



Photo courtesy of Kinjo Hiroshi

## Photo of Itosu Ankoh is Found

*The First True Face of a Karate-ka Legend*  
[English Translation by Patrick & Yuriko McCarthy]

### Mago-deshi [3<sup>rd</sup> generation student] donates [photo] to Prefecture

A photograph of the great master, Itosu Ankoh (1831~1915), a person who lived during the [late] Ryukyu Kingdom-period and responsible for having established modern Karate, was discovered for the first time by Kinjo Hiroshi. Kinjo (age 87, from Naha-city, presently residing in Hiratsuka, Kanagawa Prefecture) has been contributing to growth of Karate on the mainland, was in possession of the photo. He donated the photo to the Prefectural Library, which will go on public display in March. With only a [likeness] portrait having existed up until now this discovery is highly valued by researchers because it is a first-rate document that could lead to learning more about Itosu's legendary character. - Abe Takeshi

Itosu learned Shuri-te from Matsumura Sokon who was a martial arts teacher for the Kingdom and publicly introduced Karate. Up until that time Karate had never been openly taught. He presented his "Karate 10 Lessons" to the prefecture in 1908 and suggested that Karate should be introduced into the school curriculum. He made some improvements and created Okinawa's original Kata and [in doing so] es-

established the model from which modern Karate evolved.

The new photo was shot around 1909 or 1910 when Itosu had just started teaching at the Prefectural Middle School (the present Shuri High School). Besides Itosu, [the photo also includes] the [school] principal Okubo Shuhachi, (the Judo sensei) Ikeda Takehiko) and students are there.

Kinjo Hiroshi, mago-deshi, and So-shihan of the All Japan Karatedo Kenshu-kai, says, "We can recall his good natured character." [In the photo] Itosu's expression is calm while sporting a mustache. Kinjo recalled a story he was told by his teacher [Hanashiro Chomo]; One day Itosu was attacked by a couple of young men wanting to test their skills. Itosu quickly sent them flying. Later that evening Itosu visited the homes of the young men to see if they were all right.

In the possession of Kinjo [Hiroshi] for a long time the photo was finally authenticated by Kadekaru Toru (49), the chief specialist from Okinawa Kencho Shiryoshitsu [Okinawa prefectural office of historically important documents]. Mr. Kinjo donated about 3000 documents and precious Karate-related books to the Prefecture and said, "They should be used as materials to research historical facts and help make promote Karate worldwide from its Okinawan origin. "

Mr. Kadekaru was delighted and said, "Itosu was a restorer whose role was important for the growth of Karate. Only a [likeness] portrait of him existed in the past." Miyagi Tokumasa (66) who presides over the Okinawa Karate Bunka Kenkyu-jo said, "Like a shining star, Itosu was a great source contributor for students. This [the photo] will be precious source material to help spread Karate throughout the world."

A part of Mr. Kinjo's donation, including this photo, will be displayed to the general public, with other recent acquisitions to the museum, from 23-27 March.

### Explanation of the Photo by Hiroshi Kinjo

The Prefectural Middle School group photo:  
2<sup>nd</sup> row and 2<sup>nd</sup> from the left is Itosu Ankoh  
School Principle Okubo [Shuhachi],  
Ikeda [Takehiko, Judo] Sensei  
Judo & Kendo students  
c.1909 or 1910 [venue unknown)