

The flow of life through battle

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It is known as a path to extended youth and a way to find duality between the aggressor and the defendant. The ancient martial art called aikido (pronounced i-ke-do) has found a home in Prospect Lake.

Island Aikido which operates out of Prospect Lake Community Hall in Saanich, is a way to physical and spiritual well-being, said instructor Fred Haynes.

The name means the way of harmony," said Haynes, a sixth degree black belt. It derives from aiki-ju-jitsu which was the killing arts of the Samurai and now it's a modern martial art. There's no killing but harmless reconciliation of energy, so we use throws and pins to redirect our partners attack."

Originally from Japan, the synergy-based form of self-defence focuses on co-operation rather than competition between the two partners involved, said Haynes.

What's unique about this is that the person does the technique then changes to receive the technique. So the person doing the throw or pin then receives the throw or the pin from the partner. So it creates both the submission part and the controlling part."

There's a very yin-yang duality to it," added Haynes. Which is an attraction for many people. We're non-competitive, there's no fight-

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Haynes and nine other members of the Island Aikido club recently got back from Japan on June 12, where they spent 16 days attending seminars and did some sight-seeing in and around Tokyo.

They've also had some pretty important guests since they started the club back in February of 2004. Aside from instructors from across Canada and the United States, they also had a visit from Sensei Yasuhisa Shioda who is the son of Soke Gozo Shioda - the founder of Yoshinkan Aikido.

Along with Shioda, 19 of his students came from Japan and stayed with members of the club in late April, soaking up some Victoria culture in the process.

Shioda's visit preceded another important teacher to Victoria. Moriteru Ueshiba from Japan is considered the martial art's global leader. He is at the B.C. Aikido Federation's summer camp at UVic, which started Sunday and runs until June 26.

Haynes said the club is also looking into future trips.

We're looking into Brazil in January of next year," he added. There's quite a large number of dojos that we work with down there. We may also end up with an aikido trip to Thailand. We have clubs all around the world and across Europe, so we could plan any trip that we choose."

The camaraderie between clubs extends to an international level, said Haynes.



Sensei Yashisa Shioda, left, and Island Aikido instructor Fred Haynes practise at the Prospect Lake Community Hall.

One big mat," said Haynes. One big family, that's a good way to describe it. We have relationships we can enjoy with people all around the world with aikido."

Originally from London England, Haynes has also lived in Japan. Aikido practitioners reap physical and mental benefits, he said.

Taught in the correct way some people think that it can be the elixir of youth," said Haynes.

We do quite a nice gentle warm-up," he continued, explaining a regular class. We get our body's stretched and supple, and then we have a set of basic movements that we do and it keeps the spine flexible and supple and helps with posture. We don't train in any way that would injure anyone, so the aim is that people will have an enhanced physical well-being as well as this increased mental well-being from the study (of aikido)."

Island Aikido offers classes for all ages on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7 to 8:30 p.m. and Sundays from 10:30 to 12 p.m. Each class can contain up to 30 students at a time.

For more information, call the club at 708-0702 or email at training@islandaikido.com www.islandaikido.com

