



1960s

He began his martial arts career at Miami University in Ohio studying karate as a teenager in the 1960s. “I had wanted to study judo ever since I was a tiny child. It is still a mystery to me how I even knew about Japanese martial arts, growing up in 1950s America. There were no schools, movies, or books to encourage me. I chose Miami University because I was told they had a judo club. It turned out to be Korean Tang Soo Do karate, not the judo I was longing for, but I jumped in with full commitment.”



[OBJ]

While a university student, he read a series of articles in Black Belt Magazine about Japan’s ninja phantom warriors he had first read about in a James Bond novel as a high school student. “Incredibly inspiring lore! Painful to know that such an art existed and was impossible for me to learn. Too bad that martial art was not taught in my hometown...”

1970s

[OBJ]

The early '70s were the days of knockdown full contact karate – forerunner of kickboxing in the 1980s, toughman contests in the 1990s, and MMA prize fights in the 2000s. “I was in my early 20s, wondered just how good a fighter I was, all belt ranks

aside, and for a while got swept away in the popular martial arts fad of the era. Ultimately I could not shake the realization that I had not been attracted to martial arts as a sportsman originally, and I was not really motivated by the idea of being a ‘competition fighter’. At heart I was still inspired by childhood aspirations of training to be a protector, a promoter of peace through strength. I could not let go of the image of the ninja.”

“My kickboxer buddies teased me about going to Japan to be a spy or assassin, but I had to go. What an insane gamble, but I had to do it. I had to see for myself if the legendary ninja still existed in modern Japan. I wrote letters but got no reply. I was desperately determined. Knowing nobody in Japan, having no idea of how I would find the ninja dojo, I bought an air ticket and flew to Japan anyway.”

On a hot steamy July day in 1975, Stephen K. Hayes stepped off a jetliner in Tokyo with the thinnest of hopes that he could find the Togakure ninja dojo. “What a miracle. I found them and 34th generation grandmaster Masaaki Hatsumi accepted me as an uchi-deshi student in his home dojo. You can read the story of my search for the ninja dojo and how I got started training in Japan in *The Ninja and Their Secret Fighting Art*.”



“One of my first training sessions in Japan. Hatsumi Sensei was 44 years old. I was 25.”
(from left, Koichi Oguri, Masaaki Hatsumi, Tetsuji Ishizuka, Stephen K. Hayes, Tsunehisa Shoto Tanemura)



To support himself for the years he lived in Japan to study at the ninja dojo, Stephen K. Hayes worked for several companies in the advertising and movie business. “I had studied acting in college, and was a fan of 1960s samurai movies, so it was a wild dream come true being an actor in the samurai mini-series Shogun with legendary Toshiro Mifune and Richard Chamberlain and John Rhys-Davies.”

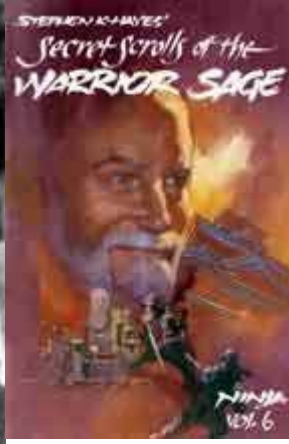
While in Japan, Stephen K. Hayes found Rumiko Urata, a recent Sophia University graduate born in a rural village near Kumamoto on Japan’s southern Kyushu island. “She was a beautiful spirit, and seemed to be the one I had been searching for my whole 30 years of life. Another miracle – I convinced her to marry me! We left for America when my Japan residency visa ran out in late 1980, and our adventure began.”

1980s

Throughout the 1980s, Stephen and Rumiko Hayes traveled back and forth to Japan for training 2 times every year. Feeling the need to be free to take off when he had to be with his teacher, Stephen K. Hayes did not establish a school.



“I taught by way of seminars. Someone in some city would see my books or martial arts magazine cover and invite me to teach. It was wild and risky. A few times the seminar turned out to be an ambush challenge in the decade when my name and the word ninja dominated the martial arts. But many good friendships were forged and some original 1980s students are still with me and now run SKH Quest To-Shin Do schools in their



communities.”

[OBJ]

In the early 1980s, American ninjutsu students often trained outdoors in the woods and rocks and dust, and usually wore tough durable military style attire rather than traditional Japanese martial

arts suits and belts. “Since I was the only one licensed to teach Togakure ninja martial arts in the western

hemisphere, I rarely wore my black belt. People knew where I had trained, and I was happy to let my martial skill and knowledge determine any fame I might earn.”

Stephen K. Hayes is listed in the International Edition of Who’s Who, and has been featured in publications ranging from Black Belt to Playboy to Tricycle Buddhist Review. He was elected to the prestigious Black Belt Hall of Fame in 1985, for his pioneering introduction of the Japanese ninja martial arts to the Western world.

From the 1980s right up to today, he has been featured in TV and film documentary projects with networks such as NBC, A&E, Discovery Channel, and Fuji TV

His 19 books have sold over 1 million copies – many volumes published in different languages around the world, translating the timeless knowledge of the East into pragmatic lessons for contemporary Western life.

1990s

Stephen K. Hayes was awarded the extremely rare honor of Ju-dan 10th degree Black Belt by his teacher Grandmaster Masaaki Hatsumi in 1993. He went on to found the martial art of To-Shin Do in 1997; he and his wife Rumiko are both known as An-shu, founder-directors of the Kasumi-An.



“By the mid-1990s I had 30 years in the martial arts and 20 years as a student of Togakure Ryu ninjutsu. I had done a thorough job of studying by imitating my teacher (learner phase 1), and then studying by testing and adapting in the West the methods I had studied in Japan (learner phase 2). It was time to start phase 3 – creating a vehicle for teaching what I felt most passionate about sharing with everyone in my community. My goal - to teach what the world needed most in terms of martial arts training for increased personal security, personal well-being, and personal responsibility for getting home happy and healthy every day. To-Shin Do – a contemporary version of the classical ninja martial arts – was born to fit that important demand. The SKH Quest Center martial arts school network was set in motion to carry our much-needed work into communities around the world.”

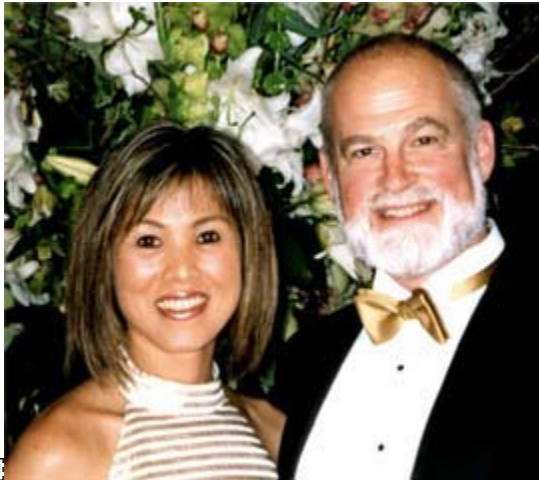
Stephen K. Hayes has demonstrated self-protection combat skills to military and law-enforcement groups including the U.S. Air Force Academy, the FBI Academy, the American Society for Law Enforcement Training, and members of Britain’s elite SAS. He has worked on special assignments with the United States Department of State Dignitary Security Services, and under contract with the United States Defense Intelligence Agency.



“In the 1990s, I was honored to regularly serve as personal security escort and advisor for my spiritual friend, 1989 Nobel Peace Prize laureate His Holiness the Dalai Lama of

Tibet. His Tibetan bodyguard walked on his right, and I walked on his left. It would be presumptuous to call the king of Tibet my teacher, but my years of being with Kundun Yeshey Norbu ‘Presence of the Wish-fulfilling Jewel of Wisdom’ have hopefully led me to more intelligence, more compassion, and more peace.”

2000s



Rumiko and Stephen Hayes at Elton John’s Oscar party 2001

Stephen K. Hayes taught as Adjunct Professor in the Masters of Business Management program of the McGregor School of Antioch University, and serves on the University of Dayton Crotty Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership Advisory Council, and the Union Institute & University Center for Clinical Mindfulness and Meditation.



The US Department of State took over the security work for His Holiness’ USA visits by the early 2000s. “The 21st Century brought me a new role in my work with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and I somehow ended up occasionally as MC introducing His Holiness at several appearances. Here we are on stage in Indiana, as he takes his teaching seat



An-shu Stephen K. Hayes' 60th birthday party with friends and family on 09-09-09 at his Dayton, Ohio, Hombu Central Training Headquarters Dojo

2010s