



Trailblazers

By Jerry Figgiani

As I sat down to write this column, it occurred to me that we are all either directly or indirectly connected to the pioneers of martial arts who have traveled this path before us. If you could stop for a moment and think about any one of the key players of your style not being there, would you be where you are today? Would the martial arts play such a large role in your life?

That being said, I am so grateful for the opportunity to highlight the individuals written about in this column over the past 10 years. Especially in the style I have been studying, Matsubayashi Shorin Ryu.

In this month's column, I will be featuring a prominent Sensei from the East Coast of the United States. Throughout the last 50 plus years he has had a large influence on many students of karate, as a teacher and pioneer in the martial arts, Sensei Terry Maccarrone.

Since 1962, Matsubayashi Shorin Ryu has flourished in the United States under many groups and organizations. These individuals taught both the principles and skills of this Okinawan karate system, which was founded in 1947 by the Grand Master Shoshin Nagamine. Terry Maccarrone Sensei found that opportunity in St James, New York when he became a manager and partner in the Hegashi Karate Dojo with Sensei Joseph Johnson. Then in 1969 he became a full owner and Sensei under Ansei Ueshiro, who was the first Okinawan Sensei to come to the United States from the Nagamine Dojo in 1962. This was followed in 1983 and 1987 by the opening of the Mastic Karate Dojo and the Westhampton Beach Karate Dojo respectively. However, Maccarrone Sensei's accomplishments encompass more than just dojo ownership, in spite of the fact at one time he owned and operated 4 karate dojos across Long Island NY. Sensei Maccarrone was instrumental in teaching and preserving the unique style of Ueshiro Sensei. In 1992 Master Ueshiro conferred the title of Kancho, head of the family, onto Sensei giving him control of Ueshiro-Ha and officially passing the responsibility for preserving the legacy of Matsubayashi ryu as practiced by Ueshiro Sensei. Interestingly, Kancho Maccarrone was never Ueshiro Sensei's first choice. However, due to his hard work and strong ethical base, not to mention that Sensei Maccarrone was always the last man standing, Sensei

Ueshiro felt confident in passing the torch to him.

In the late 1970s, specifically 1978 and 1979, Terry Maccarrone Sensei along with Sensei Joyce Santamaria founded the original Empire State Championships providing a competitive arena where young martial artists could compete and demonstrate their specific karate skills in an officially sanctioned event. With Karate tournaments gaining



more and more popularity Sensei coordinated his efforts with Sensei Nick Adler to create The Greater Long Island Open Karate Championships. These lasted from 1980 to 1989 and was followed in the year 2000 by the Junior Friendship Karate Exhibitions and Karate USA Juniors Under 21 Open at St Joseph College, which continues influencing the lives of young karateka to this day. Sensei Terry is noted for starting one of the first children's karate programs on Long Island and was one of the first Senseis to offer the title of Junior Black Belt to his younger students.

Sensei Maccarrone has traveled extensively throughout the United States, Europe and Asia promoting Okinawan karate and worked nationally with the Amateur Athletic Union and other organizations to further the goals of Sport Karate. An accomplished tournament competitor himself, Terry Maccarrone Sensei is also a recognized karate historian who sits on the Karate Masters Hall of Fame Board of Advisors. He is currently involved in developing a website of biographical information dedicated to recognizing the achievements of the first generation of martial artists in America.

Terry Maccarrone Sensei officially retired from teaching karate, but has continued to remain active in the greater community of martial artists to the present day. 🐉