

# NEWSLETTER SPRING 2008

## Grading

Our latest grading took place in March. Two people came forward this time. The venue was Thirsk Town Hall, a place where we all feel at home because we hold our weekly Association evening there. It helps to grade in familiar surroundings. As ever, our Qigong Master, Alan Box, was in charge of the grading, and offered feedback supportive and helpful in promoting further development.



Pat, (left) our newest recruit, was successful in gaining her yellow sash. She performed with style and a growing confidence. Well done, Pat.



Ro (right) challenged herself to move to blue, which she did with skill and poise. Congratulations, Ro.

The next grading date is Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> October this year. As usual, there will be pre-grading classes on the two preceding Saturdays. These will be open to all, but will focus on the needs of those preparing to grade.

Grading is a personal option and in no way expected of members. Some people find that grading gives them the impetus to work at the items in a more focused way. Others find that it takes away the freedom to experience fully the benefits of the practice.

## Open Evening

We very recently held an open evening to which all members of our classes were invited. The aim was to give people a chance to experience the difference between the more structured classes they attend and what we do on the Association evening. We wanted them to see that we are a friendly and mutually supportive group who do not see ourselves as elitist. It was also a good chance to encourage guests to consider membership.



The evening was attended by twelve people from the classes. After a welcome and brief introduction to the evening by Sifu Pat Brooks, we began with the silent meditation and static exercises. Trainee instructor Sue then led us in the moving exercise Crane Walks. The physical warm-up followed. Pat introduced the qigong form Tiger Enters the Forest, which was quite different in style to anything most people had experienced before, and which they seemed to enjoy. After this members gave tuition on a number of different exercises and forms, so that guests could choose what they wanted to work on.

Since then five people have decided to join the Association and attend the Wednesday evening group. We are very glad to welcome them and any others who join us.

### **Workshops**

This year so far we have had a very enjoyable and successful workshop on the first two animals of the Five Animal Frolics. Plans are to complete the form at the residential in September.

The next workshop is on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> June in Thirsk Town Hall, 10.00-4.00, when Master Alan Box will be teaching the Yang Style T'ai Chi form.

Later in the year, on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> November Alan will be teaching Dr. Paul Lam's T'ai Chi for Diabetes Patients. This will again be in the Town Hall, 10.00-4.00. The movements are of interest to all, not specifically for patients or teachers.

### **Residential**

Sue has spent a great deal of time over the last months doing the spadework required to get our first residential week-end organised and booked. You will have seen the leaflet. If you don't already know it, you will find Upper Nidderdale is a beautiful area to spend time in. The place we are using is quite basic but has all we need to spend some time together and to learn the form. The dates, if you

haven't already noted them, are Friday evening 26<sup>th</sup> September – Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> September.

## **New Links**

We have decided, after consultation with him, to have a reciprocal arrangement with Alan Box's Harmony organisation and the Vale of York for associate membership. If you belong to VoY you can, for a small fee, become an associate member of Harmony. You will have the benefits of membership without voting rights. Members of Harmony can become associates of our organisation in the same way.

We also hope to forge closer links with Lynne's Five Elements T'ai Chi Qigong. We have already been invited to participate in a Snake workshop being taught by Alan Box on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> September at Romanby WI hall, 10.00-4.00. We shall be delighted to welcome members of Lynne's classes to our own workshops and to the residential.

## **Committee**

At the AGM in February some changes to the committee came into effect. Valerie, who had ably chaired for some years, resigned her position and also resigned from the committee. She feels that it is time to withdraw from being so actively involved, because of her teaching commitments in Derbyshire, her family and the activities in Crete. We are very appreciative of her input and wisdom over the time of her holding the chair, and wish to thank her for all she has done for us. We are very pleased that she will remain a member of VoY. Have a lovely time in Crete, Val.

Christine also stood down from the committee, feeling her priorities have to be elsewhere. Thanks to her too for all her common sense and commitment. We are glad she too remains a member. Annie has resigned both from the committee and from the association in order to concentrate on family and other commitments. We wish her well. Ro was voted on to the committee.

## **DVDs**

Following the success of the original DVDs based on grading pieces, Harmony is now working on producing further DVDs to which Pat Brooks has been asked to do voice-overs. This also involves the technical skill and experience of Judith, who makes all kinds of things happen which otherwise might not happen at all. Thanks to her for her generous offering of time and expertise, with the web-

site and with publicity, and support of all sorts. Another project is for us to record on CD some of the deep relaxation and meditation that the instructor trainees have shared.

### **Instructor Training**

The three year instructor training under the auspices of Harmony is now well into its final year. Sue and Andrea will soon qualify. Sue is teaching classes in Thirsk and Ripon. Annie is also part of the group. Alan Box has started a new instructor training programme in Derbyshire, to which Pat Brooks will contribute with deep relaxation and meditation techniques.

### **Thanks**

Thanks to Judith for putting the newsletter together and contributing the pictures and anything else she might surprise us with. I would welcome with open arms any contributions from anyone else for the next newsletter which will come out in the autumn. You may have read a book or heard a CD you want to recommend, or you may have some comment to make on anything to do with your experience of classes and of T'ai Chi Qigong. Please let me, Pat Brooks, have your input. Thank you.

### **Postscript from Judith**



As the competitions have not been well supported recently, I am trying something completely different. Members will have received a cross-stitch chart to embroider a small silhouette of our Sifu executing a single whip. Non-members wishing to purchase a copy of the chart please send £1 with your name and address to the secretary to receive the chart only by post. All profits will go to club funds.

If this proves popular, there could be more!