

In April 2015 Australasia Tang Soo Do had the privilege of hosting a visit from the President of the World Dang Soo Do Union Grandmaster Song Ki Kim, and the Secretary Master James Pumarejo to our headquarters in Darwin Australia.

This was a very significant visit in many ways.

Australasia Tang Soo Do recently joined the WDU after a long search for our organisation to establish a strong connection with our Korean lineage.

For myself on a personal level, I had been without an Instructor for 8 years and was acutely aware that if I were to lead our organisation into the future and preserve the art of Tang Soo Do honestly I needed further guidance.

After many conversations via phone and email we asked Grandmaster Kim & Master Pumarejo if they would be prepared to visit us here in Australia. To say we were delighted when they said yes would be an understatement.

Travel arrangements were confirmed and we were soon preparing for their visit in April.

Grandmaster Kim arrived first in the early hours of the morning.

Having never met him before and not being able to speak any Korean other than our commands and techniques in class, we were a little apprehensive. As Grandmaster Kim came through customs we were met with the warmest smile and a genuine demonstration of happiness to be there! Any apprehension we had previously was quickly abated.

After settling him into the hotel, as we were in the car preparing to leave Grandmaster Kim was on the balcony with a huge smile and his fists in the air calling out 'Dang Soo!' I'm not sure what the other guests were thinking as it was 3 o'clock in the morning but we were so excited to have him here, we put the windows down and were calling out "Dang Soo!" back to him!

Master Pumarejo arrived from America the next day and we were again met with an immediate sense of Tang Soo Do camaraderie, albeit a very tired one after 33 hours of travel!

After a day of rest, many conversations and what must have been a million questions from us about everything from history to terminology, we got into the Dojang and got down to training.

Day one was a meet and greet with our younger students who were super excited and very much in awe to be meeting Grandmaster Kim. He was extremely patient and answered every student's question through Master Pumarejo translating and was happy to share his time with them.

Day two started with a pre-organised grading & training clinic for myself and two of my senior Sam Dan's. I was very honoured to be graded to my 5th Dan & Mr Gamston and Mr Osborn were graded to 4th Dan Master rank.

This was a very momentous occasion not only for us personally but for the future of Australasia Tang Soo Do.



Day three was spent with senior Dans attending special morning training. We were taken through our advanced hyungs with practical applications and were taught some of the advanced companion hyungs under Grandmaster Kim's watchful eye.

Day four saw more morning training for senior Dans giving us the opportunity to re-visit not only the new hyungs but also to workshop our existing curriculum.



Unfortunately Grandmaster Kim had to return to Korea that afternoon. It was a very speedy visit but one that has left an everlasting impression on us all. There was certainly a sense of sadness saying goodbye to him so soon.

The next day Master Pumarejo delivered seminars for our Gup students.

The seminars covered a great range of things from Ho Sin Sul, Knife Defence, Ground work and much more. As you can see by the photos, all the students had a great time and really engaged with Master Pumarejo's teaching style.

After the seminars we had enough time to grab a bite to eat then get Master Pumarejo to the airport for his long flight home.

Master Pumarejo proved not only to be an excellent instructor, he was also very inspiring to watch as a martial artist. I know he has ignited in many of us a renewed passion for our art and certainly for me, a real aspiration to continue to learn from him.

We have been a member of the World Dang Soo Do Union for a little over 8 months. From here, we now have connections throughout the world which all of our members can benefit from and we are very much looking forward to having WDSU members visiting us here in Australia. I will be travelling to America in October to train with Master Pumarejo & we are planning a trip to Korea in 2016 for our Dans. We are working on bringing Grandmaster Kim back to Darwin again soon & we also hope to host a Union event here in Australia in the future!

Meeting Grandmaster Kim & Master Pumarejo confirmed to us that our new affiliation with the World Dang Soo Do Union was truly like finding our long lost family and we feel very confident we are on our way to a significant new chapter on our martial art journey.

Dang Soo!

Master Sharon Kimberley

