

Niti  
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International Meher Baba Newsletter - March 2012 Number 194



### **ponderings and questions without sound -**

I see Sevn lifting the ashes of Don and sending them into the wind  
 on Seclusion Hill, to the big landscape.  
 this image, what an image.... and there is a shape in the ashes –  
 I ask, in which layer of reality is this happening ?  
 also in which layer of reality am I residing ?

my mind sees Sevn sitting with Don in Hammersmith Grove  
 at the table, discussing -  
 does this all happens simultaneously,  
 but needs to be translated into time context  
 that our body and mind can live it ???  
 so much is veiled and we just have to be content not to see,  
 nor understand  
 so it becomes a habit pattern  
 not to ask and not to stir.

what a leap  
 from body to ashes  
 into the wind.  
 sent by the friend  
 with arms and legs

the 3 dimensional body -

and what did we say to each other - the many things,  
the beautiful things over long times?  
they are stored, we are told, and preserved as imprints  
precious colorful energy capsules  
not to be lifted into the wind.

longing is there however,  
missing the friend.

Renate Moritz

## **Au Revoir Don Stevens**

Pilgrimage and Companionship were two dominant threads that ran through this trip to India- They resonated in our 2007 trip as well – the time when we accompanied Don Stevens and companions on a Beads On One String trip to Hyderabad, Mahableshwar and on to Meherabad. In this current journey we had a specific destination- to be solely at Meherabad and Meherazad - at Beloved Meher Baba's Samadhi, and to scatter the ashes of our Companion Don per his request in his will. Richard's and my plane landed in the middle of the night and we rendezvoused with our daughter Leslie at just past noon time the following day, Friday January 13<sup>th</sup>. With the aid of a well skilled driver we were driven straight away to the Meher Pilgrim Retreat. There we met up with Sevn McAuley and Wayne Smith who miraculously appeared within minutes of our arrival. As the evening slowly fell, Arti enveloped us, welcoming us home once again.

Early Saturday morning, in the pre-dawn light, we crossed the fields again from the MPR to the Samadhi - Sevn had a bag with him and we quickly realized he brought Don's ashes to Meher Baba's tomb – The five of us entered the tomb-shrine together, where what remained of Don's physical form was laid by us, his companions, at the feet of his Beloved one last time. Arrangements had been made for a bus to take us, and others to Meherazad. There were about 25 who went- some who came to India especially for this occasion and others who happened to be at Meherabad, recognized Don's tireless life of love and service for Meher Baba, and wished to honor him. There were many other hearts present- of those who were not able to make the journey but whose love and companionship with Don was so strong that they were spiritually with us that day as well.

Our processional went up the winding path of Seclusion Hill- with two people carrying a large photo of Meher Baba. Once on the top we gathered together in Silence. People then spoke as they were moved, of their connection with Don- with the theme of companionship coming from so many lips. Representatives told of current functioning groups inspired by Don in Chapel Hill NC, in Salem MA, and in London. Individuals from Switzerland, England, across the United States and India paid testimony to Don's uplifting support of one's personal relationship with Baba, and of the love he shared.



I was moved to read a few sentences from a later introduction to Listen Humanity, as they captured Don's intellect, creative enthusiasm and joy-

*"We are living in the flood tide age, when God's whim to know His own divinity consciously has been given another great push within Creation. Things are happening to man's inner being at a rate that could not be conceived of twenty years ago. Ours is the responsibility to look to this Being who has given us once again this great forward push, and by the reality of our devotion within his love, to make the most of this new springtime of humanity..... All one must do, in the shower of spiritual rain that is now descending is to be alert to the opportunity that is about one. How magnificent it is to sense the slowly thinning pall of gloom and destruction and to sniff the moist fresh air that already gives hint of the rainbow in the heavens."*

D. E. Stevens London September 1970.

There was a sweetness that filled the air as together we all sang Begin the Beguine- A favorite of Meher Baba's and of Don's as well. Memories flooded back of Don's first moments home, after returning to our house in Salem following his heart surgery in 2007. Don sat down at the piano in the dining room and played a lovely rendition of Begin the Beguine and Baba's presence filled the room in response. Though the musical abilities of our singing atop Seclusion Hill paled in comparison, Baba's response blossomed to envelope us all upon that hilltop.

One by one we took a handful of Don's ashes and scattered them to the winds from Seclusion Hill per Don's request. As I took these ashes cupped in my hands I was moved by a deep sense of gratitude for the true companion Don has been over the years- He skillfully and delightfully exemplified living a spiritual life in the midst of daily life and gave such attention and guidance to our own. He encouraged us to pursue a closer relationship with our Beloved through working with His words and the cultivation of inner links. I spontaneously kissed my hands- most naturally first kissing the outside of the left hand and then the right- both sides as we all did so often when greeting or departing from Don- and the words came to mind- 'I am scattering these ashes in order to fulfill the final wish of you our dear friend and Companion.' A gentle breeze then swept them upward and carried them toward Meherazad. Someone from behind me exclaimed, "Look at the rainbow as the ashes scatter."

So often we heard the story that Don loved to tell of how, those many years ago, Baba took off His sadra and had the mandali fold it up well in advance of Don's arrival. The date was noted and later Don realized it was on his birthday that Baba had done this, anticipating his coming and marking his day. This Saturday, January 14<sup>th</sup>, the day Don's ashes were scattered, was also once again Don's birthday.

Baba's presence was with us as we thank you Don for the gift of your wisdom, your friendship and your companionship. Thank you Baba for Don.

Jai Baba.

Cynthia Griffen

## Reading' God Speaks' with eyes closed !

An announcement came that Gary Kleiner was doing a reading of God Speaks in one day on January 15th. My first reaction was, read God Speaks in one day? How can this be possible? Then I thought that it would be a good opportunity to read God Speaks since I have tried numerous times by myself and somehow I can never finish it. So I planned to go.

The day before the meeting I was speaking to a good trusted friend. I happened to mention to her my plan. Her reaction was : *What an idiotic thing to do. How can one read God Speaks in one day.* Since I trust her reactions and opinions, I took her response quite seriously and reconsidered my decision to attend the meeting. Besides what she voiced, I also thought, but did not want to admit it to myself. Yet, at the same time, there was another part of me that was driving me to go. I spend some time considering all three parts: the one that wanted to go so that I could read and finish the book, the one that thought, that is not how one should read this book and the third one that for some deeper, not clear reason, was convinced, that I should attend this meeting. At the end, I decided to go, NOT because I wanted to read and finish the book, but because I trusted that intuitive voice, that wanted me to go even though I was not understanding the reason why.

Before the meeting began, I asked Gary why he is doing the one-day-reading? He explained that Baba gave us the blueprint of our soul in the book and reading the entire book in one sitting is a way of receiving this treasured gift in one gigantic wave of tre-

mendous energy.

A small group has formed and we took turns reading a few pages each, starting at 10am with no interruption whatsoever. All the participants were excellent readers, slow and clear. In the beginning I tried to follow in the book while others were reading. Very soon this made me tired, and it was not even one hour into the reading! I decided to close my eyes and only open them when it was my turn to read. To my absolute amazement, with closed eyes I was able to „see“ and sense the words and sentences written in perfect sequence and form. I did not try to understand anything. Like a roll of film all the images were unfolding in front of my closed eyes. My attention stayed focused the ENTIRE day without any digression until the very end at 9pm. My energy at the end of the meeting was charged and invigorated. I was in such a high driving back home and yet it felt that I had just spent the entire day in deep meditation and felt utterly calm.

This was most unexpected and thrilling especially coming from a person like myself who has a strong need to understand everything. 'Reading, God Speaks with eyes closed' offered me the opportunity to simply experience Baba's words, without any interruptions from my own thoughts or from anybody else's comments. It enabled me to move with the book's powerful energy. It felt as if my spirit was fed one of the most nutritious, delicious meals ever.

(As a side note, I called my dear friend the next day and told her I had attended the meeting. She was surprised I had decided to go. Then I shared my experience with her. She was stunned. Through our ensued discussion, we both realized the gift of tuning and

trusting intuition and not allowing established parts of our personality blind our decisions.)

Yolanda Koumidou-Vlesmas

## **Letter about Noor Inayat Khan**

Dear Wayne,

Back in the fall of last year you sent an email article about 'One More War Memorial,' regarding Noor Inayat Khan, published in Neti. I had been curious about the connection between Inayat Khan and Mary Baker Eddy, founder of the Christian Science Church in Boston, and in the article the writer mentions that Inayat Khan married Ora Ray Baker, a woman he met in San Francisco. I imagine she was a relative of Mary Baker Eddy, though this is not stated. When I read the article I instantly felt a deep connection to Noor, Inayat's daughter, though I had never heard of her before. There was something captivating about her- her life growing up with her mystic father, and her helping in the war. My mother was raised in England and conscripted near the end of WWII- Perhaps it was a combination of all these factors, but I felt an inner link- and a feeling that perhaps I may go to the site of the memorial when it is built- or in some way honor Noor. These thoughts then slipped into the back recesses of my mind.

In January we planned and eventually purchased our airline tickets to India for our pilgrimage and special time to scatter the ashes of dear companion Don Stevens. Richard booked the flight and it just so happened that the best deal was through Munich Germany. We have never been to Germany before. On the way over as we only had two hours and no doubt

wouldn't get beyond the airport, but perhaps we could see more on the way back as our layover was for 10 hours. Our daughter Leslie had visited Munich with her friends a few years back, thoroughly enjoyed herself, and she had a few suggestions of downtown sites.

The trip to India was so amazing and special- and I look forward to a time when we can talk with you and hear more about your adventures after we left- While we were there it was just so perfect- Baba's love and grace flowing so effortlessly. What an amazing gift. While at Meherabad we ran into a friend whom we had known when we lived in Clemson SC- He got to meet Leslie for the first time- When comparing notes with him he mentioned he had gone to Dachau while in Munich and let us know we could take the train there easily from the airport.

What to do? While traveling on pilgrimage Baba instructs us to go straight to Meherabad and straight home. The layover was planned by the airlines and for some reason it felt important on a deep level to go to Dachau. I have never been to a concentration camp before but felt that it was important for me to go- at least it would have felt wrong not to go. So, once we landed we took the train to Dachau and toured the site. It is remarkably well maintained. One gets a recorded tour in the language of your choice, and it accompanies you with information and intense stories by people who were prisoners. There are photos at various points around the site that bring the past to life. It is the most chilling place I have ever been and captures a horror that leaves one dumbfounded.

The day we were there was cold and it snowed a couple of inches. We made our way through the camp, past

the area used for Role Call, to the dormitories, and beyond. Past where many dorms previously stood there are several spiritual sites built to honor those who were so cruelly interred and murdered- Catholic, Jewish, Protestant and Russian Orthodox. It felt like a call to God to bring spirituality to a place where there was a vacuum while under Nazi rule.

Beyond the end of the green we crossed a small river. We thought of turning back as the day was raw and we had already seen so much- But we went on to the crematorium, feeling pulled to bear witness. Beyond the ovens, over to the side, was a plaque- the last thing we saw- and on it had four names, including the name of Noor Inayat Khan. The atmosphere took on a surreal quality- All of a sudden it felt so right for us to be there.

On the following Saturday after our return home we had our close group of companions to our house for a meeting. The group, known as our Intuition group, was started many years ago after a visit from Don. When he would come to town and spend time with us he would often ask to meet with the group, sharing insights and guidance, wine and companionship. In preparation for each meeting we read Meher Baba's words and then discuss intuitions or insights into daily life that we may become open to. In addition, at this particular meeting, we were sharing our many stories of the amazing time we had at Meherabad and Meherazad, and what a special and magical experience being with you and others scattering Don's ashes. Baba's presence and His divine love permeated everything.

We also mentioned that we went to Dachau- These extremely contrasting experiences from Meherabad to

Dachau poignantly exemplified a quote by Baba that I had been quite taken with that we read in Listen Humanity for a previous meeting before our trip- "Selfishness multiplied by population results in war, exploitation, persecution and poverty. Selflessness multiplied by population brings about peace and plenty." Beyond just mentioning that we went to the Camp I told the story, as mentioned above, of Noor Inayat Khan and coming across her name in the crematorium. At that moment a companion from Cambridge began telling us about a book, published in the 70s- A Man Called Intrepid- that is written by a spy in WWII in which he mentions Noor, (known in the book as Madeline )- Just as she was telling us about the book, another companion who comes to the meetings from Rhode Island was pulling the same book from his bag that he just so happened to have with him.

Sometimes the synchronicity of things adds to a surreal quality around the events taking place and one begins to see that there is something much greater at work than often meets the eye. The inner links we have with people and with situations which are beyond our awareness can just shift one's sense of 'reality.' As you sent us the initial article, and know Don's way of working with Baba's words I thought you may find this story of interest. It is written that Noor died at Dachau, but that didn't have meaning to me when I read the article as I had not been to Germany. Also of interest was written that Inayat Khan and his brother and cousin "had started out as court players for the rulers of Baroda." The maharani of Baroda was the one who owned Guru Prasad !  
Small world?

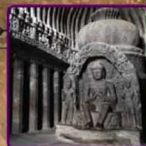
Cynthia Griffen.



# BEADS ON ONE STRING

## 2013 INDIA PILGRIMAGE

QUTUB MINAR  
DILWARA TEMPLES  
MAHABLESHWAR  
SHIVAJI'S FORT  
PANCHGANI CAVE  
MEHER BABA'S SAMADHI  
KAILASH TEMPLE  
HAZRAT BABAJAN'S TOMB  
ELLORA CAVES  
MANONASH CAVE  
MOINUDDIN CHISHTI'S TOMB



AN INVITATION TO JOIN A UNIQUE PILGRIMAGE TO SACRED SUFI, ISLAMIC, JAIN, BUDDHIST, AND HINDU SITES ALONG WITH SITES RELATED TO THE WORK OF AVATAR MEHER BABA.

WESTERN TYPE HOTEL ACCOMMODATION OVER A 10 DAY JOURNEY WITH BUS, TRAIN AND AN INTERNAL AIR FLIGHT INCLUDED COMMENCING JANUARY 14TH. 2013 IN DELHI.

FOR MORE DETAILS AND TO REGISTER CONTACT: [BEADSPILGRIMAGE@GMAIL.COM](mailto:BEADSPILGRIMAGE@GMAIL.COM)