

National Qigong Association of America



Michael Lomax's Qi Transmission during the Medical Qigong Seminar

Late July 2005 I travelled to Boulder, Colorado, USA, to participate in the 10th Annual Conference of the National Qigong (Chi Kung) Association - USA. Aside from the obvious interest of visiting such an auspicious event, it gave me an opportunity to re-visit a very dear friend, James MacRitchie, acupuncturist, qigong practitioner, author, and Founder of the NQA, and his gracious wife, and Chi partner, Damaris Jarboux. Jim and Damaris co-direct The Chi Kung School at The Body-Energy Centre in Boulder, and were the local hosts of the conference.

I arrived in Boulder late Tuesday evening, rested, and then enjoyed a bicycle ride along the bike paths around the various creeks which lay at the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. Early Wednesday evening I settled in at the university campus and enjoyed a light snack with Jim, Michael DeMolina (Chairperson), Bonnie Roy (President) and Wanda Warren (Board Member). It was good to spend a little time on the periphery of a conference rather than being hands-on in an organisational capacity, as I am usually.

The conference itself ran from Friday morning through to Monday afternoon and offered an incredible range of approaches to Qigong. Well, actually the weekend session ran Friday Evening, Saturday and Sunday with Friday and Monday daytime being optional one-day workshops.

Donning my reporter's (rather than putting my personal interest to the fore) I checked out the Clinical Treatment Forum, an area which doesn't seem to be too prevalent in Europe. I listened intently as a group of professionals talked about their various experiences and demonstrated a typical clinical treatment session. These very serious practitioners offered a variety of approaches to the treatment

of the whole range of human conditions - physical ailments and symptoms, emotional balance, mental function, and SoulSpirit integration. The speakers were Daisy Lee-Garripoli, Damaris Jarboux, Roger Jahnke, Richard Leirer, Michael Lomax, Jim MacRitchie and Frank Yurasek. Each speaker was given a slot of around 45 minutes to illustrate how they used Qigong/Chi Kung as a treatment tool. Methods included Raising the Vibrational Level which involved simultaneous diagnosis and treatment via energy transmission (Michael Lomax), Engaging the Patient in an Experience of Their Own Healing Power (Roger Jahnke), Yijinjing for Violent Offenders (Frank Yurasek), Eight Extra Meridians (Jim MacRitchie) and Chi Kung Healing (Damaris Jarboux). One common thread was their mutual desire to allow patients to facilitate their own healing process through regular personal practice.

On Friday evening, the official opening took place in the Glen Miller Ballroom (the good man attended the university and started his first band there.) This began with a one-hour Keynote Address by renowned Taoist Priest and Doctor, Jeffery Yuen, entitled "Qigong and Spiritual Cultivation". We were then introduced to seven of the Founders of the NQA, and treated to a brief overview of the past 10 years.

Next, with over 250 people in attendance, Jim introduced the 50 'Presenters' of the conference, then asked them to form a circle around the room and the audience, take their places and proceed, in whatever way they chose, to give their Qi to the assembled crowd. The sight and sense of this incredible Chi Field was soon evident to all in attendance. The evening ended with a deep resonance permeating everyone. First thing on Saturday morning, as an invited Guest Speaker representing the Taijiquan & Qigong Federation for Europe and the Tai Chi Union for Great Britain to the whole assembly, I provided an overview of Qigong in Europe detailing the legal, social and health situations as it was taught and practised in the various European countries. Much to my surprise, a good number of practitioners were genuinely interested in how things are in Europe and I'm sure continued exchange of information will benefit all in the qigong community, wherever they may be.

Having seen the Five Animal Frolics performed at a number of European events over the years, I visited Livia Koln's morning session to investigate her approach. Rather than offering a workshop Livia, who had spent many years delving deeply into Taoist literature, reported on the pictorial and literary sources for these popular forms whilst a number of eminent teachers (who had also attended the seminar) offered their particular interpretations of how the exercises were performed. The session proved very stimulating and thought-provoking and could well form the basis of an article in a forthcoming issue of this journal.

In the afternoon I began with a visit to Cultivating Qi Through Taijiquan with Steve Arney & Virginia Shultz, long-time students of Ben Lo. They spent a long time in standing postures and eventually went on to take the students through the early stages of the Cheng Man-Ching Handform. Worthy work, but with limited time available, I decided to move on to see what else was going on. Dancing Qigong seemed like an active qigong aerobic class led by Jack Bray with lots of enthusiastic happy dancers obviously having fun. One of the star attractions was Jeffrey Yuen, teaching Postures: The Foundation of Qigong, but by the time I dropped in they were well into their static postures.

10th Annual Conference

The early part of Saturday evening saw various presentations of awards to Committee Members and those who played a part in the success of the organisation over the past 10 years.

Jim MacRitchie, who was retiring from active duty in the organisation 15 years after his initial vision, was presented with a special plaque saying to 'The Founder of All Founders and NQA Immortal'. Jim, originally from Liverpool, in the UK, had contacted a number of key people, travelled around the country and laid the foundation for that which has become the major Qigong / Chi Kung association in the USA.

Following this, we were treated to a range of demonstrations which included Chen style Taiji, Wuji Qigong, Shamanic Qigong, Heaven & Earth Qigong and an extraordinarily intriguing form with wide ranging movements created by Roger Jahnke from his extensive practices and work with various Chinese masters. One unexpected addition for me was a Japanese Shaolin Troupe performing Wushu routines - six people had travelled from Japan with Master Qin Xi Ping to give this 10 minute presentation.

After the demonstrations, the evening culminated in a Trance Dance Extravaganza accompanied by the improvisational trance music of Jonathan Goldman & Friends. This was an opportunity for all and sundry to let go and flow with the Qi!

Not being used to purely Qigong gatherings, I sniffed out a few push-hands players and instigated an impromptu Sunday morning gathering. Around eight of us from very different backgrounds enjoyed a few tactile conversations through the art of Tui Shou.

Sunday started with a talk by Dr. Gaspar Garcia, a Guest Speaker like myself, who had travelled from Spain. A business meeting involving By Laws, amendments and voting for new members of the Board followed this.

After this, there were a series of 2 hour presentations by 8 presenters in both the morning and afternoon. The Conference ended with a closing group circle of 80+ remaining people.

Following the conference, I was extremely fortunate to be one of the guests of Jim and Damaris at their mountain retreat in the Rockies. Sixteen of their good friends spent a couple of days exploring the beautiful scenery and enjoying some qigong practice in the wonderfully natural environment, tailor-made for the purpose. The evening dinner party banquet allowed us all to get to know each other on a less formal basis and help to cement what I'm sure for many, will continue to be long-standing connections.

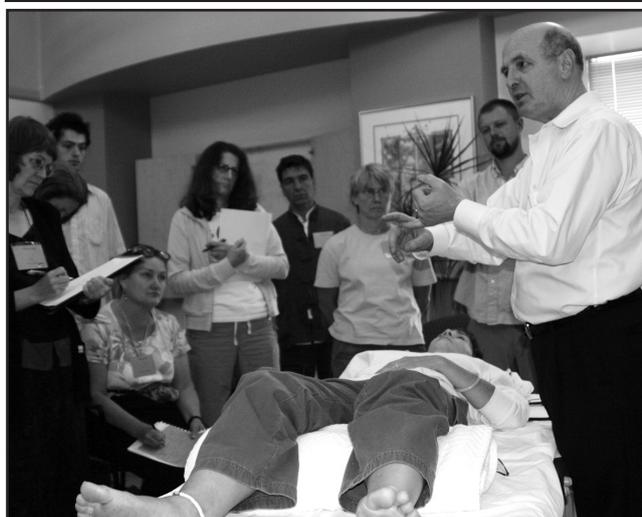
Aside from the formal and social programme, I also gleaned invaluable information on the setting of standards for Clinical Treatment with Qigong / Chi Kung in the US and enjoyed a much-needed break in the company of good friends in wonderful surroundings.

Ronnie Robinson

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gathering qi



James MacRitchie's Medical Qigong Workshop



Livia Koln's 5 Animals Seminar



4 of the NQA's original Founders: Solala Towler, Jim MacRitchie, Roger Jahnke & Gunther Weil