

Argo Dojo Times

The news of Argo Dojo, Volos – Greece

VOL. II

VOLOS, DECEMBER 2016

THE SUMMER OF 2016 WAS BEYOND OUR IMAGINATION!!!

The best motivation we could ever have...

FIRST YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF ARGO DOJO



Argo Dojo is officially one-year-old! Our Dojo opened on the 25th of October 2015. We intensively chose to open our dojo on the Day of Karate. On Sunday, the 30th of October 2016, Argo Dojo members offered a wonderful demonstration on Uechi-Ryu Karate to more than 25 people who honored us with their presence. A nice party with warm coffee, tea and drinks and homemade delicacies followed. (more on page 16)

ARGO DOJO STUDENTS SUCCESSFULLY PROMOTED TO THE NEXT LEVEL

Our dojo organized its second Kyu promotion examination on the 19th of October 2016. Georgia Rymenidi was successfully promoted to the rank of Yon Kyu and Lazaros Zografopoulos to the rank of Hachi Kyu. (more on page 20)

***Do you know what we did last summer?
Well...we had many – many great guests!!!***



From left, standing: Steve McNally Sensei, Mick Pappas Sensei, Katherine Loukopoulos Sensei, Peggy Hess Sensei, Antonis Tzounis Sensei, and Lazaros Zografopoulos. Kneeling: Kostas Arvanitopoulos Sempai, Georgia Rymenidi, and Nikos Theodoridis Sempai.

Argo Dojo members had the honor to meet and train with some of the top, non-Okinawan instructors this summer. The first visit was by Mick Pappas Sensei, chief instructor of Okikukai UK (7 Dan, Kyoshi) along with Steve McNally Sensei (7 Dan, Kyoshi) from Liverpool and one of the very few, active female students of Kanei Uechi, Peggy Hess Sensei (7 Dan, Kyoshi) from Florida, USA. Our Kobudo instructor, Katherine Loukopoulos (8 Dan Shorin-Ryu) had also the chance to join us and meet again with Peggy Sensei after almost twenty years. Our second honored guest was Arthur Moulas Sensei (9 Dan, Hanshi), chief instructor of OUKA Australia, with his wife Angela Moulas Sensei (5 Dan, Shihan). Our marvelous summer ended with the visit of our advisor, Vladimir Popovic Sensei (7 Dan, Kyoshi), chief instructor of Okikukai Serbia, escorted by Tatjana Zakic Sensei (5 Dan, Shihan) and Palumbo Gaetano (2 Dan) from Milan, Italy. In addition to the above visits, two very good friends of ours, Wolfy and Margarita Blank from Germany, joined our training for a three-week intensive introductory course to Uechi-Ryu Karate. (more on page 2)



Do you know what we did last summer?
Well...we had many – many great guests (and we trained a lot)!!!



Picture 1. In Argo Dojo we are fighters and our first victory was against this mess... Georgia Rymenidi ~~painting the wall~~ practicing Koi no Shipo Uchi.

When we started renovating the place to house Argo Dojo, we all expected to spend many hours of training and self-improvement in this place, which is like a second home to all karateka. We really put much effort and we finally managed to have a nice and sufficiently-equipped dojo, which proved to be more than enough for our training. What we could never imagine were all the great things that happened in this small house of Karate within only a few months.

It all started with a message from Mick Pappas Sensei (7 Dan, Kyoshi), sometime in April, expressing his will to visit us during the summer. Mick Sensei is the President of Uechi-Ryu Great Britain, and since he traces his routes from Greece, he spends almost every summer in his house on the beautiful island of Chios. This time he would not be alone, though. He would be escorted by Peggy (Margarete) Hess Sensei (7 Dan, Kyoshi) and Steve McNally Sensei (7 Dan, Kyoshi). Peggy Sensei from Florida, USA, is one of the most high-ranked, Uechi-Ryu, female practitioners in the world and one of the very few who had the privilege of visiting Okinawa and training several times under Master Kanei Uechi during the 80's. Peggy Hess Sensei was also the soul of the "Women's Karate Tour Organization", which organized several cultural visits in the birthplace of Karate in 2003 and 2004. Along with Peggy Sensei, Steve McNally Sensei, chief instructor of Uechi-Ryu Liverpool, would join the

team. A message from Peggy Sensei followed Mick Sensei's first contact. We accepted their kind offer without a second thought! The months passed and the end of July came sooner than we thought.



Picture 2. Our first training at Alykes Beach. From the left: Steve McNally, Mick Pappas, Katherine Loukopoulos, Peggy Hess, Antonis Tzounis, Nikos Theodoridis, Lazaros Zografopoulos. Georgia Rymenidi was busy preparing our lunch!





Picture 3. Peggy Sensei teaching the Sanchin stance and the Mawate turn.

Peggy Sensei, a really gifted and inspiring instructor, led the training sessions which included one day of training at Alykes Beach, near to Volos. Mick Sensei and Steve Sensei did their best to explain further and assist all of the Argo Dojo students during the training. We had a unique chance to dig into the details of Sanchin Kata, the cornerstone of Uechi-Ryu, and the mechanics of the body, but above all, we had the chance to meet three really wonderful persons with great enthusiasm for Karate. Our Kobudo Sensei, Katherine Loukopoulos who traveled all the way from Athens to join the event. Katherine Sensei and Peggy Sensei firstly met in Okinawa more than twenty years ago and they met again. This is how Karate unites people and this is one of the most important lessons for all the Argo Dojo students.



Picture 4. Day #2, training at the Argo Dojo. Peggy Sensei explaining a technique with Nikos Theodoridis.





Picture 5. Peggy Sensei analyzing Shiko Dachi stance.



Picture 6. Peggy Sensei talking about Uke.



Picture 7. Training in pairs under the supervision of Peggy Sensei.



Picture 8. Peggy Sensei teaching Georgia Rymenidi the Morote Boshiken technique.



Of course, we did not spend the whole time training... We had our moments of relaxation, talking, recreation and we exchanged really wonderful presents!!!



Picture 9. Katherine Sensei brought some gifts for all of our guests! Here with Peggy Sensei after long-long time.



Picture 10. Peggy Sensei's awesome presents included some rare historical photos and other things that she had the chance to get during her last trip to Okinawa, earlier in 2015.



Picture 11. Georgia Rymenidi loved her new bingata!



Picture 12. Photo after the training in Argo Dojo. Standing, from left: Steve McNally Mick Pappas, Katherine Loukopoulos, Peggy Hess, Antonis Tzounis, Lazaros Zografopoulos. Kneeling: Kostas Arvanitopoulos, Georgia Rymenidi, and Nikos Theodoridis.





Picture 13a & 13b. Certificates of appreciation for all of our guests!



Picture 14. Katherine Sensei with our good friend Lina Karamoutsou, who was the official photographer of our event, happy holding their certificates.



Picture 15. That smile on Katherine Sensei's face and the sweat on her forehead after our training says it all!



Picture 16. Welcome drinks and snacks were kindly offered at Vassilis Anestis and Lina Karamoutsou's home.



Picture 17. At Lina and Vassili's home before going to sleep... A training was waiting for us next morning.



Picture 18. The last time these two ladies met was in Okinawa, this time was in Greece...What about next time...?



Picture 19. Our last dinner... Till next time!

Earlier in July, two good friends of ours, Wolfgang and Margarita Blank from Germany joined us for an intensive three-week course which included introduction to Uechi-Ryu basics and Sanchin Kata. We all enjoyed training together and we hope to meet and train again next summer!



Picture 20a & 20b. Our good friends Margarita and Wolfy Blank from Germany received their certificates of achievement for their three-week intensive course. Wolfy's cute daughter, Lina, who took the pictures.

August was also full of great visitors. Our advisor, Vladimir Popovic Sensei (7 Dan, Kyoshi), Tatjana Zakic Sensei (5 Dan, Shihan) from Serbia and Gaetano Palumbo (2 Dan) from Italy visited Greece for vacation and training. We had the chance to re-evaluate all of our techniques and receive corrections and feedback on all of the Uechi-Ryu Kata. While Vladimir Sensei checked the techniques



and advanced kata of our Dan members, Tatjana Sensei supervised our Kyu students, offering valuable help, many technical corrections and an introduction to Kanshu Kata. Vladimir Sensei made one more visit to Okinawa in 2016, visiting many great instructors and gathering many experiences and information, which generously shared with us. He also had the chance to receive all the certificates of the students who participated in the Dan tests in Belgrade, in April 2016. So, during the last training session Vladimir Sensei awarded Antonis Sensei his San Dan certificate. Apart from training the days included swimming at the sea, road trips to the villages of Mt. Pelion and many wonderful times full of talks and future plans.



Picture 21. Training in Argo Dojo with Popovic Sensei teaching Nikos Theodoridis and Gaetano Palumbo from Milan, Italy.



Picture 22. Vladimir Sensei correcting Antonis' Kata.





Picture 23. Vladimir Sensei giving Antonis his San Dan certificate.



Picture 24. After the training with Vladimir Popovic Sensei, Tatjana Zakic Sensei and our friend from Italy, Gaetano Palumbo.

Our days with Popovic Sensei included some wonderful leisure moments too...



Picture 25. Tatjana Sensei and Vladimir Sensei enjoying the Greek sea.



Picture 26. We had the chance to do some snorkeling and swim to the small islet of St. Nicolas.



Arthur Moulas Sensei (9Dan, Kyoshi) and his wife, Angela Moulas Sensei (5 Dan, Shihan) were the last visitors of this summer. They visited Volos early in September. The Moulas family are of Greek descent and they visit their homeland almost every year. Arthur Sensei is the head of OUKA Uechi-Ryu in Australia and one of the most prominent figures of Australian Karate, with many visits in Okinawa and lot of training experience under Master Kanei Uechi and other great Okinawan Masters. Arthur Sensei led one training at the Okikukai Hellas Hombu, Michael Grigoris Sensei's (5Dan, Shihan) Dojo.



Picture 27. With Arthur Moulas Sensei at the Argo Dojo.



Picture 28. With Angela Moulas Sensei at the Argo Dojo.



Argo Dojo Celebrated its First Year Anniversary**30th October 2016**

Picture 29. The invitation to Argo Dojo first year anniversary celebration.

Argo Dojo is already one-year-old!!! Time has passed fast!!! It is like yesterday when we passed the door for the first training. During this first year we had more than 150 training days, we made new friends we experienced things far beyond our imagination! This is what motivates to continue and do more things in the future. The celebration was organized on the first weekend after the 25th of October, which is the Day of Karate in Okinawa and our Dojo's birthday. More than 25 friends, relatives, fellow martial artists and members of other Dojo honored us with their presence. The event started with a short presentation on the history of Karate and the style of Uechi-Ryu. Right afterwards, Argo Dojo students offered a demonstration which included:

- Hojo Undo and Kata, by Nikos Theodoridis Sempai, Georgia Rymenidi, Lazaros Zografopoulos and Nikos Kanellis.
- Sanchin and Kanshiwa Kata by Georgia Rymenidi and Lazaros Zografopoulos
- Seisan Kata, by Nikos Theodoridis, and
- Sanseiryu Kata, by Antonis Tzounis.

The event was completed with a small party, with drinks, homemade delicacies and sweets. We wish to thank all of our friends for joining us.

Graph 1. QR code and link to the event's video on Youtube: <https://youtu.be/Uo1hOWGhB7M>



Picture 30. Mokusho before starting the demonstration.



Picture 31. Nikos Kanellis, Georgia Rymenidi and Lazaros Zografopoulos demonstrating Sokuto Geri.



Picture 32. Georgia Rymenidi and Lazaros Zografopoulos demonstrating Kanshiwa Kata.



Picture 33. Nikos Theodoridis demonstrating Seisan Kata.



Picture 34. Antonis Tzounis demonstrating Sanseiryu Kata.



Picture 35. After the end of the demonstration we are all happy and proud, looking forward for the next big event of Argo Dojo!



Argo Dojo Held its Second Kyu Promotion Test Event

19th November 2016

The training never stops in Argo Dojo and we are so happy to see our students evolve day-by-day. A promotion test was organized last November. Two of our students, Georgia Rymenidi and Lazaros Zografopoulos had fulfilled minimum time period in their previous ranks, and, most importantly had made the appropriate progress which made them eligible for the test. The test took place on Saturday, November the 19th, 2016 at Argo Dojo. Georgia Rymenidi was promoted to the rank of 4 Kyu and Lazaros Zografopoulos to the rank of 6 Kyu. Both of them gave their best, and despite the pressure, performed better than expected. We wish to congratulate them for their effort and we wish them the best for the future. From Hellas Hombu Dojo, Michael Grigoris Sensei along with Kostas Arvanitopoulos and Petros Mouzlanov honored us with their presence.



Picture 36. Lazaros Zografopoulos and Georgia Rymenidi during the Kyu Kumite testing.



Picture 37. Georgia Rymenidi diffence against Shokushen Geri (5th Kyu Kumite).



Picture 38. Georgia Rymenidi demonstrating Kanshiwa Kata.



Picture 39. Antonis Sensei filling out the grading forms.



Picture 40. The students received their diplomas after a two-hour testing. At the back, Antonis Tzounis, Kostas Arvanitopoulos, Thomas Bartzanas and Nikos Theodoridis.



Mary Nassoula Sensei's New Dojo Opening – We were there!

Opening a dojo is a dream for many martial artists and the same stands for our friend, Mary Nassoula Sensei. Mary Sensei, however, is one of the lucky ones who managed to make her dream come true. Mary Sensei, Ni-Dan in Daito-Ryu Aiki-Jujutsu is an active practitioner for the last ten years and has led the training in other dojos before starting building her own. 2016 was the year that made her decide to do it and, after much hard work and effort during the summer, a wonderful dojo was ready to open by the end of September. The official opening of the “Apo Anatoli Volos Dojo” was a unique chance for a wonderful, two-day open seminar led by the organization’s chief instructor and Mary Sensei’s teacher, Agissilaos Vessexidis Sensei. Agissilaos Sensei, a wonderful and friendly person with great love for traditional martial arts. In addition to that he is the current holder of the world record “Most martial arts sword cuts in one minute (rice straw)”, verified by Guinness World Records Organization. Argo Dojo was invited and we were there to attend the event, make new friends and enjoy the celebrations. We wish Mary Sensei good luck and many many hours of joyful training in her dojo!



Picture 42. The event's poster featuring Agissilaos Vessexidis Sensei, holder of a Guinness Record.



Picture 41. Giannis Zigkos, Antonis Tzounis and Agissilaos Vessexidis after the seminar.



Picture 43. A nice moment with the Argo Dojo Members, Agissilaos Vessexidis Sensei, Mary Nassoula Sensei and Eleni Georgiadou Sensei of Kyokushin Karate.





Picture 44. Agissilaos Sensei demonstrating Daito-Ryu Aiki-Jujutsu techniques.



Picture 45. Agissilaos Sensei demonstrating the principles of Aiki.

Last Word



The first year of Argo Dojo is already over. It was a year full of training but, above all, full of wonderful moments, beyond our imagination. We had the chance to meet people we only knew through the internet, make new friends, and get together once again with friends and instructors who visit Greece in a more regular basis. As a result we had the chance to interact with many great martial artists and receive valuable knowledge from many great instructors.

Our plan for 2017 is to keep up with the hard work and attend the great European Seminar of Okikukai, in Belgrade, Serbia in May. 2016's events created a great legacy for our newly-established Dojo and are the best motivation for us to hold many more nice events this year as well. Our Dojo is always open to welcome any friend and sharing experiences from people around the world in joint training sessions is one of the basic motives that make us keep up with even more zeal and enthusiasm.

Dear friends, fellow Karateka, and Honored Supervisors of our Dojo, thank you all for this awesome year and we hope to meet again soon.

Best regards,

Antonis Tzounis

