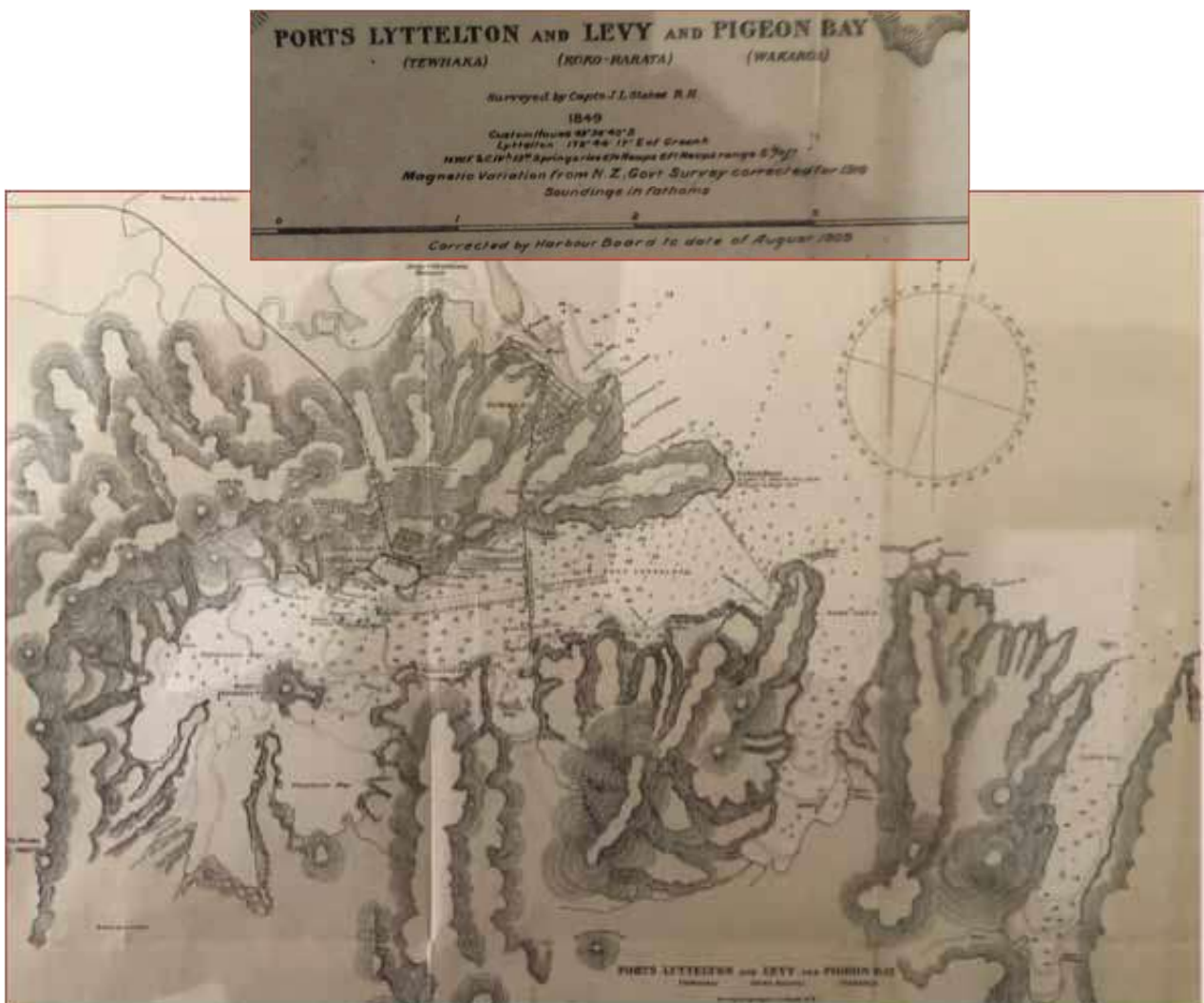
Osu.

Port Hills Crater Rim – Sei Shihan Harry and Sensei Jane

We Christchurch residents are very fortunate to have the hills of the volcano at our back door, alongside the low lying flat land of the Mackenzie basin, where our main city and our dojo were established. Hanshi and Cath, and Jane and I both reside on properties in Governors Bay, within the crater rim. Sei Shihan Neil and Moira are just on the outer face of the crater rim in Mt. Pleasant, along with several other members of our Dojo community.

During the lockdown Sensei Jane and I have been able to walk the Old Coach Road on the foreshore at the head of the harbour, which is our back door, making a pleasant daily walk from the house. We are very grateful for this and do not take it for granted. The Governors Bay Hotel, like all other hospitality venues, is shut at this time, but this is normally a significant meeting place for our community and this has been the case for the Hotel since it was originally opened. The Hotel was regularly our destination, before ambling back home after a quiet drink. One evening, while walking home in the darkness we came across a Little Blue penguin which was really cool. DoC now have signs up along the track advising walkers of the nesting area.

Below, is probably one of the first survey maps of the area. Dated 1849 it is a good example of the various volcano vents within the crater rim. Sensei Jane and I found this map while browsing in a Devonport gallery. Interestingly, after the Feb 2012 earthquake, the harbour developed another new vent on the sea floor at Rapaki reaching temperatures of 37 degrees. The other is at 26 degrees. Not bad considering the volcano has been extinct for millions of years. In coming years it might supersede the new hot pools just developed in New Brighton - watch this space.



Along the bottom of the harbour, Christchurch City Council are forming a walking track from Godley Head/Taylors Mistake back around the harbour to Diamond Harbour. The walkway encompasses old historic paths such as the Old Coach Road, formed in 1857, probably by prisoners, and includes the old Maori Trails between settlements, used as a route for the collection of food and trade. Many of the crater caves had been used as living spaces and shelter for Maori and early European settlers.

At the top of the Rim are exceptional views across the Canterbury plains, Southern Alps, Lyttelton Harbour and out to Pegasus Bay. There are numerous walking and biking tracks. As a gardener, I appreciate the unique flora and fauna that lives in our environment.

Our property, as well as "Ohinetahi" was once owned and planted by Thomas Henry Potts, a well-known naturalist and botanist. On the property he developed what was believed to be one of the first fern collections in NZ. We are currently continuing to develop the fernery area which opens out onto the Old Coach Road walking track.



After the lockdown I would recommend the Port Hills as a place to visit to revitalise and enjoy the beautiful city we live in. You are all most welcome to call in on your travels, send us a text (021 267 5694) and we will put the kettle on... Be kind. Be Patient. Stay Safe. Osu

Sei Shihan Harry and Sensei Jane.

Bum Fun

According to many journalists' reports, Elise Volweiller being one of them wrote on the 14 March, "loo paper has become the unintentional symbol for pandemic preparation, and that's a pretty hard thing to take seriously". She'd be right there!!! Our own Senpai Dean said "I can think of better things to do during the shut-down than wipe arses!"

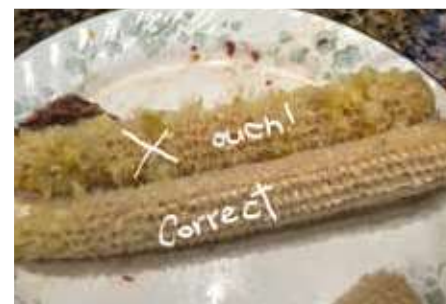
Apparently, there are some weird psychological underpinnings that help explain this such as toilet paper representing cleanliness, its cheap to buy, and usually, we have a secure supply. As humans, we have a burning need to take action in a crisis to avoid becoming paralysed by panic so "stashing a personal supply of toilet paper is a small but tangible accomplishment" [Elise Volweiller, 2020]. We've heard of crazy stuff; supermarket patrons fighting in the aisles over the last pack of Cottonsoft 3 ply. And then there's the story of the Aussie family who mistakenly ordered 48 boxes of toilet paper instead of 48 rolls? That's 2,304 rolls??? And kept them??? All of them – for themselves??? Just in case???



I therefore pose this question - have we simply forgotten how to live without this, now rare, luxury item. I mean for goodness sake; the Coronavirus Virus is not a mistake we can simply 'wipe away'. Let's get inventive. Let's show our no.8 wire capability and 'kiwi she'll be right attitude'. Fighting over loo paper is not our style. Stay with me now. Visualise corn cobs. Now I figure that most of you will have corn cobs in your freezers, as a long-standing good solid staple for all kiwi families. Kids love them dripping with butter – adults do too. This inconspicuous vegetable has more going for it than what you might think. I kid you not.

Try this – but carefully:

1. Eat your corn cob in a meticulous manner so that there are absolutely no kernels left in sight – will tell you why soon.
2. Instruct your family to do the same. Some of you may decide to eat two cobs per sitting and reap the benefits – yet to be explained.
3. Once back on your plates, the cobs, turn carefully to check for rogue kernels. Very important step.
4. Turn on the oven and set to 140 degrees Celsius.
5. Carefully collect all the cobs from all plates and lay on baking paper in the oven.
6. If the cob is buttery, dab with a sheet of handy-towel – apparently that's still available. A greasy finish on the cob is not what we are after.
7. Bake slowly for 1.5 hours – not a second over.
8. 1.5 hours later remove from oven and lay on a cooling rack. DO NOT under any circumstances use while hot.
9. Important step – check again – and again – for rogue kernels as these kernels will be very hard and sharp after baking. You do not want to risk a kernel stuck up your 'whoops-a-ma daisy'. It will not come out!
10. Once completely cooled [well, you could possibly get away with luke-warm on a cold day, or if very desperate]. In fact, now that I think about it – "come on Trev – too much info here". Back to business – once completely cooled, transfer to your toilet paper basket.
11. Now, remember, one cob per one 'whoops-a-ma daisy'. Do not use someone else's cob!
12. When done – having used all sides, come on, be good to the planet – flush the toilet as per usual. This may take several goes as the bowl may be rather crowded.
13. Wash hand thoroughly and be thankful that our local Council are behind us all the way!



Across the Ditch

So, it is interesting times. We have now been living in Newcastle for 1 year, almost to the day, and we have had a little bit of a bumpy ride with training. It is the first time we have moved to a place that does not have a Seido dojo. Although we regularly trained in Sydney when we first arrived, that changed for us last year. Finally, early this year we secured a small community hall for 2 nights of the week.

We had just started to get back on top of our training. Between us, collectively we have been training for 62 years – Sei Shihan Murray 41 years and I have been training for 21 years. So, the stuff is all there, we just have to find it. And between us we were working through the syllabus and felt like we were making good headway.

And then, just this week we received an email saying that the community hall would be closed for an indefinite period...basically till restrictions on COVID-19 pass. I think we knew it was coming but because it is just the two of us, we felt as though we were in a wee bubble and possibly, we could continue. Well, we could continue but the community hall wouldn't let us.

Wow, what has just happened? We kind of feel like the world has gone a bit mad. Training gives us so much, physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing. Training regularly is our comfortable place, it is just what we do.



So now the stop starts again.

But, we are about to move house and our new home has a big back yard so we will start training in our back yard. We won't have a beautiful wooden floor but we will have space. So training will be more like camp with cool (sometimes damp) uneven grassy ground below our feet.

Our karate is physical and often requires movement in close proximity to others. The physicality is to attack, defend and work out what we need to do, where we need to be and what the right technique is. A large component of karate requires touch...I hope this never changes. We are fortunate that we have each other in our two man dojo.



And then there is the part that is my favourite, the connectedness and the love that we have for one another (all of us) where we shake hands, put an arm on a shoulder or back for encouragement or support. And give one another a hug to say thanks for training with me, thanks for teaching me or I appreciate you. Hopefully all will blow over and we can come back to this again.

With love

Sensei Suzana aka G Hopper

Special Edits: Sei Shihan Murray

YANK WATCH

I have attached a map of Arizona (pop. in 2018, 7.172 million) so you can get a visual idea of where we live (I added an arrow to show where our home is). We live in a small community in Cochise County (pop. in 2017, 124,756) called Miracle Valley (pop. in 2010, 1837). We are located right in between the small, eclectic, artsy town of Bisbee (pop. in 2017, 5192) and the army fort town of Sierra Vista (pop. in 2017, 42,912).

All those numbers are boring but I really wanted you to have a good idea of how small (in yank terms) the town is.

Cochise County is the largest county in Arizona but has, compared to other counties, the smallest population per capita.

Our county has only 3 reported cases of Covid-19 at the moment, however (more boring numbers) the testing in Arizona is pathetic.

To date, only 13,712 people in the entire state have been tested. The state is reporting 919 cases and 17 deaths statewide.

The 3 cases in Cochise County are in Sierra Vista, 15 miles from us. As you can see on the map, the Mexican border is less than 5 miles from our home. We are not getting much information from Mexico yet, which is sad.

Last Sunday night, the border patrol had our wee home surrounded, searching the neighboring field with dogs and spotlights. One agent asked Sensei Murray if our neighbor was home (he was not, he lives in New Jersey and we barely see him), the agent asked if he could take the dog into the neighbors' yard.

Hiding in the meter-high weeds were 3 drug runners. Full camouflage, Covid masks and special booties covering their shoes so they didn't leave prints.

So, yeah, very small community, but a hotbed of excitement every once in a while.

We are staying away from as many people as we can, which is pretty easy for us, as we tend to be hermits anyway. The grocery store in Bisbee has been out of toilet paper for the last month, haven't been able to locate seeds for the garden for a few weeks, but we believe it is just beginning here.

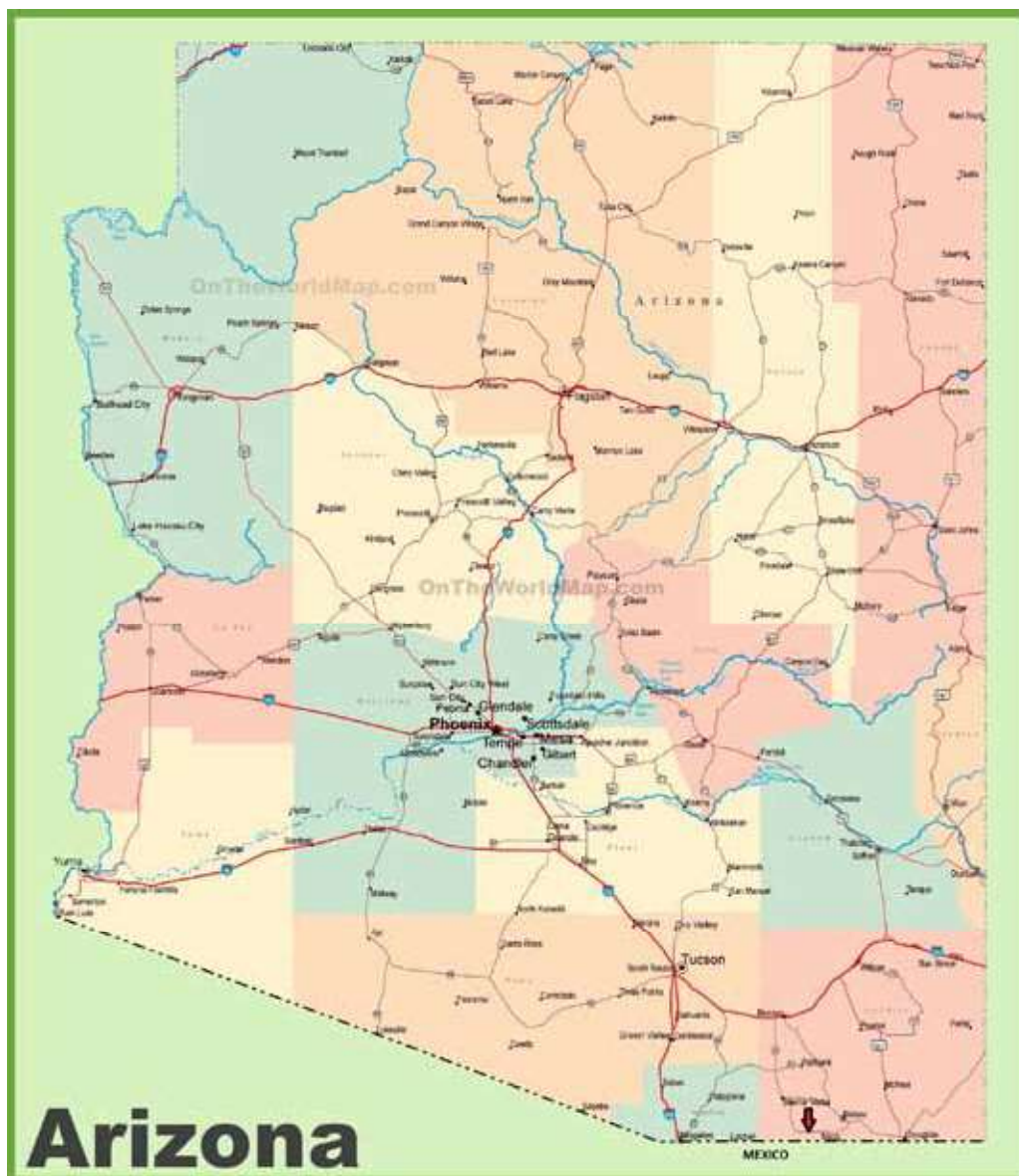
Covid cases countrywide are tripling, even quadrupling overnight.

We count ourselves fairly lucky, living where we do, as our small communities tend to work together without being told to by the government. Luckily we also have a big pantry, water collection system and a secure perimeter, thanks to 'someone' thinking ahead!

We keep spreading the words.....BE KIND. Will update next week!

Sensei Murray and Rowena Creighton





*Map of where Sensei Murray and Rowena Creighton live,
just near the border*

A la Francaise – Seido France

Teaching karate is always challenging, teaching karate in a foreign language, that we are learning as we go, is très difficile, very difficult, but we quickly found that teaching in the three forms, visual, audial and demonstration, had the new students learning and comprehending quickly. The rewards of their progress is deeply encouraging, and carry us all forward, in this place where we sometimes feel very isolated. The communication between mind, body and spirit, is a universal understand we all have access to. Our students are looking forward to returning when restrictions are lifted. Best wishes to you all from Seido France.

Osu, Senpai Patrice and Scott



**“A single twig
breaks,
but the bundle
of twigs is strong.”**

Tecumseh

