

# Karate Academy

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Newsletter February 2024

Here we are already in February. Some people say that January feels like a long month, but I am always stunned by how much of what I want to accomplish is still ahead of me and feel the impetus to get going with it. One twelfth of the year has gone. There are eleven twelfths left. Personally, I am not one twelfth nearer to my goals, but I am closer than if I had not gotten started yet.

If you are going to make a success of this year, and it's an exciting year with some landmark events happening, then getting ready and starting on your mission now is essential.

I hope you'll join me on the journey.

John Burke,  
Chief Instructor

## And So It Begins

January started well, with classes returning and people training despite the cold. We made sure that you didn't freeze in class with some good sweaty exercise.

## Bring a Buddy Day!

Saturday 17th February has been designated "Bring a Buddy Day!" at the Karate Academy in Newton Abbot. The fact is that members are welcome to bring a friend with them

any day they like, but on Saturday 17th February we're specifically gearing our classes towards showcasing what our members can do and making an ideal "First Lesson" for their friend or relative that doesn't usually train with us. What's different to the regular lessons is that if you are a yellow belt your friend gets to stand next to you—not at the other end of the line. That means that you can be there for them to help them and inspire them with the quality of your karate.

In Little Warriors that morning we're inviting parents and siblings to get their shoes off and copy along with our youngest members. It's a 9am start and it's still a Little Warriors lesson, but Sensei Janet will be explaining what we're doing and why we do it for the benefit of the parents who will be attending to have fun with their children.

The Juniors class can be accompanied by their parents on this occasion, too, although most members will want to bring their friends to train alongside them,

ignoring the usual rank protocols. We want quality people in our classes, and having more people who are just like you is the best way to make sure that the classes are full of wonderful people.

In the Open class we will welcome adults and teenagers who want to see the more mature side of what we do. We'll have a lot to get through, but try to answer the questions of both the members and their guests in class.

The guests don't need to pay anything, and the members will have a lot of fun demonstrating their abilities.

Obviously, we're hoping that the guests love what we do as much as our members do and decide to join the club. Recommendation is the best form of thanks that an instructor can receive, and our members know that the club has good people in it if they are just like the rest of us.

## New Book

There have been numerous iterations of John Burke renshi's book "OYO" that have been written, but they've never been published. In a commitment to show that he's not been idle and to leave behind reference material for future generations, Renshi John has agreed to release the book in its current form at the UK Martial Arts Show and just in time for the Keikokai 25th Anniversary. It's been 10 years in the making and breaks down the formula and requirements for practical Karate applications. You can pre-order copies directly from your sensei.

## The UK Martial Arts Show

Over the weekend of 4th & 5th May 2024 the UK Martial Arts Show is once again being held at the Doncaster Dome. Last year it coincided with the coronation of King Charles, and so Renshi John declined to attend the show. This year he has been invited once again to teach in the "Traditional Zone" on both days.

Why would you choose to drive to a venue over 5 hours away for an event? Well, that's up to you. There will be the opportunity, all in one place, to train with instructors from many different styles and see what we can learn from them.

You get to experience the quality of other martial arts instructors and their tips from their arts. There are demonstrations on stage and interviews, and there are a smattering of stands selling equipment and merchandise. Photo opportunities abound.

Katsu Tiru sensei is also due to teach in the Traditional area later on the Saturday, and legendary martial artists and movie stars Cynthia Rothrock, Don "The Dragon" Wilson, and Bill "Superfoot" Wallace from the USA are also due to be teaching in the Legends Zone alongside Muay Thai's Master Sken and Wing Chun's Grandmaster Samuel Kwok.

Members are very welcome to join us at the Show. Tickets are available from Renshi John directly at a better price than on the official website.

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# THE UK MARTIAL ARTS SHOW 2024

MAY 4th/5th 2024

DONCASTER DOME  
DONCASTER LAKESIDE - BAWTRY RD - DONCASTER - DN47PD

Demonstrations-Seminars-Trade Stands-Photo & Autograph opportunities-workshops

Join us for a weekend of martial arts action with guests Cynthia Rothrock, Bill "Superfoot" Wallace, Don "the dragon" Wilson, Mark Stas, Alfie Lewis, Samuel Kwok, KatsuTiru, Master Sken, GNT and more....

TICKETS [www.theukmas.co.uk](http://www.theukmas.co.uk)  
tel 07719636374

## Birthdays

The following students celebrate their Birthday this month (February)

9	John Chapman
12	Leilanni-Rosa Mejias-Evered
13	Dawid Winiarski
18	Teddy-James Chambers
21	Charlie Northwood
23	Dmytro Kurylo, Hugo Roberts
25	Rufus Tucker

Happy  
Birthday  
to You



## Kata Intensives

In January Janet Drew sensei gave her own free time to offer our members private lessons on two occasions. The 121s were specifically geared around certain grades and were specifically to help them with their kata. The white belt to yellow belt sessions were booked up very quickly with many of the attendees registering progress just because of that 30 minute boost. The higher grades were perhaps more reticent about having scrutiny of their kata, which is a great shame as the boost is also needed at their levels. Those who did book a slot with sensei said that they got a lot from it.

## Grading

The next kyu grading is on 18th February. The one after that will be in April.

In order to be considered for rank promotion you must be training regularly. To take part in the test you have to be nominated by your instructor. They can only do this if they have seen you make progress in class. It cannot be a nomination in the week preceding the test. To be considered for April you would need to be ready by the middle of March, and so we'd need to see you learning all of the basics, kata, kumite, and oyo that you are supposed to know in order to be graded.

Practice at home can be valuable, however habits become ingrained without an instructor there to tell you what is right and what is not. That's why we recommend training in the dojo twice per week. It means that we get to see you and embed the correct habits.

Take steps now to get ahead in the months to come.

## Looking Forward

2024 is the year that Keikokai turns 25 years old. We have some exciting projects and events, with guests and announcements to make.

The big one is the anniversary seminar. We have confirmation that **Anthony Blades 8th dan kyoshi** will be teaching alongside **John Burke 6th dan renshi** and the seniors of the dojo. Further details will be announced, but you should plan to have Saturday 18th May clear for training.

There will also be seminars in Scotland (1st and 2nd June), and in Ely, Cambridgeshire (13th & 14th July) and Shetland (7th & 8th September). Renshi John will also be teaching at the UK Martial Arts Show in Doncaster in May. Summer School will be in August, as usual.

## TKSI Badge

As you will be aware, we are members of and licenced by the **Traditional**

**Karate Study Institute** under the guidance of **Anthony Blades** kyoshi and **John Burke** renshi.

The Institute's badge has now become available. This can be sewn onto the gi on the right shoulder. It's available from your instructor at £5. We expect to see members, especially the seniors, proudly displaying their badges.



## Diary Dates:

### February 2024

17th Buddy Day  
18th Kyu Grading

## New Members

The Karate Academy is pleased to welcome the following new members who joined during January:

A warm welcome back to

**Damian Kitt**  
(*Newton Abbot*)

Recommendation is the highest compliment we can receive.

Welcome one and all!

## Last Word

The pressures we feel to improve and advance are real. They're also self inflicted. Far from being a threat to our happiness, having goals and deadlines is actually a method of channelling our time and energy and should be embraced. One of the hardest parts of the training path is when you reach Black Belt and the time before you opens up with little governance. There are two years or more between shodan and nidan, and even if you get it the colour of your belt doesn't change. We watch how, once relieved of the three or four monthly deadline to get a new belt, the new black belt holders flounder. What are they supposed to do? What are they supposed to be working on? There's a rollercoaster ride of emotion as they must come to the realisation that "if it's to be, it's up to me". If they are lucky they find a way to apply themselves. They seek guidance and help from a new position of maturity that they are the ones that are in control of their own progress. There are far fewer who realise that such has always been the case. All the way up the grades. From the beginning—it was you who put the pressure on yourself and it was you who pushed yourself to conquer the hurdles and Sensei was there to help and guide but it was you who did the work and you who got the reward. It's not surprising that some people then look for a release from those pressures. Turn off the tap. It's at that point that there is another little bit of advice that a fellow black belt might wish to impart: just train. Even if you don't have a goal. Even if you don't want the pressure. Even if grades are not what you want or need. Above all else, Karate is a thing that we DO. If you don't want to be there 3 or 4 times per week be there once. Just train. Put aside everything else for a short period each week because we DO Karate. Remain rather than deteriorate. Persist. It might just change again as the wheel turns full circle.

Proud to be the Keikokai. See you in the dojo.

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**Dedicated to Black Belt  
Excellence**