

Bill Witt & Mark Larson

Visiting Virginia Nov. 17-18, 2018



RICHMOND, Va. (7-2-18) - William Witt Shihan, 8th Dan, and Mark Larson, 6th Dan, will be visiting Virginia for a joint seminar Nov. 17-18.



*Photos: Top: Bill Witt and Mark Larson (Photo Credit ~ Bill Aquino).
Below: Bill Witt Shihan at 2010 Gasshuku at Lake Tahoe.*



Witt Shihan is Morihiro Saito Shihan's senior student in the U.S. and will be making his 24th visit to Virginia as a guest of Bryan Park Aikido and the Randolph-Macon College Aikido Club.



Larson Sensei has also been a frequent visitor to Virginia as guest of River City Aikido.

(Photos: Bill Witt, Left, and Mark Larson, Right.)

The site will be the Brock Center at Randolph- Macon College in Ashland. [Click here](#) for directions to R-MC, lodging and campus map.

Witt was the first American uchideshi of Morihiro Saito Shihan dating back to 1969 and continuing for extensive periods of time through 1975, while Larson was Saito's last principal American uchideshi from 1993 until Saito's death in 2002.

Witt Sensei was the first to receive the menkyo kaiden scroll for the Aiki-ken from Saito Shihan, while Larson was the last to receive the scroll in 2001.

Saito Shihan (1928-2002) was the longest direct student of the Aikido Founder Morihei Ueshiba (1883-1969) and Chief Instructor of the Founder's Iwama Dojo from 1969-2002. He was also caretaker of the Aiki Shrine.

Witt did extensive translating for Saito Shihan for an initial series of books in the early 1970s and brought Saito to the U.S. for his first series of U.S. seminars during that same period. Larson traveled extensively with Saito Shihan as his primary uke and otomo for seminars in the late 1990s and early 2000s and served as his translator.

"I was there when Saito Sensei wanted to promote Bill Witt Sensei to 7th Dan and helped with some of the translating," Larson recalled. "I also remember translating letters from Witt Sensei to Saito Sensei toward the end of Sensei's life and for the Saito Family after Saito

Sensei passed. Witt Sensei sent me a nice email after Sensei passed away about our connection to Saito Sensei and Iwama that I kept."

Both Witt and Larson reflect the teaching of Saito Shihan in their technique and follow the same precise training methods that are characteristic of the Iwama lineage, descending from the Founder, Morihei Ueshiba.

The fee is \$110 for the entire seminar, with a reduced rate of \$90 for early registration by Oct. 14, 2018, and \$80 for Saturday only. For further information, call Bryan Park Aikido Chief Instructor Tim Sheldon at 804-477-4533 or email him at tshel99@gmail.com.

Witt Shihan is primarily responsible for bringing the teaching of Saito Shihan to the United States. This is extremely important in the history of Aikido in the U.S., because Saito had a superior understanding of O Sensei's Aikido and the best understanding of O Sensei's weapons system.

O Sensei did not teach weapons to any great extent at the Hombu Dojo in Tokyo. He kept this training almost exclusively in Iwama. Weapons and Taijutsu go together in Aikido, and if Bill Witt had not connected Saito Sensei with U.S. Aikido students, we might never have gained this understanding. See: [The Man Who Built the Bridge to Iwama](#).

Schedule:

Saturday: 10 a.m. to 12 noon and 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., Brock Center.

Lunch Saturday, 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the college cafeteria or the restaurant of your choice in Ashland.

Party Saturday, 5 p.m., at home of Tim and Judy Sheldon. See directions below.

Sunday: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., with breaks each hour, at the Brock Center.

Directions to Home of Tim and Judy Sheldon

Address is:

7602 North Pinehill Drive

Richmond, VA 23228

Distance: 13.3 mi Time: 21 mins

Take I-95 S toward RICHMOND - go 8.6 miles.

Take exit #83B/PARHAM RD onto E PARHAM RD(VA-73 S) - go about 2 miles.

Turn Left on WOODMAN RD - go about one mile, where you will see Moody Middle School on your right.

Turn Left on BOXWOOD RD

Turn Right on PINEHILL DR - go about a tenth of a mile.

Turn Left on N PINEHILL DR - go about 2 tenths of a mile.

Arrive at 7602 N PINEHILL DR, on the Right.

If you have any questions, my cell phone is 804-477-4533.

Bill Witt Aikido Seminar Registration

Name: _____

Birthdate: _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-Mail: _____

Previous Aikido Experience - Years _____

Dojo _____ Rank _____

Telephone Number _____

Other martial art _____ Rank _____

Amount enclosed: \$ _____

(\$110 for entire seminar, reduced rate of \$90 for early registration by Oct. 14, 2018, and \$80 for Saturday only.)

Make checks payable to Tim Sheldon.

Mailing address:

Tim Sheldon
Bryan Park Aikido
7602 N. Pinehill Dr.
Richmond, VA 23228

Waiver

Aikido is a martial art similar to Judo or Karate. Aikido teaches self-defense and requires practicing with partners to learn Aikido techniques. Randolph-Macon College, Bryan Park Aikido and chief instructor Tim Sheldon, assume no liability for injury or damages arising from the practice of Aikido. Due to the strenuous nature of the practice, the participant is strongly advised to consult with a physician concerning his/her fitness to participate. All of the Aikido activities involve an element of risk, which the participant is urged to consider and which the participant assumes. If the participant feels unsure of his/her ability to take part in any of the Aikido activities, it is recommended that he/she not participate in these specific activities until he/she has mastered the more basic techniques.

I have read the above waiver and understand its contents.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian:

Signed: _____ Date: _____