

2018 will long be remembered for many reasons.

It was the first year where we were not a member of the AKKA and the decision proved to be absolutely correct with many examples of just why we should not be a member AND with all our events becoming bigger and stronger.

We can all look back with pride on our achievements during the year. The most significant to me was when I was unable to be at the Victorian Championships and EVERYONE stood up in my absence and the event ran like clockwork.

We sent many fighters to events, especially the NSW Championships and the nationals. In addition we sent 5 fighters and 6 officials to the world Cup in China. All this in a year when we also raised over \$13000 for the Royal Children's Hospital. This is just a great example of the calibre of the people within the Branch.

Personally I had many karate thrills within the year none more thrilling than being presented with a plaque (thank you Shihan Scott for arranging it), to celebrate my 50 years of continuous training in Kyokushin, by Kancho at the World Cup. That was followed by another presentation at the Black Belt Dinner that took my breathe away. A poster with a photo of all my black belts (past and present) and a special cake (arranged by my wonderful wife Wendy). These items will remain in my memory forever.

At the end of the year we also welcomed the Adelaide dojo into the Branch. This is a very significant development and will see us travelling to Adelaide a few times a few for training and seminars.

This year we welcomed the following new Dan grades:

Ron Jorgensen, Godan
Leigha Adams, Shodan
Sherriden Trevena, Shodan
Julius Wolfe, Shodan
Joanne Collier, Shodan
Dri Lyell-Kaaho, Shodan
Natalie Williamson, Nidan
Elias Kavadias, Nidan
Richard Freitag, Nidan

As we enter 2019 we have another year with a very full calendar (again) including 2 international events, the Asian Pacific in Myanmar (probably in May or June) and the New Zealand commemorative tournament. Anyone wishing to attend these events should let me know AND you should start planning NOW.

We have now fully embraced the digital age with the newsletter, events stories and calendar becoming a part of the Shihancho website and you should check at the start of every month for new articles (click Yearbook 2019).

I look forward to a great and exciting 2019. I have said many times that I am just the figurehead, without the support of each and every person in the Branch I would be doing a lot of things on my own. I am blessed to have just a great group and especially a group of instructors that has no peer anywhere.