

# Comment

The big item in the tai chi calendar this month is World Tai Chi Day on 30th April.

The event was founded by Bill Douglas and his wife Angela Wong Douglas 20 years ago. This was about the time I started in tai chi. As I became more connected to the art I noticed emails popping into my inbox advertising WTCD. I was impressed that such a thing existed although my tai chi master at the time seemed quite disinterested so I never really found out much more. Others, it seems, were more active and, as this edition has to go to press before the end of April, we are publishing reports from previous years.

Bill Douglas has spent many years collecting research on mind-body practices and the advantage of this type of practice in healing. We do seem to be in an era where what we do is being appreciated by conventional western medicine and mindful systems are no longer instantly dismissed as 'new age'.

It happens in all sorts of ways. About a year ago I fell into the clutches of the NHS and one day found myself on a gym bike, hooked up to an ECG machine. I rather felt that I was cheating. I learnt my breathing 40 years ago from a karate teacher. (Actually he also introduced me to the concept of using internal energy – ki he called it, chi in our terms.) So pedalling this bike was a bit of a doddle and they gave up before I did. But, on the wall in front of me was an interesting poster advocating abdominal breathing as a help to preparing yourself for and recovering from surgery.

'Good to know they are catching on at last,' I thought.

“Can you manage another two or three minutes?” someone interrupted my thoughts: 'What? Oh yeah, no problem.'

*John Roper*

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## TAI CHI CHUAN & INTERNAL ARTS

Is published by The Tai Chi Union for Great Britain C.I.C

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