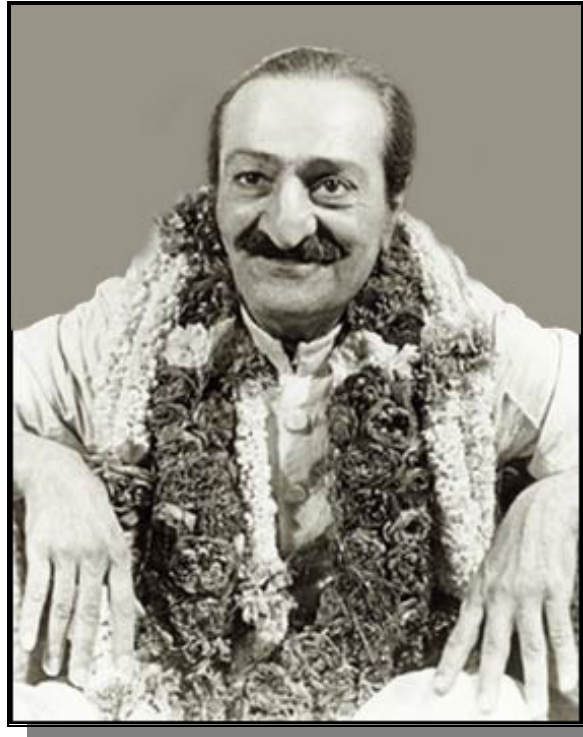


## Meher Baba Washington Gathering

February – May 2008



**L**et your love flow on ceaselessly like a stream down the mountain on its way to the ocean. Obstructions there will be, of pleasures, of pains. Pass by these as passing phases. There will flowers and thorns by the bank and in the flow. Do not get attached; do not get affected. Go on and on and let the stream become a river. Doubts may assail you, self-complacency may lure you, but with love in your heart roll on, flow on to me – the Ocean. Worry not, fear not, I am the Ocean of Love.

**Meher Baba**

## Meher Baba Washington Gathering

**Sat., February 9**  
Pamela Butler-Stone

### **Gutta Meeting & Potluck – 5:00 P.M.**

Baba has given us the Prasad of so many guests this quarter. Come contribute your ideas and talents to organizing their visits.

### **Reading *Mehera-Meher* – 7:30 P.M.**

*Mehera's* biography will be the focus tonight. If there is interest, we will continue as an ongoing reading group.

## Meher Baba's 114<sup>th</sup> Birthday Extravaganza with Special Guests Tom and Cathy Riley

**Sat., February 23**  
Pamela Butler-Stone

### **Evening Talk by Tom Riley**

Gathering 7:30 P.M. Meeting Begins – 8:00

Tom will share his extraordinary stories of meeting Meher Baba in Myrtle Beach and in India. Don't miss this rare treat!

**Sun., February 24**  
Malinda McCulloch

### **Concert with Cathy Riley and Potluck Brunch – 10:30**

Potluck Brunch – 10:30 Concert Begins 12:00 P.M.

Cathy will entertain the Beloved in us with her beautiful voice and engaging style. We will hear some of her original compositions as well as some Baba golden oldies. *Call Malinda to coordinate your potluck contribution:*

**Mon., February 25**  
Marian Lobred

### **Celebration of Meher Baba's 114th Birthday**

Dinner – 6:00 P.M. Party Begins – 7:30 p.m.

A smorgasbord of Baba delights! First, enjoy a wonderfully prepared Indian feast by Saleem and Zeeba. Then Tom will answer questions about his life with Baba and Cathy will share more of her inspiring music. As the finale, we will sing Happy Birthday to Baba and enjoy birthday cake and ice cream. *Please RSVP so that Saleem and Zeeba make enough food for all:* 202-362-0664

**Sat., March 8**  
Jeff & Geri  
Craddock

### **Gutta Meeting & Potluck – 5:00 P.M.**

This Gutta will focus on planning next quarter's meetings. Our regular coming together to plan the calendar makes our meetings so much richer and generates great ideas for special guests. We need your input!

### **Movie Night – 7:30 P.M.**

*Mehera, Meher Baba's Beloved & You Alone Exist* will be the evening's features.

## Meher Baba's Close Ones Mr. and Mrs. Jagannathan Visit from India

**March 25 – 30**

### **Special Guests Mr. and Mrs. Jagannathan**

We are happy to be hosting Mr. and Mrs. Jagannathan, who join us after being special guests at the Southeast Gathering. There will be many opportunities for informal get-togethers with them, as well as evening talks. More details as to time and place will be coming via phone tree and email, or call Pamela Butler-Stone for details: 301-946-0236

# Meher Baba Washington Gathering

Calendar (continued)

**Sat., April 5**

Bread for the City

[www.breadforthecity.org](http://www.breadforthecity.org)

**Service Project 10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.**

The Meher Baba Washington Gathering is scheduled to help in the food pantry at Bread for the City in D.C. Up to 12 people are needed to put nonperishable bulk food goods into food bags for later distribution. Kids who can help are welcome. Please contact Marian to sign up: 202-362-0664, marianlobred@starpower.net

**Sat., April 12**

Terry & Robert Barton

**Stories from Meherazad**

Gathering – 7:30 P.M. Meeting begins – 8:00 A.M.

Terry Barton will share experiences from her recent trip to India. Please bring your own personal Meherazad stories to share as well.

**Sat., April 26**

Pamela Butler-Stone

**Special Guest Allan Cohen**

Gathering – 7:30 P.M. Meeting begins – 8:00 P.M.

Allan will explore the psychological and spiritual effects of Baba's ongoing "assaults" on the limited self of His lovers, in relation to the overriding question: How can one follow the Avatar and manifest a healthy and productive presence in a totally illusory system of apparent life?

# Meher Baba Washington Gathering

## **Amartithi Celebration with Jeff Wolverton**

Jeff Wolverton was our special guest for Baba's Amartithi. (Unfortunately, without Nan, who was unable to come with him due to illness). The weekend had all of the elements of afternoons spent in the Refectory with Jeff and friends: music, food, stories, companionship and most of all Baba's Presence. Jeff artfully wove music into his stories, selecting familiar favorites that inspired the audience to join in. Jeff's rich voice was beautifully complemented by Daniel Stone's lovely guitar accompaniment. As Jeff told the story of his childhood and coming to Baba, it was obvious that growing up in his warm, inclusive, fun-loving family was an early preparation for the role he fulfills so naturally at the Center.

During his talks, Jeff shared pearls of wisdom that he was privileged to receive over the years from Baba's close ones. A major theme in his talks had to do with the importance of giving everything to Baba, both good and bad. Jeff related a conversation with Mehera in which she quoted Baba as saying, "Seeds germinate in soft soil. I plant my seed of Love in your weaknesses, not your strengths."

At another time, Jeff asked Darwin what happens when we give these undesirable parts of ourselves to Baba. Darwin replied, "Whatever we give to Baba is gone forever. Those impressions are dissolved in His impressionless Ocean. But it is only that layer that is given to Him; there is another layer behind it that may look just like the one you gave to Baba. It seems like there is no change. But whatever we give to Baba is gone from us. However, this is only part of what happens in the giving to Baba. Something far more important is going on: As we give the undesirable parts of ourselves to Baba and they are dissolved, more room is made for Baba to live in us. We create inner space. By creating inner space, Baba more and more can live in us and live our life for us." Jeff went on to highlight the above words from Darwin with one of Kitty's favorite lines from the Bible, "Not I but Christ liveth in me."

Another beautiful gem from Darwin was the following: "There is an invisible current in each of us, but in most people it is flowing towards themselves. This current needs to be reversed. We need to flow out to life; flow out to Baba or in to Baba, wherever you find Him. When we are in that

flow, when that current is moving through us, we don't have to ask, What is the meaning of life? What do I feel like doing? Where is Baba? The flow is the meaning itself. It inspires what we say and do and is the remembrance of Baba."

It was a gift to be reminded once again of the wisdom of Baba's close disciples who have helped to shape our lives with Baba. Thanks to Jeff for his generosity of spirit that was so evident throughout the weekend. Thanks also to the Kalavapudi's and the McNeely's as well as to Saleem and Zeeba for their gracious hospitality and wonderful food. But, of course this is all a reflection of Baba's generosity that is continually being bestowed upon us. Thank you Baba!

## **Special Guests in the New Year**

The New Year is off to a bountiful beginning with visits by a number of exceptional guests. Amartithi brought Jeff Wolverton to share his music and stories. On Baba's Birthday weekend Tom and Cathy Riley from Asheville, N.C. will be here to share their inimitable talents. Special guests from India, Mr. and Mrs. A.S. Jagannathan will also be visiting Washington for five days in late March. In April, Allan Cohen, who was in contact with Baba in the late 60's and who attended the Last Darshan, will give a talk on the nature of Baba's work on the egos of His lovers.

Additionally, on the horizon are returning guests, Bill and Diana LePage from Australia and musician extraordinaire Billy Goodrum from Asheville, N.C. Dates are not yet definite but their visits will likely be this summer. More details will be posted in the next calendar.

And last, but not least, Bhauji may be coming back this summer! He has just written that if it is Baba's wish, he will definitely be making a U.S. tour. We are so excited at the prospect of having Bhauji with us once again. We will let everyone know when we have definite word and will send a flyer with all of the details.

## **Baba's Birthday – Tom and Cathy Riley**

Tom had the rare fortune of meeting Meher Baba at the Meher Center in 1958 and again at the 1962 Darshan in Guruprasad. He is a gifted storyteller with a true Irish flair for drama and timing that holds his audiences in rapt attention. In the presence of the Avatar.

## Meher Baba Washington Gathering

He has many extraordinary accounts to tell of being in the presence of the Avatar.

Cathy is an inspiring singer and musician as well as a creative force in the Baba community of Asheville. She has written beautiful, original pieces of music dedicated to Baba that have touched the hearts of many.

### Mr. and Mrs. Jagannathan

The Jagannathan's are long time Baba lovers from Hyderabad, India who both had extensive contact with Baba in the 1950's and 60's. They had the great privilege of attending all of Baba's darshan programs at Guruprasad until 1965 after which Baba was primarily in seclusion. Mr. Jagannathan is an eloquent speaker who speaks from the heart about his experiences with Meher Baba.

### Allan Cohen

Allan Cohen corresponded with Meher Baba in the late 1960s and attended Baba's Last Darshan in 1969. At Baba's request, Allan helped to spread Meher Baba's message about the harmful effects of drugs. Allan has a Ph.D in Psychology from Harvard and also compiled and edited "The Mastery of Consciousness," an introduction and guide to practical mysticism and methods of spiritual development. Allan's talks are dynamic, inspiring and filled with humor. Don't miss this evening which promises to be a lively and extremely relevant discussion. Allan's talk should have special meaning to teenagers and young adults.

In His Abiding Love,

Pamela Butler Stone and Terry Barton

### MEETING LOCATIONS—Please call the hosts if you need directions.

Terry & Robert Barton	6951 Duncraig Ct., McLean, VA	703-883-8093
Pamela Butler-Stone	11227 Dewey Court, Kensington, MD	301-946-0236
Geri & Jeff Craddock	2799 Beechbank Road, Silver Spring, MD	301-588-6073
Murali & Manjusha Kalavapudi	8723 Bell Tower Drive, Gaithersburg, MD	301-258-0703
Marian Lobred	3215D Sutton Place, NW, Washington, DC	202-362-0664
Malinda McCullogh	10108 Haywood Circle	301-681-8168
Bread for the City	1525 7th Street, NW (7th & P Sts)	

# Meher Baba Washington Gathering

**Bhau's Message for Beloved Baba's 39th Amartithi, January 31, 2008**

## ***Beloved Avatar Meher Baba!***

My dearest dear ones of Avatar Meher Baba, here before me and all over the world,

On behalf of the Trustees of Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust, Meherazad Mandali and all the dear workers in the different departments of the Trust, I salute you 1,001 times with all love in the Name of the Beloved of all, Avatar Meher Baba.

I am really very, very happy to see physically present here you who have come from all over the world. Today is Amartithi. Sometimes you must wonder, "Why is the name Amartithi given for the day the Avatar of the Age, Meher Baba, dropped His physical body?"

Amartithi means the "Immortal Date."

Though our Beloved disappeared physically on this most important day, He is immortal. Age after age, when ignorance reaches its zenith, He is required to take a physical body for the work of Creation. But He is the One Who remains active, even after dropping His physical body.

And what does He do?

He takes away the obstructive impressions of all animate and inanimate forms and beings in the seven kingdoms of the gross sphere. Though He drops His physical body, He works continuously in the gross, subtle and mental spheres.

Beloved Baba has declared that His Universal Manifestation will take place one hundred years after He drops His physical body. He would always say, "You and I are not 'we' but One."

Actually, in Reality, we ARE all One. But the mind of each person is not the same. The soul is One, but minds are innumerable. And according to the mind, everyone has a different face, and thus there are innumerable faces.

But God is One, indivisible and eternal.

From the stone form until coming into the form of a human being (which takes ages and ages), we go on collecting different sanskaras. When we achieve human form, we become conscious of the gross world. Once we become human beings, our form is not changed, but again, it takes ages and ages for us to enter into the subtle sphere. In the gross sphere, our consciousness remains gross. In the subtle sphere, consciousness becomes subtle. Though we are still in human form, we forget gross consciousness and remain conscious only of the subtle. In the mental sphere, we remain mentally conscious, and we forget gross and subtle consciousness.

In the gross sphere, we are gross conscious. We remain gross, with gross impressions, and we are connected to time and space.

In the subtle sphere (which is within us, within everyone), we have subtle consciousness and are conscious of the subtle form (pran [energy]). We no longer have gross impressions. In the subtle world, there is no time or space.

In the mental sphere, we have mental impressions, and we remain conscious only of it, not the subtle or gross spheres. In the mental sphere also there is neither time nor space.

But in all these spheres, duality remains. And therefore, mind should be annihilated. That is the aim of life.

When we do cross the mental world, our minds are annihilated, and we achieve God-consciousness. Only then do we experience God the Infinite. We are free, eternally free. The goal of life is achieved, and we experience only Infinite Bliss, Infinite Power and Infinite Knowledge.

For this purpose, each drop of the Ocean has to become a drop, that is, we have to come

## Meher Baba Washington Gathering

down to the gross form and then pass through the subtle and mental forms until the mind is annihilated.

Then we do not remain 'we' but are One.

There is One Whom we call the Avatar, the Prophet, the Christ, the Messiah, the Rasool or God. He is the Ancient One, Who comes down upon the earth age after age to wipe out the ignorance that hinders the progress of consciousness. Though He is called by different names—Zoroaster, Ram, Krishna, Buddha, Jesus, Mohammed, and in this age, Meher Baba—He is One and the same Ancient One.

Today is Amartithi, the Immortal Date. And why is this day given that name?

So that we ourselves may have the longing to become immortal.

Know well, He is always present and that He is beyond past and future. He IS.

We, too, have also to become IS, and therefore, we must love, and love Him, and obey His Wish that He has expressed on 10th July 1958. We must remain honest, selfless, free from greed and selfishness. We must live for Him and die for Him in His love.

And therefore, we must bow down to Him and pray to Him:

O Beloved, keep our head always bowed down at Your feet, so that our mind may not work. May we come closer and closer to You, and one day, experience this Immortal Date.

With all love and Jai Baba to you, all dear ones. Please accept our 1,001 loving salutations, not only you who are here, but also those who are not present, yet have the longing to come to Beloved Avatar Meher Baba's home.

In His Love and Service,  
V.S. Kalchuri (Bhau)

# Meher Baba Washington Gathering

## A Gem from Jeff

On the first night of Jeff's visit, someone asked him how to explain the suffering of the world. The following story certainly provides a different perspective on this issue—as is said by Hafiz, that what we see on the stage is not as real as the “secret game being played” behind the curtain:

Back in the 1970s, when guests came to the Baba Center, one of the questions that would come up from time to time, usually asked by women, would be: What was the nature of the work Baba was doing with the women mandali (disciples)? For years, He kept them secluded on the hill at Meherabad, behind a walled compound, with no contact with men and with no outward connection to the world. For periods, they weren't even allowed to hear the name of a man. Wasn't this isolation just a perpetuation of something akin to the Muslim purdah, where women are kept out of sight and are not allowed freedom in the world? Such questions seemed entirely reasonable and understandable, and I never felt I had an adequate answer. Just to say that this was Baba's will and way, or some such answer, seemed to be just an evasion, especially to Center guests who were not yet devoted to Baba.

Years rolled by, and this question about the women mandali was always at the back of my mind. The first breakthrough that I felt Baba intimated to me, occurred during one of my trips to India. I had gone with a few others on an excursion to Upasani Maharaj's ashram in Sakori, a deeply serene place where we were served a lunch by Godavri Mai and her nuns. While there, I purchased a book of Upasani's discourses and was struck by one he gave on the complementary relationship of husband and wife in Hindu society. He began by saying that there are three different types of impressions (sanskaras), described in Hindu spirituality: Sattvic impressions, embodied by the wife, which are pure, innocent and light, and provide

a suitable atmosphere for children to grow up in; rajasic impressions, embodied by the husband, which are heavier and have to do with work in the world; and the third type of impressions, tamasic, which are very heavy and are due to great wrongdoing. The complementary role of husband and wife (Upasani was speaking about Hindu marriage in the 1920s) was expressed in this way: The wife cultivates the sattvic impressions, which create a pure and spiritual atmosphere in the home, and when the husband comes home from work in the world, his heavier worldly impressions are dissolved in the spiritual atmosphere in the home. Upasani then revealed that in his ashram, the nuns that he gathered around him (over 70 in number), by maintaining a very pure and peaceful atmosphere, perform a similar function for the entire world. The heavy impressions of the world, caused by war and other forms of intense suffering, are attracted to the pure atmosphere of his ashram, where they are dissolved. (In giving this explanation, he did not imply that the nuns had any awareness of this higher purpose for their secluded life).

This explanation by Upasani led me to conjecture that Baba may have had His women mandali performing a similar role for the world while they were secluded on the hill at Meherabad. So, when asked about Baba's work with the women, I would offer this explanation as a possible answer. At least this answer was more acceptable, I found, than not offering any explanation at all.

More years rolled by, and one day I heard this story that had a profound and moving impact on me. A woman from New York City who had not heard of Baba, one night had a past life recollection of being a victim of the Holocaust; she was trapped along with many others in a gas chamber in a concentration camp, and as they were being gassed to death, she saw first-hand the scene of people on their

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knees praying, screaming, and in terrible states of distress. However, as their bodies died, the entire group was lifted up out of that horrendous setting and were transported far away to a lovely hillside with a few buildings, a place with a most heavenly atmosphere. From above, they could hear the exquisite sound of chanting—beautiful and deep singing that soothed and transformed their hearts—coming from one of the buildings below, and as their hearts were transformed, they were then able to leave the earth-plane and move on to the next phase of their afterlife.

A year or so later, this woman heard of Baba, and someone encouraged her to go to India; when she arrived in Meherabad, she checked in at the Pilgrim Center, and as she walked up the hill to Baba's Samadhi (His tomb), she suddenly recognized that this was the very hillside that she and the others had been brought to after dying in the gas chambers! As it so happened, this was on one of the days when the women mandali from Meherazad had come to pay their respects to Baba in the tomb, which they usually did every two weeks. As the woman approached Baba's tomb, that same heavenly chant that she had heard earlier (after coming from the concentration camp) was being sung— The Seven Names of God, composed by Baba. One can only imagine how deeply moved she was by all this. (This is her story as I remember it).

I later discovered that during the period of the Holocaust (in the late 1930s into the mid-1940s), the women mandali, who were then living on Meherabad Hill, were ordered by

Baba to spend half an hour every morning and every evening, chanting the Seven Names of God.

The experience of this woman was further corroborated by the following: In recent years, a woman guest staying at the Myrtle Beach center shared that she had heard Mehera once say that all of the victims of the Holocaust had come (in Mehera's words), "through the upper room." I assumed that Baba must have told her this, because Mehera usually never made such a remark on her own. This woman had naturally thought that Mehera was referring to the upper room of the main house at Meherazad, which is where Baba stayed at night. But in researching this remark, I found that Baba did not stay in that room until the mid-40s. Mehera must have been referring to the upper room above the converted water tower on the hill at Meherabad. It was here during the war years that the Western woman mandali were living, while the Eastern women stayed in the room directly below.

I have no idea whether this explanation of Baba's work with His women mandali during the war years is true, (I assume the women were not directly aware of the work they may have been participating in ), but it certainly appears very plausible. and seems to be borne out by the experience of the young woman from New York.

Jeff Wolverton  
January, 2008

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