

To penetrate into the essence of all being and significance, and to release the fragrance of that inner attainment for the guidance and benefit of others, by expressing, in the world of forms, truth, love, purity and beauty - this is the sole game which has any intrinsic and absolute worth. All other happenings, incidents and attainments can, in themselves, have no lasting importance.

Meher Baba

December 2011

Vol. 4, Issue 7



Meher Baba Center of Northern California
INsights
Community Newsletter

In This Issue

Robert Dreyfuss

- * Memorial by M.S. Baker
- * Until the Very End
- * Robert Remembered by Others
- * Poetry Corner

Click here to add your email to our newsletter list

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

Quick Links

www.MeherBabaMeherBaba.org

info@MeherBabaMeherBaba.org

calendar@meherbabameherbaba.org

Check out the newly updated website, thanks to Jeanne Mojé MacDonald (first link above).

Newsletter wallas:
Ben Leet, Lisa Greenstein, Cherri Nelson & Karen Talbot

Baba garland

Dear Reader,

On Sunday, December 4, at the home of Alan and Karen Talbot, we met for a remembrance of our friend and brother in Baba, Robert Dreyfuss. Robert passed away on October 31. We will share some highlights from Sunday with you in this issue.

Robert told his Baba story several times to the local Northern California group, and we have it recorded. Now we can listen to his story once again. Thanks to the efforts of Larry Thrasher, we are slowly converting these many talks, maybe over 300 talks from many speakers, from tape cassette into digital media, and from there we will be able to post them onto the Internet. Today, a talk by Robert is available for listening at mandalihall.org. Here is Robert telling his story in Mandali Hall, January 1970, two sections of 45 minutes each.

click this link: mandalihall.org **Robert Dreyfuss**
~Ben Leet

~~~~~  
**MEMORIAL for Robert Dreyfuss**

A Memorial will be held for Robert Dreyfuss. His family will attend, and it will embrace Robert's friends in the wider community, his patients, his friends in Meher Baba, and anyone else who knew him and wishes to attend.

Sunday, December 18  
2 PM to 5 PM

The Memorial will be held in the main sanctuary at:

RUDRAMANDIR  
830 Bancroft Way  
Berkeley, California 94701  
(corner 6th and Bancroft, the entrance is on Bancroft) For directions visit [www.Rudramandir.com](http://www.Rudramandir.com)

~~~~~

The following is Robert's description of his first meeting with the Lord of Love:

"Suddenly, there he was! Sitting on his bed, unclothed from the waist up, beaming - the Emperor of emperors. What occurred then I shall never forget - a great loosening, a shaking from within. I am not given to visions, or 'seeing things,' or hallucinations, but on beholding his form, what I saw was his resplendent face at the center of an effulgence so brilliant, of a light so complete in its all-encompassing radiance, that tears blurred my vision in rivers of delight. There was no way I could stop it. The light was so brilliant, it was like looking into the sun, and so tears naturally had to flow. Here he was, the One who in his compassion had granted this speck of his imagination a glimpse of the Sun!"
~Robert Dreyfuss
Lord Meher 6400

"I always find it difficult to translate into words the essentially nonverbal experience of being with Baba, but ... Emanating from him was an aura of total peace, surely what is spoken of in the New Testament as "the peace that passeth all understanding." This is not something I understood when being with him, but rather felt in the core of my being. There was no room for games or pretensions or masks; it was simply being alone with my Self, and being totally accepted - for what I am and am not.

There was a love radiating from Baba that I can only call dynamic, a love that was not confined to that time and place, but is with me now and that grows more vivid with time. This extraordinary dynamic love emanated from Baba effortlessly, just as the light does from the sun. There is no one else he could be, except who he says he is!" ~Robert Dreyfuss
Lord Meher 6404

A wonderful account of Robert's journey to Baba titled, *Game of Absolute Worth*, is in *Lord Meher* online, pg. 6398 [link to Lord Meher/ Robert's story](#)

 Sebastian's photo of Robert

Photo courtesy of Malcolm Sebastian Baker

 Robert & Ruby

Robert Dreyfuss , 68, died early Monday morning, October 31, after a lengthy illness. He passed away peacefully at his home in Black Mountain, NC. He is survived by his son, Joshua, his daughter, Mani Rose, and many friends and loved ones across the world.

Robert was a learned man, who was a lover of poetry, literature, and music. He was a traveler to the end. He had an acute memory for the details of his encounters with people everywhere. He loved his many friends, his family, and he reached out to many. In the last year or so of his life, he allowed others to assist him even though he had a fiercely independent nature.

Robert was a devotee of Avatar Meher Baba, whom he met in India in 1965 after an incomparable odyssey across continents. Meher Baba, whom tens of thousands in India and in the West take to be the God-Man and the Christ, gave Robert His message about drugs being harmful physically, mentally, and spiritually to bring to the youth in the West. Following these orders became his work for the next several decades. While living in the Bay Area of Northern California, he traveled widely in the United States, giving talks about drugs in schools, colleges, churches, and at other gatherings. He was the long-time director of a drug program in the Berkeley area. He also lived in India at Meher Baba's ashram for several years.

After many years of the drug work, Robert became an acupuncturist and Doctor of Chinese medicine, where he spent his remaining years as a healer and beloved doctor to many.

Upon his retirement, he moved to Black Mountain where he lived during his last years. His was an engaging personality and was deeply spiritual. He will be greatly missed.

Photo and Obituary courtesy of Alisa Genovese

I first met Robert in late 1974, soon after I moved to the Bay Area from England. As I remember, it was over a game of monopoly at Meher Baba Information. I'm not sure of the exact symbolism of the circumstances behind this encounter, but it somehow seems appropriate that I would first meet Robert over a game of chance in a house dedicated to the Lord.

Robert was immediately generous with his friendship and took me into his world. And later, as we both remarried and had children, we grew close as families. Perhaps it helped being English as Robert, being the romantic that he was, had a overly romanticized view of my country, its culture and its people. Somehow it was always high tea at Fortnum and Mason, and the fact that this haughty English food emporium did not in fact serve high tea, which I would often point out to Robert, was an irritating minor detail that would not deflect him from his vision. Robert's ability to see things as he would like them to be was a great part of his strength and his charm although it was sometimes a quality which got him into trouble.

Robert and I shared a love of travel, of poetry, of spiritual search, of mountains and the men who climbed them and of tribal artifacts. On returning from a trip, Robert would open up his suitcase and, being the trader that he was, look to sell me something: a tanka, an Indian miniature painting, a tribal dress from Rajasthan. I usually ended up buying even though I often felt that Robert's prices, like his dreams, were not always grounded in reality.

I traveled with Robert. We once went to Mount Shasta which Robert was determined to climb. But we both knew that his asthma would preclude going too high, so we set out getting no higher than about 10,000 feet. For Robert, it was about the companionship on the journey rather than the ultimate goal. We met up in India on a number of occasions and once spent two nights at the Peninsular in Hong Kong. Robert was an accomplished hard scrabble traveler but he also had an appreciation for luxury on the road.

Robert's love for and dedication to Baba was total. I had huge admiration for the centrality of Baba in Robert's life and how his love for Baba illuminated his being and fueled his cheerfulness. For me, Robert was a powerful witness to Baba's instruction: That life is a passing show and we should take Him seriously and Life lightly. As Robert's physical condition declined over the years, this Love seemed to shine more strongly. Robert never spoke about his physical troubles, at least to me, and although he would occasionally mention his Parkinson's condition, it was if he was talking about an uninvited guest who was lingering, unwelcome in another room. So part of Robert's legacy for me and I think for all of us is this legacy, and indeed triumph, of spirit rather than a lasting impression of his physical frame. I am reminded of a few lines from WB Yates:

An aged man is but a paltry thing

A tattered coat upon a stick, unless

Soul clap its hands and sing, and louder sing

For every tatter in its mortal dress

And therefore I have sailed the seas and come

To the holy city of Byzantium.

Being the determined seeker that he was, Robert sailed his own seas and found his Byzantium when he met Baba in 1966. I am sure we have all heard the story of his journey and how he met Baba against all odds, reflecting his persistence, his headstrongness and the absolute imperative of the Divine at the core of his being. I took a photo of Robert on Seclusion Hill on my first visit to India in 1978. He's staring out over the plain, underneath a spreading acacia tree that is no longer there, leaning on a stick which he assured me, with that impish twinkle in his eye, was William Donkin's favorite. Unlike other photos I have of Robert, and I have many, his feet are solidly on the ground. He is going nowhere, he is clearly home. Goodbye, dear Robert, a wonderful soul who has gone to Baba and who is now really at home with Him.

Until the Very End

by Alisa Genovese

This is a great story that illustrates so clearly how Baba was with Robert "til the very end."

The night Robert slipped into a coma and eventually passed into His Beloved's Arms, although peaceful for him, was anything but for me and for his family. We were desperately trying to sort out whether to have him stay home or sent to the hospital and once again save his life. In the process of deciding, I called some of his dearest friends here. I told them they could call because, although he wouldn't respond, people in a coma can still hear. So a few of his friends did call, along with the kids and me, so he got an earful at the end!

The endearing part of the story is that the last person to talk to him was his friend Roy. Robert passed away just minutes after the phone was taken from his ear. Roy is a very long time close friend of Robert's; a man for whom Robert had deep respect. Although Roy knows of Baba, he is not a Baba lover nor does he know anything about our traditions in India.

After the cremation, I was feeling very raw and sad, when Roy phoned to see how I was doing. He then told me the most amazing story. He said when he was talking to Robert toward the end, he had an overwhelming urge as he described it, to sing that Roy Rogers song -- you know "Happy Trails". He said he had no idea why, but he just could not help himself. Then he said, "I ended it with Jai Baba, Robert!" He had never before said Jai Baba. I told him just how significant what he had done for Robert was. It was no wonder Robert left just after talking to Roy. He had heard "Happy Trails"!

Baba is so amazing in His myriad of ways. He cares for us all.

In Beloved Baba's Love,

Alisa

Robert Remembered by Others



Robert montage photos

Photos from the '60's courtesy of Ursula Reinhart

"By God's great fortune, I first heard of Meher Baba on the steps of the Student Union at U.C. Berkeley by no other than Robert Dreyfuss. This was in 1967 or 1968. He gave me a "Don't Worry Be Happy" card that I kept for years. I was in the Merchant Marines then and was shipping out at that time. I would tape the Baba card on my focsle door and look at it every time I went in or out. Years later I would occasionally see Robert at a restaurant that Ed VanBuskirk and I owned called The Arbor Cafe. Many Baba Lovers worked there or came by for the macrobiotic food and camaraderie. As Robert and I got to know each other better, we realized we had other loves in common other than Meher Baba, which were motorcycles and mountain climbing. We would wax romantically about mountain climbing, but as for motorcycles, Robert was way ahead of me. He had a "Ninja", the fastest or one of the fastest production motorcycles built at that time. He liked speed and pushing his Ninja to the limit .He managed to safely stay upright most of the time, but he did have a pin in his leg from a previous accident in Boston. The day he sold his Ninja he got down on his knees on the asphalt and thanked Baba for the pleasure it had given him and for allowing him to ride without injuring or killing himself. I kept my bike and Robert would often question me about it and suggest that I quit while I was still ahead of the game.

As for the mountain climbing, my most enduring memory of Robert was in Yosemite when we had gone to do some guided climbs of the big walls. We were both roped in but still a couple of hundred feet up. Even at just a hundred feet or so, down looked very far down. Well, Robert slipped and quickly fell, and just as quickly he started saying, "BABA, BABA, BABA, BABA". He kept repeating it seven or eight times before the rope he was tied into brought him up short.

This exemplifies Robert and his reliance on Meher Baba. Immediately it was Baba, Baba, Baba. I can only wish someday my reliance on Baba is as automatic and profound. I miss him.

Jai Baba" ~Harold Jamison

~~~~~

"My abiding memory of Robert Dreyfuss is the image he left of his remarkable first trip to India. He was well into his story when he arrives at Bombay, in 1965, and decides to hitchhike to Ahmednagar. He was fortunate to hitch a ride from a furniture delivery truck. The driver told him to take a ride in the back with the furniture. Robert climbed up to the top where a cushioned easy chair was tied on to the load. He sat there the entire journey, like a king or a sultan with what must have been an incredible view of the Indian landscape. Somehow that represents Baba's gift to Robert in his journey to Him. " ~Ben Leet

~~~~~

"I found out about Baba through Robert Dreyfuss and Alan Cohen on a TV show called *Tempo 2* when I lived in Hermosa Beach in Sept 1968. I became a full fledged BABA LOVER that same week! I am so grateful to him and HIM!!! Jai BABA Robert... enjoy your NEW LIFE!!!" ~Patty Thorne

~~~~~

"I first met Robert in 1969, when I came to Baba. His telling of his story of meeting Baba gave me confirming proof of Baba's being God. Over the years, our friendship developed. In the last few years of Robert's life (in the Bay Area),

we developed a more intimate friendship.

We were very fortunate that our sons, Matthew and Josh, became such good friends. As a result, we got good laugh material. We also began to communicate by non-verbal gestures, punctuated by the ever present "Nu" (the Yiddish word for "so", but in an all encompassing way).

Robert was a magnificent soul. I heard his story here and at the Meher Center at Christmas. I never failed to learn more and more about our mutual Beloved. He will always be in my heart and I do greatly miss him." ~Alan Talbot

## Poetry

by Robert Dreyfuss

### You Are Not Who You Think You Are

You are not  
who you think  
you are. You are  
a blanket of stars,  
a woven interlude  
between breaths. If  
we don't let go,  
we will not, at some point,  
return to our origins,  
the point where  
fragrance and color,  
shape and size,  
create the miracle  
that creates us.

Oh Brother, your life  
is not who you  
think you are.

~~~~~

We Knew It Was Coming

We knew it was coming,
no surprise.
You were born, lived, died-
inevitable, just a question
of when and how.
Everything else details
so many breaths,
no more than what's allotted.

Then puff, you are let loose
upon the world, the weight
of ashes scattered in a good
breeze. Even your memory begins
to fade, insubstantial, a slight
shiver along the spine.

How much good did you do?
How many did you help?
If you awakened
the heart of compassion,
that you take with you.

Otherwise you're dead.

The return journey
underway.



As some of you may know already, Robert was a prolific poet. In the last two years of his life he wrote profusely. Most of the poetry speaks of his surrendering into the eventuality of his declining health and demise. It is hauntingly beautiful and reveals the inner workings of one dedicated to the spiritual path and to surrendering his life to the Divine. A journey we all will traverse one day.

The poetry he left behind, his family and friends would like to share. We are hoping to have it published in the next year. In lieu of flowers or other donations, I am respectfully requesting a consideration to donate to this fund. Any amount is welcome.

Checks can be made out to and mailed:
Robert Ahrens (Robert's literary power of attorney)
Earmark checks: Robert Dreyfuss Poetry Fund.
722 San Carlos Ave
Albany CA. 94706

Thank-you so much for your consideration.

Alisa

Announcements

Center Library Note:

Would you like to be a "patron"? We have a library for your reading pleasure and convenience. Our library is housed upstairs in a bookcase at the MBCNC Center on Stockton Street. We have had 14 borrowers over the past year. You may access a list of the holdings at the web page meherbabameherbaba.org; look for library, and open the book or video pdf files.

When you visit the Center, remember to check out the library books. We would also like donations. For a list of books we need see the section at the end of the library holdings.

Contact the Newsletter about donations.

The Trust

All who wish to share in the commitment laid down by Meher Baba through the Trust should contact Jack Mormon, ambkj@aol.com

Meher Baba Information

For introductory information about Avatar Meher Baba, e-mail:
info@MeherBabaInformation.org
or write to P.O. Box 1101, Berkeley, CA 94701.
<http://MeherBabaInformation.org>

Meher Baba Center of Northern California

6923 Stockton Avenue
El Cerrito, California 94530
(510) 525-4779

[Meher Baba Center of No.CA website](#)

Meeting schedule can be downloaded in pdf form from website (above)

The Meher Baba Center is open for drop-in and book store most Saturdays 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. (check website for details)

Directions to our Center:

From Highway 80, Interstate 5, going north or south, in El Cerrito, take the Central Avenue exit exiting east, toward the hills. Cross San Pablo Avenue. Go under the BART train tracks and less than a block after the tracks, turn left on Richmond Avenue. Head north on Richmond Avenue until Stockton Avenue (the first stop light), turn right on Stockton. About two blocks onward, the Center is located on the left side of the street. Address and phone are listed above.

More Local Meetings

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

Sonoma County - Arti happens once a month, usually the first Sunday.
Locations vary. Call Ellen Van Allen at 707-528-0357 for specific information.

Sacramento area - Meeting times and locations vary
Contact Marilyn Buehler (916) 812-9496 info@premsay.com

Los Gatos - Sunday Evenings
At the home of Clint Snyder
Call (408) 395-6865

contact for messages to newsletterwallas: newsletter@meherbabameherbaba.org

To subscribe: click on 'join our mailing list' in the side-bar above