



National News

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2009–2010

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



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BUILDING PURCHASED in Toowoomba

In May 2009 the Taoist Tai Chi Society of Australia purchased a building for the Toowoomba Branch at 10-12 Gregory Street in Toowoomba. This is the second building the Society has purchased in Australia and the first one on the east coast. The land area of the Toowoomba premises is 2023 square metres and contains a double storey brick building and a single storey wooden hall plus about 20-22 car parking places on site.

Before the purchase, all due diligence reports were obtained, and there was good news and bad news. The good news was that we did not need to apply for a change in town planning approval to use the buildings for our purposes. The bad news was that asbestos was discovered in the ceiling of the main hall. This was professionally removed and replaced with a new ceiling in June before the branch moved into the new premises.

On the last weekend in June the Branch organized a working bee and sausage sizzle, and it was great to see over 30 members, including from other branches in south-east Queensland, coming to help and have a look at the building at the same time. The first weekend in July finally saw the branch moving into the new building and the first class was held on Monday, 6 July 2009.

In July we had our first Tai Chi workshop in the new building, when international instructor Tony Kwong visited and led a weekend workshop, with 82 members attending. It was great to see participants coming from all over Australia and New Zealand, including several members from the Western Region. The day

before the workshop, Tony Kwong performed a purification ceremony for the property, to which all members were invited. Tony also inaugurated a small Earth God shrine for the building, next to the door leading into the main hall. The Earth God traditionally looks after the wellbeing and wealth of the people occupying the building.



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Aims and Objectives

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

MEMBERSHIP DUES INCREASE

The national Management Committee has approved a modest increase in membership dues, as of **1 January 2010**. There will be a **\$2** increase to all monthly dues categories. For new members, the Registration Fee will increase from \$25 to \$30. Members may pay in advance at the current ('old') dues rate, until 31 December 2009.

To put this into perspective, in the year 2000, our regular membership dues in Australia were \$33. With CPI changes from the year 2000 to now, this would equate to \$42 today. Prior to the planned increase, the regular dues are \$38 including GST, which means they have not kept up with inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index.

Did you know that you can pay your dues on an annual or semi-annual basis? Not only does this provide the Society with greater certainty about our income, but it also provides you with substantial savings. See our dues schedule for details. **In addition, it is now possible to pay annual dues via online direct deposit.** Please check with your instructor for more information.

International Awareness Day in Toronto on 12 September included Australian representative **Hugh Sykes** (Bayswater branch) carrying the flag.



THE purchase of a second property by the Taoist Tai Chi Society of Australia is a wonderful testament to the efforts of our members to contribute their time and money. Both the Bayswater National Centre and the Toowoomba clubrooms have been purchased entirely through the efforts of members, without grants or assistance from outside the Society. Likewise, the \$13 million raised to pay for the Quiet Cultivation Centre came entirely from within the Society.

In my early years in the Society I used to wonder why we were always encouraged to give. Over the years I have reached a better understanding of the practical virtues of fundraising and of what we can achieve when we all work together. Mr Moy always encouraged us to give what we can, however little or however much. I remember once he was showing a student

He put a \$20 bill on the outstretched hand of the student and said "give it away"

how to stretch out the body in the move Parting Wild Horses Mane. He put a \$20 bill on the outstretched hand of the student and said "give it away". The student stretched a little more. Mr Moy said, "Give it away generously."

The student stretched out even further. Sometimes when there is a fundraising project on the go, I remember that lesson. There's something about the open, generous stretching in our Tai Chi that is mirrored in what our Master asked of us in our approach generally, and in our approach to money. Every dollar, given generously, helps the Society to operate and grow.

Thank you to all our members who apply their creativity and time to our fundraising projects, and to all who give so generously.

Heath Greville, Fremantle Branch, Western Australia

International Awareness Day 2009



“My Story” 1

‘I am in a better state of health and a more stable person than I have ever been’

Since starting Tai Chi in 1998, I have experienced many benefits both physically and mentally.

I am now more flexible – I can now touch my toes which I have never been able to do. In addition I have had major spinal problems (sciatic nerve) self-inflicted through running, and since starting Tai Chi I no longer have to do anything else to manage this problem. Previously when I was stressed the right hand side of my face would get very sensitive – almost not able to touch – and sometimes one of my eyelids would twitch uncontrollably. Now this no longer happens.

For most of my life the large bone on the inside of elbows has been sore to touch – one day a few years ago I noticed it is no longer sore and I can press quite hard on it with no adverse reaction. My sleep pattern has also improved remarkably – I would regularly sleep for only 3 hours per night; now I very rarely lie awake at night and average 6 – 7 hours of sleep.

I am not a very social person and feel very uncomfortable in a room full of people so becoming a beginner

instructor in Taoist Tai Chi™ arts of health was a big challenge for me. However I remembered when I first started Tai Chi my beginner instructor said that he started teaching because he wanted to give something back and this has stuck with me.

I used to shake all day prior to teaching the class and shake more when I got there – I kept telling myself ‘I can do this, others do it and I will’. It did get better and by the time I had survived teaching two Tai Chi courses I was starting to feel more comfortable.

The members in an organization are what make it and I have never had the opportunity in my life to be involved with a group of people who are so supportive and friendly. I feel I am in a better state of health and a more stable person than I have ever been – Taoist Tai Chi seems to restore and strengthen the life force.

Ron Miller, Lockyer District Branch, Queensland

‘I want to get out and do things instead of isolating myself’

Eighteen months ago I was trying to get over a drug problem and the stuff that goes with it - getting over the depression, the paranoia.

“My Story” 2

A friend gave me a book called ‘Higher and Higher’ by Joss Sauer which talked about the benefits of Tai Chi for drug rehabilitation so I thought I’d give it a try and, yeah its working! It certainly does work, just doing Tai Chi consistently. You may not see the changes yourself but other people see the difference.

I rarely get depressed anymore. And when I do they are just little days; it’s just like a little hiccup and away you go. I deal with people a lot better now and I want to actually get out and about and do things instead of isolating myself. I’m more ‘not-stressed’ now; I tolerate a lot more. It has really mellowed me out. My sister said to me ‘you’re just a totally different person’. So it’s changed me a lot and I know that if I stick with it I know it’s only going to get better. It’s helped me more to relax and helped my concentration. I find I can hold my concentration for a lot longer now.

Doing Tai Chi has been very good for my work as well; it’s increased my capacity with shearing. I’m more relaxed with the sheep. So I’m not using brute force to

push the handpiece through the wool. Before when I was shearing, I was stiff and rigid and I’d find I would hold my breath; now I find I’m breathing a lot easier, the shearing is more flowing and easy. I have a lot more energy.

This year I have had no sciatic nerve pain either, that used to get me each year as the season went on. I’ve been shearing for 11 years full time and in the last 6 months or so I have noticed I’m shearing more sheep without working any harder. I went from shearing about 32 – 35 sheep a run to around 40 a run which equates to about 20 - 30 extra sheep per day, which means I can earn an extra \$60 or \$70 dollars per day.

Recently I noticed I’d be doing a Tai Chi move and I got a funny feeling go through my body and I just about started laughing and I thought, ‘what is this feeling’ and I stopped to have a think about what was going on, which I have never done before. I’d like to see the next 12 months, how I go with Tai Chi; how I am from now to where I’ll be then.

Shane Malek, Narrogin Branch, Western Australia

Annual Report

National Highlights for 2008–09

Elisabeth Clevers-Schatten
President – Taoist Tai Chi Society of Australia
On behalf of the National Management Committee

Members of the Taoist Tai Chi Society of Australia have had a busy year, with a number of very successful International Workshops, extensive national and local workshops across Australia, and the purchase of a second building for the Society in Toowoomba, Queensland. In the Australian Capital Territory, permanent premises were leased in April 2009 and this should help to accommodate the strong growth in ACT members.

Membership numbers in Australia have continued to grow and currently sit at around 2,700, an increase of about 200 from 2007/08.

As an indicator of the volume of activity, a review of the workshop schedules for calendar year 2009 reveals that the National Instruction Coordination Committee (NICC) scheduled some 130 workshops across Australia. These include a variety of Tai Chi workshops at regional and local levels, instructor forums, How to teach Beginners workshops, and workshops on the teachings of the Fung Loy Kok Institute of Taoism, Lok Hup and other arts. This is a big commitment from the members of the NICC and the Regional ICC's,

who undertake these workshops, and it is very much appreciated across all our branches. These workshops help members gain more understanding of the *Taoist Tai Chi*™ arts of health, and also to train the instructors who help make these arts available on an ever-wider basis. Across Australia we now have 173 active instructors of which 68 are Continuing Instructors in-Training (CIT).

The Taoist Tai Chi Society of Australia also sponsored a number of instructors to attend International Awareness Day and CIT Week in Canada. In June 2009 a record number of 8 Australian members attended CIT Week. These visits help us maintain our connection with the 'source' of our teachings at the International Taoist Tai Chi Centre in Ontario, Canada.

In accord with the Society's fourth Aim and Objective – To Help Others – the Society initiated fundraising for the victims of the Victorian Bushfires and the North Queensland floods. In addition many of our branches across Australia also raise funds for local charities and causes on a regular basis.

2009

Financial information for the year ended 30th June 2009.

- Membership income was \$692,000 which is a 6% increase over the previous financial year.
- Total income from all sources, including workshop income and fundraising activities was \$1.1m.
- Expenses remained within budget, although rents and site operating costs increased by 15% over the previous year.
- The net surplus was \$226,000.
- Further information is available in the audited financial accounts.

Donations given for fire & flood relief

Following the bushfires in Victoria and floods in north Queensland earlier this year, branches of the Taoist Tai Chi Society of Australia did some local fundraising to contribute to the relief efforts. These funds were tallied up and a cheque of \$4300 was sent to the Red Cross for the Victorian Bush Fire Appeal 2009, and a cheque for \$2200 was sent to the Queensland Premier's Disaster Relief Appeal. The Society has received thank-you letters from both appeals.

New T-Shirts



Aims & Objectives shirt
Colours: Turquoise & Burnt Orange

The Eastern Region Council would like to thank all those who submitted designs for the Year of the Tiger t-shirt. It was a hard choice to make, but we feel that the design submitted by Gil Field, *Bayswater WA* translates very well, and trust that you will too.



Year of the Tiger 2010 shirt
Colours: Black & Red
Style: Slim fit & Standard