

## In Memory of Gordon Moffat



Gordon was one of my best friends. He was also one of my Judo students. He was a member of the coaching staff at the Kaizen Judo Club here in Kitchener. We were also partners in Judo, which we practiced together often. Gordon was a dedicated student of the sport Judo and a dedicated and very popular Sensei (Japanese meaning for teacher) at Kaizen. He was a trusted loyal friend, a loving proud father & husband. He was a tremendous individual to all who knew him, a true gentleman and judoka.

Gord first started learning judo with me as his Instructor many years ago at the Breithaupt Centre, where I had started a Judo Club. Gord had worked his way through the ranks and eventually earned his 1<sup>st</sup> degree black belt. He particularly loved teaching children of all ages. You could often see this first hand, especially with the younger children who looked forward to seeing their '*Sensei Gord*' by the way they gave him a hug when they arrived for their class and at the end of the class. There was this one particular class that Sensei Gord and Sensei Ron Westman had taught every week together that had these three very cute little girls in it. Their names were Melissa, Rachel & Lauren... Gord had such a blast teaching and working with these three little girls, by just watching the four of them together, that all of them were enjoying themselves, immensely.

Gordon was a partner for many of my other students who went for their black belts, including my daughter Becky when she went for her black belt in 2001. Gordon had a tremendous impact on each of us; my son Andy, daughter Becky, & my wife Dana and many, many others who knew him.

Gord had co-taught or had had an assistant helping him with various classes over the years. Many are present today to honor his memory. Everyone that he has taught with has had nothing but very kind words to say about Sensei Gord, of how gently he taught his students and how he has also made an impact on them with his one of a kind and gentlemanly ways.

Gord and I would often get together on early Sunday mornings to practice Kata. We practiced Nage-no-Kata (Throwing Forms), Ju-no-Kata (Forms of Gentleness), Kime-no-Kata (Forms of Decision) and our favorite was Goshin-Jutsu (Kodokan Self-Defense Forms). There was also one other Kata, Katame-no-Kata (Grappling Forms) during which you had to knee down and move around on one knee. We kind of gave this up as we both agreed that we were at the age that we needed a skateboard to move around on. Gord and I would often do demonstrations together with all the Katas... Gord liked the Ju-no-Kata which sometimes Gord and I would often tease and try to get Sensei Barry Williams & Angela Meyer-Sterzik to do.

There was one trip that Gord and I made to San Francisco about 7 years ago to study Ju-no-Kata under Sensei Keiko Fukuda. Fukuda Sensei was the granddaughter of Professor Jigoro Kano who founded Kodokan Judo in 1882. Fukuda Sensei at that time was 85 years old. We were told at the time when we arrived there that she had Parkinsons Disease and a heart murmur. The first class that we attended we had all bowed in and were warming up in the class... to our surprise... Gord and I watched Fukuda Sensei doing jumping jacks and pushups etc. Gord and I looked at each other and we were totally shocked and surprised. During a break in the class we both commented whaaoh! that what we saw was really amazing. Fukuda Sensei took Gord and I under her wing and she really worked with the two of us on the finer points of her specialty Ju-no-Kata. After one of the classes, Fukuda Sensei invited us out for Sushi at a Japanese restaurant. I remember this very well as Gord had never ever tried Sushi before. A lot of people do not like or really care for Sushi. To my surprise, and I wasn't sure how Gord was going to react to all of this, and for his first time, he sure enjoyed every moment of it, as Fukuda Sensei kept ordering more and more Sushi for us, until we had enough. When we asked for our bill, to our surprise... Fukuda Sensei had already paid the bill. She would not accept either one of us to pay anything towards this, she said that we were her guest. Needless to say... Gord and I expressed our profound thanks, and for the remainder of our time there we both worked very hard, on what Fukuda Sensei had taught us.

After we arrived back from San Francisco... Gord and I had entered some Kata competitions and did very well. More importantly we both enjoyed practicing Kata together when we could. The last time we practiced together was sometime before this past Summer. One Sunday morning... at this practice Sensei Mara Markovic-Siladi and her partner Mira were there preparing for the Nationals and the World Masters in France. Gord and I practiced Ju-no-Kata and Goshin-Jutsu with Sensei Mara and Mira looking on. Which was to be the last time. I will always remember this, as weak and as tired that Gord was... we both walked through the Katas, and you could see in his face that this is what he really wanted to do. He was very proud at the end of the practice; he had a big smile on his face with the look to say at the end... I did it!!!

I would like to say on behalf of my wife Dana, my daughter Becky and son Andy and from many of us Judokas, I would like to sincerely express to Gordon's family how Gordon has truly enriched our lives and how sadly he will be missed by so many of us.

I would like to end this with a poem for my Scottish friend Gordon.

It's called...

### ***A Scots Farewell***

*When I come to the end of the road  
And the sun has set for me  
I want no tears in a gloom-filled room  
Why cry for a soul set free?*

*Miss me a little... but not for long  
And not with your head bowed low  
Remember the love that we once shared  
Miss me... but let me go.*

*For this is a journey... we all must take  
And each... must go alone  
It's all a part of the master plan  
A step on the road to home.*

*When you are lonely, and sick of heart  
Go to the friend we know  
And bury your sorrows in doing good deeds  
Miss me...but let me go.*

Farewell my friend... until we meet again. Oooose!

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