



Shoshin Nagamine

By Jerry Figgiani

As we all know, the world today is a little bit smaller because of social media. Even senseis and senior instructors from Okinawa use social media to stay in touch with students from all around the world. In fact, some of the information that is sent out spreads like wildfire.

This morning as I viewed my Facebook page, I noticed a post which was sent out by Sensei Yoshitaka Taira, head of the World Matsubayashi-Ryu Karatedo Association. In his post, Sensei Taira stated that on December 15, 2013, there will be one last joint practice held in the Nagamine Honbu Dojo. In addition, he also stated that the dojo may be closing. It will be a sad day in the world of Matsubayashi Shorin Ryu if the dojo closes because of all the history which has come out of that particular dojo impacting the world of martial arts and especially Okinawan Karate. Its rich history could fill volumes of history books and the memories people have experienced on their journeys to Okinawa will last lifetimes. Though the dojo which was first opened by Grandmaster Nagamine may be closing its doors, I believe the flame that Master Nagamine lit when he created Matsubayashi Ryu will continue to burn. The spirit of Grandmaster Nagamine has touched a lot of people both directly and indirectly; now it is up to each one of us to do our part in continuing his legacy. I, too, continue to preserve the history and traditions which have been passed down to me over time. In order for Matsubayashi Shorin Ryu to move forward, communication and support will have to happen amongst the groups of Matsubayashi Shorin Ryu. I have personally seen this happening even before reading the previous-mentioned post on Facebook this morning. I have been communicating with Matsubayashi practitioners throughout the world.

The common bond between all of us, whether we come from different organizations or not, has been the head of our family, Grandmaster Shoshin Nagamine. We all have our methodologies and influences, and it is important for people to respect that. Here in the States,



we still have groups which have been influenced by the senior members who have been sent to this country to promote the art of Matsubayashi Shorin Ryu...mainly Sensei Ansei Ueshiro, Sensei Chotoku Omine, and Soke Takayoshi Nagamine. In order for the flame of Matsubayashi to keep burning, it is Grandmaster Shoshin Nagamine who should be on top of each of our family trees uniting practitioners world-wide. In the Grandmaster's book, "The Essence of Okinawa Karatedo", his first recommendation states, "Develop karate-do on the basis of its history and tradition." If we as martial artists continue to support that first recommendation, the spirit of Grandmaster Shoshin Nagamine and the Nagamine Dojo will continue to influence people throughout the world. For those of us who made the trip to Okinawa and to the Honbu Dojo, we have all touched a part of history.

