



General Letter from the Board of Trustees

Dear brothers and sisters in Avatar Meher Baba's worldwide family,

After Meher Baba's physical passing in 1969, the Trust opened its doors and became active. During the four decades since 1969 the Trust as such has provided much of the material framework enabling pilgrims to spend time at Meher Baba's Samadhi at Meherabad and in the company of such great disciples as Mehera, Mani and Eruch at Meherazad. Meanwhile, the Trust leadership has been formulating plans for a future in which treasures from the Avataric legacy enjoyed by a few fortunate souls today can become the common inheritance of all humanity.

Through the course of the Trust's early unfoldment, Meher Baba's close mandali, with their long experience and deep insight into Baba's ways, have provided the guiding vision and personal touch helping to keep the feeling of the Avatar's divinely human presence immediate and fresh. Meher Baba has characterized the Avataric age as the "springtide of creation"; and through the era of the mandali that followed that blessed season when He lived among us, something of that same flavor and ambience has lingered on.

The season of the mandali is coming to an end now; and a bell warning of the impending changeover was sounded on 5th January 2011, when Bhau Kalchuri, whose health has been fragile for some time,

suffered a major stroke. Though he has served as the Trust's Chairman since 1996, since his stroke Bhau has largely withdrawn from the day-to-day-running of Trust affairs. Of course, we were not altogether unprepared for this. Much of the operational management of most Trust departments has already passed into new and younger hands. Yet everyone acknowledges that Meher Baba's mandali have been invested with a unique authority. With this element departing from the situation the Trust will now have to learn to conduct its affairs in a new way, in the process doubtless experiencing the pangs and traumas of a transition not dissimilar from what other Baba groups and centers around the world have had to undergo.

Amid these uncertainties and with so much that seemed stable now in transition, over the last year voices have been raised within Beloved Baba's worldwide family over the Trust's direction and practices. We the trustees of the Avatar Meher Baba Trust appreciate the love and concern for the welfare of Baba's Trust that has animated those who have communicated with us on these subject. Naturally we are bound, not only by our legal and fiduciary obligations, but each of us by the inner call of service to our own Lord and Beloved, to do all we can to ensure that His Trust upholds His wish. We all know that Baba wants of His Trust complete honesty regarding its actions. We cannot fail in our commitment to this.

In response to recent communications received, on 17th November 2011 we sent out an open circular letter that we hope begins to speak to Baba lovers about this. You will find a copy of this circular as an insert here.

In this and future issues of this newsletter we would like to share with you some of what we envision and the changes in Trust operations now under contemplation as expressed in our circular letter. Functions once performed by the mandali need to be placed on a basis that depends less on individual personalities but rather on the operation of "joint responsibility," as Eruch put it. Discovering exactly how to do this is the task that now confronts us and, indeed, all Trust personnel. But to begin with, let us introduce ourselves. In an accompanying article you will find brief identifications of each of the present trustees, along with photos. We will be happy to talk with you during your next pilgrimage to Meherabad-Meherazad. Beyond this, those who wish can reach us through the "contact us" page in the Trust web site.

Other articles in this issue answer basic questions about the Trust that some of you might have, describe a reorganization of the Trust now in progress, and outline a code of ethics for trustees.

Future trustees and chairmen will doubtless turn for guidance in the management of Trust affairs more and more to the specific instructions that Meher Baba gave, in the Trust Deed and elsewhere, and to the precedents He and His mandali laid down. In its broader outlines the charge which Meher Baba imparted to His Trust is fairly clear. Lest the question should ever arise, the deed which Avatar Meher Baba signed gives the Trust no role in directing other Baba groups or organizations or centers around the world. If a religion in Avatar Meher Baba's name should ever arise, the Trust has no authorization from Him to head it, or indeed, to take part in any way.

And so the change long anticipated has come at last. We enter into this new age and new life fully cognizant of our failings and fallibility, and at the same time confident that He will not fail us, if our desire to please Him is sincere. We are all in the same boat, united by that which contains and embraces us, which is the Ocean of His Love.

Trustees

Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual
Public Charitable Trust

Construction of Memorial Tower Progresses

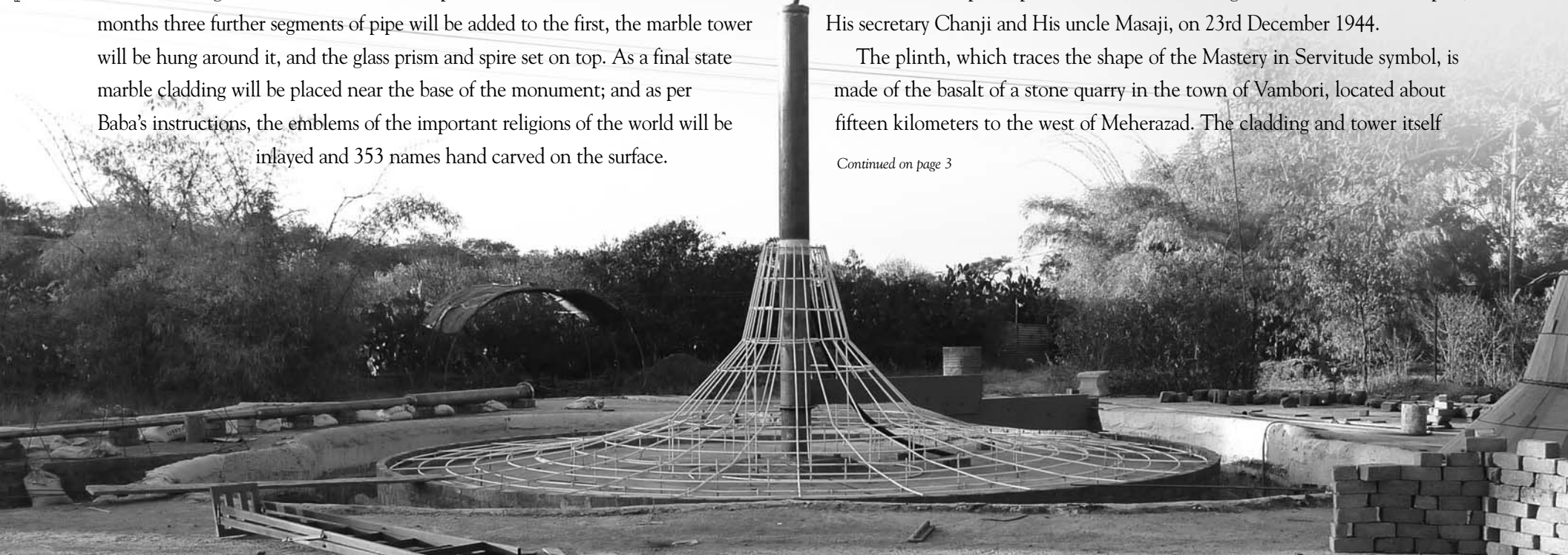
The construction of the Memorial Tower, described in detail in the February 2010 issue of this newsletter, is well under way now. By the end of 2011 the foundation had been poured, the plinth put in place, and the bottom-most, sixteen-foot segment of the stainless steel spine erected. Over the next twelve months three further segments of pipe will be added to the first, the marble tower will be hung around it, and the glass prism and spire set on top. As a final state marble cladding will be placed near the base of the monument; and as per Baba's instructions, the emblems of the important religions of the world will be inlaid and 353 names hand carved on the surface.

All of the foundational and pressure-bearing structural elements have to be exceptionally strong, since this Memorial Tower is being built to last for 700 years.

Meher Baba Himself called for its raising, in a special memorial ceremony that He Himself participated in at the site of the graves of two of His disciples, His secretary Chanji and His uncle Masaji, on 23rd December 1944.

The plinth, which traces the shape of the Mastery in Servitude symbol, is made of the basalt of a stone quarry in the town of Vambori, located about fifteen kilometers to the west of Meherazad. The cladding and tower itself

Continued on page 3



Board of Trustees Embarks on Major Reorganization of the Trust

Over the last year the Board of Trustees has inaugurated a major review of the operations of the Avatar Meher Baba Trust, having in prospect a significant restructuring and systematization of Trust policies and practices.

While the need for this has been foreseen for some years now, a major step forward was taken in a meeting on 16th July 2011 when the Board of Trustees appointed a working group to study Trust finances and formulate policies for a Financial Committee. This led ten weeks later to the creation (in a meeting on 1st October) of an Interim Financial Committee, charged by the Board with oversight of the financial activities of the Trust until such time as it is replaced by a permanent Financial Committee. For the present, the Interim Committee manages Trust finances, oversees accounting and investment activities, and monitors all expenses and budgets to comply with approved policies of the Board.

The Interim Committee’s four members are Shridhar Kelkar, Falu Mistry, Craig Ruff, and Merwan Dubash. The first three are current trustees. Merwan is a long-time professional chartered accountant in Canada who now spends a part of each year in Meherabad with his wife Ruby. His father, Adi, was a former trustee and Meherabad resident.

A CHANGE IN MANAGEMENT STYLE. In the past Trust finances were directly managed by Meher Baba’s mandali. During the last fifteen years since 1996 it was Bhau as Chairman who bore the responsibility of directing the use of Trust monies and protecting Trust properties, with the help of an accounting department and others from among the Trust staff. In fact, this style of management followed from Meher Baba’s own practice when He was in the physical form. Baba used to assign tasks such as the maintenance of accounts, the safekeeping of monies, and the payment of bills to various ones among the mandali in residence, who in the discharge of their duties would answer to Baba directly.

What followed from this was essentially a “family” style of management, that persisted in large part during Mani’s chairmanship, and after her, Bhau’s. But with Bhau’s recent reversals in health and consequent withdrawal from active Trust involvement and the increasing size of the Trust, it has become clear to the board that Trust finances and other Trust operations need to be organized on a more formal basis. The efforts which the Interim Committee initiates in this respect will be taken over in due course by the permanent Financial Committee, operating under established guidelines from the board.

FOUR FOCAL AREAS. In fact, the board is currently contemplating a reorganization of Trust policies and practices in domains beyond just the financial. At present initiatives are under development in four major areas and aspects of Trust life, as described below:

1. A CODE OF ETHICS FOR TRUSTEES. The board has recently formulated a code of ethics establishing guidelines that trustees are required to follow in their conduct with the Trust, the Baba community, and the outside world. A summary of the key points and guiding principles in this code of ethics appears as the article beneath this one.

2. REORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE SYSTEM. Over recent decades the Trust administration and committee system has grown “organically,” as it were, often in response to current needs and circumstances. Typically such ad hoc processes produce inconsistencies and duplication of function. The board is currently studying ways of reorganizing and rationalizing its administration. One part of this will involve a revamping of the committee system. The board is contemplating placing two trustees on each committee to ensure shared accountability and sharing of information.

3. SYSTEMATIZING CHECKS AND BALANCES. In the arena of Trust finances, the Interim Financial Committee will review all expenses charged to the Trust, sign off on all project and capital expenses, and oversee a strict system of checks and balances involving day-to-day financial transactions. One part of such a system would involve the submission of monthly reports and an annual report from the Accounting Department to the Committee, and from there, to the Board of Trustees. The Interim Financial Committee would liaise with the Ahmednagar chartered accountant who performs the annual audit each March. The Committee is currently arranging for a significant upgrade in the computerization of its accounting system, which, when completed, should streamline Trust financial operations enormously.

4. FINANCIAL PLANNING. The Interim Financial Committee will take a more active role in long-term planning and the management of the Trust corpus. The board plans to bring greater professional expertise to bear in projecting short- and long-term costs thereby allowing the Trust to plan for its future needs. This will help particularly in decisions relating to large-scale projects such as the new Dharamshala in Lower Meherabad, as was described in the last issue of this newsletter. In the future, operating costs will be included in the total estimate for such projects, as was not done in the past. In this way the board can better plan for the availability of revenues and thus better ensure for the long term sustainability of its operations.

Guiding Principles for Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust

Established by Meher Baba in 1959, the Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust is charged with a specific set of responsibilities as defined by Meher Baba Himself.

These include provisions that the Trust should maintain and care for His Tomb at Meherabad, create facilities for pilgrims there, foster spiritual and cultural activities relating to the spreading of His message, and carry out certain charitable activities for the benefit of humanity irrespective of caste, creed, religion, sex or nationality.

For most of its history since 1969, the Trust has been led first by Baba’s sister and intimate disciple, Mani, and then by Bhau Kalchuri, also a member of Meher Baba’s mandali.

As the Trust moves into a time when its leadership will not be vested in a mandali member, the Trustees consider it timely and appropriate to articulate the principles that should guide the actions of all current and future Trustees.

Trustees are expected to adhere to moral and ethical standards that conform with the highest

spiritual values and conduct as imparted by Avatar Meher Baba.

As an essential part of their responsibilities, Trustees are duty bound to uphold the Trust Deed in letter and spirit and to act in accordance with the highest standards of integrity, honesty and ethical conduct, complying with all policies and procedures.

As a working document, the code of ethics addresses and encompasses many fundamental principles. Its key points are as follows:

The code requires compliance with all applicable laws, rules and regulations of the land.

It prohibits Trustees from engaging in any political activity.

It forbids Trustees from supporting other causes and organisations that are not consistent with the Trust Deed and Trust policies.

The code requires accounting records and accounts to be maintained in accordance with statutory requirements.

The code sets forth that Trustees shall foster a work environment free of favoritism and discrimination.

The code prohibits Trustees from using Trust Funds for personal use. Under no circumstance can a Trustee receive, use or borrow Trust Funds for personal purposes.

The code restricts the personal use of Trust resources, does not permit Trustees to accept gratuities and requires that all Trustees avoid any conflict of interest with the Trust.

The code requires that any employment of a Trustee family member must be unanimously approved by the Board.

The code requires an annual signed declaration of full compliance by each Trustee.

Violation of the code is grounds for the resignation or removal of a Trustee by the Board of Trustees.

Additionally, in recognition of the fact that the code cannot cover every possible situation, Trustees are required to act in accordance with the broad principles of common sense and good judgement rooted in the spiritual values embodied by Avatar Meher Baba.



Silence Day Commemoration Continues to Grow

The 2011 Silence Day commemoration saw a considerable increase in pilgrim attendance. In fact, a flood of reservations forced the Trust for the first time to close new bookings on 25th June; almost 400 pilgrims had to be asked to postpone their visit until another time. The Meherabad trustees are now studying options to deal with this overflow in coming years.

Since pilgrims spend 10th July in silence, the main activity on that day is darshan at Meher Baba's Samadhi and at the Jhopdi in Lower Meherabad, where Baba inaugurated His forty-four year silence in 1925. Films were shown in the Meherabad theatre at 11 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. before capacity audiences of 650 each.

Construction of Memorial Tower Progresses

Continued from page 1

will be made of white marble from a quarry located at the foot of Mount Abu in Gujarat—the same quarry that supplied the stone for the famous Dilwara Temple there. And the pinnacle of the fifty-six foot structure will be made of glass. Thus the sequence and progression of visible stone materials, from the local indigenous rock at the bottom to transparent crystal at its summit, participates in the Memorial Tower's greater symbology.

CEMETERIES AND MEMORIALS AND MEHERABAD.

While much of the charge which Meher Baba gave to His Trust in the decade following its creation in 1959 entails the propagation of various activities, another significant Trust function involves memorials

for the deceased. Meher Baba's own Tomb-Shrine, of course, constitutes the very heart and center of Meherabad. In the Trust Deed Baba Himself named eleven female disciples whose remains He wished to be buried on right and left hand sides of His Samadhi. A few steps further to the west one finds the graves of Baba's parents, nine more women disciples, and six of His pets.

Down the Hill in Lower Meherabad Baba designated another plot close to the Dhuni, the Table House, and the shrine of Gilori Shah as a cemetery for some of His resident male disciples. At present twenty-five men lie there, whose deaths span a period of almost exactly fifty years. The first to find their final resting places there were Dr. Nilu and the great mast Ali Shah, who died on 2nd December and

27th December 1956, respectively. Most recently deceased was Jangle Master, who passed away on 26th December 2006.

The Memorial Tower is not a cemetery, although, as said, the remains of two of Meher Baba's close disciples lie nearby. But it could be described first of all as a visible memorial to the homage that the Avatar of the Age Himself paid to the love of His own lovers. The large number of names—353 of them will be engraved there—suggests that the Avatar was honoring not just those of His immediate circle but the broader swath of His lovers everywhere. The Tower will stand as an inspiration to the New Humanity of the future, assuring us that He does not forget those who remember Him and that those who sincerely seek do not seek in vain.

A Weak 2011 Monsoon Augurs Drought

Meager monsoon rainfalls threaten Meherabad with water shortages for the 2012 Amartithi and the following summer months.

For five years the Ahmednagar district has been blessed with abundant monsoons, especially in 2010, when both Meherabad and Meherazad were inundated with more than forty inches. The June-to-early-October wet season in 2011 brought with it moderate rains for much of the Deccan; but Arangaon and neighboring villages seem to have missed out on their share of nature's bounty. Only fifteen inches fell on Meherabad, several less than the annual average.

As of late December (the time of this writing), the four major storage wells in the southwest corner of the Meherabad estate contained collectively only about two million liters of water, half their capacity. Usually this supply is held in reserve until the commencement of the Amartithi volunteer program on 28th January. To meet current ongoing demand and to prepare for the Amartithi event when tens of thousands of pilgrims drain the greater part of the annual Meherabad water reservoirs, this year the Trust has to depend on the municipal supply, delivered three days a week through the pipeline from Ahmednagar city.

Water scarcity and austere water conservation methods loom in prospect for the next sixth months. After Amartithi, the trees and gardens will particularly suffer. Everyone hopes that torrential rains in June 2012 replenish the Meherabad wells that by that time will probably be bone dry.

How to Contribute

The Avatar Meher Baba Trust is supported entirely by love-gifts from Meher Baba's lovers around the world. In truth, it is Baba Himself who gives through your hands, and it is Baba Himself who brings these objects to completion, objects that He Himself laid down in the Trust Deed, when it pleases Him to do so.

For those who have not taken the opportunity to contribute, here is how. In the UK, please send your tax-deductible contribution to Avatar Meher Baba Association, c/o Sue Chapman, 2 Chapel Hill Row, Craster, Northumberland NE66 3TU, tel. 01 665 57 69 57, email suchapman@hotmail.com.

In the United States, persons who wish to make tax-deductible contributions or wish to name the Trust as a beneficiary in their will, 401K, IRA, or insurance policy should contact Emory and Susan Ayers, P. O. Box 398, Mystic, CT 06355, (tel. 860-535-0370, email TrustPlan@ambppct.org). They will send you relevant information along with a list of eight Meher Baba tax-exempt organizations that have grants in place to support the Trust. These include a Trust Development Plan grant, an Operating Expense grant, and a grant for the construction of the Memorial Tower.

Baba lovers from other parts of the world should send contributions directly to the AMBPPC Trust, Post Bag No. 31, King's Road, Ahmednagar 414001, Maharashtra State, India.

A fuller public accounting on Trust finances is provided annually in the Trust Financial Report, sent out with the June letter of this newsletter and posted on the Trust web site. The Financial Report details and breaks down information on Trust receipts—including current donations to the three grants—and expenditures; it provides as well a current and projected expenditures report for the Trust Development Plan.

More information can be found in the Trust's web site at www.avatarmeherbabatrust.org.

Shireenmai and the Coveted Shawl

Falu Mistry, one of our trustees and a thirty-year-plus Meherazad resident, recalls the following humorous anecdote as narrated to him many years ago by Gaimai Jessawala, mother of Eruch.

The story concerns Shireenmai, mother to the Avatar, who, particularly after the death of her husband Sheriar, used to pay extended visits to the various ashrams that Baba established in the 1930s and 40s. All the other women in residence there, of course, were leading lives strictly in accordance with the discipline Baba had laid down.

Shireenmai, for her part, saw no reason why her Merog (as she called him) should be giving orders to His own mother. At the same time this astute lady had the knack of scoping out her fertile-brained Son's many tricks and ruses. All too keenly she perceived that, beneath a show of filial deference, Baba was actually thwarting her in much of what she wanted—at least, whenever her wishes ran against the grain of His: which they all too often did!

Our story opens on a day of darshan, with Baba seated on the dais and Shireen, His mother, beside Him. As is customary in India, long lines of people seeking the Master's darshan and blessing would file before Him, one after another. Each would bow at His feet and lay there a garland, or a fruit, or a coconut, as a love-offering.

As the morning wore on and the darshanites streamed past, suddenly Shireenmai noticed a man carrying in his hand a beautiful Kashmiri shawl. When his turn came, he bowed before Baba and laid it at His feet.

"What a lovely shawl!" Shireen thought to herself. "When the program ends, I'll ask Merog to give it to me."

By this time the queue had moved on, and another man was taking Baba's darshan. To Shireen's shock, Baba reached down and handed him the shawl. Hardly had the thought crossed her mind, and already Baba had given the prize away—to the very next man in line!

But what to do? It was impossible to put a word in with throngs of people jostling for their moment in the sun and Baba showering His full love and attention on each of them.

But as soon as the darshan came to an end, she confronted Him. "Merog, I wanted that shawl; why couldn't you have kept it aside for me?"

Baba was the very living picture of wide-eyed innocence. "Why didn't you tell me?" He protested, spreading His hands in a gesture of helplessness. "If you had a wish for it, you should have given me a sign. How was I to know?"

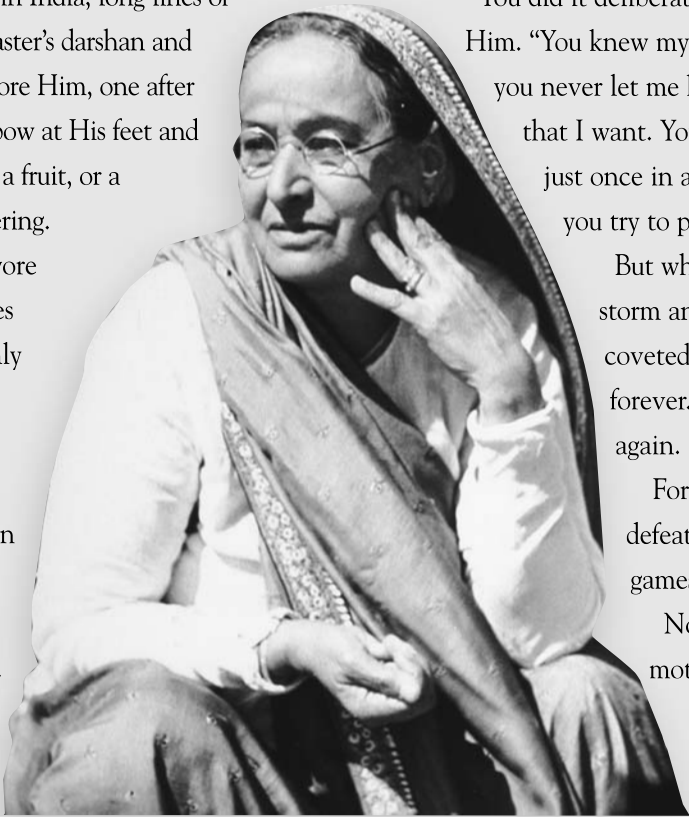
Shireen knew perfectly well that her Merog was stonewalling her. Hadn't He played these tricks on her a thousand times before?

"You did it deliberately," she accused Him. "You knew my eye was on it, but you never let me have anything that I want. You're my own Son; just once in a while, shouldn't you try to please me?"

But what use was it to storm and fume? The coveted shawl was gone forever. Baba had won again.

For no one could defeat Baba at these games.

Not even His own mother.



Shireenmai, in the 1930s.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF MEHER NAZAR PUBLICATIONS

WHAT IS THE AVATAR MEHER BABA TRUST?

CREATED IN 1959 under Meher Baba's direction and bearing His signature on its Deed, the Avatar Meher Baba Trust had at its founding two purposes: to provide means of subsistence to certain named disciples of Meher Baba's, and to fulfill certain charitable objects. Today, the first of these functions is discharged under "Avatar Meher Baba Trust, Firstly," and the second under "Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust."

The Trust Deed calls for maintenance of Avatar Meher Baba's Tomb and the creation of pilgrim facilities; for educational, medical, veterinary, and other charitable services; for estate development and procurement of sources of water; for the

promulgation of Avatar Meher Baba's love-message through melas, lectures, publication, and the arts; and for spiritual training. The Trust's current Development Plan focuses on the creation of new facilities for pilgrim accommodation at Meherabad and other goals.

Inquiries and contributions can be sent to: The Chairman, Avatar Meher Baba Trust, King's Road, Post Bag 31, Ahmednagar 414 001, M.S., India. Subscriptions to this newsletter can be sent to that address or to: Avatar Meher Baba Foundation, PO Box 398, Mystic, CT 06355-0398, USA (tel. 860-535-0370, email EAYers88@comcast.net). To subscribe to Tavern Talk (the Trust's electronic newsletter), send an email to

Listserv@ambppct.org and include in the text of your message the words: subscribe tavern-talk." Pilgrims seeking accommodation at Meherabad can address their emails to pimco@avatarmeherbabatrust.org (to stay at the Meher Pilgrim Retreat) or to jaibaba@ambppct.org (for Hostel D). Other information can be found on the Avatar Meher Baba Trust's web site at <http://www.avatarmeherbabatrust.org> (or <http://www.ambppct.org>).

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Donations and inquiries should be sent to: The Avatar Meher Baba Trust,
Post Bag No. 31, King's Road, Ahmednagar 414 001, Maharashtra State, India.

Letter from the Trustees to the Greater Baba Community

17th November 2011

Dear Baba Lovers,

Avatar Meher Baba Ki Jai!

We are writing to bring you up to date on many things concerning the Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust.

As most of you know, the Trust was established by Meher Baba Himself in 1959. A great deal of important background and history regarding the Trust can be found at our website: ambppct.org.

While Baba signed the Trust Deed on April 6, 1959, the Trust remained inactive for the remaining ten years of His Life. In the 1960's, Baba gave certain instructions to the trustees for the future about spiritual training and educating the public about His message and life. These were later incorporated into the Trust Deed.

As a part of the Trust Deed, Baba also specified that, after He had passed away, the Trust should maintain and care for His Tomb at Meherabad, create facilities for pilgrims there, foster spiritual and cultural activities relating to the spreading of His message, and carry out certain charitable activities for the benefit of humanity irrespective of caste, creed, religion, sex or nationality.

For most of its history since 1969, the Trust has been led first by Baba's sister and intimate disciple, Mani, and then by Bhau Kalchuri, also a member of Meher Baba's mandali. With the leadership of the Trust vested in a mandali member trained by Meher Baba, a great deal of respect was naturally given to the experience and authority that came from a life of close personal service given to the Lord.

There is no doubt that an enormous amount of remarkable work has been accomplished by the Trust over the last few decades. Against the many systemic challenges that governmental regulations have entailed, with Baba's help and guidance, Bhau, in particular, has made many things possible for the Trust that were considered virtually impossible. Before Mani left us, she personally reached out to Bhau to become the next Chairman of the Trust. Much good work has been done with Bhau as our Chair for the last fifteen years.

With the failing and fragile nature of Bhau's health since the beginning of the year, we want you to know that Bhau is no longer able to attend to the day to day matters of the Trust. There is no doubt that this is a moment of significant transition for the Trust and as such, it represents a critical moment in time. It is a moment in which deep thought and self-examination is appropriate to define and determine how the Trust can best uphold the charge given to it by Meher Baba.

As such, the remaining trustees have been working on the many adjustments that will come as

the Trust moves out of an era when its Chairperson was a mandali member. Each of us has been managing different aspects of the Trust for many years. The time has come now for us to create a new "post-mandali" culture in managing the affairs of the Trust enriched by legacy of the mandalis' life of love and service to their Lord.

To share with you a few such changes: We now have increased the number of Board Meetings and meet more often informally to keep ourselves abreast of the changing needs of the Trust. The Board has been developing a more defined financial policy for over a year with a particular focus on an enhanced system of checks and balances to safeguard the financial integrity of the Trust. A small working group has also been formed to develop and implement this policy. We are currently formulating a formal code of ethics to provide transparency. And while the Trust already shares its financial information on an annual basis and is also subject to strict auditing under Indian government regulations, we will be exploring new ways in which we can share financial information with the community of Baba's lovers.

In addition, we are restructuring our committees and activities so that at least two Trustees together with other Residents are on each committee. When Eruch was asked about how the Trust should manage its affairs in the light of what Beloved Baba had said about the New Humanity he said, "Best is joint responsibility." We believe this is true as it will help in the sharing of information and accountability. We are also implementing new policy initiatives where needed. One such example is in the selection of sponsorship to join the Spiritual Training Program. Selection once was in the hands of the Mandali; now the entire Board participates in the approval of sponsorship and visa renewal.

As we have been busy facing this new world of change, in the last few months, we have received correspondence expressing questions, concerns and misgivings about a wide range of subjects regarding different aspects of the way in which the Trust functions. While many excellent questions have been raised, we have also been on the receiving end of various rumors, allegations and unsubstantiated accusations that are simply not true. Many people have reported on what they have heard second or third hand or on something that has no attribution at all.

We do not take any of these issues lightly and consider all of this communication to be motivated by a heartfelt concern for the well being of the Trust. However, in order for us to engage in a meaningful response, we need to hear about people's first hand, direct experiences.

Most of the concerns that we have recently received revolve, in one way or another, around how the Trust deals with donations.

As a matter of principle, we state categorically, that we do not believe anyone should ever be pressured to make a donation to the Trust, that no trustee should receive any financial benefit from being a trustee, that every donation should be acknowledged with a receipt and that donations accepted for a particular purpose should be used as designated.

Concerning land, both Mani and Bhau were very focused and eager to purchase all land around Beloved Baba's Samadhi for the Trust. They also asked certain close Baba Lovers to join in and help with this endeavor. All land purchased for this purpose has long since been given to the Trust. Although, this is a significant achievement, there are still many acres of land near the Samadhi that need to be purchased by the Trust in order to secure the whole area soon to become a place of pilgrimage for the world.

It would be most productive for the Trustees to hear from people who have first hand, direct experience with the Trust that has left them troubled. The best way to do this is in a personal conversation with its opportunities for a true exchange, rather than through email or other written forms of communication. You may contact any of the Trustees without hesitation and you will have our full support and thanks in doing so. To do this, first contact any of us through email in order to set up an appointment on the phone. You may find our emails on the Trust Web Site at <http://www.ambppct.org/> under "Contact Us." However, in order to streamline this process, as primary points of contact, you may communicate with Craig Ruff, Heather Nadel, Falu Mistry or Shridhar Kelkar. Craig's email address is craig@mail.ambppct.org. Heather's is heather@ambppct.org. Falu's email is framrozemistry@gmail.com and Shridhar's is shridharkelkar7@gmail.com.

While we continue to learn and grow in managing Baba's Trust, please know that the trustees are wholeheartedly engaged in working to make the future of the Trust something that Baba Himself would be pleased to see in action.

In the Love and Service of Avatar Meher Baba,

Ali Ramjoo, Jal P. Dastoor, Jehangir M. Sukhadwala, Mehernath. B. Kalchuri, Framroze. J. Mistry, Shridhar Kelkar, Craig I. Ruff, Ramesh L. Jangle, Heather F. Nadel

The Trustees,
Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust

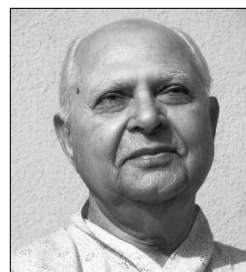
Ahmednagar, India

PS. This letter is meant to be shared with all Baba Lovers. Please circulate it.

The Ten Current Trustees of the Avatar Meher Baba Trust

The original Trust Deed which Avatar Meher Baba signed on 6th April 1959 took the form of an indenture between “M.S. Irani also known as Meher Baba” and ten individuals whom the deed designated as trustees. While none of the original trustees are still alive, their offices remain, and are currently being occupied by the following ten individuals:

VIR SINGH KALCHURI, KNOWN AS



BHAU. Born in Nagpur, India on 13th January 1926, Bhau first took Baba’s darshan on 31st December 1952 and lived with Him as one of His resident mandali from 1953 through 1969. Author of *Lord Meher* and many other books, Bhau has served the Trust as a trustee since 1973 and as Chairman since 1996.

ALI RAMJOO was born in Nasik on 27th June



1930. His father was Baba’s mandali Ramjoo Abdullah, and so from birth Ali grew up in Baba’s close contact. He married and had three sons. For nearly thirty-seven years he worked for the State Transport Corporation, concluding his service there as stores officer. Selected as trustee during Baba’s lifetime, he has served in that capacity since 1967.

JAL PHIROZE DASTOOR was born in



Mumbai on 19th April 1930. He first met Beloved Baba at Arnavaz and Nariman Dadachanji’s home in Mumbai in 1950. His is married to Dolly, whose mother, Soonamasi, was one of Chanji’s first cousins. He served as the head of export and statistics with Forbes Campbell, a shipping company. He and Dolly moved to Meherabad in 1980 and in the same year, Jal became a Trustee.

JEHANGIR SUKHADWALA, KNOWN



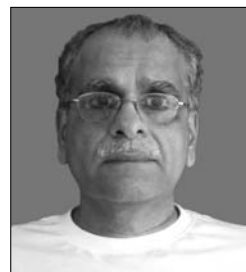
AS JANGU. Born in Nagpur on 17th March 1933, he came into Baba’s contact in December 1957 and married Baba’s niece Gulnar, daughter of Behram. He has one daughter and one son, Mehernaz and Merwan. He was an aeronautical engineer. He became a trustee in 1993.

MEHERNATH BHAUSAHEB KALCHURI.



Born in Nagpur on 23rd October 1953, Mehernath is the son of Bhau Kalchuri, current Chairman of the Trust. Mehernath first met Meher Baba as a baby of ten months and grew up in His close contact. Mehernath is married to Rajashree Kalchuri and has two sons. Holding a degree in law, Mehernath is involved in Trust legal work and dealings with the government. A trustee since 1996

FRAMROZE JAMSHED MISTRY, KNOWN AS FALU.



Born in Mumbai on 23rd February 1952 and named by Baba Himself, Falu is the son of Jimmy and Rhoda Mistry; his aunt was Arnavaz Dadachanji and his great-uncle Chanji, Baba’s disciple. Earning a degree in accounting, Falu came to reside in Meherazad in 1978 and presently serves as the manager of the Meherazad estate. A trustee since 1996.

SHRIDHAR KELKAR was born in Guhagar in district Ratnagiri on 28th March 1938. He married Perviz Talati, who was the daughter of Dina and Naval Talati, close disciples of Baba’s since the 1920’s. He has one daughter, Manije. He worked in the life insurance industry in the administrative field. He first had Beloved Baba’s darshan during the East-West Gathering in 1962. He moved to Meherabad in 1997 and serves at the Meherabad Trust Office, becoming a trustee in 2001.



CRAIG IAN RUFF. Born in Chicago, Illinois on 12th May, 1949, Craig came into Baba’s fold in 1972. Earning a degree in public affairs, Craig moved to India and has resided at Meher Nazar since 1978. Working closely with Eruch, Bhau, and other mandali, Craig has been intimately involved in Trust administration for more than thirty years. A trustee since 2003.



RAMESH LAXMAN JANGLE. Born in Meherabad on 1st December 1952, Ramesh is the son of Jangale Master, one of Baba’s mandali, and has lived at Meherabad all his life. He is married to Jayshree Jangale and has two children, a son and a daughter. Earning degrees in commerce and business management, he worked in the insurance business for twenty-seven years, resigning in 2007 to devote himself full time to Trust work. A trustee since 2006.



LINDA FERGUSON NADEL, KNOWN



AS HEATHER. Born on 5th February 1950 in San Francisco, California, Heather first heard of Meher Baba in 1969; five years later she came to live in Ahmednagar, and later Meherabad, with her husband Erico (who passed away in 2009). Heather worked closely with Mani, Baba’s sister and Chairman of the Trust, for more than twenty years; she has been intimately involved in pilgrim accommodations at Meherabad since 1976. A trustee since 2007.

Questions and Answers about the Avatar Meher Baba Trust

1. QUESTION. What is the purpose of the Trust’s corpus?

ANSWER. Corpus means “body” in Latin. Funds in the corpus of a charitable trust are comparable to capital in a business or the principal in an endowment. Corpus funds are generally held over a long term; income from interest or corpus investments is applied toward normal day-to-day expenses. The Trust’s corpus helps protect it from economic up-swings and down-swings, thus stabilizing organizational finances. A significant corpus fund earning interest ensures long-term continuity for the Trust in its pursuit of core objectives and activities.

2. QUESTION. Why are general donations to corpus more valuable to the Trust than donations earmarked by donors for specific projects?

ANSWER. The projects for which donors specify their funds may not rank among the top priorities from the Trust’s point of view. Moreover, donors often fail to realize the ongoing expense consequences that their donations entail. For example, a donor may perceive a need for an ambulance and give toward this purpose without realizing that an ambulance brings with it other expenses in the hiring of drivers, upkeep, maintenance, fuel, etc. All these associated costs have to be covered by funds that might otherwise have been allocated toward higher priority items. Simple unspecified donations to corpus allow trustees to set priorities and thus help the Trust most in long-term planning. From time to time, however, the Trust itself requests donations for specific projects, such as the Memorial Tower. Donations to these specific projects help in the carrying out of Trust priorities.

3. QUESTION. Under what circumstances can corpus funds (that is, the principal) be spent?

ANSWER. Corpus funds (principal) are normally used to purchase capital assets, such as land, buildings, machinery and equipment, vehicles, furniture, computers, and so forth. Only under unusual circumstance would corpus principal be applied toward operating needs. Such a circumstance would arise when ordinary operating expenses aren’t covered by donations and corpus interest. In this event, corpus funds (principal) finance the deficit.

4. QUESTION. How are Trust funds invested?

ANSWER. The Indian national and Maharashtra state governments permit perpetual public charitable trusts to invest only in low-risk government-owned bank deposits, in first mortgages on property, and in government securities. The key consideration in the Trust’s investment strategy is to minimize risk and safeguard principal. In consequence, the Trust invests predominantly in fixed and term deposits in banks partly owned by the government, reserving a small fraction of its investment portfolio for government bonds. Current interest rates for bank deposits range from 8.5% to 9.4%, rates approximating inflation of the Indian rupee, which now runs at about 9%.

5. QUESTION. Are Trust finances audited, and if so, by whom?

ANSWER. Audits are performed annually in the month of March by a local firm of chartered accountants (equivalent to CPAs in the United States). Audited financial statements are filed with the Income Tax authorities and the Charity Commissioner.