

PERSONAL PROFILES: Sensei John Longford



"Sensei (with hair!) used as uke for sankyo"

Tell us a bit about yourself: I am married with two children, two step-children (all grown up) and three grandchildren. I work as an electrician (apprentice trained). Spent many years in management but has now returned to working on the tools as it is far less hassle.

How long have you been training? I celebrated 25 years of Aikido last October.

Why did you start? "I had been interested in the martial arts for some years but I never got around to doing anything about it. Then at the tender age of 31 I saw an advertisement for a beginners class for Aikido at the Howard Mallett Centre. Having absolutely no idea what Aikido was I went along to try it.

Seventeen of us beginners lined up on the mat. Sensei Sargeant, then a raw Shodan, accompanied by Russell Eberhardt appeared at the front. Sensei then gave a small speech and said that it was a good turnout with 17 of us but probably only half would return the next week and he would be lucky if two or three of us finished the three months course. No way I thought! However only two of us made the day's course which was to end with us grading. The other guy broke his collar bone just after lunch and we never saw him again.

I graded to 6th. Kyu that afternoon along with Mike Meldrum who I think was the only one left from the previous beginners course. I only intended doing it for a while and certainly never expected to get a black belt let alone be in the position I am in now.

What words of wisdom can you impart to us? I have never been a quick learner and before Aikido my idea of exercise was leaning on a bar lifting a pint so there is hope for all of you. All it takes is dedication, hard work and lots of training. Train as often as you can and attend as many seminars as possible. That in a nutshell is the secret of Aikido".

UK Seminars

11 June John Longford Cambridge

25 June Matthew Hill Aldershot

30 June - 2 July Patricia Hendricks
Lilleshall,

22 July Tim Buswell Reading

26 - 28 August Bill Witt + Hoa
Newens Lilleshall

7 - 8 October Tony Sargeant Jersey

14 - 15 October Daniel Toutain
Stevenage

for full details see
www.aikidoseminars.co.uk



Club Events

Down the pub – anytime that
someone instigates
it after a gruelling
session on the mat.
Social Evening – To be re-arranged
by Ed.

AIKIDO Test

Just why *do* you spend so much time falling over and having your wrist tweaked? This simple test will tell you. Score 1 point for each (a) answer, 2 for each (b), and 3 points for every (c) you choose.

1. Do you think Nikyo is:
 - (a) Good for the wrists?
 - (b) Good for the soul?
 - (c) Good for the street?

2. Is being able to do high falls:
 - (a) Vital to understanding the techniques?
 - (b) Vital for surviving the techniques?
 - (c) A good party trick?

3. Who is your Aikido role model?
 - (a) O'Sensei.
 - (b) Steven Seagal. *Seagal*
 - (c) The Flying Fellini Brothers.

4. You do Aikido instead of Karate because:
 - (a) You like the ethical basis.
 - (b) You like to wear a dress.
 - (c) Too late to change now.

5. You never perfect a technique because:
 - (a) Aikido has infinite depth.
 - (b) You are a klutz.
 - (c) The Sensei keeps changing it.

6. You expect Aikido will give you:
 - (a) Increased confidence and security in today's world.
 - (b) Devastating sex appeal.
 - (c) Bad knees and back ache.

7. The best way to pass a grading is to have:
 - (a) Good techniques.
 - (b) A good attendance record.
 - (c) A new hair style.

- 8a. Fellas:
- A gorgeous female beginner comes onto the matt. Do you:
- (a) Train as usual, preferably with higher grades.
 - (b) Rush to train with her straight away.
 - (c) Wait for koshi-nage.

- 8b. Gals:
- What do you wear under your ge jacket?
- (a) A sensible sports bra, leotard or T-shirt.
 - (b) Nothing at all.
 - (c) Three thermal vests and a rugby shirt.

9. Is the main advantage of teaching Aikido:
- (a) It matures your own Aikido.
 - (b) Its good for the ego.
 - (c) You don't pay the door fee and you don't get hurt.

10. You have an elbow injury (and who doesn't?). Do you:
- (a) Train regardless with clenched teeth and Nurafen.
 - (b) Wrap yourself in industrial grade strapping and red arm bands and spend the whole class saying "Mind my bad..ouch!".
 - (c) Watch the class from the side and heckle.

SO HOW DO YOU SCORE?

Well that's up to you of course, but how did you do on the test?

0-9: You can't add up.

10-15: You are a wide-eyed romantic Aikido innocent.

16-25: You are a well-adjusted (relatively speaking) Aikidoka enjoying yourself with a harmless, if violent, passtime.

26-30: You are a hopeless cynic and should take up politics instead.

Compliments of Ian Bell

