



# ORIYI

Oxford and Region Iyengar Yoga Institute

Welcome to the Winter 2012 edition of our e-newsletter.

[www.oriyi.org.uk](http://www.oriyi.org.uk)

Dear Members,

I've been tidying my computer putting all the stray documents into files and noticed this newsletter has been running since January 2010 and that this is the **10<sup>th</sup> edition** – a reason to celebrate don't you think and quite an improvement on the first black and white version with no pictures.

Our next event is a yoga day with Judi Sweeting and Tig Whattler on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> February - a really great opportunity to experience some outstanding teaching from two senior teachers. Please do try to support your local Institute by coming. More details inside.

As always I try to include articles that will appeal to Iyengar yoga practitioners. This edition includes the information promised about our two new committee members Deborah and Lin as well as an interview with Tessa Martin about setting up a Home Studio, information about two Yoga Trips to Turkey and Andalucia as well as details about the IY Development Fund.

I forgot to include a recipe in the last newsletter so this time I have a brilliant recipe for Forgotten Cookies – I hope you enjoy it.

Best wishes and have a great Christmas when it comes.

Mary

Chair and Newsletter Editor.

[maryfitzpatrick@ntlworld.com](mailto:maryfitzpatrick@ntlworld.com)



## Yoga events

### A yoga workshop with Judi Sweeting and Tig Whattler

Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2013 - 10:00am 3:00pm

St George's Centre, Andover Road, Newbury RG14 6NU

More info at [www.oriyi.org.uk](http://www.oriyi.org.uk)



## Iyengar Yoga Development Fund

The Iyengar Yoga Development Fund (IYDF) has been set up to fund teachers to work with people who would not normally be able to afford or access yoga classes and could benefit a great deal from the positive outcomes of regular yoga practice. Every certificated Iyengar yoga teacher pays an annual sum to the Iyengar Yoga Association UK (IYA (UK)) for the use of the Iyengar Yoga Certification Mark: 60% of this money goes towards development projects like schools and hospitals in the village of Bellur, India, where Mr Iyengar was born. The remaining 40% is used for the Development Fund, and a part goes towards the Iyengar yoga archives project.

IY (UK) always marks Mr Iyengar's birthday on 14 December with a card, and usually with a donation to his Bellur Trust. Last year they contributed towards the work of the Iyengar Yoga Development Fund (IYDF) supporting teachers who are working with vulnerable members of our community: working with people with learning difficulties, deaf students, prisoners, children not coping in school, carers etc. Donations of over £1600 helped fund a further two classes – teaching Asian women with health and social problems in Sheffield, and teaching a group in Co. Clare with numerous problems of literacy, disability, financial disadvantage, and ethnic minority.



At the time Mr Iyengar wrote *"It is really wonderful to hear that you have approached teachers to make a donation to the IYDF which I am sure will grow into a stable position to help vulnerable members in learning this art. May God bless these members with a gallant heart to come forward and help to establish a good fund for this development."*

**In order to mark Mr Iyengar's 95th birthday year ORIYI will be donating £200 to this fund.**

***Teachers*** are encouraged to organise yoga days to raise money to support this cause in this most auspicious year. Do get in touch to tell us about your plans so we can report on fund raising activities in future newsletters.

## Introducing the new ORIYI Committee members

### Secretary - Lin Hooper

I was sitting in Sukhasana at the beginning of one of Judith's classes listening to various announcements when, mistakenly answering a question that was actually directed somewhere behind me, I found myself having taken on the position of new secretary for the ORIYI.



Mary asked Deborah and me – as incoming 'officials' – for some info about ourselves for this edition of the ORIYI newsletter. Hoping that Mary may not bring the subject up again and some time having elapsed I thought I'd got away with not actually having to do it but that was not to be. I began composing my 'info' and a little later realised it was turning into an autobiography! So, I thought I would just say that, always having enjoyed exercise and having an awareness of yoga brought to me by my lovely mother, the yoga I did in my young adult life was sporadic and it wasn't until I was in my forties that I came to Iyengar Yoga. As is the case with so many of us, going to Iyengar yoga lessons became a regular part of life, IYA is a very welcoming community and it's great to be a part of it.

Outside of yoga the three of us in our family go to music festivals such as WOMAD in Malmesbury, Fairport's Cropredy Convention and other events where we have a stall selling clothes that have been hand screen-printed by my husband in a workshop he built in our back garden (there's not much back garden left now). For many years we also had a stall at WOMAD in Gran Canaria each November and more recently in Caceres, Spain.

Based in New South Wales and Queensland during our early adult life we made trips to Asia financing ourselves with buying silver jewellery and selling it at Paddington and Balmain markets in Sydney.

Alongside the summer selling season here in the UK, skills learned from a year long secretarial course after leaving school have always kept me able to earn a living and jobs have included working for the Australian Film Commission in North Sydney and realtors in Dallas, Texas - a lot of the male population in that part of America did wear those hats as they did in Dallas the soap opera (which is about when I was there!) and they did drive around in pick-up trucks with a couple of brackets at each end of the window of their cab between which would sit a rifle. Way back in those days before mobile phones and the internet the Texans very much enjoyed hearing an English accent and would laugh loudly and say things like "doesn't that just SLAY YA?!" when I might call out 'cheerio' or something.

Since coming to Iyengar yoga I can't imagine my life without it and I hope our daughter who has taken to Iyengar yoga herself will appreciate the benefits. To come to it early in life has got to be a good thing as the steadiness and equanimity of mind it brings can only put young people in good stead for the challenges life will present to them. As a consequence, their demeanour and yogic understanding will benefit those they come into contact with and generally make the world a better place for everyone. Thank you Mr Iyengar and family.

## Membership Secretary - Deborah J C Phillips



The mission to appreciate the wonder of this ancient and mystical contorted shape shifting was set in motion whilst studying at Brighton's School of Architecture at a single promotional drop in session. This spark of interest was kindled with the discovery of my flat mate's copy of "The Book of Yoga" written with the guidance of the Sivananda yoga centre first published in 1983! Together we attempted the art using "the complete step by step guide". The Iyengar Yoga journey began more than a decade ago when a fellow primary school parent on a similar quest found out about Judith's class. The trial session on gratis at the superseded venue of the Lambourn Memorial Hall rekindled the burning ember. The experiences of three yoga conventions later, beginning with Geeta's Crystal Palace, The University of Reading Bulmershe site, which I helped organise and Geeta's Billingsgate have fanned the flames. Being invited to attend Judith Jones weekly Wednesday evening classes has sustained the fire.

## Setting up a Home Studio – interview with Tessa Martin

### Introduction

Tessa has been a yoga teacher for some 15 years and taught in a variety of places – I first came upon her when she was teaching in the Northcroft Leisure Centre. Her first classes were in a squash court – a pretty bleak place with harsh lighting and an unnerving echo with the sounds of whacking balls all around. Later we graduated to a foyer area upstairs which was quieter and warmer but still an odd shape and carpeted. Then finally came the wonderful Woodbridge Room (United Reformed Church) in Cromwell Place, Newbury – at last she had found a warm well lit space – a place still being



used by Tessa and a number of teachers to this day – and especially good now it has been redecorated!

In 2008 Tessa decided to turn her integral garage into a small studio with ropes. This was done and enjoyed by many students until this year when she made the momentous decision to transform her sitting room into a purpose build well equipped yoga studio.

### Interview

#### What made you decide to turn your sitting room into a yoga studio?

I wanted to increase the number of classes I taught with the intention eventually of giving up the 'day' job (secretary, admin 'bod' for the NHS) however the garage studio was too small and had no natural lighting. The Woodbridge Room was out of action this summer, being decorated and so I

needed a new venue for summer sessions and it seemed like the ideal time to 'try out' the sitting room.

Once I'd made the decision to put in a new wooden floor it just seemed like the right time to go the whole hog and convert and equip it as a proper yoga studio, albeit still rather small as it can only fit 10 people comfortably.



**What was your 'vision' for this new studio?**

The initial 'vision' was for me to expand the yoga business, possibly with the idea of attracting different sectors of the community at different times of the day and gearing classes to different groups, for example the over 50s.

**Question: Did you encounter any obstacles?**

Yes. This idea has been somewhat crushed as I had to declare all to the planning office of the local council. One of my neighbours was obviously concerned about my venture and reported me, so I had a visit from the planning officer. He was actually OK with what I had done but informed me that I would not be able to "expand" much more i.e. I could only take up to 4 classes a week. I am only really doing 2 classes a week at home and a fortnightly Saturday morning class. But this was very disappointing and has made me take a bit of a step back. However, I am able to offer regular workshops at the weekends and as I have ropes, these are popular.

**Question: Would you do it again?**

Yes, definitely.

**Question: What are the benefits?**

I like the more intimate nature of the teaching in a smaller studio, there are far less people than classes in halls and so you are literally closer to your students and can keep much more of a close watch on them. I thought this might be off-putting for some but have been surprised at the positive feedback. Also, you rarely have to lift your voice and you literally don't have so far to move around to get to students so I find the teaching less tiring. I can also do more to create a pleasant ambience and as the studio is fully equipped people do not have to lug heavy bags of yoga equipment to and from the venue.



**Question: Any words of advice you would give others thinking about doing the same thing?**

Remember you don't just need the room itself, you need a changing room and place for people to leave their belongings – my integral garage is now this room and also my own small living room! Cats are a problem!! Luckily most people are extremely tolerant of my two black beauties! Who wander in and out and round in the summer as we leave the patio doors slightly open for air. Not so much of a problem now that it's colder.

## Dreams of sun and sand - by Ally Hill

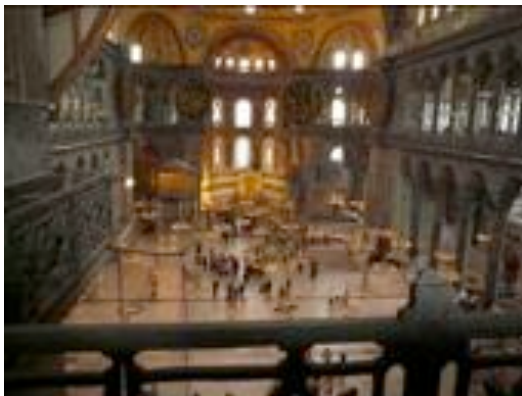
As I write this the nights are drawing in and Christmas is looming large on the horizon. Turkey seems so long ago now and yet it will be but a blink of an eye before we will be due to return. Sheila Haswell and I, Ally Hill are lucky enough to be invited to teach in Southern Turkey each year by our friends and Iyengar yoga teachers Sine Ozsoy and Aiden Love, the owners of Heliotrope Yoga Holidays.



The venues they use way down on the south coast are delightful. Next year, as this, we will be in Angels Garden, a secluded valley containing separate wooden chalet style accommodation, a wonderful swimming pool and a Hammam – a Turkish bath. The new yoga studio on site is light and spacious, all suitably kitted out for our style of yoga.

We so enjoy teaching at this venue, everything is laid on for us and the food is wonderful. The south of Turkey is very fertile and much of the fresh produce for the whole country is grown here. So the salads and vegetables are of exceptional quality and are deliciously prepared to tempt us with healthy meals.

Another thing we enjoy is the mix of students that sign up for these courses. We are always happy to see our students and those who are returning to Turkey to join us again but equally pleasing is to meet new students, with all that they bring to the mix. We have made good friends on these holidays and are sure we will continue to do so.



A new venture for Sheila next year is to teach on a three day workshop and culture holiday in Istanbul. The idea is for the yoga to take place over the weekend leaving the participants free to enjoy all that this magnificent city has to offer, when not in class. We were invited to Istanbul last spring and I can personally vouch for the wonders that it contains. It truly is the city where East meets West, from the Grand Bazaar to the Blue Mosque, the Topkapi Palace and the Hagia Sophia, all magnificent, all worth seeing. A city with a sea running through it; I never ceased to marvel at seeing a container ship just float past the end of the road!

So when the dark and the cold seep into your bones as the year turns, dream of Turkey; of sun, sea, sand, good food, good friends and great yoga. Perhaps we'll see you next year?

### **Forgotten Cookies (a easy recipe by Orlando Murrin)**

Pop these in the oven, forget about them overnight, and in the morning you'll have crumbly cookies.

#### **Ingredients**



2 large egg whites  
120g golden caster sugar  
120g pecan nuts (or walnuts if you prefer) – roughly chopped  
150g dark chocolate ( at least 70% cocoa solids) roughly chopped  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Makes 32

#### **Method**

1. Preheat the oven to 180C/gas 4/fan 160C. Line two baking sheets with foil to cover. In a large clean bowl, whisk the egg whites with a pinch of salt until stiff and dry. Gradually whisk in the sugar a little at a time to make a thick and glossy meringue. Tip in the nuts and chocolate, then the vanilla extract and gently fold into the meringue with a large metal spoon.
2. Spoon heaped teaspoonfuls of the meringue mixture, spaced apart, on to the lined baking sheets. Put the sheets in the oven, then turn it off and leave the cookies for at least 3 hours, overnight or until the oven is cold.
3. Carefully peel the cookies from the foil. Store in an airtight tin where they will keep for 3-4 days.

### **Yoga in Andalucia – by Judi Sweeting**

Christmas done and dusted, the New Year starts with all sorts of good intentions, to lose half a stone by cutting out biscuits and cakes and to practice yoga every day!

Planning the annual holiday is the best way to start the New Year - we have already booked our flights to Seville. Next August beckons and we look forward to our fifth yoga holiday in Andalucia.



Finca el Moro is a farm set in its own valley high in the hills of Andalucia (the Sierra de Aracena). The farm is surrounded by chestnut and cork trees, an enchanted setting away from the pressures of modern living. Accommodation is in cottages scattered around the vast area of farm run by Nick and his wife Hermione. They are all different; contain en-suite twin rooms with a kitchen and lounge, plus a patio area, with

lovely views. Tea and coffee, fresh fruit, cakes and biscuits appear magically for snacking. We have fabulous meals, brunch after the morning class and dinner after the evening session. The beauty of being at Finca el Moro is that there is practically nil expenditure whilst there. There is a small farm shop with enticing snacks, soft drinks, local sherry and

wines, on an "honesty" basis. The food is vegetarian and depending on the season, fresh salads and vegetables are grown on the farm.

Classes are held in a unique space, La Era, converted from the original farm threshing floor and is a cool atmospheric place, surrounded by trees; open sided and looks south from a small hill over the olive groves, with good space and yoga equipment. There is plenty of



walking and two swimming pools. Finca el Moro is famous for its impeccable stables and riding can be arranged at an extra cost, those who have been out with Hermione love it and look amazing, riding with long stirrups and donning boater hats in the Andalucian style.

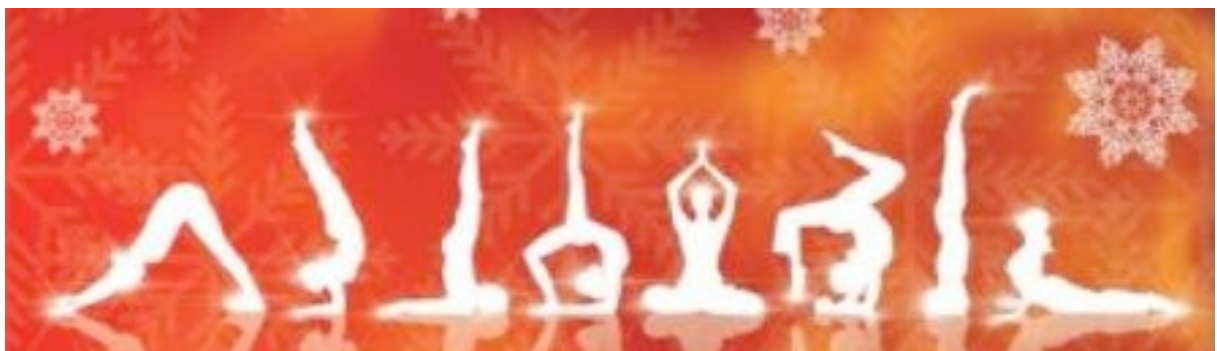
Tig and I both teach, sometimes together, sometimes separately with the other partner adjusting and helping out. Students rapidly "chill out" and see the benefits of daily yoga practice.

Many find themselves able to achieve asana they thought were beyond their level of ability and gain in confidence. Nick often joins us in class and it's great to have him there, a strong and serious practitioner, he looks forward to the classes as much as we look forward to Finca el Moro.



Come and join us, it is a truly unusual yoga holiday!

**Guess which poses below are not true Iyengar yoga poses !!**



"Yoga is a light, which once lit, will never dim. The better your practice, the brighter the flame."

BKS Iyengar