GKK History

The history of the G.K.K. is really a story of many people working together with the common bond of traditional Goju-Ryu Karate-Do. In the fifty years of its existence the organization has had various affiliations and leaders, and thousands of members. The organization has grown and matured through the efforts and dedication of many people. Today's G.K.K. is a tribute to all who participate now and those who have participated in the past.

The organization began as a single school opened by Mr. Jack Coleman in Toledo in 1959. Mr. Coleman had studied judo and Shotokan karate prior to learning Goju-Ryu from students of Master Izumikawa. As is often the case, the school grew and members opened branch programs in the surrounding area, particularly in educational facilities. By the mid 1960's the organization had about twelve active programs in the Ohio and Michigan area, all taught by Mr. Coleman's students. In 1969, Mr. Coleman and the area schools joined the Goju-Kai of Master Yamaguchi and the organization was then known as the Mid-West Goju-Kai. By this time there were about twenty programs in the organization and five states were represented. The Mid-West Goju-Kai remained a part of Master Gogen Yamaguchi's organization until 1975. In the late 1970's, Mr. Coleman relinquished direction of the organization and it diminished to four loosely connected programs.

In the early 1980's, the organization was re-grouped by Mr. Rich Stamper and re-named the Goju-Ryu Karate-Do Kyokai. Most of the former member programs become part of the G.K.K. and the current philosophy of the organization was established.

In 1983, Master Motoo Yamakura agreed to join the G.K.K. as Chairman. Under his guidance the organization grew to about thirty programs in the mid 1980's.

As the G.K.K. developed into a national and, later, international organization, it became richer because of the diverse backgrounds of its members. During the past seventeen years the organization has endeavored to share its collective knowledge among the members and to standardize the training and protocol according to Master Yamakura's guidelines.

At this time the G.K.K. is a mature, well-established, international organization. It is dedicated to the preservation and propagation of traditional Goju-Ryu Karate. It is designed to serve its members in the pursuit of those goals.

During the past forty-two years the G.K.K. has grown from a single school to its present status because of many, many, people who care about Goju-Ryu and each other. The organization is truly a labor of love and countless hours of effort have been invested by many individuals who simply wish to share, learn and grow together.

We continue the heritage and tradition of Goju-Ryu Karate-Do.