

Press Release for Stav Martial Arts Centre

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Regarding conversion of 3 to 5 South Street, Crewkerne into a Stav Martial Arts Centre

I have been interested in Martial arts since I was very young. I have trained since I was a teenager and covered quite a few of the familiar systems such as Kung fu, Karate and kick boxing. In 1992 I met Ivar Hafskjold who had recently returned to Europe from Japan. At the time I was living just outside Hull and Ivar settled in Beverley, just a few miles away in East Yorkshire.

Ivar Hafskjold is a remarkable man. As well as attaining a 4th Dan black belt in Jo-Jutsu and Ken-Jutsu Ivar had also trained in Aikido with Steven Segal before he moved to Hollywood and other Japanese arts such as Iaido and Aki-Jutsu. To make the situation even more interesting Ivar had inherited a family tradition of body, mind and spirit training growing up in Norway after WW2. This tradition is known as Stav, which means knowledge of the Rune Staves. It seems that Ivar is about the last member of his family to take the Stav tradition seriously. It was also clear to Ivar that if he did not teach Stav outside of the family then the tradition would die with him. So Ivar found four students to whom he could teach as much as possible, I was one of the original four.

I trained regularly with Ivar for four years before moving to Oxford and setting up as a Stav teacher independently. I have however maintained regular contact with Ivar and I arrange a summer camp each year at which Ivar teaches. (the 2014 camp will be held at Buckland St Mary, on August the 23rd to 25th).

As well as being a recognised Stav instructor I am also a Level One qualified Self-protection instructor having completed Geof Thompson's masterclass in 2012. I also train and teach at HEMA (Historical European Martial Arts) events such as Fightcamp and Noble Science

Essentially Stav training covers three aspects:

1. The runic stances which are the foundation for the system, performing the stances looks a little like a Tai Chi form and there is a similar emphasis on breath, posture, balance and focusing the mind.
2. The lines of the web which means being able to see underlying structure and relationships. By seeing the lines you can protect your own structure and undermine your opponents. Training begins with simple exercises with the staff and develops through training with other weapons and unarmed.
3. The Five principles which are effectively different strategies for dealing with different conflict situations.
 - The first is Trel or slave principle which is appropriate for dealing with situations where you have no real interest or responsibility beyond escaping the

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situation.

- The Second is Karl which is about protecting physical space.
- The Third is Herse which is the warrior principle and is about controlling an opponent physically and mentally.
- The Fourth is Jarl or priest principle which is about detachment and maintaining an overview of a situation.
- The Fifth is Konge or the King principle where you are simply in control.

Once the Stav Centre is open there will be at least three classes each week. The classes will cover:

- Foundation training will teach a basic version of the stances, staff training using a series of simple exercises, two person drills introducing the five principles and an introduction to basic self-defence.
- Advanced classes which will be divided into two categories:
 1. Advanced weapon training which will cover battle axe, spear, sword, sax and cudgel. (Wooden training weapons to be used in each case).
 2. Advanced Close Quarter Combat training which uses the principles of Stav as well as drawing on Medieval wrestling and dagger training, WW2 combatatives, Guided Chaos and Geoff Thompson's teachings.

Students will need to attend at least twelve foundation classes before being eligible to attend either of the advanced classes.

As well as weekly classes in each of the above there will also be day courses at weekends on a regular basis and longer 'boot camps' for students coming from further afield. I have students all over the UK as well as abroad so people will come to Crewkerne from many different places to train in Stav.

The age limit will be sixteen years and upwards, at least initially.

We have been teaching Stav in Crewkerne since January 2013 and we have been using the Methodist Church hall. Classes will resume there on Monday 6th of January. We intend to have the centre open at the beginning of February. There will be at least two introductory sessions for people to have a taste of Stav training before committing themselves. After that you will need to have a short free lesson with me or one of my senior students before deciding whether or not you want to join a regular class.

If you would like to know more please go to <http://www.somersetstav.co.uk> and please opt in to my email list. You will find out much more about Stav and I will be able to keep you informed of developments. Or please phone or text 0771 358 5954

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Brief bio:

I was born and raised in London but have lived in various places since then. I have lived in Somerset for six years. My other business is a handyman, renovations and decorating business which I run with my partner Venetia, who also helps me with the Stav. I am also an active local preacher in the Methodist circuit.

Graham Butcher 13th of December 2013

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