



Tai Chi Newsletter

<https://www.paintingtherainbow.co.uk>

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Community Based Tai Chi & Chi-Kung for everyone

Improvement cannot always be measured, it is something you feel

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<https://www.taichinewsletters.co.uk> e-mail us: markpeters@kaiming.co.uk



30th Anniversary 1994-2024

Sometimes you blink and years have whizzed by. It is hard to believe it will be thirty years, in March 2024, since we first formed the **Kai Ming Association for Tai Chi Chuan**. Kai Ming translates as ‘open-minded’ as that was and is our ethos. The Chinese characters used are a mix of classical and modern to add another dimension to their meaning. Hunt Emerson and Jenny Peters (my wife) designed the celebratory logo shown above; some of you ordered club tops with the new logo, which is great.

Our annual weekend camp is planned for **7th & 8th September**, and we’re looking for a special theme this year to add to the celebrations; if you have any requests/suggestions, please do let us know. We’re currently considering a viewing of the documentary “**Professor Cheng Man Ching’s Journey West**” which is about an hour.



Interest is building in tai chi & qigong.

Maybe you have noticed the increased mention of tai chi in the press, social media, and even popping up in TV programs. It’s a sure sign the world is waking up to its many benefits including how it helps people with long-covid.

In January, for example, the Times had two featured articles:
(1) Calmer mind, smaller waist, younger brain — we should all be doing tai chi;
(2) Qigong: a guide for midlife men.

The first article stated “*Studies have shown that, practised regularly, it enhances mood and sleep patterns, balance, and blood pressure. It keeps joints healthy and strengthens bones, and a 2021 study by scientists at the University of Hong Kong and the Chinese University of Hong Kong showed that it can help to shrink waistlines more effectively than conventional workouts can. Now comes evidence that tai chi has anti-ageing benefits*”.

Another extract is “*One study involving 9,263 participants conducted at the University of Auckland in New Zealand found that tai chi produced a host of ‘psychological and physical benefits’ including improved flexibility, lung capacity and balance, and even the running speed of volunteers by ensuring that their bodies moved more efficiently.*

And while it burns only about 108 calories in half an hour, similar to a moderate walk, the Hong Kong team reported that over 12 weeks people practising tai chi two to three times weekly lost 1.8cm from their midriff — and lowered their cholesterol levels — compared with 1.3cm lost by those doing regular weights and aerobic exercise.

It’s time to move slowly and gracefully towards tai chi.”

There are increasing levels of evidence of the physical and psychological benefits of tai chi & qigong, and I train NHS staff in its use with patient groups.

Tai chi & qigong are far more accessible as mindful exercise for people with health conditions. Let’s keep spreading the word.



A body released from unnecessary tension is at liberty to respond to gravity with ‘free’ support from the ground upwards; to effortlessly ‘inflate’ in all directions with fluid stability and elastic movement potential.

Release, relax, connect, and flow.



Donations

As many of you may know, each year at Christmas Kai Ming donates to several charities.

This year we decided to donate to local charities in Birmingham, Litchfield, and Tamworth, and make smaller donations to several other nominated larger charities.

West Midlands Hedgehog Rescue
Nominated by Litchfield class

Tamworth Wellbeing and Cancer Support Group.
Nominated by Tamworth Class

Happyfields Animal Sanctuary. Birmingham

Donkey Sanctuary - Birmingham Sutton Park.

Animals Asia - Bile Bear Rescue Sanctuaries

Fauna & Flora - protection for Pangolins

Brooke - Working donkeys, horses & mules in poor countries.

Guide Dogs for the Blind.

West Midlands Hedgehog Rescue does amazing work saving and rehoming hedgehogs. Run entirely by volunteers and raising funds from donations. Please look at their website and watch the videos: www.wmhr.org.uk

Tamworth Wellbeing and Cancer Support Group support people and their families, in their needs while coping with cancer and other chronic illnesses.



Dedicated student award

Last year we introduced this award in memory of Andrew Mcauley (Mac); see the February 2023 newsletter for more details.

This year we have several nominations/awards:
David Green from Heather Lomas,



Many Scott, Margaret Gendle, Martin Trevett, and Rachael Summer from John & Lynne Jenkins.



Jean Howell, Jean Kerby, and Robert Taylor from Neil Rankine.



Tai chi as an art has always expounded the connections to heaven and earth, being as one with nature, flowing like a river, being flexible as the branches of a tree, and being rooted like a great oak. Connect to the heavens. Take heed of the animals and birds. How they defend themselves, and how our ecology is enriched by them.

So it is sad and frightening that the biggest manufacturing countries in the world take no heed of this fact.

I wrote the article below 10 years ago, never thinking things would escalate so rapidly.

I feel now is the time to put it out.

“You Ain’t Seen Nothing Yet” Said The Wind!

After “The Great Storm” on Friday the 14th of February 2014 I felt the need to share my experience of it and my feelings that night, by putting it down in writing

Anyone who knows me will tell you I don’t talk “Chi” or “energies” very much. As a Nurse for most of my working life I interpret Chi as the circulation of oxygen in the blood to your brain and major organs, which need this vital ingredient to function to their maximum; of course, if your lungs are healthy

and you are breathing normally this hopefully will be all the time. Thus we are energized by oxygen (we have the energy), and yes in its broadest sense, we take this from the air and the planet we live on.

On Friday night after a day of warnings that the storm battering the South Coast was on its way, it arrived with a vengeance. Around midnight as I was getting ready to go to bed (yes, I am a night bird) I stood in the conservatory that overlooks the garden listening to the roar of the wind.

Something drew me outside, still cannot say what, as the noise was bad enough inside, but I just had to go. I stood, listened, and felt, and now have difficulty in putting into words the experience. Awesome, amazing, breathtaking, frightening, powerful, and overwhelming, is not really enough to describe it.

But I suppose the one emotion that was foremost was humbling. Trees (even the largest, tallest and strongest) were bending almost 45 degrees as the gusts overpowered them. Branches snapping off and leaves swirling up from the ground, Shed roof tarpaulins being ripped off in enormous pieces to go racing high in the air across the neighbouring gardens, to be thrown to the ground in disgust.

We have express trains and heavy goods trains that rumble loudly at times past the bottom of our garden, but the noise they make is nothing compared to this night.

The wind roared around me, and I suppose the only way I would describe it was this sudden feeling of power/energy the likes of which I have never felt before. It was something akin to a connection to this power or whatever you choose to call it, and it was incredible, it made my body almost tingle.

But I also felt that the power of this wind was generated by anger, it was as if nature was flexing its muscles and saying loudly “this is the only way I can speak to you, to warn you, that if you do not heed me You ain’t seen nothing yet”. Looking around the world at all the natural disasters that in part we have caused (and are still causing) by our abuse of nature it seems that we need to take that warning to heart.

I amazed myself by what I have written, as I am a pretty down to earth person normally, not prone to waxing lyrical about the weather but just taking it for granted that we are doing something to protect our planet.

But I got the message, and I hope for all our sakes that many others with the power to try and turn the tide did also.



Instructor Grading 2023

Each year we run our instructor grading to ensure we are happy with the quality and development of our team. Some are regrading as their certificates are due, some are upgrading, and some are grading as new Junior Instructors. We're really pleased to announce everyone passed and here they are receiving their new certificates.

When you see them, please remember to congratulate them.



*Perry Bennett
Instructor*

*Lynette Colins
Junior Instructor*



*David Moore
Junior Instructor*



*Linda Barrett
Instructor*



*Caroline Gibson
Instructor*



*Kathy Payne
Instructor*



*Paul Meacham
Junior Instructor*

*Alyson Ashmore
Junior Instructor*



*Sarah Taylor
Instructor*



Advanced monthly training sessions.

Sessions are held each month for 3 hours at Weoley Hill Village Hall, Bournville, to enable instructors time for their own training and for more advanced students to gain the time to develop a deeper understanding of the application of tai chi chuan.

Sessions are Sunday's 9.30-12.30 at £30 per person.

What3words location <https://w3w.co/pits.level.cake>

Training in 2024 starts with

18th Feb
17th March
14th April
12th May
9th June
7th July
11th August
6th October
10th November



Weekend camp – 9.30am to 4pm
7th & 8th September