

AVATAR MEHER BABA TRUST

ARCHIVES AND MUSEUM PROJECT

CIRCULAR NUMBER TWO

NOVEMBER 1996

I*N THIS SECOND CIRCULAR* from the Trust's Archives and Museum Committee we greet you all, Baba's dear ones of East and West: *Jai Beloved Meher Baba!* Through a continuing series of circulars we plan to update you on the progress of the project first described in our circular sent out in May 1996 and published in many Baba newsletters. Since then our hearts and attention were turned to the care of our dearest Mani. Though we rejoice in her Reunion with her Beloved Lord and brother and in her triumph of a life led totally for Him, we greatly miss her companionship, her humour and her wisdom. We feel fortunate that this endeavour to preserve and share the precious items connected with Beloved Baba was initiated and developed under her personal guidance. During the time of her illness we felt our minds greatly distanced from all other work at hand. But Mani's last letter dictated as Chairman of the Trust, at such a delicate time in her health, concerned this project and showed us more clearly than anything else could how strong her dedication was to Baba's cause and how significant this work.

The final design for the Conservation Building at Meherabad, as per floor plans shown on pages 4 and 5, is now complete and has been approved by the Conservation Laboratory of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., USA; the detailed working drawings are finished; and the Trust is ready to invite tenders and select a building contractor.

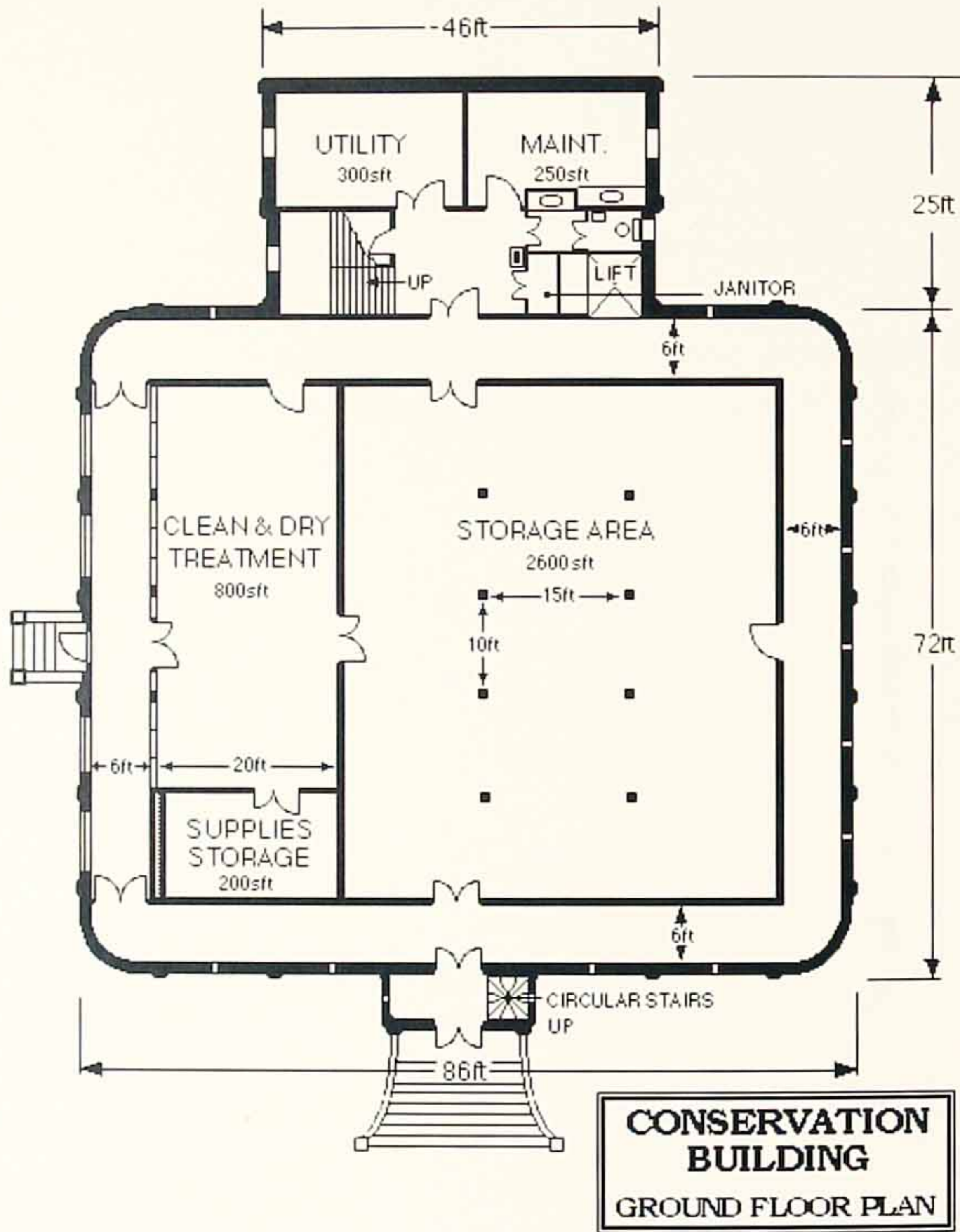
The design of the approximately 15,000 sq. ft., two storey brick building is based on the principle of a thermos bottle, or a 'box within a box' which minimizes changes in temperature and humidity without using air-conditioning. The storage and work rooms are all surrounded by an insulating corridor, and the roof is double-layered,

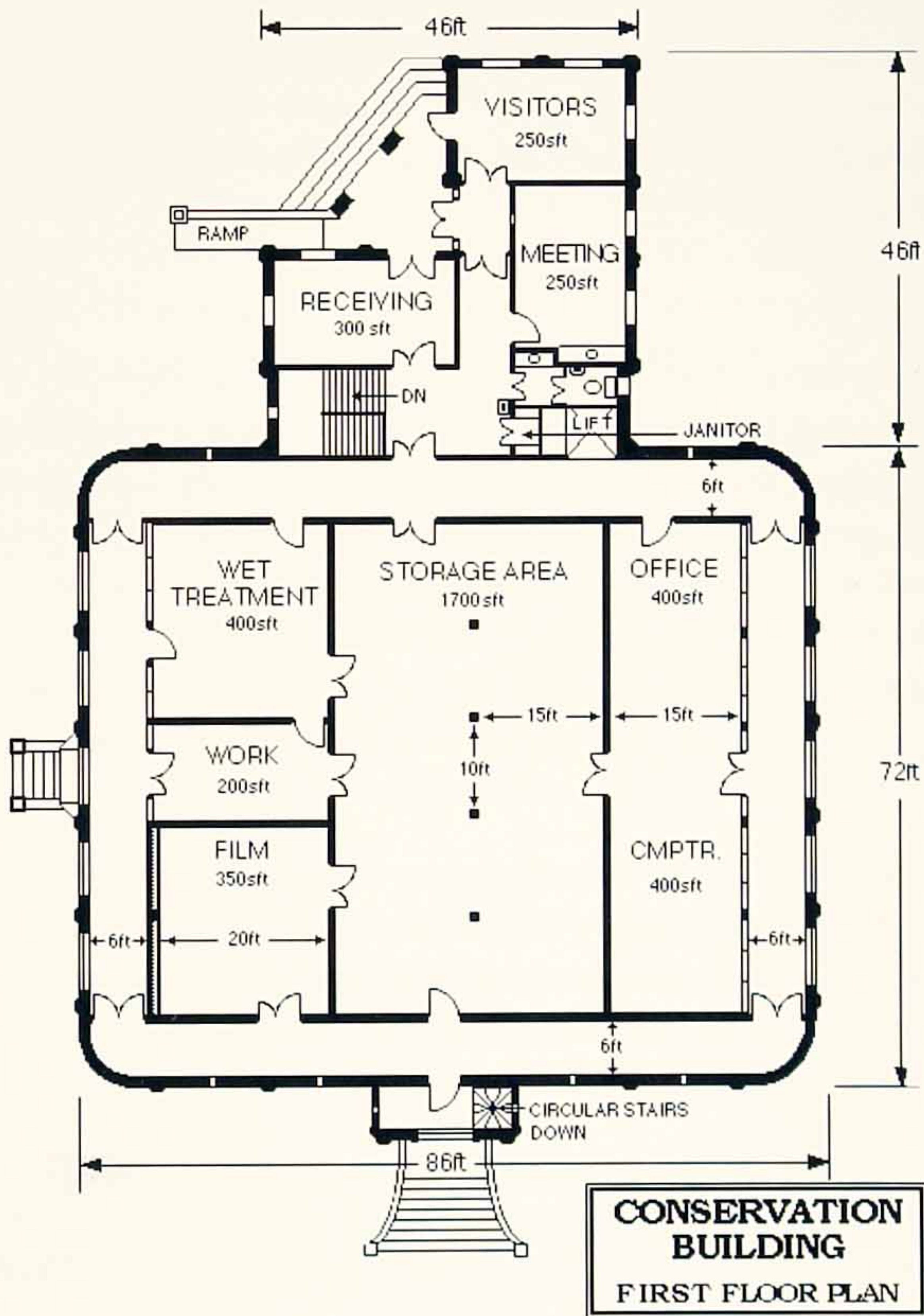
which separates these important areas from the building exterior, so as to protect the precious collection from the extremes of our harsh climate. The corridor also contains the main utility ducts and pipes for safer operation and servicing.

The lower floor, which is more protected, has a large storage room for the most fragile items, with an adjoining treatment room. Maintenance rooms are also on this floor. The upper floor has another large storage room, a smaller one for films, video and audio tapes, treatment rooms and offices, including a central computer room. In the entrance area are meeting and maintenance rooms, a receiving area and a visitor area. There is one main entrance, with two additional fire escape exits. A staircase and service elevator provide access between the two floors. The attractive design of the building's exterior has been given detailed attention to ensure that it harmonizes and blends with the surrounding landscape.

To achieve the best conditions possible for the preservation and cataloguing of Baba's precious belongings, as well as the numerous documents, photos and films associated with His life, special care has been given to incorporate archive and museum standards in all aspects of the building's design and construction. This not only includes the building materials used, but all the necessary specifications for security, lighting, dust and pest control, fire and flood prevention, and stabilization of temperature and humidity. The building is designed to carry a much greater load per square foot than usual, since cupboards containing papers are very heavy. This will also ensure that the building will be sufficiently flexible to meet changing needs in the future. These standards substantially increase the cost of the building, but they are intended to protect the precious items housed within for as long a time as possible.

Since the last circular some Baba lovers, concerned about the future safety of Baba





treasures in their keeping, have asked if they can send them here or bequeath them in their wills. This building will not only be a facility for caring for the existing Trust collection, but provision has been made to accommodate Baba treasures from those who feel prompted to give or leave them to the Trust for safeguarding and sharing with future generations.

This is the time when funds are essential to start construction of the Conservation Building. We send our loving appreciation to those of you who have responded to our first letter by sending donations. So far donations for this project, so close to the heart of Meherabad and the Baba world, have provided only a small part of what is necessary to meet projected construction costs of Rs.85 lakhs (approximately US\$ 240,000) and because of this we are forced to delay breaking ground. It is imperative that construction should start as soon as possible, not only so that precious Baba-articles be better housed, but also because of spiralling costs of both labour and materials here.

The concerted help of Baba lovers all over the world is urgently needed now for this tremendous undertaking. It is only with your full support and help that this project can be completed. As we said in our first circular, "Baba's world-wide family has the opportunity to participate in this effort in a significant way through donations. Donations are in a real sense the bricks and mortar that will shelter this precious legacy for the future."

It is, however, vitally important that this project not diminish regular Trust funds as these are needed as always for the running of the Trust Estate and its other activities. We ask that your special donations for the Conservation Building be identified as

such and that these donations be given without affecting any regular donations that you might already be giving.

Whatever you can afford to give, whether much or little, will be most welcome and your deep desire to help much appreciated. Cheques or bank drafts for this special project may be sent directly to the Trust, made out to "Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust", with a covering note specifying that it be used for "the Corpus for the Archival and Museum Building and Facilities."

This is a Baba-given opportunity in which one and all are encouraged to participate. Only with all of you joining in and helping to whatever extent you can, according to your situation, will we be able to fulfil this momentous work in the service of the Avatar of the Age.

A V A T A R M E H E R B A B A K I J A I ! !

Meheru

V.S. Kalchuri

Meheru R. Irani, Bhau Kalchuri, and the members of the Avatar Meher Baba Trust
Archives and Museum Committee.

Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust

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