



The Isshinryu Way Everything Karate & Kobudo

Isshinryu
Worldwide

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Karate is meant to be done together

Throughout the pandemic years, we all adapted and reduced our circles and training partners. We made it work, and kept active, but there's nothing like a large event to remind us of the community and enjoyment of training with others.

The 2022 was a great reminder of how close and supportive the martial arts community is. After not seeing many old friends for a few years, once we were back in the Dojo together, all time was erased. Everyone was welcomed, shared knowledge and learned lots.

At the same time, we held one of the largest gradings I can remember. Many people from across Canada and the US made the journey and demonstrated extremely strong kata, deep knowledge of bunkai and fighting spirit.

After two full days of seminars and friendship, Hanshi Mady expressed his feelings and the feelings of many in attendance. "We need to do this again next year!"

That is exactly what Sensei Susan is organizing. This May there will be another Expo, and it will continue to grow as it has each time.

Students, make your plans to attend.

Instructors, start planning your seminars,.

If there's something you want to learn, or have any suggestions, please tell your Sensei (or email me). The Expo is a success because of everyone's involvement.

While you wait for the expo, keep training, keep working with your Dojo mates and keep getting better. Put your best effort into everything you do, not just for yourself, but for everyone you train with. You have the power to make it better for everyone!

Upcoming Events

Events

May 2023—Isshinryu Expo

July 2023—Isshinryu Hall of Fame

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Essential Isshinryu is available!

For more information on the first Canadian Isshinryu book, visit www.essentialissheinryu.com!

Focus on what matters



Martial arts legend leaves a legacy of lifelong learning

By Janet Fuchek

Call this former hockey player rough and tough.

But above all, call him a martial arts legend, a skilled practitioner and instructor, and a master craftsman of traditional Okinawan weapons.

Don Shapland Sensei of Chilliwack, British Columbia, was this and more - a multi-faceted person who spearheaded the spread of Isshinryu karate across Canada and helped popularize kobudo around the world.

His recent passing created a noticeable void globally.

Leading by example, Shapland Sensei inspired people to embrace the martial arts as a lifestyle. He exuded a passion for entrepreneurial endeavours and left a legacy of lifelong learning.

After all, Shapland Sensei practised the martial arts - Isshinryu karate first, later Shorin-ji Ryu and as a ninth-degree black belt, Ryukyu Kobudo - practically all of his life until a lengthy illness cut short his dreams on June 19 of this year, just weeks shy of his 76th birthday.

Those fortunate to have trained with him will remember the precision with which he approached his teaching. He was a fountain of knowledge, readily sharing the history, techniques, and kata of these arts.

Having lived in Okinawa for 10 years, he mastered the language and adopted the customs of his new home, welcomed as a student of Ryukyu Kobudo under the tutelage of Tamayose Hidemi Kaicho. They travelled the world together, teaching Ryukyu Kobudo.

Tamayose Sensei formed the Ryukyu Kobudo Teshshinkan Kyo Kai on May 22, 1999. Its purpose is to preserve the Ryukyu Kobudo of his teacher, Akamine Eisuke Sensei, as handed down by Taira Shinken Sensei. The Honbu Dojo is located in Ozato (Nanjo City) in Okinawa, though there are branches of the association worldwide. "I have a great emotional attachment to Okinawa," said Shapland Sensei in an earlier interview, adding that he hoped to return to Okinawa to live at some point. "I love it. I don't like the cold winters (in Canada)."

Throughout the years, Shapland Sensei ran dojos in Ontario in Windsor, Thunder Bay, and in his small hometown of Dryden, as well as in such places as British Columbia. Given his experiences in Okinawa, he developed more insights into the differing approaches to martial arts worldwide. "In North America, they are far too concerned with ranks," he once said in an interview. "The reverent Okinawans prefer modesty, loyalty to one's instructor and less emphasis on the belt system. Most practise karate. That has a lot to do with the longevity of the Okinawan people. It's almost a religion to them."

In the early days of his athletic career, he had his sights on being a National Hockey League player, even travelling to the Detroit-Windsor area for that purpose.

Though that aspiration didn't materialize for long, he concentrated on his martial arts goals.

Lloyd Russette Kancho of Detroit, Michigan, and a seventh-degree black belt in Isshinryu karate speaks highly of his former student, Shapland Sensei.

The Dryden martial artist trained for six years under Russette Kancho at the Windsor Y.M.C.A., who also

brought him to workout at the Pine Street dojo there and to various dojos in Michigan.

"Don was gifted," he concludes. "He was brave. He was steadfast. He was an artist in his soul. He wanted to get it perfect." He brought him up to his second-degree black belt in the art during a time when training was like the "Wild West." "He was the first black belt I ever turned out," says Russette Kancho. "Everyone else was pragmatic. He always wanted something deeper and deeper and deeper."

He remembers Shapland Sensei for his inclusivity.

"He thought money was a necessary evil," says the Isshinryu expert. "He would take in every student whether they had money or didn't."

Not only was he a stellar martial artist, but he was known for his hockey prowess.

"He was a great hockey player," says Russette Kancho. "He was on a first-name basis with Gordie Howe and with other players. He was working out with a pro team in Detroit."

Though they lost touch for a number of years, he was glad they reconnected in recent months before Shapland Sensei's passing. "We were together in the end," he explains. "I miss him."

Bob Markovich Sensei from Windsor, Ontario, trained with Shapland Sensei from 1967-68, at dojos in Windsor and Detroit.

A ninth-degree black belt in Isshinryu Karate and a fourth-degree black belt in Filipino Arnis, Markovich Sensei says that the accomplished martial artist even helped him teach at his club in Windsor.

"He was an excellent martial artist," says Markovich Sensei, whose first studied Isshinryu Karate under Russette Kancho. "He was good at everything. He knew his katas, he was a good fighter, he knew how to teach - he came across very well in his instruction."

Another training partner, Buzz Turner, of a suburb in Detroit, remembers the incredible power Shapland Sensei brought to their Isshinryu karate practices in Windsor and Detroit during the early 1970s. Turner Sensei, now an eighth-degree black belt in the art, and Russette Kancho operated a dojo in Detroit at the time. Turner has been training under Grandmaster Willie Adams of Detroit for a number of years.

"I just remember training hard," says Turner Sensei of their sessions. "He (Shapland Sensei) was tough. Everything was different then. Fighting was aggressive."

He reflects fondly on their time together in training. "It's sad that he passed," says Turner Sensei.

One martial artist who did get to train with Shapland Sensei in karate and kobudo, both during a trip to Okinawa and when he ran a dojo in Dryden, was Brant Ledoux Sensei, who still resides in that Northwestern Ontario town. He says he'll never forget a four-hour, gruelling workout he did in Okinawa. A seventh-degree black belt in Isshinryu karate, he also attended various seminars by the karate and kobudo legend, even helping to organize them. "To me, he was one of the top senseis in the world," says Ledoux Sensei of his mentor. "He was pretty explanative - he went deep into things. You could pick up more from him than from other people. He was detailed and straight to the point."



(Continued on page 3)



Martial arts legend leaves a legacy of lifelong learning

By Janet Fuchek

Ledoux Sensei also considered him to be progressive, where he embraced changes in systems. He noticed how Shapland Sensei was in his element in Okinawa, mastering the language and calligraphy. That's what his drive was," he figures. "It was part of him – the art."

Ninth-degree Isshinryu instructor, Albert Mady of Windsor, Ontario, who also holds ranks in other styles, recognizes Shapland Sensei for his invaluable contributions to the martial arts. "Shapland Sensei was an early pioneer of Isshinryu in Canada, an outstanding instructor and practitioner," he says. "Rest in peace."

His kobudo students around the globe also miss this martial arts icon. "I remember my first visit to Canada in 2010," says Frank Pely Sensei of Nordhausen, Germany, who is a sixth-degree black belt in Ryukyu Teshinkan Kobudo and holds high ranks in other martial arts. "Shapland Sensei picked me up from Vancouver Airport, showed me Vancouver on a small city tour, and then we drove to his home. I was allowed to stay in his house, was fed, and was allowed to use his laptop. I was impressed by his generosity." The accomplished practitioner credits Shapland Sensei for his powerful influence and for his craftsmanship. "Shapland Sensei was always trying to promote Tamayose Hidemi Kaicho's Kobudo Teshinkan Kyo Kai Association," says the Teshinkan Shibuchō for Europe. "Among other things, he regularly organized seminars and manufactured high-quality Kobudo training weapons and accessories."

His influence was felt in such places as Minnesota.

"Shapland Sensei was a huge influence on my development in kobudo," says Jerry Holt Sensei of the Minneapolis area who is an eighth-degree black belt in Isshinryu karate and a fifth-degree black belt in Ryukyu Kobudo Shimbukan. "I was fortunate enough to spend a lot of time training with him on the dojo floor. I was not a direct student of Shapland Sensei, but he always treated me like one of his students. I truly miss him. I spent many hours Facetiming with him, talking about martial arts. His budo spirit will always be a part of me."

Another Minnesota martial artist – Tim Jurgens Kyoshi of Lonsdale – describes his chance meeting with Shapland Sensei when they both lived in Okinawa.

"When the Okinawa Prefectural Budokan opened for use around the spring of 1995, the Aikido group I trained with shifted classes there," he recounts. "Training was hard, and a cool drink after class was a good cool-down. I stumbled across Shapland Sensei in the Seaman's Club, which was right next to the Budokan then. He was wearing a T-shirt with the crest of the Ryukyu Kobudo Hozon Shinko Kai embroidered on it. I asked him about that, and that kicked off a long conversation and then a nearly three decade's long friendship."

"For some time, I would also join Don and Tamayose Sensei for additional training sessions at Tamayose Sensei's family dojo," he adds. Jurgens considered the Dryden martial artist to have been a dear friend. "Don was my best man at my wedding, where he talked about the times I would take apart and rebuild computers for him, always with a few parts left over and how it was probably good that I had not become a surgeon," he says.

"Despite our paths taking slightly different turns with me following Akamine Hiroshi Sensei and him being one of the founding members of the Teshshinkan organization, we remained close friends, often chatting online for hours about many topics," he continues. "While I was never his student, I certainly learned many things from him, and I would not have become the martial artist I am today without his kind introduction."

Jurgens Kyoshi now holds the rank of eighth-degree black belt in Shorin Ryu Mukenkai and a seventh-degree black belt in Ryukyu Kobudo Shimbukan.

Besides his martial arts family worldwide, Shapland Sensei leaves behind relatives in British Columbia, Dryden, and elsewhere.

Be it master martial artist, innovative entrepreneur, or talented teacher, Shapland Sensei will long be remembered as a passionate practitioner and a lifelong learner who produced champions and inspired others in their own practice.

Memories of Shapland Sensei

By Dinah Jung

My memories of Shapland Sensei are blurry when I think of when and where I first met him. It was so many years ago, sometime in the mid 1980's? The first time I met Shapland Sensei, was in Thunder Bay, when Sensei Dave Von Bargen was running the Isshinryu club at Confederation College, Shapland Sensei showed up for one of the classes. After that brief encounter, I wasn't sure what I thought about him as an instructor, but the Fuchek sisters and Sensei Brant Ledoux talked me into traveling and participating in a number of seminars with Shapland Sensei in Dryden and Winnipeg.

As I trained with Shapland Sensei more, I was very impressed by his concise knowledge and expertise in Kobudo. When I expressed interest in learning more about Kobudo, further discussions with Shapland Sensei resulted in Sensei Brant Ledoux and I, organizing a couple of Kobudo workshops in Thunder Bay. Students who attended the workshops really enjoyed learning the traditional weapon katas and basics. The training sessions were intensive, but we always found the time to laugh, share great food and drinks, and share our thoughts about training into the wee hours of the morning. Somehow, we all mustered the strength to

get up in the morning, a little bleary eyed, but eager to train.

My interest in learning more about Kobudo from Shapland Sensei lead me to train at his dojo in Chilliwack, B.C., where I also had the amazing opportunity to train with Tamayose Sensei. The training sessions were extremely intensive, but I learned so much under the guidance and sharp eye from both Shapland Sensei and Tamayose Sensei. I had the pleasure of meeting Shapland Sensei's wife, his children, and Tamayose Sensei's wife, who were so kind and friendly to me. The other fellow Kobudo students from around Canada and the United States made me feel welcome, although, I was just a beginner and everyone else seemed to know and perform the weapon katas so well.

Shapland Sensei was also extremely talented in making beautiful traditional weapons, and I regret not purchasing more of his hand made weapons. Especially the one of the kind turtle shell shields.

I will always remember the times I trained with Shapland Sensei, whether it was in Thunder Bay, Dryden, Winnipeg or Chilliwack. The world is now missing another one of the great Masters of Kobudo.



2022 Isshinryu Expo a Huge Success

After a hiatus for COVID, the Isshinryu Expo was held again in Thunder Bay on the May long weekend. Participants from across Canada and the US participated in a spirited grading session and weekend of world class seminars and training.

Video highlights from the expo—

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=argnQLBzifM&feature=youtu.be>



2022 Isshinryu Expo Promotions

Sankyu

Julia Fenton (Chitora Dojo)
Kaelyn Fenton (Chitora Dojo)
Wilder Ostap (Chitora Dojo)
Cameron Lemire (Chikara Dojo, Windsor)

Nikyu

Lisa Opas (Toshikai Thunder Bay)
Sam Giardino (Toshikai Thunder Bay)
Lucas Fabiano (Toshikai Thunder Bay)
Averi Peckford (Toshikai Thunder Bay)
Colton Tycholas (Toshikai Thunder Bay)
Carson Mulligan (Toshikai Thunder Bay)
John Meilleur (Toshikai Ottawa)

Ikkyu

Hannah Fonso (Toshikai Thunder Bay)
Logan Fonso (Toshikai Thunder Bay)
Peter Harbron (Chitora Dojo)
Addison Peckford (Toshikai Thunder Bay)
Noriko Shibata (Toshikai Ottawa)

Shodan Ho

Jacob Wood (Toshikai Thunder Bay)

Sandan

Keira Purdon (Chowa/Toshikai Dojo)
Andrew Yip (Toshikai Ottawa)

Yondan

Rod Berek (Toshikai Ottawa)

Nanadan

Susan Baldassi (Toshikai Thunder Bay)
Tim Leonard (Toshikai Ottawa)

Hachidan

Richard Ruberto (New York)

Isshinryu Hall of Fame Awards

Sensei of Sensei Winner: Tim Leonard—Ottawa, ON

Imagine a young fellow learning Isshinryu basics in a small rural town in Northern Manitoba in the '70s. Relocating for university in the '80s, he continues the disciplined training that fuels his passion for the martial arts and establishes his first dojo in a local community centre in Winnipeg. From these humble beginnings, Tim Leonard emerges as an Ambassador for Isshinryu Karate in Canada.

Always balancing his quest for physical mastery, with his desire to strengthen Isshinryu in Canada, Tim co-founded an annual Canadian Isshinryu Karate Tournament in Winnipeg that attracted competitors from across Canada and promoted camaraderie among the dojos in Canada. Leaving his dojo in the hands of his blackbelts, Tim relocated to Ottawa, Ontario for employment and established the Toshikai Dojo of Ottawa, that boasts a robust student base and many Blackbelts. Tim's students are now running dojos of their own, inspired by his teaching. Tim has travelled throughout Canada and the USA to compete in tournaments, attend seminars and to teach Isshinryu. He is the co-founder of the International Isshinryu Expo held in Thunder Bay, Ontario—an event to promote learning, cultural teachings and camaraderie among martial artists.

How would you recognize Tim Leonard in a room of Blackbelts? Tim is the one organizing the International Blackbelt testing and adeptly handling any conflicts that arise. He is also the Blackbelt that is competing in kumite and kata with a Warrior Spirit that can be felt by all present. As well, he is the one that continues to inspire his students on a daily basis with his commitment to excellence with his own skills and theirs.



Young Karate-ka Finalists—Logan and Hannah Fonso—Thunder Bay, ON

The Fonsos are an outstanding candidates for the IHOF Young Karateka of the Year Awards. Since young ages, they have been dedicated students at the Toshikai Dojo of Thunder Bay, attending weekly classes and volunteering at special events to support the dojo. What would you notice about them if you popped into our dojo? You might find Hannah and Logan setting up platforms, ramps and hurdles for our obstacle courses or collecting up the kumite gear at the end of the class. They can often be seen crouching beside a young student, patiently guiding them and whispering words of encouragement at their first class. As well, you'll notice her warrior spirit as she throws leg kicks at larger opponents or performs Chinto Kata with focused energy. They are presence at the dojo and her contributions are appreciated by the parents of young students, Sensei and peers. Hanshi Albert Mady, their Sensei's instructor, officiated at Logan and Hannah's brown belt testing and is thoroughly impressed with their skill level and contributions at the dojo. Hannah and Logan Fonso exemplify all of the qualities of an outstanding young karateka.



Mindset

By Richard Ruberto

We're all aware martial arts requires years of dedicated effort. It all starts with a reason or mind set as to why we want to get involved. At some point we realize our initial conception of what martial is, was somewhat off. At that point we have to regroup and decide if this is really what we want to do. In other words reset our mind set.

You are either in it with both feet or you are not. You cannot half step anything and expect miracles to take place. You cannot expect one sensei to give you all the answers because they can't. However, before you throw in the towel give it your best shot. I assure you the effort and

experience is well worth it. Martial arts gives us a positive mind set. One which will help us in our daily lives. We will experience a mind set in all we do beyond our expectations.



Kyu Fest 2022

By Tim Boykin

After a three year hiatus, due to COVID-19, KYU FEST was hosted at Charlotte Catholic High School, in Charlotte NC on Saturday the 17th of September and was hosted by Grand Master Mitch Kobylanski. The event was attended by over 60 Black Belts from NC, SC, VA and TN and supported over 120 under black belt participants in 53 divisions. This year's event kicked off with "Colors" presented by the Sun Valley High School Navy Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (NJROTC) Color Guard and included recognition of Grand Masters in attendance and promotions of United Southern Isshinryu Karate (USIK) black belts.

The event began promptly at 11:00 AM and wrapped up at 1:15 PM. KYU FEST continues to focus on three key areas: Developing Comradery within Isshinryu Karate, supporting a safe/injury free KYU centric karate tournament and the training and development of black belts within the organization. Current plans are to host KYU FEST in September of 2023, in Charlotte NC. ALL are cordially invited to attend!





About The Newsletter

Just as in our dojo training, the newsletter is about sharing and improving as a group. We regularly have contributions and updates from Quebec to British Columbia in Canada, as well as from Germany, New York and the Southern United States. Everyone is always welcome in my Dojo or to share via the newsletter.

Articles are welcome from anyone and everyone. They can be about anything related to the Martial Arts, a technique you think is just great; A better way to do a technique; History of a Karate Master; a tournament trick that works well; ANYTHING!

All articles are appreciated as e-mail. You can send it to your instructor to proof read and send in, or directly to me. (sensei@isshinryu.ca)

You can even include pictures if it helps your article!

Karate Terms

Barai Sweeping Block

Dachi Stance

Dojo Training Hall

Hai Yes

Hajime Begin

Kenko Health

Keri Kick

Kihon Exercises

Kumae Guard Positin

Kumite Free Hand/ Fight

Kyu Level or Grade

Mo Ichi Do One more Time

Mokuso Meditate

Nukite Spear Fingers

Rei Bow

Ryu Way

Sanchin Three Battles

Shitogi Gi pants

Uwagi Gi jacket

Numbers

Ichi one

Ni two

San three

Ju ten

Ju-ichi eleven

Ni-ju twenty

Ni-ju-ichi twenty-one

San-ju-ni thirty-two

Aikido instructor **George Leonard** on mastery:

"How long will it take me to master Aikido?" a prospective student asks.

"How long do you expect to live?" is the only respectable response.

Ultimately, practice is the path of mastery. If you stay on it long enough, you'll find it to be a vivid place, with its ups and downs, its challenges and comforts, its surprises, disappointments, and unconditional joys. You'll take your share of bumps and bruises while traveling – bruises of the ego as well as of the body, mind and spirit – but it might well turn out to be the most reliable thing in your life. Then, too, it might eventually make you a winner in your chosen field, if that's what you're looking for, and then people will refer to you as a master. But that's not really the point.

What is mastery? At the heart of it, mastery is practice. Mastery is staying on the path."

Source: *Mastery*