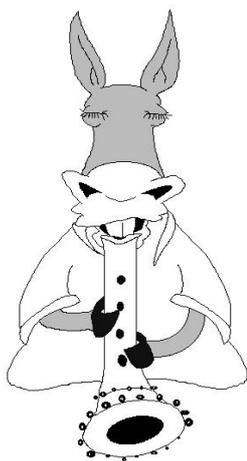


豪州尺八会

AUSTRALIAN SHAKUHACHI SOCIETY

Nr 29 July/August 2007

ASS P.O Box 63 Woodford NSW 2770



Greetings! This newsletter is a shorter one than usual. There's a report on the very recent European Shakuhachi Festival and a continuation of Alvin Ramos's last Roots Pilgrimage tour of Japan and various bits and pieces of news.

Just letting you know that the next ASS AGM has been scheduled for:

August 11th 2007 11am-1pm

**Manly Community Centre
(upstairs) 12 Wentworth Street
Manly (brief walk from wharf)**

**There will be a WSF08 meeting
scheduled after that from 1.30pm-
4.30pm.**

WSF 2008

**DATES:
4-8 July 2008**

Riley's Rockies Report

I had planned to miss this year's Shakuhachi Summer Camp of the Rockies altogether, due to commitments in Australia and a tenuous Rockies Camp budget. It would have been the first time to not be in Boulder in June since the World Shakuhachi Festival in 1998, and it hurt to even think that I wasn't going this year.

Three days before the camp was to begin, I received a most unexpected late night phone call from Cory Sperry, the driving force behind both the Camp and the original WSF98. My presence was requested. Needless to say, I jumped at the chance!

This year's Camp was as enjoyable as the previous eight. Those of you who have attended one of the seven Australian Shakuhachi Festivals, or either of the two Hawaii Shakuhachi Festivals will have an idea of how the Camp operates. These three camps or festivals share a number of things, including many of the faculty, yet each is unique. They are certainly always highlights of my diary.

One of the main reasons that I was particularly anxious to attend this year's Rockies Camp is because it was to be one of the few, possibly the only time where six of the main unofficial international shakuhachi festival committee members would be in one place at the same time: David Wheeler, Cory Sperry, Christopher Blasdel, Kaoru Kakizakai, Yoshio Kurahashi and myself.

With Kakizakai san representing the other two Kenshukan members (Teruo Furuya and Kazushi Matama), and with Kurahashi san representing

Ronnie Selden, the convener of the NYC festival, one could say that the entire contingent of experienced international shakuhachi festival organisers were there.

We had several very long, and equally very fruitful discussions. Much of what was discussed will be presented in the WSF08 meeting following the ASS AGM on 11 August 2007.

Perhaps the most exciting and surprising developments that came out of these meetings was an idea put forth by Cory Sperry. Since the Rockies Camp is always held over the fourth weekend of June, a number of us had always assumed that the Camp would be postponed or cancelled in 2008, as it's usual time would be only a week before WSF08 in Sydney. There would just be too much conflict.

Cory said that it would be most unfortunate to cancel the Camp, especially as 2008 would be the tenth anniversary of its founding. Instead, he suggested, why not schedule the Camp immediately before WSF08 and have it in Sydney. Cory further suggested that it be called the Rockies Camp Down Under!

The thirty participants of this year's Camp were canvassed and a whopping twenty, two-thirds said 1) they were planning to attend WSF08 and 2) if there were a workshop type Camp immediately prior to WSF08, they would be even more certain of coming to Sydney next year.

Furthermore, since neither the Australian nor Hawaiian shakuhachi communities are having a workshop oriented festival or 'camp' in 2007, nor are any planned for 2008, and as all three 'camps' share a number of faculty members and a common modus operandi, it makes perfect sense to combine all three festivals for 2008.

To make a long discussion short, after many emails and a great deal of research and budgeting, it seems likely that the 10th Annual Shakuhachi Summer Camp of the Rockies, the 7th Australian Shakuhachi Festival, and the 3rd Hawaii Shakuhachi Festival will combine forces into one single event, the "Rockies Camp Down Under".

This is the plan: the Camp/Festival will be held at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music on the three days immediately prior to WSF08, from Wednesday morning 2 July through Friday

afternoon 4 July, finishing in time to register for WSF08 late that afternoon. The hands on, play all day, workshop oriented Camp will complement the more concert oriented WSF08.

Costs, faculty, schedules, etc, will be announced as soon as possible, but we hope be able to offer the 3 day camp for as low as AU\$250, if one registers for WSF08 as well. That is nearly 50% of the cost of previous ASF and HSF events.

We think that this pre-WSF08 event will be extremely popular. As registration numbers will have to be strictly limited, participants of previous Rockies Camps, ASF and HSF events will be given first preference.

More information will be forthcoming at the WSF08 meeting after the ASS AGM. See you there. For those of you who can't make the AGM,

"WATCH THIS SPACE"!

Riley Lee Manly 10 July 2007

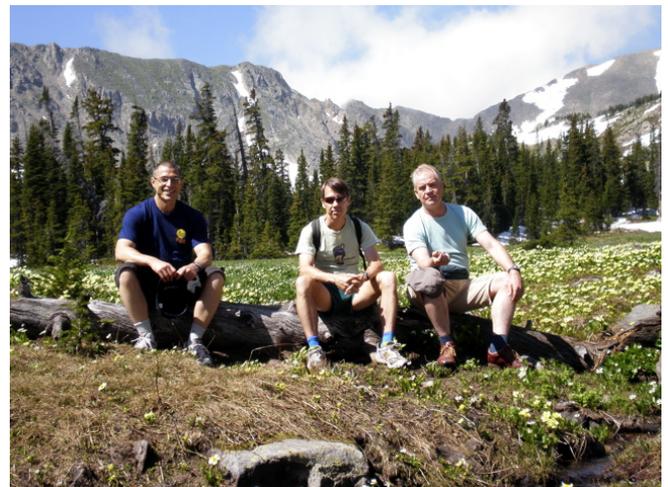


Photo: L to R - Riley Lee, David Wheeler, Christopher Blasdel, hiking in the Rockies the day after the Rockies Camp 2007, in between discussions, meetings and more discussions.

WSF08 - <http://worldshakuhachifestival08.com>

THE LONG FLUTE

A Tilo Burdach Shakuhachi for sale

Daiden Sacha: here is a picture of the flute sent to me by Tilo Burdach for which I said I'd try to find a new home for.

My contact mobile is +61 4 3490 6917
or e-mail daidensacha@yahoo.com.au

Please let me know if you need any further details about the flute. [2.4]

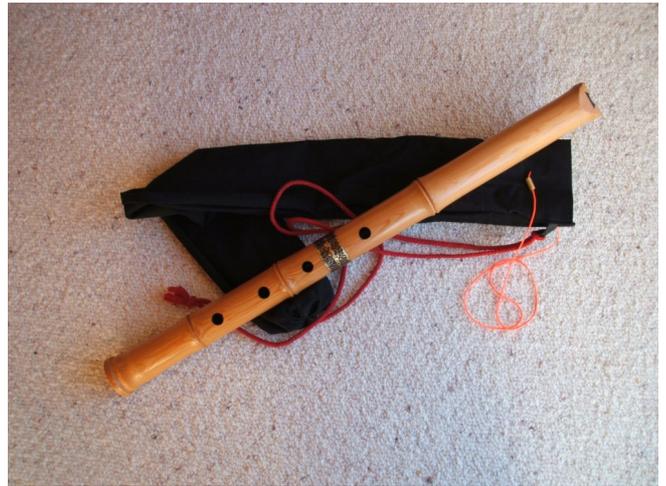


And speaking of flutes:

Another flute for sale – a David Brown

Wood Oregon – wide grain quite light weight.

Plays well.



Maker David Brown....2004/5 Size 1.8

Suggested price \$300 ono

Arno Struzina

"Coonarn"

Majors Creek NSW 2622 [02] 4846 1010

Ngapartji Ngapartji

You are probably aware that the Sydney Opera House season was cancelled unexpectedly at the last minute.

The good news is that Ngapartji Ngapartji will now be appearing in Sydney as part of the Sydney Festival.

Tentative dates are:

Opening: 12th January 2008

Closing: around 9th February 2008

The organisers cast and crew are overjoyed and look forward to happy times in the harbor city.

Our web site has been overhauled and full details, as much as we know, are shown there.

Andrew MacGregor

www.shakuhachiflutes.com



Deep music?

Alcvin Ramos's Roots Pilgrimage

Koya-san: Day 1

Early on the morning of Nov. 9 we opened the day at 6 am with zazen meditation in our room finishing with 10 minutes of whispering 'AH' as a prelude to our visit to Koya-san, the most sacred mountain in Japan, and center of Japanese Esoteric Buddhism. It was my first time, so I was very excited. It was a quite a long train ride from Kyoto. 3.5 hours. From Kyoto Station we took the JR to Shin Osaka, then the local train to Namba Station, then the Nanakai line to Koya-san station.

Then a very steep cable car up the mountain to the beautiful town of Koya-san. We took a bus to the temple where we were staying called Rengejo-in which was a very lovely, and warm place. What a magnificent haven to come to after a long travel. Check in was at 3 pm. We had lunch downtown and immediately got hooked into shopping as there were many lovely Buddhist things to buy.

We also visited the impressive and massive orange-red, white and yellow Kongobuji which houses a great gold sculpture of Dai Nichi Nyorai, the cosmic sun Buddha, the central figure of Shingon Buddhism.

We arrive in Koya-san just at the perfect start of the fall season with all the leaves turning fiery reds, yellows, and oranges. One auspicious thing was seeing an image of a heavenly bodhisattva playing shakuhachi, on the side of a great bronze toro (lamp) next to the Kongobuji.

We got back to Rengejoin at 4:30 and checked into our rooms. 5:30 pm was evening service where we meditated in the ceremony hall. Entering the hall, it was very dim, with only candles lighting the space. This low lighting made the many gold items of the hall glow with intense brilliancy. The meditation started with 5 minutes of chanting by the monks then a deep penetrating silent meditation for 40 minutes.

6:30 was dinner in the main hall. After dinner, we were treated to a lovely surprise lecture in English by the owner of Rengejoin, Michiko Saotome, who is 87 year old.

She told us her story of growing up during World War II and being the wife of a Buddhist priest. She also gave us lots of interesting historical and philosophical background about Koya-san which we all enjoyed. Her English was near perfect as she studied English in University.

After she finished her lecture, we were blessed with another wonderful lecture by the head Shomyo (chanting) priest who explained in detail the basic meditation and ideology of Shingon Buddhism, chanting, and the practice of Ajikan, meditation of the letter 'A', one of the most important meditations in their practice, which is where the famous shakuhachi honkyoku derived its name.

It was a great lecture. He invited our shakuhachi group the next morning to join him and the monks to play shakuhachi as they chant! What an auspicious thing!

Day 2 at Koya - san to be continued.



European Shakuhachi Festival 2007

A participant's report.

The four wonderful and exciting days of the second European Shakuhachi Summer School took place in the beautiful green place of Munster city and its area, in Alsace, France.

We were graced by the presence of the incredibly talented Furuya Teruo sensei and Kakizakai Kaoru sensei from Japan, who besides the intense and generous courses they offered, played at two of the evening concerts, one in the big church in the city of Munster, where more than a hundred people from the area attended. Every one was amazed by the quality and magic of their playing.

They came from Japan with two very unique koto and shamisen players, Oonishi Mizuka and Watanabe Haruko, who accompanied the Sankyoku courses and played as well.

It really brought an extra deep flavour of the Japanese spirit, and we all had the chance to know more about those instruments as well as the singing that goes with them. Those two ladies were very helpful, gracious and talented. They really opened up my experience to this style of music.

We also had the presence of Kariya sensei, who represents the Tozan school in Paris, and from Jim Franklin sensei, and two French teachers, Véronique Piron sensei and Jean-François Lagrost.

Most of the organisation was taken care of by Véronique Piron and Jim Franklin, who did a wonderful job, as well as teaching and playing in concert!

There was 2 'student concerts/open mike' and this was a wonderful time for those who made the effort, and for the listeners.

We had attendees from UK, Germany, Belgium, Switzerland, Netherland, France, Japan, Prague. I have probably forgotten someone here but the spirit was great. It was nice to spent time getting to know each other better, learning so many things, and bathing in the very spirit of the Japanese shakuhachi culture, in the true sense of

it, that is, the unique sound of shakuhachi being played with such expertise, both in feeling and almost infinite subtleties of tones.

The Japanese sensei were easy to communicate with, generous and full of a positive energy so that gradually everyone benefited from it and this created a very harmonious environment, and our communication grew a little deeper every day.

We had also eventually had a chance to try some shakuhachi, and some from a very talented Japanese maker, named Seichiku (hanko name). We shared a lot about our passion, and spent four intense and absolutely wonderful days.

Again, many thanks you to our Japanese guests, to those who organized it all so wholeheartedly - what happened was worth your efforts - the teachers and the participants who created together a beautiful feeling, very open-minded and heart felt as well.

I'm sorry for those who could not attend, but you would had heard about it one day or another anyway, and I feel it is always worthwhile to tell when it is a success, and not to tell when it is not.

Hope we can all continue that way in inspiring each other in a spirit of humanity, generosity and simplicity.

What more is there, at a social level at least? It makes everyone want to be at their best, and it is contagious. So we did not became greater players at immediatately, but we did see some more of our potential, gained some extra knowledge, enthusiasm and perspective and that's definitely worthwhile. The Infinite is a foot ahead. Let's step in.

Gambate! Dominique Houlet - France



Phil Nyokai James has Uploaded a new website

<http://sonicsangha.org>

It is similar in format to this...

www.shakuhachiforum.com

- an excellent website worth visiting weekly.

For those of you interested in this subject - particularly Shakuhachi and Zen/Buddhism - you should check it out !

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