



CELESTIAL TAI CHI COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

Term 5

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September 2013

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***At the 15th WTPA Annual Competition our College was proudly represented by the Senior Master Chin Min Lian, serving as a Judge, and Instructor Suzette Hosken, who won several gold medals as well as the coveted Female Taijiquan Champion trophy
Warmest congratulations to both of them!***

Free Park Lessons

Saturday 12th October
Time: 10:00am to noon
Malvern, Central Park Malvern,
Cnr Burke & Wattletree Rds
(Melway 59 G10)

Sunday 20th October
Time: 10:00am to noon
Fairfield, Fairfield Park
Cnr Heidelberg Rd & Fairfield
Park Dr (Melway 30 J12)

College Break: 30 September – 6 October
Weekend Retreat: 15 – 17 November

Competing at the WTPA Annual Competition

The 15th WTPA (Wushu & Tai Chi Practitioners Australia) Annual Competition was held on Sunday August 25th 2013. The stadium was buzzing with energy when I arrived, with two competition areas set up and rows of seats for spectators. We were given a briefing with the main message being to relax and enjoy ourselves, not to worry about winning, to just enjoy being there and being a part of it all.

I was very pleased to run into Senior Master Chin Min. He had been invited to be a judge for the competition - quite an honour. Family and other tai chi friends soon arrived; there were over ten Celestial members there to watch the competition.

The program started with a formal opening ceremony. There were speeches, the athlete's oath and competitors all standing in lines. Then there was the Lion Dance. The magnificent beasts were highly expressive; they twisted, turned, leapt and fluttered their eyelashes. WTPA president Tara Brayshaw declared the games open.



The Wushu performances on Arena 1 were outstanding, with high kicks, flips, airborne twists and the occasional roar. There was much cheering and clapping for each competitor.

Tai Chi and Qigong were competing on Arena 2. Most of the morning was taken up with Qigong forms, a new addition to this competition. I enjoyed watching the groups perform their gentle, graceful moves.

My first event was **Tai Chi 24**. There were three of us in the open advanced division, and we were to all perform at the same time in front of the seven judges and large crowd. I was vaguely aware of the other two competitors, but was able to keep focused on my form throughout. We all walked off and stood by the side of the arena as protocol dictates and then waited. We seemed to wait a long time. Finally the scores were called out and I was given 8.85, the highest score. Yes, I was pleased with that! A brief bit of celebrating followed with my tai chi buddies. There's nothing like a few hugs and words of congratulations to make it feel real.



Tai Chi 48 followed soon after. I was the only person doing 48 and one other woman had entered 42. I was astounded to hear that we were to

go on together. Quite normal practice apparently, so I had to get used to the idea quick smart. I don't know how the judges manage in this situation.

I did find it very distracting to turn around and see someone else doing different moves. My focus wobbled as I approached the back of the arena to do the snap kicks. My opponent was quite close, I was too close to the edge (points deduction for going over the line) and up loomed my barbecue. This is the precise point at which I had made an adjustment every time I practiced at home in order to avoid bumping into the barbecue. It might as well have been there because I avoided it as I was used to, skipped a move and found myself on the wrong leg. To get back on the right leg I threw in another snap kick - three in total. Whoops, moving right along ...! That error focused my attention greatly and I found it easier to ignore the distractions from that point. More waiting by the side of the arena followed and then the scores - I came out on top, just.

The Flute: The final section was the female weapons. Many women were competing in the fan and sword 32. One woman entered sword 42 and she and I were teamed up to compete. Again, I was surprised to learn we were to go on together. This time I was in the front half of the arena, which was less distracting. We both were given 8.30 with Gold Medals awarded to us both.

A Final Surprise: After the last event of the day many competitors left and others went to get changed. As I popped out of the change room I noticed there was a ceremony going on, which I assumed was to thank all of the volunteers. I poked my head in the arena to see one of the marshals gesturing wildly to me: 'Go, go, they've just called your name!' 'What... why?' 'You got an award!'... I dropped my bags and trotted up to the officials trying to piece together what I'd missed. The MC called my name again; I saw Chin Min grinning from ear to ear and Tara Brayshaw smiling at me. I had won the Female Taijiquan Champion trophy. Tara said, 'I do hope you'll be back next year' and I replied, 'I will definitely be back!' I will be back and I hope to have a lot of Celestial friends entering with me as well.



Suzette Hosken

This is an edited extract. The article appears in full on www.celestialtaichi.com

Tai Chi for the Wellbeing of Hospital Staff

We started tai chi at the *Peter James Centre* with Tony Donnoli in 2009 with the Celestial Tai Chi College. It was part of the hospital staff 'Wellness Project'. As usual, we started with a great number of participants and with perseverance and encouragement amongst ourselves, the students, and most importantly, under Tony's guidance, we continued with various forms of tai chi until this year.

Over the past years, Tony helped us explore what tai chi meant to us. Physically, we have noticed that our balance and endurance have improved. Mentally, we have experienced an amazing energy flow amongst us while practicing tai chi together. We really enjoyed mastering all the new skills we were taught.

We had our tai chi class right after work. Tony showed us how to focus and centre ourselves with qi gong and tai chi. By the end of each class, we found we were relaxed and focused and ready for all challenges ahead. After the passing of Tony, four of us have joined the evening class in Box Hill Tai Chi Centre.



With the teaching from Grand Master Eng Chor and Senior Instructor Snezana Dabic, we are starting to learn Sword Form 32. Edward Yong has also given us many pointers in understanding some of the sword movements.

We are looking forward to continuing learning more about tai chi to gain the benefits of the chi flow and overall health and wellbeing.

Pauline, Eric, Lesley and Shirley
Box Hill Tai Chi Centre

Our Tai Chi Journey

We started to learn tai chi with some friends a few years ago. The learning of tai chi has been quite a discovery experience for both of us. The little knowledge we previously had came mainly from literature that made us aware of taijiquan as a well-known, established martial art, developed in the Wudang Mountain in China. We have found out that tai chi has become very popular in modern times as a health exercise for the elderly people both within and beyond China.

As we learned, we realised that tai chi is a 'soft' martial art. The movements tend not to release force against force, but divert the



opponents' force away, releasing it in a sudden manner and from the whole body in a very powerful way. We enjoy the gentle rounded movements of Yang Style Tai Chi, which are quite unusual and sometimes hard to learn. It took us a while to get used to these fundamentals of tai chi, requiring a detailed understanding of the correct hand and foot work.

Tai chi masters must have been very knowledgeable in the science of physics, considering how they harnessed and executed force and energy to develop the form movements.

At a basic level we feel that tai chi improves our posture. Grand Master Eng Chor and Senior Instructor Snezana always remind us to keep the head straight and to relax the shoulders and still the 'monkey mind'.

They also remind us to slow down the movements and breathe naturally. The latter aspect of tai chi, we have realised, helps people become more calm, more observant and analytical before they respond to external challenges.

We have noticed that with time learning tai chi does benefit both our physical and spiritual health. As a practical exercise it improves our coordination and prevents osteoporosis.

On the lighter side of learning tai chi, now we can understand and appreciate more the martial art skills displayed in some Chinese kung fu martial art movies.

Happy tai chi practice!

Tuan and Kim Nguyen, Box Hill Tai Chi Centre

Tai Chi Weekend Retreat – 15th-17th November, 2013

This year's retreat will feature Grand Master Eng Chor who will share his knowledge, expertise and skills to participants. The retreat is a live-in weekend amongst the peace and tranquillity of the Lake Dewar Lodge, near Myrniong, 15 minutes from Bacchus Marsh, situated close to the Werribee Gorge. This is a truly fabulous setting for a weekend of Tai Chi. The program will commence Friday evening and conclude Sunday afternoon. There is also the opportunity to attend as a day participant.

Weekend Participants

Prices quoted is per person (shared accommodation)	Family of 2 or more	Individual
Fully prepaid by 17/09/13	\$350	\$385
Full payment by 5/11/13	\$385	\$420

These prices include accommodation and all meals from Friday dinner to Sunday lunch. **Note:** Single room accommodation is limited, given on a first come, first serve basis. Single room supplement, add \$55 to the above cost.

Day Participants

Prices quoted are per person

	Family of 2 or more	Individual
Saturday Session 9.00 am – 5.30 pm		
Fully prepaid by 17/09/13	\$146	\$160
Full payment by 5/11/13	\$160	\$175
Sunday Session 9.00 am – 2.00 pm		
Fully prepaid by 17/09/13	\$110	\$120
Full payment by 5/11/13	\$120	\$130
Saturday & Sunday day sessions		
Fully prepaid by 17/09/13	\$230	\$255
Full payment by 5/11/13	\$255	\$280

Celestial Tai Chi College – Weekend Retreat, 2013 With Grand Master Eng Chor

Proposed Program

Friday, 15th November

- 6.30 pm: Dinner
- 7.30 pm: Opening Session & Ice breaker
- 9.30 pm: Supper
- 10.00 pm: DVD session (optional)

Saturday, 16th November

- 8.00 am: Breakfast
- 9.00 am: Celestial Tai Chi, L1 – L6
- 10.30 am: Morning Tea

- 11.00 am: Qi Gong Session:
 - Option 1: Shibashi 1
 - Option 2: Lohan
 - Option 3: Wild Goose
 - Option 4: Tao Yin
- 12.30 pm: Lunch
- 1.30 pm: Rest
- 2.30 pm: Hsing 1
- 3.30 pm: Afternoon Tea
- 4.00 pm: Tai Chi Refinement &
Sun Chen & Wu Tai Chi
- 5.30 pm: Wash up

- 6.30 pm: Dinner
- 8.00 pm: Exploring history & philosophy of Tai Chi,
Chinese Calligraphy
- 9.00 pm: Supper
- 9.30 pm: Open Discussion

Sunday, 17th November

- 7.00 am: Weapons practice – Fan, Flute, Broadsword & Long
pole (optional)
- 8.00 am: Breakfast
- 9.00 am: Tai Chi – Martial Arts Application (Pushing hands,
Free Hand & Sticky Hands)
- 10.30 am: Morning Tea
- 11.00 am: Wushu Form
Wudang Tai Chi, Qi Gong
- 12.30 pm: Lunch
- 2.00 pm: Check out/Departure

Retreat Information (cont.)

Massage

Why not treat yourself to a relaxation massage during the weekend? Again this year we are fortunate to have Michelle, an experienced Massage Therapist, who will be available for bookings on Saturday (10.00am–5.00pm), cost \$40 (½ hour)

Booking Information

Our Tai Chi weekend has always been very popular, so to avoid disappointment, please book early. A deposit of \$100.00 is required on registration. Please direct all enquiries to Beng Yan on 9840 2855.

- The Retreat commences with an evening dinner at 6.30 pm.
- Participants may begin to check in from 4.00 pm onwards.
- Please provide your own toiletries.
- Training sessions are optional but participants are encouraged to attend all trainings to reap the full benefit of the retreat.
- Please bring proper attire and footwear for training sessions i.e. loose comfortable clothing and flat-heel shoes. An extra pair of footwear for training is recommended.
- Massage payments are to be paid by cash on the weekend directly to the Service Provider, if you have booked for the service.
- For those who have additional swords to spare, please bring them along.
- Weather may be unpredictable; be prepared for sudden cool change in spite of the summer season.
- The venue of the Retreat is: Lake Dewar Lodge, 339 Garrards Lane, Myrning, VIC 3341 (Melway ref: 611, E1). Tel: 03 5368 7459

The College Retreat is suitable for students of all levels including beginners.

Registration form can be obtained from class instructors or downloaded from the College website.

2013 College Christmas Banquet

The College Annual Dinner Banquet is being held on **Saturday, 7th December, 2013** at the Dragon Boat Palace, 149 Lonsdale St, Melbourne. This is always one of the College highlights of the year, particularly the performances by our Masters & Instructors during the evening.