



CELESTIAL TAI CHI COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

Term 2
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April 2014
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Senior Master Chin Min with advanced students at Preston Centre.

Free Park Lessons

Saturday 3rd May

Time: 10:00am to noon

Malvern

Central Park Malvern
Cnr Burke & Wattletree Rds
(Melway 59 G10)

Sunday 11th May

Time: 10:00am to noon

Fairfield

Fairfield Park
Cnr Heidelberg Rd & Fairfield Park Dr
(Melway 30 J12)

Park lessons are an opportunity to practice tai chi with the Masters as well as offering a free introductory lesson for anyone who is interested, so tell a friend and bring your family.

Upcoming events:

College break – 17th April to 25th April (Easter and ANZAC Day)

World Tai Chi & Qigong Day 26th April – details page 3

Philosophy Lesson 1st June – details page 3

Changes at Eltham – we have moved

Renovations at our previous location have necessitated a move from our tranquil abode of fifteen years to a very different venue. We are now at the Eltham Bowling Club – a very different space.

We were fortunate to find somewhere that was available on a Friday morning. It is larger so more students can be accommodated and an adjoining soccer ground provides opportunity for practice in the open.

We experimented in first term, having all our students together in one session, but have decided to go back to two classes.

From **10.00am to 11.00am** levels one to six are offered. From **11.00am to 12.00pm** students can select revision of Yang and Beijing 24 and also Wild Goose Qigong.

Any students from other centres who require a make-up class in any of the above, will be made most welcome by Gil, Suzette, Linda, James, Sue and me. You will find us in Susan Street, which is off Bridge Road.

Judy Grant – Instructor Eltham





World Tai Chi and Qigong Day

Saturday 26th April 10am-12pm

Tai Chi and Qigong Day is celebrated throughout the world providing an opportunity for us to experience the combined energy of participating tai chi and qigong practitioners.

This year we will gather in the beautiful State Rose Garden in Werribee, which offers a splendid and tranquil environment, to focus on tai chi and qigong skills.

Starting at **10.00am** and finishing at **12.00pm** (including morning tea) this is an occasion to enjoy. Melway Map reference 201 B3.



Philosophy Lesson with Grandmaster Eng Chor Khor

Sunday 1st June 3pm-5pm

Each year, **Grand Master Eng Chor** conducts a philosophy lesson. These are always fascinating and entertaining events. Tai Chi history, its philosophy and Chinese culture will be explored. The lesson is informal and questions are encouraged. There is no charge for this event.

Date: Sunday 1st June from 3pm to 5pm

Location: Beverley Hills Primary School, Cassowary St, Doncaster East.

Like us on facebook: www.facebook.com/celestialtaichi stay up to date with the latest College events, videos, photos and tai chi news from around the globe.

Weerama Festival 2014

Weerama: the word translation means “to play”. This festival has a parade, fireworks, amusements, craft stalls, activities and much more. The team from the Werribee Centre spent the day at the festival as we do each year to promote the joys of tai chi.

This year, we missed our traditional salutation to the Prime Minister. Other dignitaries present were the Mayor, State and Federal Members and lots of friendly faces in the crowds as we walked along the parade trail.

Our fans caught everyone’s attention when we snapped them loudly during a short routine that we repeated as we walked. The parade took about one hour and we snapped the fans about every 100 metres.

The rest of the day we were at our Celestial Tai Chi stand and gave short tai chi shows about every 30 minutes. It was interesting to observe the Asian locals and tourists taking photos and videos of us.

We had a stage demonstration in front of about 100 or more people. The children moved along with the Lotus exercise and the adults waved their hands in the clouds.

It was a great weekend for us and we’re looking forward to next year’s festival. Thanks to everyone who helped from Werribee. Special thanks to Judy Grant, who came from Eltham to join in with the parade. There is an open invitation for everyone who would like to come along and join in.



John Sindoni - Senior Instructor Werribee



Moonee Valley Festival

The annual Moonee Valley Festival was held in Queen's Park, Moonee Ponds on 23rd February this year. This is a very large local festival that always attracts big crowds throughout the day. Each year instructors from Moonee Ponds perform at the festival - so Margie, Dave, Doreen, Wayne and Joy gave a demonstration of qigong exercises, tai chi levels 1 and 2, and the fan routine.



For the remainder of the day, we were at our artistically decorated Celestial Tai Chi College stall, chatting to people about the many benefits of qigong and tai chi.

A very large number of people spoke with us this year, and we are hoping that many will be inspired to join us.

It is a beautiful setting in Queen's Park, by the lake with water fountain and swans, and we always enjoy the opportunity to promote tai chi, and our College, at this annual event.

Thanks to all other members from Moonee Ponds who supported us on that day.

Ashburton Festival



Senior Instructor Margaret Rogers, along with Chris Dowdall, Belinda Leong and Suzette Hosken performed at the Ashburton Festival in February.

This photo shows the team enjoying the Warrior Lohan Qigong and the move "dragon sweeps tail."

Early Morning Tai Chi (Pyjama Qigong)

Over the years, I've heard Grandmaster Eng Chor say many times to practice tai chi first thing in the morning. I've tended to view this as an unattainable goal. In fact not even a goal, more with an air of wistful romanticism... "Wouldn't that be lovely, but it's not for me."

There were many excuses: too busy, too tired to get up early, no peaceful place when the kids are buzzing around... But excuses are very much what these were.

The real reason I never wanted to do tai chi first thing in the morning is that I'm often in pain. Mornings were a time of assessing just how sore and stiff I was going to be that day. I'd hobble around, creak my way down the stairs and ease myself into the day. By afternoon I would have warmed up to the point where I could have a good practice, and I would always enjoy it and feel better for it.

I know I'm not alone in feeling this way. I have fibromyalgia; I was diagnosed when I was 19 and this is what sent me to tai chi at what many consider to be a young age (I was 24). Many people drawn to tai chi have forms of arthritis, chronic injuries, depression, anxiety, chronic fatigue and other conditions that affect our quality of life. Tai chi and qigong are the ideal exercise for these sorts of conditions, but first thing in the morning?

Well, I'm now a convert. This year I decided to give it a go and I have learnt much.

I started in summer, so I literally rolled out of bed, went over to the window and began. First I did Shibashi set 1, next day set 2, next day set 3, then back to set 1. I rolled through the Shaolin qigong, the Lotus and some Golden Treasures and Ba Duan Jin (all on different days). I practice for about 15 minutes a morning.

I developed a new appreciation for the ancient Chinese Masters who came up with these exercises. Initially I was planning to put together a program of a bit of this, and a bit of that to ensure that the main joints of the body were all being taken through a range of movement. But of course I didn't need to do that – the Masters had already taken this into account.

Take Shibashi Set 1 for example. We start very gently by just floating the arms with a gentle knee bend, then we open the chest a little, then we stretch upwards, then some deeper knee bending is introduced. Add in some gentle spinal rotation, a little spinal flexion, some rising up on the toes (singly then together), some weight transference, making a

fist, and some left/right brain challenge. Add to this the rhythmical breathing and you have a very complete exercise for most of the joints of the body as well as the internal organs. I don't think you could possibly do better than Shibashi Set 1 for morning qigong.

For an afternoon session, I would take fairly large steps and bend my knees a lot. In the morning I take very small steps with minimal knee bend very gentle spinal movements. Because my movements are within a smaller range of movement, I get through them slightly quicker, so I alter my breathing accordingly. Instead of breathing in and out during one move, I might breath in one move and out the next. I love to do the Shibashi very slowly, but for the morning, a quicker tempo just works better.

There are so many benefits: I go to bed at night looking forward to getting up in the morning; my fuzzy morning brain has cleared by the time I finish; my body has been warmed up gently; I am calm and relaxed; I get through my day more efficiently and can focus for longer. Plus I don't seem to be hurting quite as much (fingers crossed).

I think it's important to keep in mind that there are many different ways to practice tai chi: there's the quick run-through for when you are learning new moves; the solid 'training-style' practice where you really work your body and have a good warm up and cool down; the moving meditation practice where you are transported somewhere else as you flow through your moves; the days where you just want to get it right and the days where it doesn't matter that you've got the move wrong, you're just happy to be doing some exercise. These all have their place.

My early-morning tai chi has in fact been pyjama qigong. I love qigong in the morning, but you might prefer your tai chi levels, especially if you haven't learnt the Shibashi yet. The same principles apply – smaller steps, smaller arm moves, smaller knee bends.

As we move into autumn and winter I expect my pyjama qigong will turn into Ugg boot and beanie qigong. I don't mind. As long as I keep this practice going, I'll be very happy.

Suzette Hosken – Instructor Camberwell and Eltham

Changes at Camberwell Centre

Please note the new times for our Monday morning classes:

10.30am – 11.30am Levels 1 to 6. **11.30am – 12.30pm** Tai Chi Flute.

2014 College Dates

March 17 to May 11: Term 2

April 17 – April 25	College break (Easter & ANZAC Day)
April 26	World Tai Chi & Qigong Day
May 3	Park Lesson at Malvern 10am – 12pm
May 11	Park Lesson at Fairfield 10am – 12pm

May 12 to June 29: Term 3

June 1	Philosophy Lesson
June 21	Park Lesson at Malvern 10am – 12pm
June 29	Park Lesson at Fairfield 10am – 12pm
June 30 – July 6	College break

July 7 to August 24: Term 4

August 16	Park Lesson at Malvern 10am – 12pm
August 24 – September 7	China Tour
August 24	Park Lesson at Fairfield 10am – 12pm

August 25 to October 19: Term 5

August 31	WTPA Wushu & Taijiquan Competition
September 21	Workshop
September 29 – October 5	College break
October 11	Park Lesson at Malvern 10am – 12pm
October 19	Park Lesson at Fairfield 10am – 12pm

October 20 to December 7: Term 6

November 29	Park Lesson at Malvern 10am – 12pm
December 6	College Annual Banquet 6pm
December 7	Park Lesson at Fairfield 10am – 12pm

Park lesson at Malvern: Central Park, cnr Wattletree and Burke Rds

Park lesson at Fairfield: Fairfield Park, cnr Heidelberg Rd and Fairfield Park Drive