



National News

summer edition 08-09

Letter from the President



The official Newsletter
of the Taoist Tai Society
of Australia Inc.

Positive growth is continuing

2008

Many positive things have happened for the Taoist Tai Chi Society of Australia Inc during the last 12 months. Not least, our total membership at 30 June 2008 was around 2500 members, which is an increase of approximately 400 members over last year.

We have had good attendances at many of our workshops, including 2 international workshops led by visiting international instructors from Canada and the USA. Of particular note was Tony Kwong's 'long march' through all the capital cities on the eastern seaboard during March 2008, to follow on from Tony's visits to many Western Region branches in November 2007. The series of intensives which Tony conducted proved very popular with a broad range of members. This year too we had a record number (7) of Continuing Instructors in-Training (CITs) go to CIT Week at the International Centre in Canada.

Implementation of our new online membership database is going well and seven branches are now using the database for tracking membership payments and other member-related information, and more branches will begin using it in the coming months.

In November 2007 TTCSA decided to look into the possible acquisition of a second property in Australia for a regional centre in Brisbane. A preliminary building purchase strategy has been developed and was presented to the International Taoist Tai Chi Society. Since the November decision

- total membership numbers = 2500 at 30 June 2008
- 2 international workshops
- 7 of Continuing Instructors in-Training go to CIT Week in Canada
- new online membership database
- property search for Eastern Regional centre
- charitable institution status granted

the strategy has been broadened with a view of being as flexible as possible to be able to look into other purchase opportunities that may arise.

Also in November 2007, the Management Committee of TTCSA commenced a forward planning exercise to be able to be more pro-active in addressing the challenges facing the Society in Australia and to make best use of limited resources available. See inside this newsletter for a one-page summary.

Another pleasing piece of news is that in August 2008 we received

notice from the ATO that our application for endorsement as a charitable institution had been granted. This outcome is especially meaningful as Master Moy always wanted our organisations to have charitable status if possible, in accordance with objective 4 of the Aims and Objectives ('To help others'). The ATO granted us this status on the basis that the objects contained in our constitution include the advancement of religion, reflecting the fact that the teachings we offer are grounded in Taoist practices for the cultivation of body, mind and spirit.

Elisabeth Clevers-Schatten
President – Taoist Tai Chi Society
of Australia Inc

On behalf of the National Management Committee



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Aims and Objectives of the Taoist Tai Chi Society

1. Make *Taoist Tai Chi*™ internal arts available to all
2. Promote the health benefits
3. Promote cultural exchange
4. Help others

Strategic process looks to the FUTURE

During the past year the national Management Committee has encouraged a process of reflection on our longer term strategy and planning. This culminated in a one-day meeting in Brisbane on 16 July 2008, and below is a one-page summary of the core ideas that were generated. These will guide us in relation to operational matters and priorities, while keeping the Society's Aims and Objectives very much in the forefront.

The international Aims & Objectives:

1. Make *Taoist Tai Chi*™ internal arts available to all
2. Promote the health benefits
3. Promote cultural exchange
4. Help others

Our Australian Plan

Over the coming 5 years our intentions are to progress the Aims & Objectives by:

- A. Deepening our understanding and enhancing our learning.
- B. Getting things done and keeping on track.
- C. Growing the membership.
- D. Housing ourselves.

We will do this by embracing the goals, and taking the actions, that follow:

A. Deepening our understanding and enhancing our learning

In working towards this we are committed to:

- Developing and maintaining a program of instructor and member education which promotes understanding of the roots of our tradition and the internal arts we teach, and maintains the quality and consistency of instruction.
- Keeping the commitment to our oral culture and way of doing things and paying attention to the balance between oral and written.

Actions to progress this strategic intention include:

- Improving instructor and branch councillor training, including regular instructor forums and "How to teach Beginners" workshops, Local Branch Council training sessions and succession planning.
- Setting up resources to assist branches with keeping in touch with members and lapsed members.
- Establish and improve processes to share 'lessons learnt'.

B. Get things done and keep on track.

We are committed to:

- Developing, maintaining and the continuous improvement of our systems and communication processes so that the organisation runs well at all levels.
- Using modern technologies where that can aid communication, administration, financial management and reduce the risk of fraud.
- Spreading the administrative workload between as many members and volunteers as possible, so that getting involved is not onerous and individuals do not get overloaded.

Actions to progress this strategic intention include:

- Streamlining and improving our administrative systems, including improved use of Internet and other electronic media.
- Looking at improvements in the areas of membership payments and opportunities for Branches to input to our financial management.

C. Growing the membership

We are committed to promoting and educating about the benefits of the *Taoist Tai Chi*™ internal arts to existing and future members.

Actions to progress this strategic intention include:

- Having a national marketing and promotion program to provide a consistent image and message.
- Implementing the Membership Database for all branches.
- Developing our knowledge of and resources for delivery of Health Recovery classes.
- Encouraging young people to join and take leadership roles in the Society.

D. Housing Ourselves

We are committed to accommodating/locating our classes and member activities in venues that are accessible and appropriate and which as far as possible enable the long-term security of the Society's operations.

Actions to progress this strategic intention include:

- Developing a checklist for branches seeking premises including locational aspects, premises requirements, negotiation hints, potential pitfalls, financial viability.
- Fundraising for the establishment of an Eastern Centre and other properties as appropriate.
- Reducing our environmental footprint by implementing our Environmental Policy.

Tai Chi delivers health benefits to accident victim

In August 2006 I was involved in a motor vehicle accident that resulted in a lateral fracture of the tibia and damage to the knee. After being trapped in the vehicle wreck for over an hour, I was transferred by helicopter to a hospital emergency department where I spend the next 8 hours while my condition stabilised. Two days later, I underwent extensive surgery to repair the damage in the leg and commence the recovery process.

I was unable to bear any weight for 8 weeks and then commenced a program of physiotherapy and exercises designed to return some flexibility, strength and usage to the wasted muscle and support structure of the leg. By the beginning of 2007, I had restored some usage and flexibility. At about this time, a new Tai Chi beginner course started in Toowoomba. As I had commenced two beginner classes in 2006 (albeit the second was interrupted) and had attended continuing classes, I decided to start Tai Chi again.

I attended the introductory week, hobbling to lessons on a walking stick... After some weeks... I was able to build enough condition to attend classes without a walking aid.

My plan was to complete a beginner course and continue to build up some strength and flexibility. I then hoped to move on to continuing classes. I attended the introductory week, hobbling to lessons on a walking stick. After some weeks of re-learning the moves, as I had been absent from Tai Chi for 5 months, I was able to build enough condition to attend classes without a walking aid. The strength and flexibility in the leg continued to improve over the course of the 4 month beginner course to the point that, after completing the course, I considered I was ready to commence continuing lessons. That first night of Dan Yu's and Tor Yu's was memorable. I did leave from that Monday night

class with a renewed flexibility in the damaged leg. Improvements that had occurred during the re-learning of the 108 moves of the set were enhanced by the refinements available through continuing classes.

My experience has been that the gentle exercise afforded by the Tai Chi set and foundation exercises continues to improve the strength and flexibility in my damaged leg. The benefits I received have not only been physical, as I believe the moving mediation provided by the Tai Chi set, and the general social atmosphere and support available from fellow Tai Chi practitioners has played a significant part in overcoming the mental challenges that an event such as this accident and its aftermath have presented. I intend to continue experiencing the physical and mental benefits afforded by the practice of Tai Chi and associated internal arts for some time to come.

Graham Moore
Toowoomba Branch

what a workshop



'A feeling of solidity and confidence pervaded the National Instructor Workshop in Brisbane in July. Seventy-seven instructors and set leaders representing most branches from across Australia attended, including twenty-three instructors from the Western Region. This ensured a warmth of feeling akin to a family reunion or a get-together of old friends.'

Ned Crossley, *Narrogin*


'My abiding memory of this workshop is energy, cooperation and enthusiasm. We were there to help each other explore the lessons being shared.'

Sally Mercer, *Bayswater*

Photo of *Sticky hands practice* at the National Instructor Workshop.

National Instructor Workshop Australia

IN BRISBANE - OLD



19-20 July 2008

www.taoist.org.au
click on workshops

Following the success of the 2007 NIW at the Bayswater National Centre, the 2008 NIW will again offer the opportunity for instructors to get together and share knowledge and experience, this time in Brisbane.


Topics will include:

- Aspects of development in Taoist Tai Chi™ internal arts and methods – physical, mental and spiritual
- Taoist approaches to ageing
- What are the basics of good instructing?
- Review and practice of foundations and moves

Open to all instructors, set leaders and interested members. This workshop will be facilitated jointly by members of the Australian National Instruction Coordination Committee.

When	Weekend of 19-20 July 2008
Times	Saturday 9:30am – 5:00pm Sunday 9:30am – 4:00pm
Cost	\$100 inc GST
Location	Level 1, 566 Lutwidge Rd. Lutwidge Queensland
Registration	Please register using the registration form available at www.taoist.org.au

For more information email registrar.bris@taoist.org



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Beyond the TAI CHI SET



During my initial experience as a member and then as a set leader and instructor I wrongly thought that teaching and learning the Tai Chi (taijiquan) set were the main goals. Now, through my short experience as an instructor, I have discovered there is more beyond the 108 moves.


Our organisation is a place that welcomes everybody, disregarding their social or cultural background, their own history, personality, gender, race, religion, sexual preferences, age, physical or psychological conditions. This is, to me, is the most valuable virtue in the philosophy of our Society. I have discovered that taijiquan is a tool for us to improve

our life style, to achieve well-being and relate to others with more patience, generosity and with an unselfish heart. Teaching *Taoist Tai Chi™* internal arts has allowed me to forget about my problems and appreciate that others have harder lives. This feeling of leaving the cave of my own little world and connecting with others has had amazing benefits for my own growth as a better person.

For example I have noticed that some people suffer from loneliness, stress or other psychological problems and they find great benefit in coming to a class for one and a half hours where they can laugh and connect

to a group in a social environment where they are valued and welcome. People may not remember the set properly, and have trouble with balance and keeping a good form. However, they feel happy and accepted for what they are. Angles, shifting the weight, turning the hips and correct timing are all good for our practice, but finding a place where we are welcome and respected is an extremely important thing in a world which is sometimes very individualistic and selfish. Our organisation really is based on some beautiful principles passed on to us by the generous heart of Master Moy.

Adriana Baz
Melbourne

 I have discovered that taijiquan is a tool for us to improve our life style, to achieve well-being



International Awareness Day Fun in all weather & all paws

A special International Awareness Day was held this year in Ottawa, Canada, on 31 May. More than 1800 members from around the world attended, including 7 members from Australia.

The day prior was a beautiful sunny day, but the day itself was pouring rain. However, spirits were not dampened.