
MEHER BABA CENTER OF NO. CALIF INC.

QUARTERLY

NEWSLETTER

2131 UNIVERSITY AVE., RM. 235
VOL. 33

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94704-1029
SPRING, 2003

Welcome Home!

A year ago, on February 23, 2002, Ed Munnich got up at the annual Baba birthday party of the Meher Baba Center of Northern California and announced to the group that the Board had been unable to recruit enough members to serve on the next year's board of directors. "We may have to disband if more of you cannot participate," Ed said in a stern voice.

Some of the long-time members were determined that the group would not perish simply from lack of participation. They believed that a permanent center was needed to inspire participation from the Northern California Baba community.

The idea of a permanent center for the Northern California group had been around a long time. Different apartments, halls and storefronts had been considered by the group, but all plans had been nipped in the bud because of various fiscal and logistical limitations.

Not long after His birthday, Baba turned the key. Harold Jamison found an appropriate site for the center. The location was a former massage parlor in El Cerrito, a quiet suburban hamlet nestled in the East Bay. When Bhau came to the Bay Area in June of 2002, the MBCNC was privileged to have him visit the potential site. Bhau gave his enthusiastic approval, and with that encouragement, the group made a commitment to go forward with the project. Harold and the core committee saw potential in the site. But first, it had to undergo major remodeling.

The main room of about a thousand square feet consisted of three concrete cubicles. A false ceiling of less than 8

feet concealed an actual 20-foot ceiling. There was a large communal shower room that was full of dry rot and mildew. Upstairs there was another shower, an old sink, three or four different floorings and lots of disreputable fixtures. There were at least three stridently different color schemes, none of them particularly well done. In addition to the shoddy condition of the physical structure, there was an odor that pervaded the entire place. Years of massage oil, sweat, mildew and other smells engulfed the visitor.

In keeping with the principle of democracy, committees

carefully guided the work. Meetings were held on a weekly basis to make decisions about each phase of the project. The initial phase of construction consisted of gutting the interior. The most difficult part was removing the carpet, which had been glued to the floor with some space-age material that resisted all attempts to remove it. During the gutting there were, fortunately, only a few accidents. The most notable being Ron Greenstein's breaking his arm.

After the gutting was finished, new electrical outlets were installed. The electricians discovered that the electricity had been run through a tap to the neighbor's electrical system and that the phone line was also tapped into one of the neighbor's lines. It was also discovered that the previous occupants had run ventilation to the inside of the walls rather than to the outside.

Pergo faux wood flooring was installed on the main floor and wall-to-wall carpeting was laid upstairs. Some 80 pounds of spackle was applied to the walls for texturing. Peter



N E W S L E T T E R

Ravazza volunteered to undertake the paint job, with the help of Dan Stone and Kathy Wiederhold. Using his own unique touch and technique he created a palate of colors. The final result is a wonderful and light interplay of soft tones, perfectly accentuating the intended mood of the center. Playfully painted on one of the walls is a translucent image of Baba's face.

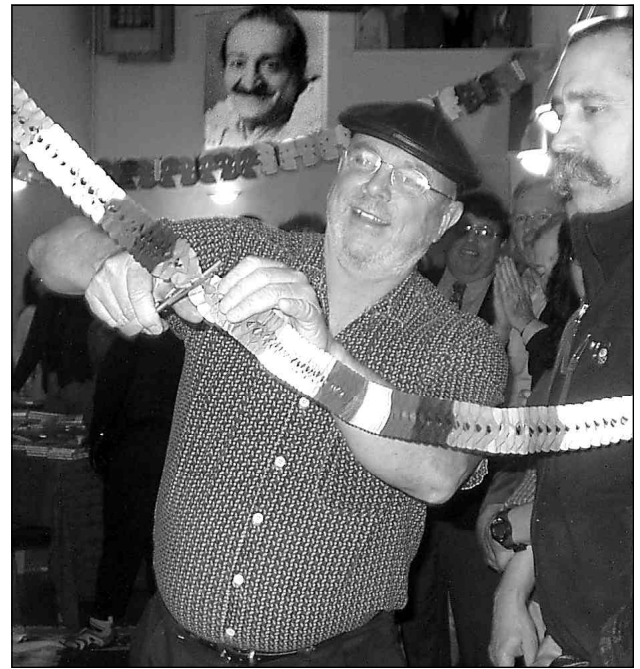
Approximately 50 different people helped with the different phases of the construction, and design. In addition to those who did the physical work, there has been an equal number of Baba Lovers who have contributed money. Eventually we will need \$1,500 per month for the rent and have received pledges that cover about two thirds of this.

The center looked beautifully festive for its dedication on the annual celebration of Baba's birthday. A delightful and whimsical window dressing, created by Lisa Greenstein and Pam Johnson, turned the store-front window into a three-dimensional birthday card for Baba. Bridget Robinson created a stunning gold colophon, Meher Baba's Mastery in Servitude emblem, which adorns the glass front door.

Baba's birthday was celebrated on Feb 23. Honored guests were Bea Dimpfl and Herman Alvarado, who spent time with Baba in the 1950s and early 60s. We were also treated to a lovely harp concert by Judith Shotwell and enjoyed our local talent including David Miotke, Ron Greenstein, Raine Eastman Gannett, Karen Sterkin, Gay Dunn and Cindy Lowe.

Betty Lowman and Annie Stovall coordinated children's activities, including crafts, balloons and garland-making. Vern Stovall and the Drygas's created a beautiful stage, and Fred and Janet White held forth in the kitchen.

A short ceremony was held and the group awarded the Golden Hammer award to John Richards and Roger Larsen and the Golden Paint Brush Award to Peter Ravazza and Kathy Wiederhold for work above and beyond the call of duty. Then, after a short introduction on the history of the group by Robert Dreyfuss, the Meher Baba Center of Northern California was dedicated and sealed with a recitation of the three prayers and a loud chorus of Avatar Meher Baba Ki Jai.



Harold Jamison cuts the ribbon, dedicating the new center.



The children garland Baba's photo.



Alexandra and Rabia Cons cut the cake with Herman Alvarado.

C A L E N D A R

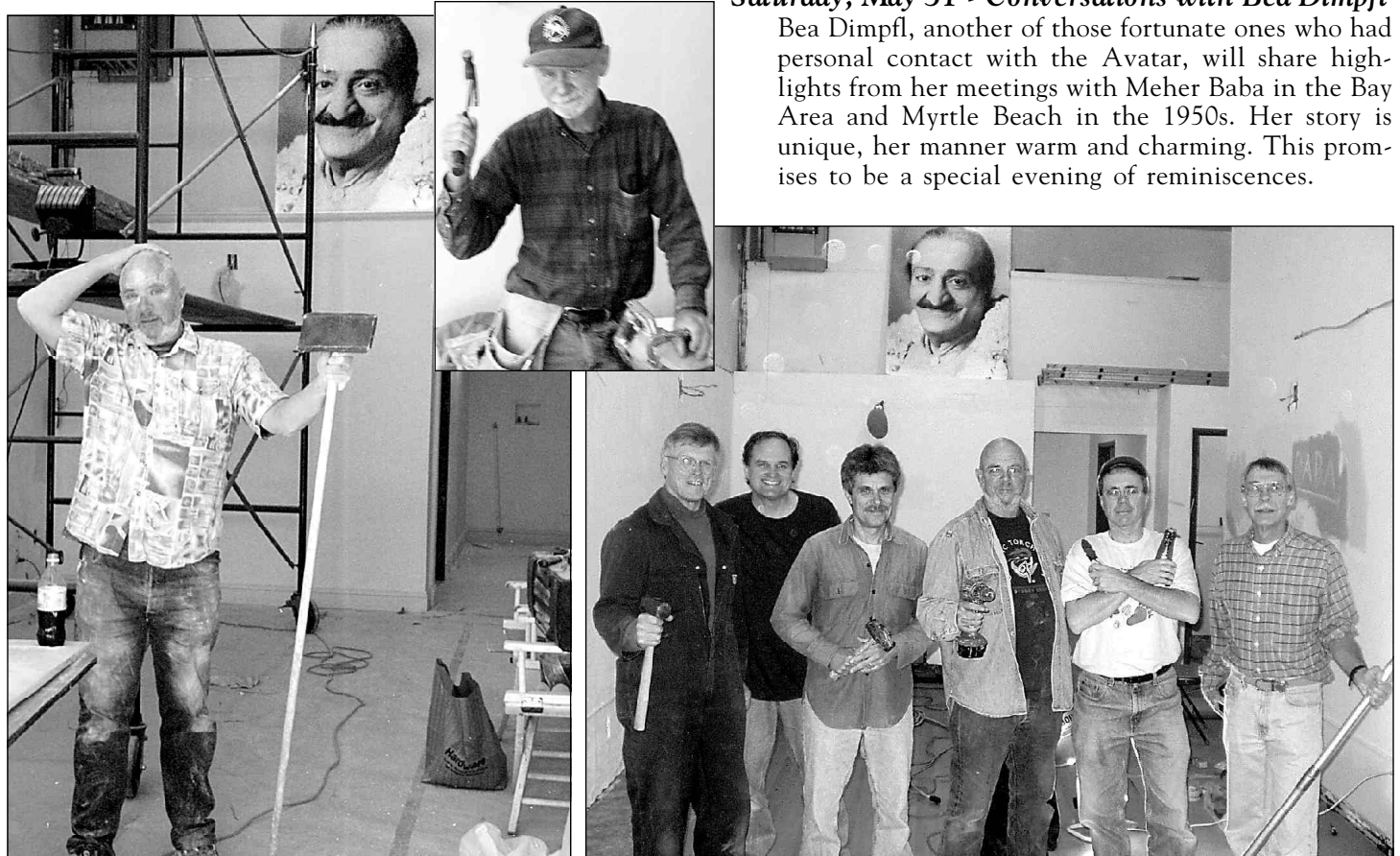
Meetings are held on Saturday nights and start at 7:30, doors open at 7. Arti will be held every Sunday at 10 AM
Directions to the new center: From Hwy 80 in El Cerrito, take the Central exit east, toward the hills, cross San Pablo, go under the BART tracks to Richmond Ave. turn left, go a few blocks 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.

Saturday, April 12 - Dance and Movement

Simple moves and improvisations will be led by Odil, who teaches movement. Allow your own spontaneous dance to flow in praise of the Beloved. Bring your woolen socks & silky scarves. All ages welcome. Odil will be hosting these meetings on the second Saturday of each month.

Saturday, April 19 - Film Night

Meher Baba on the silver screen. View rarely seen footage of the Avatar. Peter Ravazza will show movies from his collection.



Saturday, April 26 - Introduction to Meher Baba

Marilyn Buehler will conduct this meeting for any who want to know about Meher Baba, and lead discussion afterwards on ideas for introductory meetings. Bring your friends who are new to Baba.

Saturday, May 3 - Men's Meeting (Men only)

We will talk about the role and characteristics of the men mandali in Meher Baba's advent. Come share stories about the men mandali.

Saturday, May 10 - Movement with Odil

Odil will be hosting these meetings on the second Saturday of each month.

Saturday, May 17 - Remembering Mehera

Baba's beloved Mehera passed away on May 20, 1989. He said of her that she alone loved Him as He should be loved. We gather tonight to remember this most precious soul. Raine Eastman-Gannett will host.

Saturday, May 31 - Conversations with Bea Dimpfl

Bea Dimpfl, another of those fortunate ones who had personal contact with the Avatar, will share highlights from her meetings with Meher Baba in the Bay Area and Myrtle Beach in the 1950s. Her story is unique, her manner warm and charming. This promises to be a special evening of reminiscences.

Harold Jamison, Baba, Roger Larsen, John Richards, Brian Drygas, Ron Greenstein, Doug Ross, Fred White. Photos by Brian and Brent Drygas.

Meher Baba Center of Northern California, Inc.

President, Brian Drygas, Vice President, Harold Jamison, Secretary, Ron Greenstein, Treasurer, Jack Mormon

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

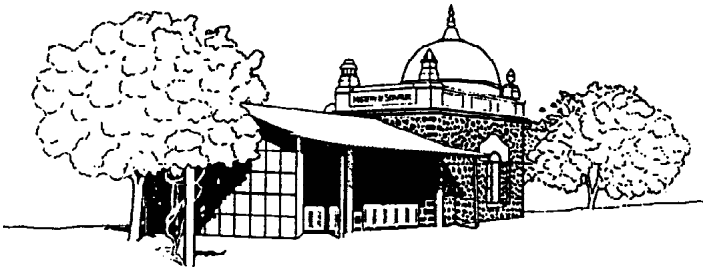
Bookstore: Katie Mink • Officewalla: Howard Jee • Trustwalla: Jack Mormon (P.O. Box 2288, Richmond, CA 94802-1288)

MEHERABAD YOUNG ADULT SAHAVAS

With great excitement, we invite you to apply for the third Meherabad Young Adult Sahavas. The Sahavas will be held at Meherabad from June 25th to July 2nd 2003 for 100 young adults aged 19 to 30 from all over the world. Space is limited to a combination of 100 Indian and International participants and registration will only be accepted up until **April 15, 2003** .

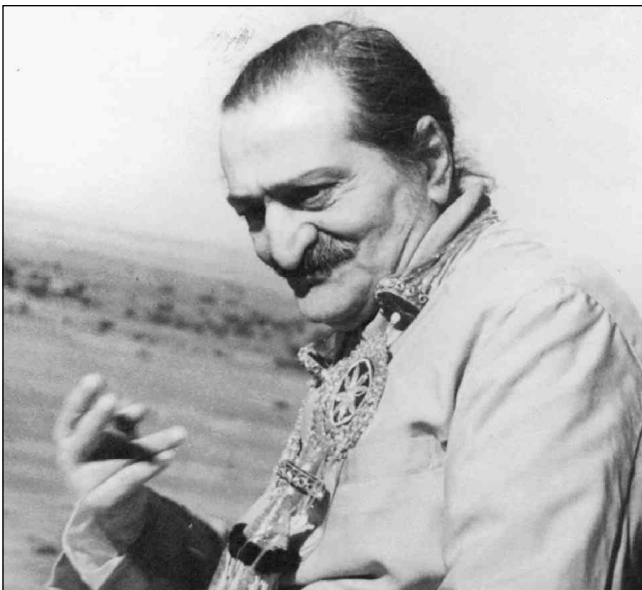
This Sahavas has been a wonderful opportunity for Meher Baba's young lovers to come together and share in His love and companionship. We hope that you will be able to join us for this year's event and contribute to making this a Baba filled week of sharing, learning, play and service. Write or e-mail the addresses below.

Meherabad Young Adult Sahavas,
Avatar Meher Baba PPC Trust
Post Bag # 31, Kings Road
Ahmednagar, MS 414001 India
Email: sahavas@ambppct.org



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.



LOCAL MEETINGS

- Albany - Thursday Evenings - 7:15-9:15 PM**
God Speaks Meetings at the Barrie-Anthonys' the first and third Thursdays of each month. Please call (510) 524-6405 by 5 PM the day of the meeting.
- Lafayette - Sunday Afternoons**
Monthly meeting at the home of Kirk and Marlene Allen. Please call them 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) 486-2924.
- Santa Cruz - Thursday Evenings - 7:00 PM**
God Speaks readings and occasional videos. Call Buzz or Ginger Glasky (831) 457-0444.

FOR ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER CHANGES: e-mail amba42@yahoo.com or write or call:

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

MEHER BABA INFORMATION

People who wish to know more about Meher Baba can obtain introductory material and a catalogue of available publications by writing or phoning Meher Baba Information. P.O. Box 1101, Berkeley, CA 94701. Or call (510) 562-1101

MEHER BABA CENTER
of Northern California, Inc.
2131 University Avenue, Room 235
Berkeley, California 94704-1029

Non-Profit U.S.
Postage Paid
El Cerrito, CA
Permit No.186

Address Correction Requested