**Practising Alone With Guruji.**

Among my treasure trove of memories of my times with Guruji is one that shines as an example of his generous spirit and his high regard for others. I was attending a Convention where Guruji was guest of honour and main teacher. Wanting to get in some practice before the busy schedule of classes began I was searching for an empty room which would allow me more space than my own cramped accommodation. I had been told that there were a few rooms available in a certain area of the Centre so I headed in that direction and chose the first door I came to entering with my mat and a loose idea of the asanas I wanted to practice. Imagine my surprise to find Guruji there engrossed in his own practice. I apologised for disturbing him, explaining that I had thought the room was empty and I could use it to do my practice. I turned to depart and leave him in peace. “No, stay” He said. “Come in and practice.” So I did. My pre-planned sequence however was set aside in favour of practicing with my back against the wall. I had read many of Guruji’s articles on how to use the wall to improve one’s accuracy in yoga asanas. He described the wall as his friend. I hoped the wall would be my friend too and help my accuracy in the presence of the master. I did wonder if he would later shower me with corrections.

(Guruji of course gave necessary corrections and guidance in the moment, at the time you were in his class. He did not dwell on what was before.)

Even now over thirty years later I can visualise that room clearly. I remember the low lighting and the peaceful atmosphere as Guruji practised. He made scarcely any noise save for quiet breathing. It seemed as though time stood still. For me it was a very precious time. I was just a humble young yoga student unknown to this great yoga master, yet he was happy to share his private space with me and ensure that my desire to practice was met.

Jan O’Donoghue, Certified Iyengar Yoga Teacher, Gold Coast School Of Iyengar Yoga, Ph 0407123699

Gold Coast, Australia.