



# BRITISH AIKIDO FEDERATION

Newsletter



Caroline Smith

## A short Introduction...

Welcome to the new newsletter for the British Aikido Federation. This newsletter has been designed for members of the BAF to share information about courses, experiences and to ask questions! In the first edition of the BAF newsletter you will find articles from all levels of practitioner including senior grades such as Sensei Morgan, Chief Instructor for Wales and kyu grades.

If anyone would like to submit an article or question for a future edition, then please send your request to [BAFNewsletter@outlook.com](mailto:BAFNewsletter@outlook.com). We will endeavor to include as many submissions as possible in future editions.

We hope you enjoy this article, and we thank you in advance for your continued support of the British Aikido Federation.



Sunny

## My First Summer School was FANTASTIC

Most of the days during summer school, my mind was always about aikido. It is addictive. The weapon classes allowed me to practice differently—I felt like the weapon became part of me, especially in sensei Ian's class where we slowly practiced basic movements which helped me to correct and adjust my posture.

What I particularly enjoyed about aikido classes were learning from different sensei's and learning new techniques through practicing with different people. Every class that I joined are suitable for beginners like me and I can work in my pace. The way that people have their own ways of doing the same technique is interesting. At the end of that week, I got more understanding of how energy works.

On the day that I did my first summer school kyu grading, I was quite nervous and excited at the same time. It was a weird feeling. However, the support that I got from the people around me calmed me down. What I remembered from my grading was about myself enjoying that moment, and certainly, recalling the names of the techniques hahaha.

I enjoyed training with different people and spending time with like-minded people who enjoy training in aikido as I do. Getting to know more about the members of the club has built stronger friendships between us. The people that I met are so positive, and kind and they are part of the things that make this experience so special to me. They made me feel very welcomed and feel like I am a part of this big family.

The experience that I got from summer school is invaluable. I gained new friendships and learned how to focus on the present, as well as to connect my body and mind. Aikido is now a part of me and now I cannot wait to join the next summer school again.





Don Morgan

## Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> August – Summer School

Car ready GI and Hakama packed on my way to summer school since 2019 3 years have gone by, travelling up to Chester all my emotions and anticipations running high looking forward to seeing old friends and making new ones, tinted with sadness of friends who will no longer be there.

As I drive through the entrance to Chester College past the porter's lodge heading for Molly Hall for registration all the memories of the past 40 years come flowing back, Steve sitting at his desk as if they had just pulled the dust sheets off warm welcomes all round.

Sunday morning temperature around 30 degrees first practice in Molloy focusing on basic technique in a nice and steady manner concentrating on tai-sabaki and basic technique making sure everyone had enough water breaks all though Molloy holds a lot of memories it is a difficult place to train.

Monday morning temperature around 30 degrees training in Molloy but in the afternoon got to train with Kanazawa Sensei in small hall this year they had installed air conditioning which did help, the mat was full and Kanazawa Sensei focusing on basic technique, found the training difficult sensei wanted everyone to stay low in their posture.

Tuesday morning temperature around 30 degrees. Knees and body aching its been three years since I've trained continuously so it was not unexpected but was worth all the aches and pains just to train with friends again.

Thursday morning temperature around 30 degrees. Everybody assembled at small hall for the gradings not so many this year but everyone did well and congratulations to them all, sitting watching the gradings my knee reminded me of pains gone by, trying to be the best example you can.

The morning temperature around 30 degrees, Last day of training, the week seems to have flown by, training has been excellent Kanazawa Sensei showed us once again we must focus and concentrate on basic movement and technique which is something we must take back to your dojo's, training finished with looking forward to the Gala meal and a few drinks to celebrate the week.

Saturday morning temperature around 30 degrees. Been a brilliant week weather has been brilliant apart from the heat, met up with many friends Alan Rowley, Alan Smith



*British Aikido Federation Summer School, Chester 2022.*

and many more and new friends as well, thank you to everyone who organize summer school, car packed time to drive home see you all next year...

British Aikido Federation

### Upcoming National and Regional Courses

**Regional Course – Greenwich**  
19th November

**Regional Course – Manchester**  
27th November: 10:00 – 13:00  
Ian McClarence Sensei

**Regional Course – Cardiff**  
3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> December

**National Course – Spring Course – Malvern**  
22nd and 23rd April 2023

**National Course – Chester**  
3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> June 2023

**National Course – Summer School - Chester**  
5<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> August 2023



Jim Anderson

## ...And it was good!



*British Aikido Summer School 2022*

Summer school met earlier this year, for the first time in three years, and it was good. It was good seeing old friends and making new friends, tinged though with the sadness for those who couldn't attend.

And it was good being back in a setting that's become familiar over the years. I've only ever attended summer school on the grounds on the University of Chester, and we've spent a lot of time in some of the rooms. I missed sweating in Old Gym, though not enough to wander by one evening and have a look in. It was interesting being back in the swelter box of Malloy, particularly with the back doors now blocked off. And we all appreciated the air conditioning in Small Hall, especially during the gradings.

We each have spaces that possess a special resonance, and these are among those spaces for me, for all I've learned and experienced and everyone I've met and worked with in those rooms. I carry a collection of memories, individual moments that found themselves caught in the webs in the corners of my mind, some that make me smile and some that carry a sting.

There are important spaces beyond the dojos. Breakfast in the cafeteria, which I normally don't eat but which is an unmissable part of a summer school day. The laundry room, especially in those years, like this year, that are warm with all the consequences of that warmth. A small room with a mattress less comfortable than my mattress at home. Cooking and sharing meals in small kitchens, with a collection of pans too small.

And of course, the bar, where we retire in the evenings, to share stories, miss easy shots on the pool table, enjoy each other's company and reinforce our community. Or in the case of this year in particular, rebuild our community. I enjoy a beer as much as the next person, but the importance of the bar even among these other spaces is this community. The aikido at summer school is why we gather, to practice and to learn, but we've also built a great community, and it's a community I love being a part of.

And so the countdown begins for summer school 2023. So begins the countdown to having internalized the habit over the week of bowing, to the point of bowing as I pass through any doorway. So begins the countdown for the long drive, wondering what will be the year's figure formed from baled and loose hay, by the ice cream stand somewhere on the A51. There will be other courses, smaller courses, but so begins the countdown to us gathering together again. To practice and to learn. To swap stories. And to keep alive these things we all love.

## British Aikido Federation Ask the BAF

This section has been designed to give BAF members a chance to ask questions of the BAF.

If you would like to submit a question, then please do so by emailing [BAFNewsletter@outlook.com](mailto:BAFNewsletter@outlook.com).

**Q:** When is Summer School 2023?

**A:** Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup> August 2023

**Q:** Where can I find information about upcoming national courses?

**A:** Check out the BAF website ([bafonline.org.uk](http://bafonline.org.uk))

**Q:** If I have a suggestion about Summer School, who should I send it to?

**A:** Send suggestions to the summer School organizers.