

THE AUSTRALIAN STRATHFIELD

Sahaja Newsletter



Contributions:

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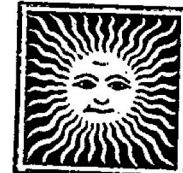
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JANUARY 27TH '96



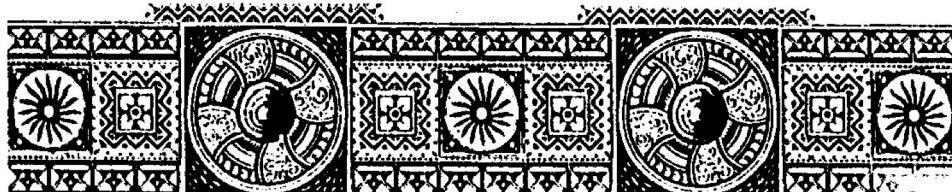
*You are your own ideal and
you have to create new ideals.*

X.X. SWAMI MATAJI



1996 SHIVATRI PUJA TASK ALLOCATION

Venue liaison	Fred Meyer	02-4772282/ 0414-244886
Venue accommodation	Brian Fitzpatrick	02-7472820
Concert set up	Melbourne collective.	
Catering	Russell Raggat	02-7472820
Washing up	Joe Griffith	048 - 851069
Technical manager	Patrick Murphy	02-5708562
Puja set up	Brisbane collective	
Entertainment program	Rakesh Kapil	02-7466472
Structures tent etc.	Fred Meyer	02-4772282/ 0414-244886
Hire equipment	Fred Meyer	02-4772282/ 0414-244886
Transportation.	Juan Vega	02-7472458
Accommodation	Juan Vega	02-7472458
Puja invitations	Shannon Gathery	
Flowers.	Huguette Anglem/ Adelaide	02-2642343
Gifts to puja spectators.	Matthew Cooper	02-6658210
Decoration	Anil Sattarshetti/ Canberra.	02-5600029
Shri Mataji Rooms.	Western Australia	
Recruitment.	Peter Aerfeldt	02-7466472
Cleaning.	Joe Griffith	048 - 851069
Audio.	John and Chris Dobby	02-4162373
Video	Helen Manassey	02-5604134
Registrations	Brian Fitzpatrick	02-7472820
Parking	Max Lieberman	02-6658210
Puja chair.	Western Australia	



CONTRIBUTIONS.



Contributions to the cost of Shri Mataji's Australia and Asia Tour can be deposited in the white box at 10 Clarence Street. Within the envelope, please include a note saying who the contribution is from and confirming that it is for the Tour (as opposed to the regular National Promotions Contributions). Please put cash contributions, in an envelope and write the same note and give to Sue-Ellen or Robert Monaghan at Burwood or directly to Radhika Richardson if she is there. Best not to send cash in the mail.

Michael.

OPERATION NEWBORN.

Veena Scialo of London has proposed rather a nice idea for Birthday Puja. She is proposing to present Shri Mataji with a photo album of all children born in Sahaja Yoga throughout the world during 1995.

Cathy Beavan, living at Wamuran Qld, has willingly agreed to coordinate this project, assisted by Sue-Ellen Monaghan at 10 Clarence St. Burwood. contact

Cathy on (074) 966 716 OR

Sue-Ellen on (02) 747 4835

And then to let them have a photograph and the following details.

Name of child; name of parents; date of birth; time of birth and place of birth.

Veena Scialo wishes to receive this information in London by the end of February.

Happy snapping,

Michael.

Similar to last year it is intended to have a stall at Bundilla where a variety of Sahaja Yoga material will be available.

Last year there were tapes of Shri Mataji's talks, music, books etc. Interstate collectives were able to sell T Shirts and have a fund raising raffle for Wamuram.

If there is something in particular you would like to organise to sell and/or buy please let us know so we can do our best to make it possible.

Contact: Therese O'Leary



SHRI MATAJI'S SOUTH INDIA ITINERARY.

I spoke to Hari at Pradisthan on Tuesday, when he notified me of the places Shri Mataji is travelling to in the south of India.

January 29th Bangalore.

30th Bangalore Public Programme.

31st Bangalore Music Evening.

February 1st Madras.

2nd Madras Public Programme.

3rd Hyderabad.

4th Hyderabad Music Evening.

5th Hyderavad Public Programme.

6th Return to Pune.

February 17th Opening of Washi Hospital.

18th Thani (Bombay) Public Programme.

24th Bombay Public Programme, NATIONALLY

TELEVISED, WITH A POTENTIAL AUDIENCE OF.....

247 MILLION PEOPLE!



By the grace of Shri Mataji I had the good fortune to spend five weeks in Saint Petersburg, Russia. It was one of the most wonderful experiences of my life. I was certainly given the "Royal" treatment wherever I went. Everyone was so friendly, generous and kind. I was greeted warmly at the airport by my wife Tanya, Jack (from U.S.), Margarita and Sergei (who had a car).

The weather was freezing compared to the 33C heat I had left behind in Darwin as we made our way through the city. St. Petersburg is very beautiful - one of the jewels of Europe. The great river Neva runs through the centre with the huge Winter Palace of Peter the Great along its bank. Great spires of cathedrals tower skyward as the eye pans along the skyline. Large chunks of ice drift slowly down the river as a reminder to just how far North it is. Trams, trolley buses and the very fast "Metro" carry the 5 million population about their business.

The grossly inadequate "warm" clothing I had brought with me was discarded for something more substantial loaned to me by Valera and his wife Nadezda. This included a large fur hat (shapka). The first two days were spent running from office to office to extend my one-week visa. I did nothing. Everything was taken care of by Slava, Valera and Tanya. I felt helpless sitting in the corner whilst negotiations were taking place. Who is this Australian looking uncomfortable in six layers of clothing!

The next day I met yogi's Ossa, Michael and Elena from Helsinki, Finland and Sandy from NZ. We were very kindly taken on a tour of St Isaac's Cathedral by Jack's wife, Svetlana. The cathedral is the fourth largest in the world and has a magnificent view of the city from the top of the dome. Next we visited The Hermitage, a museum within the Winter Palace. It is chock full of some of the world's greatest art treasures. Here we saw Rembrandt's, Renoir's, Leonardo da Vinci's and all the Dutch masters. All this art had been lying in the basement during the communist era and now it has been restored in all its glory and available for all to see.

Diwali Puja was spectacular with around 500 yogi's attending. The stage was beautifully prepared with seven large leaves standing vertically in the centre with a large photograph of Shri Mataji adorned with flowers. Rows of bright candles lined the stage. The bhajans were wonderfully performed and the vibrations very strong. We foreigners were invited onto the stage to do puja as the 1008 names were sung. It was a very powerful experience - as if Shri Mataji was there in person. Afterwards gifts were exchanged and many people came to greet us with folded hands and smiling faces.

During the first week of my stay I couldn't help noticing that the phone rang incessantly. No sooner had one hung up than it rang again immediately. Is this normal I asked. No - just people ringing to invite me around for dinner! Tanya then wrote out a "timetable" of visits. We then commenced our tour!

It is normal to take around some little snack such as some fruit, biscuits, cake or a bunch of flowers to present to your host but I wasn't prepared for the lovely reception I received from everyone I met. The table would be groaning under the weight of the feast. The meal would start with a small snack, followed by the main course, followed by dessert, followed by tea and cakes with a variety of jams and chocolates. A very balanced meal indeed! I met so many wonderful people and they always made me so welcome. They always gave me the most comfortable seat, the biggest cup, the largest helping and the best of everything. Nothing was too much trouble.

There is no shortage in Russia. You can buy anything you want - at a price. Although the economy is not good at the moment Shri Mataji has said that in 1996 it will start to improve. Indeed it looks as though Russia will be on a par with the other European countries in the not too distant future. There is a problem with the Mafia especially in St. Petersburg. It would be nice if we could shoe-beat this problem as well as the negativity attacking Sahaja Yogis in Russia.

We visited the town of Pushkin (named after Alexander Pushkin, the famous poet). There is a huge palace brightly adorned in white, blue and gold. Many famous paintings can be seen but many art treasures were stolen by the Nazi's in WWII. It has been refurbished after being almost destroyed during the bombing. Thick snow covered the beech, elms and oaks in the wonderful ornate gardens. The temp was now down to -6C.

I had been asked by Jack to help him with English lessons for the yogis so I was pleased to help. The first class was held in the Ashram in Pushkinskaya Street in the city. Sixty people attended so Jack took the beginners and I took the more experienced people. It was a lot of fun. We laughed a lot about the differences in the language and they were really interested in Australia, especially about crocodiles! The vibrations were really strong and everyone had a good time. Afterwards tea and biscuits and then out into the freezing night air. We had great fun having a snow-ball fight down the main street - Nevsky Prospect on the way home. Every Thursday saw more people attending to the point where we were contemplating having twice-weekly classes.

Jack had also started a Sahaja Yoga public programme for English speaking people and the yogis had done posterizing around the city. The first programme was attended by about twenty yogis and four new people. One young man was a Russian but had just returned from spending six years in the US. He had seen Shri Mataji's photo in the subway in America and now he'd seen a poster in Russia and decided to find out more. The programme went well but we have since lost the venue due to lack of funds. Jack is continuing in another place but due to its inaccessibility has not had many newcomers.

It is possible to attend a Sahaja Yoga programme every night of the week somewhere in St. Petersburg. The city has 3000 yogis so the programmes are well supported with over 500 yogis attending. There is a programme every Sunday where the leader (Professor Voronov) reads out the latest news concerning Sahaja Yoga. Then there is a meditation, bhajans and lots of talking!

The public programme for newcomers is every Wednesday evening at the University of St. Petersburg. The one I attended was run by Sasha who explained about raising Kundalini, clearing chakras, three-candle treatments, affirmations, mantras etc. We then had a long and very deep meditation with some wonderful music including a piece by Vivaldi. Then to my surprise I was hauled up on stage to speak about Australia!

Temp now is minus 16C. That was the day before I left. Lots of people came and wished me goodbye handing me a little gift. I have a new Rakhi sister - Ina (we share birthdays) and lots of new-found brothers and sisters. At the airport were about 12 yogis to see me off. Lots of laughter hugs and good vibrations. I almost wanted to turn round and stay! The vibrations stayed with me on the 28-hour journey home. Then it was into the fiery furnace of 35C tropical heat and peeling off layers of clothing for more suitable attire. Isn't Sahaja Yoga just wonderful? Jai Shri Mataji! Peter Hewitson, Darwin