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MEHER BABA CENTER OF NO. CALIF INC.

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QUARTERLY

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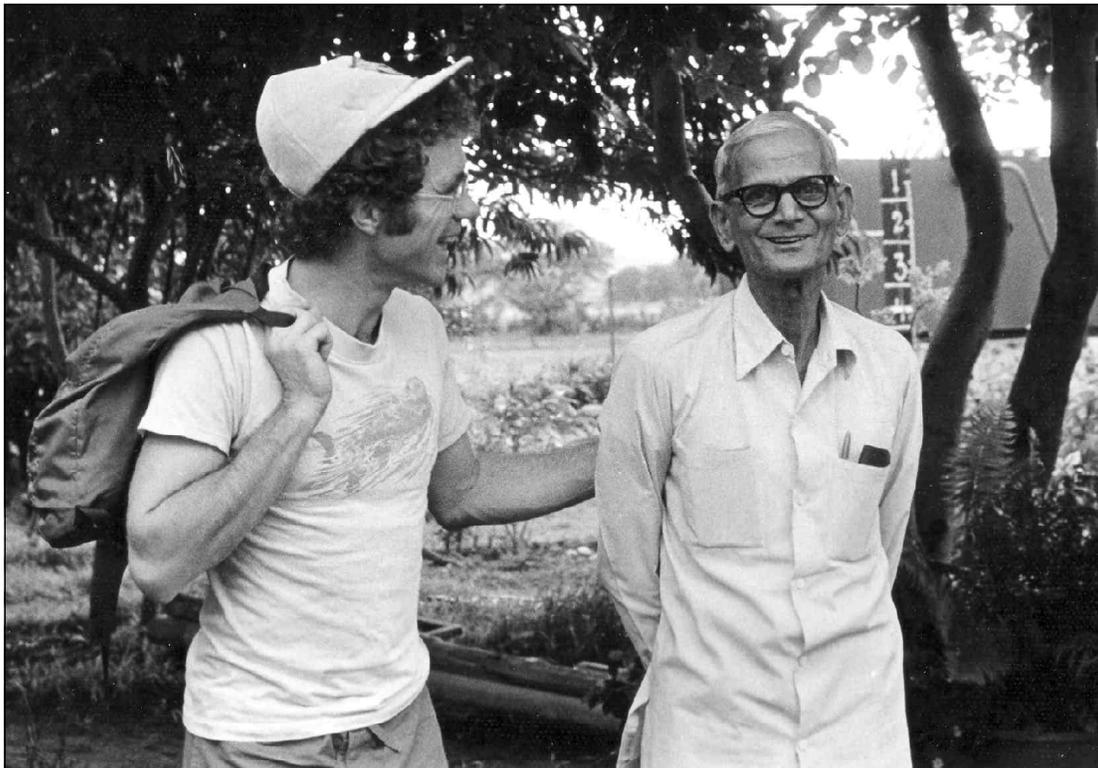
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NEWSLETTER

6923 STOCKTON AVENUE  
VOL. 34

EL CERRITO, CALIFORNIA 94530  
WINTER, 2003-2004

## Remembering Bal Natu



Bal Natu with  
Doug Ross,  
1979/80.

**Bal Natu** left the body that Baba said would be his last on October 7, 2003. Having been promised liberation from the rounds of birth and death, he welcomed the end and those close to him were struck by his happiness and by the “palpable feeling of joy in the hall and during his funeral and cremation.”

Bal first saw Baba in 1933, when he was 14 years old. In the 1940s he deepened his contact with Baba and was given permission to come for Baba’s darshan anytime. He stayed with Baba for extended periods of time in the 1950s and 60s. Then, after he retired from teaching in 1977, he moved to Meherazad where so many of us had the good fortune to know this remarkable man, the embodiment of loving humility.

Among his many books are his *Conversations with the Awakener* (Sheriar Foundation, 1991.) This brief excerpt conveys the flavor of his musings on the Awakener’s presence in his life.

### A Simple Solution

“How great a sin can You forgive?” I asked You in one of my darkest moments.

“Until this day, no one has committed a sin so great that I am unable to pardon it,” answered a soft, loving voice.

“Then how much merit,” I mumbled haltingly, “must one earn to win Your glance?”

“The merits of all people put together are not enough to win even a sideways glance from Me,” reverberated the response.

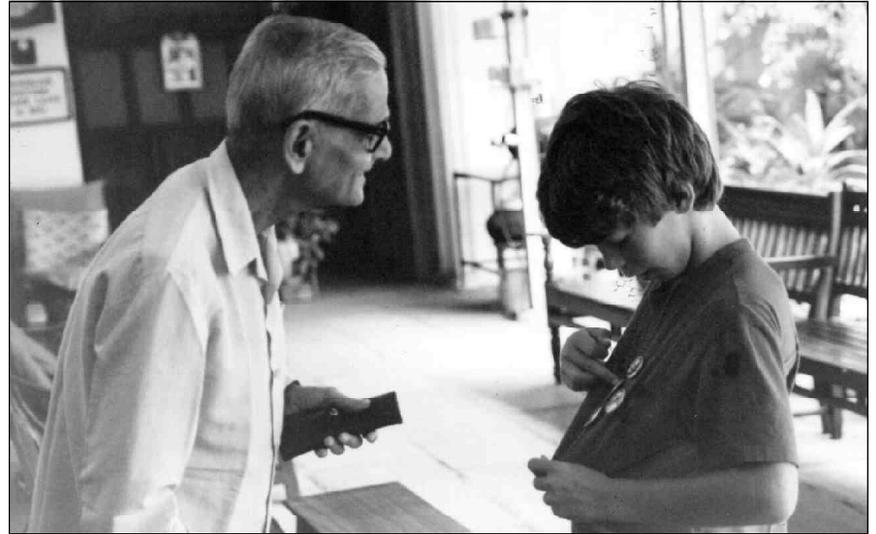
“Then how can I ever hope to see You?” I stammered despairingly.

“What!” I heard a ripple of laughter filled with compassion. “Don’t be stupid! It is simple!”

I was shocked and surprised, and emboldened myself to ask, “What do You mean, “simple”? Are You joking with me?”



*Beaming! Rabia Cons and Bal.*



*Bal admires Gary Lowman's collection of Baba buttons. September, 1987.*



*Bal with Shireen Lowman, out in the noonday sun. September, 1987.*



*Barbara Munch with Bal about a week before he passed away.*

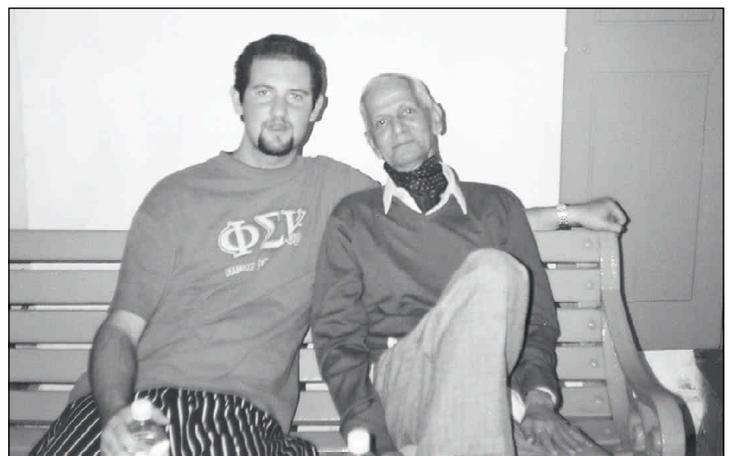
“No, it’s really very simple!”

This confounded me all the more. I cried within my heart, “I don’t understand what You mean. And I am also amazed. Where does this voice come from?”

The answer came, “It is from the fathomless depth within you, My child, where you are not but I am. May I go now?”

“Please don’t leave me in this state of anguish and confusion. You said, ‘It’s simple,’ but what is the secret that will open my heart to this simplicity?”

Your voice deepened and became increasingly profound. “The secret is: why think of sin? Why think of merit? Just think of Me! Am I not the Most Intimate One, the Most Compassionate One within you? Bve!”



*Brian Jones with Bal, July, 2001.*

With these words, the voice receded within me totally. This gracious assurance, however, continues to ring in my ears, nay, my entire being:

What a simple solution!

But how difficult to live it!

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# C A L E N D A R

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**Meetings are held Saturday nights at 7:30 PM, doors open at 7. Arti will be held every Sunday at 10 AM.** Directions to the new center: From Hwy 80 in El Cerrito, take the Central exit east, toward the hills, cross San Pablo, go under the BART tracks to Richmond Ave. turn left, go a few blocks to Stockton (the first stop light), turn right at Stockton, go a couple of blocks, park on the street. The center is on the left side of the street, 6923 Stockton Ave. El Cerrito, CA.

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## **Saturday, December 6 - Meher Baba Film Night**

Peter Ravazza will be showing treasured footage of the Beloved from his personal collection.

## **Saturday, December 14 - Mehermas Party, 2 - 4 PM**

A festive get-together with other Baba lovers to celebrate His holiday Spirit. Bring holiday "yummies" to share. Bookstore will be open for gift shopping.

**NOTE: There will be no more regularly scheduled Saturday meetings until January 3rd '04**

## **Saturday, January 3 - Movies at the "Center Theatre"**

Presenting movies of Baba and His lovers selected from an assortment of private collections. We'll have a snack bar with hot buttered popcorn, too!

## **Saturday, January 10 - No Meeting**

## **Sunday January 11 - Baba's Work in Iran, 2 - 4 PM**

A talk given by Farhad Shafa, highlighting his experiences there between 1974 & 1979. While traveling throughout Iran, Farhad met with old Baba lovers and interviewed Prem Ashram boys about their early days with Beloved Baba. Farhad also worked with the young people, who were eager and ready to hear about Baba.

## **Saturday, January 17 - Cabaret Night Club "The Drink Tonight is Love"**

This is your opportunity to perform music and songs, or read from the poetry of Hafiz, Rumi and other devotional writers. Candle-lit cafe-style tables, with an "open mike" will create a cabaret atmosphere.

## **Saturday, January 24 - Amartithi Slide Presentation**

Robert Dreyfus will narrate his slides of the 1979 Amartithi in Meherabad.

## **Friday, January 30 - Observing Amartithi, 8:30 PM**

On Amartithi we remember Meher Baba's 1969 departure from His physical body. We will have readings and a viewing of the interment film, followed by a silence from 10:30 to 10:45, to coordinate with Baba's lovers observing silence on Meherabad Hill in India.

## **Saturday, January 31 - No Meeting**

## **Saturday & Sunday, February 7-8, Jim Wilson**

Jim Wilson and his wife Jean open their home and big back yard every year to host the Oregon Sahavas. Jim will be our special guest this weekend. Saturday at 7:30 PM, he will treat us to his original songs and ghazals, which are a delightful blend of humor and poignancy. Sunday at 11 AM, we will have a potluck brunch at the Center, then he will tell his story of coming to Baba. Group discussion will follow.

## **Saturday, February 14 - No Meeting**

## **Sunday, February 22 - Baba's Birthday Celebration**

We'll start with a potluck lunch from 12 - 1 PM, then from 1-4, games, children's activities, bookstore, music and a film; finishing with birthday cake and Baba's arti. Your help with this event will be appreciated. Call Brian Drygas (408) 927-6500.

## **Saturday, February 28 - Game Night!**

Bring your favorite games and join in for a playful round of frolicking fun. (Baba loved to play games!)

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## **PHONE TREE RETURNS TO LIFE**

We want to make sure that MBCNC's phone tree is up-to-date and will work when we need it. If you want to get Baba messages by phone, e-mail or both; or if you can help by making calls yourself, please call Janet White at (510) 843-4417, or e-mail Mary Weiss at meweiss@aol.com with your name, phone and e-mail information.

*Our apologies to Patricia O'Leary, whose photos of Bhau in the last edition were incorrectly credited to Patricia O'Reilly.*

### **TUESDAY NIGHT MEDITATION**

On four upcoming Tuesday nights from 7:30 to 8:30 PM, Ben Leet will host an hour of silent group meditation and prayer. Meetings will be held December 2 and 16, January 6 and 20. "I don't expect anyone but myself to come, with maybe an exceptional cricket," says Ben. Come and surprise him.

### **FOR ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER CHANGES:**

**e-mail [amba42@yahoo.com](mailto:amba42@yahoo.com) or write or call:**

Paul Christy 28 Domingo Ave. Apt.A,  
Berkeley, CA 94705 (510) 845-4339

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## **Meher Baba Center of Northern California, Inc.**

*President, Brian Drygas, Vice President, Ron Greenstein, Secretary, Ed Munnich, Treasurer, Cheryl Longo*  
*Board of Directors: Brian Drygas, Ron Greenstein, Harold Jamison, Ed Munnich, Doug Ross, Fred White, Janet White*  
*Newsletter: Alexandra Cons, Editor • Betty Lowman, layout • Library: Alexandra Cons*  
*Bookstore: Katie Mink • Trustwalla: Jack Mormon (P.O. Box 2288, Richmond, CA 94802-1288)*



Don with Jean Ross of Sacramento.

## DON STEVENS: THE THREE BRIDGES

On two occasions, Meher Baba told Don that he had “an almost perfect balance between the head and the heart.” Don shared his “head” and his “heart” with about 75 people attending the Three Bridges seminar near our center on October 18th and 19th. Don said the “Three Bridges” were Baba Himself, the mandali and Baba’s words. Baba has said that He was “a bridge for mankind to know God.”

Don stressed the importance of Baba’s words. Eruch has explained that Baba “attaches to each word something which is similar to an atomic bomb of spiritual energy” in His meticulously edited works. Don said that the books which were meticulously edited by Baba Himself were the first eight chapters of *God Speaks*, the original *Song of the New Life*, Part II of *Listen Humanity* and Baba’s Prayers.

Don also mentioned the importance of the *Discourses* and emphasized the importance of knowing the source of quotes.

He talked about honesty, saying that he considered Baba’s order to be honest the most difficult of His orders. Don said if asked about a difficult subject, one had two choices: one could choose to say nothing about a subject; or, if one chose to respond, Don explained, one did not have to relate the totality of what one knew about a subject.

The weekend was thought-provoking and provided a lively forum for all who attended.



## LOCAL MEETINGS

### *Lafayette* - Sunday Afternoons

Monthly meeting at the home of Kirk and Marlene Allen. Please call to confirm. (925)-284-4066.

### *Los Gatos* - Saturday Evenings - 8:00 PM

Arti, singing and readings at the home of Clint and Sharon Snyder. Call them at (408) 395-6865, or Betty Lowman at (650) 323-1900.

### *Petaluma* - Sunday Mornings - 11:00 AM

Arti, readings and fellowship. Contact Hermann or Jeanette Loew at (707) 778-1195. Please call ahead.

### *Sacramento* - Sunday Mornings - 11:00 AM

*Discourse* readings and occasional gatherings. Contact Mike and Jean Ross, (916) 359-2954.

### *Santa Cruz* - Thursday Evenings - 7:00 PM

*God Speaks* readings and occasional videos. Call Buzz or Ginger Glasky (831) 457-0444.

To receive e-mail updates from the Center, send an e-mail to Fred White: [faredw@aol.com](mailto:faredw@aol.com)

Check out our new web site:

[www.MeherBabaMeherBaba.org](http://www.MeherBabaMeherBaba.org)

See program information and much more.

## THE TRUST

All who wish to share in the commitment laid down by Meher Baba through the Trust should contact Jack Mormon, P.O. Box 70383, Richmond, CA 94807-0383.

## MEHER BABA INFORMATION

For introductory information about Avatar Meher Baba, e-mail [MeherBabaI@aol.com](mailto:MeherBabaI@aol.com), or write to P.O. Box 1101, Berkeley, CA 94701. See our online catalog of books and other materials at [www.MeherBabaInformation.org](http://www.MeherBabaInformation.org).

MEHER BABA CENTER  
of Northern California, Inc.  
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El Cerrito, California 94530

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