



At the members' update meeting in November last year, the board announced a number of initiatives to make the TCUGB more relevant to the members and the public.

These included:

A simplified joining process maintaining the high standards required from applicants applying to become instructors

The reintroduction of the printed magazine

A revamped website to make it easier for members and the public to understand the benefits and find a local teacher

The simplification of grants to help support members and the community interest aims of the TCUGB.

The board was delighted at the resulting positive feedback from members.

Because of the current economic climate many people are suffering financial and physical hardship. This can lead to problems of isolation, anxiety, poor physical and mental health and social exclusion.

We are hoping that our members can rise to the challenge and find innovative ways of teaching and helping disadvantaged individuals or groups who may be struggling and cannot afford to attend classes.

How tai chi has helped others

To give a couple of examples of how tai chi and qigong can change lives for the better:

In the mid 1970s the Hong Kong government took the brave decision to introduce tai chi classes in the large housing estates with a view to improving residents physical health and wellbeing. An unforeseen benefit was that those attending the classes forged relationships with others, became friends, and had their social lives enriched as a result.

In this country, Tony Ulatowski, a former director of the TCUGB, introduced tai chi to schools in deprived areas of London arranging tai chi classes as part of the school curriculum with competitions between schools as well as entering students in other competitions. Such activities gave young people a sense of self-worth, of being part of a team and having a wider responsibility within a community.

TCUGB supported Tony by funding the children's transport costs and entry fees to the competitions. The school teachers gave their time and support for free often driving the teams to events.

Gerda Geddes

When considering what to call the new grant it wasn't

hard to come up with the name The Gerda Geddes Fund as her life embodied many of the qualities and beliefs, we in the TCUGB embrace, and are wishing to promote with this fund.

Gerda was a migrant, moving between Norway the Far East and Britain, where she finally settled in Scotland. She opposed fascism by working with resistance groups during the Second World War, and used movement as a therapy working with Holocaust survivors. She was probably the first person to teach tai chi in the UK.

In an interview with our late editor, Ronnie Robinson, she recalled an incident when representatives of a certain group first visited the UK.

"I found the two men who came to be very, very arrogant. They didn't want to talk with anyone who had experience in tai chi and were very single-minded in their approach to the art, presenting everything as being very precise and very 'cut and dried'. I told them that my experience working with the Chinese never reflected this single-minded precision and that one person did something one way whilst another took a very different approach."

Something for us all to keep in mind when judging others.

Applying for the grant

A total amount of £4,500 has been budgeted in 2023 for The Gerda Geddes Fund with a maximum amount of £500 per project.

Each application will be considered on its merits and there will be no set criteria so allowing applicants to be imaginative. Preference will be given to projects that reflect the objectives of the TCUGB and the benefits the project can bring to the public particularly the disadvantaged or isolated members of our society. 🌍

You can read about Gerda Geddes At:

www.gerdageddes.com

Details of the scheme and an application form can be found on the TCUGB website: www.taichiunion.com

If you have any questions about this, please contact us at enquiries@taichiunion.com