

Question:

How old is Shotokan Karate?

Answer:

Shotokan karate is approximately 90 years old. It was first introduced to members of the Japan Ministry of Education in 1917 by Master Gichin Funakoshi. He gave a demonstration which was very impressive, where upon he was invited to Japan and he remained there until his death in 1958. Initially, Master Funakoshi's art was just called karate, but he was encouraged to give it the name "Shotokan" because he was a writer whose pen name was Shoto (pine waves). Kan means hall or building, thus a loose translation of Shotokan is the hall where Shoto (Funakoshi) taught.