



Goju Hall #804 of New Rochelle, N.Y.
Founder: Raymond A. Fitzpatrick

Earl B. Monroe

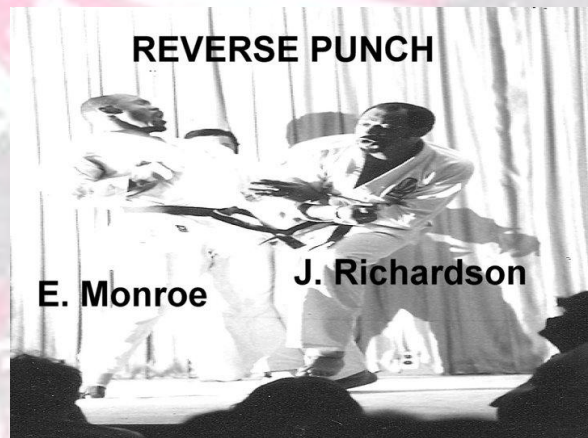
May 9, 1937 - August 19, 2008

Kyoshi of Nisei Goju-Ryu

Little is known about Sensei's childhood. His real mother, Gladys, placed him in the care of Edward and Lillian Burgess of Greenburgh, NY, when he was a boy. His younger, foster sister, Sandra Jones watched him grow and become a popular, handsome athlete while attending White Plains HS, Class of 1956. He loved to play football for WPHS and developed an affinity toward golf while working as a caddy in Westchester. After graduating from HS, the family moved to Mt. Vernon, NY. He loved his mother dearly and he was her favorite child. This bond was maintained until her death in the early 1990s.

He joined the US Army in 1962 and did his basic training at FT. Sill near Lawton, Oklahoma. His martial arts journey began at age 25, while serving his country overseas. He studied Judo, obtaining the rank of Sho Dan, during his time with the U.S. Army in West Germany. Upon returning home in December 1964, he quickly became interested in the Jujitsu taught by Theodore West, Antonio Pereira and Florendo Visitacion (all deceased). He was soon excelling in this 2nd art, eventually reaching Sho Dan in 1967, Ni Dan in 1969 and San Dan in 1977.

In the mid 1960's, Mr. West hired an Urban Goju karate instructor named Frank Ruiz (deceased). West, Sensei required his Jujitsu students to study Judo and Karate prior to obtaining their Dan grade in Jujitsu. A natural fighter being taught by a phenomenon and surrounded by some of the great Goju practitioners on the East Coast, Monroe fell in love with Karatedo and was extremely proficient at it. Sensei trained with Louis Delgado, John Giordano, Carlos Serrano, Joe Richardson, Chaka Zulu, Owen Watson, Ron Van Clief and others. He maintained contact with his original instructor, Theodore West and his Jujitsu colleagues, but he devoted the brunt of his training time to Grandmaster, Frank Ruiz, founder of Nisei Goju-Ryu, receiving his 3rd black belt in 1969. He was promoted to Renshi in 1974 and Kyoshi in 1983. He received his 7th Dan from Gm. Frank Ruiz on March 28, 1992.



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In 1967, Sensei exploded onto the New York tournament scene with vengeance. Included in his tournament record are 1st place kumite victories at the:

East vs. West Coast Team Tour. '69
United Amateur Open Karate Tournament, '70
1st National Karate Championship, '71
International Karate Championship of Bermuda, '71
Grand Champion, The Brotherhood of Martial Arts tournament, '71
North and South Karate Championship in Florida, '72

In one of his epic battles, Monroe, Sensei nearly defeated world champion point fighter, Joe Lewis, at the former Sunny Side Gardens in Queens, NY in 1971.

From 1970 until his departure from New York in 1986, Monroe, Sensei taught and developed 12 black belts students for the Nisei Goju-Ryu banner at several dojos in The Bronx and Westchester County. Five of these students went on to open schools of their own. His main school, Nisei-Ni, located in Mt. Vernon, NY, opened in 1972. In 1978 and 1979, he promoted 2 open, regional karate tournaments at the Mt. Vernon High School and referred at countless other events in the tri-state area while in NY. He was often sought out because of his strong and impartial style of refereeing. He was listed in the 1982 edition of the black belt directory, "WHO'S WHO OF KARATE."

Additionally, he was employed as a retail store manager from 1965-1970 and also drove a bus during that same period. From 1970-1982, he worked as the night manager of the Recovery Room Lounge in Mt. Vernon and for the Mt Vernon Board of Education from 1976-1986.

In 1986, he relocated to Arizona at the request of his mother and father. He reluctantly left the New York area, which was the center of his life in so many ways. After their passing, he remained there, but often-visited New York and the U.S. Virgin Islands to visit his Dans.

His last trip east was for Zurriane Bennett of San Yama Bushi and Combination Goju who hosted a large seminar in Virginia and sent for Monroe, Sensei in 2007. Several of Sensei's students converged on this event and saw their instructor of the last time. We all had a grand time. A year later, he was gone. Sensei Monroe's legacy travels through four generations of Dans throughout the East Coast and U.S. Virgin Islands. His sister, Sandra Jones of Phoenix, AZ., survives him as well as several generations of black belt students and friends.

Loving Submitted by,
Raymond A. Fitzpatrick, MCS
Iemoto, Nisei Goju-Jitsu

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