

PEACE SHRINE

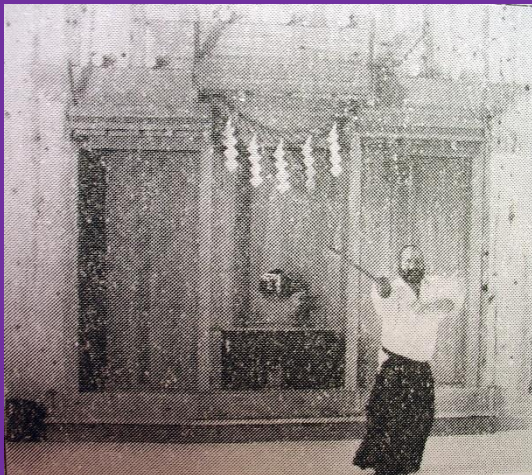
By Todd M. Shirley 忠, Spring 2005



This shrine was originally built in 1988 expressly for the Aiki Institute under the leadership of Koichi Ideta Barrish, an American who became the first American (and non Japanese) in history to become a Shinto priest officially recognized by Ise Grand Shrine. His authorization came through Tsubaki Grand Shrine by Yamamoto, Yukitaka the 96th Guji (high priest) of the 2000 year old site in Suzuka, Mie, Japan. Currently Barrish is the Guji of Tsubaki America Grand Shrine and Tsubaki Kannagara Jinja. He is also a world renowned Aikido sensei, and Aiki was the initial & cohesive factor that has supported and propelled this social phenomenon in the West.

The following was an article that was published during the summer of 1988 by Aikido Today Magazine Vol. 2, No. 2:

Peace Shrine Dedicated in WA

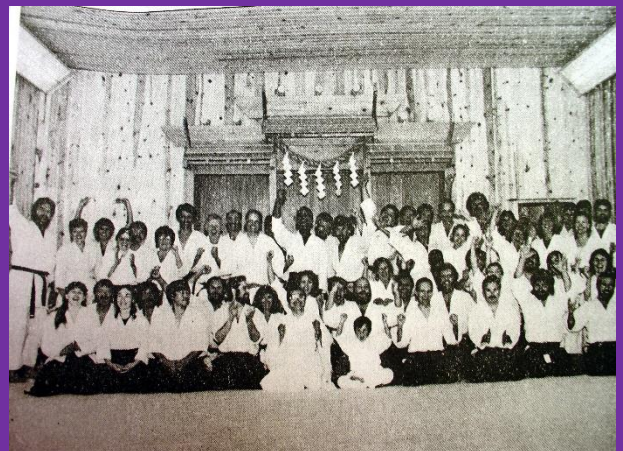


The Aiki Institute, a non profit learning Center in Everett, Washington, dedicated its new Heiwa Jinja (Peace Shrine) on June 4 and 5.

Koichi Barrish Sensei, the dojo's chief instructor, described the Heiwa Jinja as a three dimensional representation of our commitment to the spirit of loving protection, and he compared our training to *misogi* practices, which simultaneously purify and invigorate. He also explained how our centripetal centering activities have a natural expansive echo, manifesting in vibrational purification and a transformational experience of oneness with all creation.

Participating in the dedication were Reverend Shokai Kanai (a Nichiren priest), Genevieve Barrish (Aiki Institute), John Smartt (Stockton Black Belt Academy), Jack Wada (Aikido of San Jose), Mark Bartosch (River City Aikido, Sacramento), and Steve Gayer (Aiki Institute, LA).

The opening was an excellent chance for us to share training with our friends and for them to see our new, all pine, 80 tatami dojo. The tour of the bamboo roof-garden with its view of Puget Sound and the Olympic Mountains was a highlight of the event.





During the late 1980's & early 1990's Barrish sensei had traveled greatly while demonstrating and teaching his Aiki technique. One of his most famous stops was at the historic Aikido of San Jose, otherwise known as the Takemusu Shinbuden, located in downtown San Jose's historic Japantown. The building was originally a kabuki theater, and was established in 1976 by Robert Nadeau sensei (Osensei soto deshi) as Aikido of San Jose. Shortly thereafter, Nadeau sensei had bequeathed the leadership of the dojo over to Jack Wada sensei (Hikitsuchi uchi deshi). It was during this time that Barrish sensei had occasion to demonstrate at Aikido of San Jose. Wada sensei and Barrish sensei made a good connection, and Wada sensei had received a 5th dan in Ideta ryu Aikido from Barrish sensei. Afterwards, Barrish sensei moved into the Pacific Northwest where he established the Aiki Institute in Everett, WA. He later moved to Granite Falls, WA, and the Peace Shrine was gifted to Wada sensei. Sunny Skys sensei (Aiki Zenshin Dojo) was at the time affiliated with PAT (Pacific Aikido Takemusukai, Jack Wada kancho), and he had acquired and reconstructed the Peace Shrine for Wada sensei. The shrine resided at Aikido of San Jose throughout the 1990's.



In 2001 Aikido of San Jose moved its location, and the shrine was then bequeathed to Todd Shirley (忠, Tada) by Wada sensei. Todd Shirley had been a student of several Japanese martial arts, and Aikido in particular. He had, and does, study with numerous sensei throughout the USA & Japan. Interestingly enough Todd had also trained with Barrish sensei, as well as studying esoteric Shinto rituals with Yamamoto Guji at Tsubaki Grand Shrine in Mie. Tada sensei had originally established Murakumo Dojo in 2001 on the Kitsap Peninsula in the state of Washington.

In 2004 Tada sensei moved the dojo to the foothills of Los Gatos, CA. Here was a Japanese hillside garden that he and his friend Robert Schumacher had cultivated by hand during the 1990's, and he felt that this would be the appropriate location to re-erect the Peace Shrine.

The shrine was moved to Los Gatos in 2001 with the help of the San Jose chapter of the Pathfinders MC, a clean & sober motorcycle club. One of the members, Frank E. Kabai, was a student of De Anza Aikido where Tada sensei was an instructor under Jeff Adams sensei & David Brown sensei. The Pathfinders assisted the Aikido community in moving the 1.5 ton structure to the Los Gatos location. In 2004 Tada sensei re-erected the shrine on the 90 Cleland Ave. Los Gatos property with the help of a few local people from the Aikido community, and here it remains.

