



Commonly Asked Questions About Manzil-E-Meher

An Information Sheet
for Pilgrims

1. What is Manzil-e-Meher?

Manzil-e-Meher (MeM) is a 15,000 square foot archive building under construction on Meherabad Hill, to the right of the paved road that leads to the top of the Hill.

2. Who decided to build Manzil-e-Meher; where did the idea come from?

The need for an archive building was proposed by Baba's mandali under the direction of Mani. Mani said "As Baba made it clear that Meherabad would become a place of world pilgrimage, we are building at the root, Meherabad, a repository for Baba's personal items to be stored and preserved until the time when they may be shared with countries of the world which will be awakened to Meher Baba."

3. What is the AMRC and what is its purpose?

Mani, with the mandali, formed the Archives, Research and Museum Committee (AMRC) in 1993. The AMRC was then approved by the Board of Trustees of Avatar Meher Baba P.P.C. Trust and adopted as a committee of the Trust. The purpose and primary goal of the AMRC is "to care for the precious and priceless collection of Baba's personal articles and items associated with His Advent as lovingly, carefully and professionally as possible, and to ensure its ongoing accessibility and availability to the world for as long as possible."

4. *What is the purpose of Manzil-e-Meher?*

The purpose of MeM is to help the AMRC achieve its stated goal. The building itself is designed to provide and maintain optimum conditions and a stable environment necessary for the safe management, storage, care and preservation of the collection. Many ongoing activities will take place inside the building, for example: inventory; cataloging; creating and maintaining database records; preparing museum-quality enclosures for items; duplication of items such as letters, photos and films; conservation treatment and repair; preparing items for storage, exhibit and sharing; pest management; environmental control; house-keeping; research and testing of preservation methods and materials; volunteer training; and administrative duties.

5. *Is Manzil-e-Meher a museum?*

MeM is not considered a museum because items aren't going to be exhibited or displayed there. Because of the need to maintain a secure and stable environment in the building, items won't be available for general public access or viewing inside Manzil-e-Meher.

6. *What kinds of items will be cared for in the building?*

Among the items that will be cared for inside Manzil-e-Meher are: personal items of Meher Baba's such as locks of His hair and His clothing; objects that He touched or that bear His signature; household items that were used by Him or for Him; items that document His life, activities and teachings (such as correspondence, publications, tapes, films and photographs); and selected items and materials of the Mandali and the five Perfect Masters.

7. *Will these things always stay inside Manzil-e-Meher?*

Many of Baba's personal items are very old and fragile, and have naturally deteriorated over the years. Although it is slow and time-consuming, taking steps now to preserve and protect them will prolong their life. When timely, the less fragile of those personal articles will be exhibited and shared throughout the world. Duplicable items, such as papers, correspondence, films, photos and so on will be copied so that the fragile originals can remain in protective storage, while copies can be made available to the world.

8. *What are the future plans for items stored inside the building?*

A very necessary first step in caring for this collection is to make every effort to maintain professionally accepted standards and methods for its safe storage, treatment and preservation. When the collection has been cataloged, safely housed, and copies have been made of duplicable items such as letters, photos and films, the focus of activity will naturally turn towards implementing responsible guidelines for sharing items with contemporary and future humanity.

9. *How were plans for the building made; who designed it?*

Manzil-e-Meher was designed by the Trust's architect. Ongoing professional advice was given by the Facility Director of the Smithsonian Institution Museum Storage Facility, Washington D.C., who visited Meherabad in 1995 and worked closely with the architect and the AMRC team.

10. *When did construction begin and when will the building be finished?*

Ground was broken for Manzil-e-Meher on 1 May 1997, and construction is due for completion in 2001. After construction is completed, the building will need to 'air out' for some time before it can be used; during that time the interior furnishings will be finished, and preparations to move the collection in will be made.

11. *Can I go see the building; can I go inside?*

Pilgrims are welcome (and encouraged!) to go look at Manzil-e-Meher and walk through it if they like while it is under construction. The building won't be open for general public access once construction is completed and the building is in use.

12. *Who will work inside the building, and can I help?*

A variety of people will work inside the building, including the AMRC team, visiting professionals, and volunteer residents and pilgrims. Much help will be required over the years to manage and care for this precious collection, and because of the many different activities involved, there are countless opportunities available for helping. You are welcome to volunteer your time and skills to this work.

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13. How will the collection be made available to people like me?

There are numerous ways in which Baba items and materials from the collection will be available. In the present and immediate future, many people who volunteer to help with archive projects have an opportunity to be in contact with items in the collection through work. Over time, many other kinds of opportunities for access will be available to the general public through new museum and research/study facilities at Meherabad, and through sharing throughout the world.

14. Should I give my Baba treasures to the Trust?

Safeguarding Baba's things is an enormous responsibility that involves both preserving them with great care while they are in your keeping, and ensuring their future care. If you are doubtful about the continuity of their future safety and sharing after you are gone, please consider leaving Baba items to the Trust.

15. If I want to contribute to or help with the archive work, who do I approach?

If you are interested in helping with the archive work while you are at Meherabad, please see Janet Judson or Meredith Klein at Meherabad.

16. If I have other questions about Manzil-e-Meher, where can I go to get more information?

For further updates and information about Manzil-e-Meher, please ask Janet Judson or Meredith Klein at Meherabad. More information about Manzil-e-Meher and the AMRC work can also be found in a number of Trust circulars and *Tavern Talk* articles.