



MY TEACHER MASTER LUN KAI (1926 – 2014)

Much is written about the life of Grandmaster Yip Man and his students in Hong Kong, his teachings and followers have received wide publicity. Thanks to their hard work the late Grandmasters art has now spread to every corner of the globe. Generally little has been published about his teaching in Foshan (Fatshan) and his students from those early days.

Lun Gai was born in 1926 his father died while he was still young so he started work at the age of twelve as a boy servant at the Luen Cheong Embroidery Factory on Wing On Road which was owned by a relative. The factory stood around 800 meters north of Grandmaster Yip's residence at Mulberry Gardens. The owner of the factory was a good friend of Grandmaster Yip and so he invited him to teach Wing Chun to his children in the warehouse at the back of his factory. Lun Gai began to study under the Grandmaster at the age of fourteen; Grandmaster Yip was around forty years old at this time. The group would meet every evening and consisted of around six students and the Grandmaster taught for free, he asked his students to address him as "Man Sok", Uncle Man. This was during the occupation by Japanese forces so the class would meet in secret.

Great emphasis was placed on the study of the Siu-Nim-Tau form and on Horse Stance practise. When they practised Chi Sao Grandmaster Yip would cover his eyes and Chi Sao with all the students and he could tell by the feel which of the students he was training with. The teaching method at this time was to teach the complete system in one year as lessons were held every night, which included Siu-Nim-Tau, Chum-Kiu, Biu-Tze, Butterfly Knives, Long Pole and Wooded Dummy. There was no instruction in any other form of sticking hand training apart from the two handed Chi Sao. The class ran for four years and after the break up some of the class members stayed in touch with Uncle Yip. Grandmaster Yip lived with Lun Gai's Kung Fu brother Kwok Fu during this period.

Grandmaster Yip left Foshan around 1949 after the Communist takeover as an Undercover Police Captain he feared possible reprisals from the new regime. Before leaving China Grandmaster Yip instructed his few remaining students to use the Phoenix Eye punching method which Lun Gai Sifu still favours today.

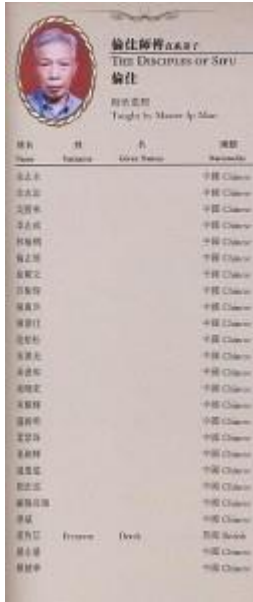
During the training at the Luen Cheong Embroidery factory Lun Gai and Kwok Fu were good friends, being four years older Lun Gai looked upon him as being an elder brother. During the early years of the Communist takeover the two classmates lost contact and went their different ways. Lun Gai made an effort to try and contact Kwok Fu but to no avail, at the same time Kwok Fu was also trying to find Lun Gai. Knowing his old classmate was an electrician by trade Kwok Fu would always ask any electricians he met if they knew Lun Gai. One time Kwok Fu was near to Guangzhou and met an electrician who said he knew Lun Gai and that he had returned to Foshan and was working at a pump factory there. Kwok Fu wrote a letter to the pump factory which Lun Gai received, the old classmates were reunited in 1958 and have been close friends ever since.

Cultural Revolution

During the Cultural Revolution the practise of martial arts was frowned upon by the Red Guards many martial arts Masters were persecuted this included torture, imprisonment and death. Kwok Fu suffered at the hands of the Red Guards and his health is still poor today because of their treatment. Lun Gai continued to practise throughout this period mostly at home; sometimes he would go to the park or the Ancestral Temple. Often the practise at the Temple would be watched by a Policeman who was also a martial arts practitioner so he never reported him.

I asked Lun Gai sifu if he had ever had to use his Wing Chun in a real life situation he said Grandmaster Yip did not want his students to fight. There was one occasion however just after the Cultural Revolution when he went on his bicycled out into the countryside at night. He was travelling along a dark road when two men jumped out in front of him, as he stopped the light, which was driven by a dynamo, went out. He quickly put the bicycle down; one man threw a powerful punch towards Lun Sifu. Lun applied the Kuo Sao movement from Wing Chun's second form, Chum-Kiu. He heard the breaking of bone and the man screamed with pain, turning to the side the other man had already launched a kick, which glanced against Lun's thigh. The man didn't follow up the attack hearing his accomplice's screams both men fled.

Lun Gai Sifu has taught for many years in Foshan and has passed on Grandmaster Yip's legacy to numerous students. Here is the complete list of Master Lun's students and represents the only students recognised by Master Lun who published this list in the Ving Tsun Athletic Association book Genealogy of Wing Chun.



In the past many students and Masters from around the world have visited Master Lun to exchange theories and to meet the man who represents Grandmaster Yip's early teachings in China. In recent years there have been claims by some instructors that they are Master Lun's students and I even read of students who claim to be Closed Door disciples of Master Lun. This is nonsense as no one on the above list is a disciple because Master Lun follows the method of his teacher Grandmaster Yip Man who never took disciples [*the title of the list states disciples but as the book was printed in Hong Kong the term was used despite Master Lun not taking on disciples in the traditional sense*]. To have a few private lessons does not equate to closed door training. In Chinese martial arts there is a special ceremony called Bai-Si to become a closed door disciple this is normally witnessed by Masters within the martial arts community. They act as witnesses and signatories to the adoption into the closed family network and the naming of the next generation to continue the style. To go to China and learn a couple of forms does not make one a disciple. Every instructor will have many general students who train a little and leave only the ones who train for a long period and form a strong bond with the Master will become a family member.

Sadly over the last five years Sifu's health has deteriorated with joint problems mainly in the knees, He has taken medications for high blood pressure for some years and it appears that this has caused these side effects.

In February 2004 Master Lun gave me permission to form the Lun Kai Foshan Wing Chun Association we now have branches in Hungary, South Africa, Spain, Ireland and throughout the United Kingdom.



Derek Freason presents Lun Kai with VTAA Membership

About Sifu Derek Freason

Sifu Derek has practised Wing Chun for many years whilst training with Sifu Danny Connor he had the opportunity to train with Sifu Josef Cheng and Sifu John Darwen. Also through Sifu Connor he trained with Sifu Ip Chun in both the UK and in Hong Kong. Derek was the first foreign student to travel to Foshan China for intensive study with Sifu Lun Gai. Derek is European representative of Sifu Lun Gai, a Permanent Member and Recognised Instructor of the Ving Tsun Athletic Association of Hong Kong and Honouree Director of the Yip Man Museum Foshan China.

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