



Tai Chi News

TERM 3 2011 MOVING MEDITATION SCHOOL OF TAI CHI & QIGONG Tel: 83817969
Email: movingm@chariot.net.au www.emedici.com/movingmeditation

Hi Everyone,

At last spring is on the way, the birds are singing, the flowers are blooming and on Monday, 12th September the annual Moon Lantern Festival will be held at Elder Park. We encourage you to come along to this celebration. We will be there from 3.30 pm through to around 7.00 pm. The Tai Chi Association of Australia, of which I'm the State Representative, will be offering workshops every 30 minutes. There are several schools participating so it is a good chance to experience different styles of Tai Chi. More information is inside your newsletter. Your teacher will have flyers on this event.



We have often been asked about the Shaolin Temple. I have therefore incorporated in this edition a brief background, including the development of Qigong and Shaolin Kung Fu for those of you who are interested. Brenda, George and myself were fortunate to train at both Shaolin and Wudang temples on our China Tour. While Shaolin was very vibrant and rather commercial, Wudang gave a feeling of peace and tranquillity, more in keeping with our school philosophy of Tai Chi and Qigong. I will give some background information on the Wudang Temple in our next newsletter.

We have vacancies for Assistant Teachers and a couple of our classes and will be offering Teacher training to selected students in the New Year. Pre-requisites are: Completion of Tai Chi Qigong and 44 Forms Yang Style Tai Chi, a willingness to share your skills and a love and dedication to the art. You must have time to train and attend our monthly meetings once accepted. This is a stepping stone to starting your own area if you are interested and have the time.

It is with sadness that we say goodbye to Christine Pascoe. Christine was a valued member of our Reynella branch and unfortunately passed away after a long illness. Our condolences go to her family at this time. Christine, we will miss you.

There are two workshops coming up interstate in November, one in Sydney, the other at Lake Dewar, near Myrning. If you are travelling interstate or are interested in participating in either of these workshops more information is inside the newsletter.

Best wishes, Rosemary

TERM DATES 2011

Term 3:

25th July—16th September

Term 4:

17th October—9th December

Content

- ***Moon Lantern Festival***
- ***Teacher Training***
- ***History of Shaolin***
- ***Afterthought***

Moon Lantern Festival

The Moon Lantern Festival, held on the 15th day of the 8th Lunar month of the Chinese calendar has become one of South Australia's favourite annual community gatherings. Family and friends come together to admire the beauty of the full moon and think of absent loved ones. It's a time to celebrate and eat *moon cakes* together. Festivities include a diverse selection of Asian food and market stalls, lanterns, crafts, workshops, horoscope readings and more.

At twilight school children participate in the Moon Lantern Parade which will light up Elder Park. This will be followed by a spectacular fireworks display.

Our school, as a member of the Tai Chi Association will, with other Tai Chi schools, offer 30 minute Tai Chi Workshops from 3.30—6.00 pm in the Santos Tent. We have also been allocated 30 mins. From 5.00 —5.30 pm to give demonstrations in the Martial Arts Area.

Where: Elder Park, Martial Arts Demonstration Area

When: Monday, 12th September

The Moon Lantern Festival takes the place of our Park Lesson for this term. Therefore if you are able, please come along and enjoy this special event with us, I'm sure you will enjoy it. If you would like to help, either participating or handing our brochures, please let us know. As this event is very popular parking is a problem, therefore if you are able to come in on public transport it will be easier and certainly less stressful than trying to find a park.



Every Generation

This celebration runs during October and is supported by COTA and the Government of SA.

Our school is offering an Obligation Free Lesson to beginners at most venues from 18th October—28th October. If you have friends who are interested in learning Tai Chi this is a great time to encourage them to come along and experience it. The venues and dates will be advertised in your local Messenger Newspaper nearer the date.

EVERY GENERATION
FESTIVAL



FOR YOUNG AND OLD

Interstate Workshops

There are two workshops, one in Sydney the other in Melbourne in November: Master Zhang Junfeng, the renowned Beijing teacher of Traditional Yang and Wu Style Tai Chi, will present a series of workshop from 11th to 20th November.

Master Lai Wi Tang and associates will be presenting a series of relaxing weekend workshops of Tai Chi and Qigong at the YMCA Retreat, Dewar Lodge, near Bacchus Marsh. It will run from Friday evening 25th November to Sunday 27th November.

For further details, ask your teacher or contact the office on:

Phone: 83817969 or Email: movingm@chariot.net.au

Background to Shaolin Kung Fu

History of Shaolin Temple

History tells us that at one time over 72 ancient temples nestled in Mount Song, the most famous of these must be the Zen Temple of Shaolin.

The temple was built in the Northern Wei Dynasty (AD386-534) and is reported to be the first temple of Zen Buddhist teaching. During its existence many stories have been told and films made about the temple and the fighting monks, some true some legend. Its history has been colourful and despite upheavals, both natural or otherwise, many of the valuable cultural relics have been preserved.



The Great Shaolin Temple, as it is called, is located at the foot of Wu Ru Feng (Five-Breast Peak), north of Shaoshi Mountain. It nestles in a deeply wooded area (called “lin” in Chinese) hence the name Shaolin (woods in the Shaoshi Mountain. The first famous Buddhist monk was Ba Tuo (Buddhabhadra) who founded the temple in the 5th Century AD) when Buddhism was flourishing in China.

Development of Qigong and Shaolin Chuan (Kung Fu)

Budhidharma, or Da Mo as he is often called, is perhaps the best known of the monks to practitioners of Tai Chi, Qigong and other Chinese martial arts. He is often quoted as sitting for hours facing a wall in meditation and, it is said, he actually meditated in this way for 9 years. He taught Chan or Dhyana, which in Sanskrit means “getting rid of distracting thoughts”.

There are many stories about the background of Budhidhama, from being the son of an ordinary family to being the third son of a king in ancient India. Whatever his background he holds a very important place in the history of Shaolin and the martial arts.

How did the monks of a Zen temple, whose journey in life is to teach peace, kindness and love become so proficient at fighting?

Budhidhama is generally believed to have introduced a series of exercises into the temple because of the poor physical condition of the monks. He was endeavouring to cultivate their moral character through meditation but found that many became sleepy and dispirited through sitting too long, with no physical activity. After much contemplation Budhidhama came up with a sequence of 18 movements, known as the 18 stiffs of Arhat, (similar to gymnastics) to improve the physical as well as the spiritual well-being of the monks and aid their concentration. The movements consisted of stretching, bending and twisting, rhythmic breathing and dynamic energy meditation.

As the popularity of Buddhism rose and fell, depending on the dynasty, the martial arts had a similar roller-coaster ride, as did the fortunes of the Shaolin Temple. The 18 stiffs of Arhat were further developed by Bai Yu Feng, who increased the number of movements to 72 and then to 173. He also created what is known as the Five Imitations Boxing from the original five animals of Hua Tou.

The original animals were tiger, deer, bear, monkey and bird which we use in Tai Chi. The imitations were dragon, tiger, leopard, snake and crane which are used Kung Fu today.

Shaolin Tradition

The Shaolin Chuan tradition was constantly enriched.

The body turning, circling and animal movements of Budhidharma were developed to the more refined and graceful movements of the Ba Duan Jin, during the Sung Dynasty. These exercises are generally accredited to General Yue Fei (not a monk but a soldier in the army of the Emperor). They include 'Lifting the Heavens' and 'White Crane Spreads its Wings', which many of you are familiar with.

From the Shaolin developed various styles of Tai Chi, the five most well-known styles being Chen, Yang (which is our school's 44 forms) Wu, Woo and Sun. (More about these styles in later editions of your newsletter).

In the history of Chinese martial arts there are two major schools, Shaolin and Wudang (both of which Brenda, George and I visited in our April tour of China).

- ☉ The Shaolin School: Attack first—"even a clumsy attack may be better than craftiness"
- ☉ The Wudang School: Calmness subdues courage, yield and deflect, the soft overcomes the hard.

Both schools consider firm and agile footwork a must and base the movements on the bow stance and lunge.

Power in the Martial Arts

1. Wai Dan (External Elixir)

The focus is on the limbs rather than the torso, which includes the internal organs. When exercising using Wai Dan the Qi builds up in the arms and legs. When the potential is high enough Qi will flow through the meridian channels, clearing obstructions and helping to nourish the organs. This type of exercise is similar to a gym workout. It is physical and improves health, increasing Qi to the limbs, which energises the muscles, increasing martial power.

2. Nei Dan (Internal Elixir)

Nei Dan Qi is built up in the body and lead out to the limbs. Nei Dan is generally more difficult to understand, it can also be dangerous if not taught correctly. Nei Dan relies on sensation, feeling and centring of Qi to the Dantien. Practise is essential for maximum benefit and leads to improved health and a greater quality of life.

In China most martial artists begin by practising Wei Dan and graduate to Nei Dan. Eventually they combine the Wei Dan with Nei Dan for greater skill and strength.

Dr. Yang Jwing-Ming, The Root of Chinese Chi Kung 1989

Zhang Jiata Shaolin Temple 1983



Afterthought

Leading from a road between grand halls, the Temple is hid in the purple green.
With fifteen centuries of sacred call, a thousand years of martial sheen

Fu Mei—Poem "Passing the Shaolin Temple (Ming Dynasty)