



Professor John Chow-Hoon

#### Martial Arts Bio:

Born March 5, 1927 in Kipahulu, Maui, Hawaii, the youngest of 13 children born to Hoon Chow and his mother Lily Malualani Kiha. Professor John (Ah Chin) Chow-Hoon got his first taste of the martial arts after his family moved to the island of Oahu, to a house on Queen St. in the town of Kakaako, close to a Japanese school. This school offered judo and kendo to any student who was interested.

Every chance he got he would watch those classes and became more and more interested with the martial arts. Finally, a friend and school mate asked him to join in. Being small for his age, he was placed in the judo class. His instructor at that time was Yukiso Yamamoto. Eventually, they both heard about Prof. Henry S. Okazaki's dojo, where they would train on Saturday mornings. The rest of the time he was sent to train at the Kaheka dojo under the supervision of Bing Fai Lau and Sig Kufferath.

Along with regular classes, Prof. Chow-Hoon was sent to study long-life massage at Prof. Okazaki's Nikko Sanitarium. There were several people he admired that were skilled in long-life massage: people like John Cahill, Jerry Turatani, Moses Pang, Bill Costa, Boyd Andretti and others.

While studying Danzan Ryu Jujitsu at the Kaheka lane dojo, Prof. Chow-Hoon was also studying the art of Koshoryu Kenpo with his brothers William and Frank. When his brother Prof. William (Kwai Sun) Chow graduated from James Mitose' school of Kenpo Jujitsu, he opened his dojo at the Chow home. When Prof. Chow-Hoon's father left Hawaii to go back to China, Prof. Chow took everything out of the house and knocked down a couple of the walls, including a piano shop next door in order to transform their home into a regular dojo. William would later open up schools on Young Street, at the Kapahulu Japanese school and latter on at the Nuuanu YMCA.

Prof. Chow-Hoon received his shodan in Kenpo in 1943 along with Prof. Simeon Eli and several others. In attendance at his promotion were his friends Charlie (Prof. Toru Tanaka) Kalani and Arthur Lyman both of whom would later become famous in the entertainment business.

Many good students came out of the Kenpo school at the Nuuanu YMCA, Bill Chun, Manuel Dela Cruz, Paul Yamaguchi, Bobby Lowe, Harry Pang, Boyd Andretti, Woodrow Mckandless, the Emperado brothers Joe and Adriano (Adriano would latter on with others form an eclectic form of self-defense called Kajukenbo), Ed Parker (Parker would latter bring Kenpo Karate to the mainland) "brother" Abe Kamahoahoa, Ralph Castro and many others.

Prof. Chow-Hoon received his shodan from Prof. Okazaki in 1945, the day before he was inducted into the U.S. Army. After entering the military in 1945, Prof. Chow-Hoon was assigned to camp Roberts, Calif. For basic training, from camp Roberts he was sent to the Philippine Islands.

While in the orient, the Prof. used to moon-light as a professional wrestler. He ran across many of the top wrestlers of the day including the "Masked Marvel", who was the father of Dave Castoldi, a well known martial artist from the Boston area.

Prof. Chow-Hoon returned to Hawaii and was assigned to the Military Police Division. He was selected to become the instructor at the Military Police School for Self-Defense. Besides the military police he also trained the police for the Hawaiian National Guard, several members of the Honolulu Police Dept. and also members of the F.B.I. Next, Prof. Chow-Hoon spent a tour of duty in Korea where he worked out with Yudo (Judo) and Tang So Do clubs.

Once again Prof. Chow-Hoon returned home to Hawaii. While there he would train at the Kaheka Lane club, which was one of Prof. Okazaki's many clubs teaching the Danzan Ryu system. Some of the individuals who came out of this club were people like John Kaneakua, Joe Holck, Sam and Bill Prestridge, Michael Chong and Sam Luke Sr.

During the middle of the 50's, Prof. Chow-Hoon along with Prof. Francisco Limbago taught at Schofield barracks, Hawaii where he was selected as one of the Judo coaches representing Hawaii. This team took 1st place at all military games. His heavyweights were Prof. Toru Tanaka and Larry Price. Price would later go on to become the football coach at the University of Hawaii.

During this period the military used to have an "All Army Show", a kind of talent show. Prof. Ramon Ancho was selected as the best of the show. He would perform "Board Breaking" using multiple boards using his fingers. During one of these shows Prof. Chow-Hoon and Prof. Limbago pulled a trick on Prof. Ancho. Prior to his portion of the show, both the Prof's wet a couple of the boards without telling Prof. Ancho. He had to hit the boards more than a couple of times in order to break them. He knew they had pulled a trick on him for they both had a great big smile on their face.

Prof. Chow-Hoon got stationed in Japan, where he was able to train at the Kodokan . Out of respect he started out as a white belt, but by the time he left Japan in 1962 he was ranked as a sandan (3rd degree black belt).

At the end of 1962 Prof. Chow-Hoon was stationed at the Fort Ord in California as a drill sergeant. This is when he first started to teach in the Monterey area. He ran across another Okazaki student Prof. Toru Tanaka. Whenever Prof. Tanaka would leave to go off to wrestle, Prof. Chow-Hoon would help out and run the class. And when he could not be there due to military obligations Cal Avila and Joe Takayama would stand in.

In 1964, Prof. Chow-Hoon was transferred to Alaska but still managed to work out and teach in anchorage. In 1965 he was assigned to Viet Nam. There he taught martial arts at the police station in Tien Nin.

Prof. Chow-Hoon retired from the military after over 20 years of service. He decided to settle on the Monterey Peninsula in the city of Pacific Grove, after retiring from the Army. Prof. Chow-Hoon worked as a P.E. teacher at the Del Mar elementary school in Marina, California. It was here that Prof. Chow-Hoon was approached by Mr. Art Clark to teach the martial arts in the community of Marina. Prof. Chow-Hoon

taught at three elementary schools until 1968 when the gym at Los Arboles School was built, and then he combined the three clubs into one big class. Then in 1973, he started yet another club at the Pacific Grove High School, where he acted as Sensei and Advisor for his remaining years.

Back in 1978 Professor Chow-Hoon was one of the leaders instrumental in founding the organization of Jujitsu America for which he was very proud. It was an organization such as his own life, one of Kokua and Ohana. Everyone who walked the path of the martial arts with Professor experienced real joy of celebration and excitement in learning from this most gifted man.

– Professor James Muro