





Australian Collective Photographic Album.

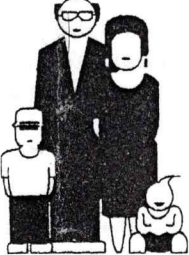
During the recent celebrations of Guru Puja Shri Mataji requested that an album of photographs of the established Yogis of the Australian collective be compiled. She said that sometimes when names are being discussed She would like to have access to a photograph of the person.

She said that the photographs could be of families groups, or individuals but should include the people names, their date of birth, and the date of their self-realisation.

To this end we are calling for everyone in the collective to promptly send a photograph of themselves, or if married of their families by the end of the first week of September in readiness for Shri Ganesha Puja.

Photographs should be attached to an A4 Sheet of paper indicating the name, date of birth, and the date of realisation of everyone in the photograph in the format indicated and sent to: Trevor Sandford 76 Frances Street Lidcombe 2141 NSW.

Photograph to be attached to an A4 piece of paper in the following layout.



Name	Name	Name	Name
Date of birth	D.O.B	D.O.B	D.O.B.
Date of realisation	D.O. R.	D.O.R	D.O.R.

Guru Puja - Cabella Ligure – 1999

The celebration of Guru Puja is one of the most important milestones in a Sahaja Yogi’s spiritual life.To undertake a pilgrimage that will allow one to pay homage to the Lotus feet of one’s Guru is every devotees most heartfelt wish: when this Guru is Shri Adi Shakti Herself who has given us the potential for total liberation from the bondage of ignorance, ego and selfishness, who has created the jewel of enlightenment, and given birth to the path of our liberation which is vast and subtle, yet incomparably direct and revolutionary in its impact. As our beloved Mother and Guru She has full awareness of the challenges that we face and has tirelessly sought to convey the passage to spiritual liberation and its true significance through the potential to completely transform not only the individual, but the entire way that human beings, as a race, live together.

How much greater then is the desire to begin that journey which will end at the Temple of Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi at Cabella Ligure, and be part of the assembly offering salutation and exaltation to Param Puja Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi. As befitting an occasion of this magnitude representatives from the far-flung nations of the Sahaja Yoga world began to gather during the week preceding Guru Purnima. The hosting countries had the enormous task of housing and feeding close to 2000 people. As has become traditional ladies and families would be accommodated in the main Puja hanger, men were housed in the big blue circus tent situated in a field adjacent to the cooking area.

Friday, 28th July .

By Friday Yogis in large numbers had begun to assemble from the enlightened nations of the world. Amenities had been constructed prior to the Puja weekend, the cooling waters of the flowing stream amply catering for the necessities of bathing.The river drains the rain which showers down from on high upon the encircling mountains, water is life, it runs cold and clear, pure and blue, the stream meanders and flows, reflecting the light of the sun, carrying the vibrations of life, sustaining an inherent capacity to not only cleanse the outer body, but has the potential to absolve and purify the heart and the soul. Young and old alike went down to where the waters of life were flowing to feel the cool stream as it flowed along its course, and to delight in time spent in a place of peace. The days were hot, the nights cool, the sun bathed the camp in bright light warming the Earth and the stony banks of the river which leads Yogis down to the waters edge. The days were filled with the laughter of children playing in the camp. During the hot midday hours many sought rest in whatever shade maybe found in preparation for the sleepless nights which were to lie ahead. As the sun set the northerly breeze began to blow, it could be heard rustling amongst the trees and seen swaying through the grass.

The Puja Pandal for Friday evening’s concert was completely full. Due to the numbers of hosting countries the entertainment program was to be vast in scope and range and had to be spread over two evenings. Shri Mataji arrived around 10pm for Friday evening’s concert. Uncle Guido welcomed Shri Mataji and Sir CP to the celebrations of Guru Puja. He remarked that this was to be the closing Guru Puja celebration of the millennium which had seen a re-vitalisation in the level of commitment and the application undertaken by those involved in the weekend’s preparations. Everything had been accomplished, there was no obstacle that could not be overcome. He said it was difficult to express in words the feelings of Sahaja Yogis who had come together to worship their Guru: feelings of devotion and of deep gratitude to Her for transforming our lives, and that of our countries. In Italy the economy is thriving, the detrimental affects of the Mafia have declined. Similiar positive changes have been seen in all countries where the enlightenment of Sahaja Yoga has become established.

As the millennium was drawing to a close he said a Mahahavan was to be arranged to counter the misnamed celebrations which would be occurring throughout the world. The evenings program then commenced with a procession of the ten Adi Gurus who each presented flowers to the feet of Shri Mataji as the slightly modified stanzas of the prayer to the Guru were narrated. “Thou one may have position, or power, or leadership what does it all matter if one’s mind is not absorbed in Shri Mataji’s lotus feet” .

The music program commenced with performances from the hosting countries. The first country to present was Sweden, with their inaugural performance before Shri Mataji. They performed a sweet and melodious bhajan beautifully rendered. The Finnish collective then presented a film representing aspects of the cultural and spiritual heritage of Finland. The film was acted, scripted and performed with much heart, humour and insight by the Finnish collective and was much appreciated by the audience.

The Belgium Yogis next took the stage. In preparation for the Puja they had asked everyone in their collective to write something of what Guru Puja meant to each of them. These pieces were then collated into a grand poem composed in praise of the Guru and recited between the performance of their bhajans. The Sahaja Yogis of Holland then performed a series of melodious bhajans. An expert proponent in the illusory aspect of Maya – a magician from Spain next performed which Sir CP and Shri Mataji appeared to appreciate.

The Spanish collective then presented a number of traditional dance pieces followed by devotional songs set to the rhythms of the flamenco guitar. Their performance received the first standing ovation for the night. The Yogis of Genova next presented a series of bhajans set to Indian classical rhythms performed upon modified Western instruments. A performance of technical expertise and harmony which also received a standing ovation. The night ended with Baba Mamma presenting a group who needed no introduction, Nirmal Sangeet Sarita who again performed a number of bhajans in dedication to the Guru with the heart-felt style and spiritual sensitivity that we have to come to appreciate over the years. It was a performance of joy, delight and exultation to our Guru. The program concluded in the early hours of the morning.

Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> July

The camp continued to fill throughout the day. A veritable sea of tents sprang up amid the fields surrounding the two pendals , the camp swelled to nearly 2000 people, many seeking the cooling mitigation of the river, or the awning of a nearby tree for alleviation from the heat of the summer sun. The night skies were beautiful, amber horizons far away, never ending stars in a rolling heavenly sky, all were watching the blessed moon rise, bathing all with its soothing glow, a procession of Yogis arrayed in silks and saris assembled for an evening of Divine entertainment.

The night unfolded we certainly forego our sleep but were to be refreshed by something far more serene: time spent in the company of the Divine. Leaving all else aside an assembly of Yogis came together, a sea of open hearts and sparkling eyes drawn together: at that moment there was no other place that we would rather have been. The evening’s program began at 10pm with a recital by Nishat Khan. He has performed a number of times before Shri Mataji, but few could rival the level of virtuosity and sensitivity to the spirit of the Indian Classical tradition . As his performance was revealed he proved his command both of his instrument, and the attention of the audience. His concert was greeted with another standing ovation. He concluded his performance with a encore which added to an already perfect evening of Indian Classical music.

The next performance was to be a transcendent and incomparable rendition of an Indian Classical Sanskrit epic, the world’s longest poem – The Mahabharata, performed in English, by the Yogis of Italy. It was a production undertaken upon a grand scale with over 70 players, professionally acted, scripted, costumed and choreographed. Yogis throughout Italy practiced for over a month, many driving several hours each week to Cabella to practice and prepare for the play. The Divine was made manifest in the form of Shri Krishna who acted as the master of the play as the drama was revealed. The Mahabharata highlights the eternal contest between Dharma and righteousness, and those who would see these principles overcome. The innermost narrative tells the story of two sets of paternal first cousins--the five sons of the deceased king and the one hundred sons of blind King Dhritarashtra --who became bitter rivals, and opposed each other in war for possession of the ancestral Bharata kingdom with its capital in Hastinapura on the Ganga river in north central India.

The five sons of Pandu were fathered by five Gods and these heroes were assisted throughout the story by various Gods, seers, and brahmins, including the seer Vyasa who later became the author of the epic poem telling the whole of this story. The most dramatic figure of the play was Shri Krishna, the supreme God Vishnu himself, descended to earth in human form to rescue law, good deeds, right, and virtue, all different aspects of dharma. While Shri Krishna was the cousin of both parties, he was a friend and advisor to the Pandavas, and served as Arjuna’s mentor and charioteer in the great war. Shri Krishna was portrayed several times as eager to see the purgative war occur and dharma upheld and in many ways the Pandavas were his human instruments for fulfilling that end. The Dhartarashtra party behaved viciously and brutally toward the Pandavas displayed most dramatically in the play when they took advantage of the eldest Pandava, Yudhishtira in a game of dice: The Dhartarashtras ‘won’ all his brothers, hiself, and even their wife Draupadi; they humiliated all the Pandavas driving them into the wilderness for twelve years.

The Pandavas fulfilled their part of that bargain, but the Dhartarashtra party was unwilling to restore the Pandavas to their half of the kingdom when the thirteen years had expired. Both sides then called upon their many allies and two large armies arrayed themselves upon the stage for battle. The performance culminating with an intricately choreographed battle scene where victory to the Pandavas was delivered, and dharma and righteousness prevailed. The action of the drama was accompanied by one of the most famous sermons of all time, Shri Krishna ethical lecture and demonstration of his divinity to his charge Arjuna, the famous Bhagavad Gita occurred in the Mahabharata just prior to the commencement of the hostilities of the war. The audience gave the performance a rapturous reception and a prolonged standing ovation.

Shri Mataji said that the play was an amazing creation with an intricate combination of theatre, drama, and the action of the players. She congratulated everyone involved with the production saying how pleased She was with its execution. She then said that over the last two evenings we had been fortunate to have witnessed two evenings of performances where an atmosphere of joy had been created and had enveloped us all. This had been the underlying theme of the Guru Puja weekend. We were fortunate to become part of an occurrence of deep significance and joyous celebration.

Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> – Guru Puja

Shri Mataji began by saying this was the tenth anniversary of Sahaja Yogis coming to Cabella to worship Her as their Guru. Through Sahaja Yoga we have achieved absolute knowledge but we are yet to reach the stage where this absolute knowledge can be assimilated. We are yet to go deep into this knowledge.

Shri Mataji defined one of the reasons that we have been unable to assimilate this knowledge as due to a heritage we share with the animal kingdom which lingers within us still ~ aggressiveness, peevishness and fear are all part of our inheritance. Shri Mataji added to this the ability to think, to react, and to rationalise which creates additional problems such as jealousy. This creates problems which are not seen in the animal kingdom. Thinking further perverts these inherited tendencies, which leads to expanded reactions. Shri Mataji said that as Gurus we should not react nor try to suppress others, adding that rather than getting angry, our methods should be of love and compassion. If we avoid anger, this will prevent others also getting angry and seeking revenge against that anger.

She said that love is the only way to solve problems.

Shri Mataji then said that to be good Gurus we must keep a close watch over our animal inheritance and develop a peaceful, loving, compassionate temperament. Then when we try to help another person they may feel our love and improve. As Sahaja Gurus we should also forgive which means to forget completely the misdeeds of others. Shri Mataji defined our first problem as being our animal inheritance, the second, which is worse, develops from thinking and ego. With the advent of Sahaja Yoga it is not necessary to physically or emotionally punish anyone, we must know that this will not help a person’s spiritual ascent. Shri Mataji said that we must be kind and understanding which will help everyone’s spiritual ascent.

After receiving our realisation we have also received the power of love and compassion: it was because of our love that we received our realisation.

Shri Mataji explained that in all things we must be detached, which is more than just mere words, it is a state of mind that must be achieved. When it comes to helping someone then we must go all out. Thinking and worrying about people is attached attention, when we leave everything to the Divine then this is detached attention. As Sahaja Yogis we should realise the extent of our problems, then slowly these should be dissolved: this does not happen by argument or discussion, but through love and compassion. Shri Mataji described how the majority of people the world over value love: this is the third quality of human beings. First is our animal inheritance, second is thinking, and the third is that we value love.

Only Sahaja Yogis can achieve this state of mind and are capable of detached love, where one is absolutely detached, and absolutely attached. If we know through vibrations that someone is alright then there is no need to worry about them. If the vibrations indicate that there is a problem then we can apply full attention to that person, not through attached attention, but through detached attention. Shri Mataji remarked that if we are always worrying about a person, speaking to them, putting our attention to that person because we feel attached to them then our attention will not work out. Being attached to a few people means that our attention becomes bound and useless and cannot be useful, there is so much to do, there are so many people who want their realisation. Our attention has to be absolutely free so when we put our attention it remains absolutely free, this is spiritual attention; which is the same as love.

Shri Mataji said that She is not talking about this mundane world, but another world, one which is higher, and where our attention works beautifully and is not bound by our attachments. This can all be achieved through introspection whereby we can face ourselves and all problems maybe left to the Param-Chaitanya. Our problems cannot be solved by worrying and thinking, they must be left to this power which can manage everything. Shri Mataji declared that Love is Truth and Truth Love. In all our dealings we should endeavour to be extremely truthful, and to have pure love which is not directed towards some personal gain or reward. She remarked that the subject of pure love could go on forever and forever. As Gurus we need to know the extent of our duties which requires of us to be meditative in order to improve our vision and to enable it to be clear cut. Shri Mataji ended Her discourse by explaining that the meditative state emits vibrations which bestows upon us the powers to do our work, we do not need to fight or to argue but to meditate whereby we achieve a state where we are completely surrounded with love and compassion.