

Shri Mataji also told that Guido (who has recently been there) had suggested that that Puja be held in Turkey this year, as the many visitors that have been invited from Eastern bloc countries would find it much easier to get the necessary visas and travel arrangements to come there. Shri Mataji asked us all to give a bandhan so that this would work out.

Later in the evening Shri Mataji kindly joined us in the ashram sitting room for bhajans, which went on until after midnight. Shri Mataji translated some of the bhajans for us, and kindly corrected our singing of her bhajan "Bhakti Sunaye". She recommended that proper translations of the bhajans be done by the individuals in the Swiss collectively, and then published, and said how important it is that we understand the songs - effectively mantras - that we sing for the vibrations to go deep.

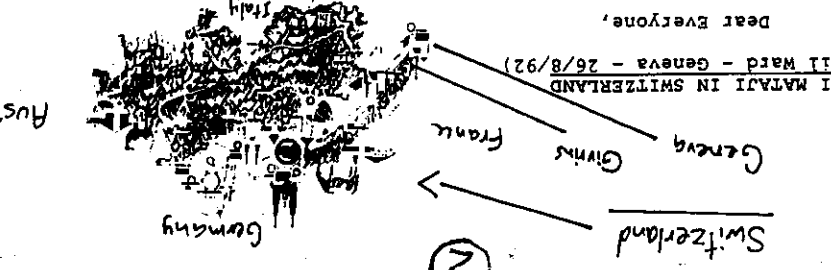
A set of porcelain cups and saucers, all beautifully hand-painted by local sahaja yogis in the Chinese style suggested by Shri Mataji was presented to our Divine Mother, who said that she would have to build a museum in Cabella, as what she is doing with them - too beautiful to use, and she cannot give them away! And a covered by a crocheted tablecloth, also the handwork of our yogis. And Shri Mataji was very happy to see the bed made for her by local sahaja yogis, with its beautiful hand-carved omkara at the head and very delicately worked Shri Chakra in marquetry at the foot. She was particularly happy that all these gifts were hand-made and that we had not just spent money to buy her a present.

During Mother's talk the little children were playing quietly by her chair, watching our mother very closely or eating popcorn and chanaas from a plate on Shri Mataji's table. Shri Mother advised us that chanaas are very good for children and that we should give them chanaas rather than sweets.

Shri Mataji also talked for some time about certain false gurus and their sects, particularly Scientology and Ananda Marg, before retiring to her room. One remarkable thing about her talk was that she was speaking in a normal voice, as though she were sitting in a small room, but everyone seated on the lawn (at least a hundred of us) could clearly hear everything she said. A tribute to the acoustic of the ashram, as Shri Mataji designed it!

At 9.15, Shri Mataji kindly joined us on the patio of the ashram for a while. She discussed a number of subjects, and started by announcing that Geneva is now the Centre Heart, since Sahaja Yoga has been started in so many countries by sahaja yogis coming from Geneva. Shri Mataji suggested we draw a tree of how Sahaja Yoga has spread out from Switzerland, and here is an approximation from your correspondent (please correct me on the dates and anywhere I might have forgotten):

Our Divine Mother arrived in Switzerland on Sunday evening to a hearty welcome from the hundred and fifty or so sahaja yogis waiting at Geneva airport. Shri Mataji sat down on a bench outside the terminal building to accept flowers from everybody present, and then left for the ashram. She said she was surprised to see how much the Swiss collectively had grown!



SHRI MATAJI IN SWITZERLAND (Phil Ward - Geneva - 26/8/92)

Sahaja Newsletter

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AUGUST 28, 1992.

ATTENTION ALL GREEN THUMBS!
 The garden at Burwood is in need of a new chief gardener and helpers. Any green veteran (preferably a green geret) or anyone willing to learn is most welcome. Ashram residents will do the watering, but interested people are needed to bring out the beauty of leaf and flower.
 Efrem (The Garden Gnome)

VIDEO LIBRARY.
 There will be a garage sale at Burwood on Saturday 19th September. All contributions welcome. Please deliver contributions to Burwood by that date.

GANESHA GIFT.
 Earlier this week Fred and Lisa Myer left for Cabella carrying a gift from us all Shri Mataji. Northmeade and Turramurra Ashrams made Indian sweets (those specially favoured by Shri Ganesha) to offer to our Divine Mother. Natt and Chris Dobbie (East Lindfield) made a beautiful card with Shri Ganesha on the cover and a photo of Uluru and our greetings inside. Zoe painted a bunch of Australian wild flowers on silk and then mounted it on a big card. The poem chosen for the verse inside Shri Mataji's card can be found in the red Prayers and Praises book, page 79 (1st verse- substitute "we" for "I").

LOST ITEM.
 At last week's Puja when Jason Cula put down his song book for the last time. Some kind person picked it up and put it away safely. Jason is most anxious to be re-united with his song book (before Sunday if possible!) Can the kind person please reveal the whereabouts of the song book.

SARAH'S FAREWELL
 It's time to say good-bye to Sarah. In two weeks time she will be going to India to start a new life. So we thought we should have a maha-celebration at the India Gate Restaurant opposite the QVB at 6pm Sunday, 6th September. Enjoy a delicious meal, bhajans and karaoke. All are invited. Please contact Vinay (798 4051) to reserve a seat. The entire restaurant has been booked for Sahaja Yogi's.

The first follow-up programme last night, Tuesday, brought 25 to 30 new people back to the University, all very pleasant and sensitive. One couple had made the return trip from Freiburg (96 minutes each way), as they had also done on Monday for Shri Mataji's programme, and they're coming again tonight and tomorrow. So Matijas said to them, find us a hall there, and we'll do a programme, next week or the week after...

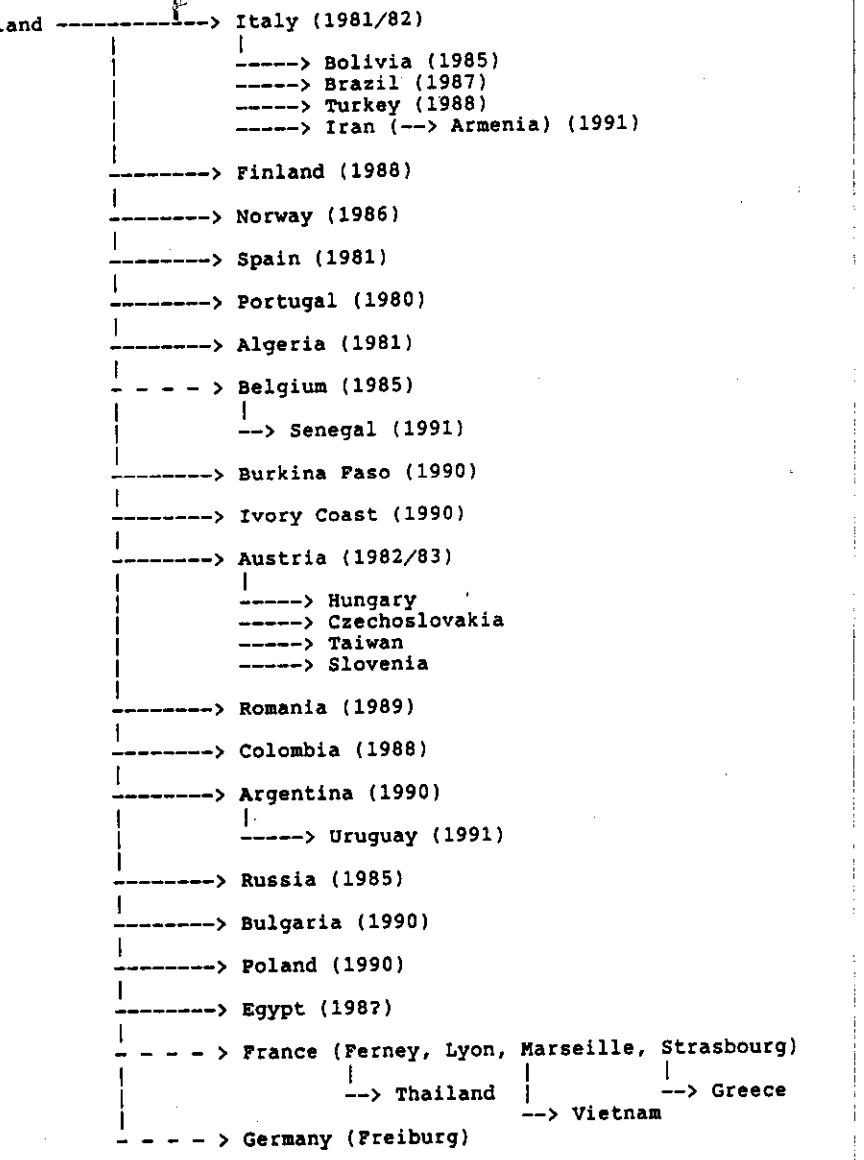
Shri Mataji finally left Switzerland by car for Cabella Tuesday afternoon, after a busy morning meeting some local sahaja yogis. Across the Lake of Geneva the complete range of the Alps was visible in all its majesty, to give our mother a beautiful send-off. (This was quite miraculous, the only time the mountains have been so visible in such heat; normally a view like yesterday's is only possible in the cold, still air of winter.)

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More anon, much love Phil

Spreading Sahaja Yoga

We have been asked to share our experience in relation to the spreading of Sahaja Yoga and holding programs. I have been fortunate in being at the right place, at the right time to have the opportunity to be involved in number of country programs. As someone said there is no guaranteed format which will assure success, from my experience the main requirement is a pure heart-felt desire to hold a programme and give people the opportunity to receive their realization. If the desire is there then everything else falls into place and the program is organised effortlessly. When you are involved in holding a programme you really experience real benefits from a vibrational aspect, you also feel tremendous enthusiasm, excitement and sheer joy as you share the new people's experience of self-realisation.

When it comes time to holding the programme you can get by with a small amount, a photograph, candle, cassette player, some literature. A TV and Video is good but we should not let a lack of equipment be a deterrent. If the desire is there to hold the programme the arrangements can be made quite easily. For the country programs, we usually began with a call to the local council inquiring about the availability of halls or rooms to hire. Most Post Offices have copies of telephone books for all country areas. These will provide telephone numbers of Radio and TV stations, Newspapers, Councils and Community Rooms. Once the room is booked then posters can be made up. There are a number of people like Guy, Charles, or Judy who can help with posters and handbills. A visit to the town a few weeks before the programme to put up posters, handbill, talk to radio, TV and Newspapers is helpful. If this is not possible adds can be posted to the newspapers, community announcements mailed to local TV and Radio stations, posters mailed to business.

A mention of the up and coming programme in the newsletter will put the programme within the collective attention and be a good invitation for other Yogis.

We have found best success when we have held programs in towns where a local has asked us to come. They may be friends, relatives or an acquaintance of Sahaja Yogis. On many occasions these new people have invited us to come and stay at their house. The local person somehow becomes a focus from which the vibrations spread from. Following the initial program these people may take up the job of organising follow up meetings. This is the hardest part of holding programs, that is how to cater for follow up interest. We can send tapes, literature even videos, however someone, or the group as a whole must take up responsibility for continuing on. The most important aspect of this is that the new people meet collectively for meditation and vibrations. We can also act in a supporting role with follow up visits and encouragement. It is important to try to keep these new people in our attention with bandhans, shoebeating, and the occasional phone call to give encouragement. This helps to keep them in the collective attention, people located in remote locations really need our help and support as they do not have the support of a large collective to fall back on. Being out of sight tend to mean they are out of our attention.

As mentioned holding programs makes one feel tremendous, even if large numbers of people do not attend or follow up we should not feel that the programme was not a success. Going out and spreading the message of Sahaja Yoga is success itself, the results of this work is left to Shri Mataji.

Getting switched on to nature, Tokyo style

THE WEEKEND REVIEW AUGUST 15-16, 1992

By CAMERON STEWART



Shades of the West: alternative culture in a city that thrives on normality

ON Meiji-dori Avenue in Tokyo's trendy Harajuku district, one of the city's most bizarre sights sits largely ignored by the thousands of Japanese who pass by it each day.

It is a small flowerbed on the footpath, but unlike most flowerbeds, this one has no flowers growing in it.

Where the flowers should be, the locals have placed three Toshiba television sets which beam out around-the-clock images of flowers to the passing world.

My Japanese companion — clearly puzzled by my unenthusiastic reaction to this innovation — eagerly assured me that the televisions were an improvement on real flowers because they required less maintenance.

And what's more, they provided more variety than real flowers, he said, referring to the fact that the types of flowers on the screen changed every few minutes.

With this televised flowerbed you could enjoy tulips from The Netherlands one minute, roses from England the next, and if you stayed long enough you could probably travel the horticultural world via this electronic botanical garden.

The flower televisions in Harajuku are part of the latest craze in crazy-crazy Tokyo — the electronic creation of nature.

To put it mildly, Tokyo and the environment have never been the best of friends. For decades the Japanese, in their frantic pursuit of the yen, have turned their capital into something of a concrete Disneyland with scant regard for aesthetics such as trees and parks.

But in the environmentally conscious 1990s, it seems to have dawned on the citizens of Tokyo what a monster they have created.

Given that there is no way of addressing the problem quickly, the Japanese have adopted their own unique way of bringing back nature to Tokyo — via electronics.

All over the city, from furniture stores to restaurant walls, there will suddenly appear a moving video of a running waterfall or a tropical rainforest.

Videos of fires, which enable a couple to enjoy a romantic night at home in front of a fire without having to actually light one, are reportedly big sellers in Tokyo.

Japanese department stores sell plastic rocks with plastic frogs (or a choice of other animals) sitting on them which make frog noises when touched.

Plastic birds which chirp when touched are also popular, as are aquariums which are filled with mechanical rather than real fish.

Even the most feared part of nature in Tokyo, the earthquake, has been electronically simulated by the government-controlled "earthquake vans". These vans, one of Tokyo's more unusual sights, roam the city as part of a campaign to educate people about the safety procedures they should follow in an earthquake.

The backs of the vans are designed to look like an ordinary Tokyo living room and, when a crowd of onlookers has gathered, the van's earthquake button is pressed causing the van and its living room to shake as it would in an earthquake.

The hapless demonstrator who has been placed in the convulsing living room then demonstrates the correct evasive action to take by diving under a table in the middle of the room.

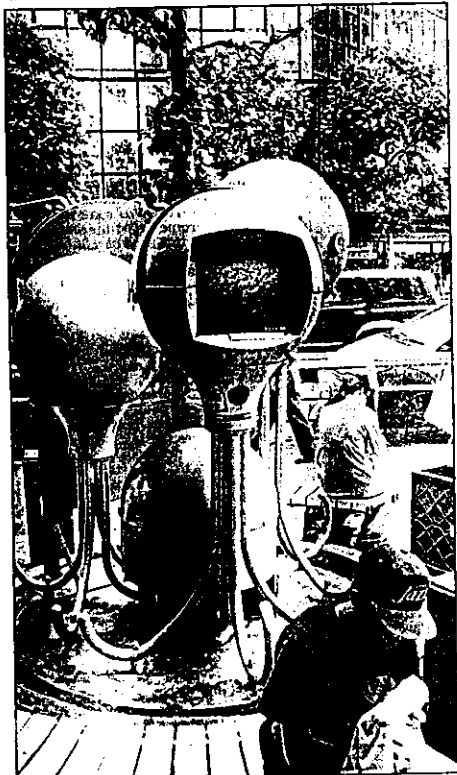
These quirky sights of Tokyo are likely to provide the best memories for visitors to the city.

Despite what the Japan National Tourist Organisation will tell you, with the exception of a handful of shrines and temples, Tokyo is not a city crammed with things to see.

The carpet bombing of the city by the US in World War II left little of traditional architectural interest and the modern buildings which stand are mostly uninspiring and overwhelmingly grey.

To make matters worse, Tokyo is officially one of the most expensive cities in the world and the money spent in a night out in the nightclub district of Roppongi would probably feed a small African nation for a day.

For claustrophobes and people over six-foot there are other problems given the consistently sardine-like nature of Tokyo's transport lifeline, the subway, and the Japanese penchant for persecuting tall Westerners by hanging their signs so low.



What's on TV? tulips from The Netherlands one minute, roses from England the next, all without leaving Tokyo

But if the robotic grey-suited masses get too much to bear, one can always retreat to Harajuku. This is Tokyo's Greenwich Village — a place where would-be Japanese Bob Dylans gather on a Sunday to thrash their guitars in the hope of being discovered or just for the fun of it.

In a city that thrives on conformity, Harajuku is a lone pillar of alternative culture and, not surprisingly, Tokyo's youth gather there in their thousands to let off steam every Sunday.

On the main drag, Inogashira-dori Avenue, gangs of Japanese Teddy Boys looking every bit like their Western counterparts can be seen street dancing to rock'n'roll classics churned out by their ultra-high-tech ghetto-blasters.

This avenue in Yoyogi Park is also lined with local bands every 100m or so which play everything from heavy metal to light pop and solo acoustic guitar. The most popular are mobbed by masses of Tokyo schoolgirls, who are usually more entertaining than the bands due to their habit of dancing in perfect synchronisation.

The opposite extreme are the heavy metal bands, which are largely ignored despite the fact that they look every bit as mean as any other self-respecting heavy metal band with their shoulder-length purple hair, tattoos and skin-tight pants.

Down the street, shops are crammed with the latest Tokyo gimmicks, ranging from handbags that are shaped as television sets, complete with plastic screen, aerials and dials, to calculators disguised as cigarette packets — the ultimate consumer heaven for the high-tech junkie.

india tour
raffle
tickets

\$ 20 each

drawn: 25.9.92

Sue Raggatt

746.9144

ON SALE FOR 3 WEEKS ONLY

How to complain about things you see on television

The Australian Broadcasting Tribunal has recently published two community information leaflets, *A Guide to the ABT* and *How to Express Your Views about Television and Radio*.

The Australian Broadcasting Tribunal is an independent statutory authority that regulates commercial television, commercial radio and public radio. It does not regulate the national broadcasters ABC and SBS, who each have responsibility for their own performances.

A Guide to the ABT explains how the Tribunal operates and how organisations and members of the public can make submissions to it.

How to Express Your Views about Television and Radio explains how standards for broadcasting are set and how you can obtain a copy of them, who you can complain to, how you should go about it and what happens after you complain. The leaflet also provides addresses of Tribunal offices, industry associations, and other relevant government and non-government organisations.

The Government has recently released a draft Broadcasting Services Bill that would see the ABT replaced by an Australian Broadcasting Authority. A leaflet about the new Authority is now available.

The leaflets are free and can be obtained by writing to:

ABT Publications
P O Box 1308
North Sydney 2059