

Minutes of the Urasenke Philadelphia Tankokai Annual Meeting  
February 11, 2018

President Frank Chance called the meeting to order at 2:24 p.m.  
The agenda was adopted with amendments.

### **Report of Activities in 2017**

We were very privileged this year to take part in the North American Traveling Workshop. Gyotei-sensei Machida Soho was accompanied by Sensei Christy Bartlett (translator) and spent two days in Philadelphia, where 15 people attended and were able to take advantage of the great knowledge that the sensei imparted.

Part of our ongoing activities are classes held in various locations. We have ongoing classes for advanced students at Shofuso, and two classes for beginners, one in the spring and one in the summer. In 2017, both sessions were filled to the cap of six students, with four continuing classes after the initial round was over. These classes are taught jointly by Morgan Beard and Drew Hanson

Drew Hanson continued to teach classes at the Tea Institute at Penn State (at the main campus in State College, Pennsylvania). Each semester there is a new group of beginning students, and the number can vary greatly. There is also a group of four continuing students who are currently at the koicha level. At the end of 2017, Drew retired from teaching students at Penn State; Morgan will be taking over for him in the spring of 2018.

In addition, Taeko Shervin and Drew Hanson teach lessons at their home.

Another important part of our ongoing activities are public demonstrations. This year we once again had monthly demonstrations at Shofuso from April through October, with twenty to thirty people in attendance each time.

We also do demonstrations at local festivals. During the Cherry Blossom Festival, we take part in the main Sakura Sunday celebration. This year we did four demonstrations. The demonstrations were free, and open to as many people as wanted to watch; the early one was not well attended, but the later three had approximately 100 observers each. We also experimented with serving tea and sweets for a \$5 fee as a fundraiser; we made \$424 as a result.

Also during cherry blossom season, Taeko Shervin did two demonstrations at Shofuso for 25 people each (the maximum space would allow), and Drew Hanson did a demonstration at the Morris Arboretum for more than 100 people.

Later in the year, Morgan Beard participated in the Obon Festival at Shofuso with a series of continuous demonstrations throughout the afternoon.

Individual members also did private demonstrations throughout the year.

We had gatherings for the Tankokai membership for Otsukimi (October), Robiraki (November), and Hatsugama (January).

The activity report was accepted by the group.

## **Upcoming Events**

Drew Hanson reported that we are now gearing up for our demonstration year at Shofuso. There's a question about how to handle the July demonstration, which coincides with the Parks on Tap event and may result in difficulty with parking and crowd navigating. Discussions are ongoing.

A tea gathering to celebrate the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the relationship between the Raymond and the Nakashima families in New Hope, PA, originally scheduled for last November, has been rescheduled for April 29<sup>th</sup>. The event is a fundraiser, but will also feature members of the family renewing their relationship in the context of the tearoom.

Mary Lynn Howard will be doing a demonstration at Cedar Crest College in Allentown in March. We have also been contacted by Longwood Gardens about doing a demonstration during their Chrysanthemum Festival in the fall.

Should we have a Tanabata tea? That would also be Parks on Tap weekend, as well as a demonstration, and so availability is uncertain. Further discussion to follow.

The date for Robiraki was tentatively set for November 4, 2018. Drew will inquire with the Horticultural Center about availability.

Dates were set for future board meetings:

- May 20, Mary Lynn Howard's house
- August 19, Frank Chance's house
- November 18, Frank Chance's house
- All meetings at 2 p.m.

It was suggested and agreed by consensus that we should set up a Google Calendar to coordinate association events.

## **Financial Report**

Treasurer Drew Hanson reported that we're doing very well financially; our overall cash reserves increased by approximately \$3,000 in 2017 to \$15,789. (See separate financial report for summary of income and expenses in 2017.)

Our most significant single expense was the intensive in October; in addition to routine expenses such as food and supplies, we donated \$1,000 to the Japan-America Society in appreciation for our ability to use Shofuso for this event.

President Frank Chance raised the question of establishing a gift policy. This is especially useful in guiding on whether or not to accept physical gifts such as tea utensils, to prevent us from taking on

things that we are unable to use. Frank will look into donation policy language used by other associations.

There was a discussion about the need for storage space that's accessible by multiple association members, so that they can more easily accessible when needed. Morgan will look into this.

The financial report was accepted by the group.

### **New Business**

A question was raised about what will happen to Taeko Shervin's house as she plans to move back to Japan. Could the association consider acquiring it for practice and event space? It was determined that the association does not have the necessary financial reserves. One of our members is considering acquiring the house privately and making it available for group use. If not, then the house will likely be sold outside the group.

Shofuso is rebranding as the Shofuso Japanese Cultural Center this spring. There has been a long-term discussion around building a new cultural center, but Frank reported that that's not in the three-year plan, although planning for it is. They want to start the branding in that direction even before build new building.

Morgan put forth a motion to buy set of new tatami mats – 12 ½, so that we can use them for Hatsugama but also for classes at Shofuso. We want to order lightest weight possible for maximum portability. Morgan estimated the cost at around \$2,500. A motion was made and seconded to approve the purchase. The motion passed unanimously. Also approved by consensus: The set of 8 ½ mats currently being used at Shofuso are not in good shape and can be given away for free rather than attempting to sell them.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:51 p.m.