

Chado Urasenke Tankokai Philadelphia
Board Meeting
October 5, 2019

Attending: Morgan Beard, Drew Hanson, Mary Lynn Howard, Shoko Kato, Terry Sherwin (remote: Keijiroh Yamaguchi, Sachiko Houck)
Absent: Frank Chance Derek Finn, Brandon Forsht

The meeting was called to order at 10:08 a.m.

The agenda was amended to add discussion of chajis, also add to discussion of the possibility of holding meetings by conference call. Motion to adopt the agenda was seconded and voted unanimously.

Report of the Demonstration Committee

Drew Hanson, chair, reported that the most recent demonstration was done by Sachiko Houck at the Pennsylvania Tea Festival in Mechanicsburg, PA. She talked to many people who are very interested in tea, had some interviews with the press. She served tea to 80 people on the first day, 60 on the second day.

We've received a request for a demo in January in Northeast Philadelphia from the Torresdale Women's Committee. Terry Sherwin is following up.

Drew is doing a demonstration later this year outside of Morristown, NJ, for group of martial artists (this is the same group described at previous meetings). The event will have 19 attendees from all over the country.

In the summer Tamiko Leinz sponsored tea and a demo for the families of the Kyodaiko taiko drum group. The demo had almost 20 people. It was held at their dojo (practice space), and they opened it up to marital arts people upstairs.

Mary Lynn Howard had a demo at Muhlenburg College; they also requested a demo last year, which was done by Sachiko Houck.

There was a brief discussion of arrangements for the October public demonstration at Shofuso.

Events Committee

Morgan Beard, chair, reported on past events:

- The World Peace tea event that had been tentatively planned for August by a tea practitioner in Norway was cancelled by the organizers.
- Morgan Beard and Mary Lynn Howard served tea at Shofuso's Obon Festival in August. We had a "drop-in" tea in one section of the outdoor festival, where people could come up and watch the demonstration or drink tea. Served an estimated 40-50 people.
- Our annual Otsukimi moon-viewing tea was held at Shofuso in September for approximately 10 guests.

Upcoming events:

- Robiraki: November 3
- Hatsugama: January 12 (snow day January 19)
- Tankokai Annual Meeting: January 26

In April, the former Sakura Sunday is now a two-day weekend event. Terry said she understood that one day would be more of a cosplay/anime centric day, while the other would be for the more traditional arts. Morgan will get more information and report back.

2020 is the 50th anniversary of Midorikai. Drew reported that they are proposing having celebrations worldwide that can be whatever each group decides it wants to do. Will follow up once more details become available.

The Sogetsu ikebana exhibition is happening at Longwood Gardens until 17th of November, coinciding with the annual chrysanthemum festival. It's biggest ikebana installation that Sogetsu iemoto Akane Teshigahara has ever done. The biggest installations are all bamboo, with arrangements by local practitioners and by students who came from Japan.

Membership

Shoko Kato reported that she set has up software that will allow us to send out membership reminders. The renewal date will be January 1 for everybody, with automatic reminders that go out until people renew. She will also send an e-mail reminder for 2019 for people who have lapsed.

New Business: Japan Philly 2020

Morgan and Terry went over the Japan-America Society of Greater Philadelphia's plan for Japan 2020 Philly plan. The events are being organized by Yuka Yokoyama, who joined the JASGP staff for that purpose. They are coordinating events that celebrate the connection between Japan and Philadelphia at a wide variety of venues throughout the region.

There was discussion of how we could participate. Terry suggested celebrating history of tea in Philadelphia, especially Brother Keenan and his connection to the Catholic mass. St. Joe's has timeline of Jesuits in Philadelphia that also talks about their involvement in tea. There were Japanese women who came to Shofuso to demonstrate even before Taeko Shervin sensei came on the scene.

Suggestions for us included pop-up tea at venues that could include the Art Museum, Barnes, colleges, museums.

It was agreed that we would form a 2020 working group to brainstorm ideas and work on organizing, consisting of Terry, Morgan, Keijiroh, Shoko.

New Business: Succession

Drew is going to retire as being chair of the Demonstration Committee. Terry is interested, and unless there are any objections she will proceed to train and transition into the role during the remainder of 2019.

Drew disclosed that he is undergoing treatment for cancer; he is expected to be fine but doesn't want to make any commitments until he knows for sure how things will turn out.

Other Topics

There was a question about where demonstration queries come from. The answer is that some come through Urasenke Philadelphia website, and Drew also gets a number through his own website.

Morgan mentioned that over the summer she moved to the website to a new platform to make maintenance easier, and at the same time she did a site redesign. She asked everyone to go to the site (www.phillytea.org) and let her know if there's anything that doesn't work or could be improved. We also have a blog that mostly consists of some old posts from Shoko, but anyone who is inspired could submit new ones.

Drew brought up the question of how we accommodate transgender students (inspired by a transgender student at Shofuso). This situation was not difficult to handle because the student presents consistently in their chosen gender, but how do we handle nonbinary students? Consensus was that it's up to the teacher to decide how to handle, but the best way to handle is probably to let student choose what style they want to learn (and make sure they understand that switching back and forth will be more of a challenge).

Keijiroh is having a chaji every few months. The purpose is to introduce tea in general to people, and encourage people to come to okeiko. It will also give practice to experienced students to learn the roles. He welcomes everyone to attend these practice chajis. There will be one in late December (21 or 22), just before Christmas. Hoping for another one February or spring. The non-tea guests can be anyone. As of right now these are being organized privately (not official Tankokai events), but if it grows and becomes self-sustaining then it could transition to become a Tankokai program.

Tamiko Leinz has a kimono sensei , Rumi-sensei, coming back this year. The sensei has offered to do a free two- or three-hour workshop for the tea people on sewing for changing han-eri. It will be in May, haven't set a date yet but will be here between May 1 and May 7.

Ikebana International is bringing a kimono historian in this month for their annual presentation.

There is a Song Dynasty chawan in the collection of Philadelphia Museum of Art, and we might be able to arrange for a special study group come to look at chawan. Have to think about dates; Monday would be best.

Future Meetings

There was some discussion of having future board meetings online, to make it easier for everyone to get together (no need for long drives and we could then schedule them in the evening). It was agreed that

we would give it a try. Next meeting date was set for Sunday, January 5th, at 7 p.m., via Zoom. (Morgan will send meeting info.)

The meeting was adjourned at 12:02.