



Australian Newsletter

Jai Shri Mataji!

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*O Light Eternal fixed in Self alone,
Known only to Yourself, and knowing Self,
You love and glow, knowing and being known!*

*That circling which, as I conceived it,
Shone in You as Your own first reflected
light when I had looked into It a while,
Seemed in Itself and in Its own Self-colour
to be depicted with man's very image.
My eyes were totally absorbed in It.*

*As the geometer who tries so hard
to square the circle, but cannot discover,
Think as he may, the principle involved,
So did I strive with this new mystery:
I yearned to know how could our image fit
into that circle, how could it conform;
But my own wings could not take me so high –
Then a great flash of understanding
struck my mind,
And suddenly its wish was granted.*

*At this point power failed high fantasy
But, like a wheel in perfect balance turning,
I felt my will and my desire impelled
By the Love that moves the sun and the other stars.*

Dante Alighieri



STATE NEWS

NSW News

Central Coast 21st May

Seven happy Yogis (one for each chakra) completed their day long cleansing at 3.15 pm with an oil head-rub. This seemed to release the build up of residues that had moved up from concentrated application of vibrations to the charkas. Most people reported good results, some saying the Camphor and or Ajwan produced noticeable benefits. Various methods (personal choice) were used in the privacy of one's own room in an atmosphere of silence from 8.30 onwards.

Generally speaking smiles were bigger and one could feel greater collectivity and a degree of lightness as we prepared for a BBQ at about 4.00 pm. The food was enjoyed with the usual Yogic enthusiasm amidst across the table banter. At 6.30 pm the havan started and by now the numbers had swelled to 6, all engaging enthusiastically in offering negativity to a roaring fire.

All-in-all everyone had a great day, and more days of various formats – and even a week – are being considered in the year ahead.

A camping weekend at Hawkesnest for men and boys is trying to manifest during June either on the long weekend or the weekend prior. This to enhance the right heart qualities and unite the male collective prior to the responsibility of the Central Coast hosting the Shri Krishna Puja in August. So anyone interested in a collective time in the nature and a night around the campfire Sahaja-style please call 0415 6442 44 now.

Peter Cordon

Taree Programs, Wednesdays 7.30pm

These have been going very well. We had all except two returning for the second week, and two new people came, so we had ten people both evenings.

The vibrations are so strong at these meetings. Although I didn't single out anyone to ask about their individual experiences, no-one had any questions and the meditation was really clear and thoughtless.

Jo and Peter Boland

Ladies' Seminar at Balmoral

Friday 2nd June to Sunday 4th June

(one week before the long weekend)

All ladies are welcome.

A special invitation is extended to:

- All mums (try to come without children so you can gain maximum benefits)
- Ladies who have not been doing Sahaja Yoga for very long (please pass on the invitation at your weekly programs)
- Any lady experiencing women's health problems
- Ladies who have been to Washi hospital
- Ladies who have had the blessing to be in Shri Mataji's company and received personal advice on subjects which may be of interest to the collective (especially Indian yoginis).

The aims of the seminar are to:

- provide an opportunity for intense introspection without usual distractions
- gather information concerning Shri Mataji's advice on women's health issues
- Discuss Sahaja Yoga in relation to family demands, priorities and responsibilities
- welcome ladies who have not been doing Sahaja Yoga for very long
- re-examine Puja and puja dress with more depth and understanding
- enable yoginis to rejuvenate, deepen and strengthen their connection with Shri Mataji

Ladies should bring a plate to share on Friday evening, a cake, fruit to share (fresh, tinned or dried), a sari, a warm sleeping bag and warm coat etc (all the other things!) and any Sahaja literature relating to child-care, women's health and family, or advice from Shri Mataji on these subjects.

"Itinerary" (for those ladies who wear watches):

Friday 2nd June Arrival

(so we can begin early on Sat)

- 7:00pm Casual Collective Meal (bring a plate to share)
- 8:30pm Welcome, meditation & Shri Mataji's talk
- 10:00pm Lights out

Saturday 3rd June

- 5:00am Wake up
- 5:30am Meditation
- 7:00am Breakfast
- 8:30am Exchanging Vibrations (3-on-1) to identify precise catches for every lady
- 10:30am Tea (bring a cake)
- 11:00am Open session on women's health problems and Sahaja Yoga techniques for clearing, plus Shri Mataji's advice on these things
- 1:00pm Lunch
- 3:00pm Bushwalk, shoebeat or rest. Saris, Clothes, Pottery etc for sale
- 4:00pm Invitation has been extended to Balmoral architects so they may hear any suggestions the ladies have relating to the development of Balmoral
- 6:00pm Dinner
- 7:30pm Questions for the Indian ladies relating to Puja etc. Presentation of Indian Dancing. Supper
- 10:30 Lights out

Sunday 4th June

- 5:00am Wake up
- 5:30am Meditation
- 7:00am Breakfast
- 8:30am Exchanging Vibrations (1-on-1)
- 9:30am Shri Mataji's talk
- 10:30am Tea – Saris, Clothes, Pottery etc for sale
- 11:00am Session on Family and Sahaja Yoga – open to floor out air concerns about the direction of sahaja Culture. Collective Bandhans
- 1:00pm Lunch
- 2:00pm Wash up and clean up camp
- 3:00pm Collective shoebeat.

Registration (approximately \$20 at this stage) and other enquiries to:
Michelle Shete 9371 4669

Transport problems:

Mahima Morgan 9649 6879.

Please inform Mahima if you have a spare car seat.

Reminder:

Caretaker required for Balmoral

A reminder that we are all looking for a CARETAKER for the country property at Balmoral while Alfred Hewitt is overseas between mid-July and mid-September.

Anyone who would like to live there for the whole two months or for a part of that time should contact Michael Fogarty at 02 9417 5572.

Please give this your consideration. In the interests of the security of our own property and the care of the vibrations which have been established there, as well as the supervision of the comings and goings, we should have someone (or even a succession of people) there in the role of caretaker. I know this is what Alfred feels and I agree with him.

Waiting to hear from you,
Michael

Old News

Toowoomba Programme

The Toowoomba programme held on 13th May saw four seekers returning from the previous month and three new seekers gaining their realisation - currently all very keen to learn more about Sahaja Yoga. The next programme has been organised for Saturday, 17 June at 10:30am at the Centre for Focusing, 34 Goggs Street.

Sahaja Yoga for Japanese Tourists

Shri Mataji has had her attention on bringing the Japanese to Sahaja Yoga for some time. One suggestion is to have programs in the Hotels where they stay on the Gold Coast. The management would be approached to offer a free morning meditation class for the tourists. Once they have their self-realisation we could give them details of follow up programs in Japan which they could attend when they return. This project needs some coordination and support.

Country Programs

The Music of Joy and public program trip to Coffs Harbour on the long weekend 10-12th June gives us a chance to again have programs at Murwillumbah (11am, 10th June) and Lismore (1.30pm, 10th June). It will mean missing the first concert at Coffs Harbour, but we will be able to attend the following two on Sunday and Monday. If anyone wants to join in this fun tour please advise.

Guru Puja

We have invited The Music of Joy group for the weekend and we hope to include a concert in the Queen St Mall, Brisbane City, which will be a great promotional event for our central city programs and hopefully uplift the collective desire.

Many people have indicated that they would like to come for the puja weekend. Those who are sure about coming please let us know as soon as possible so we can start making arrangements. People intending to fly please advise flight details so pick ups can be arranged. Camping facilities will be available as usual. Please all come.

Programs in Brisbane city

A new concept in running programs in the city has been implemented. As opposed to running programs in our homes, a central program would run weekly for an indefinite period and suburban programs would run for 2-3 weeks then move to a different venue. The idea is to encourage us to meet the seekers halfway by showing them our commitment to them. Newcomers would be encouraged to go to the central program for future meetings.

Like the hub of a wheel the central program would be fed with people from the suburban programs. After some time, they would be invited to join in collective programs at Wamuran. In running these programs we would like to spend far less time on techniques, catches and problems and replace knowledge with the greater experience of self-realisation which gives them all the knowledge they need. We feel that people will grow quicker this way and would attend pujas with a deeper understanding of our Mother.

Peter Hewitson

Vic News

The Victorian Collective is still a-buzz over the tremendously uplifting weekend at Balmoral. Everyone was most impressed with Avinash's inspiring words and edifying accounts of his times with Shri Mataji. We were all deeply moved by the personal accounts of so many yogis from all over the world. Especially memorable were Mark Bevan's description of Shri Mataji placing the cool globe of the moon in his cupped palms and Dr Manocha's dramatic account of a classic Shri Ganesha *sarupa samadhi*: these were stories to tell our grandchildren and will be cherished for years to come. We are all waiting for the premier night to see the director's cut of *Sahasrara Balmoral* when Rob Henshaw gets back from his busy interstate trip and has time to collate all the videos he carefully recorded throughout the weekend.

It was also a great pleasure to all of us to catch up with former Melbourne yogi Uncle Geoff Platford. We were charmed again by the sincere, straightforward manner that earned him universal respect in Victoria while he was with us. Clearly he has been a great inspiration to the New Zealand collective, judging from the quality of Kiwi yogis who accompanied him on their very long trip from Auckland to Balmoral. Our love and fond memories follow him back.

For all of us the weekend was an amazing affirmation of how strong our collectivity has become and how sincere is our happiness to be with each other and our interstate brothers and sisters. What else apart from Mother's grace could enable us to move virtually the entire collective, man woman and child, from Melbourne to Balmoral overnight. More than seventy yogis, old and new alike, were simply one in desire and commitment to get there - it was never seen as an effort, just a marvellous opportunity for us all.

It was to us all a very clear reflection of the depth that Melbourne has achieved over the last few years that has been bearing such positive fruit throughout this first year of the millennium. There were no complaints or grumbles about inconveniences or expenses - just a sense of child-like excitement that we would all be on the road together and then immersed in the huge ocean of collective joy that Balmoral was for us over those precious

few days we had together. What a puja! What bhajans! What a night that was! For all of us Shri Mataji Herself was with us for the entire weekend. Truly, when we gather together in such numbers we become such a powerful manifestation of all that Mother has taught and desires for humanity as a whole. We didn't really want to go home.

And what a marvellous estate Balmoral is. For many of us we arrived under gathering clouds on a misty puja evening - clouds heavy with the *param chaitanya*. After a night of simply celestial celebrations we awoke to a bright New World of pure Sahaja activity bustling in the perfect warmth of the autumn morning sun. And how kind and thoughtful were our Sydney hosts taking care of all our needs and wants. And it was in the Saturday sunshine that we saw the magnitude of the property - its dams and walks and bushland surrounds. We eagerly await the realisation of Uncle Michael's plans and drawings for the future of Balmoral.

Since the Saharara puja weekend Rob has explained how the overall structure of Sahaja Yoga is currently being streamlined to give shape to Shri Mataji's desire that Sahaja Yoga be placed on a the proper footing of an established religion within the broader Australian community. To bring effect to Her vision the Australian trustees have devised a new national corporate structure. The new structure will gather the various property assets held throughout the states into a form that will allow greater leverage in financial negotiations as well as putting Sahaja Yoga forward in the broader community as the large and substantial religious community we have become. And all this in no more than the twenty years since Shri Mataji has established Sahaja Yoga in Australia.

Amongst other advantages it is likely that the new national structure will permit tax deductibility for donations to Sahaja property funds and charities. Avinash is currently finalising all these arrangements and lodging the required paperwork. It is very likely that the National Trustees (which includes Rob) will be able to advance considerable funding towards the establishment of a Balmoral-style retreat here in Victoria before the end of the year.

Rob has explained how such a property would enable us to bring new seekers into a Sahaja environment for much longer periods than an evening program, enabling them to feel the joy of Sahaja collectivity over an entire day and perhaps a whole weekend. With the memory of the unique Sahaja *nirananda* we all enjoyed so much over the Balmoral weekend we are keen to crystallise our own desires for a collective retreat as soon as possible.

Victorian Sahaja architect Rohan Waldie studied Uncle Michael's drawings with great interest and is meditating on a suitable layout for a dwelling on our own future property. Martin Purcell and Peter Corpe are already considering the construction issues and strategies and we are all keeping an eye out for a suitable location.

Down here Bruce Ridge and Colin Berry have kept up their country run vigil and gave realisation to more new people in the Ballarat and Bendigo districts last weekend, assisted by a very dedicated Bhajan group (Rohan, Maruthi, Christine, Paul, Lorna and Denise to name a few). Friday night clearing programs continue as well-attended now as when we began.

All in all the momentum set in motion by Rob and Avinash in January continues to gather strength.

Jai Shri Mataji
Michael Davies

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

From *Sunday Independent Newspaper Ireland*

"Switching people on (and off) with Sahaja"

A Belfast-born American publisher is planning to promote a different form of yoga in Ireland, reports *Djinn Gallagher*.

Alan Wherry is from Belfast, but he left long time ago 40 years ago, he says, slightly wistfully, in a voice that hasn't lost that Lagan blás. These days he's a bigshot in the publishing industry, the head of Bloomsbury USA, so he spends a lot of time leaping into airplanes and rushing across the Atlantic to solve complicated problems. It's a stressful lifestyle, but he approaches it a calm serenity that tends to surprise the people who knew him when he was younger and wilder.

Ten years ago, Alan, now 57, began to practise the esoteric art of Sahaja yoga. Sahaja ("spontaneous") yoga is nothing like the kind of yoga you might have encountered at an evening class in your local tech. There's no need to wear a leotard or twist your legs around your neck. In fact, Sahaja yoga isn't really yoga as we understand it: it's a form of meditation, where you sit up straight in your chair (with all your clothes on) and get in touch with the inner peace and silence that we all carry around deep inside us, underneath the tumult of chit-chat and shopping lists and daydreams which fills our conscious mind.

"I use Sahaja yoga all day long, while I'm sitting in a busy office," says Alan. "It helps me to live in the present."

"As the modern world grows ever richer and faster", he says, "people are becoming increasingly distracted, either chasing the next rainbow or regretting the fading of the last one, filling the spiritual void with drink, drugs and sex."

"Some people live in the past, always a little bit depressed about the things that happened to them or the chances that they missed," he says. "Some people live in the future, thinking about the next holiday or the next job. But the only place you can live your life is the present. I have a four-year-old grand-daughter

and, like any small child, she has very little memory of the past and no expectations of the future. So she lives happily in the now."

Sahaja yoga is a way of achieving this magical childlike state "thoughtless awareness", as Alan calls it. The practice was created in 1970 by an Indian woman, Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi, who had lived as a child in Mahatma Gandhi's retreat centre. Born in 1923, she married a senior civil servant, CP Srivastava, just before India achieved independence. Her husband was secretary-general of the United Nations International Maritime Organisation for 16 years.

Shri Mataji, a deeply spiritual woman, was meanwhile practising Sahaja yoga, and wondering how to introduce it to the rest of humanity. She began to invest her own time and money in bringing the practice to a wider audience. Those she taught described feeling a mysterious power flow like a cool breeze over their whole body, especially over the palms of their hands and on top of their heads. The website www.sahajayoga.org features lots of photographs of Shri Mataji radiating light from her head and her fingertips. You might choose to read this as a metaphor, but Alan Wherry is in no doubt about the fact that it actually happens.

"Each of us has a spiritual potential, like a computer waiting to be switched on," he says. "That spiritual flow happens when one's personal energy connects with the energy of the cosmos. The word 'yoga' is the Sanskrit for 'union' " ... then the publisher in him takes over for a few seconds and he adds a verbal footnote. "It's the same root as the English word 'yoke' as in 'yoke together'," he explains. "One's own spiritual energy is 'yoked together' with that of the universe."

Like Shri Mataji, Alan is devoting his own time and money to teaching others about the wonders of Sahaja yoga. When he comes to Ireland later this month, the talks will be free to anyone who's interested. Given that he'll be paying for his own flight over, a fact he blithely acknowledges in response to a direct question, this seems a remarkable offering on his part.

But he doesn't think it's remarkable at all. In fact, he feels he can only keep what he has by giving it away. "When people charge me for spiritual enlightenment, I wonder what is going on," he says. "I've always worked on the basis that I've been unbelievably lucky in my life, in the way that people have helped me. And if you don't recycle that, you become a very dried-up sort of person. If I help someone, and then they go along and help someone else, that's how it works. Shri Mataji uses the image of it being like a candle lighting another candle."

But the person hearing the message must be willing to listen. On a recent trip to the States, Alan gave a talk to a group of prisoners on Riker's Island about Sahaja yoga.

"They were like schoolboys," he says. "They came into the room and they spent five minutes just horsing around, talking and laughing and playing with the flip-charts on the board. I waited for them to settle down, and then said: 'If anyone is in this room because they've been told to come, then there's the door.' Nobody left."

"After an hour and half the prisoners, most of them young black men awaiting conviction for drugs offences, told him they had never before felt so relaxed. And these were guys who had used industrial quantities of some very powerful drugs."

"Sahaja yoga really works," says Alan. "I can show you how when I come to Dublin. But the room in the Royal Marine Hotel only seats 200 people, so be there early". We'll be waiting.

*The Sahaja Yoga talks will be in the Royal Marine Hotel, Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin, at 7.30 on Thursday, May 11, at 7.30pm, and in the Lagan Suite, Maysfield Leisure Centre, Belfast at 7.30pm on May 12. Admission is free

Contribution by Peter Hewitson, Brisbane

Nouméa

Hi every body....

We are in Nouméa since few days and every thing run very well: we have found a big nice house where I will also be able to work, because it is very huge, not far from the center of the town, a calm suburb....and there is also a very big room in wood (mezzanine) to do such a nice méditation room..... every body in the collectif think it's really the blessing of our Mother! Last Wednesday, we have done a very nice public programme and the collectif is of six "old shakti" and two couple of récent peoplemen stand arriving slowly in the collectif (according to the good technic which Rajnev tells me: not more than three month between two programs!)

We have really a very big place for people coming visiting us....so welcome to every Australiens yogis who want méditate with us and have some rest in this marvellous country.

I will be so happy to receive again the Australian news letter and some news from every body! Here is our new mail address and postale one:

Catherine et JC Poirrell

International

Adi Shakti Puja

**and First Sahaja Marriages
on Shri Mataji's Land in Canajoharie,
New York, June 30 - July 3, 2000**

The collectives of North and South America are blessed to invite the World Collective to the most joyous occasion of Shri Adi Shakti Puja in upstate New York. For the first time in America, there will be international Sahaja marriages during the international puja seminar on this beautiful land (114 acres which was bought by Shri Mataji in 1993 for the growth of Sahaja Yoga in America).

Shri Mataji has graciously named the land Nirmal Nagari, and the new road to the land is called Sahaj Marg, the path of Sahaja. Let us all be gopis and gopas celebrating this auspicious event in the countryside in the Land of Shri Krishna, dancing in the presence of our Divine Mother. Last year, Shri Mataji explained that Shri Krishna Puja in America has brought prosperity to the world. Now Adi Shakti Puja in the Americas will spread spirituality throughout the world.

Mark Mays

Astoria New York

May 11th

Now that our Divine Mother has reached the shores of this great land of Shri Krishna to once again bless it with Divine Vibrations, I would like to share with all of you some of my experiences encountered in the prison and drug rehabilitation programs where Sahaja Yoga Meditation has been taught and is still being taught in the New York City area.

Just as the Divine Mother reached out to us to give us our Self Realization and we reached out to Her to receive this great gift, it is our great privilege to be able to reach out and share this gift with others. Seekers living a normal life are able to come to the public programs and get their Realization very easily. But there are other seekers who are unable to attend meetings. They may be in drug rehabilitation centres or in prisons. They may be in shelters for the homeless or for battered women. Some may be entangled in other serious problems and don't have the means to attend the programs. For this reason it is all the more important for Sahaja Yogis to reach out to these lost seekers and tell them that peace and Self Realization can be achieved in this complicated, modern life.

Seekers are everywhere, including prisons, drug rehabilitation centres and many other social service facilities. As Shri Mataji stated, "The doors of the Kingdom of God are open to everyone. But time is getting short and soon these doors will close." It is our great privilege to reach out to those seekers who are less fortunate than us. Although it is the Divine who does all the work, we are the Divine's instruments.

Let us make the great effort to go out and find those who are considered outcasts and have been forgotten by this society in which few have great financial wealth and many are still poor. Racism and prejudice have contributed to creating a divided society. It has created a society in which some members are unable to function as normal citizens. A society that hates is a society that separates and ostracizes and limits the potential of the individual. Drug rehabilitation centres and prisons become very profitable institutions in this kind of society.

The great vision of Shri Mataji is that of a peaceful and beautiful world in which all are equal and everyone can receive their Self Realization. It is the vision of the Great Mother whose children are all enjoying the bliss of the Divine Vibrations. Therefore, let us reach out to all those seekers who are living in various institutions or may be incarcerated and may not be able to attend our meetings. Most of these people have suffered greatly and have been ostracized from society. They have fallen into the traps of drugs or alcohol and other forms of abuse.

There have been quite a few yogis in the New York area that have been conducting programs in prison and in a drug rehab centre for over a year. Everyone says only one thing at the end of these meetings: "The vibrations were so powerful!" The yogis always have a radiance and a glow when they emerge from these meetings.

I would like to share with you some of my own powerful experiences and what I have learned in being involved in these programs. Drug rehabilitation centres are full of seekers. Manoj has told us that Shri Mataji has stated that these centres are places where yogis should have programs since they are full of seekers looking for the truth. Many have been trying to find answers to life's purpose and have fallen into the traps of false reality. Many of these unfortunate people who have been abused as children or have come from alcoholic parents or some other negative environment have fallen prey to this insidious evil perpetuated by some unscrupulous people who want to become wealthy in a very easy manner.

The physical and emotional states of these seekers are very fragile and greatly need Self Realization. Most of them ask questions that are very deep and are very sensitive and intelligent. The first New York Sahaja Yoga drug program was held at SuCasa, a drug rehab centre in the Lower East Side, a working class section of Manhattan. Fifty-four seekers sat patiently waiting for us. They were white, African-American, Hispanic and Native American and on their faces one could not help but notice that these seekers had suffered greatly.

The meditation was one of the most powerful I had ever experienced. Their faces

were very tense and nervous in the beginning, but after their Realization they smiled and became very peaceful. Afterwards, Jerry Mayfield, a New York Sahaja Yogi and I became very emotional after having experienced such a unique and powerful program. We have now been at this centre for over a year.

The assistant director of SuCasa is anxious once again to meet with Shri Mataji. Although she does not practise Sahaja Yoga, she has received her Realization and is very grateful to us for offering these programs.

Every week an average of fifteen to twenty people attend the meditation program. Sahaja Yoga has now become a regular part of the initial counselling program, and most clients participate willingly and are always grateful to us.

Another program where yogis in New York have felt great vibrations is the prison program. We have been at Rikers Island Correctional Facility for over a year. This prison is a temporary holding area that houses prisoners waiting to go to trial and who will either be convicted or released. Again, here the vibrations were very strong. As four Sahaja Yogis waited inside a huge, old, hot gym, guards removed chains from the arms and legs of about thirty prisoners who came to get their Realization. A few came in wheelchairs and one walked in on crutches. This area was the North Infirmary Command area that houses inmates who need medical attention.

As these prisoners meditated and got their Realization, their sad faces were transformed into peaceful and relaxed ones. These were faces that had seen hardships, poverty, suffering and had made great mistakes, and yet they were getting their Realization! The compassion and love of the Divine Mother flows everywhere! Needless to say, the vibrations were very powerful. At the second program there were forty-five men who attended. After five months at this facility, there were about eight to ten prisoners who were footsoaking, saying mantras and wishing they could attend pujas. We were even considering holding a simple puja, since these 'prisoner yogis' already had pictures of Shri Mataji's Holy Feet. But most were transferred to the state penitentiary and therefore we did not have this rare opportunity to do puja

in a prison.

One of the reasons we were allowed to do so much in this facility is that the special programs director received her Realization and also met with Shri Mataji. A very compassionate woman, she cared very much for the welfare of these inmates. Even though she did not meditate, she spoke very highly of Shri Mataji and placed no restrictions on us when conducting the Sahaja Yoga programs. The yogis never experienced any harm or disrespect. On the contrary, the inmates were always grateful to us. One should be aware that in the prisons we encountered basically the same problems that the yogis encounter in a regular public program – mainly, conflicts with one's religion and the use of Shri Mataji's picture. Many prisoners turn to Islam or other religions during their incarceration and this also creates conflicts with the picture of Shri Mataji.

The next facility where programs were held was at the women's facility on Rikers Island. The vibrations at the first program, where about fifty women attended, were simply 'powerful'. The faces of these women had also experienced many hardships. About six of the women were pregnant. There were women of all races, including some very young Chinese and Russian ladies. Afterwards, many thanked us very sincerely and continued to ask questions about Sahaja Yoga and the chakras. Older women who did not speak English simply shook our hands.

There was one lady who continued to shake during the meditation and yet was still able to receive her Realization. Afterwards, she could not stop crying. After speaking to her, she informed me that she was very worried about her teenage daughter's safety since she was living alone. Through her tears, this lady also told me that she had been raped when she was younger and since then she could not stop shaking. She continued to thank the yogis for coming and for helping her to have more faith and hope in God, since she was in a very difficult and seemingly hopeless situation.

The problems of women in the prisons are more serious than those encountered by male prisoners. First of all, expectant mothers have to face the problems of their babies being born in a cor-

rectional facility. Almost all of the babies are born addicted to drugs and face withdrawal symptoms. The mother is allowed to keep the child with her only after undergoing extensive psychiatric testing. If the mother is unstable, and most of them are, a family member takes over the responsibilities of the baby. When there is no one to take care of the baby, then it must be given up for adoption. Sometimes the baby is placed in an institution for babies, such as the famous Mother Hale House in Harlem. The mother is allowed to claim her baby only after she has become drug-free, emotionally stable and has a reasonable income.

One expectant mother who received her Realization and had been attending for about a month gave birth to a baby boy. She came back to tell us that 'Baby Richard' (nine pounds, two ounces!) was born drug-free, even though she had been on drugs for many years and had been on methadone during her pregnancy. She announced to every lady at the meeting that Shri Mataji had allowed her baby to be born drug-free and that this was a miracle for her! She also stated that her baby's body was cool all over at his birth and that he had a very strong kundalini! These are just a few of the beautiful experiences that the yogis have been blessed with in conducting these extraordinary programs.

It is interesting to note that just a few weeks after we started the programs at the female prison, a series of television programs on ABC's 'Nightline' reported on the conditions of the female prisons in the United States. Some statistics that are important for us to be aware of is that eighty-four percent of all women are incarcerated because of drugs and most of them have been abused as children. Also, more crimes and attacks are committed against women while in prison than in the men's prisons. The rate of inmates in American prisons continue to rise, and most of the reasons for this are drug-related convictions.

The problems encountered specifically by the Sahaja Yogis at the female prison were rather disheartening. Although the inmates continued to attend and were very willing to meditate and interested in Sahaja Yoga, a few people from the administration area were actually quite negative and made it difficult for us to

continue the programs. Although most of the guards were kind and tolerant, a few were very disorganized and their apathy towards us and the inmates prevented us from continuing these programs. At times they even removed the permission that allowed us to enter the facility. Yet, we were still able to give Realization to about 150 to 175 women.

At the present moment many New York yogis are participating in a program that is allowing them to give Realization to male prisoners attending drug counselling classes. Every week about six or seven yogis go to Rikers Island to teach about Sahaja Yoga. So far about five hundred inmates have received their Realization! There are also plans to hold a meditation program for the staff, which consists mostly of drug counsellors. Let us desire that every prisoner and every employee in these facilities receive their Realization and come to Sahaja Yoga.

Dear Yogis, I wanted to share with you some of the interesting stories and blessings that the other yogis and myself have experienced in these very dynamic programs. Some of you may be fearful of the prisons and do not know what to expect. What fear should you have when the Greatest of all the Mothers is protecting you! Let us try to reach out to all those seekers less fortunate than us. Shri Mataji has now arrived in this great land of Shri Krishna. Let us work together to help the Holy Mother realize Her great vision for this country and for the entire world! Much love to all and *Jai Shri Mataji!*

Anna Mancini (Canadian Newsletter)

GENERAL NEWS

Editorial of Indian Divine Cool Breeze, Vol X Issue 11 & 12 of 1998

Looking at a glass of water one may observe that "it is half full", another may observe that "it is half empty". When we look at the leaner side of life we only defeat ourselves. For instance, if someone is asked, "please phone Mr X" without even trying, the answer comes "he may not be home". Even before making an attempt if people start imagining the difficulties then they create an invincible mountain by which they defeat themselves. The mental process has a ready explanation or an excuse for everything. For instance, a Sahaja Yogi suggested "let us do a public programme"; back came the reply "we may not get the hall". We have to realise that the mental process is linear and has to recoil back. So let us overcome it and change our outlook to saying, "Of course we will get the hall, we are doing God's work".

We know very well the power working behind us. Let us yoke our mental process to it and leave it to work out everything. By our imagination we block the flow of vibrations and tire ourselves. Thus we are defeated and exhausted by our own reactions. When our attention is centred there is no reaction. We can be in action and achieve many things without getting overwhelmed.

The depth of our faith can cause anything to happen. Sahaja Yogis have many experiences of the power of bandhan. "It was raining, we had to conduct a public programme outside. We gave a bandhan and behold the sun suddenly appeared." "It hadn't rained for a long time, the crops were dying, we gave a bandhan and it rained." Whenever Shri Mataji arrives or departs in any part of the world, the weather shows exuberance and turns favourable. Very recently at Shri Krishna Puja, Cabella in August was very hot. There was the largest congregation of Sahaja Yogis. Sahaja Yogis were even sleeping in the open. Therefore, it was important to have dry weather. The weather co-operated until the puja was over. The next morning there was such a heavy downpour, but by then every one had left. The temperature became very pleasant and heavenly.

In September, Navaratri Puja, Cabella it rained throughout the music programme. But on the day of the puja the sun beamed everywhere and there was no trace of any cloud in the sky. There are many other experiences where it was very hot and Shri Mataji brought the temperature down by bringing down her right side. Thus we know very well how nature is so obedient to her. Also there are the miracle photographs and thousands of cases of healing. From these experiences our faith has grown into enlightened faith. We know that vibrations actualise into reality, our pure desires. Our confidence in the power of the paramachaitanya has become absolute. We apply its power not only to our problems but also to the problems of our society, country and the whole world. Sometimes the paramachaitanya may take its time to work out things. It may need time to overcome negativity. We should remember that time is a human concept. Paramachaitanya is beyond time. As our brain is monitored by time we bind ourselves in time schedules and are panicky if things do not work out in those time schedules.

However, since paramachaitanya is not bound by time it functions in its own freedom. Maybe something we wish to happen tomorrow may be worked out by the paramachaitanya after ten years. For instance many things Shri Mataji told us ten years ago are happening now. Whatever paramachaitanya takes up it achieves. It always keeps its commitments but it cannot be bound by time. Whenever it performs is the right moment for that event.

For the moment our job is to put our attention to world problems and pray fervently to Our Divine Mother for solutions. At our level we should continue giving bandhans and rely completely on the paramachaitanya to work it out. Our Divine Mother is the Mightiest of the mighty and even the impossible must yield to her or perish. We pray at her lotus feet and marvel at her miracles.

O Devi, Let our eyes only behold the
world redeemed by your miracles,
Let our ears hear only your praise,
Let our lips only sing Thy glory,
Let our hands perform only Thy
commands,
Let our existence be only to please you.

Contribution by Elaine Walsh, Brisbane

Birthdays!

Our best wishes to.....

Denise Berry, Barbara Fitzgerald, Fiona Aggarwal, Janie Friith, Uma Nadarajah, Erin Redfern, Judy Dobbie, Martin Purcell, Pramila Siren.