

## **Meeting Report-Ashmolean Museum 10<sup>th</sup> September 2016**

At the Annual General Meeting in December 2015 we discussed holding meetings in various locations throughout the country, engaging with museums with Japanese collections and improving communication between the Society and various stakeholders such as curators. The meeting at the Ashmolean Museum was the first such meeting to take place.

In the morning there were three presentations:

- Mark Radburn discussed the history and characteristics of early iron tsuba;
- Eckhard Kremers followed with a discussion covering early Akasaka work, identifying design features and characteristics of the iron;
- Ford Hallam presented an overview of his current research in the analysis of soft metal in tsuba and other fittings.

Mark's and Eckhard's presentations will be available on the To-Ken of GB website shortly. Ford will publish his in the near future, once he has finalised further research details.

All of these presentations were hugely enjoyable, detailed and extremely informative and we are very grateful to the presenters for their considerable effort in putting these together.

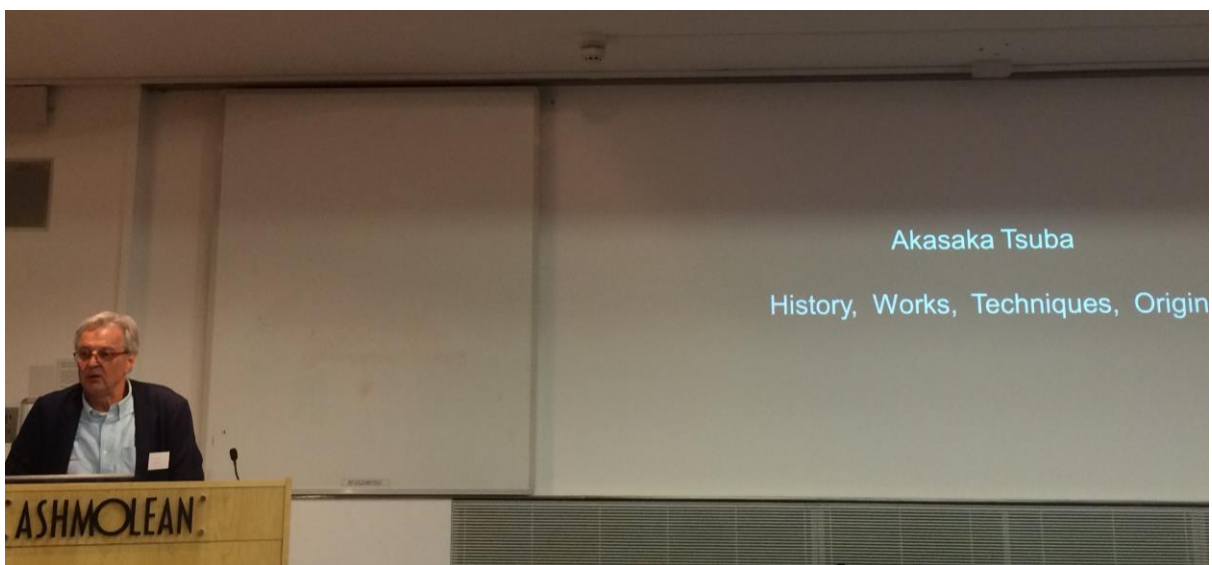
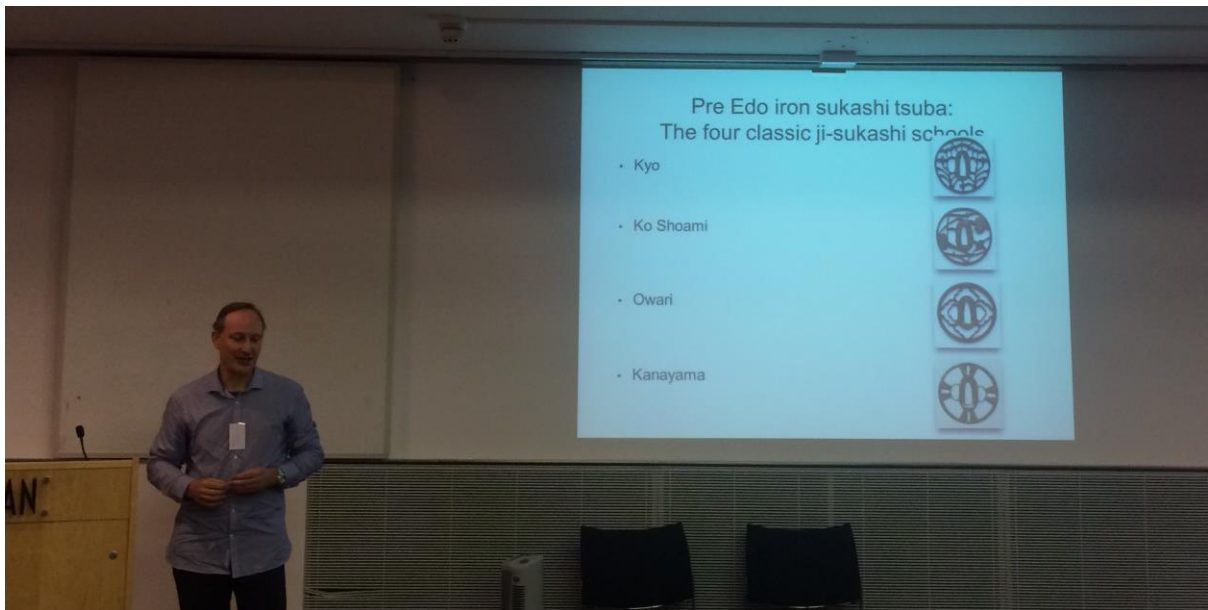
In the afternoon the meeting attendees split in to smaller groups to view examples from the Church collection in the Ashmolean study room. These pieces are not on display so it was a great privilege to have the chance to see and handle them. Special thanks need to be given to Clare Pollard, curator of the Ashmolean for her enthusiastic involvement, and also to Graham Curtis and Justin Orr who have spent considerable time cataloguing the collection and selecting pieces to view.

Alongside the presentations, there was a display of tsuba and koshirae for members to study. Thanks go to Bob Morrison, Ian Chapman, Mike Hickman-Smith, Paul Bowman and Clive Sinclair, all of who supplied excellent examples of fittings and koshirae. What was particularly interesting was being able to see authentic Japanese koshirae alongside those produced by our own craftsmen employing traditional techniques. I believe our local workmanship compared extremely well.

As always, the success of such a meeting depends on the input and collaboration of many people. It was especially pleasing to welcome Hans Eschbaum, one of the founding members of NBTHK Europe, and Eckhard Kremers, the newly appointed chairman of NBTHK Europe. The fact they flew over and played such an active part in the day bodes well for our future co-operation.

I hope all who attended enjoyed the day (and those who attended the dinner in the evening enjoyed that as well!). As said at the time, I am sure there are things we could do to improve these events. If you have any ideas or suggestions, please do contact us and we will continue to develop the format and content.

## Section 1: Lecturers



Section 2: Tsuba on display (small sample) - feast for tosogu lovers





Section 3: Nihonto aficionados also had a lot to see and learn



See you next time!

