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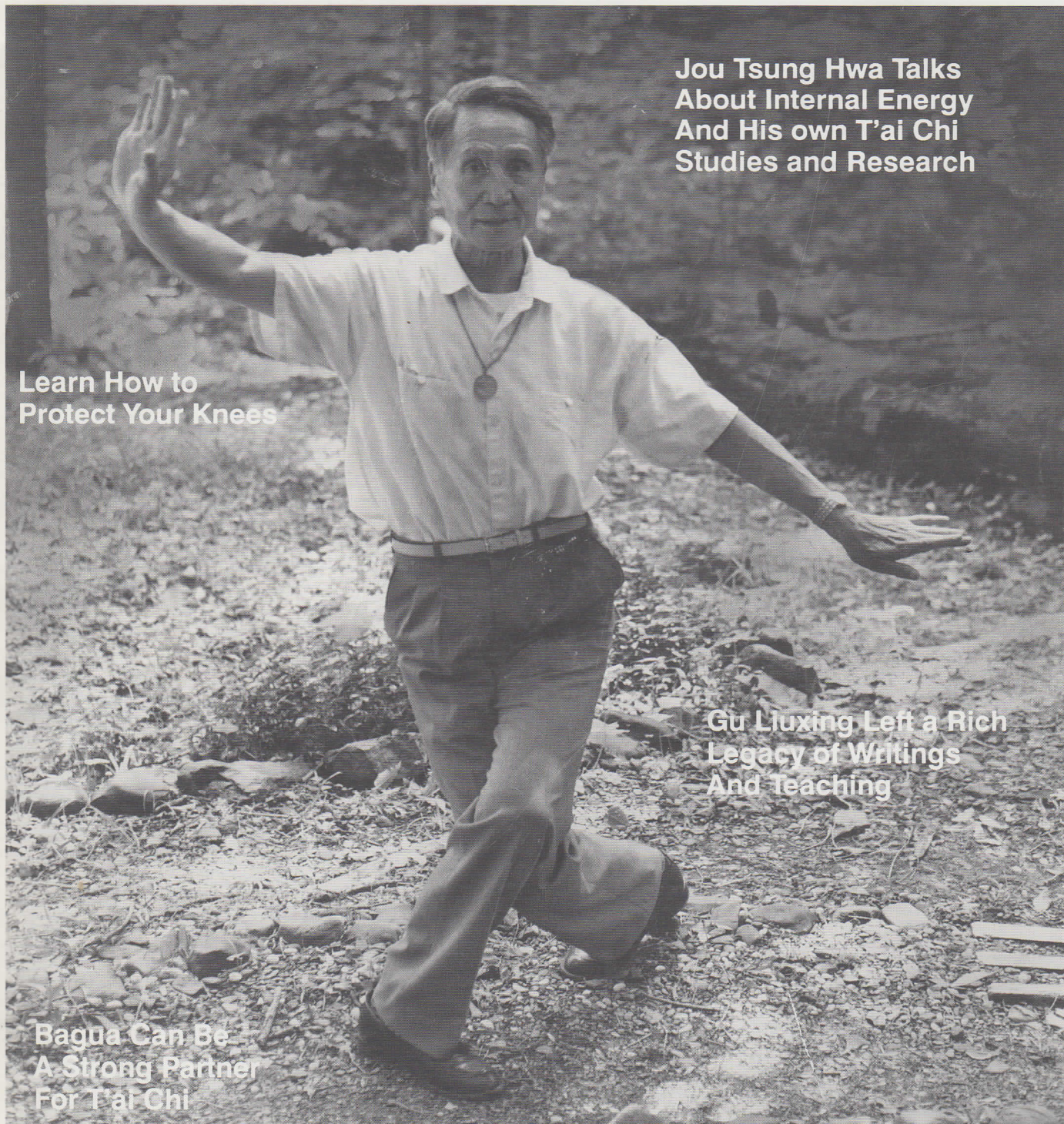
Vol. 16, No. 4

Learn How to
Protect Your Knees

Jou Tsung Hwa Talks
About Internal Energy
And His own T'ai Chi
Studies and Research

Gu Liuxing Left a Rich
Legacy of Writings
And Teaching

Bagua Can Be
A Strong Partner
For T'ai Chi



Jou Tsung Hwa on Study and Internal Energy

By Marvin Smalheiser

The development of T'ai Chi Ch'uan proceeds from each individual's research into its principles and the ability to apply those principles in every detail of the practice, according to Jou Tsung Hwa.

Jou, who is founder of Tai Chi Farm, Warwick, NY, has focused his own studies over the past 30 years into the core principles and translating them into the details of practice.

His goal has been to develop ways to cultivate internal energy the way the masters of old did it and to make his rediscoveries available to others devoted to T'ai Chi Ch'uan.

He has published three valuable books, "Tao of Tai Chi Chuan," "Tao of Meditation," and "Tao of I Ching."

A mathematician and math teacher who published many math texts while teaching on Taiwan, Jou tries to apply the same precision and logic to T'ai Chi Ch'uan. "First you have the definition. 'What is T'ai Chi Ch'uan?' You have to understand that first. Then you have to learn one-by-one, step-by-step"

His own practice cured serious stomach and heart conditions that Western medicine described as hopeless. He improved his eyesight so that

at 75 years of age he does not need glasses and can read a newspaper or see in the distance without any trouble.

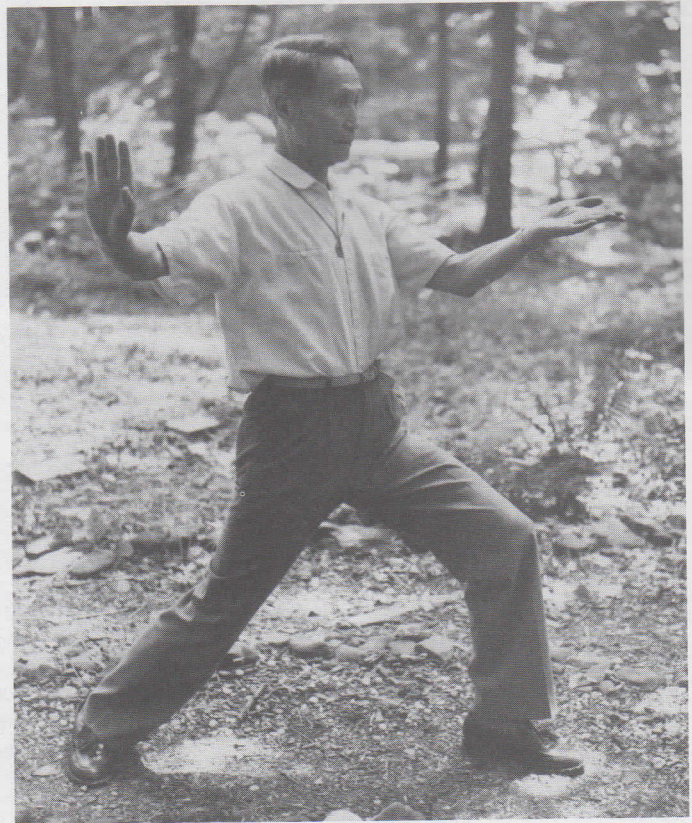
"T'ai Chi is an internal martial art," Jou said. "If you just do arm movements then it is just an external martial art. You have to coordinate the inward and outward movement. You have to coordinate the movement of the abdomen with the movements of the various parts of the body. Without this, the practice is just external."

"You have to think internal and what it means," he said, adding "no book on T'ai Chi Ch'uan discusses this and no one could tell me. But I wanted to find out the definition of internal . . . why they called it an internal martial art. If you just say it is because it is soft, you cannot call that an internal martial art."

"In the internal martial arts, you have intensity inside first. Then you show the movement, which follows the inside effort. You have to coordinate the abdominal movement with the external movement."

"If the American people can pull in and push out their abdomen as they practice T'ai Chi, then immediately they can get benefit," Jou said. Not the least of the benefits, he said, is that it will help them lose weight.

But he added that they don't want to do it and attributed this to the weakness of human nature. "People want to go to a doctor. They want to get a diet formula and pay a lot of money. But it is simple to



Jou Tsung Hwa

lose weight. Don't eat too much. Get more exercise. But people will not listen to you."

He said he had many students who got immediate benefit from the practice, including losing weight and continuing to look young. The main benefit of T'ai Chi, he said, is to improve health and for rejuvenation.

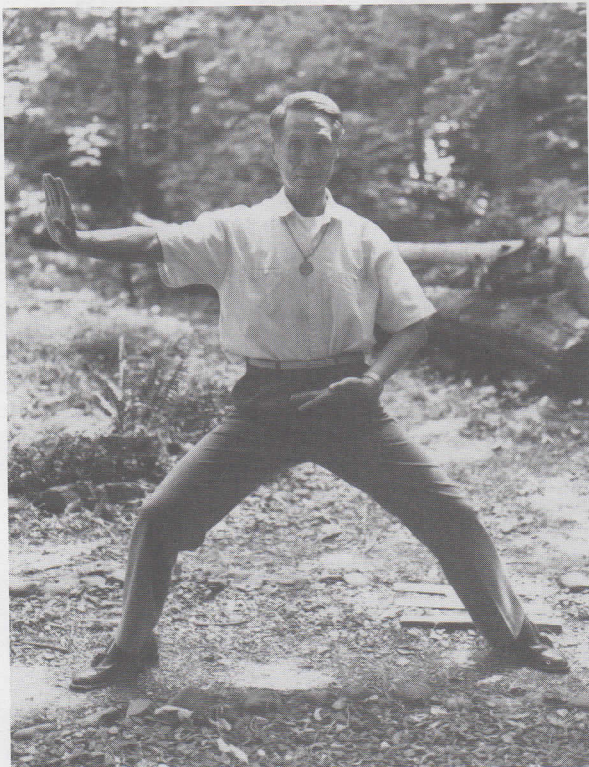
Jou accumulated his knowledge from his own work and research rather than having it handed down to him and often tells practitioners that they can do the same thing.

His practice includes, in addition to the coordination of the abdominal movement with the external movement, the opening and closing of the joints and orifices while doing the postures of the forms.

He attributes his improved eyesight to eye movements coordinated with the form movement. In addition he does the same with the nostrils and the ears, throat and other body openings.

These can be done with any form but require full attention and a great deal of practice to integrate them into the form movements.

The joints, such as shoulders, hips,



and others are also opened and closed. As an example, he said that when the hands push out that represents closing and when they come back in toward the body, that represents opening.

And he said that you don't have to be doing the form to do the opening and closing of the joints or orifices. "You can concentrate on this the whole day and night."

From these kinds of internal practices, Jou said, the internal energy is developed.

When asked if internal energy, or jing, can just be developed from doing a form, he responded: "No, no, no. It don't think so. It is impossible." And he said that when some people who do the form seem to be strong, he said: "Maybe, some people are naturally strong. But it is not T'ai Chi strength."

Internal energy, he said, comes when the whole body is integrated. It builds up in the body through doing the form and through practice of fa-jing, or explosive power techniques, and through breathing.

He said to build up internal energy in body it helps to work with the diaphragm through the flexing the abdomen in and out and also through Chan Ssu-jing exercises.

The Chan Ssu-jing exercises, or silk reeling exercises, are circular movements of the arms and other parts of

body, often coordinated with abdominal movements.

Jou said the purpose of T'ai Chi Ch'uan is to develop the whole body. Certain sports or athletes, he said, emphasize strength and use of separate parts of the body and don't have the entire coordination of the body. Some baseball pitchers and some boxers, he said, can be seen to focus their strength just in their arms and Jou compared this to playing the violin with just the arms.

In doing T'ai Chi, he said, the torso and legs must be integrated and the arms cannot move independently. "It is easy just to move the arm. It is better if the body moves the arm. In every sport, if just the arm is moved then the level of performance is not high, just the beginning stage."

He said it is the same with push hands. "If someone pushes me, I just turn my body to deflect energy, turning and sinking the whole body. You have to use the torso method. It is so obvious."

Push hands is like the problem of the overweight person, Jou said. "There is no short-cut. Push hands has its principles. But it is not only the smart technique that is necessary.

"In push hands, first your body needs to be flexible. That is what the form practice teaches you. Second, you need strong internal energy. The second Chen routine helps to give this. Third,



you have to put the two together, like Yin and Yang. When you put them together, you become peaceful and relaxed as in the Yang form."

Jou said that if someone just knows the Wu or Yang style and not the second routine of the Chen style, then they should do supplemental, separate movements to increase their power. They should take individual movements from their form and do then individually with power to increase power.

"If you don't have flexibility or in-

"In push hands, first your body needs to be flexible. That is what the form practice teaches you. Second, you need strong internal energy.

"The second Chen routine helps to give this. Third, you have to put the two together, like Yin and Yang. When you put them together, you become peaceful and relaxed as in the Yang form."



ternal energy it is like you want to buy a house without money. You need the money first.

The mind, too, is vital to develop of internal energy, he said. "When you put more of your mind into what you do, then you get more energy. If you don't put your mind and intensity into it, then what you do won't work."

"You have to put your mind into every posture. If you have low ch'i, you will never make progress. It takes years and years of practice, but if you just do it in a routine way, you will never make progress. There has to be emotion there.

"If someone is afraid or happy, you can see it in the way they walk. Even if a person walks very well and there is no emotion in it that is not good. You have to put these kinds of things into each T'ai Chi posture.

"When doing each posture you have to think, 'Why do I want to do this?' and 'Why do I want to do that?' and 'How does my mind go together with all this?' It is very educational."

To learn, he said, students have to maintain their patience because it takes time to integrate all the different aspects. He has also found that students want to learn to much.

"The more the better. They don't want to concentrate on basic principles. They want to do fancy things or immediately after learning the solo postures, they want to learn the sword or want to learn this or that.

"Without a good foundation in T'ai

Chi, it is useless to try to learn many things."

Jou, although he has worked hard at finding the inner aspects of T'ai Chi Ch'uan, often says that he has not studied formally with a teacher. Instead, he tried to learn the external forms from the best people possible when he was studying in Taiwan after he became ill.

In the process he learned the Yang and Chen forms, the Wu form of Wu Yu-Hsiang, sword, knife, two-man sword, push hands and sparring.

He was 47 years old when he found he was very sick and that his heart had enlarged and his stomach had dropped downward. His stomach was very painful. When he was hungry it was painful and when he ate he had pain. He could not even eat ice cream or other cold things.

The Western-trained doctor he saw said there was no medication he could give to help him. And acupuncturists were not available at that time.

"Then one day I went to see one of my friends and he said, 'You should



practice T'ai Chi Ch'uan'."

Jou then started to learn T'ai Chi and said that after three years of practice, his stomach was in good condition. And after five years, his heart was in good condition.

He said he initially learned his T'ai Chi from a man who taught Hsing-I as his main art. "He taught the Yang style long form. But I did not think his T'ai Chi was good because Hsing-I was his main discipline. I studied with him about one and a half years. Then I just went to the park in Taipei to practice, where all the old people would go. Most of them did the Yang style."

He also studied with other people in the park to learn other forms but did not take any one as a principal teacher, he said.

At one point, he and two friends discussed asking Cheng Man-ching if he would accept them as formal students. "But then I was 52 years old and I thought I was too old. I didn't think it was appropriate at my age to kneel down to become a formal student.

"Also I saw that some of his students were very good and some were not so good. So thought it might not be worth it to do that."

Another reason he decided not to study with Cheng is that he thought that if he (Jou) could develop something new, then people might say that it learned it from Cheng. Also, he felt



Jou Tsung Hwa, right, waves to crowd after Chang San-feng ceremony.

that if he was not his formal student, one day he could say to all T'ai Chi players, "If you work hard you can find everything by yourself."

"That's my purpose in life. People can depend on themselves. I hate it when they talk about the secrets of T'ai Chi."

And another important factor was that he had decided to go to America. If he became a formal student it would be in name only if he only studied with him a short time in Taiwan.

But even though he did not study with Cheng, Jou said, "I respect him very highly."

One of the reasons he did not study with just one teacher, he explained, is that when he met various teachers, he would ask them why T'ai Chi had so many styles.

He said all had the same answer. "They would all say that his T'ai Chi is T'ai Chi. They would say what the others did was not T'ai Chi. This was a standard answer of the traditional T'ai Chi teacher so I made a decision.

"If there was no place to ask the rules, then I have to do the research myself. Then I researched for myself the Yang style, the Chen style and Wu style of Wu Yu-Hsiang."

But he still went to the park in the mornings to practice with the best available people.



Jou feels that students should approach the study of T'ai Chi Ch'uan the same way that Confucius is said to have learned how to play a nine-string instrument.

He tells the story of how Confucius, who was very smart went to a famous teacher, who taught him a song to play and Confucius immediately learned it from the first lesson.

"The next time he came to the teacher, he played the song and his performance was very good. His teacher said it was very good and that he had never had a student so good. The teacher wanted to give all his knowledge to him and told him that he was going to give him a second song. Confucius said no.

"The teacher said 'All my students come to me and say the more songs the better. And you say no.' Confucius said, 'I can remember the song, I can play it but I am not skillful enough so I need time to digest it.'

"The teacher said that was all right and Confucius went home to practice. At the time of the third lesson, he went back to the teacher, who saw that he was much better and admired him.

"He said, 'Now you can learn the second song.' But Confucius said no and the teacher asked why. Confucius replied, 'I can remember the song, I can play it skillfully, but I cannot yet put my mind into this song.'"

Jou said this is very important in terms of learning T'ai Chi. "When you play T'ai Chi, you have to put in emotion as well as skill. From this story, I reflected on learning T'ai Chi.

"T'ai Chi has to be done the same way. If you don't put the right emotion into T'ai Chi from the beginning movement to the last movement, then your T'ai Chi will never make progress. That's for sure."

Jou was born in Hangchow, China, and lived on the mainland until he was about 30 years old. His family was very rich and he studied at a University but did not have to work because of his

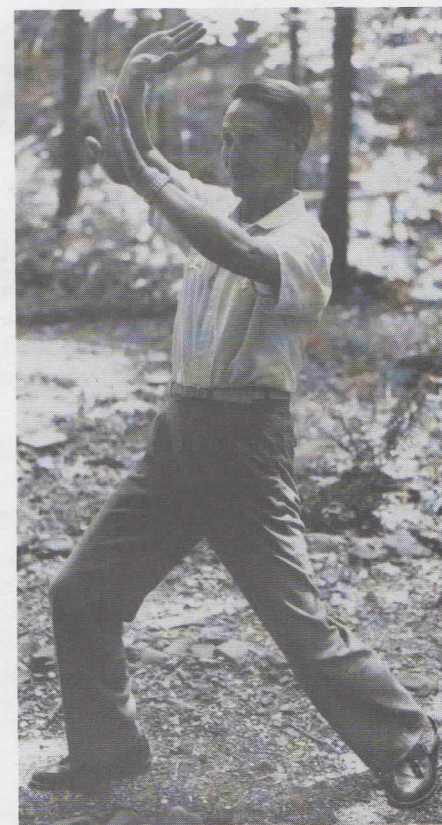


Jou Tsung Hwa teaches a seminar at the Farm.

family's wealth.

When the Communists took power in China, his family lost everything. Jou and his wife and two children left China for Taiwan in 1949, but even some money they had in their baggage was lost. "We didn't even have a blanket to cover ourselves at night. We lost everything."

At the university, Jou had majored in mathematics so in Taiwan, he became a mathematics teacher and published over 30 popular mathematics books.



"I made a lot of money. Jimmy Yang (Dr. Yang Jwing-ming) read all my books when he went to school, so he calls me his teacher."

Jou brought his family to the U.S. in 1969, and was concerned then that the mainland government might make a move to take over Taiwan, which had lost its seat in the UN, and recognition from the U.S.

He came to the U.S. as a student at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ, to obtain a masters degree in mathematics education. He then became a salaried visiting professor. On the side he started to teach free T'ai Chi Ch'uan classes.

Jou also established a textile importing business which his wife and son now operate.

Jou taught free T'ai Chi classes at Rutgers for 10 years. He also began publishing the three books which he intended as a vehicle to obtain money to buy property on which to create a T'ai Chi College where all people could come to learn all aspects from teachers from every style.

His idea then and now is to train more and more teachers so more people could learn T'ai Chi and to gradually introduce health aspects of Chinese traditional medicine and culture.

The three books are the Tao of Tai Chi Chuan, Tao of Meditation, and Tao of I Ching.

"My purpose in publishing these books was to contribute to T'ai Chi Ch'uan and to buy a property for a T'ai Chi farm. At this time, I talked to

my students about this as I could not drive and I wanted someone to drive me to look at properties. This was in 1978.

"I set up six requirements for the property.

"1. It had to have frontage on the highway so it was easy to locate.

"2. It had to be not too far from a big city or big airport.

"3. I didn't want just a field, because I am not a farmer. It had to have a stream and other attractive features.

"4. It must have a road and some beauty.

"5. The larger the acreage the better.

"6. The price must be as low as possible, so I could afford it.

"All my students said I was daydreaming. That this is impossible. Then for six years, I researched each weekend, sometimes on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, from eastern Pennsylvania and the Poconos to northern New Jersey, and into the catskill area of New York state.

"Finally, I found this one property and found an unusual story. The owner of the farm, Roy Vair, was in his 80s. He and his wife lived in a main house and across the street was a large farm property with eight cabins.

"When I came to see the property, the main house had been sold off. His wife had died of old age and he became depressed and shot himself. After he died his daughter was found murdered on the property and the person who killed her was never found.

"A couple of months later, one of his sons died and then his grandson was riding a motorcycle on the highway in front of property was killed in an accident.

"Two other sons and one daughter were afraid and moved away and decided to sell the property. It was on the market for four years but people were superstitious and afraid to buy it.

"At the time, the eight cabins were occupied by low in-



come residents. Some of them drank and created a bad scene.

"The first time I came here I didn't care for it, but the next time I came here, I wanted to buy it. But the people living in the back shot off a gun twice as a warning and when the realtor took me around to the back of the property, someone put sugar in her engine while we were looking at the property. Her car engine was ruined. It cost her \$2,000 to repair."

Jou bought the property in 1984,



Jou Tsung Hwa, lower left, leads participants up a path during Chang San-feng ceremony.



People attending the 20th annual Chang San-feng festival at Tai Chi Farm walk up a path to a hilltop shrine.

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but it took two years to finally get the squatters out of the cabins.

Later some of Jou's students who he was letting stay free in the cabins, told him that the ashes of the grandson who died in the accident were buried at the back of the property.

At first he considered sending the ashes to his relatives but they apparently were not in a position to deal with them.

Then he decided to let grandson be the god of the property, following a Chinese tradition.

He set up a frame at an altar in the main building and put the grandson's name in the frame. Then he held a service, offering to take care of the ashes and asking his spirit is to be the guardian to protect the property.

Jou said he had no concern about the bad history of the property when he bought it, because it was going to be used for T'ai Chi.

Since, 1984, Jou and his students and various concerned T'ai Chi people have helped with clearing and landscaping and construction work, which continues.

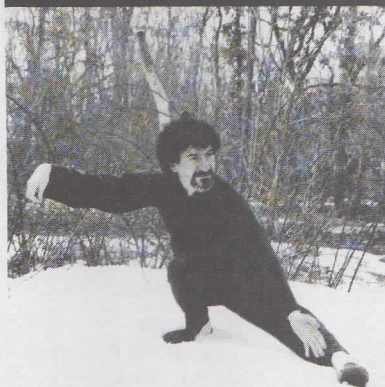
Each year, the first weekend in June he holds a festival honoring the founder of T'ai Chi Ch'uan. Hundreds of practitioners, some from other countries, come for workshops, demonstrations and fellowship. •

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