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Face to Face

By Janine Moore, Moore Martial Arts

Q&A with Sifu Mike Young

Born in 1932, Dai Sifu Mike Young has more than 70 years of martial arts experience in White Crane Kung Fu, Hung Gar Kuen, Choy Gar Ma, Choy Li Fut and other Chinese and Asiatic martial arts. He was instrumental in introducing Adriano Emperado to the Chinese martial arts community. He is adviser to many martial arts associations including Kajukenbo and its extension arts.

He is the primary source of historical information for Kajukenbo as he lived and "ran around" with "The Big Five" or the Five Founders in their younger years.

Source: http://www.kajukenbo-koa.com/gm_mike_young

How did you spend your early years?

I spent my early years, my formative years, age 3 and up until 1939 when I was 7, in China. Then Japan declared war on China. Americans told us to get the hell out of China. All the Americans stayed in the Delta area, in southern China. We were to get out. That, cause Americans (to look) back to China with many roots, which was tradition with Chinese.

To get back to main land in Hawaii, 1939. By then, I was old enough to remember. China was a third-world country. It was just an embarrassment to be Chinese. Senior grandmaster Ming Lum was from the same Delta area. They'd grow one crop in wet season, and another crop in dry season. It was always the light year that was daoist, not Buddhist. That

came out with great fighters. Not Buddhist.

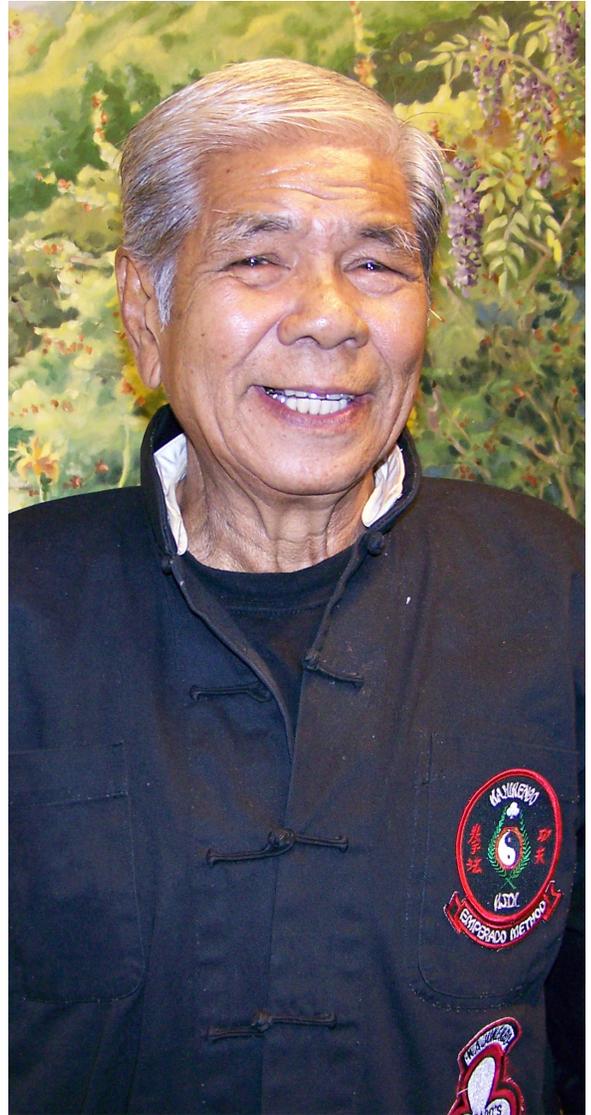
In 1939, we all returned back and stayed in Macao, or Hong Kong was British. Eventually, we go back to Hawaii. Grandfather said come back home.

This was when I had my first exposure, I saw what martial arts is all about. I see incredible things. Putting spikes into logs with bare fist, pulling them out. Picking up red hot iron without burning themselves. Breaking tile... That's elementary. Pulling brick out of stone wall, I've seen that.

We get back to the war started in 1941, of course.

I remember the game, Europeans all did judo and jujitsu, all those schools was closed because of war with Japan.

Only one was open, Kotokan, Danzan Ryu. ... all your schools, all grade school and high school, were ... I'm in warehouse, barracks. So classes were half a day.. some go morning to 12, another 12-5. So you get a lot of time on your hands. Not much entertainment, no basketball, no football, so training in judo....Join the crowd.



Q&A with Mike Young continued, page 2

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Q&A with Mike Young, continued

How did you get into the martial arts?

I was picked on by bunch of bullies, (and one day,) I came home a bloody mess, and grandfather said, nobody is going to beat up my grandson that way. So he sent me to a Kung Fu master. I remember in 1938-39, what word Kung Fu can do. But it takes too long.

I wanted to learn it faster. Why I wanted to learn it faster? I had the wrong motive — retribution.

To learn to defend myself in a faster way, I picked up boxing. ... That be not wise, cause anything Chinese is no good in those days. China was a terrible country. You do the monkey dance. Kenpo was even out. How you gonna fight with this? So everyone started taking judo.

Senior martial arts man in the U.S. before he died. I studied with him, martial arts with one Chinese old timer, he's a master. Just to satisfy grandpa. And that's when I was training in boxing at the same time. I wish I paid more attention now.

How are the martial arts different today?

Today, martial arts is an art.

A. R. T. When you talk about art, you will talk about fine art, you want the Mona Lisa, Michealangelo, Davinci. You don't want to talk about the graffiti eyesores. You insult many intelligence.

That's a difference.

In this day and age, martial arts study is a survivor skill no longer needed, because you have law and order, you have a thing call the pistol, and thing called a bullet, which a lot of (people) use misapplied. But life goes on. And time has changed, you no longer need this as a survival because you have law and order.

So, there was a tyrant ruler Mao Tsang Tung, he took China, like any other conquerors, he was ruthless, but he get the job done. He unified China, and he saw a cultural revolution.

But outdated as it can be, it still can be used in the form of internal/external exercise, clear the mind, cleansing the body, Wushu. Not man against man, like the gladiators. Learn to turn it into an art, like

the Shaolin Troop. They're beautiful to look at. You see those guys, they're a piece of rubber band.

How does martial arts help the practitioner?

It sharpens your mentality, your body, ... you go across the street, see a car trying to take a right turn at 35 miles an hour, you're going to jump out of the way. If you don't, you're not going to win. I promise you that, you're not going to win. Use the art to sharpen your reflexes. You can apply it to your survival, you can apply that to your business. If you're running a business you know how to survive. Here comes a chain hotel, going to compete against you and run you out of business. You can run your own show and compete against those guys. Survive, survival. Self preservation.

What you can do, remember, is someone in front of you, who's in front of you? What you can do if someone in front of you? Can you do that with someone in front of you?

Like a river, lot of tributary comes out of it. From one, the mighty oak tree grow. But the roots, Mitose, Kosho Ryu... goes all the way through the Bronze Age.





Two masters, one grandmaster, a conversation *Part II*

Students discuss Dennis Decker, the artist

When two masters of the same art involved in the arts for decades, get together to talk about their beloved teacher, Master Dennis Decker, stories come alive from a past now only buried in their minds. Chi Lin Kempo masters **Mike Snyder** and **Ron Wilkerson**, both from West Virginia, sat down last fall with Janine Moore Sensei, to relive the old days, remember the creativity and skills Decker and his disciples taught them, and to pay tribute to the man who helped shaped them as martial artists today.

Grandmaster Dennis Decker taught Chi Lin, a southeast Asian art form, in Morgantown, W.V. He also taught what he called Chi Lin Kempo, (Chi Lung Tao) from 1966-1984. Later, in 1980 he taught what he called Chi Ling Pai Gung Fu until his death in 1997.

His top students remember his stories: This is part two.

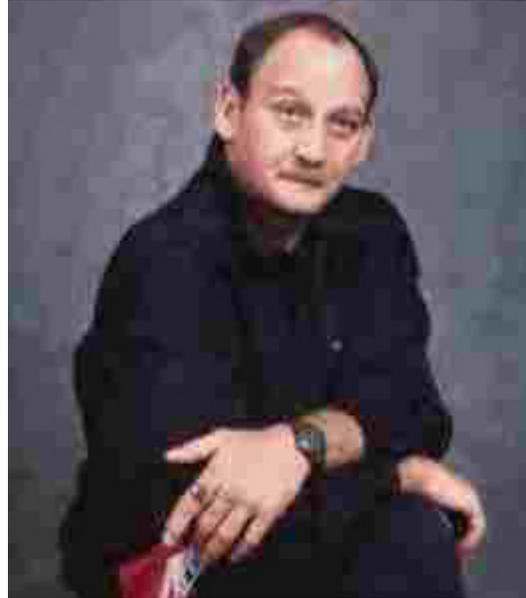
Mike Snyder: Grandmaster Decker left and went to Pittsburgh with Dan Pauley (who studied with Decker in the '70s and '80s in Pittsburgh and Chicago). We still had contact with him, but not a lot.

Here is another story about Sam Boyd, when Dennis left, Sam Boyd and Noah took over the school. Noah taught Kung Fu, and Sam taught Shotokan. He didn't teach Kempo...

Sam Boyd wanted to go this stick fighting class in southern West Virginia. Turns out the guy running the camp was Remy Presas (the founder of modern Arnis). Sam went in there and had never done any stick fighting at all, but by end of the first day, he was leading the drills and at night he was teaching all the new stuff. Sam just picked this stuff up real fast, and go back out and teach. Presas just watches....

Presas was wanting him to go on the circuit with him. ... Sam was showing Presas how to improve this stuff. Presas came to stay with Sam for two weeks and Dennis came in. Within a week, Dennis is out there teaching Arnis just as good as Sam. Presas was wondering ... how in the hell could these guys pick this stuff up so fast? They had a gift. And once again, the right guys at the right time just happened to hit and meet and all this stuff would grow.

Also, during that time, Dennis had met Hanshi (Bruce Juchnik). Hanshi was showing him all the ukemi he had gotten from (James Mitose, Hanshi's teacher). Dennis came back and showed this stuff to Presas. And Presas said how did you get that? Because Dennis, from what Hanshi said, sort of helped put it together... Dennis had that insight. He had the ability of taking a motion and make it work right away. With his background, so much stuff, he and Bruce were just naturals. Bruce helped him to improve his stick fighting, Dennis helped him in other areas of



Great Grandmaster Dennis Decker

martial arts. That's what I've heard, there's no way to verify it.

Ron Wilkerson: When we first met Bruce, and we saw him moving, it was like Ooh, man!

Mike Snyder: We knew that he had the same gift and could understand martial movement like Dennis could.

Ron Wilkerson: Also in touch with shimes. This is brother who was awesome. Talking about Bruce now. He didn't even show he was part of the Chi Lin Group it was just a sense to train and learn. There was no ego.

Ron Wilkerson: It was a blessing to constantly to have spent that much time with Master Decker and the nucleus.

Mike Snyder: Back to Chi Lin. For the most part, the last time I saw Dennis Decker, we had a Chi Lin reunion. This is an event that Nina, my wife, would host and we'd bring in people. I had a teacher then named John Lupe. He's a whole another story. His Tai Chi is as good as I've seen. But he's kind of a strange guy. So we brought him into teach, and I had hooked up with Dennis' cousin the year before at the previous Chi Lin reunion... Decker's cousin made the connection. I told him I want to talk to him. I called him and said, we've had some tough times, I can control the environment now. I want you to come to this thing.

He comes in and he's got his entourage of people that he picks up...

Ron Wilkerson: We had been having this Chi Lin weekend without Master Decker for the last 20 years. ... He had never been.. we had lost



Master Ron Wilkerson teaching fan Gathering 09

contact.

Mike Snyder: This is the first time I'd seen him in probably 15 years, and the last time. He came in, he was in poor health, he had a bad heart, but still had this energy. Some of this crew that came with him ...

Ron Wilkerson: They were old school guys he'd known for years prior to us.

Mike Snyder: These were the Indonesian guys. They were Americans that had studied with Dillon Reeders, who was out of Erie, Pa., and old school Indonesian guys. And, Dennis knew this guy, so he knew his students, these guys showed up at the event and Dennis had gone to the hotel. I was walking out with shorts and T-shirt, ... I go out there, these guys pull up in this pimp-mobile. In there, guys dressed in black, shades and they all got these canes. I dribbled the ball, and came up. They said: Were here to see Grandmaster Decker. I didn't like their attitude right away. I said, Who? Oh, Dennis. And I could see the hackles raise up. It was like they were like, grrrr ready to fight. Then he says, It's Grandmaster Decker to you. I said, I think he went down that way, you can park your car over there. I took my ball and bounced it off their car, and walked away as I dribbled ... and I could see them just starting to get out, but I started walking real fast, and I knew they couldn't catch me. I thought, Oh, god, these guys are going to ruin our event. It's been a warm family thing, but these are guys that he had met because they put him in their hall of fame. Because he knew their teacher.

So we're sitting there, and these guys come in, this guy comes in with a cane, and they're dressed up kinda funky, Indonesian type stuff and they go up to Steve Patterson. ... they're saying, Where's Grandmaster Decker? And he says, Well he's staying at that hotel but the show doesn't start until 8. And this guy says, I'm the show. I started getting off there, and John said, Wait, wait, wait, because I'm already pissed at

these guys. They didn't even look over at me. ... He stands up, and Steve goes he's not a warrior at all, but he's big and threatening. But he stood up, and these guys, you could see, maybe this guy we want to think twice about and so they went out the door. I'm pissed now. I said, Dennis, you just brought some more trash in, you did it again. So, I didn't see him that night. John's smiling, he's thinking all right, I'm going to see something here. We get up, and they had this cafeteria there. Dennis is sitting out on the balcony and I see the guy who was rude to me the night before, and they were like bodyguards standing on either side of them. I walk over to Dennis, ... and he pulled them back. He's my senior student. I sit down there, and they sit back a ways.. I start talking. Why did you bring these guys here? he said, Well they put me on their hall of fame. He got the picture here, and kept them away from us.

They did their seminar with some crazy cane fighting stuff. They weren't really good at it.

Ron Wilkerson: My first introduction in internal arts with (Decker)... he did have a knowledge of it, the energy, of Tai Chi.

Mike Snyder: He got something somewhere from somebody, and he had an ability to take something and really stretch it and amplify it. That was his genius to be able to take a little bit and reinvent the wheel.

Ron Wilkerson: His creativity too, it was amazing.

Ron Wilkerson: This Gathering was an awesome event, an experience I will cherish for ever. I want to share with all people I know who are close to me, especially those guys, Charlie Brown and Jim Good. Terry Kramer. I was overwhelmed. It's an amazing event. The only thing I don't like about it, it's too much. It's overwhelming. We weren't expecting. I came here with an open mind, open heart, because I love Hanshi Juchnik, I love what he's doing. Whatever he says for us to do, we'll respond. But I really would have liked the time just to go to all these different artist, with great masters here and spend time training, just pumping their heads. What he is doing here is really important for traditional martial arts.

Master Mike Snyder: Traditional martial arts is really under threat.

Ron Wilkerson: It is getting watered down. There's not as much quality. When we came along, the art we had, we had to really work hard. And people, we see a lot of commercialization.

Mike Snyder: We live old school. (Dennis) knocked 200 people down to 12 in no time, and I had no idea why I stayed, I really don't, but I'm glad I did. This Gathering has been wonderful. Dragging us out of our comfort zone.

Ron Wilkerson: We had the same anxieties...

Mike Snyder: We didn't want to be disappointed, because we thought

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Decker continued...

people would be posturing and strutting around, I don't have time for that.

Ron Wilkerson: These guys here, we didn't get a chance to spend time with all of them. It was overwhelming. It was really overwhelming.

Mike Snyder: I was reading about out these guys then, 15 years ago and they're here. Martial arts on west coast is lot different from east coast. Just so much more if it out here, especially Filipino arts.

Second: We had a sincere invitation from Hanshi Juchnik. He said come, you'll have a good time. I've been able to totally express myself here, all different cultures, walks of life, and particularly... these guys knew that once I got here and met these brothers, it would inspire me more. It's been awesome.

Ron Wilkerson: Even though I know I'm not in shape, a lot of people here think I am in shape, and due to Master Decker... or maybe I used muscle memory.

Mike Snyder: I don't understand why you people would want us to teach when there are so many good people here. I prefer to be a student than teach.

Ron Wilkerson: We were supposed to teach... but we had some flexibility. It was humbling to think we could be invited to teach here, with all these great masters.

Mike Snyder: We're just average guys. The guy that I trained with, are really good. There's a lot of people out there,... but getting to them and come out, my god it took him at least 5 years.

Ron Wilkerson: One thing for sure, they love what Hanshi is trying to do. Whether they've arrived totally, they see something in what Hanshi's trying to do here, hoping it's going to rub off, and we'll be able to carry on.

Mike Snyder: I'm selfish, in that I don't like these things to get too big, because it takes the closeness out. But if he's going to be successful and pull this off, he's got to grow. There doesn't have to be conflict when we're all trying to preserve an art and any art that's worth being preserved, we have open arms for.

Ron Wilkerson: It's inspired people here to go back and do the right thing. That's critical. He's planting that seed. I keep hearing him say, "I Love you guys" I love the martial arts. I want to preserve the history and I want to preserve

the culture. . What that does, when you come here, you meet other people, here, and it reinforces you. Next gathering, we're going to be ready. We're going to come back with the right frame of mind, the right attitude, that's what I love about you and John and your group, and Laurie.

Mike Snyder: If it wasn't for Hanshi, we wouldn't be here. Hanshi inspired us in Chi Lin.. to preserve this art. And I thanked him many times. He saved Chi Lin Pai.

Ron Wilkerson: He's saved a lot of other arts, too. And what he's doing if nothing else, he's inspiring those people.. whatever you have, we may not have been taught totally the way we wanted it to be, whatever you have, you're going to preserve that, and you're going to go back and make your students work harder. And have a greater appreciation for what your doing.

Mike Snyder: For what the ancestors brought us.

Ron Wilkerson: If anything, really, we're in his debt.



Professor O'Sullivan and Sifu Mike Young Gathering, 2009.



Guru Carlito BonJock, Master Randy Stigall, Guro Victor DeThauras Gathering, 2009.



Gakkusei Corner Gathering

By: Laurie Langhorn

Moore Martial Arts, Windsor Colorado

As I begin to make travel plans for the upcoming Gathering in September, I find myself reminiscing about last year's event. It was my first Gathering, and it was a larger-than-life experience. I came away with such fantastic memories, I wonder how anything could possibly surpass it!

I love martial arts with a passion, and I went into last year's event with an expectation to expose myself to new arts and learn lots of new "techniques". And I did. I attended as many workshops as I could that had descriptions that were unfamiliar to me. It was invigorating to learn to move in ways that I could not have anticipated in arts such as Cappoeira and Baqua. I learned the beautiful movements of the fighting fan kata from the talented Ron Wilkerson. I was thrilled to learn new grappling and joint-lock techniques from more workshops. There was so much knowledge and expertise to draw from, and so little time. It was impossible to take it all in!

The physical element of learning in the workshops was tremendous. As a new practitioner, I strive to learn and train as much as I can. But as I summon the Gathering experience as a whole from my remembrance, there

was something much more considerable and intangible that transpired. I formed precious new friendships. I saw a camaraderie among practitioners that transcends individual arts. My respect for my own teachers gained depth and breadth. I witnessed great leaders of the arts pour forth such incredible warmth of heart and deeply humble spirits. I had the profound privilege of a heart-to-heart conversation with an esteemed master of the arts. Professor O'Sullivan left a compelling impression on my heart as he demonstrated a fervent kindness and tenderness toward people.

I could not have imagined the sublime treasures I would attain by attending last year's Gathering. My goal was to learn new arts. As I look forward to September, I have a completely different perspective. I learned that if you look into the heart of the teacher, there you will find the art, and so much more. I will set my sights set on the people I will encounter and from whom I will learn. My expectation is to seek the heart of these cherished masters and try to see their art through their eyes. Yes, I believe it's going to be a good year!



Sifu Mike Young, Sifu Bill Owens, Professor O'Sullivan Gathering, 2009.



Jeff Driscoll Sensei and Master Jerry Pinington, Gathering, 2009.

Upcoming Events

September 11-12, 2010	Kurt Vansickle Oregon Seminar www.westlinmartialarts.com	Hanshi Juchnik, 916-308-2606
September 25-26, 2010	The Gathering in Sacramento, CA Marriott Rancho Cordova, Sacramento Pre-registration \$225.00	Hanshi Juchnik, 916-308-2606 http://www.collectivesociety.com/collectivesociety.com/The_Gathering_2010.html
October 8, 9, 10, 11, 2010	Madrid Spain Seminar, Mario Padilla, Julio Marqoza	Hanshi Juchnik, 916-308-2606
October 15,16-17, 2010	Martial Arts Retreat, Texas with Hanshi Juchnik lynn.kelch@martialartretreat.com	Lynn Kelch Hanshi Juchnik, 916-308-2606
November 6-7, 2010	Hanshi training held in Windsor, CO www.mooremartialarts.com	Jon Moore Sensei 970-686-1247 Hanshi Juchnik 916-308-2606
November 13-14, 2010	In House training at Hombu dojo	Hanshi Juchnik 916-308-2606
December 4-5, 2010	Oregon Seminar, Kurt VanSickle www.westlinmartialarts.com	Hanshi Juchnik 916-308-2606