

Bili Eaton Dances Off to Join Her Beloved

Bili Eaton, a longtime New Yorker, dancer and devoted follower of Meher Baba since the 50s, passed away on March 20 at age 94. Her book A Love So Amazing tells her unique story. Bili means "cat" in Hindi, and Mani would draw pictures of cats in all the letters she wrote to Bili. The drawings appear in the book. Bili worked on "Operation Topsy," precursor to the Family Letters. Mani would send letters to Bili, and Bili would send them out to group heads for distribution. Bili told her story at Meher Mount in August of 1996, the 40th Anniversary of Baba's visit there:

What I want to bring to you is what Baba was like. Beginning any meeting with Baba, He used to say "There is nothing else but God, and He'd wait." ...Nothing else exists. There is only God. There is nothing else." Every time, He kept pounding into our heads. That's hard, when you think about it, but it got into our heads to some extent.

I was brought up in the Anglican church, My parents were English. They had migrated to this country. I went to Sunday School, I was confirmed in the church, but I was always somewhat of a rebel. I used to wonder about death. I used to wonder about life. I used to question. I couldn't accept what people told me I had to believe.

Eventually, after I had been confirmed in the Church, I became an Atheist. I said "I don't believe in God, I don't believe all this, it's all hypocritical." I was going to have a good time in life. I did what I wanted to. I couldn't go anybody else's way, I had to go my way.

I became an Arthur Murray teacher. I taught there for about four years I was having a great time. It was during the war years. I had all the boyfriends I wanted, because they used to come in and take lessons at Murray's. Nobody else had boyfriends because they were all away. I had a good time! I didn't suffer like the others did. I thought the purpose of life was to have a good time. I used to go out nightclubbing, I used to smoke and drink, not excessively, but I enjoyed myself.

Then there was a strike at Arthur Murray's, so I went to another studio. I noticed that they seemed interested in

"New Thought." They talked about "Mind Control." It was mental and it was science, that appealed to me. Boy, after reading it, my life changed! I thought, "Now I can get control of my life. I can do things the way I want. I'm going to use this and do things the way I want."



Bili Eaton
photo courtesy of Beloved Archives

One day, at a conference on New Thought, I was sitting by the lake. I saw another girl sitting there, and I was very attracted to her. She came and sat next to me, and we talked about healing with mind control. She said, "I've been following this for some time, and it seems not quite enough." We talked for some time, and she said, "I know a Mr. Frederick, he's very intelligent, and says interesting things. I'll invite him to our meetings, and ask him to invite his friends." So, back, in New York, every other week, we had a meeting at her apartment.

He was a very interesting man and he was a marvelous cook. That was good too, but where was the power? After a few months, we weren't really getting anywhere with mind control. One time he said, "You must be tired of hearing me talk all the time, why don't I bring my daughter Filis. She follows a master from the East. I don't cotton up to him, but you should see how my daughter has improved!"

Filis and her friends were a nice group, a very artistic and intellectual group – they read their own poetry and played music on the piano. Then Filis came. She put a pillow down and sat in the middle of the floor. She was very simple, no makeup, her hair parted in the middle – very calm. She had a gentle voice.

She started to talk. She said Meher Baba was a Perfect Master. There was no God mentioned, which was fine with me, I was still a skeptical person. She talked about karma, she talked about meditation. I asked her why the Black people suffered in slavery, why did the Jews suffer in the holocaust. She gave me answers that made sense, really made sense. I thought, "She's got something. I like that woman!"

After she got through, she said "We have Baba meetings at the Winterfeldt's home. If you are interested, I can send

you notices about the meetings.” After some time, I went to a meeting. John Bass came to the door, saying “What are your credentials? Not just anybody can come in here.” I was ready to leave. I had a temper, still do. Just then, Fred Winterfeldt came and greeted me. He was a darling, and he and Ella became my best friends.

I kept going to the Baba meetings. In those days, there were no books. I told my boyfriend Phillip about Baba, and he went to the meetings too. He liked them. Everything was fine except the discourse on sex. We didn’t buy it.

When we heard that Baba was coming to America. I didn’t want to go to Myrtle Beach, I was sure He would come to New York. It wasn’t planned that way, but because of the accident, He did come to New York, and that’s where we saw Him.

It was the hottest day I can remember in New York. You could fry eggs on the sidewalk. In those days, I always dressed up. I was wearing black gloves, a nice dress, high heels, Phillip was wearing a nice suit. It was so hot! We went in, I went first. The doors opened, and there was Baba. He was half-reclining on the sofa.

The minute I stepped into the doorway, I had a physical sensation. I stepped on the ground, and it was as if I had stepped on a live wire with my feet. A shock went all through me. I don’t remember the mandali being here, just Baba, He was all in white. His eyes were so big, they seemed to cover his whole face. Very black eyes. His look went right down to my toes. Something inside of me was frightened. I’m not an emotional person, I don’t understand all these things. I come from a stiff-upper-lip English family. We don’t have these kind of emotions

Then somebody pushed me to go forward. It took forever. I

just couldn’t seem to get there. Baba motioned to a stool, and Phillip sat next to me. Baba said, “I know them, but they don’t know Me.”

Then Baba turned to Philip and said “I had an uncle who looks like him.” I was furious! I was so jealous! Baba was more interested in Phillip than in me! I thought I loved Philip, but just then I hated him!

At home, I had an English bull terrier dog, her name was Misty. I loved that dog. When I came home after work, her whole body would wag! She’d close her eyes, tilt her head to one side and grin from ear to ear. Baba did exactly the same thing when He met me! He closed his eyes in ecstasy and tilted his head to one side. He must have known about Misty!

Then Baba dismissed us. We went downstairs, and it was 104° outside, but I was freezing cold. I had broken out in goosebumps and shivering. Phillip clutched his stomach and said “You know, I think we need a drink.” We went to the Commodore Hotel and sat at the bar. I ordered a hot whiskey sour. I was freezing even though it was so hot outside.

I began to cry. What was I crying for, I had no idea. They were cold tears. I don’t like to show emotion. But I couldn’t stop sobbing. Every day after that, for about a month, I cried for no reason, most of the time in public. Funny thing was, I’m not a crying person. Even when my mother died, I didn’t cry. But I cried then, and I cry very easily now when I think of Baba.

Baba’s last message to me was, “ My love lessons to you. I am happy with your love.” He was so much fun to be with, and He was God at the same time. That was a real trick I don’t think anybody could imitate.

Franey Irani’s Reminiscences of Viloo

Viloo Irani passed away on March 18. Her niece Franey Irani recounts some special memories of times with her:

Viloo Aunty as I called her, was my paternal aunt through marriage. She married my uncle Sarosh (my father’s younger brother) when I was about three years old. At that time we were a joint family, and all lived together at Khushroo Quarters (which now houses the Trust offices).

All who knew Viloo knew her to be a very active and out-going person, with a real zest for life. She was an avid card player and especially enjoyed Mahjong. The many Baba lovers who had the good fortune to stay with Viloo and Sarosh at “Viloo Villa” before the Pilgrim Centre was built, all share fond memories of their hostess. Viloo took care of each one, and provided wonderful meals and a warm welcome during those early years after Beloved Baba dropped His body. Many new ones were coming to Baba then, and Viloo made them all feel at home.

My Uncle Sarosh was Mayor of Ahmednagar for a period



Viloo with Amrit and Dara Irani. Photo by Billy Ward

during the tail end of the British Raj. As such, Viloo and he were prominent members of society, and were greatly respected by the community. They carried out their official obligations, all the while devoting their lives to Beloved Baba.

One of my early childhood memories of my aunt is of one particularly hot summer: we children, my brothers and cousins, liked to play outdoors, of course. One year, it was so hot that my great-uncle (Adi Senior’s father) insisted we

not play in the sun but rather should come inside to learn our Zoroastrian prayers!! This was not what we children wanted to hear; but Viloo Aunty quickly came to our rescue and said that instead of learning prayers indoors, she would teach us all embroidery. And this she did; even the boys amongst us learned how to embroider and sew thanks to Viloo’s quick thinking.

Viloo, who lived to a great age, will be greatly missed by her family and friends and all those who cherish their unique and Baba-filled stays at Viloo Villa.

C A L L E N D A R

PLEASE NOTE: For this quarter, most meetings will be held on Sunday afternoons from 3-5 PM. Directions to our 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. Phone: (510) 525-4779

Saturday, June 2, 7:30-9:30 PM - Practical Spirituality: Remembering Baba in Daily Life

Through readings and discussion we will explore the topic of daily remembrance. Hosted by Brian Drygas

Saturday, June 9, 7:30-9:30 PM - Nick Ormerod

Heard any new Baba music lately? Our own Nick Ormerod will share music he has composed from his heart.

Sunday, June 17, 3-5 PM - Meher Baba's Visit to Oceano Dunes

In 1934, Meher Baba spent one night with an eclectic group of artists and spiritual seekers living in the dunes south of Pismo Beach, California. He stayed in a cabin that still stands in the town of Oceano. Come and find out more about Baba's intriguing side-trip. You might decide to make a two-day trip to LA Sahavas and spend a night at beautiful Oceano Dunes. Hosted by Betty Lowman

Sunday, June 24, 11-3 PM - Annual General Meeting and Pot Luck Brunch!

Brunch will start at 11 AM. Meeting starts promptly at 12:30 PM. Please come to vote in a new wave of enthusiastic Board Members-to-be!

June 30 - July 1 - Holiday Weekend, No Meeting

Sunday, July 8, 3-5 PM - Kate Talbot's India Stories

Kate will share her beautiful photos from her recent journey through India, including Meherabad/zad, Taj Mahal and a camel trek through Rajasthan.

Saturday July 14, 7:30-9:30 PM - Mitchell Rose

Back by popular demand, award-winning filmmaker Mitchell Rose will show more unique films tonight.

Saturday-Sunday, July 21-22 - Urban Sahavas with Jimmy Khan

Jimmy Khan was a teenager when he first met Meher Baba at Guruprasad. He would go there with his family and the Bombay Baba group and would stay at Mobo's hotel in Poona, along with Meherwan Mistry

and the other Bombay Baba lovers. He is one of the handful of people who had the opportunity to spend time with Baba without any of the mandali present and is also one of the dwindling handful whose career was chosen for him by Baba. He stayed all seven days on the Hill when Baba's body was awaiting interment. Since then, he has been a frequent visitor to Meherabad/Meherazad. He is a passionate storyteller and is eager to share his stories with us.

Sahavas Details will be sent out via e-mail and posted on our website: www.MeherBabaMeherBaba.org/calendar.

Sunday, July 29, 3-5 PM - Ocean Quilt Tea

Come have tea and pick out material for your piece of the ocean quilt; see what others have done and how they will be put together. Hosted by Janet White (If you cannot come, contact Janet at (510) 843-4417, and she will mail you cloth).

Saturday, August 4, 5-8 PM - Youth Sahavas Recap

If you attended Youth Sahavas this year, or have attended in the past, this is a chance to share stories, pictures, and memories. Ed Munnich will facilitate.

Saturday, August 11, 7-9 PM - Love Stories

Come prepared to tell and/or listen to inspirational or spiritual stories dedicated to Baba's remembrance. Share personal anecdotes or classic stories. Let's do our best to keep this oral sharing tradition alive and well. Hosted by Ron Greenstein

Sunday, August 19, 5-8 PM - Persian Dinner and Poetry - Tonight, Meher Baba's Wine is Served

We will hear the poetry of Meher Baba's favorites: Hafiz and Francis Brabazon. Raine Eastman-Gannett will sing Francis Brabazon's Ghazals. Persian dinner will be served. Lets get drunk with our Beloved's Wine. Please donate at least \$10 to lighten your Center's expenses. Hosted by Philip Karantzalis.

Sunday, August 26, 3-5 PM - Practical Spirituality: Love and Meher Baba

This meeting will highlight personal insights and open discussion rather than text. Hosted by Brian Drygas

Monday, September 3, 2-4 PM - Labor Day Picnic

Save the date for a our Labor Day picnic. Details will be sent out later via e-mail. Harold and Sue Jamison will coordinate.

WHERE IS OUR NEXT BOOKSTOREWALLA?

Meher Baba Center of Northern California, Inc.

President, Dawn Dolan; Vice President, Ann Holm; Secretary, Fred White; Treasurer, Cheryl La Rosa Longo

Board of Directors: Laurie Brook, Dawn Dolan, Ann Holm, Kristi Marshall, Katie Mink, Jo Marie Munnich, Natasha Nelson, Fred White, Janet White

Newsletter: Alexandra Cons, editor; Betty Lowman, Hugh MacDonald, Laurie Brook • Website: Brian Drygas, Priscilla Hazlewood, Christine Ozuna

Finance: Harold Jamison • Program Planning: Alisa Dreyfuss • Center Maintenance: Fred White • Office Manager: Natasha Nelson

Urban Sahavas: Brian Drygas • Trustwalla: Jack Mormon (P.O. Box 2288, Richmond, CA 94802-1288)

Our Center - a History and an Appeal

Dear Fellow Baba Lovers,

The Meher Baba Center of Northern California needs your help. In order to keep the Baba Center open and viable we need more donations. The Center collects \$1,100 in regular monthly donations from 18 households each month – only 18 households, out of the 400 that receive this newsletter! More of us **MUST** step up to the plate if we are to continue to operate. It costs \$2,500 a month to keep the Center open. This means we are short \$1,400 every month. Sometimes bookstore sales or one-time donations cover this. Often, we've had to withdraw funds from our small savings account. The MBCNC is not a for-profit institution. We don't want to build up a reservoir of funds. We just want to cover our monthly costs. If 100 members pledged just \$15 a month, the shortfall would be eliminated and we'd have a little left over!

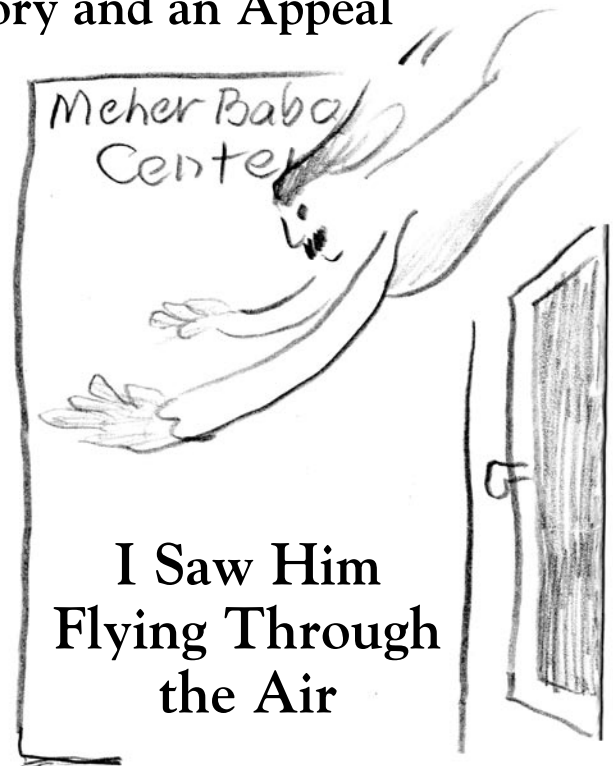
In the early 80s, our fledgling group received a donation of several thousand dollars from Joseph and Carrie Harb. This was seed money – the Harbs' loving encouragement for our group to come together in Baba's name and work toward having our own Center. For many years, the interest sustained us as we rented our small office and church halls for our weekly meetings.

Prior to having our own full-time Baba Center on Stockton Avenue in El Cerrito we met at the Albany Methodist Church. and before that, at the Friends (Quaker) Meeting House in Berkeley, and on the UC Berkeley campus. When we met, we would unpack Baba's pictures and Baba literature set up tables and chairs, have our meeting, pack up and disappear until the next event. The bookstore was stored in a private garage and had to be transported and unpacked for each event.

By His grace, and the hard work of many of His lovers, we have had a beautiful center for the past five years. Our Center has a window display, meeting room, office, bookstore and lovely meditation room which houses Baba's sadra. The Northern California Baba Center has become a wonderful home for concerts, urban sahasas, and other gatherings where people can come together and celebrate Baba's love. As a community we are faced with the task of maintaining the Center we have created.

As a board we decided to renew our lease for the Center this year because many members of our community felt strongly that we should. When we did renew our lease, our landlord John Bear, generously agreed to continue to pay our water bill, citing Meher Baba in a letter to us:

“While we may have a legal right to ask for back payment, and indeed future payments from you, we cannot, in good conscience, do this. Meher Baba has written eloquently on the laws of Karma (Discourses, pages 327-333, etc.) and we do pay attention to this. Therefore, we will continue to pay this bill for the duration of your lease. (...this is, in effect, a \$2,683 gift we are giving to the Meher Baba Center)” Our president Dawn Dolan points out that this man, not a member of our group, has given a generous gift from the heart. Surely our membership can be so generous.



In October of 2003, with our new center completed and ready for use, Harold Jamison had this experience and shared the story via e-mail. Illustrated by Will David.

On Sunday late afternoon I was in front of the center waiting for someone and a car slowed down as they neared the Center. The car stopped back from the center a bit and the woman driver seemed hesitant and since I couldn't figure out what was going on I approached her car thinking she needed directions. She said no but wanted to know if I was connected to the center and I said yes. She turned to her young daughter, maybe 5 or 6 who was in the back seat in a child car seat and said her daughter had seen a man all in white flying through the air and he flew into the Center. When he flew everything changed to a blue color like the sky. I asked the girl if she would like a picture of Meher Baba and she seemed excited by the idea so I went and got some written material that had Baba's photo in it. I asked the girl if she could read and she said no but she could look at the pictures. I was so dumbstruck by the experience I didn't ask any other question and the mother and the child drove off with the girl looking excitedly at the Baba pictures.

Without more contributions from our members, we will eventually have to give up the Center. If the Center is an important part of your community, please make a pledge. Any amount is helpful, big or small. It all adds up – \$5, \$20 or \$50 a month will make a difference. Most beneficial is a donation which is automatically charged to your credit or debit card each month. This provides the Center with a regular and dependable base income. To set up a credit/debit card payment, contact Doug Ross at (510) 388-6529. Or, you can mail a check in the enclosed envelope.

In Baba's love, the MBCNC Board of Directors

Annual General Meeting/Donation Card

We will have our Annual General Meeting Sunday June 24, starting with a potluck brunch at 11 AM. Please call Janet White to coordinate dishes (510) 843-4417.

The AGM will start promptly at 12:30 PM. Do come and let your voice be heard. We will be electing new Board Members, and we will be approving the the budget for the next fiscal year.

We will also discuss the direction that the membership wishes to take for our Center in the coming year. Your thoughts and wishes are important!

If you cannot attend, please designate a proxy active voting member to cast your vote. Please fill out and mail in the form below.

According to our bylaws, an active voting member of the Meher Baba Center of Northern California must have a sincere personal interest in Meher Baba, be over 14 years of age, and and live in Northern California. .

There are nine positions for the Board, and nine candidates are running:

Janet White Laurie Brook Kristi Marshall Billy Baum Jeff Auen Greg Dunn
Ron Greenstein Philip Karantzalis Brian Collins

I, _____ designate _____
an active voting member of the Meher Baba Center of Northern California, as my proxy. I authorize him/her to cast my vote at the Meher Baba Center of Northern California Annual General Meeting on June 24 2007.

Meher Baba Center of Northern California 6923 Stockton Ave. El Cerrito CA 94530

I would like to make the following contribution(s)

\$10 donation to cover the costs of printing and mailing your copy of the Newsletter

_____ one-time donation to support our El Cerrito Center

_____ monthly pledge to support our El Cerrito Center

Check enclosed, made out to the Meher Baba Center of Northern California or MBCNC

Credit card information: Visa Mastercard Exp. date _____

Card number _____

Name on credit card _____

Billing address _____

Signature _____



Ongoing Meetings at the Center

1st and 3rd Wednesdays, 7:15 PM - God Speaks Reading and Discussion

Reading *God Speaks* aloud in a group is very helpful as one tries to understand and internalize Meher Baba's words. Join us as we read together the story of creation. Please bring your copy of *God Speaks*. Dates: 6/6, 6/20, 7/18, 8/1, 8/15

2nd and 4th Fridays, 6:30 PM - Just Conversation

Just Conversation; a new venue for exploring Baba in our everyday lives – no structure, just conversation. Doors open at 6:30 PM, but get there when you can. Feel free to bring dinner (or not). Dates: 6/8, 6/22, 7/13, 7/27, 8/10, 8/24.

2007 Meherabad Young Adult Sahavas

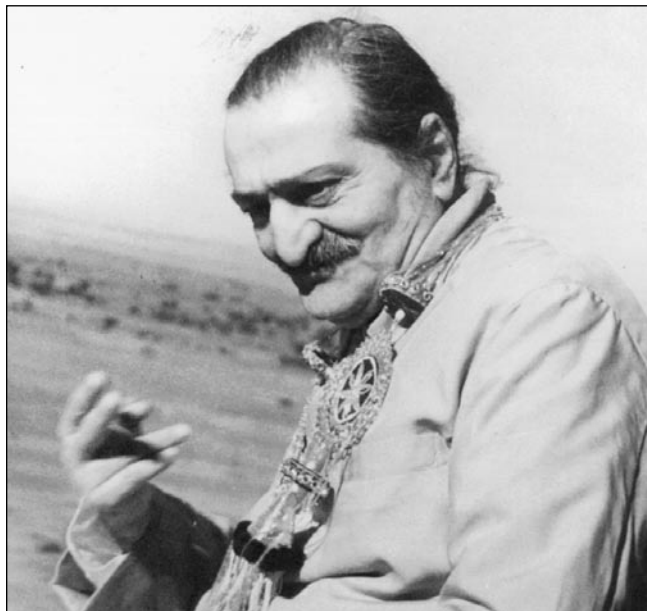
Young adults ages 19 to 35 are invited to attend the 2007 Young Adult Sahavas from Sunday July 22 to Friday July 27, to be held at Meherabad, India. Come take part in this special opportunity to be together in His divine companionship. Participants will stay in Hostel C. The Sahavas registration form and information are online at <http://ambppct.org/events/sahavas.php>. Contact jaibaba@ambppct.org for registration at Hostel C or mbyas@ambppct.org for questions regarding the Sahavas program.

Shirla Edwards

Shirla Edwards passed away in Charleston SC on April 4. She and her husband Jerry were part-time residents at Meherabad, spending half of every year there from 1988 to 1999. She co-founded of the Avatar Meher Baba Circle of Friends, a service organization, in 2005. Shirla was a kind, gentle spirit who was sensitive, supportive and understanding. She will surely be missed.

MEHERANA EVENTS

June 23 Gala fundraiser and silent auction
Info. at www.Meherana.org or call 209 966-5078



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LOCAL MEETINGS

Lafayette - Sunday Afternoons

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

Los Gatos - Sunday 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 Loew at (707) 778-1195. Please call ahead.

Sacramento - Several Gatherings Each Month

Times and locations vary. Contact Mike and Jean Ross, (916) 359-2954 or Cheryl Johnson (559) 312-3751 for details. See more info. on the web: www.garlic.com/~cdjohnso/SacMeherBaba

FOR ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER CHANGES:

e-mail: mbe3@sbcglobal.net call: (510) 525-4779
write: **MBCNC 6923 Stockton Ave. El Cerrito, CA 94530**

To receive e-mail updates from the Center,
send an e-mail to: elist@MeherBabaMeherBaba.org

Our Center's Web Site: Program information and more!
www.MeherBabaMeherBaba.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.

MEHER BABA INFORMATION

For introductory information about Avatar Meher Baba, e-mail MeherBabal@aol.com, or write to P.O. Box 1101, Berkeley, CA 94701. See our online catalog of books and other materials at www.MeherBabalInformation.org.

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