



Oxford & Region Iyengar Yoga Institute

Welcome to the first electronic newsletter

Dear members,

I hope you like this first version of the new newsletter. This edition is a bit basic – just in word with no pictures but we wanted to get it out before Christmas and we are still experimenting with different software packages. We hope to make it a fairly regular occurrence with probably about three editions a year. Each member of the committee has written a little bit about themselves so that if you don't actually know us you can get a little more insight as to who we are.

This kind of newsletter is a new venture for ORIYI and will rely on members taking the initiative and providing information and articles. For example you might like to tell other members through this newsletter about particularly good bits of equipment you have purchased – or for that matter information about kit that didn't live up to expectations. I have just recently managed to get a pelvic swing from JivanaProps in Germany – I spent ages trying to find someone who would supply it in the UK to no avail – so if somebody knows where you can get them in England please let us know. My son has just installed the hooks for the ropes and made a pretty good job of it. However he did manage to persuade me to buy him a new drill to do the job! If you have attended a particularly useful Yoga workshop you may like to tell us what you gained from the event. If you have any ideas or indeed useful contacts for future yoga days please contact Jenny Furby our Events Secretary. Those of you who are keen readers of yoga literature may want to share your experiences with us and recommend new books. We would even be interested to hear what you think about 'old' books!

If you are a teacher you may like to take advantage of some financial support for a yoga project you are developing – remember part of ORIYI's mission is to help others spread the word about Iyengar Yoga. Jennie Wood, our Treasurer has more information about how you can go about seeking this kind of support. Looking forward to hearing from you all

Best wishes

Mary Fitzpatrick
Membership Secretary

Message from the Chair – Tessa Martin

Welcome to this new format newsletter, I hope you like it. All the members of the committee are going to take the opportunity to tell you a little about themselves starting with me. I have been teaching for 10 years now having passed my Introductory Level II in 1999.

I really decided to help out on the ORIYI committee some years ago as I became more acutely aware of the vast amount of work that was done by the members of our national association, the Iyengar Yoga Association (UK). The IYA(UK) is responsible for everything to do with Iyengar Yoga in the UK and it is only in the past couple of years that they now have 2 part-time paid employees. So practically all the work, membership, accounts, ethics, exams and assessments, assessors and moderators, legalities etc., etc., is all done by volunteers! I have huge respect and appreciation for these volunteers most of whom are teachers.

I knew that I did not have the time to give to the national association so I felt that by becoming involved in ORIYI this would be my very little way of trying to do my bit to help out at a local level. It was very easy for me (like so many others) when we were first involved in Iyengar Yoga to be cynical and somewhat critical of the whole set-up until we understood the enormity of the task they were dealing with, I now recognise and appreciate the devotion and commitment these dedicated teachers have made.

I believe that Yoga goes deeper than just to the mere physical body. It is my hope that as more and more people take up yoga seriously they will find more meaning in their lives and begin to investigate the underlying philosophy.

Best wishes to you all

Tessa Martin
Chair

The Secretary – Karen Barraclough.

Fifteen years ago I had a stroke. After about a year I was told that I had made a full recovery, but it didn't feel that way. A few years later, after my first class taught by Judith Jones, I felt the two sides of my body coming together again. It was fantastic. I'm not a teacher but as a physiotherapist I find that what I learn about alignment and balance through the precision of Iyengar yoga practice is very useful when I treat patients. It has made an enormous difference to my health and my life. I have been very lucky and have been able to go to yoga days, on holidays and even conventions.

I mentioned to Judith that I would like to help in some way. Next thing I found myself the secretary for ORIYI! I believe passionately in Iyengar yoga (I have tried other types) and am happy to do this job because I've had so much benefit myself. My one regret is that I didn't start younger and I'd love to see it taught in schools.

Treasurer – Jennie Wood.

I rather nervously went along to my first yoga class in about 1991 and was pretty soon hooked. My mother had done yoga for years and I'm ashamed to say that I never took much interest other than occasionally giggling at her practising. Now I understand her eagerness not to miss her weekly evening class. Judith Jones has been my teacher from the start and when she ran her very first teacher training course I decided to give it a try – secretly thinking I'd be far too scared to actually do it. I passed my Introductory Assessment in 2003 and have been teaching in the Wantage/Newbury area since then.

I joined the ORIYI committee, because I think it's important for people to be involved in local, voluntary groups – it's great to see what can be achieved when individuals work together. I enjoy being treasurer because I quite like a good spreadsheet!

Membership Secretary and Newsletter– Mary Fitzpatrick

I first started doing yoga in a rather haphazard way over fifteen years ago. My first experiences were only partially satisfying and I have to say there were times when I was bored and unfulfilled. But then about ten years ago I came across a new class being advertised at Northcroft Sports Centre in Newbury being run by Tessa Martin so I decided to go along. Tessa made it clear from the beginning that we would be studying Iyengar Yoga and that everything she would be teaching was in tune with the teachings of Mr B.K. S. Iyengar. The name meant nothing to me at the time but I enjoyed the class and went back again and again. As time has gone by and my practice has improved a bit I have come to realise just how remarkable Iyengar Yoga really is and how fortunate I was to find it. I cannot imagine my life without it. This year I agreed to take on responsibility for the membership to try to do a little bit to help. I've just about mastered the intricacies of the data base and now look to try and provide the members with more regular communications via this newsletter.

Events Secretary – Jenny Furby

I have always enjoyed yoga since going to an inspirational yoga teacher 18 years ago. From there I found Iyengar Yoga. It has certainly helped me through some tough times with a large family. There is always something new to learn and it covers all aspects of life. I have been teaching for four years. After going to many yoga events it seems fitting that I give something back and organise some for ORIYI. Please do make suggestions if there is a teacher you would like us to invite or if you know of a good venue where we could hold a yoga event; and also come along and enjoy them!

IYA(UK) Rep – Emma Pinchin

I have been practising Iyengar Yoga since university, where it helped me get through the demand of Finals without experiencing the crippling Glandular Fever I had suffered during both GCSEs and A-Levels. From my very first class, with the excellent Tessa Cornish, I was hooked. When Tessa left Oxfordshire for France in 2004 she suggested I consider teaching; following teacher training with Sheila Haswell at Sarva I qualified as an Introductory Level teacher in October 2007.

Over the last eight and a half years I have seen my practice grow and develop as university, work, teacher training, and finally teaching have all put different pressures on my time. Now as I approach the final stages of pregnancy my practice is again evolving – breathing has become much more

important than tying myself in knots (although who'd have thought that I would actually miss being able to do Parivrtta Parsvakonasana!). I am looking forward to being able to use the techniques I have acquired through my yoga practice when delivering our baby in the New Year.

I have been on the ORIYI committee for a year now – and have greatly enjoyed taking part in the IYA(UK) meetings which convene three times a year. Since January I have also taken on the role of Constitution Officer for the IYA(UK), which is a fascinating, if demanding role, requiring getting to grips with the background legal and technical aspects of the IYA and its regulations. If anyone from our area ever has anything that they would like me to raise with the central organisation please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Web Master – Ruth Jones

Yoga for me is my Mum hanging upside down from the 'yoga' swing that was attached to the apple tree in the garden. My Mum is an enthusiastic, dedicated yoga teacher and yoga was with me throughout my adolescent life.

Now that I am older I can appreciate yoga for myself. I have been going to classes for about six years now! Not only has it helped me to deal with my back injury, each week it rejuvenates me, giving me a relaxed and stable outlook on life.

I joined ORIYI to help with web design, to keep the website up-to-date. I am very happy to post anything that may be of importance to ORIYI onto the website.

Video Library and Newsletter – Phil Brown

Information about Phil will be supplied in the next newsletter

Without portfolio – Judith Jones

Although I have no specific job on the ORIYI Committee I am there in an advisory capacity as I have had a lot of committee experience as Chair of ORIYI (then ORIYG - Oxford & Region Iyengar Yoga Group - I was landed with that job after attending my first meeting , just as an "observer"!) and Chair of the national association the IYA(UK). Currently I am Chair of the Ethics & Certification Committee, a job which I retire from in 2 years time.

I have taught Iyengar yoga in Newbury, Hungerford and Wantage for 20 years and some of my original students are still coming - the eldest is 90 and is an inspiration to the younger members of the class.

I am also involved in training teachers and assessing and moderating yoga exams (assessments). I suppose I'm the "Mum" of the Newbury area teachers as when I passed my Introductory assessment in 1989 I was the first qualified Iyengar Yoga teacher in Newbury. Now there are many teachers in this area of the ORIYI map which is very rewarding.

www.judithjonesyoga.co.uk

Yoga Days

ORIYI members enjoyed an excellent day of yoga at the Sarva Iyengar Yoga Institute in High Wycombe in September. Sheila Haswell provided a great mix of challenging postures and useful anecdotes to help us all improve our practice. I was especially taken with her quote from Geeta 'to neglect your inversions is unpardonable' - the word unpardonable really hit a chord with me and has provided the impetus to try to do more practice at home. (Sheila later informed me that the quote came from Yoga in Action - Preliminary Course. See page 119 in the grey box)

More yoga days are planned for 2010 they are:

Saturday 7 th Feb 2010	Nathalie Blondel	10.30 – 1.00pm Newbury
Saturday 13 th March 2010	Kirsten Agar-Ward	10.00am – 4.00pm Newbury
Sunday 18 th April 2001	Jane Orton	10.00 – 4.00pm Abingdon
Saturday 25 th September	Marion Kilburn	10 am - 4 pm Thruxton Village Hall, Andover.

More information will be circulated nearer the time

ORIYI AGM

The ORIYI AGM took place on Saturday 19th September during the Yoga Day at Sarva. The committee was elected and the various officers gave their reports.

The Treasurer informed us that we now have over £5000 in the bank; the profit made this year was £1,131.35 most of it from yoga days and the Professional Development Day. Discussion took place over how this money could be used, perhaps to fund/sponsor a class for underprivileged people eg out of work, battered wives etc. It could be used to subsidize a teacher to run a class but may take a while to establish. **Any level of teacher can apply to teach Iyengar yoga to a group of needy people with no medical problems, but following new rulings from Gururji on the teaching of Iyengar yoga therapy, the teacher may need to be Intermediate Senior Level 1 if the students have any medical or psychological problems.**

If anyone is interested in running a class like this please put forward proposals for suitable projects to Tessa Martin. Contact details????

At the last count ORIYI has 67 paid up members, 29 of which are teachers – many thanks to everyone for their continued support. Please remember to notify Mary Fitzpatrick if you move or change your email address.

Under 'Any Other Business' we discussed how to spend the surplus money in the ORIYI account.

Suggestions included :

- Help for new teachers to get classes started (contact Sheila Haswell – via the Sarva Centre)
- Encouraging secondary schools to think about including Iyengar Yoga in the curriculum. Performing Arts Schools and Sports College might be more receptive to this idea but this will depend on the individual heads.

Anyone who has any contacts that could be used to foster these ideas please contact Tessa Martin.

The full minutes are available on the ORIYI website at www.oriyi.org.uk/

Next AGM to be held in June 2010

Merry Christmas to you all