



Picture of Kanbara

from "The Fifty-three Stages of the Tokaido"  
Utagawa Kunisada (1786 - 1865)

*Tameshigiri* before viewing the artwork of Japan. This particular collection has many prints that chronicle the story of the forty-seven *ronin*, as well as a few artifacts of samurai life. Also included are several prints of other famous episodes in Japanese history and people of noble character.

## Dojo Projects

The *new dojo* cutting sword is still under construction. Loren Kierstead donated the blade and Goya Kenny is creating the *tsuba* from a plate of Damascus steel. All of these fine parts will come together along with a custom designed set of *menuki* to make a gift for Dr. Gettings. Everyone will enjoy this sword for years to come as our *dojo* continues to grow.

Work is also being done to build a *Tokanoma* for the archery range. This may be installed in January during the *Dojo* cleanup.



## Phoenix Matsuri

*Mizu Hi Kobukai* students are invited to participate in, or watch, the *Sekiguchi Ryu* demonstrations at the *Matsuri Festival* in Phoenix at the "Heritage and Science Park". This is located near the University campus and takes place on **February 24th and 25th**. The *Mizu Hi Kobukai* will display *Kata* and *Tameshigiri* both days.

Many other groups will demonstrate their arts over the weekend and there will be Japanese food, music and entertainment. Further information can be found at;

[www.azmatsuri.org](http://www.azmatsuri.org)

Admission is free but parking is not. Event parking is available in the nearby ramp. Last year it cost \$10.00 to park for the day.

## Kagami Biraki

Once again it is the cusp of a new year. Time to wash your training gear and replace items that are worn out. There is no honor by Japanese standards in wearing a threadbare *Gi* or *Hakama*. It is strictly an American fashion to admire ripped jeans or a tattered shirt.

This is the season of renewal and the rituals of *Kagami Biraki* are meant to reinforce that idea. The breaking or "opening" of the *Mochi* symbolizes the end of one cycle and the beginning of the next, just as the cycle of the moon marks the passing of a month. Most of all, this is the time of year to rededicate yourself to the art that we all share with such joy.

In Japan there is a special affinity for the new and perfectly maintained. One aspect of this is displayed when people exchange gifts. It is customary when presenting a gift, to emphasize the fact that something is new by wrapping it in a layer of white *Washi*. This shows that the object is free of contamination and has not been excessively handled. It is also common practice to leave store tags in place to show that an item came from a prestigious shop. In general, anything that signals a level of attention and care has been taken as well as a certain amount of forethought, is very desirable.

Please join us for the **Dojo cleaning** and preparation on **Saturday, January 6th**, immediately following practice. This year we would like to add traditional decorations to the training space at *Magee Dojo*. Pine boughs and colorful *Origami* are all that is required.

**Kagami Biraki** will take place on **January 13th** at the *Magee Dojo*.

## Events Schedule

### Local

- January 8** *Senbon Suburi*  
*Stone Avenue Dojo* 6:30 PM
- January 13** *Kagami Biraki*  
*Magee Dojo* 6:00 PM
- February 24-25** *Phoenix Matsuri*  
*7th Street and Monroe, Phoenix*
- March 9-10** *Mizu Hi Tai Kai*  
*Yuma, AZ*
- March 11** *Sekiguchi Testing*  
*Yuma, AZ*

### USFBD / ZBBDR

- February 16,17** *Orlando Tai Kai*
- August** *West Coast Tai Kai*

## U of A Enbu

The *Yamakawa Dojo* Performed for a crowd at the opening of the University's latest exhibit, "The Faithful Samurai, Kuniyoshi Woodblock Prints". Many interested students and staff witnessed our presentation of *Kata* and



**“Western Technique”**  
Gyaku Cactus Giri



**Tai Kai Preparation**

Dr. Gettings is directing the preparations for the seventh annual *Mizu Hi Tai Kai*. The event, coming in March, will be held in Yuma, Arizona. This will make it possible to have hotel space at this time of year. The event schedule and seminar lists will be available soon. The events program and rules will also be posted on the web very soon so that participants may train accordingly. We are planning on preparing special translation copies of the program, this year, as a courtesy to our Japanese guests. Koichi Sakaguchi has generously offered to prepare the text. We owe him our thanks.

“Domo Arigato Gozaimas.”



**Sekiguchi Testing**

Soke Yamada will conclude his visit to the United States by officiating a testing session for eligible students of the *Shin Shin Sekiguchi Ryu*. Approval to test will be known ahead of time from Dr. Gettings. Both *Shodan* and *Nidan* tests consist of the first six kneeling forms of the *Sekiguchi Ryu* tradition.

Testing fees for rank are according to the following list;

Shodan	\$125.
Nidan	\$225.
Sandan	\$325.
Yondan	\$425.

For the scientific minded that is;

$$\rho = \text{Rank Desired, } \{\rho \in \mathbb{Z}_+\}$$

$$\sigma = \text{Specie Required, } \{\sigma \in \mathbb{R}, 0 < \sigma < \infty\}$$

$$\sigma = \$ \left( \sum_{n=1}^{\rho} (0_n + 10^2) \right) + \$ (10^2 / 4)$$

Students who will participate are reminded that testing fees need to be in cash for the ease of exchange. All students are encouraged to participate in the *Tai Kai*, Seminars and *Matsuri* Festival.

**Friends in LA**

Longtime member and friend, John Beckman, recently relocated to sunny California for his work. No stranger to long commutes, I think the LA to Tucson route may be a bit too much for him. Perhaps, in the mean time, he will train with the *Senpoken Dojo* in Costa Mesa and become our link to LA. The *Mugai Ryu* may also present him with another set of skills to enjoy. John will be missed by the *Yamakawa Dojo* both for his enthusiasm and his diligence with the “swiffer”. We all hope that our paths will cross again.

