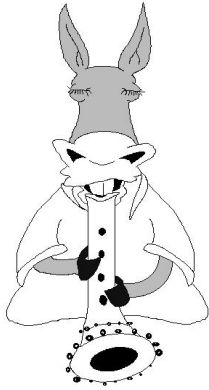


# 豪州尺八会

## AUSTRALIAN SHAKUHACHI SOCIETY

Nr 37 December 2009

ASS P.O Box 63 Woodford NSW 2778



Greetings All! In this issue there is the report of the AGM, new doings and a long interview with Justin Senryu Williams. While this is a bit longer than I normally run it's interesting enough to have it in full.

From all the ASS committee have a happy, peaceful and safe Christmas and a Happy New Year! 🎵

### **BREAKING NEWS!**

### SUMMER BLOW

**Where:** In Manly Community Centre – same location as the recent AGM.

**When:** Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2010 11am – 4pm.

The program will include Riley presenting a selection from his Princeton Lectures given earlier this year. There will be a Honkyoku class focusing on HachiGaeshi. Members are encouraged to perform – it is an ideal environment with an understanding audience – performing is a great teacher, and I encourage everyone to take the opportunity- whether beginner or advanced.

Full details, program, map, cost etc will be emailed to you shortly and will be on the website soon.

**Put this date in your new diaries!**

### **From the New President**

*Introducing the new ASS Committees and announcing plans for 2010*

Season's Greetings to all ASS members. Your new Committee is working to organize events throughout 2010, culminating in a Festival to be held in January 2011.

There are familiar and new faces on the ASS Committee and on the various subcommittees. Many thanks must go to John Holmes who has handed over the reins of Treasury after many years. John will continue being involved as a member of the Festival organizing committee.

Our new Treasurer, Nicholas Scofield, spends his daytimes in the rarefied world of high-finance, so is well-equipped to take over.

Bronwyn Kirkpatrick has happily decided to stay on as Secretary. [Thanks for her sterling work there –Ed.] And Graham Ranft continues as editor of this Newsletter.

Our new Publicity Officer is Martin Lloyd. Martin is enjoying the technical challenges in reorganizing the ASS website.

Many thanks also go to Stuart Ransom for his work as President. I can't promise to bring the same avuncular charm to the office as that exuded by Stuart.

Introducing myself to those I have not encountered over the years: a Sydneysider for many years, I have worked in music all my life. I started shakuhachi with Riley some 6 years ago and have also studied with Kakizakai sensei in Chichibu.

My particular concerns within helping continue a vigorous ASS that serves its members are:

- Making the society as relevant and as useful as possible for people not living in Sydney.
- Emphasizing performance practice as a means of raising playing standards.
- Establishing core repertoire that becomes a basis for efficient concert preparation and presentation.

## 2010 Plans

**SUMMER BLOW** – In Manly at the Community Centre, 12 Wentworth St, Manly. It is 2 minutes walk from the ferry terminal.

**WHEN:** 17<sup>th</sup> January 2010 11am – 4pm. Put this date in your new diaries. It is soon.

The program will include Riley presenting a selection from his Princeton Lectures given earlier this year. There will be a Honkyoku class focusing on HachiGaeshi. Members are encouraged to perform – it is an ideal environment with an understanding audience – performing is a great teacher, and I encourage everyone to take the opportunity - whether beginner or advanced.

Full details, program, map, cost etc will be emailed to you shortly and will be on the website soon.

There will be AUTUMN, WINTER and SPRING BLOWS.

Looking forward to a busy 2010,  
David Dixon (Pres)

## ASS AGM 18<sup>th</sup> October, 2009

Meeting opened by the president, Stuart Ransom, at 12.55pm

Attendance: Stuart Ransom, Bronwyn Kirkpatrick, John Holmes, Riley Lee, David Dixon, David Jobst, Martin Lloyd, Nicholas Scofield, Margaret Tung

Proxy forms submitted by: Ray Mercer, David Kotlowy, Patrick Campbell, Ken McArthur, Adam Simmons, Graham Ranft, Bev Jennings.

President's welcome.

Apologies: Graham Ranft, Margaret Catchpole, Carl Rathus, Bev Jennings, Ken McArthur

Secretary's report: it was moved and accepted that the minutes from the 2007 ASS AGM were received by all members.

Business arising from the minutes: Riley Lee gave a wrap on WSF08. He said that the event was successful and worth it, despite the financial loss. The losses were due largely to the exchange rate, lower than expected ticket sales and the expense of hiring the Sydney Children's Choir. The DVDs are in process and will sell as a set of 5 for \$100. The DVD set, WSF08 programme and the International Shakuhachi

Society's Annals Volume 2 will be available for sale at future ASFs. Further, the DVDs will be advertised on the website and will be available for sale at WSF 2012. Riley thanked the volunteers: John Holmes, Rupert Summerson, TaikOz students and Patricia Lee.

**Chairperson's report:** Stuart Ransom spoke of a lull in the society after WSF08 and the need to recharge and regroup for the next ASF. Stuart thanked John Holmes and Riley Lee for all of their efforts for WSF08.

**Treasurer's report:** Financial Statement 1<sup>st</sup> July 2007 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008 tabled. John Holmes spoke of his enjoyment of the role as treasurer over the years but that it was now time for a change. John thanked Riley Lee. It was moved and accepted that the Financial Statement 1<sup>st</sup> July 2007 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008 had been received.

Office bearer positions were opened. New positions were nominated and accepted as follows:

Newsletter Editor: Graham Ranft

Publicity Officer: Martin Lloyd

Treasurer: Nicholas Scofield (John to handover all documents)

Secretary: Bronwyn Kirkpatrick

President: David Dixon

### General Business

Margaret Tung posed the question of whether ASS needs to lodge a form with the Office of Fair Trading and whether the treasurer needs to lodge a financial report? Riley Lee to investigate.

David Jobst proposed a motion that ASS holds an annual fundraising concert. Motion moved and accepted. A committee comprised of David Jobst, Nicholas Scofield and David Dixon was formed to organize this event.

John Holmes questioned what the International Shakuhachi Society's Annals Volume 2 should be sold for. Riley Lee proposed a motion that they should cost \$50 for non-ASS members and \$25 for ASS members + \$10 postage. Nicholas Scofield will be in charge of posting them. Motion moved and accepted.

Margaret Tung proposed a motion that the publicity officer contact teachers in each state who are ASS members for possible inclusion on the ASS website, for publicity purposes. Motion moved and accepted.

John Holmes proposed a motion that ASS membership fees increase from \$25 to \$30 per annum from July 2010. Motion moved and accepted.

Riley Lee proposed a motion that the treasurer send out a reminder to all members before the end of each financial year to pay dues. Members that renew before the end of this financial year pay \$25; new members pay \$30. Motion moved and accepted.

Location of next ASF was discussed. A committee comprised of Riley Lee, John Holmes, David Jobst, Margaret Tung (field) and David Dixon was formed to decide.

Riley felt that the main ASF should occur every 18 months in a comfortable venue and that further basic camp-style events could occur more regularly. Patricia Lee has investigated the possibility of holding the next ASF at University House, Canberra from June 11<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> 2010.

Riley Lee proposed a motion that the next ASS AGM occur at the next ASF. Motion passed and accepted. Meeting closed at 2.55pm.

~~~~~



Justin Senryu Williams

## An interview with Justin Senryu Williams by Brian Purdy

**-How long have you been playing shakuhachi?**

About 5 years.

**-How did you discover the shakuhachi?**

My brother had an LP of Yamaguchi Goro's Honkyoku. That was the first time I heard the shakuhachi. Something about it, the tone colour I think, captivated me and remained with me until about a year later when I saw the instrument for the first time while I was living in India. I had previously stayed in Thailand training in meditation in the monasteries there, and during that time I had experiences which connected me to bamboo, giving me a feeling of appreciation and wonder. So, finally seeing the beauty of the instrument whose sound had left such an impression on me, this wonderful natural bamboo, doubly impressed me.

My friend whose shakuhachi it was, then explained to me how this instrument was that of wandering Buddhist monks, who would travel across Japan, homeless and on a perpetual pilgrimage through the valleys and forests. My friend was a great story teller. Like any great story teller, the line between fact and fiction was a grey but pleasant one. I felt a lot of resonance with this story, as I felt I fitted that description too. It was not for several more years that I started studying shakuhachi, but it was from this time that I nurtured the intention to learn.

**-What aspects of the shakuhachi most appealed to you when you first discovered it?**

I think this is mostly answered above. The decisive factor really was the nature of the music. I had dedicated myself to spiritual practice, and in our tradition music played very little part. Before I met my master I had spent a lot of time singing and playing devotional music in India. For me this is a very fulfilling activity. There is no audience. We are all devotees, whether brahmin, beggar, priest, mother or child. And all celebrating God together. For me this is the best kind of music.

My master was Buddhist, and our training is generally neither social nor creative, as such. For me it is the best training, and is very efficient for transforming the mind. So much of my time was spent alone, at times I would go to study or attend teachings, and rarely in other activities. However, as the years went by, I realised that I missed the creativity of the devotional singing and music making I used to do with my Hindu brothers and sisters, which had now become only a

rare treat. There seems to be a creative fire in me, and the most healthy thing seemed to be to allow that, and even to nurture it.

I realised I wanted to study an instrument deeply. And shakuhachi seemed to be the most suitable instrument for me, having a music which is designed on a non-egotistical basis. Much music is based on "self" expression. As with devotional music, the shakuhachi Honkyoku is also a kind of "self-less" expression.

Whether that is actualized or not is, of course, up to the individual. But as a basis, this gives a very good foundation for the music, and makes it very suitable for a potential spiritual practice. Also technically, I find that shakuhachi Honkyoku requires both strong concentration and relaxation. This is precisely the combination of elements required in meditation. This is an important reason as to why or how shakuhachi Honkyoku is complementary to meditation practice. I say complementary, because I believe it cannot be a replacement for meditation practice.

**-Who were your main influences and what style initially appealed to you most in the beginning?**

In answer to the question of main influences, and your next question of teachers' impact, certainly my Buddhist master has been my main influence and guiding force. This provides the meaning and basis of my music.

In terms of styles - when I started studying, I had no idea about the different styles and genres. I never asked my teacher, Michael Coxall of Kinko-ryu Chikumeisha, to teach me anything in particular. I just asked to study, and learned anything he would teach me. Perhaps this is from my Buddhist training, for which we generally do not ask to be taught this or that. It is the teacher who knows what the student should be taught. All I knew was that I wanted to study, and Michael was an excellent teacher.

After several months of study, I borrowed some CDs from Michael. I had already been studying the different genres Michael teaches, of Sankyoku, Honkyoku and shinkyoku. But the CDs gave me a chance to hear a wider variety of music. The music I most loved from that, was the Honkyoku of Yokoyama Katsuya's school. It was then that I realised I would have to go to Japan to learn more about the shakuhachi world.

**-What teachers do you feel have had the biggest impact on your playing and conceptions of the flute?**

I have really appreciated all of the teachers who have taught me. I have studied a variety of styles, so each

teacher has made a big impact for me on each of their respective styles. Furuya Teruo has a great understanding of music, and outstanding mastery of technique. He has been a great influence on me as one of my main teachers. Yokoyama Katsuya of course has been a great influence for me, both through Furuya Teruo (his student) and directly while studying with him. Both of these teachers have not only been my guide for their repertoire but also for deepening my understanding of music in general.

Araki Kodo V, another of my main teachers, has a very different style and approach to Yokoyama and Furuya. His is the oldest tradition of Kinko-ryu Honkyoku and Sankyoku, and also for me the most refined and fitting to my tastes. But his influence has also extended to my whole approach to the instrument, especially in his mastery of tone colour. It was for this reason that Yokoyama encouraged me to study with him.

With Kurahashi Yoshio I studied about 20 pieces, 12 of which were Honkyoku. Although it was early in my shakuhachi studies, this gave me an appreciation for and inquisitiveness towards the older roots of the Honkyoku repertoire, and simpler ways of playing. This has led me to researching further into the history of the music, and so has had a continuing influence.

Fujiyoshi Etsuzan has been a great influence both through his vast repertoire and wealth of knowledge, really broadening my understanding of the historical developments of shakuhachi music, and encouraging my passion and love for study and research both in playing and in terms of history. Again, his approach is different from my other teachers which helps to broaden my understanding and playing ability further.

Iwata Ritsuen has been another important teacher for me, as one of the very few masters of Seien-ryu. The Honkyoku of this school are the original Honkyoku of Fudaiji temple. These Honkyoku have become some of the most popular Honkyoku today through Higuchi Taizan, who arranged them into new versions and included them as the basis for his school, Taizan-ha, also known as Myoan-ryu or Meian-ryu.

From his lineage they spread across Japan. Jin Nyodo also studied these pieces and made his own arrangements so they also exist in his school. To study them in the original Seien-ryu style from which they came has been very valuable for me, both for playing them in that older style, and also to deepen my understanding of the arrangements of these pieces which I have already studied from the other lineages. These have been the main influences on my playing.

Concerning my "conceptions of the flute", to this I would also add that studying from books and shakuhachi experts has been very important for me.

Some of my friends here in Japan have spent up to 60 years or more studying shakuhachi playing and history. They have been an invaluable source of knowledge and sharing the passion and love for the instrument is also what brings this aspect alive and makes it so enjoyable.

**-When did you decide to begin making shakuhachi and did you have any teachers initially?**

Actually the first shakuhachi I made was before my first lesson. I needed a shakuhachi to start studying, so I made one. I had lived in China for a year and while I was there I studied xiao, which shares a common ancestor with shakuhachi. I studied using a professionally made xiao, and had made a couple from plastic for fun. So making a plastic shakuhachi was not so difficult. It was in tune and worked fine for my first months of lessons until I had the chance to buy a professional shakuhachi, which my teacher bought for me on one of his trips to Japan.

On my first trip to Japan I learned some basics of shakuhachi making. After I returned to England, I realised that the only way I could really continue my studies of Honkyoku and shakuhachi making was to return to Japan.

**-Who has been the biggest influence on your shakuhachi making?**

Araki Chikuo (Araki Kodo II). His shakuhachi have been my favourite to play. I have learned several styles of shakuhachi making from teachers living today, and all of these have helped me a lot. Each maker has different ideas and techniques, and different areas of expertise.

But the shakuhachi which have most impressed me have been some rare shakuhachi from older makers, and so I have directed much of my efforts to the study of these older instruments. Good old shakuhachi are very rare, as many (most actually) old instruments are quite bad. But some of the older shakuhachi made by master makers are really outstanding, and quite different from modern shakuhachi.

My favourite maker is Araki Chikuo, but other outstanding makers who have influenced me are some of Chikuo's students such as his son, Araki Kodo III and Miura Kindo, and older makers such as Hisamatsu Fuyo and other such Kinko-ryu makers, and also makers of other lineages such as Kokyo for old Myoan-ji style, Murase Chikuo for Fudaiji style and others.

**-When did you decide to move to Japan and pursue both playing and making as a full time venture?**

I started studying in England, and came to Japan to see what was here. I wanted to have a wider view of what the shakuhachi world was about. When I returned to England, it didn't take long until I realised I had to come back to Japan to study what I wanted to learn. That was one year since I had started learning.

My original intention was not to live in Japan. I had not even thought of that as an option. Japan is an expensive country to stay in. My intention was really to study as intensively as possible for a number of months, and just see how things went. As it turned out, I never had to leave, and have been continuing my studies ever since, as well as now working as a shakuhachi maker and teacher here.

**-Did you experience any bias in being accepted into the shakuhachi culture in Japan?**

In the beginning, no not at all. People here are generally very nice, especially shakuhachi people. Only occasionally I have had some troubles. One is that it is not usual for Japanese students to study with more than one teacher. And often, if someone does go to another teacher, first they leave the other teacher and are basically cut off from that school. It is not always like that.

But, generally, you only have one teacher. This applies not only to shakuhachi but to Japanese arts in general. Being a foreigner gives you more freedom in this respect and you can be given more freedom, which is lucky, although when you actually live here rather than just visit, you are expected to follow the Japanese way more.

As I have studied with a number of teachers, this has sometimes caused some friction. Some people really think that is bad, and wrong. The irony of it is that many of the most famous teachers, including most of my teachers, have studied with a number of different teachers themselves. Yokoyama Katsuya for example studied with his father and Fukuda Rando, and also with Watazumi who was from a very different lineage. Watazumi studied with a number of different teachers also. Jin Nyodo studied with shakuhachi players all across Japan. And so on. (For more details see the lineage charts on my website which give some of these details). Also, during the Edo period Komuso would travel across Japan and sharing Honkyoku on the road was common. It was quite different from the strict world which developed after that period.

So it is important to remember that the culture is different here, and one should always ask permission from one's teacher before studying with another

teacher. My teachers are all very open, and have been encouraging towards my studies of different schools. I feel uncomfortable and sad when other students and even some friends view this as "wrong", but there is no way I can see it as wrong when I have the full consent and encouragement of my teachers, and when I consider the reality of the history of Honkyoku lineages where it was common to learn from many teachers.

Another problem is jealousy. Most people are very supportive and encouraging, and glad of what I have learned. Also being a foreigner can make them feel proud, proud that the shakuhachi brings interest from foreign countries.

But, occasionally one may encounter jealousy, if someone feels uncomfortable with a newcomer whom they perceive to be good but also young, and on top of that a foreigner. I have to say though that this has been very rare in an otherwise very friendly environment. I have experienced more hostility in the foreign shakuhachi community.

Perhaps because it is a smaller community, some people occasionally feel threatened if you know things they don't or if they feel you are invading their speciality, even if that is not your intention. On the whole though I find shakuhachi people everywhere to be very nice and welcoming group of people.

**-How long have you lived in Japan now?**

About 4 years.

**-How have your conceptions of the flute most changed now that you have so much more experience in the culture and the instrument?**

I don't think being in the actual culture is very important for shakuhachi study. There are good teachers abroad such as your own teacher Michael Gould, who teaches in the traditional way. I don't think there is any added bonus in being in Japan simply for normal Japanese culture. However, I have chosen to study some particular parts of Japanese culture while I have been here, which I do think have helped me.

I studied Satsuma Biwa, for which I also had to sing. Satsuma Biwa was played by samurai in Kyushu during the Edo period. Apart from my love of Biwa music, I also felt that this would help me in my understanding of some of the auditory environment of the Komuso, who were also Samurai, and therefore people of both the same class and time as the Satsuma Biwa players.

I also studied Kyudo. Though I have not had the opportunity to study in depth, this gave me a deeper

understanding of posture and the physiological side of Japanese arts. This side was also very strictly taught by my Biwa teacher. This has been useful for shakuhachi.

Other than this, being here has been invaluable for the teachers, experts and instruments. One excellent source of information is Riley Lee's thesis. This is a wealth of information. Riley himself has also helped me a lot with his shining example of playing and scholarship, and kind encouragement. John Singer is another who has not only mastered the shakuhachi but also has a wealth of knowledge. So there are excellent teachers and resources overseas.

But I do feel very grateful for being here in Japan. Each time I study a new piece, or hear a new story, it's like another piece of the puzzle being filled in. I also feel that as I learn more, in terms of both history and playing, it enriches everything I have already learned.

One example of this is where one Honkyoku has been learned by someone two or three hundred years ago and then incorporated into their lineage, and passed down through time in both lineages and perhaps branching off to another, two or even more. For me these are then all parts of one whole. It's like a whole picture starts to build up, and slowly get clearer and more intriguing.

My understanding of what is a "good shakuhachi" is has also taken a lot of time, and I continue to learn. This has been made possible with the help of people here in Japan sharing their knowledge and opinions with me, and from playing many shakuhachi, sometimes traveling across the country to visit important historic instruments. This has been invaluable for my shakuhachi making and also historical understanding of shakuhachi.

**-When making flutes do you have a preference for jiari or jinashi flutes?**

I love both jiari and jinashi. Personally I usually play jinashi, but not exclusively. Both are a joy to make and to play, and it really depends on what sound I want to make for that particular moment. Also both jiari and jinashi have a great variety. So I make for myself in a variety of different styles of shakuhachi to suit the different music I like to play. Similarly this variety can suit the varying demands of my customers.

**-Do you find that most of your flutes tend to be more suited toward one school or another?**

This again comes down largely to personal taste. Even within one school, individual players have individual tastes. However, there are some general tendencies. Yokoyama Katsuya's school of Honkyoku (sometimes

known in the foreign community as "Dokyoku") has very specific techniques which are very demanding on shakuhachi. These are generally impossible to play correctly on old style shakuhachi, and indeed on many modern shakuhachi. So these shakuhachi must be specially made to play this repertoire. That is my main special consideration for Yokoyama's school.

For jiari I favour the tone colour of traditional Araki-ha instruments, and so I make in this style, whether the instrument will be for Yokoyama's school or Araki's. Tone colour is a very personal choice. Yokoyama's school has always been using Kinko-ryu shakuhachi, and for me Araki-ha shakuhachi are some of the best of these. My main "guide" in shakuhachi making is that I should make what I like.

At one stage I was questioning this, and wondering if I should think more about what customers would like. It was my teacher Furuya who strongly encouraged me to follow what I like, and I have taken his advice to heart. The result is an instrument which is suitable for both Kinko-ryu and Yokoyama's school, the benefit of each giving no detraction from the other. Most of the music of other schools which I have studied can equally be played well on these instruments, though some music such as the music of Seien-ryu is better suited to a specific type of shakuhachi. Tozan is a school which I have not studied, and I have no idea whether or not this type of shakuhachi is suitable.

For jinashi, there is much variety. The longer shakuhachi for example, while suitable for Yokoyama's school and other Honkyoku schools, would usually not be used for Kinko-ryu which generally does not use longer than 2.0. Then, some shakuhachi I make in Kansai style which require a gentle breath.

The tone of this music is quite different from Yokoyama's school, and is favoured by many Myoan players. Many players from Yokoyama's school would find such instruments unsuitable due to the difference in playing style they require. And where Myoan players may find Myoan and Yokoyama styled jinashi suitable, Tani-ha players have their special demands, which Myoan players may find suitable but not all Yokoyama school players.

Some people require shakuhachi with older tunings, and I myself prefer these for certain styles of playing. Most notably "chi" will be much sharper than the modern tuning. Although with much practise it is sometimes possible to control the pitch of these instruments for modern-tuned playing, most people will be unable to do so. In that case these instruments would be unsuitable for playing modern-tuned music, which includes Honkyoku, as it is usually played today.

So, while there is cross-over between the different styles of music the instruments are suited to, it is important to consider what repertoires will be played, and what kind of sound or special requirements the customer wants from their instrument.

### **-What schools of music have you studied and play?**

Concerning post-Edo period music, I have studied Fukuda Rando's music and some Shinkyoku (new Japanese music such as that of Miyagi Michio) and Gendaikyoku (contemporary music).

Sankyoku (Edo period ensemble music) I have studied under a number of teachers but now focus solely on the Kinko-ryu Araki-ha style. Incidentally shakuhachi playing in Sankyoku is often said to have started after the Edo period since it was *officially* not allowed for shakuhachi before the Meiji period due to restrictions of the Fuke sect.

However Kinko-ryu (and other schools for example in Osaka) actually have a long history of shakuhachi playing in Sankyoku reaching back well into the Edo period, as evidenced by oral tradition, and old documents and woodblock pictures. So there is quite a deep relationship between the genres of Sankyoku and Honkyoku, both having influenced each other since very far back in their histories.

Honkyoku has been my main study. I have studied the complete repertoires of Yokoyama's school (about 22 pieces), Seien-ryu (11 pieces) and Kinko-ryu Araki-ha (38 pieces). My studies of other schools is ongoing and so far includes:

Jin Nyodo lineage: 12 pieces (many pieces are overlapping but Jin often made his own arrangements).  
Kimpu-ryu (Nezasa-ha): 5 pieces (There are 10 in total).

Taizan-ryu: 7 pieces (33 in total many, of which come from Kinko-ryu and Seien-ryu).

Shimpo-ryu: 5 (there are about 70 in total)  
Other lineages: 8

There are some other pieces which I have taught myself from recordings, such as some of the pieces which Watazumi played (some of which he may have created himself). Although I enjoy these, in Japan great importance is put on learning the pieces directly from a teacher, and teaching oneself is not viewed as having "learned" a piece.

Genuine lineage is vital, and is the only accepted way for a piece to be transmitted. Although it seemed to me possible to study from recordings, I experience again and again the irreplaceability of studying directly with

teachers. There are so many points which I cannot grasp by myself and could never guess, even with a careful ear.

With a teacher, we learn the vital points of the pieces, what can be changed, what cannot be, what is the special character of each phrase and technique. For one's own taste of music, that may not be necessary, but for the genuine transmission of the music as it is embodied by the lineage, the personal teacher-student relationship is vital.

Concerning what I play, most usually I play Honkyoku. Of the Honkyoku I play it varies with what I am focusing on at the time. These days usually Yokoyama's school, Kinko-ryu and Seien-ryu, next Taizan-ryu and then about equal measures of the rest.

**-Do you have one style of music you tend to play more?**

It used to be Yokoyama's school as that was my main school, but now as I mentioned above, I am giving equal time also to Kinko-ryu and Seien-ryu.

**-As I understand it you have earned your Shihan license. What school or schools have issued you a Shihan license?**

My Shihan was given to me by my teachers Furuya Teruo and Yokoyama Katsuya. Yokoyama also gave me my professional name as a shakuhachi maker, Senryu (which translates as "Dragon of the spring", "spring" as in source of water).

**-Do you teach very often in Japan or online?**

I have been very busy with shakuhachi making and my own studies, as well as other projects and work for my teachers such as publishing the Kinko-ryu Honkyoku notation written by Araki Kodo II, which will be ready soon. So I have not had much time to devote to teaching, though I do have a number of students both here in Japan and abroad. I will be coming to Europe to teach next year.

**-I noticed pictures of you practicing Kyūdō online. Do you feel there is a connection between playing shakuhachi and practicing Kyūdō?**

I studied Tai Chi Chuan quite deeply in England and Hong Kong, so it was natural for me to take the opportunity of studying Kyudo here in Japan which has always attracted me, and also Bujutsu. I spoke above about the connection for me in terms of posture, and how to hold one's body in what after all is a samurai art (shakuhachi). Further than that, there is a more direct connection.

According to my teacher's teacher's teacher, Miyagawa Nyozan, shakuhachi is "teki zen ken". In

this case teki (flute) means shakuhachi, and ken (sword) means martial arts. Zen is meditation. "Shakuhachi" should be, or genuinely includes, all 3 of these trainings. This seems to have been the way of the komuso. They were all samurai, and were trained in various martial arts. It seems that they continued that training after joining the Fuke sect. I do not know the details of this, although it would be fascinating to know, such as, did they train together, or individually? Anyway it was suggested to me that there was no specific art that they trained in, but that they trained in whatever martial arts they had trained in before becoming komuso.

Watazumi was devoted to his martial training exercises with a stick. Apparently sometimes when expected to play shakuhachi to a paying audience, he would simply do stick exercises, and claim it was the same thing (to the distress of the organizers). Nishimura Koku was another noted martial artist. Nyozan's student Takahashi Kuzan taught not only shakuhachi, but also zen and martial arts. However, such teaching nowadays is rare and shakuhachi has been almost entirely separated from these other two branches.

**Thanks so much to Justin for taking the time to answer these questions and sharing his insights. You can find Justin's site and more information on him at his website: <http://senryushakuhachi.com/>**

~~~~~



Lachlan and friend.....

## Your new committee

Founder: Dr Riley Lee  
[riley@rileylee.net](mailto:riley@rileylee.net)

President: David Dixon  
[shakachichibu@hotmail.com](mailto:shakachichibu@hotmail.com)

55 Metropolitan Road, ENMORE 2042  
ph: 9516 2507  
mob: 0416 370703

Secretary: Bronwyn Kirkpatrick  
[bronwyn.kirkpatrick@bigpond.com](mailto:bronwyn.kirkpatrick@bigpond.com)

Treasurer: Nicholas Scofield  
[nicholas.scofield@allianz.com.au](mailto:nicholas.scofield@allianz.com.au)

Publicity Officer: Martin Lloyd  
[rokit@spin.net.au](mailto:rokit@spin.net.au)

Newsletter: Graham Ranft  
[ranftg@inet.net.au](mailto:ranftg@inet.net.au)

### Websites:

[www.rileylee.com](http://www.rileylee.com)  
[www.shakuhachi.com](http://www.shakuhachi.com)  
[www.komuso.cz](http://www.komuso.cz)

尺八

尺八の会



PO Box 63  
Woodford, NSW 2778

***Join the***

**..... AUSTRALIAN SHAKUHACHI SOCIETY (ASS)**

**Attention existing members** – Please renew your membership and support ASS!

**Other Shakuhachi enthusiasts** – You are cordially invited to join ASS

ASS promotes the shakuhachi and its music by:

- ◆ organising **activities** for people to practice or perform together, and share experiences relating to the shakuhachi
- ◆ publishing a **newsletter** four times a year to: publicise upcoming events, provide a forum for articles on shakuhachi, listing resources, reviewing shakuhachi CDs and offering flutes for sale, etc
- ◆ coordinating the **Australian Shakuhachi Festival** to celebrate the art of shakuhachi, workshops and performances are offered.

Please join ASS and help promote shakuhachi music.

Fill out the membership form below, enclose your payment and return to: **The Secretary, Australian Shakuhachi Society, PO Box 63, WOODFORD, NSW, 2778**

---

**Yes, I would like to join the Australian Shakuhachi Society**

**Yes, I would like to renew my membership.**

**Enclosed is \$25.00, being dues for one year (Jul 2009 – Jun 2010)**  
**For new members:**

**Enclosed is \$30.00, being dues for one year (Jul 2010 – Jun 2011)**

**Enclosed is \$60.00, being dues for two years (Jul 2010 – Jun 2012)**

Name.....

Address.....

Suburb.....

State..... Postcode.....

Tel..... Fax: .....

Email .....