

ERLE MONTAIGUE

Born in 1949 in a small mining village about 50 miles south of Sydney in New South Wales Australia. Born by Caesarean Section, his Mother actually watched in a large mirror over head as they cut her open to lift him out. Erle's two siblings were still born due to the umbilical cord strangling them and Erle was also in this same situation, hence the Caesar at 6 weeks premature.

Weighing in at only 4 lbs, the doctors said that Erle Montaigne would be a backward boy in both brain and body. His Mother, Margaret Kathleen took Erle back to the hospital where he was born years later to show them that he was indeed not in that condition and was in fact thriving.

Erle's Father was also a self taught musician and could put his hand to just about anything and this rubbed off on Erle as he grew, trying many different musical instruments until his first guitar came in 1962.



An only child and "different" to the others in his mining village, he was

always picked upon and had to find different ways home from school (which he just hated) every day to avoid being punched and beat up in general. His only friends being girls and in particular his constant friend Eileen. They were together from ages 3 until 13.

During his time at school, Erle met a music teacher who asked him to be in the school choir and this proved pivotal in Erle's music career as he discovered that he had a voice.

School was not good for Erle and by age 12 could hardly read, write or add up. But soon realized that in order to get the girls, he would have to at least be seen to have a brain! So he embarked upon a self teaching regime whereby he learnt how to read, write and do complicated arithmetic in only one week and became head of the class to the teacher's amazement. However, this didn't last as the call of the wild and girls was just too great and by age 15 was spending most of his school days truanting down at the local beaches.

Erle's first band was formed at school in 1964 and by 1967 he was expelled from school for deeds far above and beyond the call of school duty!! This also proved to be one of the best things to happen to him as a huge weight was lifted from his shoulders, leaving him free to pursue girls and music.

Erle was playing in his band "Earl's Court" in an open air concert when he noticed a pair of beautiful blue eyes looking up at him. She was only just 15 and they were eventually married just after she turned 16. Of course a marriage of those ages (18 & 16) was very difficult to maintain and so after two children it ended. Erle is still great friends with Cheryl Ann who has been re-married for about 30 years now.



Erle took on a job as an apprentice Telephone Technician in 1967 and caused havoc in the teaching institution run by the then General Post Office. We won't go into all of that but just to say that Erle has always been a bit of a rebel to put it mildly. So his sojourn with the Telephone company lasted for only two years when he was chosen for a new rock musical, "Jesus Christ Revolution", followed by Godspell and Jesus Christ Superstar. During this time, Erle also recorded his first hit song "Can't Wait For September" (1969) which

became a big hit for him.

While at the Telephone institution, Erle met an old teacher called "Mr Wong Eog" who everyone mistakenly called Tokyo Joe. Mr. Wong told Erle that he knew a martial art whereby one could become superman! So wanting to become superman (after being beaten up for most of his school days), Erle was right in there to learn from this gentleman. The style which was unheard of in the West at that time, Erle discovered was Tai Chi.

Erle did many things in the music industry in Australia until 1974 when he travelled to London to further his music and acting career. But God had an ulterior motive in that he really went there to meet his 2nd Tai Chi teacher, Chu King Hung who took him on as his first student.



And so the story goes! The rest is history when Erle travelled back to Australia upon the death of his father in 1978 and met the love of his

life, Sandra, had three more children and also met Chiang Yiu-chun who became Erle's main internal arts teacher from whom he learnt REAL Tai Chi, Wudang Arts and Dim-Mak.

In 1981, Erle travelled to Hong Kong where he met and trained with both Yang Sau-chung (the son of Yang Cheng-fu) and also Ho Ho-choy, the great Bagua master. Erle has had a number of other teachers in China and those from whom, although he cannot say that he was a long term student, has learnt heaps from, such as Fuzhongwen, Shao Shan-kan and some others whose names have now faded.

In November of 2003, Erle, his family, two dogs and business moved to the UK .



His music has again surfaced and he now plays and records with his children in their family rock band, "MOONTAGU". Moontagu, is what the Chinese people call Erle because they cannot pronounce his real name and means an "Old Tower" which Erle is happy with.

Between the years of 1979 and 2011, Erle had an explosion of creativity and production and he produced the largest number of DVD titles on the internal fighting/healing arts as well as a wealth of books

published world-wide. He became the first Westerner to introduce Dim-Mak to the Western World with his books from the early 80's and also DVD productions. Prior to Erle's productions, there were only a couple of small and insignificant half hearted books written and published in China on Dim-Mak as not many ever received the real transmission. Even now, Erle's books on Dim-Mak are the ruler for all others and all other books on Dim-Mak have taken from Erle's work. Many so-called masters say that they knew it all along, but sales records show that they have all bought Erle's work. One extremely famous Chinese Master in the USA who wears the silk suite and Nike shoes recently bought Erle's MTG3 DVD on the Pauchui San-Sau form and then put out his own DVD title on that form. However, Erle, being Erle, has changed some things in the original form so that they work much better and sure enough, this master has re-created these changes in his own DVD titles. So we know positively that this person learnt from Erle Montaigne's DVD! Not that he or anyone else will ever admit it as it is not prestigious to say that one has learnt from a DVD of a chap from a small village South of Sydney in Australia!

Erle Montaigne was regarded internationally as one of the leading instructors of the internal arts of taijiquan, pa-kua chang, and qigong. He had been practicing the internal arts since 1968 and can trace his lineage directly back to Yang Lu-ch'an, the founder of the Yang style.

He has taught in Sydney, London, and Hong Kong (in fact, he is one of a select few Westerners who have taught taiji back to the Chinese in Hong Kong) and has given workshops all around the world. In 1985, Erle became the first Westerner to perform at the All China National Wushu Tournament, at which time he was tested for hours by three of the world's leading internal martial arts experts and received the degree of master. He is believed to be the only Westerner to have earned such an honor.

Erle began his martial arts instruction at the age of 11, training in karate and judo at the local police Boys' Clubs in his native Australia. His forte in these early years, however, was wrestling, which later led to a stint as a professional wrestler!

An eclectic and colorful character who has never allowed himself to be pigeonholed into any one art, pursuit, or career, Erle is also an avid musician. He has always "marched to the beat of a different

drummer," and his somewhat rebellious nature can be traced back at least as far as 1966, when he was expelled from school for painting the building yellow, among other "small" things.

Erle was a regular writer with the prestigious British martial arts magazine *Fighting Arts International* and for *Australasian Fighting Arts Magazine*, one of the longest-running quality martial arts magazines. His photo has appeared on the front cover of both of these publications, as well as that of *Karate/Kung-Fu Illustrated*, published in the United States. He also served as the editor of *Combat & Healing* magazine.

Erle was a foundation member of the Australian Kung Fu Federation and the first person to be awarded life membership to this organization.



AKWF President Walt Missingham commented:

“Erle will be greatly missed he was both a colleague and a friend. Erle was a great contributor in the early days of the Federation and he served as President of the Federation in 1987 as well as Vice President in 1986 and 1988 to 1994. He was a great national and global ambassador for the martial arts – we are all the poorer for his passing. I extend my sincere thanks to Erle and my sympathies to Sandy and their children.