



The purpose of this newsletter is to inform local members of what is available to them through the society and create a forum to share thoughts and experiences of Tai Chi. The number of publications per year will depend on the response to each issue, so do let us know whether or not you think it is a good idea, and if you do, please make suggestions as to the sorts of things you would like to see included.

If you have something to say about Tai Chi, or anything related to it, then please set pen to paper, or finger to keyboard, and send it in. An illustrative photograph would be good, too. *If not you, who? If not now, when?!*

Contact Sam on 01223 504746 (email: sam.masters@dial.pipex.com) or Tormod on 01223 424610 (email: sw65@tutor.open.ac.uk) if you have something to contribute.

Suffolk Branch structure

Suffolk Branch was divided into three sub-areas last Autumn after failing to form a committee. These are Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds and Cambridge. Cambridge area includes classes in Stamford, Exton, Warboys, Isleham, Soham, Newmarket and Cambridge.

We have tried to spread the workload between a number of people throughout the area. A folder has been made up for each of the Co-ordinators which contains all the information on how to carry out the task. The tasks are:

- **Stock Co-ordinator** – acts as the intermediary between instructors and the stock room in Colchester.
- **Instructor Mailing Co-ordinator** – distributes information coming from Colchester to the instructors.
- **Membership Co-ordinator** – issues new membership cards and keeps records of membership numbers.
- **Fund-raising Co-ordinator** – keeps records of donations and correspondence relating to those in the area.
- **Demo Co-ordinator** – organises intensives and holds resources for PR and advertising.
- **Secretary** – collates information from instructors and the various task holders into a monthly report and distributes this to the branch chair person and the instructors for display in the classes.
- **Area Co-ordinator** – represents the area at branch meetings and makes certain that information is flowing within the area structure by updating task descriptions and forms.
- **Instructor** – co-ordinates between members in classes and the various task holders.

The organisation of the Society is carried out by members like yourself, so if you would like to help out with any of the above tasks contact your Area Co-ordinator whose contact number is with your instructor. Most people who are currently helping with the running of our area, say that not a lot of work is involved. It would be nice to have enough volunteers so that no-one would be expected to do a job for more than 6 months at the time.

You may well like to help out at national or at branch level. There are many sub committees which would appreciate help, particularly if you have a needed skill.

To find out about where help is needed ask your instructor and if you really would like to know what issues are being discussed by the National Committee, why not attend one of their meetings (as a paid up member you are entitled to). These meetings usually take place every month in Colchester. Read the notice board in your class where some of the juicy information is displayed or ask your instructor for details. Another good way of becoming informed is to read the various noticeboards in the practice hall when you are attending events at the Centre. ■ Tormod Holt

The Taoist Tai Chi Society has four aims and objectives. Here is one: "To make Taoist Tai Chi available to all"

Tai Chi in Colorado

When I went to Boulder, Colorado on business last year I met up with Seth whom some of you may remember, as he learned Tai Chi in Cambridge. We attended a class on the outskirts of Denver where the Society runs two classes every night and a practise session on Saturdays. It was very similar to our classes except that they don't drink tea during the break – I was told that Americans find the idea of hot drinks during exercise a bit strange.

Everybody was very friendly and made me feel welcome from the start. We did a few exercises and a set and then started to work on *Parting Wild Horse's Mane*.

At the end of the class the instructor asked us to do a set whilst smiling. He said it would help us relax. It was surprisingly difficult to smile all through the set, and I forgot several times – but I did try. At the end of the class I was given a T-shirt from the Colorado branch of the Society which I was very proud to add to my collection of Tai Chi T-shirts. ■ Susanna Wreth



Charity donations

During the last year, Cambridge area classes donated **£1366.50** to:

| | |
|--|--------|
| ● Rutland Scanner Appeal | £90 |
| ● Milton day Care Centre | £30 |
| ● The Old Drift | £20 |
| ● Stamford Careers group | £20 |
| ● East Anglia Children Hospice | £25 |
| ● Jimmy's Night Shelter | £55 |
| ● Macmillan Nurses | £30.50 |
| ● Arthritis Care | £40 |
| ● Salvation Army | £100 |
| ● Arthur Rank Day Care Centre | £30 |
| ● Pain Relief service | £30 |
| ● Fung Loy Kok | £120 |
| ● Jean Usher Hall (from the Cambridge intensive) | £212 |
| ● RSPCA | £30 |
| ● Comic Relief | £534 |



The Taoist Tai Chi Society of Great Britain is a registered charity dedicated to making the health benefits of practicing Taoist Tai Chi available to all who wish to experience them. Registered Charity No: 1053425

So, what is an INTENSIVE?



The purpose of an intensive is to work harder than you would normally in the weekly class and to receive a higher level of instruction. Work concentrates on Dan Yu's, Tor Yu's and practising moves from the set in detail. You are ready to attend an intensive when you have completed most of the set in a beginners class.

Intensives are held once a month at the Colchester Centre and frequently in other locations throughout England, Wales and Scotland. Normally they are held on a Saturday or a Sunday from 10am to 1pm and cost £3. There is no need to book for intensives, just turn up. The instructors accredited to teach intensives are; Paul Davis, Mark Knott, Crispin Barker, Cliff Slater, Betty Puleston and Paul King.

To find out where and when an intensive is taking place, ask your instructor. However, if you are prepared to travel it is worth phoning instructors in other areas to ask if they are holding intensives locally, as they are not necessarily publicised outside the area in which they are taking place, so you need to get proactive! ■ *Tormod Holt*



Thursday night Tai Chi in Cambridge Hills Road Sixth Form College. The two halls usually used on this night were unavailable which led to the two groups, numbering around 30 people, using this rather grand venue for one night.



So, what is a WORKSHOP?



Workshops last 1, 2 or even 5 days depending on the kind of event. Instruction is given at a high level by Andrew Kirby, Mike Usher or other International Instructors and anyone will benefit from attending. These are less of a workout than intensives and are designed towards building up improvement over several days.

The instructor may observe the group doing a set and decide from what he has seen what he will work on. He will start by demonstrating a move and explain some aspect. After the group has practised the move for a while he will go into more detail. The purpose is to give people attending the workshop something to work on over the next few months whatever their level of Tai Chi may be.

Just as in intensives the atmosphere is very friendly and non-competitive. There is no pressure to keep up, there are plenty of breaks and they are a great opportunity of meeting other people.

A 2-day workshop in Colchester costs £50 which includes accommodation and food. Concessions are also available. Longer workshops are usually fund-raising workshops taken by senior instructors from Canada. The prices for these vary but will be about £200.

Your instructor will inform you of forthcoming events and give you a workshop booking form which in most cases must be sent off with payment well in advance of the event. ■ *Tormod Holt*



What happens to the dosh?

The largest part of the enrolment fee is used for purchasing the snazzy blue T-shirts which are worn with pride by all. About 50% of your monthly fee is used for hall hire and the remainder is passed on to the national level where it is used for maintaining and expanding the society. A small percentage is passed on to the European Federation to help other countries in Europe to become established.



At present there is a large surplus of funds which is going to be used for expansion of the practice hall, alteration of the kitchen and improving the shower facilities at the Colchester Centre as well as the planned purchase of buildings in Edinburgh and Southend. The work on the Colchester Centre will commence and finish this year.

The membership fee is really an annual fee divided into twelve months to make it easier for many to afford. As a member this fee is to be due even if you have not attended the class for a while due to sickness or holiday. It is important that members make sure that the membership fee is paid each month which makes life easier for the instructor who on the whole finds it an unpleasant business to hassle for the money. Bear in mind that all instructors are volunteers and ordinary members who pay their monthly fee just like everyone else. This is in fact one of the conditions to becoming an instructor. ■ *Tormod Holt*

Fancy attending a class in another area of the UK?

As a paid up member you may attend any class run by the society, although it is important that you take your signed membership card with you. You may find that the instructor demonstrates the moves differently to what you are used to. This could be due to a different style of teaching or because he or she is working on different aspects of Tai Chi than your normal instructor. In either case you should adapt your Tai Chi to what is being taught in the class you are attending, partly out of respect for the teacher but mainly to benefit from the class.

If you attend an event in the Colchester Centre you will find details of additional classes in a folder which is held in the office in the tea room. At the moment there is no procedure for keeping an updated list of national classes so some initiative is required to find out about classes in a particular area. ■ *Tormod Holt*

This contact list for classes in the UK was correct as of January 1999

How to become an instructor

One way of progressing in Tai Chi is to become an instructor. Having to explain and demonstrate a move to other people helps to clarify it in ones own mind. The main requirement is that the movements are clear enough for a beginner to follow, but a willingness to represent the society and its aims and objectives is also important. If you are interested in progressing in this way, you should talk to your instructor about it. He or she will tell you what to work on and arrange for you to assist in one of the existing classes. This is an important stage of learning as it may be the first time you observe the Tai Chi form of another person.

In order to become an accredited instructor you will have to attend an Assistants Workshop as well as an Instructor Workshop. Once you have been accredited you will be expected to attend at least three workshops a year. More instructors, more classes, more members and happiness all around! ■ *Tormod Holt*

● **South West Essex**

| | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Basildon | 01268 588 3824 |
| Billericay | 01277 656689 |
| Brentwood | 01702 554 213 |
| Canvey Island | 01268 680826 |
| Dartford | 01322 221460 |
| Grays | 01375 480015 |
| Northfleet | 01322 221460 |
| Rayleigh | 01268 773877 |
| S Woodham Ferrers | 01702 203552 |
| Thundersley | 01268 773877 |

● **Scotland**

| | |
|---------------|---------------|
| Aberdeen | 01224 745053 |
| Edinburgh | 0131 667 1620 |
| Forfar | 01307 468743 |
| Glasgow | 0141 945 1816 |
| Inverkeithing | 01383 730053 |
| Inverness | 01456 450641 |
| Isle of Barra | 01871 890394 |
| Linlithgow | 0131 539 5514 |
| Longniddry | 01875 853208 |
| Penicuik | 0131 228 6251 |
| Perth | 01307 468743 |
| Prestonpans | 0131 667 1620 |
| Stornoway | 01851 704974 |
| Strathaven | 01357 522509 |

● **London**

| | |
|----------------|---------------|
| Barkingside | 0181 500 0568 |
| Bethnal Green | 0181 281 5342 |
| Chadwell Heath | 0181 599 8231 |
| Chingford | 0181 599 8231 |
| Dagenham | 0181 599 8231 |
| Finchley | 0181 346 9306 |
| Holburn | 0171 837 8954 |
| Ilford | 0181 599 8231 |
| Tower Hamlets | 0181 281 5342 |
| Lambeth | 0181 521 9594 |
| Walthamstow | 0181 521 9594 |
| Woodford | 0181 599 8231 |

● **Cardiff**

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|------------|--------------|
| Caerphilly | 01222 865955 |
| Cardiff | 01222 865955 |
| Newport | 01222 865955 |

● **Mid-Essex**

| | |
|------------|--------------|
| Braintree | 01376 323776 |
| Burnham | 01621 782691 |
| Chelmsford | 01245 471352 |

| | |
|--------|--------------|
| Maldon | 01621 850648 |
| Oxford | 01865 351695 |
| Witham | 01326 520260 |

● **West-Essex**

| | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| BishopStortford | 01279 461057 |
| Brighton | 01444 246148 |
| Burgess Hill | 01444 246148 |
| Epping | 01992 523854 |
| Harlow | 01279 504450 |
| Lewes | 01444 246148 |
| Milton Keynes | 01908 585733 |
| North Weald | 01992 523854 |
| Tunbridge Wells | 01892 863043 |

● **Suffolk**

| | |
|----------------|--------------|
| Bury St Edmund | 01284 768562 |
| Cambridge | 01223 740543 |
| Ely | 01638 780039 |
| Huntingdon | 01487 822898 |
| Ipswich | 01473 410468 |
| Newmarket | 01638 780039 |
| Stamford | 01780 763021 |

● **North East Essex**

| | |
|---------------|--------------|
| Clacton | 01255 425693 |
| Colchester | 01206 563465 |
| Coggeshall | 01787 222128 |
| Earles Colne | 01787 222128 |
| Frinton | 01255 425693 |
| Halstead | 01787 224573 |
| Kelveden | 01621 817745 |
| Mersey Island | 01206 383759 |
| Mistley | 01473 327311 |
| Tiptree | 01621 816726 |
| West Bergholt | 01206 272745 |

● **South East Essex**

| | |
|--------------|--------------|
| Benfleet | 01268 794340 |
| Eastwood | 01702 523801 |
| Leigh-on-sea | 01702 477991 |
| Rochford | 01702 523801 |
| Southend | 01702 541943 |

● **Telford**

| | |
|---------------|--------------|
| Telford | 01952 604313 |
| Shrewsbury | 01952 249896 |
| Wolverhampton | 01952 610477 |

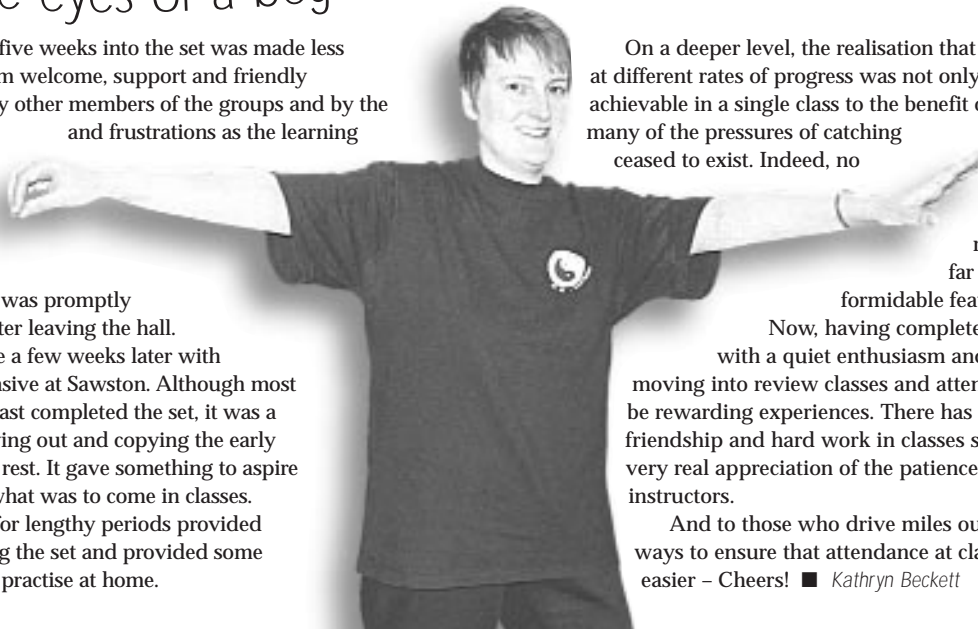
● **Ireland**

| | |
|-------------|-------------------|
| County Mayo | 00356 (0)96 73075 |
|-------------|-------------------|

through the eyes of a beginner: the first three months

Going to classes some five weeks into the set was made less daunting by the warm welcome, support and friendly encouragement shown by other members of the groups and by the sharing of experiences and frustrations as the learning process progressed. At that stage the old adage of *practice makes perfect* was not exactly holding up, especially since so much was promptly forgotten five minutes after leaving the hall.

A turning point came a few weeks later with the first Cambridge intensive at Sawston. Although most other beginners had at least completed the set, it was a useful experience just trying out and copying the early moves and watching the rest. It gave something to aspire to and an awareness of what was to come in classes. Practising single moves for lengthy periods provided anchor points for learning the set and provided some basic building blocks for practise at home.



On a deeper level, the realisation that personal development at different rates of progress was not only possible but achievable in a single class to the benefit of everyone meant that many of the pressures of catching up and keeping up ceased to exist. Indeed, no beginner could have come away from that morning without realising that there was far more to Tai Chi than a formidable feat of memory.

Now, having completed the set and armed with a quiet enthusiasm and a lot of curiosity, moving into review classes and attending intensives should be rewarding experiences. There has been a lot of fun, friendship and hard work in classes so far, and not least a very real appreciation of the patience and dedication of the instructors.

And to those who drive miles out of their respective ways to ensure that attendance at classes is made so much easier - Cheers! ■ *Kathryn Beckett*

workout: **body** versus **mind**

Why do we practice the set such a lot even when we know the sequence of the set? The effect of regular practice is that changes take place within your body. Your instructor has probably talked about this and the effect it has on your health. Consider this change as cultivation of your body and like most cultivation this will take time. However, physical exercise is not all there is to Taoist Tai Chi. In Taoist culture your physical body and your mind are not two separate entities but are parts of a whole, so in this respect cultivating the body for health without cultivating the mind and spirit does not make sense. Understanding this can be viewed as part of one of the Society's aims and objectives: 'cultural exchange'.

Master Moy created the society so that members would have a place not only to develop our physical well-being, but also a place where they can have a mind and spirit workout. The aim in Taoist culture is to revert to "one's original nature"; one may describe this as achieving a calm emotional state. The Taoist method used to achieve this is sometimes referred to as "tempering of the heart". It is easy to imagine cultivation of the body, but what does a workout of the mind and spirit look like? As in the cultivation of your body, changes will take place when cultivating your mind. To do this, no fancy equipment is needed, only participation in activities which make a difference to others. For example, the society can not exist if tasks are not carried out by someone and it is the willing volunteering manner which cultivates the mind (tempering the heart). Volunteering, reducing one's ego, putting others before oneself, are all helpful mind and spirit exercises. It is not the size of the task but the willingness to help which forms the quality of the workout. This is why another aim and objective of the Society is 'to help others'. (Have you found the other two aims and objectives within these pages?)

To cultivate your body, attend classes and workshops – to cultivate your mind, participate in the society. ■ *Tormod Holt*

How to get hold of a **fancy T-shirt**

You will need a cunning plan. Uncommon Tai Chi T-shirts are often used for fund-raising purposes and so occasionally a foreign T-shirt finds its way into a class along with some raffle tickets. If you buy a ticket, you may be lucky. You might also go to workshops attended by members from abroad who will sometimes bring along T-shirts which are for sale. Another way would be to attend a class abroad or become friendly with a foreign member so that arrangements (nudge, nudge, wink, wink) can be made on how to get hold of an alien T-shirt – of course in a strictly legal and above board manner.

Good luck. ■ *Tormod Holt*

attending classes **abroad**



Some preparation must be carried out before attending classes when you're gallivanting around the world. You will need to take with you a letter of introduction issued by the Branch Chairperson (as well as your passport, toothbrush and any other useful items such as spare socks!). Do not request this letter the day before you are leaving – remember that the chairperson (who's contact number can be obtained from your instructor) is also a volunteer.

Berlitz has not yet got around to publishing a pocketbook of 'Tai chi classes in funny places' and books about Tai Chi journeys are unlikely to contain the locations of worldwide Taoist Tai Chi classes. The easiest way to find out if there is a class near to your holiday destination is to contact the

addresses given below or look at the *website*: <http://taoist.org/Locations/locations.html> for more local addresses.

Some members take a small gift with them – often a locally designed T-shirt from home, unworn of course.

You are sometimes given correction on your Tai Chi when abroad which can be a bit confusing, so talk to your instructor about it when you are back in your class.

If you are off to the land of moose and glory (Canada) to do Tai Chi, and intend to spend some time there, do not just turn up and expect to be given a place to stay. Contact the centres well in advance of travel and be prepared to help out with various tasks such as maintenance, cooking and so on. ■

CANADA

Taoist Tai Chi Society of Canada

1376 Bathurst Street, Toronto, Ontario M5R 3J1

Tel: +416 656 2110 • Fax: +416 654 3937

E-mail: canada@taoist.org

There are many clubs throughout Canada – more details on the internet

USA

Taoist Tai Chi Society of the USA

1310 North Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32303

Tel/Fax: +904 224 5438

E-mail: usa@taoist.org

MEXICO

Asociacion Mexicana de Tai Chi Taoist Mexico

Sinaloa #80, Col. Roma, Mexico, D.F. 06700

Tel: +523 3711 • Fax: +360 5987

AUSTRALIA

Taoist Tai Chi Society of Western Australia

PO Box 824, Fremantle, WA 6160

Tel: +61 9 339 1331 • Fax: +61 9 339 1331

E-mail: australia@taoist.org

NEWZEALAND

Taoist Tai Chi Society of New Zealand

PO Box 224, Rotorua, NZ

Tel: +64 07 346 0175

EUROPE

Taoist Tai Chi Society – European Federation

Bounstead Road, Blackheath, Colchester, Essex CO2 0DE, England

Tel: +44 1206 576167 • Fax: +44 1206 572269

E-mail: europe@taoist.org

Classes in:

- Austria • Belgium • Czech Republic • Denmark • France • Germany • Hungary • Ireland • Italy • The Netherlands • Poland • Portugal • Spain • Sweden • Switzerland • UK •

Here is
another aim and
objective:

**"To promote the
health-improving
qualities of Taoist
Tai Chi"**