**Institute of Aikido Winter School March 23/24/25 2018:**

The IoA Winter School 2018 was held over the weekend of March 23 – 25 at the dojo of Spalding Aikido Club, an excellent modern venue which was appreciated by all our participants. There were some 30 aikidoka on the mat on both days. IoA clubs AME, Livingston, Loughborough, Slough, The Hut, Kingston and of course Spalding itself were all represented, together with two guests from Ireland, James Applegate 4th dan and Richard Whitfield 3rd dan from the Shinbukan Dojo in Galway. Presiding over the weekend were IoA Governing Board members, Sensei Lawson Moore and Sensei William Timms.

Friday afternoon was devoted to two successful dan gradings, Wayne Eveleigh took his Shodan and Rob Dunford Nidan. Both aikidoka are from Slough Centre Aikido Club.

After bowing in on Saturday morning four 2nd dans took the floor in turn to give their 3rd dan grading exposition of the Riai System, O’Sensei’s harmonisation of the principles underlying the use of Bokken, Jo and Open Hand. They were Tom Evans of Livingston Aikido Club, Brian Black also of Livingston, Andrew Glendinning of Ame Aikido Club and Rod Davis of The Hut. All four candidates illustrated different aspects of the Riai System and the course members showed great interest in – and were frequently entertained by - the varied explanations and the practical applications of the Riai System. All candidates were awarded 3rd dan.

Saturday continued with a presentation during which four 5th dan IoA instructors rotated, Paul Foster-Dent from The Hut, Linn Robertson from Livingston, John Kingsbury from Slough and Colin Simpson from Nottingham examined various aspects of Open Hand techniques including Shiho Nage, Kote Gaeshi. Irimi, Kaiten Nage and Kokyu Nage.

Sensei Moore gave us an interesting lesson regarding the way that the Aikido forms present tori with different problems which have to be solved.

The afternoon concluded with a weapons session by Sensei Timms covering the first five Kumi Jo.

Ali Khan - The Hut/Kingston and Ken Kidston – Slough were awarded their 4th dan.

Sunday began with a session by Sensei Lawson Moore presenting various aspects of Open Hand techniques. This was followed by a weapons session by James Applegate, assisted by Spirit Frederick, using both Bokken and Jo, demonstrating a different style of weapons from that of the Institute.

Sensei Timms afternoon session was based around the more advanced Aikido concepts of Flexible and Ki no Nagare.

The day concluded with sessions by Deirdre Robertson, 4th dan Livingston, Janet Pain, 3rd dan The Hut, and Tanith Barry, 2nd dan The Hut

Many thanks go to Spalding Aikido Club for organising such a successful Winter School 2018, which was particularly enjoyable because of the great atmosphere on the mat.