

Eternally Inspiring Recollections

of our Divine Mother

**Sahaja Yogis' stories of
Her Holiness Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi**

**Volume 2
1981 – 1983**



**This book is humbly dedicated to
our Divine Mother, Her Holiness Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi
that Your name may be ever more glorified, praised and worshipped**

Thank You, Shri Mataji, for the warmth and simplicity and all the many ways in which You showered Your love upon us. And thank You for the great play of Shri Mahamaya that helped seekers to love and trust You, often without yet understanding the truth that You were and are.

The heart of this book is to remind us of the magic of Sahaja Yoga. The spirit of this book is to help our brothers and sisters all over the world, and also in the future, to know a small part of the beauty and glory of You, Shri Mataji, as a loving, caring Mother whose wonderful power of divine love dispelled and continues to dispel all our uncertainties.

Sift now through the words that we found when we tried to remember. What follows is our collective memory, our story together. We ask Your forgiveness if our memories are less than perfect, but our desire is to share with others the love that You gave us, as best we can.

Acknowledgements

The editor would like to humbly thank all the people who have made this book possible. First and foremost we bow to Her Holiness Shri Mataji, who is the source and fulfilment of all, and who graciously encouraged the collection of these stories.

Contents

- Chapter 1 - 1981 - January and February - India**
- Chapter 2 - 1981 - March and April - Australia**
- Chapter 3 - 1981 - April - Hong Kong**
- Chapter 4 - 1981 - Back in London**
- Chapter 5 - 1981 - Early Summer - England and France**
- Chapter 6 - 1981 - Mid Summer**
- Chapter 7 - 1981 - Brompton Square**
- Chapter 8 - 1981 - July and August - around the UK and Weddings**
- Chapter 9 - 1981 - September and October - North America**
- Chapter 10 - 1981 - October to December - Italy, and Christmas in London**
- Chapter 11 - 1982 - January and February - India Tour**
- Chapter 12 - 1982 - March and April - London, Rome and France**
- Chapter 13 - 1982 - May - France, Portugal and Spain**
- Chapter 14 - 1982 - Summer - London, the USSR and Yorkshire**
- Chapter 15 - 1982 - August - Cheltenham and the West Country**
- Chapter 16 - 1982 - August to October - Switzerland, Holland and a UK Miracle**
- Chapter 17 - 1982 - October and November - USA**
- Chapter 18 - 1982 - December - India**
- Chapter 19 - 1983 - January and February - India**
- Chapter 20 - 1983 - March - Australia**
- Chapter 21 - 1983 - March to May - Malaysia, India and Switzerland**
- Chapter 22 - 1983 - May and June - London, Paris and Madrid**
- Chapter 23 - 1983 - July to September - Sweden, London and Rome**
- Chapter 24 - 1983 - October - North America**
- Chapter 25 - 1983 - October and November - London**
- Chapter 26 - 1983 - December - India**

Chapter 1

1981 - January and February

India

The same railway station

Something which struck me when reading Baba Mama's book of memories was that many of the places that he mentions as being significant to the Salve family, especially their forebears, were places we visited in Maharashtra on the tour of 1980. For example, we went to the same railway station at Rahuri to which Shri Mataji's paternal grandmother, Sakhubai, escaped with her children through a terrible night of flood and storm. We were at that station quite some time before the train came in.

Bogunia Bensaude

The train was late

On that same tour we were travelling near Nasik and a great banquet had been put on for us by some yogis. Shri Mataji was to join us because She was making the same journey by car. We waited a long time but She didn't arrive. The yogis took us inside and suggested we rest, then there was a blackout and someone said we could meditate. When we eventually saw Shri Mataji again, She apologised because apparently the car had broken down.

It was New Year's Day in 1981 and Shri Mataji was due to leave Rahuri by train and it was late. Someone fetched a chair and placed it beneath a lamp on the station. Our Mother sat and we all sat at Her Feet. This was where we all belonged, so peaceful at Her Feet. Shri Mataji had told us we had all been with Her before, and now there was no doubt. One yogi kept asking if we could sing the aarti now.

'No, not now,' She kept saying. As it approached midnight, She turned to the yogi and said, 'You can sing aarti now,' and as we came to the final verse the train arrived. Mother climbed into the train as we sang. 'If the train had arrived before midnight I would have spent the rest of the year travelling,' She said.

Sarah Frankcombe

You'll travel all year

That was the first time we ever sang bhajans, proper Indian bhajans. We learnt them on the railway station and we waited and waited for the train.

The train was supposed to come at nine o'clock and I remember that Shri Mataji said that there's an old saying that if you travel on the first of the year, first of January, if you start travelling on the first day of the year, it means you'll travel all year and that you won't be able to stop travelling.

The train was delayed, so we sang bhajans then we went and had a cup of tea. Eventually the train left at one minute past twelve on the second of January.

Wendy Barrett

Like the Sermon on the Mount

Do you remember that village called Karuse? We went to this village and it was an amazing experience because the villagers had come from miles and miles around and they were everywhere. We were in Maharashtra and way in the countryside. They had a simple bullock cart, with palm trees over the top of it and a driver, who slowly took Shri Mataji through the village and we danced in front of it and all the villagers played their music and came and She gave a programme.

That was on our first India tour and we did that quite a few times in quite a few villages, but that particular village I remember. There were people literally hanging out of the trees and on the tops of ruined walls and hanging everywhere and we were near the front. I looked around and thought, 'This is like the Sermon on the Mount in the bible. They're everywhere.'

Shri Mataji gave a very short talk in Marathi, but it was an amazing experience. It hadn't rained there for ever such a long time, and they were destitute. As soon as the talk finished, the skies opened and the rain came down and we all had to run for cover and there were thousands of people.

Kay McHugh

A really joyous occasion

We went to a small village just outside Pune. It was a very dusty place and all the village people came and they were sitting on roofs and walls. They were just everywhere. The programme was held outdoors. Then it just poured and poured for about an hour. It had not rained for nine months and the Indian people were totally over the moon. They danced, sang and ended up covered with mud. Because there had been no rain it was very dusty and when the rain came it became very muddy. It was a really joyous occasion.

Cheryl Bradshaw

Because a saint was buried there

There was another village that we went to on that India tour, which was the place where those pictures were taken, where the light is coming down. I was sitting next to Cheryl Bradshaw, who took the pictures, so I can vouch for the fact that it was an overcast day. There was no sunlight.

I took the pictures from Cheryl to London to Shri Mataji, to Her flat. I was a flight attendant at the time and often went there from Australia.

'These amazing pictures have come out, Mother,' I said. I didn't take all of them, only about three or four and showed them to Her, and She didn't exactly say why the light was coming down. I think I was probably too busy talking to Her, rather than listening. 'There's another picture, Mother, in the series, it's the last one and You have Your hand up over Your head like You're saying, 'It's enough now.' She laughed. She said the reason for the light in the photos was because a saint was buried there. After the talk, She made us go down to his grave and we walked around.

Kay McHugh



Shri Mataji translated the movie

It was the beginning of 1981 and we went to see a movie with Shri Mataji in Pune. There were about thirty of us from Australia on that first tour where there were buses. Shri Mataji told us all to go to a movie theatre one evening. She was supposed to come too, but the movie started and She had not yet arrived, so we all sat down.

About ten minutes into the movie Shri Mataji arrived and She came and sat between my husband, then fiancé, and myself. All through the movie She translated, because it was a Hindi movie. She told him the plot, who the villain was and what was happening. She laughed and laughed and it was absolutely wonderful. When She sat down, She put Her glasses on, and it struck me that this was such a human thing to do. It was a very enjoyable evening.

Caroline Henwood

Not easy to give a hand to Shri Adi Shakti

There was a Sahaja Yogi in Pune called Mr Bakri. One day he was with Shri Mataji. He wanted to help Shri Mataji, and She was climbing some steps so he offered his hand to Her to help Her climb them. As soon as he gave his hand to Her he himself fell off the steps! Then Shri Mataji pulled him and he was all right. She said it was not easy to give a hand to Shri Adi Shakti.

Sandeep Gadkary

How the Indians clean their teeth

In 1981 we went to a temple where Shri Rama had worshipped. It was a Shivalinga, very old and underground. Shri Mataji sat outside afterwards and had tea and started to tell us about the neem tree that was shading us. We've got some lovely pictures of Her sitting under the neem tree laughing and laughing. She was breaking branches off and giving them to us to chew.

'This is how the Indians clean their teeth. They never have tooth problems because they just chew on the branches of the neem tree,' Shri Mataji said. Mr Dhumal handed the branches out to us.

'Chew on it. It's really sweet,' he said, and Mother was laughing. He was tricking us because it's really bitter!

Kay McHugh



Shri Mataji holding neem leaves

The Kundalini pulsating

I had a friend called Emily who lived in Hong Kong and who had received her realisation. We asked if she could help with the arrangements for the upcoming Hong Kong programmes and she immediately said yes. The next few days she was given intense treatments, a crash course in the subtle system and how to clear it, and a copy of *The Advent*. Thus armed, she returned to Hong Kong and arranged a spectacularly successful first foray of Sahaja Yoga into Hong Kong and China.

In order for Emily to meet Mother, she joined the India tour of 1980/81. At this first meeting Emily was very business-like, with a portfolio of details. Shri Mataji seemed very pleased and gave her a present of antique brass. The best present Mother gave her, however, was allowing her to go to Her Feet. Needless to say she was quite caught up and this first experience of going to Mother's Feet was a startling revelation to her. Her Kundalini pushed with such a force that it pulsed powerfully at several chakras, especially the liver, and tremendous heat came out.

In the series of public programmes that followed in Bombay, Mother, in Her great benevolence, would call Emily up to the stage and have her go to Her Feet. Each time she would sit up afterwards looking stunned and sweating profusely. Emily told me she used to try to pull her hands out from Mother's Feet but could not move them. She said it was like a mountain on her hands. In those days Shri Mataji would, after some time, slightly lift Her Feet and it would be time to take your hands away and sit up. Towards the end of the series of programmes, Mother was again working on her; She gave a triumphant 'Hah!' and Emily at last came up radiant and smiling.

Kay McHugh

Extra sweet

During my first India tour of 1981, I quickly learnt that the delicious sweet that was sometimes served at the end of meals or as prasad was called barfi. Having found out to my great surprise, and to my advantage, that many of my sisters were not fond of it, I was cheeky enough to extend my hand far out whenever distributed or to ask my neighbours whether they wanted their sweet. I then ended up with a treasured bag that would last a few days, since I would often try to share it in vain.

The last day, on arriving at the airport for our return flight, we were pleased to hear that it was rescheduled for noon of the next day and that we would

spend the night at the airport, since our leader told us that Shri Mataji's departure flight would be at 10.30 am.

When Mother arrived, we all sat quietly at a distance on the floor. Mother was talking to the family members and country leaders that accompanied Her. We could not really hear what was said but a box of barfi appeared. After Mother vibrated them, Anand, who was a little boy at the time, started distributing one to each yogi. At the end of the round, one was left in the box. Anand went back and asked Mother something, which I assumed to be 'Who shall I give the last one to?'

The thought, 'Of course not me. How can I be so selfish and greedy to even think...' was interrupted by Mother pointing at me and saying, 'Give it to her.'

Natalie

Amram

Rub them more strongly

I was a child of about nine years old. It was a puja in the 1980's in Mumbai and there were usually about twenty children on the stage. Before this, my father told me to be careful and had me cut my fingernails so as not to give any pain to Shri Mataji and to be very gentle when I washed Mother's Feet.

It was the puja day and all the children were called onto the stage to wash Shri Mataji's Feet. It was my turn and Mother asked me to warm Her Feet. I remembered my father told me to be gentle with Mother's Feet, but Shri Mother asked me why I was being so gentle! She wanted me to warm Her Feet by rubbing them. She told me to rub them more strongly.

Raju Koli



Shri Bhumi Devi Puja, Delhi 1981

Shri Mataji is omnipresent

On 9th February 1981, with my doctor brother, I attended a public programme of Shri Mataji in Delhi, at the Constitution Club. On the previous day I had given realisation to him and he felt vibrations, but he did not feel them at the programme. On the bus home he expressed many apprehensions about Mother. The next day my brother went home to Allahabad and again I attended Mother's programme. I was surprised that Mother started delivering Her lecture as if replying to my brother's doubts about Her, in chronological order. The next day I wrote a letter to my brother about the replies and told him it was as if Mother had listened to our talk.

RR Singh

The parrot

In about 1981 Shri Mataji came to my father's house for lunch. Accompanying Her were Raol Bai and a few Delhi Sahaja Yogis. My father is very fond of animals and has had dogs, bears, cheetahs, squirrels and parrots over the years. The wild animals were released into the wild. At the time Shri Mataji came he had a parrot which was not caged. He used to go inside the cage only to sleep, otherwise he would fly all over the house. At breakfast he would come down from my father's shoulder and sit on the dining table. He would never eat anything from the plate, only from the edge of it, where my father would keep a titbit for him to eat. We had a Samoyed dog too.

The day Shri Mataji came, She sat in the garden as it was winter. My father brought the parrot, perched on his finger, to Shri Mataji. She petted it and spoke to it. He cocked his head to one side listening very carefully. The parrot made sounds like 'Uh? Uh?' as it was enjoying the petting. She petted him for quite a while. She also petted the dog.

A week after this incident the door was left open and the parrot flew out. That was the first time he flew out of the house and we never found him again.

Deepa Mahajan

Chapter 2
1981 March and April
Australia



Shri Ganesha Puja 1981

Shri Mataji created a Shri Ganesha

On Shri Mataji's first visit to Sydney in 1981, She held a Shri Ganesha-Gauri Puja at Burwood ashram. This was the first Shri Ganesha Puja on the land of Shri Ganesha. While Shri Mataji was preparing for the puja She asked a few ladies to come into the bathroom and asked us to help Her. She asked us to rub fragrant paste into Her body. She told us that this was the paste that Shri Parvati had used to create Shri Ganesha. Later Shri Mataji created a Shri Ganesha from this paste and gave it to us.

At the end of this puja, She asked for a large bronze plate that was hanging on the wall. She asked for it to be placed behind Her head. One yogini had been trying to take Shri Mataji's photo for days without any success and Shri Mataji asked her to take the photograph then. This is the photo of Shri Mataji as Shri Ganesha that so many of us use for Shri Ganesha Puja. Shri Mataji said the best flowers for worshipping Shri Ganesha were hibiscus flowers and you can see that spontaneously everyone brought hibiscus flowers.

Sarah Frankcombe

The negativity tried to knock the seeking out of me

In my very early Sahaja days, a group of us were invited to share an evening with Shri Mataji at the apartment in Sydney, Australia. At one point She noticed my limp, and, insisting that no Sahaja Yogi should limp, and made me lie on the floor in front of Her. She asked me what was wrong and I explained about the osteomyelitis I'd had in the left ankle from an early age. She placed one foot on the damaged ankle and the other on my Nabhi.

Conversation continued and many of those present told stories - some very funny - about their seeking days. At one point I mentioned, from the floor, how I didn't have any such memories, my need for understanding and peace of mind having taken me into music and poetry and drama rather than towards the Spirit. Shri Mataji, pressing into my ankle, asked when the osteomyelitis had happened. Aged six, I told Her. She nodded and explained how the

negativity had tried, at that early age, to knock the seeking out of me.

Lying there, with the Adi Shakti's Feet on me, how delighted and grateful I was that it had failed.

Brian Bell

Is that better?

When Shri Mataji made Her first visit to Sydney, Her press conference was held at the Wentworth Hotel. My husband Ian Henke was sent to cover it because someone was unwell at the small newspaper office where he helped out occasionally. A friend, Brian Bell had asked him to attend. We knew Brian from the ABC. Because Ian was a seeker, he was able to ask intelligent questions, but didn't want to write the story until he'd heard Shri Mataji speak in public. So we went to the Maccabean Hall where Ian was recognised as a journalist from the press conference.

As a result we had the privilege of being invited to lunch at Drummoyne where Shri Mataji was staying. When we arrived, She was seated on a couch and Brian Bell was lying on the floor. Her foot was on his ankle that was frozen with osteomyelitis. Shri Mataji went on chatting.

'Is that better?' Shri Mataji said eventually. Brian wiggled his frozen ankle and it moved. This was the first of many treatments we saw Her do.

Frances Henke

The first public programme

The first public programme that Shri Mataji gave in Australia was in Sydney in 1981. She was wearing a white sari with a red and silver border. As She spoke the silver caught the light and I remember thinking how beautiful it was.

Towards the end of Her stay Shri Mataji arranged some marriages. We were sent out to search for a piece of material suitable for wedding saris. We searched Sydney but came back empty handed, nevertheless, Shri Mataji said not to worry about it, She would find something suitable.

The next day Shri Mataji was out in the car, and asked the driver to drive down a side street in Surrey Hills. She had found a material shop that none of us knew existed and bought metres of red satin, enough for two saris and at a very good price. She then unpicked two borders off Her white saris, and I got the silver border on my wedding sari. What love She had for Her children!

Sarah Frankcombe

That is right - you are right

The first public programme in Sydney was in Darlinghurst, at the Macabbean Hall on the 25th March, 1981, in the middle of the worst area in the whole of Australia. It was two streets from where I lived, and I was convinced by a friend to come and see Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi.

Shri Mataji spoke about the first centre of our inner subtle system, the Mooladhara chakra, very apt as it was Her very first public programme to be held in Australia. I sat right up at the front and listened, very interested to what She had to say, especially the part where She spoke about an energy that should rise to the fontanel bone and awaken the subtle system within us. At the end of the programme we were allowed to go up and meet Shri Mataji. She held my hands.

‘You’ll be alright,’ She said in a very comforting voice.

We found out that Shri Mataji was holding a seminar on the 28th March, three days after this programme, in the garden of a Sahaja Yogi on the North Side of Sydney. I arrived quite late, and Shri Mataji had already begun talking. I took a place on the grass in the middle and when Shri Mataji was talking I could feel something very holy about Her, even though I was so clouded in my awareness.

Shri Mataji announced that She would go inside and have a rest and while She was doing this we should all lie on the grass and She would work on us. As She walked towards me to go into the house I noticed a white aura all around Her being and the first feeling that came into my heart was that She was Christ - She looked so holy. I lay down on the grass and dozed. As Shri Mataji had said that She would work on us, my experience was quite intense. I felt very relaxed and then I could feel something like thick black oil coming up my central nervous system, like all the tar from all the cigarettes that I had smoked coming out of me at once. Then after some time I felt water flowing through my system and felt it cleansing my whole body like an inner fountain, making me feel light.

Shri Mataji then came back out again and began to work on people. She began with a girl with leukemia and the girl felt so much better and was smiling and joyful. She then worked on a disciple of a false guru. By this time I was very nearby and we could all see a big lump on the spine of this man. Suddenly Shri Mataji lifted Her hand as if She was putting a spear into the lump, and before our eyes it was gone, and the man seemed to be very relieved.

By this time I was sitting right beside Shri Mataji and could only think that I was with Christ when He was healing all the sick. This familiarity was so strong in me that I had this question in my head: ‘You must be Christ. I can remember You way back then by the River Jordan in Galilee healing all the sick.’ This question was only in my mind, but Shri Mataji looked down at me and took my hand and drew a cross on it with Her hand.

‘That is right - you are right,’ She said, and smiled down at me with so much compassion that I was overwhelmed with joy that She had read my mind. She had answered my question without me even opening my mouth.

Gauri Mehrani-Mylany

With one glance

I was never what is termed a seeker. I was cruising through life and not much concerned about anything other than my own happiness. My brother Kerry was always looking for something and said he would tell us once he found it.

One memorable day, in 1981, I was seated in front of the television watching a football game, when my brother came home and said the most incredible thing had happened: he had just met an Indian lady called Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi and had received his self realisation. He told me he had spent the day with Her and a group of people and that he had had the opportunity to wash Her Feet. He had felt an incredible cool wind coming from Her body, especially when washing Her Feet.

One day, a year later, he told me Shri Mataji was in again in Sydney and would I like to come and see Her. I was not very enthusiastic, but went along with him. After some time, someone announced that we should all stand as Shri Mataji had arrived. At this moment, time seemed to slow down. Somehow I could sense Shri Mataji slowly making Her way down the aisle and I could feel a

silence and a power I could not describe. With every moment, I could sense it drawing nearer.

I turned my head to look and just at that moment Shri Mataji was walking down the aisle. She paused for a moment, turned Her head in my direction and looked at me for an instant with a powerful stare, which was in that same moment a beaming smile. She paused and our eyes met and suddenly I felt as though I had been living inside a suffocating bag, which had covered my whole body and that it had surrounded me all my life.

As She looked at me, it felt as if someone had grabbed the top of this bag and pulled it from me. I jumped up from my seat in amazement, as if I was seeing and breathing in a new way. It seemed as if a mist or cloud had been blown from my mind and I was only now thinking clearly. Shri Mataji smiled again and continued to the dais to begin Her discourse.

I was still looking around dumbfounded, trying to make sense of what had just happened. I couldn't think; I just felt alive and fresh. Much of Her talk was foreign to me, but even though I did not understand Her words, I somehow felt that She spoke the truth and that I could trust Her.

Chris Kyriacou

I got all excited

Katy, do you remember anything from the first time you saw Mother in 1981, when you were only nine years old?

Lyndal Vercoe

I remember seeing Shri Mataji's aura at the first programme. I was really excited and came to the next programme, where I sat at the front, wanting to see that again, but I could not.*

We got there early, and I was bored and went out to play in the lobby area. There was a little ante room off the lobby; I wandered into it and then realised Shri Mataji was sitting there. I got all excited and rushed back and sat quietly waiting for Shri Mataji to come in and start the programme.

Katy Mankar

*Editor's note: *if we see auras, it means we are a little off centre in our awareness.*

Profound peace, quiet and joy

It is the first week of April 1981 in Sydney, Australia, and I am sitting in the small Maccabbean Hall awaiting the arrival of Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi at Her last public programme.

I have felt blissful when looking at pictures of Shri Mataji sent to me interstate by a friend, and she had inexplicably picked up a photograph of Her and kissed it this afternoon at my friend's place.

'You look as if you are worshipping this woman,' I warned her, concerned. 'I know She is lovely but you must not worship anyone but God.'

'Oh, we can discuss that tomorrow,' my friend smiled vaguely. She had not said who Shri Mataji was.

Now I am sitting in the middle of the Maccabbean Hall for the public programme; the small crowd is restless; Shri Mataji has not yet arrived; I chat quietly with my friend.

Suddenly everyone leaps to their feet; I stand also, to see what is happening, and catch a glimpse of the back of Her dark head, and a flash of a white-clad shoulder vanishing down the aisle. The dark head disappears in the sea of tall heads but the glimpse is enough: I am in instant bliss – words cannot describe it, and I know Who She is the instant I see the back of Her head; even before She reaches the stage and is visible. I remain in profound peace, quiet and joy for a month.

Jenny Watling

I just want to stay here forever

The next day, Saturday afternoon, I go to Burwood ashram at my friend's invitation. We sit in the small meditation room with about twenty others, and Shri Mataji comes in. She begins to speak and someone tells Her there are two new people in the room.

She asks us to go up to Her; asks me where I live and what I do. She tells me I work too hard, have a very bad liver and have been neglecting my Spirit. Then She tells me to close my eyes. But I am agog at being so close to Her and I can't help just watching Her face. I do not mean to disobey. Her eyes close and Her forehead moves. I am in bliss and gaze at Her moving forehead in raptures. She opens Her eyes and speaks more firmly but with a smile.

'Close your eyes,' She says. Obeying, I close my eyes. I just want to stay here in front of Her, on my knees, forever.

Jenny Watling

She is glorious

The next day is Sunday and new people who were at the Friday night Maccabean Hall programme come to Burwood, at Shri Mataji's invitation, to meet Her.

About two dozen people come. She invites us to wash Her Feet. I hang back while others go before me; I am scared of doing the wrong thing and offending Her. Eventually I take my turn. She is glorious. I am blissed out. Words cannot describe how it feels to wash Shri Mataji's Feet.

Jenny Watling

Vibrating our jewellery

After the Maccabean Hall meetings, new people were invited back to Burwood Ashram. Shri Mataji sat for eight hours giving a long queue of people vibrations. Certain items of jewellery were taken off and put into vibrated water in the old meditation room where She sat. Since then I put my rings and mangal sutra in front of Her picture every night to be vibrated after a day in the wide world.

Frances

Henke

I had to come to see you

In 1981, Shri Mataji's first trip to Australia, we went on a shopping expedition and Shri Mataji wanted to buy Sir CP a dinner set. So we took Her to the old Grace Brothers store in Sydney. As we went into the china department, who was there to serve us, but a lady who had come to Sahaja Yoga the previous year, and had seemed to really recognise Shri Mataji but had then dropped off. Since we entered, you could see her recognition of Shri Mataji.

‘I didn’t come to see You, Mother’, the lady said.

‘I know, so I had to come to see you,’ Shri Mataji said, and then said, or something like that, ‘The mountain did not come to Mohammed so Mohammed had to go to the mountain.’ I’m not sure of Her exact words.

Sarah Frankcombe

She put Her Feet on the soil

When Shri Mataji first came to Sydney we all went to Taronga Zoo with Her. It is near the harbour and there are winding paths and a lot of people go there. It is a beautiful spot. There was a nice open area to sit down, and Shri Mataji took Her shoes off and sat on a big granite boulder. I was lucky enough to put my shawl down for Her to sit on, and She put Her Feet on the soil. Taronga Zoo is a place where a lot of people take their children, and it has been vibrated by Shri Mataji.

Caroline Henwood



Shri Mataji at Taronga Zoo, 1981

Why Australia has so many mice

Shortly after the Australian yogis had been on their first tour of India, in March 1981 Shri Mataji came to our newly-rented Burwood ashram with Sir CP and Auntie Raolbai. We were a small group of about forty to fifty Sahaja Yogis, some meeting Mother for the first time.

The joy of the visit remains with us: the picnics in parks and bushland, the outings, the public programmes, talks to yogis, and sharing our Mother’s birthday with the first puja to Shri Adi Shakti on Australian soil. My memory is primarily visual – like a photographic gallery – rather than a recall of words spoken.

However, I do remember two occasions more clearly. On one of our excursions with Mother we went to Taronga Zoo, overlooking Sydney Harbour. After wandering around outside and looking at a Noah’s Ark of creatures, we went into the Nocturnal House where many of our native marsupials were found. Shri Mataji walked past the enclosures housing such small and shy animals of the rodent family as the *Anticinus* and *Bilb*.

‘Do you know why Australia has so many mice? Because it is the land of Shri Ganesh,’ She observed, but, on seeing the ferocious-looking Tasmanian Devil, Her comment was: ‘There’s a little rakshasa.’

Bogunia Bensaude

I feel You must be the great Goddess

My first memory of Shri Mataji was a public programme in Melbourne in April 1981. I went expecting to hear a lecture on yoga postures.

There was a sense of high expectation in the hall, then suddenly a deep silence fell. No-one had announced anything. We were all waiting, looking at the table with the photo, flowers and a candle beside that empty chair. After some minutes of this strange deep quiet Shri Mataji came in and crossed the platform to sit on the chair. That was a long moment. She seemed to glide rather than walk; She moved swiftly and economically but Her presence was so radiant that She lit the whole space, and time stood still. Then She was seated, smiling and listening to the speaker who introduced Her. I felt impatient to hear Her speak and to my surprise found myself wanting to see Her Feet. Why was this? I had never wanted to see any other person's feet.

Then Shri Mataji rose and spoke. It was so satisfying just to hear Her voice. She told us about the first four chakras and that Australia itself was the Mooladhara chakra of the Mother Earth and how we were born here because of previous merit, and not to worry about some damage we had sustained in this life. She said She would teach us how we could easily correct it ourselves. Everything She said about the function of the chakras was so clear, such obvious truth. It was familiar, as if we had just forgotten it and now remembered, as She reminds us.

Then amazingly, She said if we would just slip our shoes off and hold our hands open on our laps and close our eyes, She would awaken our Kundalini, the impossible thing I'd read about, but hardly hoped to attain in this life, or at least until I was very old. I could barely feel it and doubted that it was real.

I watched as some people who obviously knew Her were rushing forward to embrace and greet Her. I watched with envy. How I wished I could know Her that well! Such lucky people! But at least, I thought, at least, if She would only smile at me. And then a great feeling of joy! As I watched Her greeting those people, I felt Her smile, and it was actually in my heart. She knows me!

The next morning I went to the park for my usual martial arts practice, but it did not calm my mind as it used to do, instead it made my mind race and I felt quite hot. Thinking about the wonder of the night before I said in my heart, 'Mother, forgive me for asking, I feel You must be the great Goddess. If this is so, please could You just send me a little sign?'

As I walked out of the park a car drove up beside me. It was someone I had known twenty years before. He greeted me and said he was off to lunch with a friend and had bought some flowers to take, then something had compelled him to buy a second bunch. He had wondered why until he saw me, and then knew who they were for. They were a dozen red roses. My eyes filled with tears as I thanked him and tried to tell him who he was acting as a messenger for, but he rushed off. He was not a seeker.

At the programme a few days later I felt confident that I now knew what was happening, so I sat in the very front row. At the end there were questions and someone asked, rudely, if this was Shri Mataji's final incarnation or if She would have another life on earth. Shri Mataji politely said She was not here to explain Herself, but to give realisation to those who wanted to receive it. Then that man left.

I was suddenly filled with shame and wished I'd not been so bold as to sit in the front row. Suddenly I saw: I am here right in front of the Holy Ghost incarnate. This was enough to shrivel this ego for a split second, so that the Kundalini could gush forth in a fountain and the amrit then poured down, soothing the Ida and Pingala Nadis. Bliss!

No doubt about feeling it this time.

Lyndal Vercoe

Shri Mataji was standing beside me

A few weeks after my realisation in 1980 I went to see a certain friend, because of all my friends I thought she was the deepest seeker. I spoke for a while but didn't mention Shri Mataji.

'Ever since you walked in I've been feeling this cool wind all around me,' she said. So I dashed out to the car and got a photo of Shri Mataji and set her in front of it and she had such a strong experience, but she never came to Sahaja Yoga. The next year, 1981, when Shri Mataji came to Australia I desired so much that this friend should come and meet Shri Mataji, but she didn't.

However, Sir CP was staying overnight in Melbourne and I was invited to accompany Shri Mataji there, so She could spend some time with him. We were the last people to get on the plane, and as we made our way onto the plane, there was my friend on the very same flight. On landing in Melbourne we met Sir CP and I went off. On the way out of the airport I happened to meet my friend.

'Was that Shri Mataji that you were with on the plane?' she said. Before I could answer, Shri Mataji was standing beside me.

'This is my friend, Shri Mataji,' I said. Shri Mataji lent forward, shook her by the hand, and then She was just gone.

On that occasion, we were going through the airport and passing the perfumes, and She asked me which one She should buy. I didn't know what to say.

'I don't need to buy any, as I made all the fragrances, you know,' She whispered to me.

Sarah Frankcombe

Chapter 3 1981 – April Hong Kong

First programmes in Hong Kong

My friend Emily arranged for Mother to stay in a suite at the Hilton Hotel, Hong Kong, to have Her first official press conference with English and Chinese newspapers and two public programmes, one at a very prestigious venue and one in a large Hindu temple. Through her connections in TV and radio she arranged for Shri Mataji to have a half hour television programme and a whole afternoon on English radio. These two things particularly pleased Mother because She said through the ether She had at last penetrated into communist China.

Emily was not completely clear and Mother used this to Her advantage during the television programme in Hong Kong. Shri Mataji explained how when the Kundalini rises, if there is a block it can be seen throbbing as it tries to clear the blockage. To demonstrate this Mother asked my friend to go to Her Feet and told the camera man to film it. He was not sure how to do it and missed the evident pulsation at her liver. Shri Mataji said we should do it again and this time I should point to where the Kundalini would be working. She said it would not be so obvious because it had already cleared a lot. It was true, it only throbbed half as much, but nevertheless the liver catch was filmed for posterity and was televised to a vast Chinese audience.

Kay McHugh

Divine timing

Emily noticed that Mother mostly arrived after the advertised starting time of the programmes. She had Her own very good reasons for doing this, never did anything by mistake and often graciously apologised for Her late arrival, giving logical and unavoidable reasons. Emily had little understanding of the ways of the divine and asked Shri Mataji to please come on time, saying the Hong Kong public wouldn't wait, because they were busy people.

'Of course, of course,' said Shri Mataji.

The Hong Kong programme venue was ten minutes away from the Hilton Hotel and a limousine was booked for exactly ten minutes before the programme start time. Shri Mataji entered the limousine at the appointed time while Emily was waiting outside the venue to greet Her. The start time came and went, ten minutes passed, twenty minutes and half an hour.

My friend's anxiety levels were rising and she paced up and down outside the hall. Finally, forty minutes late, the limousine drew up, with Shri Mataji apologising. The driver, who spoke no English, had misunderstood and taken them to the airport! Strangely not one busy Hong Kong person had left the hall.

Kay McHugh

The shawl-bearer to the Goddess

After the 1981 programme in Hong Kong, we went back to the hotel in the hotel car and I got out, said my pranams, goodnight to Shri Mataji, and bowed down.

'You must come,' She said. I was in my dress with just my handbag.

'But I haven't got anything to wear, Mother,' I replied.

‘You must stay with Me,’ She said. ‘You can wear some of My clothes. Come along.’

‘Oh, my goodness me,’ I thought. So I ran back to the car, grabbed my handbag and then proceeded upstairs with Shri Mataji.

We went upstairs into the hotel room and talked about this and that and then She eventually got into bed and was reading the hotel magazine. We got up in the morning and ordered breakfast, the breakfast came and after that we went out. It was a Diwali day and it was also my birthday.

‘Will I need My shawl?’ She asked me.

‘I don’t know, Mother, but it’s looking cloudy, so perhaps You may.’ She looked out and to the distance and gave bandhan to the clouds.

‘There, now I’ve cleared it up a little bit. But,’ Shri Mataji said, ‘I’ll take it. Here, you carry it.’

‘What a great day to carry Your shawl, Mother, because it’s Shalivahana New Year day,’ I said, or something similar. She touched me on the back.

‘You’ve got it,’ She said, because Shalivahana means the shawl-bearer to the Goddess.

I felt very privileged on my birthday to be the shawl-bearer of the Goddess on Shalivahana New Year day. We went shopping and had lunch somewhere and Shri Mataji clinked my glass with Hers.

‘Happy birthday,’ She said to me over lunch. It was my best birthday.

Walking down the street with Shri Mataji in Hong Kong was incredible because Hong Kong is so crowded that you can’t walk abreast. I was walking behind Her and watching all the people’s faces as they were looking at Her. I saw the amazed look on their faces and virtually saw their Kundalinis come up as they focused on the face of this remarkable Indian lady walking through this crowd, down on the crowded streets of Hong Kong.

We went into a Chinese emporium and saw some lovely Kwan Yins. Shri Mataji bought beautiful teacups and tea sets for Her daughters, and also make-up. There were shopping lists of this and that we were buying and toys for presents and different things.

‘How much do I owe them?’ She said in the end. ‘Oh, I need some Hong Kong money,’ She said and I lent it to Her.

‘Now you must remember to tell Me to pay you back when we get to London because I can’t owe people money in this lifetime, otherwise I’ll have to come back and pay you back in another lifetime.’

‘That’s all right with me then, Mother,’ I said and She laughed.

‘But,’ Shri Mataji said and laughed again, ‘do you realise how difficult it is for Me to incarnate?’

Kay McHugh

Overcoming negativity

We were walking down a street in Hong Kong, shopping, in 1981.

‘Negativity – I don’t want to destroy negativity; after all, I created it,’ Shri Mataji said. ‘I want you people to become so powerful that negativity runs away in your presence. If you can do that, I won’t have to destroy it.’

Kay McHugh

Chapter 4
1981
Back in London

London-Mumbai, Mumbai-London

I had just come to Sahaja Yoga, and had applied for a London basing in my airline job, which seemed impossible at the time because it was done on a point system and I had just used up all my points. While I was on the India tour, I had got the London basing and, to this day, I don't know how. I didn't question it. I told Shri Mataji I was coming to London.

'Oh, good, then you can come and stay at My house,' Shri Mataji said.

My trips were London-Mumbai, Mumbai-London, so it worked out for Mother that She had somebody to take things backwards and forwards, while She was in India, with all the work at Brompton Square.

After Shri Mataji had come back to India from the Australia tour, I got a trip from London down to Mumbai and was so excited. The yogis at Chelsham Road ashram gave me money to buy flowers for Shri Mataji in India, and I went and bought the biggest bouquet, which was taller than I was and it was so wide I had to walk sideways in through the door to give it to Her and that's when Shri Mataji wrote that lovely letter.

Kay McHugh

I must write a letter for the flowers

My heart was so full to see Shri Mataji again after being away from Her for those weeks that I walked into the room with the flowers and presented them to Her and I sat down at Her Feet and there were other people sitting down around Her Feet at the time. Shri Mataji told me that She'd said some wonderful things in Australia and was telling me all the things that had happened on the Australia tour.

'I must write a letter for the flowers,' She said, and it was such a lovely letter.

Kay McHugh



That wonderful letter

What was not much money in the UK, translated into lots of rupees and an enormous bunch of flowers in India. We were amazed when the next week, when Kay reappeared in London, she brought that wonderful letter from Shri Mataji, which we all read with delight, in the kitchen in Chelsham Road. We truly never expected that.

Linda Williams

The full incarnation

Mother once said at Caxton Hall, 'I am Christ, I am Krishna, and you'd better worship Me in this lifetime.'

Shri Mataji made it clear that we could only come to Shri Sadashiva through Her, because He never incarnates. All the deities were within Her and did not incarnate as separate entities as they did in other times, because this time Shri Mataji was the complete incarnation with all Her powers.

Linda Williams

Supta and Svapantini

It is said in the Shri Lalita Sahasranama that the Divine Mother is known as Shri Turya, the one who transcends all states, but She is also Supta, the one who is the state of deep sleep and Svapantini, the dream state. In the early programmes we saw Mother do many astounding things, sometimes it was as if Shri Durga walked among us hurling vibrational missiles, or it was Mahakali who sat enthroned on the stage stretching Her finger toward the fire to destroy negativity, or using channa to eat bhuts. Among the many miraculous and extraordinary things we witnessed Shri Mataji do was entering into the Ida Nadi channel of the seeker, seemingly going in and out of deep sleep at will, while working on the subtle system. Several times I stood or knelt close to Shri Mataji while She was seated behind a person She was working on. She'd vigorously clear the chakras and raise the Kundalini, Her hands moving

upward as She tied three knots above the head, bangles making that delightful musical jangling sound.

‘There is a deep Left Heart,’ sometimes She’d then say, or ‘Void is catching,’ or ‘Now there is a Swadisthan problem’. Then She’d close Her eyes, Her head would go to one side and in a single beat of time She’d have entered the most profound state of sleep and we’d hear a gentle rumbling snoring sound. After working on the problem in the Supta state for a minute She’d open Her eyes bright and wide as if no time had passed.

‘Ah, yes, flowing much better now!’ She’d say, then leaning forward with loving concern She’d ask ‘How is it?’ to the person, perhaps followed by something like, ‘Hm, it’s still not fully there’. Again in an eye-blink Shri Mataji would re-enter the deep sleep state and we’d hear that measured powerful breathing of the Goddess coming in and out. A few seconds afterward again She’d wake up and say, ‘That’s it, the chakra is cleared and the Kundalini is flowing smoothly’. We who had our hands towards Mother as all of this was going on would feel tremendous vibrations at this announcement. It was truly amazing to see the love She poured into each person, how hard She’d work and the lengths She’d go to.

Caleb Williams

A training ground

In those days Shri Mataji would get off the stage to be with the many new people and work on them. Sometimes if we were working on one of the new people She would ask us what we felt and if we did not feel what we should She would explain to us why. As different false guru followers appeared over the years She would give us different mantras and methods to overcome them so the public programmes became a training ground where we could test out whether what we had learned was working or whether we needed more training, so She would be working on both the new person and the Sahaja Yogi who was working on the new person at the same time. Sleeping and standing at the same time is not normally possible but we would witness it all the time. When Shri Mataji was alone with the Sahaja Yogis She would suddenly go back 2000 years and start talking about when She came as Mary and Her son Lord Jesus Christ.

Derek Ferguson

She broke any fanaticism

When vegetarians came to the programmes, generally catching on the left, Shri Mataji would recommend them to eat a McDonald’s hamburger, as much to break the conditionings as anything else. She sometime called McDonald’s ‘Macdougles.’

Shri Mataji often broke Her own rules, giving gifts of black trousers to women, advising a yogini to wear high heels and fancy stockings, chocolates to children, coffee beans given to an ashram, etc.

She broke any fanaticism which attached itself to Her advice.

Marilyn Leate

Boons and fire

My first puja with Shri Mataji was the 5th of May 1981. I came to London from Bristol with the Sahaja Yogis and did not know what was going to happen.

A puja, they said, and Chelsham Road ashram was packed. It was an international puja with Sahaja Yogis from all over the world.

At the end of the puja it was said that if you were not born in the UK you could ask for a boon for your country. The first boon I asked for was for a new pseudo-religious movement that was taking hold should be stopped. The second boon was for marijuana to stop being produced by the Mother Earth, because this group said it was a holy herb. The third boon Shri Mataji told me to ask, that another group should stop.

After this, when Shri Mataji was unwrapping presents, the oil burners with wicks caught the wrapping paper, and flames shot up to the ceiling. Everybody stood where they were and Shri Mataji did not move either, so I jumped up, ripped off my corduroy jacket, damped down and put out the fire, then went and sat back down.

Derek Ferguson

Not a single scorch mark

At one of the first pujas I went to at Chelsham Road, a small miracle happened. I was sitting at the back, and suddenly I noticed that quite a sizeable fire had started just by Shri Mataji. I literally threw my coat forward, as I could not get to the front myself, and told someone to put it over the flames. This they did and the fire was put out. After everything was finished and Shri Mataji had left, I went to the front and found my coat in the corner. It did not have a single scorch mark on it.

Bill Hansel



At the concert of classical Indian music

Editor's note: On one occasion the Sahaja Yogis were honoured to have a concert of classical Indian musicians at Chelsham Road, who played in the presence of Shri Mataji. One of the gentlemen was Mr CV Vyas, who was very well known. In the photo, the musician on the left, who is looking very intently at Shri Mataji, has a light coming out of his Sahasrara.

Shri Mataji was so pleased

When we started singing bhajans Shri Mataji would ask us to get together at Chelsham Road and sing together. We were not successful at first. At last a French yogi captured some qualities of singing bhajans in a more authentic

style while on the India Tour, around 1982. Shri Mataji was so pleased. At last a Western yogi had begun the journey towards singing in the Indian style.

Patricia Proenza

Mice

We had a lot of mice at Chelsham Road ashram. My mother complained about this to Shri Mataji.

‘Of course you will have mice; it is Shri Ganesha’s house!’ She said.

Auriol Purdie

Alcohol and nicotine

On one occasion Shri Mataji told us that God created alcohol for cleaning jewellery and nicotine was supposed to be a pesticide. However humans drank the alcohol and consequently polish their livers, and poison themselves instead of unwanted insects with the nicotine.

Linda Williams

The wisdom of nursery rhymes, children’s songs

Shri Mataji spoke about nursery rhymes. Concerning this one:

‘Ladybird, ladybird fly away home

Your house is on fire,

Your children are gone.’

She said She was the ladybird and we were Her children. Then there was this one:

‘London Bridge is falling down,’ and it goes on ‘Build it up with bricks and stones...’ but that doesn’t work, so eventually it says:

‘Build it up with rods of iron.’ That works, according to the song, and these are our Kundalinis. Mother was building up the bridge – us - with that.

This is similar to one of the psalms of the bible, where it says:

‘Thy rod and thy staff will comfort me’ - that is also the Kundalini.

Auriol Purdie

May God bless you

In 1981, when I came back to Britain from India, where I had got realisation from an older Sahaja Yogi, he would sometimes ring me up and ask me to phone Shri Mataji, because he wanted to ask Her various questions and often could not get through. I used to ring Mother up, and the first time I did so, at the end of the conversation, Mother said to me, ‘May God bless you.’

‘What a lovely thing to say,’ I thought, because I did not realise who I was talking to.

Susie Lumsden

The tender love of a tigress protecting her cubs

There were many people from false gurus at Caxton Hall meetings and Shri Mataji worked on them tirelessly, trying to save them. We used candles in meetings and sometimes Shri Mataji used to come down from the stage to the floor to check people’s vibrations and often worked on their left Vishuddhis, which seemed to be the main problem stopping them from feeling the cool breeze.

The sensitivity to vibrations was quite poor those days, yet Shri Mataji often asked our opinion as to make us feel that we were all one team and encourage us to feel confident about our abilities. She wanted us to experience our newly gained powers straight away. During my second meeting Shri Mataji looked at me.

‘What are you sitting down there for? You have to give people their realisation. Can someone show her what to do?’ She said.

Mother talked to the people at programmes about everything, trying to solve their work, relationships and family problems. I could feel this immense love and concern emanating from Her, the tender love of a tigress ready to fight in order to protect Her unsuspecting cubs from many dangers until they are equipped to care for themselves.

Grazyna Anslow

You killed Christ

There was a programme with Shri Mataji at Caxton Hall where She had been speaking on the Agnya chakra when at the end of Her talk, Her mood changed.

‘You killed Christ!’ She suddenly cried out.

There was pin drop silence, no one moved - no one dared. I shrank further down in my chair as She again directed the accusation at yogis and newcomers alike.

‘You all killed Him!’ I couldn’t bear to look at Her face any more as it seemed an intrusion on the raw, private grief of a Mother for Her son and I felt to be a helpless bystander at the cross witnessing Her anguish.

This lifting of the veil lasted probably only a minute, Shri Mataji then changing the topic and bestowing a soothing smile upon Her children, bringing us gently back with Her again to the here and now.

Danya Martoglio

Incidents at Caxton Hall

Sometimes Shri Mataji did miracles at the programmes. An Indian diplomat’s wife came and she unfortunately had breast cancer. Shri Mataji invited some of us ladies, with the permission of the Indian lady, to feel the lump in her breast. Then She worked on her for a bit. After this Shri Mataji had us feel her breast again, and the lump had completely disappeared.

Once a very dear lady came to Caxton Hall and Mother noticed She had a bad liver, in that her right Nabhi was catching. There did not seem to be any reason for it, as the lady led a moderate life and was a nurse. Shri Mataji asked her what sort of nursing she did, and she replied that she was working with terminal liver patients. Mother explained that this was the cause of her problem.

One evening there was a fight outside, because a lot of groups hired rooms at Caxton Hall, a building of halls for rent. That night some extreme right wing political group was there and things had got a bit out of hand. It did not affect us, but we asked Mother if we should stop going there. She told us not to worry, because a lot of seekers’ groups went there, and that it was good if we had programmes there, to help the seekers. She also said schools were good, for the same reason.

Linda Williams



Shri Mataji at Caxton Hall in 1981
Below - detail of the above photo

Editor's note: Shri Mataji explained that the Brahma shakti enters the fetus's brain from above, but because it is triangular in shape the awareness is refracted outwards and our connection with the all pervading power is lost, so we get into our ego and super ego. For a fuller explanation, see the text of A Unique Discovery, in the Appendix at the end of this book.

Shri Mataji was completely detached

After the public programmes at Caxton Hall, the Sahaja Yogis often went to The Spaghetti House nearby for a meal. And occasionally Shri Mataji came too!

'What did you think of that talk?' She said to me in the cloakroom of the restaurant, referring to Her talk at the programme. She went on, with words to the effect that She was surprised and thrilled at how good it was. Shri Mataji was completely impersonal, detached about Herself.

Patricia Proenza

My life transformed

We had the Monday programme near Shri Mataji's flat and then we would go and spend time with the yogis eating afterwards at a restaurant. Shri Mataji would come and eat with us sometimes. What did I eat? Well it was all firsts. I'd never had hamburgers, never had Italian food, until then. My life was totally transformed at the age of thirty-one.

Kingsley Flint

Crocodiles

It's May 1981, and my wife Ruth and I have come up to London for the Sahasrara Puja in Lambeth. Just before going to the puja we browse through some National Geographic magazines and in one there's an article about crocodiles. I comment on what evil-looking creatures they are.

'Yes, but look at this,' Ruth replies, showing me a picture of a mother crocodile carrying its babies in its mouth in an oddly sweet, protective way. 'Even they have their nice side.'

'Maybe,' I admit begrudgingly.

We go on to the puja and Shri Mataji gives a wonderful talk. Imagine our surprise, however, when in offering an image of the way in which, after giving them self realisation, the mother looks after and cleanses Her children, She refers to the way in which a mother crocodile will carry her babies in her mouth.

Suddenly we glimpsed at once the fullness of Her knowledge and the discretion with which She used it.

Chris Greaves

Small children at Her Feet

The first time I went to Chelsham Road was May 31st 1981, where Shri Mataji was due to give a programme. We were so many in this meditation room that I felt the walls had expanded.

This is from my diary: 'The prophecy of William Blake seems accurate, this place looks like a ruin... and the Sahaja Yogis are trying to restore it. However the meditation room is very beautiful and rustic: there is a beautiful wooden statue of Jesus Sacred Heart, a statue of Shri Ganesha and several stunning large photos of Shri Mataji, lots of flowers and the sun shines through the wooden leaded windows. The vibrations are very clear.'

Shri Mataji arrived late.

'All the protocol is nothing! She said in a magnificent way, and also asked what protocol could we offer to Her? She said that the only thing to prove our love to Her is to love one another.

It was so beautiful, so intense, and echoed the words of Christ. I had tears in my eyes. A lot of small children were at Mother's Feet and before speaking She had taken three of them on Her lap. Afterwards a little five year old girl with brown hair sat at Her Feet with hands stretched towards Shri Mataji; she was in total silence.

'She is in meditation,' Shri Mataji smiled and said.

Antoinette Wells

Humans do make mistakes

In 1981, I had been in Sahaja Yoga for about eighteen months, and in those days that meant that Shri Mataji had graciously worked on me many times,

because as there were so few of us we all had a turn. She asked me if I felt I was alright. I replied that I felt alright when I was with Her and in Her presence, but that otherwise I might easily do something wrong, and make a mistake. Shri Mataji replied that yes, I would make a lot of mistakes, because I am a human and humans do make mistakes.

Another important piece of advice I recall from those days was this. Shri Mataji said we should always try to be very gentle with people if we had to say something a little correctional, we could even pretend that we too had a similar problem but got over it, to make the person feel more at ease.

Linda Williams

The understanding of ants

Once Mother said that the difference between the understanding of humans and ants was something like the difference between our understanding and that of the deities — except that the distance between us and the ants was much, much less than between us and the deities. That was in the early 1980's.

Auriol Purdie

An amazing memory for names

I am reminded of so many early morning trips out to Heathrow Airport, sitting on the tube, flowers in hand to greet Mother. She had an amazing memory for names.

The first time Mother used my own name in Brompton Square, I was occupied with a job, probably scraping back old wallpaper and watching people trooping back and forth to Mother for instructions with tasks about the house. Each was met with a warm smile, and called by their name. I was then still quite new in Sahaja Yoga and was thinking inside, I wish Mother knew my name, too. A little later the same afternoon, I heard Her on the stairs, clearing Her throat in that characteristic way and then calling down to me, using my name. It was such a simple thing, but I knew Mother had heard my desire, and my heart was so full. Another time, when passing Her on the stairs, She stopped and looked at me for a few seconds.

‘Caleb, you really love music, don’t you?’ She said out of the blue, before continuing on Her way down the stairs.

I had been listening to Holst’s *The Planets* suite before coming to Brompton Square that day, and the jaunty themes, were resonating through my mind as I worked. I concluded that Mother could hear the music that was re-playing in my mind and this was the reason for Her comment.

Caleb Williams

The Falklands War

In 1982, while at Brompton Square, Shri Mataji arranged to go and see the Prime Minister, Mrs Thatcher during the Falklands War, to try and give her some vibrations and calm her down. When Shri Mataji came back, while sitting round the dining table with us, She told us that Mrs Thatcher asked Her what Her name meant.

‘Immaculate, the Holy Ghost in reality,’ was Her reply.

Shri Mataji also said that the divine was not interested in the war outcome because the islanders were not seekers, but She did give a bandhan when one of

the Sahaja Yogis came running into the room, saying one of the ships was going to be blown up, and the planes turned around and did not bomb the ship.

Derek Ferguson

Avoiding problems

In Brompton Square, before we started work we were advised to say the mantra to Shri Ganesha and Shri Hanumana so that we would not have problems. One of the siddhis of Hanuman is that he can become invisible. If that power is awakened within us the negativity would not see us in the first place to give us problems and you can go around untroubled by having to clear out.

Derek Ferguson

Sahaja music

In the early pujas when there were not many bhajans. I remember the Sahaja Yogis singing old Christian songs like *Onward Christian Soldiers* and feeling that this couldn't be right. Later on when bhajans came in, it was so different on the vibrations, for the better. At Brompton Square, London, in the early 1980's, I was Shri Mataji's house when She started to play some jazz music. I was shocked to hear that She liked jazz music, then She read my mind.

'It's very spontaneous music,' She said.

To this day I regret not looking at the record collection to see what type of jazz She liked or the musicians She listened to. We could have invited them to play at many concerts for Her if they were alive in those days.

Derek

Ferguson

Sometimes you have to pity Me

One time I was with Shri Mataji at Brompton Square, just Her and myself, and She was talking about some person who had been giving Her a lot of trouble.

'Mother sometimes I really pity You,' I said - it just slipped out. Then I apologised profusely for speaking so out of place.

'No, it is alright,' She said, 'sometimes you have to pity Me.'

Linda Williams

Chapter 5
1981 - Early Summer
England and France

The miracle of the blowtorch

Once we were in Shri Mataji's house in Brompton Square, London, in 1981. It was being redecorated and Mother was walking around and directing people. She would tell us where paintings and other decorations were to go and what colour this door or that window frame was to be painted.

Shri Mataji, wearing a highly inflammable nylon sari, walked towards a blowtorch which was on the floor in the middle of the room and as She passed very close to it, the flame went from the nozzle completely around Shri Mataji two or three times, forming a ring a few centimetres away from the sari.

Auriol Purdie

/



Shri Mataji at Brompton Square during renovations

A flame leapt out of the torch

Shri Mataji was wearing a synthetic nylon sari, blue and white, and walking around amid the rubble and dust. I was in a room where some people were making plaster moldings to go on cornices. Some other people had been working in the room too and someone had left a blowtorch burning, which is a most unwise thing to do. I had used blowtorches for many years and knew how dangerous they were and was always careful to turn them off when not using them. It was pointing into the middle of the room and Mother walked in.

She walked straight in front of it. A flame leapt out of the torch, then went round Her synthetic sari below knee height in a blue ring, then back into the torch. While all this was happening, I was horrified and took a dive across the room to move the torch, landing in an undignified heap, lying on my stomach at Shri Mataji's Feet – anything to protect Our Holy Mother.

Linda Williams

Aarti

I had arrived in Brompton Square not knowing anyone, feeling totally shy, inadequate, caught up, and wondering if I should be there anyway. There was a group of people I joined and two people in charge of choosing workers for their particular jobs. They chose their friends one by one and the group got smaller and smaller until I was the last one remaining, but then the two groups walked off and I was left totally alone. Until I felt a hand slip into mine.

‘Let Me show you My house,’ Shri Mataji said.

How can I describe it? I can’t put it in words without making it sound smaller than that feeling was. Mother held on to my hand tightly, showing me round every room of Brompton Square.

That’s when the blowtorch incident happened. Mother was still holding my hand when the flame actually caught Her sari. I saw it and I still can’t believe it happened. The flame flew all around the bottom of the sari and then back into the blowtorch. Mother just laughed

‘Oh, the flame wanted to do aarti to Me,’ She said, and carried on as if nothing had happened.

Alison Rovina

I am the fire

When we realised what had happened, we looked up in amazement to find Shri Mataji smiling down at us.

‘I am the fire, how could it hurt Me?’ Shri Mataji said, and She went on Her way to supervise putting in some pipes in the next room.

Auriol Purdie

In an instant She became the Goddess

There were so many extraordinary aspects to those times with Shri Mataji in the early days. In some moments She wrapped us all so expertly in Her maya and ‘play’ and it was indeed possible to become totally relaxed, swept up in the feeling, that to be in Her company was the most normal, natural experience and it was perfectly OK to chat, joke, even watch television with Her, or sip Cokes and eat samoosas. But there were other times when in an instant, She became the Goddess, and promoted the deepest feelings of complete humility, gratitude and an astounded sense that we were in the presence of an absolutely divine personality.

One time we were looking at some early photos with Mother. There was one, a very soulful looking portrait, taken of Her in the early 1970’s, a beautiful black and white image. I remarked on what a lovely photo it was, Mother standing, in a white sari.

‘This photo was taken after I opened the collective Sahasrara Chakra. I even look a bit sad,’ Shri Mataji said. Danya and I fell silent and waited for Her to say more. She had become very reflective. ‘I look very serious in this photo. At that time I even stopped eating and became a little thin.’ Then Mother continued, ‘From birth I knew I was the Goddess, and My job was to save and raise up this doomed humanity.’



My sister Danya and I began to realise we had gone from a casual conversation about photos, to sitting at the feet of Adi Maya. Shri Mataji then expressed Her feelings on gazing into the collective Sahasrara chakra of humanity. She said that before this had happened She always felt confident that when the time came She would be able to find a way to do the work of saving us all. She described to us both how it was only when She gazed inside the collective Sahasrara and saw the twisted and tangled nadis there that revealed all the problems of the human condition, that She realised how hard the job would be, and how complicated, and damaged the human race had become. It was these emotions - this realisation of the huge task that lay ahead - that She saw reflected on Her face in that early photo. There was nothing that either Danya or I could say after this.

All we could do was sit in silence, feeling such profound gratitude for Mother's amazing compassion - Her ability to take on impossible burdens so that all of us could transcend and live better lives.

Caleb Williams

Shri Mataji's legendary Mahamaya quality

In a recent conversation with my sister Danya, we were both marvelling over Mother's extremely sweet and disarming capacity to put us both at ease when we sometimes attended Her house at Brompton Square. For a few years, due to whatever unknown boons from past lives, we were both lucky enough to be regular, and in some periods, almost daily visitors. We were there to do little jobs and generally help out in whatever way was necessary, in other words we leapt at any chance to visit in order to be close to Mother and bask in the beautiful vibrations.

Both of us were students back then, and fairly 'poor'. The normal ritual was to catch the tube across London from Hampstead to Knightsbridge or to South Kensington early in the morning, often struggling mightily to preserve good attention in those crowded, bumpy, rumbling and frequently airless train carriages. Upon arrival we'd stop off to buy some hopefully fresh and fragrant

flowers from florist a few minutes away from Mother's house. Many times we were met at the front door by Mother Herself, beaming benevolently, and, seemingly incredibly surprised and touched we had thought to bring even a single rose.

'What is this? Really! For Me?' She would say, making us feel that She had been offered a magnificently unexpected and highly original gift. 'No, I cannot accept it, you should not have ... you are just a student. Flowers can be very expensive.'

'Please Mother, You must have it, it is for You,' came the timid reply.

'Beautiful, just so beautiful, and so very fragrant,' Mother would say, smiling and inhaling deeply and gathering the small bunch, or perhaps single flower to Her nose.

Hearts and faces melted in such moments. All worries about presenting mankind's Holy Redeemer on earth with an extremely small and humble offering immediately vanished on hearing these extremely gracious words.

In the early period of Brompton Square, when the house was still a building site, and yet to take on the atmosphere of a holy palace in the heart of London, whoever was going to the local 'deli' at lunchtime would ask Mother if they could bring something back for Her. I remember doing this myself.

'Ah, but what will you be having for lunch, Caleb?' Shri Mataji said.

'I will be having a can of Coke and a samoosa, Mother,' I replied.

'Then that is what I would like too!' would be Her reply.

Afterwards we would all sit with Mother sipping from our Coke cans and enjoying a delicious spicy snack in Her company. And somehow Mother would make us all feel utterly at ease and fine about the fact that we had just presented Her lunch to Her, in a humble brown paper bag. This was all part of Her legendary Mahamaya quality, the supreme playfulness and illusion, that allowed us to approach Her with all of our flawed everyday humanity and function - in a relatively uninhibited and reasonably well-coordinated manner - in front of Her. I look back at those times now and marvel at Mother's unlimited grace and compassion to us all.

Caleb Williams



Darwin Court, Regents Park, London

52, Darwin Court, near Regents Park, London

Around late spring/summer 1981, Shri Mataji had a small operation at the London Clinic, at a time when Sir CP had to go overseas because of his work.

Two of us were living in a flat near Regents Park, North London, and it was arranged that Shri Mataji would come there to convalesce after Her operation. We were so truly blessed by this great honour. We had not been there long, and did not even have armchairs or a sofa. We were trying to purchase some chairs when we were informed that Shri Mataji, who knew of our situation, would bring Her own. Just before She arrived, a three piece suite was delivered, belonging to Shri Mataji, which She had used while living in Oxted. This little suite is still in my house.

So Shri Mataji came to stay at 52, Darwin Court, Gloucester Avenue, London NW1. We were instructed by the leader that Shri Mataji should have a complete rest, and on no account should any Sahaja Yogis be allowed to visit Her. That may have been the plan, but it was not to be. Shri Mataji was coming directly from the hospital, and we imagined that She would wish to go to bed immediately. Shri Mataji arrived at the flat, and was followed in by a large group of Sahaja Yogis! She came into the living room, sat down and began to talk to people, discussing various matters, giving advice – just continuing as She did normally.

We asked Shri Mataji if She would like to rest, and She said She would rest later. During all the days of Shri Mataji's stay, She worked constantly. She requested yogis to visit Her all day and every day. Somehow the number of visitors seemed to increase dramatically at meal times, and somehow the food cooked for a smaller number of people was transformed so that everyone was able to have a meal.

Shri Mataji was seeing, advising, working on people endlessly for the whole of Her so-called convalescence. She said that when She was given a general anaesthetic for the operation, She used this as an opportunity to work in the subconscious realm.

One night Shri Mataji asked someone to switch on the television to watch the news. As soon as it was turned on, the film *The Omen* came on. Shri Mataji said enthusiastically that we would watch this instead of the news. I remember sitting at Shri Mataji's Feet, watching this menacing film. Shri Mataji made many comments as gruesome events in the film took place, and She explained that those events could not have really happened, since the negative forces had no control over certain happenings, such as causing a church steeple to fall during a violent storm, in that the negative forces cannot control the elements. It was a memorable, if unusual experience, to be sitting at the Holy Feet of our Mother, watching such a horrible film.

On one occasion, Shri Mataji observed that we had a lot of photos of Her on our rather elaborate altar. She told us that it was better to have just one photo of Her in the room, and to look after that photo.

Patricia Proenza

The deep people

Several moments of those times in the flat with Shri Mataji stand out to me. She must have moved in when I was away because I came home, opened the door and looked down the hall to see Shri Mataji sitting in the lounge room. I think I dropped my bags as I ran down the hall and dived at Her Feet.

'Surprising,' I recall Her saying, and I didn't know whether that was because I had just come from work, or because I appeared so right-sided, 'all your catches are on the left side.'

The other moments were watching TV with her, and Patricia and me in our sleeping bags on the floor in the bedroom with Her talking to us in the dark. She was talking about knowing the deep people.

‘I may never speak to them but I know them because we resonate together,’ She said.

It struck me as such a beautiful and telling thing to say and as She started naming people in the collective who were the ‘deep ones’, we hung out anxiously to hear our names. Feeling our fretfulness, at the end of Her list She said, ‘And of course, you two,’ much to our delight.

Kay McHugh

God is good!

This is a story concerning our dad, who often worked in repertory theatres up and down the country to earn a living. Occasionally a TV part would come his way in helping to pay the bills. Sometimes there was no money at all, and he would help out in my aunt’s restaurant. Then a cheque would arrive in the post as an old TV series he had appeared in had been sold to Japan or similar.

‘God is good!’ was always his stock response when this happened. That is the one phrase I remember him by from my childhood. Years later my mum, Caleb my brother and I were basking in Mother’s love.

‘What about your father? Why doesn’t he come?’ She would ask, in 1981. One day mum said something about him still drinking alcohol and not wanting to come till he could give this up.

‘That is My job! Doesn’t he know? It is My job to wash away all the sins of the seekers from all their lives!’ Shri Mataji answered really emphatically, almost angry, and then, laughing with Her characteristic humour, said, ‘I am the Maha Dhobi!’

However, nothing would convince him to attend the London meetings where She was giving realisation. In a rather indiscreet fashion my brother and I had taken to rolling lemons under his bed, and watering down any alcohol in the house with vibrated water. He later confessed he knew of our tamperings but turned a kindly blind eye.

One day Mother came again to the Friends Meeting House in Hampstead, a meeting we were now helping to run, and he said he was still not ready to meet Her. After Her talk and realisation Shri Mataji was individually working on numerous seekers seated on the floor in a semi-circle in front of Her, with Her ‘Ha! and ‘Hoo!’* taking out negativity with one hand, vibrating sugar with another - Her thousand arms in action. We were gathered around with our backs to the entrance so we didn’t see my dad slip in - of course, She spotted him immediately - with Her thousand eyes. Mother suddenly looked up, as if seeing a familiar face who had just come back from a trip.

‘Ah! How are you now?’ She said. My dad bowed down to Her Feet in answer, She then tenderly took his hand in Her own and said smilingly, ‘God is good!’

Danya Martoglio

The eternal mother

Only Shri Mataji knows the truth! No matter how many blessings, we all fall through the ‘net’ of maya. Years ago, in 1986 a Sahaja Yogi ‘snatched’ on me for doing something. Mother was both cross with that person, and at my darling

mum, such a great seeker and I am ever grateful to her for bringing me to Shri Mataji.

‘Danya would never ..’ my mum piped up to Shri Mataji.

‘I know Danya much better than you!’ Shri Mataji replied, with much kindness to the mother who gave birth to me.

Danya Martoglio

**Ha and Hoo are bija mantras – Ha, for example is the sound of the rising Kundalini.*



Shri Mataji speaking at Hampstead

Brompton Square, 1981

As always, we would work on the house, in this case 48, Brompton Square, London, and Shri Mataji would work on us. I spent a great deal of time stripping white paint off wood panelled doors with a blow torch and then staining them with Peruvian Mahogany wood stainer - a rich brown colour not too far from the colour of Indian people's skin - or the pigment of the indigenous peoples of the Cape in South Africa, places I lived for most of the next twenty years. All the shops selling it in Knightsbridge and Kensington knew me - including Harrods which was nearby, and we cleaned them out of Peruvian Mahogany wood stain.

I also did a fair bit of glazing as there were a lot of doors in the house which were made of small glass panels. Putty, used to attach the glass to the frame, was nice to work with and I shall never forget the smell of linseed oil when Mother showed me how to put it on - which She did perfectly.

Regular contractors couldn't take the vibrations - they usually did crazy things or just ran off. The trick was to do exactly what Shri Mataji asked and not argue with Her, and definitely not say, 'I don't think I can do that'. She tried to get me to do some wallpapering one day - really expensive paper, and I

refused, saying, 'I don't know how, I will just waste it'. Shri Mataji said my problem was I didn't let Her work through me. The person who took over the job when I failed - I think it was Kay McHugh from Australia or maybe Danya Martoglio, just surrendered in their hearts and although they had also never wallpapered before, just said, 'Mother, You are the doer,' and the wallpaper went up fine.

Everything was a mess at Brompton Square, to begin with, one day Shri Mataji was walking round overseeing operations - paint stripping, carpentry, electricity et cetera. Someone had a tape recorder and was playing a sung version of *Ya devi sarva bhuteshu*. Shri Mataji said to turn it off and the person asked if there was something wrong with it. She said there was not, but it caused the vibrations to flow from Her so strongly, and it was too much in among all the building work.

Shri Mataji would appear not to understand something like a complicated point of electricity or plumbing. She would appear to be completely in the dark. Then when whoever it was gave up and said they couldn't do it, She would very sweetly suggest this and that, and whatever it was, She would give the perfect answer.

A lot of people came from all over Europe and England to help at weekends – French, Italians and also some Portuguese. We would send out for chicken takeaways and other good things to eat from The Midnight Shop, owned by an Indian, just down the road.

Kay McHugh was on the Bombay-London route for Qantas and Mother often asked her to bring wooden sculptures and all sorts of amazing things with her on the flight whenever she came through. Kay put them in a cupboard in First Class - much to the surprise of the rest of the cabin crew.

Linda Williams

At Brompton Square

One day Shri Mataji asked me to plaster Her bathroom ceiling in Brompton Square, but She wanted me to leave the door open so She could sit down outside and watch me. I was really trying hard not to let any plaster or water splash on Her while I was doing the work. Some time after She offered me some tea and started to explain to me one of the protocols of tea drinking which was that we should not use the same spoon for stirring the tea as we use for putting the sugar in.

She gave out some presents and when it came to my turn She ran out so I was feeling a little bit disappointed but She said She would get a present for me later. After about a week my ego thought maybe I should ask what happened to the present which I did.

'Don't you feel it?' Shri Mataji replied, meaning some powers had been switched on which I could feel, but I was not putting two and two together. I pulled my ears and said sorry. She smiled.

One evening in Brompton Square we were all sitting around Shri Mataji and She asked somebody to bring a bible and read the chapter from the book of Revelations, about the 144,000 that it says will be saved from the world's population when the last judgement comes along. After the Sahaja Yogi had read it out to Her, She said She thought there would be more than that who would be saved.

Also in the house Shri Mataji asked me to call a Sahaja Yogi. I had to tell Her he had collapsed in bed and was sleeping because he had been working hard. She told me I should wake him up and give him basil leaf tea with honey, and tell him to come and see Her. The Indian version of basil is called tulsi and is regarded as a holy plant.

One day down in the basement in the house a suitcase was found and Shri Mataji asked us to open it up. Inside it was full of shoes and She told us to take a pair each, and said they should be worshiped. When I went to Jamaica in 1999 to give realisation I brought a pair with me and placed them on the Mother Earth there and did a small puja to them.

Once, early in the morning I had to take something to Shri Mataji's room where I could hear a lot of birds outside the window. In those days sometimes She would read our minds and tell us what we were thinking which this time - She did do with me as I was wondering why they were so loud. She told me that in the morning the birds would come and sing to Her.

Derek Ferguson

Working on a cupboard

One of my first times in close proximity to Shri Mataji was when I was invited to go and do some carpentry in Her house in Brompton Square. I was asked to bring some wood to put a floor in a cupboard, so on my way I found something suitable in a skip. I don't know if this was auspicious or not but this was my style at the time. I spent some time in the cupboard cutting and fitting the wood. I had just got to the last piece and decided to try it in the remaining hole and to my amazement it fitted perfectly without being cut. I was just pondering on the event when I became aware that someone was standing in the door of the cupboard. It was Shri Mataji, smiling.

'How's it going?' She asked.

'Very well, thank You,' I stammered.

'You've spent long enough in there,' She said.

We were all invited into Her bedroom to watch a Hindi movie or two. Shri Mataji sat on a sofa in a very relaxed way and gave us a running translation of the movies. I was naturally amazed at how relaxed and informal it all was and spent the next few days with a kind of special glow at having been honoured to have been there.

Chris Marlow

I was enjoying watching you!

When I was a young girl I had the great fortune and blessing of sometimes accompanying Shri Mataji on some of her trips abroad. I also spent some time 'helping' at Brompton Square, Shri Mataji's London residence during the 1980's.

It was a time when those yogis and yoginis with decorating skills were invited to come and work on that elegant Georgian house under the watchful gaze of the Adi Shakti. As She watched teams of yogis scrape off layers of wallpaper going back to before Victorian times it felt that many other layers were being worked on inside us all.

As it was such a wonderful opportunity to be in the presence of our Divine Mother it didn't take long for this young London schoolgirl to swiftly acquire some nifty wallpapering abilities. My first wallpapering task was to wallpaper

the inside of Shri Mataji's sari cupboard in Her bedroom with a beautiful silvery paper with gorgeous white blooms.

Before I began I needed to take out the saris and if I close my eyes I can still see the myriad shades of gorgeous colours and soft subtle silks in hues so vibrated and sparkling with chaitanya that it seemed as if all the colours of the universe were pouring out of the cupboard. And the fragrance – I wish I could conjure that pure fragrance like nothing else on earth and yet very much of the Mother Earth - a divine fragrance that brings tears to the eyes due to its sacredness. No other fragrance in the world compares to the fragrance emitting from Shri Mataji, and Her saris carry a lasting resonance of Her unique perfume.

Thereafter I seemed to find myself at Shri Mataji's house 'helping' every school holidays (and sometimes rather cheekily when I should have been at school). In those days I foolishly imagined that Shri Mataji didn't really 'know' me or hadn't really 'noticed' me in the house amongst the more established yogi workforce. Did She even know my name, I wondered one particular day?

That very day I was given a guest bathroom to wallpaper on the fifth floor of the house. There I was, up a ladder on the top floor of the house wallpapering a bathroom ceiling, very concentrated on what I was doing, when suddenly I started to feel overwhelmed with a warm feeling of love and joy flowing through my body.

As I was balancing on a ladder and focussing entirely on getting the paper aligned I hadn't actually noticed that Shri Mataji had unexpectedly (and very softly and silently) climbed up the five storeys and was in fact standing in the doorway watching me. When I turned I saw the Goddess looking at me with such an expression of such love and compassion I was overcome.

'Hello Danya,' She said simply, with a radiant smile, 'I was just enjoying watching you. I came to tell you that lunch is ready.'

It was only later when replaying the scene of Her overwhelming kindness did I realise that of course Shri Mataji knew my name, and more importantly, She knew me through and through.

Danya Martoglio

A little London sightseeing

When Shri Mataji first bought the Brompton Square house, which was of a late Georgian date, She asked me if I would take Her to my old college, the Courtauld Institute, then at 20, Portman Square. This house is one of the finest examples of Adam interior design in London, and Mother asked me, as an ex-student, if I could make an appointment and show me round. This was done and we went round the rooms with their beautiful décor.

After this Shri Mataji asked me to take Her to an art gallery, so we went to the Wallace Collection, a small gallery nearby. Despite all my knowledge of Western Art History, I couldn't think of much to say. But I felt She was saying that this knowledge and love of art was a good thing.

After that I asked Shri Mataji if I could show Her Queen Mary's Rose Garden in Regents Park. She agreed and we walked around the beautiful roses, all different colours and fragrances - it was a damp day, and after looking at the flowers, which were at their best at that time of year, we went to the cafe in the garden and had a cool drink and cake. I was concerned because the chairs were

a bit wet for Shri Mataji to sit on, although She did not seem to mind. Because of the chancy weather, there were not many people and it was very serene and peaceful.

Linda Williams

A well-known phenomenon

I was with a friend who wasn't a Sahaja Yogi, but he was interested. We'd been out for a pizza in Camden Town in North London and were walking through the back streets, talking about Sahaja Yoga when we suddenly got struck by an incredible smell of roses, very powerful.

'Wow, that is fantastic,' we said, and looked around to see where it was coming from. We looked in the bushes, in the grass and everything around. It wasn't coming from anywhere and suddenly we looked up and realised we were standing right outside Darwin Court, Regent's Park, and at that time Shri Mataji had moved into Darwin Court for a short period of time and She was most probably up there right at that moment.

I told my friend that it was a well-known phenomenon that Shri Mataji's presence was pervaded with the smell of roses. It was a very intense smell and it certainly wasn't coming from anywhere localized.

Chris Marlow

Such grace and subtlety

June 1981 — we were sailing across the Channel towards the French coast, eleven yogis from London travelling to France to the seminar the Parisians had organized. Shri Mataji would be there, too. I spent part of the night chatting with two or three yogis, while the rest of them kept silently together.

'I've been around for seven months now and I don't even know how to balance my right and left channels of energy. These people stick together and don't know how to help others,' I was grumbling to myself.

The following morning, we reached the place of the seminar in a beautiful village outside Paris. About thirty people were there: French, Swiss and English. For each meal, the tables were shaped together as a U and Shri Mataji would take a place at the central table, according to the traditional rules of feasts. Everybody would then sit around Her and all around the tables and I remembered, with emotion in my heart, Christ eating with His disciples. Shri Mataji was so majestic and bringing such justice to Christ.

As usual, I was keeping away from Her. Her sweetness and Her force both combined, intimidated me and, above all, it was not easy to accept that somebody else might have known my hidden being much better than myself, as I was slowly discovering, She could do very well.

In fact, Shri Mataji proved it once more the day after, on Sunday morning. We were all seated around Her in a small room and She was looking around, smiling to the group before starting to speak. Her vivid black eyes were pouring a rain of life, love and well-being. Without doing or saying anything, that invisible rain was already flooding our whole being, binding all of us with a sweet warmth. We remained a few minutes in that exquisite silence, then Shri Mataji asked a straightforward question.

'Well,' She said, 'let's start with practical things today. Suppose you want to balance your right and left channel, how will you do it?'

In a fraction of a second, Her powerful, dark and shining eyes embraced the whole group, looking for an answer, and stopped on me — two huge penetrating eyes questioning me. Shri Mataji lifted Her eyebrows and with a prompt movement of the head asked me, 'Mmh?'

I was seated at the back of the room. My heart jumped into my breast and I blushed violently. Shri Mataji scrutinized me for a few seconds, but what a shower on me! Then She looked away and nobody had been aware of Her play, as everything had been shaken around me at such a speed. When She gave the answer, which was less important to me now than the fact She had heard me a couple of nights before, I was stunned indeed. If She had caught my demand on the boat, that meant She had equally caught my accusations, of which I was not proud now. To be able to satisfy and correct at the same time, to be able to correct without bringing out shame or humiliation in front of others — that, I had never seen. I was full of admiration, facing such grace and subtlety.

Guillemette Metouri

The right colour

In 1981, for Mother's visit to France, we went shopping for material to decorate Her room. By 'chance', the only one in sufficient quantity that fitted our budget was an 'unconventional' deep pink cotton. The yoginis that were with Mother when She first entered the room said that She commented on the beautiful colour.

Natalie Amram

Chapter 6

1981 – Mid Summer



Guru Puja at Chelsham Road, 1981

The perfect answer

There was a puja at Chelsham Road in 1981 with the whole collective well packed sitting crossed legged on the floor. Being that close to Shri Mataji, with everyone in a large room felt like a family gathering. At the end of the puja Shri Mataji allowed some questions and was asked whether there would be a Third World War. She said no. Another yogi asked whether what happened to all the world religions would also happen to Sahaja Yoga in terms of a great deviation from the original teachings. Shri Mataji answered that this time people would be better equipped thanks to vibratory awareness.

Shri Mataji asked ladies not to wear trousers at pujas. Some ladies who did not know about this came in trousers but were asked to keep discreetly at the back. Most ladies would borrow a skirt or sari if they had turned up wearing trousers. We were told that wearing saris at pujas helped the ladies' vibrations. We were also told that a sari was much better than a Punjabi suit for puja.

I asked Shri Mataji about a 'religion' that was founded in Persia in the nineteenth century and has about six million followers. Immediately I felt great heat coming onto me.

'They still smoke and drink don't they?' She asked.

This answer meant a lot to me because my brother was following this and seemed frustrated at not being able to give up tobacco and alcohol. I felt Shri Mataji had tailored the answer to my personal circumstances, which amazed me since I had never mentioned him or introduced him to Her.

Carol Garrido

My headache disappeared

After the Guru Puja at Chelsham Road in 1981, many people including myself had very painful headaches. Shri Mataji told us to go and lie on the earth face down and place our Agnyas on the ground. This was so that Mother Earth could suck out all our problems and clear the Agnya chakra. When I gave a flower to Shri Mataji after the puja and took vibrations from Her Feet, She placed Her right Agnya finger on my Agnya chakra and turned it clockwise. Miraculously my headache disappeared.

Gilly Grimshaw

Look at the flames

In those days, Shri Mataji often used to bless us with Her physical presence when we had a havan. One time, at Chelsham Road, it was a very dark day, with heavy clouds. It was beginning to rain and looked as if it was bound to really pour in a few minutes. Shri Mataji asked us to do a bandhan for it to stop, and when we did, She made the rain hold off until we had finished the havan. Shri Mataji sat at one end of the fire, where nowadays we would have Her photograph.

Shri Mataji told us to take a little of the samigri in our right hand, raise the right hand up the left side and revolve it three times over our heads in a clockwise direction, before offering the samigri, or our pure desire, to the fire, every time a mantra was said. She told us that one should try to look at the flames because this is good for the eyes and absorbs negativity. After the mantras, Shri Mataji would encourage all of us to offer different 'baddhas' or problems to the fire. She also told us havan ash is very good for the Hamsa if you put a bit on your nose between the eyes.

Linda Williams

The numbers of people were ever increasing

Most weekends, Shri Mataji would come to Chelsham Road ashram and we would have a long afternoon talking and working with Shri Mataji and being worked on and the numbers of people were ever increasing. It was always packed on a Sunday afternoon.

Mark Callahan



Puja at Chelsham Road

The foundation stones

‘You are the foundation stones of Sahaja Yoga, but like foundations stones in a building, you will not be seen,’ Shri Mataji said to us at Chelsham Road, when there was a largish group of us there, She explained that the next generation would be the ones who would be seen.

Anonymous

Stop!

One time Shri Mataji came into the meditation room and some people put their hands up with the palms towards Her, as She came in, like the gesture which means ‘Stop!’

Shri Mataji said that was not a good idea, because the deities, who were always with Her although we did not see them, saw this gesture as aggression, and it is not wise to disturb the deities. She showed us how we should do it – hands out with the palms upward in the gesture of humbly asking for Her divine blessings which She gave us all the time.

It was ok when She asked us to put our hands up at a public programme.

Linda Williams

Asanas

I used to practice Hatha Yoga before I came to Sahaja Yoga. Shri Mataji invited me to Her house once to meet a Polish girl, a wife of an Indian diplomat. There were some other Indian ladies in the room also wives of employees from the Indian Embassy in London. They had some health problems and were not seekers. They kept asking Mother for advice and She told me to instruct them about asanas they had to do. She gave me some general guiding information: bending forward asanas are for the left and bending backwards asanas are for the right.

Grazyna Anslow

In the car with Shri Mataji

Shri Mataji was going to Cambridge for a public programme in July 1981. She asked that the Sahaja Yogis who travelled with Her in the car should be able to give directions to the meeting hall. As I used to live in Cambridge I got the privilege of a seat. Although I’d lived in Cambridge the destination was not clear in my memory, and it also appeared to be unclear in the other passengers.

On the motorway we experienced a couple of traffic jams delaying us and we were getting anxious with time. Shri Mataji told us to put our attention ahead of the jam instead of immediately around us. When the road cleared we were already late and had half an hour before the programme started. At this stage we were also lost and none of us knew where we were.

Shri Mataji asked the driver to stop at a garage for directions. As we continued, the directions could not be remembered. At this point, I remember Shri Mataji’s person as extremely big. Our minds were all blank. Shri Mataji took over and suggested we turned at a couple of junctions; then each of us redeemed ourselves, we recognised parts of the road and our memories slowly returned. As the route became clear, Shri Mataji’s person reduced back to the accustomed size.

Ann Lewis

It's very rare that a great scholar should also be a great realised soul

I was a seeker for as long as I can remember. When travelling in India I found some books translated into English by a Cambridge University Professor named Juan Mascaro. These books not only made the most sense to me, but also gave me such joy that I could not put them down. They were the *Dhammapada*, the *Bhagavad Gita* and the *Upanishads*.

About a year after getting self realisation from Shri Mataji in Caxton Hall in London, in October 1979, my wife and I were living in Cambridge and we attended a lecture given by Juan Mascaro. As soon as he walked into the room and began reciting passages from the Gita and Upanishads in Sanskrit, the whole room lit up around him.

When Shri Mataji came to Cambridge some time later for a programme, in June 1981, it was only natural that I would want Mr Mascaro to meet Her, so I arranged a meeting that would occur the day after the programme, at his house. As it turned out an interview for Shri Mataji had been arranged in the morning with a lady from a local BBC studio, and it went on much longer than we had anticipated. Afterwards we got caught in a traffic jam, all of which resulted in Shri Mataji's desiring to have a nap before departing for Norwich, a city some sixty miles northeast of Cambridge, where we had arranged another public programme that evening. Shri Mataji seemed to sleep quite soundly and we knew it was inauspicious to wake Her.

'I slept so soundly, it must be quite late,' Shri Mataji said when She awoke. I replied that it was, and that we would not have time to go see Mr Mascaro. 'Better go and phone him,' She said. I could feel his sadness and disappointment over the phone but we agreed to make it some other time. When I reported back to Shri Mataji, She said 'Well, he is an older man, better phone him again and tell him I will come'. By this time my emotions had gone through the entire spectrum and I reported back to Mr Mascaro. I couldn't tell whose relief and joy was the greater – his or mine!

When we all arrived at his very humble thatched cottage in a small village about ten miles from Cambridge, he was standing in the doorway with a single, beautiful white rose that he had picked from his garden. To our amazement and delight he began to sing the ancient shloka that we Sahaja Yogis were very familiar with, as we used to sing it to Shri Mataji following the aarti at pujas! There were no dry eyes that observed that scene, I can assure you. After presenting Shri Mataji with the rose, he invited Her, then us, inside and what was to follow was even more amazing. The vibrations in the room were so strong that I envisioned the walls of the house collapsing from the power of it. It was as if a long lost son finally had found his Mother.

At this point any hope of getting to Norwich anywhere near the scheduled meeting time was so far out of the question that I almost thought about calling the hall to tell the caretaker to put out a sign saying that the meeting was cancelled. I was resigned to fact that we were going to be very, very late and that if anyone did show up they would have left hours ago. The drive to Norwich was very beautiful but normally it would take between an hour and a half and two hours. In the car, on the way to the meeting Shri Mataji made this statement.

'It's very rare that a great scholar should also be a great realised soul.'

I do not know how long it actually took us to get to Norwich that day, but I do know two things: that the meeting was scheduled to begin at 7 pm and as I opened the door to let Shri Mataji out of the car at the front entrance to the hall, the clock on the church tower across the street began to chime seven times!

‘How many times do I have to tell you people that we are not bound by time?’ joked Shri Mataji.

Jim Thomas



Shri Mataji with Jim Thomas by the River Cam, Cambridge

Shri Mataji spoke in a loud and powerful voice

It was in 1981 and a Sahaja Yogi called John had been practising a type of meditation intensely for about two months before he got his Self Realisation in Cambridge at a Sahaja Yoga programme and was very eager to meet Shri Mataji in person. As luck would have it, She was giving a programme in London only a few days later and my wife Hilary and I accompanied him down on the train.

At the conclusion of Shri Mataji’s talk, as was customary, we began to work on the new people and I was somehow drawn to work on John. He was catching very badly on the left side and the left Vishuddhi was particularly hot. I concluded it was all due to the meditation practice, which was from a false guru, and the mantras he had been saying. He confided in me that he felt it was a very dark practice, and I never did feel his Kundalini had come up fully.

As the programme ended, we began to walk down the long winding staircase and I made some remark about how his experience had been, when I saw to my surprise Shri Mataji walking just behind us, without anyone else within twenty feet of Her, and completely out of earshot of anyone else. She glared at John.

‘What are you doing here? Get outside right now!’ She said in very loud and powerful voice, glaring at John.

The three of us were speechless and stopped on the stairs as Shri Mataji continued on down the stairs, followed by a large contingent of Sahaja Yogis. After Shri Mataji had departed, I looked for John and was embarrassed by what had transpired.

‘Oh, no it’s alright,’ he said, recognising my confusion, ‘actually throughout the entire programme I was painfully aware of a very grotesque goblin sitting on my left shoulder. It was terrible. It stayed there until the very moment Shri Mataji told it to get outside!’

Jim Thomas

Keep the whole house tidy

Shri Mataji once came into my bedroom at Chelsham Road. She was

downstairs in the meditation room, but some tea had spilt on Her sari and She wanted to change it. I had some saris that She had graciously given me, and that I had never worn, so I invited Her up to my bedroom to change. She came up and it was a mess – I hadn't had time to tidy it up as I'd been cooking for the puja and also had to get myself and the children ready. She said we must keep every room in the house tidy when She came, and it was not auspicious to have a room like this even when She was downstairs.

Linda Williams

There are no words

I gave Shri Mataji a card. I wanted to put all I felt in my heart into words on the card to give Her. But I couldn't. There were somehow no words to express these deep feelings She brought out inside me.

'There are no words to express my feelings,' I wrote. When I gave it to Her, She read it and paused.

'That's the best,' She said.

Feelings and true love go beyond words into the realm of the Divine.

Felicity Payment

With all Her Mother's love

We are sitting in front of Shri Mataji in a North London flat. She is reading letters and helping others. We are at Her Feet, maybe three or four feet away, around Her like family. It is very comfortable. However I am feeling somewhat anxious, as was usual at that time. I am aware at a subtle level that somehow She is trying to make me feel better. Suddenly She stops and looks over at me. From Her very depths I felt Her pour Herself into Her words.

'Can you not feel how much how I love you?' She said, with all Her Mother's love, Her arms reached towards me. She wanted to melt all my anxieties with Her great love.

Above all, that is what She came to give us, that sense and feeling of Her great love for us all, Her tremendous joy, Her laughter. With this in our hearts the dams will break and Her love will just flow out and melt all around us. This is the power She has given us, to love all equally as She did and does still.

Felicity Payment

Chapter 7
1981
Brompton Square



48, Brompton Square, Knightsbridge, London
Left - the front door, right – the front hall and stairs

What are those golden builders doing? Where was the burying place

*Of soft Ethinthus? Near Tyburn's fatal Tree? Is that
Mild Zion's hill's most ancient promontory, near mournful
Ever weeping Paddington? Is that Calvary and Golgotha
Becoming a building of pity and compassion? Lo!*

*The stones are pity, and the bricks, well wrought affections
Enamelled with love and kindness, the tiles engraven gold,
Labour of merciful hands: the beams and rafters are
forgiveness:*

*The mortar and cement of the work, tears of honesty: the nails
And the screws & iron braces are well wrought blandishments
And well contrived words, firm fixing, never forgotten,
Always comforting the remembrance: the floors, humility:
The ceilings, devotion: the hearths, thanksgiving,
Prepare the furniture, O Lambeth, in thy pitying looms,
The curtains, woven tears & sighs wrought into lovely forms
For comfort: there the secret furniture of Jerusalem's chamber
Is wrought: Lambeth! The bride, the Lamb's Wife, loveth thee,
Thou art one with her and knowest not of self in thy supreme
joy.*

*Go on, builders, in hope, tho' Jerusalem wanders far away
Without the gates of Los, among the dark Satanic wheels.*

William Blake

Editor's note: This is a passage from the prophetic work Jerusalem, by William Blake, written about two hundred years ago, that concerns Shri Mataji's house at Brompton Square. A lot of the stories about that time, in the early 1980's, when many of us were invited to our Holy Mother's home, can be related to these lines.

The house was totally vibrating

The house at Brompton Square was a great blessing for me and many Sahaja Yogis. That place was a dimension of its own. Once Shri Mataji said to me that every inch of that house was vibrating, every inch of that house where She had been. She had been everywhere in that house. I've been in many of Shri Mataji's houses, but Brompton Square was quite special and as it was quite intimate with Shri Mataji. It was more intimate in those days. I can remember various experiences — not in proper order because time went out of the window there.

One of the early instances was before I could decorate and it was all through Her blessings that it happened, that we learnt to decorate.

John Watkinson

Getting involved with everything

Shri Mataji would get involved with everything. One time a yogi was working with a jack hammer and as I passed by She was watching, I passed by later and She was there discussing the jack hammer with the yogi. The third or fourth time I passed by Shri Mataji was working it. Having seen Shri Mataji involved with so much so often it did not really register what I had witnessed until much later.

Editor's note: a trade description of a jackhammer is 'A powerful pneumatic tool that is used to chisel or hammer away at surfaces. Because of their vibrating motion, jackhammers require special safety considerations.'

John Watkinson

Shri Mataji is the Goddess and everything is possible

Shri Mataji had some external builders coming into the house. There was a small room which was to be a bathroom and the next room behind that was Her bedroom. Shri Mataji wanted this room turned into a bathroom and She wanted a bath in a very specific place. The external builders were determined that there was no way that this bath was going to fit in there and it was impossible to do the plumbing and so on.

'This will work and I want it done like this,' Shri Mataji said.

Eventually, the builders were no longer around and the bath was put in by the Sahaja Yogis and it fitted and worked out exactly as Shri Mataji had desired. This happened again and again. Whenever Shri Mataji had anything to do with the building, She did things which traditional builders will say are impossible, but Mother is the Goddess and they were obviously possible.

Auriol Purdie

Shri Mataji just turned his Agnya

At Brompton Square, someone was putting the staircase in and it just wouldn't fit. It had been cut out and it was a great long staircase and it just wouldn't fit.

'Mother, we just can't get this to fit,' he said. She just turned his Agnya about a quarter and then he put it in and it fitted.

Pamela Bromley

'Prepare the furniture, O Lambeth, in thy pitying looms'

Some of us who lived in one or other of the Lambeth ashrams were making curtains for Shri Mataji's bedroom. I asked if I could bring my sewing machine to the house and sew them on the spot.

'No, you must do them at Lambeth. It is in the poem,' Mother said. She meant the part about Brompton Square by William Blake, where there is a bit about preparing the furniture in Lambeth, at the Nightingale Lane and Chelsham Road ashrams.

'Prepare the furniture O LambethThe curtains... wrought into lovely forms.... For comfort.'

Linda Williams

The way you should do things

We were working at Brompton Square, doing some wallpaper downstairs. Shri Mataji didn't come out from Her room because when She came out from Her room everybody just stopped working. We would stand up and put our hands out to Her. I was new in Sahaja Yoga and I didn't know anything. So I was doing the wallpapering, working really fast and I saw Shri Mataji coming, but I just looked at Her and carried on.

'See, this is the way you should do things,' She said. At that moment, I stopped because I thought She was correcting me, but, in fact, She was saying how we should do the work.

Antonio Scialo

Brompton Square stories

One day in Brompton Square a Sahaja Yogi came up to Shri Mataji with a bag of lemons and chillies and ask Her to vibrate them because he was getting lots of bad dreams. She told him that you don't have to dream but if you dream of Her it is ok.

A leader asked how should we view Her and She told him it should be with awe.

While we were working on the house I noticed that my body was starting to swell up with too many vibrations. Shri Mataji called me soon after and told me that we needed to go to a meeting to get rid of the vibrations because were taking them from Her but not exchanging them with other people. However, because we were working till ten at night sometimes, that was not an easy solution. It came to my mind that in the morning before leaving for work from the hotel at Brahman Gardens we could just check each other's vibrations, which we did and that solved the problem Shri Mataji never brought the subject up again while were there.

One day in the living room of Bramham Gardens She told us that She wanted us to try something new, which was to get up at 4 o'clock in the morning to do morning meditation. There was a sharp intake of breath. Shri Mataji told us that at that time She give out vibrations to all those rishis, saints and real gurus all over the world that were meditating, so if we did the same it would help Her, so we started a new era. In the beginning it was hard but we got used to it.

Once, at the bottom of the stairs by the entrance I was looking at Shri Mataji as She was going to go up the staircase. I then turned around to look at something and when I turned back She was already at the top of the stairs, which was impossible to achieve in those few seconds. She read my mind and told me that Shri Hanuman carried Her.

Derek Ferguson

Sharing wisdom

In Bramham Gardens, while waiting for Her house at Brompton Square to be ready Shri Mataji told us that not everyone could be there with us then, and that we had to share what we got with others, meaning we had to tell other people what She told us when we were with Her.

Derek Ferguson

You should have told Me

Shri Mataji wanted to make a small shrine to Shri Ganesha at Brompton Square, just inside the front door on the left. However, to do this involved hinging the door on the other side, which meant that the door would bang into a large radiator on the right. We rehung the door and patched in the old hinge pockets with car body filler. Shri Mataji came down the stairs and asked if anyone else could smell gas. We said no, but She went round all the gas fires, trying to find the leak. Eventually, someone said that maybe it was the filler I was using, which Shri Mataji declared it was. I took the hint and never used it in Her houses again.

Now we came to the problem of the radiator. I had noticed that there was a large piece of wall outside Shri Mataji's bedroom with a small radiator on it and I wondered about swapping that with the one by the front door, but I knew not to make suggestions to Shri Mataji. So when Pat Anslow and I were there with Her looking at the problem, I didn't say anything. Finally, She turned to me with a very knowing twinkle in Her eye.

'Maybe we could change it with the small radiator outside My bedroom. What do you think?' She said. I stammered that it sounded like a very good idea. Pat and I drained down the big radiator by the front door and carried it towards the bedroom, which involved going down two or three steps. There was still some sludgy water in the bottom of the radiator and, as we tipped it, going down the steps, the black sludge splurged onto the nice pink carpet. We groaned and started trying to clean it up with that terrible sinking feeling of having done something really stupid. A few minutes later, Shri Mataji came out of Her bedroom and saw us.

'You should have told Me,' She said and went into the bedroom to fetch a large canister of talcum powder and an old sari and showed us how to clean off the dirt from the carpet by putting talcum powder on the sludge, then covering it with a sari. She told us to leave it till the next day when it would Hoover up. When we vacuumed it the next morning, the stain had disappeared without a trace. We were very relieved and grateful to Her.

Chris Marlow

The yogis were eager to give Shri Mataji what She liked

Shri Mataji once mentioned that She liked sausages. Just down the road there was a takeaway shop that was open very late, called the Midnight Shop, which sold cooked sausages, so Shri Mataji had an endless supply of sausages, from yogis all eager to please Her giving Her something She liked.

Editor's note: we also ate a lot of take away roasted chicken and chips from the same shop, and it was an honour to buy Shri Mataji's portion. We took it in turns, and sometimes Shri Mataji insisted on doing the honours.

Anonymous

Sausages

Shri Mataji would come to the house every day, with Her camel coloured coat and headscarf and in between going all over the house, She would sit on a chair in one room. I can remember the absolute delight of being able to nip off to The Midnight Shop to buy Her some sausages, which She seemed to enjoy, but I think it was mainly to make whoever got the chance to buy them for Her happy.

John Watkinson

Those beautiful white saris

All those beautiful white saris that Shri Mataji used to wear, those beautiful white saris with the red borders that She used to wear at programmes, She gave a whole heap to me.

‘Cut these up and we will make curtains out of them,’ She said. I got the scissors and I couldn’t do it. I couldn’t physically cut these saris. I thought, ‘What am I going to do? I can’t disobey Mother, but I just can’t cut these saris up.’

‘I’m sorry, I just can’t cut them up,’ I said.

‘Doesn’t matter, we’ll use something else,’ She said, as if to say it is no big deal at all.

Pamela Bromley

Editor’s note: One time Shri Mataji explained that She wore these colours at the public programmes because white represented Shri Adi Guru, and red Shri Maha Kali, for destroying negativity.

They were really great days

In the early days, Shri Mataji had a special sari that She would wear just for working on the house. She would get involved with everything — the filling of holes in the walls and everything. All kinds of people would go there and sometimes the filling of holes wasn’t good.

‘Who did this?’ She would say, then She would show people how to do things. There was a spot on the wall outside the front of the house that Shri Mataji filled and it was incredible watching Her doing it. That part was as smooth as glass and nobody could get it that smooth. Shri Mataji would be there, staining the furniture - everything. She would be wearing the same shoes and sari and a headscarf and we would have a chair there for Her and a table. Sometimes Shri Mataji would sit there, with all this work going on and all kinds of people doing the work. They were really great days.

John Watkinson

‘The ceilings, devotion’

One day Shri Mataji decided to change the colour of Her bedroom ceiling. Shri Mataji wanted me to paint the ceiling not only with all of Her furniture in it, not only all of Her beautiful ornaments but with Shri Mataji in the room also. So I went into Her room with a ladder, paint, paint brush and a plastic sheet. I looked up at the ceiling and began to think where I should start, as the idea of painting the ceiling with everything in the room and Shri Mataji was to say the least out of the ordinary. I tried to work out where to put the plastic sheet in case paint dripped down. I was quite worried about getting the paint on the

furniture or on Shri Mataji Herself and in my brain I was projecting/working out where the paint could fall, and my brain went out of control.

‘Oh my god what am I thinking?’ I thought. Then Shri Mataji looked at me and asked what I was doing to which I replied that I was trying to work out where to start.

‘You can start there, you can start over there or you can start there, just start!’ Shri Mataji said

So I just started, I painted all of the ceiling and of course I did not get paint on anything. An unforgettable experience, but with many experiences like this one knows that it happened but part of one’s brain asks, ‘Did that really happen?’

John Watkinson

‘Go on, builders, in hope’

Many nights we would spend up all night, working around the clock. We wouldn’t get tired. The vibrations were so great and we were all in heaven with our Mother. It was our conditioning that would pull us down to reality and cause us to go home and sleep.

Then we’d be back as soon as we could, never wanting to ever be away from our Mother’s presence.

Rosie Lyons

How Shri Mataji nurtured us all!

Shri Mataji’s houses were always so special. She would buy some dilapidated piece of property and turn it into a royal abode. Brompton Square epitomised the fruits of Her creativity. It was situated in a square of old Georgian houses facing a small collective garden in a pleasant part of London. The houses were nothing special: tall, four storeys high, and typical of that era, but after the collective efforts of the Sahaja Yogis under Shri Mataji’s tutelage and vision, it was transformed inside into a place of beauty.

Many yogis learnt a trade there, under Her guidance. One became a maker of ornate plaster cornices and ceiling decorations, another a decorative tiler. Being the source of all knowledge, there was no craft that the Devi could not teach to us. I remember the mirrored dining room ceiling, the wonderful plumed birds on the soft velvety golden bedroom wallpaper and the delicately ornate plaster cornice moldings going up the staircase.

Felicity Payment

To share the joy of the moment

I came to visit and work at Shri Mataji’s house in Brompton Square. Mother passed by and asked what I was doing. I replied, with a big smile on my face, that I was painting the skirting board, and She just smiled and laughed, as if to just share the joy of the moment!

Colin Heinsen

‘.....there the secret furniture of Jerusalem’s chamber.... Is wrought’

One of my first times of close proximity to Shri Mataji was when I was invited to go and do some carpentry in Her house in Brompton Square. I was asked to bring some wood to put a floor in a cupboard. I spent some time in the cupboard cutting and fitting the wood. I got to the last piece and decided to try

it in the remaining hole and to my amazement it fitted perfectly without being cut. I was just pondering on this when I became aware that someone was standing looking at me. It was Shri Mataji, smiling.

‘How’s it going?’ She asked.

‘Very well, thank You,’ I stammered.

‘You’ve spent long enough in there,’ She said and we were all invited into Her bedroom to watch a Hindi movie or two. Shri Mataji sat on a sofa in a very relaxed way with Her husband. She gave us a running translation of the movies. I was naturally amazed at how relaxed and informal it all was and spent the next few days with a kind of special glow at having been honoured to have been there.

Chris Marlow

‘the nails

*And the screws & iron braces are well wrought blandishments
And well contrived words, firm fixing, never forgotten,
Always comforting the remembrance’*

I’d been knocking a nail in the wall and I missed the nail and hit my thumb. Shri Mataji spent about ten minutes holding it because it hurt so badly. You’d be sitting there and She’d be holding your thumb and She’d be giving people instructions on how to paint the ceiling and She was in the room. Shri Mataji would come around all the parts of the house, giving instructions in doing a better job.

Malcolm Murdoch

I want to understand You

‘I want to understand You,’ I said to Mother.

‘You never will.’

I guess really because what understanding means is intellectual. Understanding means to understand mentally. As we all realise She’s totally incomprehensible.

Malcolm Murdoch

‘...the beams and rafters are forgiveness’

When we worked in Shri Mataji’s house quite a few things happened in the house itself. One day She gave me a box of wallpaper and asked me to line two open shelves for ornaments. One shelf was easily completed with a roll of paper. Then I looked in the box and found just a few scraps of paper.

‘Sorry, I don’t think there’s enough paper,’ I went to Shri Mataji and said. She told me to go back and try, so I went and, after a long time of total patchwork, the papering was complete and I had the smallest piece of paper left. It all exactly fit. I was amazed. When I stood back from the shelf, I couldn’t believe my eyes. They looked the same, yet one was completely patched.

I felt Shri Mother was showing me that some souls come into Sahaja Yoga so pure without much blemish and some come with holes and need patching. Once the love and vibrations permeate their beings, they are as beautiful as the other. Everything is possible with Mother’s love.

Rosie Lyons

Like a power station

Once I went to the airport to meet Shri Mataji.

‘How are you?’ She asked me.

‘Very well, Mother, thank You,’ I said.

Shri Mataji stood in the middle of the passageway and we were giving Her flowers and suddenly She was the only one who existed. All life and all power generated inside Her and neither the flowers, nor us, nor the houses had any life. Everything around was like cartoon cutouts. Shri Mataji was like this power station, containing incredible energy and She looked huge. I kept standing there with my mouth wide open, not able to communicate to anyone what I had just seen.

Grazyna Anslow

I was there with you all along

There was a lot of turmoil in my life, and Mother suggested that I write a letter to Her about it. I did so and She read the letter.

‘Now, go and get a pen and paper.’ She dictated things to me, things I would never mention, but true things.

Mother was telling me, ‘I am with you. I know what you are going through. I know what you have to bear. I was there with you all along in every moment, every thought. I’m always there. There are no secrets from Me.’

Our Mother is Shri Adi Shakti.

Rosie Lyons

A feast of ideas

After Shri Mataji bought the Brompton Square house the Sahaja Yogis spent a lot of time there, working on it. This was our first big collective project and after it was finished we realised we had grown as a collective and changed for the better as individuals.

The work on the house was a feast of ideas just taking shape and then being changed, rearranged and developed. Shri Mataji was with us and listening to Her, dining with Her and watching Her amazing spontaneous interior design skills was breathtaking. Everybody had a go, whether they knew building work or not. The house was not huge but Shri Mataji created an optical illusion of space by using mirrors and mirror tiles. Everything in the house was beautiful and rich in design. It became almost like a Sahaja Yoga centre; we used to visit the house all the time.

Once, someone brought in a tramp who wanted to meet Shri Mataji. Mother was overjoyed. She asked for a table to be set for two and had lunch with him. She said that he was born realised.

Grazyna Anslow

He was like a tramp but Shri Mataji insisted on seeing him; She said She was his last refuge.

Derek Ferguson

***‘Well contrived words, firm fixing, never forgotten,
Always comforting the remembrance’***

Someone told me that Shri Mataji had just bought a house in Brompton Square and there was a lot of work needed, and this would help one clear too.

So I went there and rang the door bell, and was asked to go to Shri Mataji to ask Her if I could work in Her house.

‘You are not needed here,’ She said.

I narrated a story of Guru Nanak, (the guru of the Sikhs, and I came from a Sikh background) where He says that the purpose of life is to achieve self realisation and you can only get that from a true master. In a subtle way he also said it is only Shri Mataji, the Mother of the universe, one who can give spontaneous self realisation. He said that once you do find the true master you should serve that master.

‘This is what Guru Nanak said, and that is why I have come to You,’ I said. Shri Mataji completely changed and became motherly towards me. I was happy to do anything because I had found my guru as my Mother.

‘Son, you can start the work,’ She said. I did exactly what She asked me to do.

‘Mother can I come tomorrow?’ I used to ask Her every day.

‘Yes, you can come tomorrow,’ She would say. She was working for months in Her house. I kept going, just to be near Her. She was very happy, seeing me do the work and I was happy to do the work for Her.

Shri Mataji would ask me to sit near Her when She went to sleep, and She said She was going in to my past; She would take me into a stillness and thoughtlessness. I was only aware that I was sitting in front of Her, and She showed me many other things as well on a spiritual level, that She is the greatest of all, the cause of all. Sometimes She would ask me to rub Her Feet and the cool breeze of the Holy Ghost came to me like a very strong wind and made me thoughtless. When I worked in Shri Mataji’s house I used to take one flower every day and Shri Mataji was very happy to receive it.

Joga Singh

‘What are those golden builders doing?’

Our life at that particular time used to consist of getting up, going to do a full day’s work, coming home, getting changed and going round to Mother’s house to continue the building work in the evenings. Of course, that would continue over our weekends.

Malcolm Murdoch

Editor’s note: This was the origin of the name of the Sahaja building firm, the Golden Builders.

***‘The stones are pity, and the bricks, well wrought affections
Enamelled with love and kindness’***

There were a good number of us working there, mostly from England. We would have meetings and discussions throughout the day with Shri Mataji and She would preside over all the activities in the house, as a sort of Artistic Director and Clerk of Works.

It was a very intimate and enjoyable time with a great deal of work — everything from structural renovations and installations of central heating through to the carpeting and decoration and furnishing. The whole thing took many, many months and sometimes there were about twenty people working in one room, quite late at night. Another time I worked alone. There was great camaraderie and enjoyment.

Shri Mataji was working out problems through the people who were working there. By working with us and on us, She was clearing out much wider collective problems and being in the frontline could be quite an intense experience. Personally, I found I had some difficulty in the early stages, as Shri Mataji tried to impress upon me the importance of working faster, as that was my particular problem. Later on, I improved both in terms of speed and quality.

Mark Callahan

*‘...the tiles engraven gold,
Labour of merciful hands’*

There was a lot of work going on; cornices were made out of plaster of Paris moulds, which were then placed at the edges of the ceilings. Then we painted them with gold leaf. I had to go to Harrods to fetch gold leaf paint quite a lot. I did very basic things, like stripping down the wood and painting it with a wood stain of reddy-brown colour. I did lots and lots of painting and scraping. I painted the ceiling of Shri Mataji’s bedroom. I think the shade was called Almond White.

Gail Pottinger

I am in you and you are in Me

One day I turned up and we came in the front entrance of Brompton Square, not down in the basement, which was where we often went in. There were three of us there. It was in the early stages when the walls were being knocked down and there was a lot of dirt. I had quite a bad blocked nose from all the dust.

As we arrived in the front entrance, there was Shri Mataji and we gave Her flowers. She took my flower and smelled it and said, ‘Mmn!’ Then She offered it to me and I also smelled it.

‘I can’t smell anything, Mother. My nose is blocked,’ I said. She took it back to Herself and started smelling it again and again and then I could really smell the fragrance, as if She was showing me, ‘I am in you and you are in Me.

The others were standing watching.

‘I can smell it now,’ they said, and everyone was laughing.

John Watkinson

Chapter 8
1981 – July and August
Brighton, Dorset and Weddings

Going to the game park

In the summer of 1981, in about June, Shri Mataji took Her grandchildren, and also my two, to a game park near London. We had a picnic lunch and it was a wonderful day. As we were driving around the park and looking at the animals, we were going past some giraffes, which were not too close, and as we drove past they turned their backs to us. Mother explained that the animals felt the vibrations as a cool wind, and in the way of animals, turned their backs to shield themselves from the cold. Mother explained that animals are one with the universal consciousness, whereas unrealised humans are split off from it.

Mother also said that when She first married, they went to Her husband's family palace. The family owned some elephants, and in India that was not unusual at the time. But what was very unusual was that when they saw Mother, they all knelt down in obeisance to Her, in recognition.

The other thing I remember about the visit to the game park was that we were passing some monkeys on a rock, and they were all preening each other. They sat looking at us, and I laughed because they looked quite funny.

'You were all like that, (were monkeys) not so long ago,' Mother said. That put me in my place!

Linda Williams

A spiritual experience

Amjad Ali Khan was giving a concert of Indian classical music at the Commonwealth Institute, London, in 1981. He was a sarod player of some repute and being a public performance, the concert had started at the allotted time, but Shri Mataji had not arrived. His playing was superb, and during his performance Shri Mataji entered with Her husband. Amjad respectfully acknowledged Her arrival by rising slightly and bowing to Her.

After that, his performance went through the roof and took you to another level altogether. It was a spiritual experience. Afterwards he apparently acknowledged the difference in his performance after She had arrived.

Kay McHugh



Shri Mataji at a concert at the Commonwealth Institute in 1981

With Her family and some Sahaja Yogis

It just sort of takes place

I remember going to concerts with Shri Mataji in the early days. I went to a couple of concerts with Amjad Ali Khan in the Commonwealth Institute in London in 1981. He was always very respectful, and would always bow to Shri Mataji and tell Her what a great honour it was to be playing in Her presence.

I had also sung a few songs there. I would get up on the stage, and it would be like driving Shri Mataji, because when driving Her you feel you are about six feet up in the air and completely witnessing what is happening. It's just happening and you are not doing anything, and singing to Shri Mataji is much the same. You are on the stage: you've been nervous before, but once you're there, you are just enveloped in a nice little cocoon of vibrations.

Chris Marlow

A visit to Brighton

Shri Mataji visited Brighton with Her daughter Sadhana Didi, and Her grandchildren Sonu and Anand, and stayed with Pamela Bromley in Brighton, in July 1981. Brighton is a seaside town in the south of England.



Left: Shri Mataji sitting on the beach with some members of Her family and some Sahaja Yogis. Right: Shri Mataji on the Lower Promenade, above the beach.



**Left: Shri Mataji before the public programme
Right: Shri Mataji speaking at the public programme**

.



Shri Mataji at the Amusement Arcade with Her family and the Sahaja Yogis, and giving candy floss to Her granddaughter.



Shri Mataji speaking to Sahaja Yogis in Pamela's house

We went to the beach

One morning we went down to the beach in Brighton. Mother sat on the pebbles and we all sat around Her and some of us foot soaked in the sea.

Kay O'Connell

Mother was just so motherly

When Shri Mataji was at my house in Brighton, She used to sit in the big high bed and all the yoginis could sit round.

We went shopping with Her in Brighton, to an Italian ceramics shop and Mother was looking in there.

'I've got a weakness for china,' She said. I went with Mother to The Lanes, a really smart part of Brighton. Mother bought many things and someone else collected them. Mother was just so motherly.

She was just so wonderful, wasn't She?

Pamela Bromley



Shri Mataji visiting Pamela's shop in Brighton



Shri Mataji giving vibrations to a policeman in Pamela's house

The most exquisite tea sets

One evening a group of us were walking with Mother through the Brighton Lanes and looking in the shops. Mother stopped at a shop selling Italian china and pottery then told us that She had 'a weakness' for tea sets and pottery. I remember thinking, 'How can the Goddess have a weakness?'

Some time later I was at Brompton Square and there was a little room full of the most exquisite tea sets from all over the world. They were so lovely to look at and it made me smile thinking of how Mother enjoyed the maya.

Kay O'Connell

Just like a mother

There was a squat across the road from Pamela's house and the young people living there came to meet Shri Mataji, who took great interest in them all. She spoke to them about the things that concerned them, just like a mother would but was also telling them that there was something greater.

Later that year we held two meetings in another squat with some of the same people and even though they weren't ready to be yogis themselves they had respect for Shri Mataji and Her message.

Kay O'Connell

Editor's note: a squat is a house or flat where people live temporarily, without paying rent.

A puja in the garden

In 1981 there was a puja with Shri Mataji in the garden of my flat in Hove. Afterwards Mother sat in my bedroom. All the yogis squeezed into the room and She chatted to us about India. She then vibrated all my photographs of Her. As She was going down the stairs to leave I went before Her to make sure that the carpet on the stairs was secure. She laughed and asked what I was doing. I told Her that I was concerned that She did not fall.

‘There’s nothing you can do about it. If I’m meant to fall, I’ll fall,’ She said.

Gilly Grimshaw



Puja in Brighton 1981

Shri Mataji’s attention was always on current affairs

It was August 1981, and we had not had a seminar for some time. Every couple of months when we had a seminar, it really helped bring everyone together and get the vibrations going. My parents were going away from their house in the country for two weeks. I had known, ever since I got realisation, that this would be the perfect place to have a seminar, but my parents weren’t supportive of Sahaja Yoga and I was really hesitant. However, after a very thoughtless meditation I felt we should just do it, so we started to organize for a seminar in Dorset.

I wanted to give an invitation to Shri Mataji because it was protocol to do so, and to ask Her if we could have a puja there in Her presence. The only day I could go was the next Sunday, which was Princess Diana’s wedding day, and everybody was at home watching it on the TV, and I also wanted to watch it. She was very loved by everyone, but I thought, ‘No, I have to go to see Shri Mataji.’ The streets were deserted and I went to Shri Mataji’s apartment at Ashley Gardens. I was very nervous about giving this invitation and met Alan Richards in the lobby, which was perfect timing.

‘Maybe *you* could give the invitation to Shri Mataji,’ I said.

‘No, you must come up with me,’ he replied. So we went up in the lift and knocked on the door, and Shri Mataji opened it.

‘Come in, come in,’ She said. ‘We’re just watching the television.’

Princess Diana and Prince Charles were going through the streets, so we sat down and watched the whole procession and ceremony with Shri Mataji, just as if we were all family, in a very relaxed way. It was very interesting to see how Shri Mataji’s attention was always on current affairs, what was going on at the time. She watched the TV and read the newspapers.

I gave Shri Mataji the invitation and She said that She would be happy to come.

Felicity Payment

What beautiful flowers

We started the weekend from the Friday night. People brought tents to camp in the backyard and a lot of people slept in the big empty mill room and it felt really special because we were right in the heart of England, in Dorset.

‘Shri Mataji, could we call the seminar *Keeping your heart open?*’ I had asked when I gave the invitation, because we would go to the meetings, we would see Shri Mataji and our hearts would open and then they would close over again and I felt, ‘How to keep the heart open so that always the vibrations are flowing?’

Once I had decided that it was the right thing to have the seminar at my parents’ place, I felt confident, that I could deal with whatever happened with my parents afterwards, and then everything just worked out. About seventy people came from all over England. It was very joyful, greeting everyone as they came.

Shri Mataji came on the train on Sunday morning and we were going to greet Her at the station. Suddenly I realised that I hadn’t got any flowers for Her and it was Sunday. All the stores were closed in the countryside. I tried to raid the flowerbeds by the house but there was only one rose and two other little flowers so I arrived at the station feeling very impoverished. I wanted something to make more of a bouquet, and growing alongside the station wall were some little yellow wild flowers, and I thought, ‘This could be nice.’ I asked the stationmaster’s wife if I could pick them.

‘Oh, yes. They’re just weeds,’ she said, so I picked the flowers and made a bouquet. Shri Mataji always knows what’s in your heart and She knew what had lead up to this.

‘What beautiful flowers. Where did you get these ones from?’ She said, when I gave the wild flowers to Her, ‘They are so fragrant.’

‘I got them from here. The stationmaster said they’re just weeds.’

Felicity Payment

‘You see today she brought some flowers. There were some supposed to be weeds according to her. She went to the station and there she was taking some flowers out and the stationmaster and his wife were very sweet. They said, ‘Go ahead. They are only weeds. You can have them.’ And they are so fragrant — one of the most fragrant flowers I have ever seen. They are just weeds. They do not conform to any formal flowers or anything, but just a few flowers attached to other flowers were most fragrant.

Love gives all the sophistication and the fragrance and the breeding which is required. Not talking of love, but really loving is the way. It’s most enjoyable.’

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi (Extract from puja Open Your Heart 1981 talk)

Shri Mataji was breaking our conditionings, that some flowers are just weeds. But wildflowers are still flowers. We took Shri Mataji back to the house in the car. Everybody was waiting for Her and stood to sing a beautiful song as She came in and sat down in Her chair at the end of the big long room, an old mill room, with all the yogis in front of Her. We did the puja. It was very special

and I was always very thankful to be at a puja with Shri Mataji, because we always felt so much better afterwards, and She worked on all of us in such a deep way.

Felicity Payment



Shri Mataji with some children at the Dorset seminar

Tea in the garden

Shri Mataji sat outside in the garden and had tea and we all sat round, very informally and She'd just start talking to us of interesting subjects, often seeking subjects.

Ray Harris

Shri Mataji sat and had tea with us in the garden — the mother drinking tea with Her children. It was very relaxed and She was so motherly. At times, Mother would be fierce, like when you've got naughty children or children who don't seem to understand what they're doing and you're trying to get them on the right path and explain things to them. But, at other times, it was so nice just to be able to sit with Her as She was drinking tea or talking about ordinary things.

Felicity Payment

Shri Mataji says thank you

We had a beautiful puja and then afterwards we sang William Blake's Jerusalem, '*And did those Feet in ancient time.*' There we were amongst the green hills of England and this was so many years ago, seventy of us. That's all the yogis there were in England.

'This is the song you should sing,' She said, and we sang about building the New Jerusalem '*amongst these dark satanic mills,*' which William Blake wrote about all those years ago. It felt like we were at the beginning of something special, like you were building. We felt important, that it was important to be there, meditating and working it out.

Someone brought a piece of green muslin material and everybody embroidered a little flower on it, as if we were all the flowers on the green of England, and we offered this after the puja to Shri Mataji as a gift. Shri Mataji put it on and said it was like the green hills of England. There was even a green towel which someone had provided. Mother's Feet were on the green towel and the vibrations from this — the puja photo that Ray took from this puja was very strong, very beautiful vibrations.

After the seminar Shri Mataji left for Bristol. I stayed behind to clean up, and I got a phone call from a Sahaja Yogi who had been travelling with Shri Mataji.

'Shri Mataji says thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you again and again.' She was very over-exuberant with all these thank-you's for the seminar and I wondered why.

A few days later my parents returned and heard from the neighbours that we had had 'a bit of a do' while they were away. I got an ominous phone call to meet with them and I realised what the thank-you's were all about. By thanking me, Shri Mataji gave me the courage to face my parents, and of course it all just worked out beautifully. When you work for Shri Mataji with a sincere, pure heart, you are always taken care of. On a vibrational level, really something opened and worked out for us in England.

Shri Mataji had shown us each other as She saw us, not the outside weedy appearance, but the beautiful flower that always lies within. She was always trying to make us see that we were truly beautiful.

Felicity Payment



The puja at the 'Keeping your Heart Open' seminar

Shri Mataji gave a complete architectural explanation

We were standing with Shri Mataji in the nave of a beautiful 13th century limestone abbey in Sherbourne, Dorset, England. We had just had the puja the day before at Mill Farm, Yetminster, and as was Her custom, Shri Mataji was

visiting the local area to spread vibrations everywhere. She looked way up at the stone ceiling full of vaulted buttresses.

‘How do you think they made those arches?’ She said, gesturing with Her hand, as if wondering to Herself, yet asking us. I was clutching a guidebook and started flipping through the pages.

‘Maybe it will tell us in here,’ I replied, but before I could find anything, Shri Mataji gave a complete architectural explanation. Later Djamel said that he once had a conversation with Shri Mataji about aerodynamics and She had talked with him about very technical aerodynamic concepts.

It was this incident that made me realise that Shri Mataji is the pure source of all knowledge. She knows everything about everything.

Felicity Payment



The vaulting of Sherbourne Abbey

Reading the Bible to Shri Mataji

We were at the seminar in the summer of 1981, in Wiltshire, at Felicity’s house, but I cannot recall which part of the Bible I read. However, it was in one of the rooms with the women. Shri Mataji asked a couple of us to read the Bible out loud to Her. When it was my turn, I remembered Her asking me about four times to slow down my speech to a point where I felt I was talking painfully slowly. This experience has taught me considerably with my attention and communication.

Ann Lewis

The seminar in Dorset - Open your Hearts

In August 1981, we went to Felicity Payment’s house in Dorset, to a seminar in the countryside. Shri Mataji went on the train, and told people not to go on that train with Her – unless She had asked them to. However, two Sahaja Yogis did try. They went to the station to find Mother, both on the platform and they walked right up and down the train looking in all the compartments, but they could not see Her. When we all got to Felicity’s, Mother said to the two of them that they would never find Her if She did not want them to – and I remember one sentence She said as to why: ‘...because this is a being of a totally different order.’

We had a lovely weekend and various things happened, but there was one which was connected with shopping. Mother had gone to the local town, Winchester. There was a clock in an antique shop which She saw and was

interested in. She went in and bought it, and the shop owner said it had been in the window for a very long time. Shri Mataji explained She could work on every person who had looked at the clock as they passed up the street, and that was why it was a good thing for Her to buy.

She had me rub Her Feet in the night after the puja for hours. Whenever I thought She had gone to sleep and I stopped a bit, She would jerk Her toe to indicate I should go on. She never really slept.

At the puja we did not have a sari to offer but I had bought some green material and edged it with white lace and got everyone at the seminar, including the men, to sew a flower on. Then I sewed a green stem and leaves to tie them all up together like creeper all over it. Shri Mataji wore it like a veil over Her head in the puja.

Linda Williams

A tide in the affairs of men

Shri Mataji came to our house in Bristol again, in early August, 1981. Shri Mataji took me aside and talked to me. It was my choice, of course, but there was a tide in the affairs of men - She used that phrase of Shakespeare's - and for me that tide had come. Shakespeare, She said, had been almost too aloof. Much though She respected him, his heart had not been as warm as William Blake's, nor had he felt as much concern for the totality. Perhaps in a previous life he had spent a long time on a mountain top - and so, maybe, had I. Now it was time to come down off the mountain. To marry Ruth was the right thing to do, absolutely. So, I said: yes.

One week later we were married.

Chris Greaves

The woman who came to say hello

In the summer of 1981, Shri Mataji visited Bristol for a second time. She was sitting talking in my room when the woman from the flat downstairs came up to say hello to Her. She was a nice young woman, a decent person though very reserved and spinsterish and somehow 'old before her time', and she was always suffering from a bad back. She wasn't exactly a seeker, but she had let us use her room on Mother's previous visit and was clearly curious. She sat on the floor at Mother's Feet, clearly in pain. Shri Mataji was very compassionate.

'How could they do this to this sweet girl?' She asked, referring to the negative forces. Shri Mataji said the acupuncture the woman had had for her back hadn't helped at all. Privately, She told my wife that this woman had stomach cancer, but not to do anything about it: She would try to work it out. Of course, we didn't mention any of this to her. Some time afterwards we heard she had had a dream in which Mother took something out of her stomach.

Chris Greaves

Basmati rice

Every time Shri Mataji came to Bristol, in the early eighties, I had the honour of cooking for Her. The first time She came She talked to me about what I had cooked and the ingredients I'd used. She was very complimentary but said that the best rice to use was Basmati - I had used ordinary long grain Patna rice. So, the next year when She visited I used Basmati. However, the third time She came to the Old Vicarage in Montpelier, where we had a flat, somehow in the

rush of preparing everything we had only managed to get Patna rice. At least, it came out of a big sack in our local shop and was sold to us as the much cheaper Patna rice. They didn't have any Basmati.

Shri Mataji had been served Her food and I was in the kitchen. I started worrying.

'Mother said I should use Basmati and I didn't get it,' I said to a Sahaja Yogini there at the time. At this moment someone came into the kitchen and said that Mother was asking for me, so I went to Her.

'Ruth, where did you get this rice, this is the finest quality Basmati, we cannot even get this in London, you know!' She said.

Ruth Greaves

A few flower related stories

The first happened in York Road, Bristol on one of Shri Mataji's visits there. She said that She would show us how we are all cells in Her body. She took a rose in her hand and held it to Her nose. She told us to breathe in deeply through our noses every time that She did, and that we would smell the fragrance. She did this four or five times and with each intake of breath we all smelt the wonderful fragrance of the rose, no matter how far away from Shri Mataji we were. I was in the doorway, which was on the other side of the large room, from Shri Mataji.

The second was at the Cowley Manor seminar in 1982. I had felt some negativity trying to distance me and make me draw back from Shri Mataji, so when we were walking in the gardens, I think it was after we had performed a havan, I made myself go up to Shri Mataji and offer Her a flower. I did not look at Her when I gave it. Later on we were all sitting around Shri Mataji and She was talking to us. On the table next to Her was a pile of flowers that had been offered to Her, at some point She picked up the very flower that I had offered and began playing with it, twirling it in Her hands and smoothing out the petals with Her fingers. Several months later, when She visited Bristol, a yogi showed me some photographs he had taken of Shri Mataji and suddenly there was one showing Mother with the most beautiful smile and the hand of someone extended, offering Her a pink chrysanthemum. It was my hand! I had no idea that this moment had been captured on camera!

The third incident was at a Guru Puja at Shudy Camps. At some point previously I had heard Shri Mataji say that pink is the colour of the love of the child for the Mother and red is the colour of the love of the Mother for the child. As a secret message of love, before the puja and unknown to anyone I placed a pink rose on Shri Mataji's table, beside Her chair. It was a large puja with hundreds of yogis from all over the world and I hadn't seen my husband, Chris all day. We were finally clearing up to go home when Chris came up to me - he gave me a pink rose he had in his hand.

'I found this on Mother's table and thought you might like it,' he said. Another yogini and I were standing side by side waiting to give our flowers to Shri Mataji. She paused in front of us, looked at us very sweetly and said 'You look like flowers yourselves, standing there.'

Ruth Greaves

The protection of Shri Rama

The week after the seminar in Dorset, my husband left me. I was in Shri

Mataji's house a few days after all this had happened and She asked me why I was looking so glum, and said that it was very inauspicious to look so sad in Her presence. I explained that life was a bit tricky in every direction.

A day or two later, I was again with Shri Mataji, and She asked me to go to Her room. She showed me a beautiful red sari, and even today people remark on what a rich and glowing colour it has, even though it is now old, tarnished and faded. She put it on me, fold by fold.

'This sari represents Shri Rama. He is now going to look after your Right Heart chakra, and you must never worry or be afraid. He is always there to protect you,' She said.

August 1981 was difficult for me and Shri Mataji was incredibly kind. One day She spoke to me alone, at Brompton Square. It was a talk which seemed to come from a very high level, as if She was saying - try to stop worrying about superficial things.

She told me that I must try to be brave, because by looking through my eyes, She was helping to work out millions of women around the world who had been left to bring up children without the support of a husband. She then said that She had come down to our level to help us, and when She incarnated She did not have to obey any rules of the world - but She did so impeccably, as an example. She also said that between incarnations, She has an overview of what is going on but when She incarnates She sees the details. On this occasion She could hardly believe the mess we had managed to make of everything.

Linda Williams

Shri Mataji moves house and Sahaja Yoga grows

In 1981, Shri Mataji and Sir CP stayed in a number of temporary residences. With growing numbers of Sahaja Yogis, some large houses were rented through the Sahaja Housing Association. In the Earls Court area of west London, these included a former hotel, which was part of a housing association that the Sahaja Yogis had started. The hotel was in Bramham Gardens. Shri Mataji and Sir CP stayed for some time at this hotel, sleeping in a room which was behind the reception desk on the ground floor.

Patricia Proenza and others

This humble little car

Back in 1981 there was a very dynamic Sahaja Yogi. Shri Mataji used to call him 'the James Bond of Sahaja Yoga.' He had set up a Sahaja Housing Co-op, which meant that he got hold of large properties that were up for redevelopment and they would be filled with yogis for short periods of time. It was by these means that the co-op acquired a hotel in Earls Court, London.

For the first two weeks, the fourteen bedroom hotel was occupied by only two yogis, but then Shri Mataji said She would like to move in. This was due to the fact that Her flat in Westminster had been sold and the new house in Brompton Square was still undergoing renovations. As you can imagine the hotel filled up overnight. A week before Her arrival in the hotel, in Bramham Gardens, Earls Court, there were some Sahaja weddings in London - and where else to put up those getting married, from out of town, but the hotel? The weddings were to be on the Sunday and on the Saturday the grooms went to Southall to buy their wedding outfits. The brides went to Chelsham Road, where the weddings were to be.

Bernard Rackham and Mia, Miodrag Radosavljevic, who were the only yogis living at the hotel, were recovering from having to suddenly cater for what was their first experience of hosting thirty or so people.

‘Mother’s here!’ the call suddenly went up, and so She was. Shri Mataji was on the way to Southall (a suburb of London where many Indian people live) to buy saris for the brides. She had been packing at Her flat in Ashley Gardens, Westminster and someone had packed away the car keys and they could not be found, so She had come to the hotel in a taxi.

‘Bernard has a car, Shri Mataji,’ someone mentioned.

‘Great, we can go in that,’ She replied.

Now this car, to describe it as modest was to elevate it to unknown proportions. It was not only a Mini, one of the smallest British cars on the road, but it was to be vibrating a scrap yard within six months of the event. There was no suspension, moss was growing out of the windowsills and the rust was such that you could see the road going by through a hole in the floor - yet this humble little car was destined to be a vehicle for Shri Adi Shakti.

You can’t describe the joy or the maya of being that intimate with Shri Mataji, so it won’t be attempted. What can be said is that, on arriving in Southall, the first thing to be seen was a large group of yogis pacing the streets in search of kurtas and the like. The car horn honked and the bewildered yogis peered around. You can imagine their astonishment when they realised Who it was sitting in this little green car. It being Southall, it was not just the yogis, but everyone crowded around the car to see, and soon there was a huge crowd. Yet, a couple of minutes later, after Mother had told the yogis where to do their shopping, they drove fifty metres up the street, pulled up, attracting no attention whatsoever, and Mother disappeared into a shop — another Indian lady looking for saris.

Bernard Rackham

We went shopping in a little Mini car with Shri Mataji and the Sahaja Yogis. It was interesting because we are used to seeing Shri Mataji coming out of a big Mercedes and She went shopping in Bernard Rackham’s little Mini.

Miodrag Radosavljevic

Encompassed in Mother’s love

In 1981 there was a wedding of sixteen brides in London and I was one. On the morning of the day before the weddings Shri Mataji arrived at Chelsham Road with a huge plastic bag of saris. She threw them into the middle of the room and said that all the brides could choose one as a wedding present. All the brides got up and started to sort through the saris noting the colour and pattern. I remained seated because something inside me wanted Shri Mataji to choose a sari for me. She looked up and saw I had not moved. Selecting a sari She tossed it to me and said that it was for me.

After the weddings when I wore this sari to a meeting Shri Mataji drew everyone’s attention to it and how it was made of very hard wearing silk.

In the beginning I really didn’t like the sari. The ego would not allow me to enjoy its vibrations. But over the years I have come to love and appreciate it and every time I wear it I feel encompassed in Mother’s love.

Gilly Grimshaw

Sixteen weddings in the back garden of Chelsham Road

In August 1981, I was very new to Sahaja Yoga - I had had my realisation for about six months, and had only met Shri Mataji a couple of times. I was living in Sheffield. I was phoned at home there by a Sahaja Yogini one day.

‘Mother has proposed a match for you. Will you accept?’ she asked me. So I said yes and felt amazing vibrations. My Kundalini shot to the top of my head and I thought, ‘Wow.’ I had never felt such strong vibrations before.

I had about three days in which to get myself down to London for the weddings. It was quite an event because although there were only sixteen couples, we thought this was a huge amount of people to be married. Most of the weddings prior to this had been two or four couples at the most. I came down to London and Graham, my future husband, met me at the station. Graham had been spending quite a lot of time in the presence of our Holy Mother and She had even told him what ring to get for me.

Gail Pottinger

There were sixteen weddings and it was lovely, full of flowers. It was the middle of summer and lots of brides were getting dressed at Chelsham Road. Shri Mataji sat outside with Her face to the garden with Her back to the meditation room with the French doors open either side of Her.

It was a beautiful starry night in the end. Didn’t it go into the night time?

Kay McHugh

Editor’s note: The weddings took place in the garden, and beforehand there was a haldi ceremony, also in the garden. There was one large fire, which all the couples walked around, and Shri Mataji personally handed out the garlands beforehand.

Marriages at Chelsham Road

My brother was getting married in 1981, and was one of the couples. The havan and marriages took place in the garden, after which Mother sat with the Sahaja Yogis in the meditation room. I was watching all the yogis queuing at the door to come and sit down in an already crowded room; there was shuffling from all around, everyone making space for more; still the person who was at the back of the queue was shortly sitting down, but still it seemed like droves of people were still waiting. The floor space around us got smaller.

‘Come in, come in! Move forward, there’s plenty of space,’ Shri Mataji would keep saying from time to time. The meditation room was not the same size as usual. It had expanded for sure, and again space/physics were not relative.

Ann Lewis

We were there to welcome Shri Mataji

The first time I met Shri Mataji was for the weddings at Chelsham Road in 1981. The very next day Shri Mataji was going to Scotland, where I come from. After the wedding celebrations we all got into cars and drove up to Scotland and went to the flower markets when they opened at 4 am. Then we were there to welcome Shri Mataji when She arrived. She spoke to everybody in a little flat in Glasgow. We were all able to go in and talk to Her.

The very next day She came through to Edinburgh and was staying in a flat belonging to Finn Robertson's father somewhere round about the King's Market. He was about the only yogi in Scotland then. I was driving Shri Mataji and there were lots of cobbles there, and I wanted to drive slowly to keep it nice and smooth for Her. I couldn't remember the way to the hall where the public programme was going to be, but there was only one person there, so Mother only stayed one night.

Susie Lumsden

The normalness of so many things Shri Mataji would do

The first meeting in Glasgow was in a small flat in 1981. There were quite a few of us staying to help out for the public programme. Shri Mataji arrived in the evening, having been driven up in the car by Hari Jairam. Upon arrival, we inquired if Mother had eaten and apparently Hari had bought fish suppers and they had eaten them in the car, but again it points out the 'normalness', from our point of view, of so many things She would do.

Mark Callahan

The effect of photos

Different photos can have different effects, depending who took them. In 1981 I was helping a yogi to arrange programmes in Scotland. We drove from London to Glasgow and Edinburgh and spent days plastering both cities with posters. When we got back to London we went to see Shri Mataji to tell Her the progress of the arrangements and show Her the posters. She told us the posters were not suitable.

'That photo will never attract the seekers,' She said.

We made new posters with a photo of Her approval and not only replastered the two cities but had to remember every shop and newsagent we had been to before! Later, when we were in Edinburgh with Shri Mataji, a yogini who had come with us had brought two albums of photos she had taken of Shri Mataji. She had used expensive equipment and different lenses and had been quite diligent in her work. I thought they were beautiful photos but to our surprise when Shri Mataji saw them, She said that the lady must throw them all in the sea and the negatives as well. To her credit she did not question Shri Mataji and did just that and considered it a blessing to be corrected by Mother.

Shri Mataji would ask yogis to take some photos for a particular purpose.

'But Mother, there's not enough light,' a gentleman said, on one such occasion.

'You take the photo; I'll take care of the light,' She answered.

Another example of the photograph reflecting the vibrations of the photographer was in Australia on one of the early trips. The collective was told by Shri Mataji not to use photos taken by a particular person, and that they should be destroyed. She said he caught on Vishuddhi and all his photos of Her showed Her neck area in a distorted way.

Kay McHugh

A programme in Birmingham

Shri Mataji gave a large number of public programmes in different towns all over the UK. She went to Birmingham, which She said is the Nabhi of England, quite a few times.



Shri Mataji giving vibrations to seekers after a programme at The Friends Meeting House, Upper Bull St, Birmingham, on the 14th August 1981

We all stayed there with Shri Mataji

After I married, Shri Mataji went to Sheffield, where I came from, to do a programme and I went too. She was staying in the Harris's family house and we all stayed there with Mother overnight. People were sleeping all along the landing outside Her door and everything. When we got up in the morning, we came downstairs, Shri Mataji started to work on all of us. She stayed in that house, which is interesting because it was a very Jewish household.

Gail Pottinger

Ashrams for the growing numbers of Sahaja Yogis

In 1981, with the growing numbers of Sahaja Yogis, some large houses were rented through a housing association in the Earls Court area of west London. Shri Mataji and Sir CP stayed for some time at one of the houses, a former hotel.

Patricia Proenza

Bramham Gardens Hotel, Earls Court

After our marriage we were living at a house in Bramham Gardens, which had been a hotel. The Sahaja Yogis had rented it as part of a housing co-op. Quite a few Sahaja Yogis were living there, all together. Mother was in the process of renovating Brompton Square and because the house wasn't ready, Shri Mataji and Sir CP came to live in the ground floor flat of the Earl's Court hotel. Every day She would go from Bramham Gardens to Brompton Square to work and sometimes my husband Graham would drive Her there. We'd wait outside and watch Shri Mataji go off. Then we'd all follow on to go and work on Brompton Square with Her.

Gail Pottinger

Two young men

When Shri Mataji was working on Her house in Brompton Square, in 1981, She lived for a short time in a flat in Earls Court, in the basement of a big house which the Sahaja Housing Co-op had taken.

One day I was with Shri Mataji in Her sitting room and there were two

people sitting with Her and talking. They were both fairly new Sahaja Yogis. One was a bonny young man from Scotland, with reasonable vibrations and a fresh healthy face. He was glowing in Mother's presence, and She indicated that his vibrations were quite good. The second young man was of West Indian origin and the way Mother was working on him, and by feeling his vibrations, it was obvious that his situation was not so easy. After they had both left Shri Mataji confirmed what I had observed and felt.

A few weeks later the Scottish boy disappeared back to Glasgow and was last heard of experimenting with non-prescribed drugs. The other young man, some thirty years later, is a strong Sahaja Yogi.

Linda Williams

Shri Krishna Puja in the Midlands

Shri Mataji went to Birmingham several times and stayed at the Tamworth centre each time, and visited places like Shakespeare's Stratford-on-Avon during Her stay. She appeared to like going to Tamworth and Birmingham, and spoke of the discipline, which gave a special gravity and depth. The Shri Krishna Puja was held in Tamworth in 1981.

Bala Kanayson



Shri Mataji being served food by Bala in Tamworth, 1981

Not imagination but reality

In London, 1981, I bought a present for Shri Mataji for presentation at the forthcoming Ganesha Puja in late August in Switzerland. Clutching the precious floral crystal platter I had taken hours to choose, and walking back to the underground station, thinking of Shri Mataji, I heard Her voice, in my head, calling my name. I'd never had such an experience before. Then I heard it again. This time, however, I realised it was not imagination but reality.

There, across the road, Shri Mataji was calling my name, through the traffic noise of Oxford Street. She needed help with some purchases Sir CP had made. So, happily, I joined a group that included a couple of yogis, and we collected the packages, delivering them to the apartment Shri Mataji was staying in. The experience itself was reward enough, but we were invited to tea and cake, and I was given a jacket, a treasure I still am delighted to wear, well over twenty-five years later.

Because it is You

Mother came to my house in 1981, when we lived in Lausanne, Switzerland. It is a medium-sized town near the lake and we used to live in a flat that was at the ground level, which was easy for Shri Mataji. Mathias Kaluzny, the leader in those days, had asked me if Shri Mataji could stay at our house. I was happy to welcome Shri Mataji, but, when I think back, I feel ashamed the way I received Her. In Her kindness and Her compassion, She accepted to come.

She slept in my room. It was a huge room, and we had got the flat just before She came. In those days, there was a small collective of yogis that were travelling with Shri Mataji, plus a few people in Switzerland, maybe twenty or thirty. The ladies were allowed to sleep in the room with Her, and at night, we were fourteen ladies sleeping on the floor around Shri Mataji's bed.

We cooked for Her and served Her and on one occasion She was having a meal in the bedroom. She asked to eat a pear for dessert, so I sat next to Her. I didn't dare to touch the pear, but I took the knife and the fork and prepared the pear.

'Why are you doing that?' She said.

'Because it is You, Shri Mataji.'

'But you are a Sahaja Yogini now. It is all right,' She said.

So somehow I had to use my fingers.

Marie-Martine de Techtermann

For God there is no time

In August 1981, there was a public programme with Shri Mataji in Lausanne, Switzerland, where I got my realisation. I was sitting at the very back of the hall because I wanted to observe everything. Mother came one hour later than announced and while She was walking to the stage, a couple of elegantly dressed Swiss people stood up, and showing their watches indicating She was too late.

'For God there is no time,' Shri Mataji answered, majestically walking by them in Her white sari.

Christine Haage

My saris have got so many vibrations

This is one of my memories from when Shri Mataji was living at Bramham Gardens in 1981. One day I was upstairs in my room.

'Mother wants someone to pack Her suitcase,' somebody came and said. She was going to America on tour and there was no other lady around. I went down to Shri Mataji's room to help Her pack. She had a walnut wardrobe which was really beautiful, and in it She kept Her saris, including the white saris, which She used for public programmes.

'They all need folding and putting in this suitcase,' She said. I started folding Shri Mataji's saris and putting them in the suitcase and got about halfway through. There were quite a lot and I kept folding them up, and after a time I got really dizzy. Mother looked at me.

'It's the vibrations,' She said. 'They're too much for you. Sit down. It's My saris, they've got so many vibrations.' Shri Mataji made me sit down and then a servant appeared. 'We'll have lunch now,' She said.

I remember sitting down at a table with just Shri Mataji, and the servant brought lunch in. The starter was melon and I thought, 'I don't really like melon, but I can't refuse because I'm sitting here with Mother.' So I just ate it, and then I think we had some prawns and something else. It was quite an amazing experience. I felt completely over-awed that I was sitting with Shri Mataji in Her dining room eating lunch.

'Right, we'll finish the packing now,' Shri Mataji said after the meal was finished, and I packed up the rest of the saris.

Gail Pottinger

She was giving vibrations at that time

While we were at the hotel at Bramham Gardens, Shri Mataji asked us to get up at four o'clock in the morning, for meditation, because She was giving vibrations at that time to all the saints and gurus all over the world, and it would help Her. There was a sharp intake of breath with that news but we all gave it a go, and it carried on all round the country.

Derek Ferguson

Chapter 9

1981 – September and October North America

My first meeting with Shri Mataji

In 1981, Shri Mataji came to Boston for the first time. This was my first experience of Sahaja Yoga. Through the person who is now my husband, Steve, I had heard about Shri Mataji and about Sahaja Yoga and heard of the reality of who She was and became very eager to meet Her face to face. I felt if I could meet Shri Mataji, I would be able to recognise if this was reality or not. I still have vivid memories of standing with my then acquaintance, now husband, at the airport, preparing to greet Her with a bouquet of yellow roses.

Shri Mataji wasn't on the plane that we expected Her to be on, which was a disappointment, but She was on the very next one, which was an hour later.

Kristine Kirby

I will remember them for eternity

We were living in dormitory like rooms in the centre of Boston. Steve Kirby was in one building and I was in the next one. Since I had the nicer room, that was the room in which we had prepared to host Shri Mataji in. She had to climb three flights of stairs and did so without complaint. Shri Mataji seated Herself in the room and was extremely gracious.

'Oh, how nice,' She said.

It was a sunny day and the sun was flooding in and it was a dingy little room with a few flowers, and Shri Mataji's presence. It did seem quite pleasant at that moment. For some reason I went out of the room and when I came back, She was working on Steve, now my husband. There were about seven other people in the room, the entourage who were accompanying Her on the trip from New York. I sat in the back because I still wasn't familiar with Sahaja Yoga and had not really ever felt the cool breeze. As I sat there, the cool just immediately started wafting over my hands. It was unmistakable and that was the first time that that had happened.

'Now, let's see Kristine,' Shri Mataji said after She had finished with Steve.

I came forward without questioning because these cool vibrations I had heard about, I was actually feeling. She worked on me for about an hour and a half. I can't remember everything that was said, but I do remember one moment, where Shri Mataji talked about thoughtless awareness.

'If you are in the present, you will remember everything,' She said, and picked up a mug from the side table. 'You see, the colours in this cup, I will remember them for eternity,' because of Her thoughtless awareness.

Of course, I remember that vividly because of Her words, and because She pulled us into thoughtless awareness at that moment. I remember the cup just as vividly.

We served Shri Mataji lunch that day, and it was a very unusual situation because the kitchen was three floors down in the basement. We were running up and down, trying to serve Shri Mataji chicken and carrots. Of course, the conditions and the circumstances were totally inappropriate, but She was completely gracious about all our efforts. We were very young at the time and I had no understanding of how to host even a normal person, let alone Shri Mataji Herself.

Shri Mataji asked if She could have some time alone to rest, because there was a public programme that night. Because of this, we went out together with the other Sahaja Yogis and sat on Boston Commons. I learnt about shoebeating and we talked about the vibrations of Boston.

When we came back in, Shri Mataji was reading *The Advent*.

‘Oh, I’ve never read it. It’s not bad,’ She said, which was a big surprise to us because. I had learned a lot about Sahaja Yoga by reading that book.

That evening we went around the corner to a church and in the basement Shri Mataji gave a programme. She gave self realisation to about forty people and again I was feeling vibrations very, very strongly, just to verify the experience I had had in the afternoon. In those days Shri Mataji would Herself walk around the whole hall and work on people individually. She did that on that evening, and then She walked back to the apartment and Steve and I walked with Her.

‘Get married, because you both have Left Nabhi,’ Shri Mataji said, and subsequently we did.

That is the end of my recollections of Shri Mataji’s first visit to Boston, a one day trip up from New York, which She was visiting at that time.

Kristine Kirby

The energy was so tremendous

After Shri Mataji’s first visit to Boston in 1981, the following week we travelled down to New York to participate in the public programmes that were being held there, and also a small puja that was held in a yogi’s home in Staten Island. That had tremendous vibrations.

At the end of the puja, it was one of those situations where the people present could not absorb all the vibrations from Shri Mataji, so about six ladies went into Her room and, as She rested, we took vibrations from the chakras on Her body with the left hand placed on the chakra and the right hand ventilating away. The energy was so tremendous coming from Her body. I remember that it felt almost like an electric current. Gradually, it put all of us completely to sleep. We all slowly drooped, until we were completely asleep on the floor.

Kristine Kirby

She teaches you with sweetness

In my first two weeks’ experience of Shri Mataji, She was giving programmes in New York in 1981, September. I began to see so many things around Her. You can’t imagine the auras that She has around Her, the halos and huge lights and all the deities. I didn’t know what it all was to begin with. Eventually, I approached Shri Mataji and I explained to Her that I saw all these things.

‘From this moment on you will no longer see them,’ She said. She touched my Agnya and I never saw those things again. But this situation gave me a perspective that, although there are a lot of tests, I knew who She was. This supraconscious experience had given me an insight, at least brief, and I could not be deviated from the path.

They say that every seeker has to get to see his guru, and I had to get to see my Guru Mata, who is the best of all gurus, because She teaches you with sweetness and not with the whip.

Michael Petrunia

**Editor's note: on a number of occasions Shri Mataji has said if we see colours and lights like this, we are a little off centre. On one occasion She did, however, say that at least we knew Who She was when we had these sorts of experiences, as was the case here.*



Shri Mataji speaking at a public programme in New York in 1981

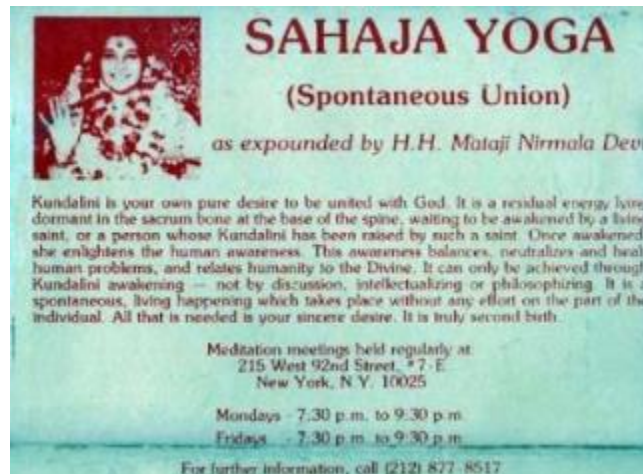
The gifts of Shri Mataji to the American seekers

Shri Mataji found us in September 1981. There were so many gifts Shri Mataji brought to us in New York in those earliest of days. We had a new family all over the world, brothers we were not supposed to be too familiar with, 'It upsets them,' Shri Mataji explained, and sisters we were supposed to bond with. I smile now, although did not understand then and was a bit dubious to begin with, that I would never be alone again. She held nothing back and my children adored and recognized Her.

Shri Mataji asked us right off not to 'make a mythology of Her'. She alerted us about forgiveness, and the past being passed. She let us sit at Her Feet for hours on end and invited so many people to join us there, other tenants in the building, our friends, Her New York City friends, Her older brother and his friends, new immigrants from Russia and India, and local teenagers.

Our flat at 215, West 92nd Street, in New York City became the Sahaja centre and hosted activities and meetings three times a week for three years. I have a nice brochure from that time we used to post and give out. We took pictures and kept a file of names, two more children were born to me there, and the collective love was palpable and vital, if still awkward and slightly dysfunctional.

The brochure for the first New York programmes:



Shi Mataji's advice

I had been nurtured by outspoken pioneer grandmothers, whose pithy adages were pointed, useful and sometimes unexpected so I was delighted to hear Shri Mataji's adage like statements that held us accountable. My children know them by heart:

'Don't waste.'

'What your country wastes you must retrieve and restore.'

'Husbands, take care of your wives.'

'Wives, take care of your children.'

'Serve the men folk first; Western women don't know how to handle their men.'

'Do not become fanatics - I eat meat, sometimes.'

'Respect your children and listen to their stories. They are love. Remember they are My children first, and everyone else's children are yours as well - yelling at them defeats you. Teach them how to self-correct by putting down their egos in front of My picture, and their Spirit will spontaneously rise.'

'Say: pay attention to your Spirit. You are the Spirit and that is the most important thing.'

'God created man in His image and I created you in Mine,'

'You are in My body. I love you all. You are all special, no favourites.'

'Love each other because it troubles Me when you don't.'

Shri Mataji told us, first thing when She came in 1981, both in New York and Los Angeles, that 'Shri Krishna must stop playing His tricks!' We collectively quivered because even though we had no clue about what She meant we knew She had meant it. She reminded us that we were lucky to have a Mother as a guru, and many of us humbled down in our desire to please Her. She explained Her divine politics by stating that sometimes She has to 'appease the deities.' I proudly showed Her the artistic rendering of my astral body and Shri Mataji firmly said, 'I want you in your (normal, physical) body.'

I was raised as a Christian, but found it all a confusing ritual. I asked God to give me truth and freedom. 'Be still and know that I am God,' was the only sure comfort zone. All that ended abruptly when Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi came to find me. I asked Her why She wore a red dot on Her forehead.

'In remembrance of the blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,' She replied. She loved Him every day to remind us to too, with a very big dot.

Judy Gaddy

**America is the Vishuddhi chakra of the world, and Shri Krishna rules this chakra.*

Thank you for pleasing Me

In New York, in 1981, we made a list of topics that we should bandhan, things that we thought we needed to bring to the attention of God, to be addressed. Innocently and exuberantly we spun impure and immoral institutions purporting to be in charge of Christianity, the Mafia, abuses such as alcoholism, incest, racism, ignorance and poverty, etc into God's attention, knowing in our pure childlike hearts, and having no doubts, that all the sorrows would be revealed and healed in Her perfect time. This was not a ritual and we only did the bandhan once.

One day, a year later in 1982, while having a quiet chat with Shri Mataji in my bedroom, I asked Her how She did it. Sweeping Her right hand up the centre of Her body, She made a spinning circle just above Her forehead.

'I put it in My attention and it all works out,' She said, and then added, 'I am hungry, and I have a taste for sausage.' This was permission to prepare the only thing I had in the fridge.

'Shri Mataji, how may I please You?' I asked.

'Thank you for pleasing Me,' She replied.

Judy Gaddy

The perfect housewife

Shri Mataji had gone to the States to do some public programmes in New York and elsewhere. However, Sir CP had some extremely important guests - Arab heads of state - and he asked Mother to come home from New York to arrange a dinner. She immediately cancelled the New York programmes and flew home on the next plane in time to prepare the reception and dinner.

Shri Mataji always miraculously had time for us, and the local Sahaja Yogis were invited round to Warwick Road to spend a bit of time with Her. It was the first time anyone had videoed Shri Mataji and we watched the tape of a programme She had conducted in the USA. Mother watched too.

In 1981, Shri Mataji came back briefly from a visit to the USA, and the local Sahaja Yogis were invited round to Warwick Road, Earl's Court, to spend a bit of time in Her presence. It was the first occasion anyone had videoed Shri Mataji and we watched the tape of a programme She had conducted in America. Mother watched too.

'This Mataji, She is good on the video, isn't She?' Shri Mataji said, in all innocence. It was so candid, so sincere, I realised She is much, much more than the Shri Mataji we see. She was watching a part of Her vast being on the TV.

She spoke about a number of subjects, and one was astrology. She said it was a good thing to know one's sun sign and rising sign, and to look with all honesty at one's star chart. She gave a little example against Herself.

'I am a Pisces, the fish,' She said. 'Now fish usually swim away from trouble, but do I swim away from trouble? No. So you must face yourself.' Shri Mataji went on to talk about the different signs and the main thing was that every sign has a positive and a not so positive side, and one must try to recognise and overcome any shortcomings inherent in that sign.

For example, Sagittarius is the man with the arrow. An arrow goes straight to the point, Shri Mataji explained, but on the other hand it gets stuck in and can't

easily be withdrawn. So if you are Sagittarius, either rising or birth sign, be aware of this and don't get too stuck into things, because that is a tendency. Then there is Taurus, the bull, the most earth-bound sign, and if you are Taurus the negativity will stick rather easily, because of this, so one must shoe beat if you think there might be bhuts bothering you. On the plus side, the bull is the vehicle of Lord Shiva, the Most High, so you can become the vehicle of the Spirit.

Some signs are easier for Sahaja Yoga than others, Shri Mataji explained, but that is only a relative thing. For example, Libra and Gemini are a bit difficult because they are air signs and also double signs, therefore ruled by the intellect, so it is difficult to let go and surrender. Scorpio, Shri Mataji said, can be good, because it is the sign of rebirth and resurrection - Lord Jesus was born under Scorpio, (at the time of Diwali, not in December. She said He could never have been a Capricorn). But we humans must watch out - the scorpion has a sting in its tail. Aquarius is good.

The next day Shri Mataji returned to America.

Linda Williams

Editor's note: On another occasion Shri Mataji said that one should not put too much attention on astrology

This is why you came to America

I got my realisation from Shri Mataji in 1981 in Los Angeles and I just met Shri Mataji by accident. She was so pleased. I was not getting the vibrations and She put both Her Feet on my hands for a few minutes and then I got the vibrations.

'This is why you came to America, to get it,' She said.

'Why couldn't I get it in India?'

'No, you had to come to America to get it.'

I had worked in the Shipping Corporation of India for ten years, Shri Mataji's husband's corporation. I knew She was giving realisation, but I didn't get a chance to have the realisation in India.

'Why don't you go to Texas?' Shri Mataji told me, just out of the air.

Within a month, everything worked all right and I have been in Texas since then.

Mangal Singh Dillon

A brief stop in Vancouver

Shri Mataji first came to Canada in the fall (autumn) of 1981, in early October. She held a public programme in Kitsilano High School and some forty to fifty people came. It was a brief stop in Vancouver, following an earlier visit to the east coast of the USA. The people who attended that programme didn't stick on for long but a yogini who had come with Shri Mataji stayed for three months and gave realisation to a good number of people, among them four of us who travelled to India in January of 1982 for the India Tour, and we are all still in Sahaja Yoga.

Lori Wills

A letter to Shri Mataji

When I first came into Sahaja Yoga in 1981, in Canada, I got my realisation and they gave me a photo of Shri Mataji. I went to my room and meditated. I

had a very strong conviction that I was meditating to Shri Mary, who I had prayed to all my life. Now I felt I had a connection, and felt this extremely strongly and for the first time felt a strong spiritual awareness – including the cool vibrations. I sat down and wrote a letter to Shri Mataji who was in England.

‘Anything You want me to do, I am willing to do,’ I wrote, because all my life I had wanted to change the world. For the first time I had found something which looked as if it would do that, and was going to work.

When I got to Britain a couple of months later, I discovered I was well known because Shri Mataji had taken the letter and shown it to all the Sahaja Yogis there. She was saying that people had been in Sahaja Yoga for so long – a year or five years, and they still had not said that to Her, and here was this boy in Canada who had just come in - and look at his letter.

Patrick Redican

Shri Mataji was playing with the sky

One day some of us went to meet Shri Mataji at Heathrow Airport. Shri Mataji was coming from America with Hari Jairam.

As we were approaching the airport, we noticed that the sky looked unusual. It was a sunset, but a sunset such as I have never seen before. The sky was of so many different colours, with such breathtaking intensity, that we were stunned. The colours kept changing very fast and they were in front of us, behind us, just everywhere. It was a feast to the eye and a masterpiece of artwork. Hari told us later that when the plane was circling the airport, Shri Mataji was playing with the sky.

‘Should I add some pink here and some yellow there? What do you think?’ She asked Hari, and Mother was moving Her hands and the colours were changing all the time.

Grazyna Anslow

Chapter 10
1981 – October to December
France, Italy, and Christmas in London

Halloween is a very bad idea

In 1981, some of us London Sahaja Yogis were with Shri Mataji at Warwick Road ashram, another of the Sahaja Housing Coop properties in the Earls Court area, and it was the evening of Halloween, the 31st October. Celebrating Halloween is a very bad idea. Traditionally, it is the evening before the day of All Saints, the 1st of November, and is the evening, or 'e'en' all the 'hallows' or ghosts traditionally fly, but Halloween parties, when people dress up as ghosts and witches and so on, are not auspicious.

It was early evening: Mother had a candle and was putting the flying bhuts into the candle, although all we could see was black smoke coming out of it. Within minutes it was black and burnt down. It was a big fat candle, about two inches in diameter and six inches high. She called for another one and another, each as big, and again and again the black smoke stained the candle black and it burnt down in a fraction of the time that a candle does normally as Shri Mataji cleansed the area.

Linda Williams

Diary extract: the first programme in Rome, November 1981

One representative of each of the European countries then in Sahaja Yoga – Switzerland, France and Germany, was at the station to welcome Shri Mataji.

The first evening the programme took place in the back room of a library. There was a crowd as far as the street, lots of young people from twenty to thirty-five years old. A large number got their realisation. Shri Mataji's speech was full of subtleties and finesse to introduce Sahaja Yoga to these Romans. Later in an Italian restaurant I was feeling a sore throat coming on, I looked at Shri Mataji, so incredibly beautiful, and a big gush of love rose in me. In the evening She asked us to come and sleep on the floor around Her bed, but I did not want to inconvenience Her and the others with my sore throat.

'You too, I'll cure you!' She said.

The next day the pain in my throat had gone. Later we had an amazing puja dedicated to Shri Mahalakshmi at Ruth's place. We said the qualities to the Virgin Mary in Latin, and the vibrations came so cool. We clad Shri Mataji in a beautiful royal blue sari, the colour of Mother Mary's cloak. For me there was total joy and doubtless awareness: the circle was fastened, the Catholic conditionings were losing their grip. A little while before, sitting next to Shri Mataji, She had asked me to put my hand on Her left Vishuddhi and She worked on me.

'Oh, Shri Mataji, You are so perfect,' I said.

'It is the higher self of all of you who called Me to this earth,' She laughed and said to us. After the puja She touched my Agnya chakra, I was in total thoughtless awareness.

'Look at her dilated eyes!' Shri Mataji said to the others.

I was in total bliss.

Antoinette Wells

I wanted to say 'Mother'

I met Shri Mataji in Rome in the autumn of 1981 when I was thirty years old. Gregoire and Catherine de Kalbermatten had given me realisation in early August. Catherine was busy with her baby so Gregoire and I organized programmes for Shri Mataji, who came in November. She had accepted to give four public programmes in Rome.

At last, the big day arrived. I had never met Shri Mataji and there was a group of Swiss yogis who came for these programmes. We went to the airport to greet Shri Mataji and She arrived with the Australian lady, Kay McHugh. We were waiting at Arrivals and I had a little bouquet of flowers. At first, when Shri Mataji arrived, I did not realise it was Her because She was not tall, and had a coat over Her sari and a scarf. I did not expect to see Her like that, knowing Her from the photos. Shri Mataji immediately took me in Her arms.

'My child,' She said. I wanted to say, 'Mother.' I had this word 'Mother' in my throat, but I could not say it because I was just overwhelmed with emotion or joy. It was an extraordinary moment to at last meet Shri Mataji, and see Her. We drove back, Mother in the front with Gregoire and I was in the back with Kay and for the first time I heard Shri Mataji in Her human form, talking and chatting.

The same evening was the first programme, so all the yogis went first to do the introduction and I was to drive Shri Mataji there after a while. I drove Her to the programme, and I was alone with Her in my little car.

While Shri Mataji gave the talk, She demonstrated raising the Kundalini on me and showed the audience how it was happening. You can imagine with what strength I felt my Kundalini going up then! It was absolutely great and to translate for Shri Mataji was certainly a great moment. After the programme, we went to eat pizza with Shri Mataji in a Roman trattoria and they sat me next to Her. So the first day I met Shri Mataji, I had this extraordinary chance of being able to drive Her, translate for Her and then eat sitting next to Her.

So it went on for the next few days. There was a lot to do, and Gregoire gave the introductory talks. I would drive Shri Mataji for shopping or whatever and then I translated for Her; it was really a great, great week.

The day after I met Shri Mataji was a Sunday and She agreed that we should do a little puja to Shri Mahalakshmi. Shri Mataji said it would be a good idea to have the puja at my home, as I was going to stay in Rome, whereas Gregoire was going to leave a few months later, and we received that phone call at my place where I was, with about ten or fifteen Swiss yogis staying. We rushed to prepare the house: we put clean sheets on the bed and a set of clean red towels, but nothing was new and nothing was only for Shri Mataji.

She came and said She needed to have a bath before the puja, so we prepared the bathroom. It was all so exciting, and we arranged my lounge for a puja. There was a marvellous puja and She asked me to come and wash Her Feet. I had never washed Her Feet and at that time there were no videos of Shri Mataji, and I had no idea of how I was supposed to do it, so I started rubbing them.

'Ruth, I have just had a bath,' She told me. 'My Feet are not dirty. You don't need to clean them.'

You can imagine how embarrassed I felt, but it was beautiful anyway. That week was extremely intensive and was an amazing time for me, as I was so new in Sahaja Yoga.

Ruth Eleanore

Raising my Kundalini to give me strength

Gregoire de Kalbermatten was doing the introduction at a public programme in Rome in November 1981. We had been shopping with Shri Mataji and She went directly from shopping to the programme. I drove Her there, and before going on stage She wanted to refresh Herself, but nothing special was prepared for Her, so we went to the Ladies' Room.

'Oh, poor Ruth, you're catching on Centre Heart,' She said. 'You've been running too much. I made you run too much.'

And there, with ladies coming and going, Shri Mataji raised my Kundalini and worked on me. Then Shri Mataji went on stage and started speaking, and I translated Her words into Italian. Because at that time we were so few, we were doing all different roles and going from one thing to another.

This was so amazing, Shri Mataji raising my Kundalini to give me the strength to be in shape to translate for Her.

Ruth Eleanore

Maybe I will see You in paradise

We were a little group of European yogis who accompanied Shri Mataji for the first programmes in Rome in 1981. We went out with Shri Mataji to see some basilicas that She wanted to visit. The first one was Santa Maria Maggiore, and as soon as we entered Mother was delighted with the marble floor displaying huge circles.

'See,' She said, 'they are like chakras,' and then looked to the left where there were some places where Catholic people confess their sins. 'What are these wooden boxes for?' Shri Mataji asked. We told Her, and She was amazed. 'Really?' She said.

We went to another basilica, San Pietro in Vincoli. This is the basilica where there is a magnificent statue of Moses by Michelangelo and Shri Mataji asked us to put our hands towards the statue, the vibrations were cool. She explained to the little party of Sahaja Yogis who were accompanying Her how the sculptor, who was a realised soul, had captured the aspect of the Guru in Moses, with his left hand on the Nabhi and his right hand directed towards the heart and the strong determination in his gaze.

'Only one thing is inaccurate,' She said, 'he should have Egyptian chappals on his feet and not Roman ones.'

We crossed the whole nave of the church with Her until we reached the place where the holy bread is exposed, and there were some Italian women there, kneeling down and praying with their rosaries (sacred beads). Shri Mataji told us to move a little at the back; She was wearing a beige coat and a scarf around Her head.

'Let them see My Kundalini,' She told us, placing Herself right in between the altar and the women saying their 'Ave Marias,' (prayers to Mother Mary). Shri Mataji stood there for quite a while and then we all went back with Her towards the entrance. Behind us we heard somebody walking very fast, as if the person wanted to catch up with us.

'Are you Catholic? Are you following Christ?' the lady who had followed us asked Shri Mataji. She wanted to give us an image of Christ on the cross, with blood all over His face, and we were not inclined to take it, but Mother said to take it.

‘Yes and we are following this lady,’ Ruth who could speak Italian, answered, indicating Shri Mataji. The little group was nearly at the porch and we all stopped.

‘So you are like us. Do you believe that Jesus is really in the holy bread?’ the woman said to Mother.

‘If you really believe that He is there, then He is,’ Shri Mataji answered, and the lady seemed to be a bit troubled at this point.

‘Don’t feel guilty,’ Shri Mataji said to the woman, who was now facing Her. Ruth translated this into Italian.

‘It is not easy not to feel guilty after what had been done to Christ!’ the woman said. Shri Mataji told Ruth to ask the lady in Italian, what she thought of Her.

‘Una molto bona persona,’ the woman looked at Shri Mataji and said. This means: ‘A very good lady.’ By now she was very moved and we were all feeling very strong vibrations flowing in our hands, and the woman fell into Mother’s arms.

‘Maybe I will see You in paradise,’ she said.

Gregoire who was posted in Rome invited Shri Mataji and our little group for supper and there Shri Mataji again spoke about the Last Supper that Christ took with his disciples; She said that He had gathered them there to say good bye and as he was pure pranava (vibrations) when he shared the bread to give it to them it was full of His vibrations, thus when He said: This is my body, it was real as the bread touched by the Hands of Christ became vibrations..... Again that evening Shri Mataji shared the bread with us.

Antoinette Wells



The closest representation of Christ

When Shri Mataji travelled to Rome in 1981 we visited different places with Her, and were lucky enough to go to the Sistine Chapel and the Vatican, including the chambers of Raphael. When we entered the Sistine Chapel, it was really something magnificent to see all the paintings of Michelangelo.

Mother told us that Michelangelo was a realised soul and how that was the most perfect painting and the closest representation of Christ. In that Last Judgment painting, we can see the Agnya chakra — because there is a shape, an oval shape like an egg, around Christ, and Mother Mary is next to Him.

Then Mother showed us how in the Last Judgment, all the people from the left side were going down to the hell and how people were raised up to be judged and saved. The people who were going down to hell were going down on the left side of Christ, according to the painting. She gave us all an explanation of the Last Judgment.

We stayed quite a while there and it was amazing to see that, in the presence of Shri Mataji Herself, giving us all these commentaries.

The strength and the power and the greatness

We went to see the statue of Moses by Michelangelo. In front of the statue there were three ladies, all with black clothes and they were all praying and they were kneeling on the wooden pew.



‘Let them face My Kundalini,’ said Shri Mataji. So Mother put Herself in front of these three ladies and then She was looking onto the Moses and also giving us an explanation.

‘Look how he put the hand on the Void,’ She said, ‘how the Right Nabhi, the right knee was not covered to show us the place of the Void and the Nabhi.’ Then She told us that the two horns on the head were representing the ego and superego. Mother enjoyed the strength and the power and the greatness which was coming out of this statue.

After, when we were going out of the church, one of the ladies who was praying behind Mother came running and wanted to talk to Shri Mataji, but she didn’t know how to start. The lady asked Shri Mataji who She was, if She was a spiritual person and whether She believed in the Virgin Mary. She was so emotional, so touched and she didn’t know what to say. Shri Mataji was listening quietly to her.

‘Yes, of course, I believe in all that you believe. Of course, I believe in the Virgin Mary,’ She said, ‘but you should not feel guilty.’

‘Oh, how do you know it?’ asked the lady. Then Shri Mataji started to sit down. It was amazing because the lady just kneeled in front of Shri Mataji and was kissing Her hand. It was such a great experience because when we, the yogis who were around, saw these three ladies praying like this, we were laughing a bit inside and saying, ‘Oh, look at this lady there, praying like this,’ as if it were a bit unnecessary.

Shri Mataji wanted to show us how these ladies, even if they were praying that way, had the sensitivity to recognise Her and knew that there was something special about Her. With their hearts, they showed their devotion and their receptivity to the spiritual power of Shri Mataji. It showed us that we have to respect people who pray to God in their own way because, if they are sincere, it is a reality for them.

Then Shri Mataji told the lady to come to the programme. It was a very touching and moving moment and I think Shri Mataji just wanted to give us that lesson, that we have to also respect people who believe in a sincere way with the heart because God is close to all of them.

Marie-Laure Cernay

I am Mother God

When Shri Mataji came to Rome in November 1981, She stayed at Grégoire and Catherine’s place. After two big and very successful public programmes

took place, one day we went to visit Florence. We went to see the museum where Michelangelo's statue of David is housed.

'It is the representation of Luv or Kush,' She commented when leaving.

We also went to the Uffizi Gallery, where Shri Mataji gave us Her comments on each painting. When leaving, I was holding Gregoire's older son in my arms and She smiled and asked me whether I was his godmother. I answered that Marie-Laure was his godmother and that I was the godmother of Gregoire's other son.

'You are the godmother, and I am Mother God!' She smiled again and answered.

Marie-Amelia de Kalbermatten

Editor's note: for Christians, a godmother is a sort of honorary mother who is present when the child is given its name at the religious ceremony in the church.

The Holy Spirit arrived

Shri Mataji's journey to Italy began in Rome. We saw some sights of the city with Her. In a church we saw Michelangelo's statue of Moses, a massive figure of one of the ten primordial masters - Adi Gurus. Shri Mataji taught us that the incarnations of the Adi Guru are expressions of the principles in our Nabhi Chakra - dharma-peace-justice-generosity-seeking and our own inner mastery. The Nabhi Chakra has its place not only around our navel, but also at the knees and elbows and around the crown at the back of the head. Shri Mataji pointed out how the great, realised artist had depicted Moses: he wears a toga which surrounds his whole body, and the naked knee can be seen with the toga swirling about it. The long beard ends in a big curl, winding itself around the Nabhi and beneath it his hand points to the Nabhi Chakra.

We left Rome early in the morning of the next day and went to Florence in several cars, and it was raining heavily. Shri Mataji came out of the door, umbrellas were opened to bring Her to the car and it suddenly stopped raining. Shortly after it again began to rain heavily and continued for the whole journey. Finally, when the convoy stopped at the side of the road near Florence, the sun came out. On a nearby street lamp two white doves were cleaning their feathers with the sun rays falling on them. The Holy Spirit had arrived.

At the Uffizi Gallery in Florence this special guided art tour continued. Shri Mataji drew our attention to the faces depicted on certain paintings and to the good vibrations of certain artists. In Florence, too, we went to a church. In a corner some women were praying and selling pictures of Jesus with His head drenched in blood and wearing a crown of thorns. This was not at all like the glorious picture of Christ Shri Mataji had given us and showed the deep feelings of guilt a certain belief system has implanted into the hearts of the believers. We stopped near one of these ladies, who was interested in Shri Mataji. An Italian yogi exchanged some words with her.

'What do you think about Me?' Shri Mataji asked.

'Oh, she's a beautiful lady,' the woman said, but her eyes and vibrations spoke for themselves.

Back at the piazza, for some of us the time to say good-bye had come. This was the only time Shri Mataji kissed me on the cheek like an Italian mama.

Thomas Menge

The teacher of all the teachers

We went to see the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, in Italy in 1981. It is one of the most famous picture galleries in the world, where especially you have Italian paintings. At that time, we were a group of people from Italy and Switzerland. There was a lady who was a teacher of the history of art, so she started to explain to Shri Mataji about the pictures, but she couldn't say more than the name of the painter, the year he painted, the title of the painting. Everyone could have read that themselves.

'Look at this colour, how it makes contrast with the other one,' said Shri Mataji, after she had finished. 'Look at this line, how it separates the painting in two parts. Look how the light puts the attention on this central part.'

In fact, Shri Mataji was Herself giving us all a course of history of art and of painting. It was just so beautifully done and it was again a subtle teaching to the so-called teacher because Mother is the teacher of all the teachers.

Marie-Laure Cernay

Taking us back two thousand years

We discovered Botticelli when Mother told us that he was a realised soul. We discovered the *Primavera* and *The Birth of Venus*. At one of the paintings, it was amazing because Shri Mataji came close to the painting.

'Why did they paint Joseph like this?' She said. 'He was not at all old. Why do they paint him so old?'

It was like taking us back two thousand years and realising that Mother knew Joseph and how he was. She was just there, like Shri Mary. She said that he was such a gentle and sweet husband and he did not look at all like that. We were quite stunned at that moment.

Marie-Laure Cernay

Have you given a bandhan?

It was the first time Shri Mataji came to Rome, for a series of programmes in November 1981. I had taken a holiday from work and went to London for a series of weddings, and Shri Mataji was going to see the yogis at these weddings. Shri Mataji had nobody to travel with Her and I said, if Shri Mataji accepts it, I would with great pleasure travel with Her, and She had accepted.

So there we were at the airport. I had met Shri Mataji for the first time only about five or six days before, when She had arrived in Rome. She had done some shopping and there was a lot of hand luggage. I had taken an Economy Class plane ticket and Shri Mataji had Her Business Class plane ticket. We arrived at the gate and the flight attendants started shouting at Shri Mataji because She had too much hand luggage. I was a bit panicky, but Shri Mataji said She was thirsty, so I went to fetch Her a cup of tea, in a plastic goblet. I gave a bandhan for this situation to solve itself because I was worried about all this hand luggage, consisting of porcelain cups and saucers and so on.

When I came back, I could not believe it. Before this, the airline attendants had been so aggressive with Shri Mataji but now I saw that they were being so kind to Her. Shri Mataji explained that they said they would accompany us to the airplane from the gate. They carried our hand luggage and they even upgraded me to Business Class so I could sit next to Shri Mataji. I was absolutely stunned and Shri Mataji laughed.

'Well, Ruth, have you given a bandhan then for the situation to change?' She said.

‘Yes,’ I said.

I knew that it was not my bandhan that had done it, but Shri Mataji. It was just so amazing to see these people change their attitudes so much.

Ruth Eleanore

Shri Mataji sent me to look for you

When Shri Mataji and I arrived in London from Rome in November 1981, Sir CP was waiting for Her with the official United Nations car and the driver. So Shri Mataji had me sit in the front seat, next to the driver and She was sitting next to Sir CP and they were discussing the construction of the house of Brompton Square.

At that time, Shri Mataji and Sir CP were staying at a hotel with the Sahaja Yogis in Earls Court, while Brompton Square was being rebuilt. We arrived there and Shri Mataji took me downstairs, where She was staying in rooms with windows way up, which only gave a little bit of light, because the rooms were almost underground. She opened Her suitcases and started chatting with me and I felt very shy.

‘Come, let’s go upstairs. We’ll meet the yogis,’ She said, and She went into this lounge, which was not decorated at all. Shri Mataji sat and told the yogis who were there about Her trip in Rome and the programmes.

After a while, I needed to go and freshen up after the long travel, so I got up discretely. After a little while I heard somebody knocking and saying, ‘Ruth, are you there? Because Shri Mataji sent me to look for you. She did not know where you went.’

Ruth Eleanore

It came off like butter

There was some wallpaper on the ceiling in the dining room and it wouldn’t come down. Shri Mataji decided She didn’t want it because the person who put it up had such a caught up right side. She’d changed Her mind.

‘No, we won’t have the wallpaper on the ceiling. We’re going to have mirrors,’ Shri Mataji said. She had us take the wallpaper off and it would not come off. We were soaking and soaking, and still it wouldn’t come off. ‘How’s it going?’ She said when She came down to see us.

‘Oh, it won’t come off, Mother,’ I replied.

‘Well, just give this person a bandhan,’ She laughed. We did as She asked and the next minute the wallpaper just came off like butter. It just fell off.

Kay McHugh

Mirrors

I am reminded of a precious moment from the Brompton Square days when Shri Mataji had glanced at Her reflection in one of the many, many mirrors in the house.

‘You see, I need all these mirrors to help Me remind Myself who I am - that I am in this form,’ She explained.

Danya Martoglio

Gilding the roses

I remember standing outside the Brompton Square house waiting tentatively for the door to open ... imagining the deities scrutinising each new arrival. I can

remember anticipating the rush of vibrations - and that heavenly fragrance. If Shri Mataji's bedroom door was ajar the sound of Her voice, and Her laughter, coming from the depths of the house, would give hope of Her darshan.

One day I was a bit anxious about the state of my chakras, after a crowded and hot London tube journey. My vibrational sensitivity had suddenly increased on arrival and each catch was now glaringly evident. I wasn't ready to be under that divine magnifying glass and I was hoping for a little job in the background to allow for acclimatisation. Instead, I was given a pot of gold paint, a little brush and a ladder and told that Shri Mataji wanted me to paint some of the roses on Her bedroom wall.

There She was seated on the sofa, the Goddess Herself! Black hair tumbling elegantly over Her shoulders, Her lotus Feet stretched out in front of Her, it was as if She had nothing else in the world to do other than survey my amateurish work. Not only was I standing high up on a ladder, I also had to have my back to Her to do the painting. I couldn't have felt more exposed. And in Her own gracious way She put me at ease by chatting about this and that. Shri Mataji spoke of books I'd just happened to have read; and asked me what I'd studied that week at school. Any naive comments from me were met with an exclamation: 'Really?!' and Her eyes became big with astonishment - as if I'd uttered a unique gem.

Following this soothing conversation came a companionable silence and the job was done to Her satisfaction. All the while I could feel the kindness pouring from Her eyes, onto me and into me, warming me like sunlight; every little fear of being 'caught up' melting away.

Danya Martoglio

Wallpaper

On another occasion I was working at Brompton Square, and thought, worried, that Sahaja Yoga was not working out in the world, and at that moment Shri Mataji read my mind and took the scraper I was using.

'You have to have patience,' She said a few times.

After a few moments I realised what She meant, and carried on with my work with renewed vigour and a more peaceful mind. However, the wallpaper was not coming off easily. As Shri Mataji was doing Her rounds at that time She asked us what the problem was. When we told Her, She asked us to bring the container with the water we were using, then She vibrated it. After that the wallpaper came off very easily. We later discovered the problem was because the Sahaja Yogi who had put it up was very right sided and his vibrations made the paper hard to remove.

Derek Ferguson

Two questions

One day down in the basement dining room of Brompton Square in the early 1980's there was a small gathering of Sahaja Yogis listening to Shri Mataji. Caleb and Danya's father asked Her two questions.

One was why did Christ have the crown of thorns placed around His head and the other was why did He allow Himself to be baptised in the river. The first answer was that the negative forces wanted to excite his Ekadesha Rudra so that He would get angry and destroy the creation, because he was Shri

Ganesha. The second answer was that the baptism was to satisfy the ego of John the Baptist.

Derek Ferguson

Shri Krishna was pleased

When I was living in the hotel at Bramham Gardens and going to work in Brompton Square I used to stop at the flower shop and get some flowers on the way. When I arrived at the house Shri Mataji would hold up Her fingers with the centres I was catching on, then I would proceed to the front of the house and give myself a good shoebeat. After a while less and less fingers would go up until no fingers would go up. Eventually Shri Mataji said Lord Krishna was pleased with me so I thought, how can I thank Him?

I remembered He liked butter so I went and bought some butter and prepared myself like I was going to do a puja. I sliced off a small piece of butter and let it slide down the back of my throat after saying to Shri Krishna, 'I don't know anything about how to please You but this is an offering to You from me.' All off a sudden my Vishuddhi chakra opened up wider than my throat and my whole mouth went cool. I then thanked Shri Krishna.

Derek Ferguson

Shri Mataji was much beyond this human body

Shri Mataji once told me I could go and see Her whenever I had free time, at Brompton Square, so for about five years I would go once or twice a week, on my days off. She asked me to do many small things. On one occasion She asked me to get a hand lotion for Her hands, and told me to put it in Her room. Anything She would ask me to do I would do, because I saw Her as the Mother of the universe, the doer of everything.

Sometimes She would appear to me to be like an ordinary Indian lady, very compassionate and happy to see me, and then another form, which I felt in my subtle system, was that She can see through me, and see through the whole universe. Shri Mataji was still an Indian lady but She was much beyond this human body. The third form was when She is the Mother of the whole universe, the Mother of God, it is She who came, for the first time, in full complete form.

One time at Brompton Square, I was doing gold painting in Her bedroom, along with one or two other Sahaja Yogis. She asked me to go and sit near Her. She said She wanted to see my past and future, and wanted to work on that. She went deep asleep for about two hours. I sat in front of Her for about an hour and then went back to work. After that Shri Mataji called me back and said that She had done the job.

One day She asked me to clean Her bathroom, because the wallpaper and furnishing and everything was finished. I said I wanted to clean it really properly but that it might take a little more time, and She said that was alright. When Shri Mataji looked at the job, after about two or three hours, She said that I had done the cleaning the way She did the cleaning of the people's inner selves.

Joga Singh

Enough wallpaper to finish the job

The yogis were decorating the basement of the house at Brompton Square and had bought this really nice wallpaper from Harrods. While putting it up

they ran out of paper and tried to go back to Harrods to ask for some more. However Harrods were out of stock and couldn't order any.

Mother was consulted after coming back from Harrods. She told them to check the storage area. After searching the whole storage area, taking everything out so they could get to the back, they found three rolls of the exact same wallpaper, enough to finish the job.

David Prole

Do it with all your love

Shri Mataji was at the bottom of the stairs of the ground floor at Brompton Square, with Sahaja Yogi's gathered around Her. She was holding a paint brush in Her hand and was painting a piece of wood.

'In whatever you do, do it with all your love, attention and understanding,' Mother said as She was doing this.

Ann Lewis

Shri Mataji must have felt my fear

When I was working in Shri Mataji's house at Brompton Square on renovations, somebody had put me to papering a ceiling over a staircase well. They left me there on a little plank over the well. I was too shy to say that I was terrified of heights. All of a sudden the plank wobbled and I felt a sudden fright in my heart, but didn't say anything out loud.

Shri Mataji was right at the other side of the house and in the over twenty years I have known Her, I have never seen Her run, before or since. But She ran into the room and told me to get down immediately. She must have felt that fear in my heart.

Alison Rovina

'Is that Calvary and Golgotha Becoming a building of pity and compassion?'

There was a woman and her brother and they brought a sixteen year old boy who had blood cancer to Shri Mataji's house in Brompton Square. I was working in the same room as where Shri Mataji was working on this boy. He was so weak, he couldn't even sit up. She had him lying down. She called me over to work on him as well.

'What do you feel?' She said to me. There was incredible heat and Shri Mataji put Her Feet on his Nabhi, worked on him with Her Feet. I was feeling it all and after twenty minutes or so, it was just blowing cool. I saw and felt Shri Mataji cure this boy of cancer. That was a tremendous experience, a wonderful thing to actually be there and feel and experience on the vibrations Shri Mataji cure the boy.

After being almost carried in, he walked out, full of energy. It was incredible.

John Watkinson

Helping Shri Mataji tidy Her saris

This either took place at Brompton Square or Bramham Gardens. I was in Her bedroom together with another Sahaja Yogini. The yogini that was with me had another task to see to and she left the room. Shri Mataji also had to leave the room; but She said She had to speak to the deities to explain to them that I had Her permission to be alone in Her room. Shri Mataji turned Her back to

me, and I could hear She was speaking to the deities - very quietly - but not in English, the moment She left the room.

I was left alone in the room; I sat down facing Her shoes that were at the foot of Her open wardrobe with many saris hanging in it. The fragrance in the room, the vibrations, and the deep, deep silence, was an experience beyond words; there was no body and no mind! Shri Mataji walked back into the room.

Shri Mataji said, 'You're enjoying, Ann,' and laughed.

Ann Lewis

An offering for the ganas

One day in Brompton Square I was passing the kitchen and Shri Mataji was there as I walked by. Then a thought came into my head that it would be nice to have a meal cooked by Her, and spontaneously, to my surprise, She called me, gave me some money and sent me to the Midnight Shop to buy some butter and lots of onions - from memory there may have been chicken in the meal also but that was already there.

When She had cooked the meal She started to pour the rice, which now had butter in it, into a glass bowl, but some spilled onto the counter. When I tried to clear up the spilt rice She told me to stop, because that was an offering to the ganas who were jealous of me, because She had cooked a meal. This made me very worried, but it was all right because the rice had pacified them. Shri Mataji then had all the Sahaja Yogis come to the dining room served the meal. It was absolutely delicious.

'Thank You Mother,' everybody started saying.

'Don't thank Me, thank Fergy,' She said.

I wanted to hide under the table and pull my ears. So now anytime I cook or chop or serve food and something jumps away from the main part of the meal I treat that as an offering and offer it to the ganas.

Derek Ferguson

David was a realised soul

While at Brompton Square in December 1981, Shri Mataji remarked that David, the king in the Old Testament, was a realised soul. The story of Noah's Ark was the story of Lord Vishnu's fish incarnation, She said.

Chris Greaves

You are all so lucky you have Me

One cold, snowy evening, we sat at Brompton Square with Shri Mataji (in a room without a roof!) and watched the first video taken of Shri Mataji giving a talk, it must have been about 1981.

'She speaks with such sincerity! What a sincere, genuine person! You are all so lucky. You have Me. I do not have anyone like this to be with in that way,' Shri Mataji said of the video afterwards.

One day Shri Mataji was preparing for a trip to India, and was packing Her saris in Her suitcase. As usual, the room was filled with Sahaja Yogis. That day I had been rushing around from place to place, and with many misgivings, entered Her room knowing that my chakras were very caught up. After sitting for a few moments, an overwhelming wave of Her serenity and stillness swept over me, soothing, calming my agitation. I felt all my inner tensions unknitting one by one, my chakras clearing, my mind and heart becoming tranquil. It was

an experience of immense, indescribable comfort, of being in heaven, of being enveloped in the tidal wave of Her love.

Patricia Proenza

‘A building of pity and compassion’

In the winter of 1981, Shri Mataji moved to 48, Brompton Square, Knightsbridge. She and Sir CP lived there for a few years. When Shri Mataji bought the house in Brompton Square, She invited all the Sahaja Yogis to come and work there. Shri Mataji oversaw all the building works in every detail, and revealed to us Her boundless knowledge of all things, including building construction! She instructed that the house was to be stripped back to its skeleton. Every single layer – and there were so many – of wall paper was scraped away – everything was stripped back to its basic structure. A skeleton was left, often without a roof in places. And we knew that as we worked, Shri Mataji was stripping away all our layers of conditioning and negativity.

Patricia Proenza



Shri Mataji at the housewarming puja at Brompton Square in 1981

Shri Mataji gave a gift to every person in the collective

In 1981 Shri Mataji stayed in London for Christmas. It snowed on Christmas Eve and Mother said it was because Kevin Anslow, Pat's son, wanted a white Christmas.

Shri Mataji had a whole shipment of gifts for all of us, a couple of crates. She brought them to Chelsham Road and had us unpack them in the meditation room and there was packing material all over the floor. Out of the crates came loads of ceramic animals and other objects. We had to lay them all out and then Shri Mataji assigned one to each of the people in the collective. Mother was amazing in the way She remembered all the names of the people in the collective, and there were quite a few of us by then. She gave each of those people a gift for Christmas when She came on Christmas Day, after the puja.

Auriol Purdie

The Comforter promised by Christ

In 1981 Shri Mataji stayed in London for Christmas. On Christmas Day we had a puja and Mother came. At the end of the puja the leader stood in front of Her.

‘Mother, You are the Comforter,’ he said.

‘That I am.’ She answered.

‘Mother, You are the Counsellor,’ he continued.

‘That I am,’ She answered.

‘Mother you are the Redeemer,’ he said finally.

‘That I am,’ She replied.

In the Bible Christ promised to send the Comforter, the Counsellor and the Redeemer.

Auriol Purdie

Bloodshed was avoided

When I first came to Sahaja Yoga, Shri Mataji was very pleased that I came from behind the iron curtain. I had an experience of Kundalini rising in Poland around the time when Shri Mataji visited my country and the pope performed a morning mass to the Virgin Mary in Mother’s and Sir CP Srivastava’s presence. Since that day, everything started to work for me to make it possible to come to England to get my full Realisation from Shri Mataji.

In 1981, the political situation in Poland was very tense because of the Solidarity uprising. Shri Mataji called me to do Christmas Puja at Chelsham Road, and was very concerned about Poland. Shri Mataji asked me to pray for peace in Poland during the puja and said that there should be no bloodshed.

The next week, I heard that martial law was declared by General Jaruzelski, who was then the head of state. I did not know what to think, as it was such a controversial decision to make. I found out later on that had Jaruzelski not declared the martial law, the Russian tanks, already waiting for an order to go in, would have invaded the country and there would have been a terrible bloodshed, followed by occupation of Poland by the Russians troops. But because of the martial law, the bloodshed was avoided.

Grazyna Anslow

Chapter 11

1982 - January and February

India Tour

She loved me very much that day

Mother was going to come to Mumbai by plane and it was the Sankranti Day, 14th January 1982, and we went to see Her at the airport. Hundreds of people were there and it was the first time I saw Her. When Mother arrived, Niranjana, my husband, introduced me as his wife and Mother took both my hands in Her hands and praised me like anything.

‘Oh, she has got realisation. She is a realised soul,’ She said.

Tears came in my eyes and I bowed down. It was a miracle that I had realisation.

From the 14th January, I became a Sahaja Yogini and at the end of the year, on 28th December, we went to Lonavala to Mother’s puja there. It was our first wedding anniversary. We went to see Mother with some sweets and we gave them out to many people. Mother labelled us ‘a one year old Sahaja Yogi couple,’ and gave us gifts and a beautiful room to stay in for three days. She gave me a beautiful sari, which I still have with me, and a suit piece cloth for my husband Niranjana. She loved me very much that day, like a daughter-in-law.

Palinita Mavinkurve

She took me home

In 1982 I came to India a little before the other Sahaja Yogis. One day the plane carrying some others was supposed to be coming in from Canada. I went to meet the plane and it turned out it was going to be delayed by more than twelve hours, so I came back into town from Mumbai airport on the bus and got down at the wrong stop.

I had very little idea where I was, and didn’t know Mumbai at all. I realised I was round the area of the Jaslok Hospital and remembered that Shri Mataji’s mailing address in Mumbai was sometimes near the Jaslok Hospital. I went into the reception area of the hospital, and completely by chance met Shri Mataji, and She took me home to where She was staying.

Patrick Redican

I went into meditation

The India tour began with a public programme. It had finished by the time we foreigners got there and at that time after the programme everybody used to go to Shri Mataji’s Feet. There would be a line on one side of the stage. So we stood at the end of the line and when we got to Her, She told me to sit down on Her right hand side a little way away.

I went into meditation. When my eyes were open I saw this reasonably ordinary scene of Shri Mataji talking to different people, and people coming to Her Feet. But when my eyes were closed, I saw Her as if She was casting the Sudarshan chakra on Her right index finger at me. I had come from Canada, and in the Virata the right Vishuddhi is Canada. It was the first time the Canadian Sahaja Yogis had come on the India tour, and there were four of us.

A true spiritual connection

I first met Shri Mataji in Mumbai, India, in January 1982. It was at the end of a public programme, and She was still sitting on a chair on the stage, meeting people. I was told to go up and introduce myself. She said something to me, and I bowed to Her, and then sat on the stage near Her and watched Her. I had been practising Sahaja Yoga meditation for less than a month, and I did not accept any of the stories or theories which I had heard about Sahaja Yoga or Shri Mataji.

I had one amazing experience: once I sat with about ninety other people in India, around Shri Mataji. We entered a state of Sahaja meditation - all of us. Inside my being was exquisite silence. I felt calm and comfortable inside myself. And then I discovered that Shri Mataji and I were one. She asked, where on my head was my attention. And at that moment, that was exactly where my attention was! She was feeling exactly what I was feeling, as if we shared the same nervous system.

A few minutes later, She said where the attention had moved to, and again, that was where my attention had moved to. In this awareness somehow I was connected to Shri Mataji, I entered a state of ecstasy, of divine bliss. I had only one thought: 'Please don't stop'. Only now can I more fully appreciate how that one experience taught me that the intimacy of a true spiritual connection is absolutely immaculate and pure. Shri Mataji's first name is Nirmala, which means immaculate.

Mark Taylor

I was transformed

I got my realisation on 1st December 1981 in Vancouver, Canada, and shortly after that, three other Canadians and I decided to go on the India tour, and we left in early January 1982.

I cannot ever forget the evening we arrived in India. We were met at the airport in Mumbai by some lovely Indian Sahaja Yogis who took us in a bus directly to a train station and from there to a public programme which was just coming to a close. There were about twenty-five of us and we were instructed to quietly enter along the back of the stage and just be seated while Shri Mataji finished giving realisation and speaking to the group. We sat down and watched and I remember feeling such an amazing flow of vibrations coming from Her, like waves of joy which just seemed to envelope us all.

Following that, each of us was introduced to Shri Mataji personally and each of us bowed down to Her. It was difficult to speak in Her presence and even to say my name, as I felt quite tongue-tied and irreverent, trying to speak at all. I just wanted to look at Her and enjoy Her. After that we were told to wait outside for the buses to come and take us to our overnight stay. I found it difficult to speak to anyone.

During that tour, which took us almost into the middle of March, many amazing things happened to me which at the time I could not explain and did not totally understand. One of the first things that was said to me about Shri Mataji was that She was the Adi Shakti – told to me by an Australian yogini in a very casual conversation. I didn't know what that meant, or the significance

and yet it seemed like a very powerful title. I later became aware of its meaning, or at least the literal translation.

Lori Wills

I was touched in a very deep way

That first year, Shri Mataji would often check our vibrations every few days or so to see how we were progressing. Each time I would bow in front of Her, I could feel such powerful vibrations. On some occasions when I would go before Her, I would feel confusion and embarrassment because my chakras were so caught up.

About two thirds of the way through the trip, after we had just completed a long procession through a village with Shri Mataji riding on a bullock cart along with us, we all rested for some time at the end and then were asked to come before Her. This was the first time I felt totally thoughtless and when I sat up to look at Her, after bowing, She raised Her eyebrows and smiled at me with such approval. It was so wonderful to see Her pleased, like a child who has seen their Mother approving their state of cleanliness.

Every day on that tour I was touched in a very deep way but the most profound was when we had just visited a girl's school. Shri Mataji was walking with us towards Her car and the buses and said to me that I must not be in the direct sun because it was heating my liver. She told me to protect myself by putting my sari over my head.

Lori Wills

The vision in Her eyes

We had been at a programme in the afternoon and at the end I was sitting with a group of young Maharashtrian girls. One of them gave me a container of kumkum for putting the red bindi on my forehead. She suggested taking it up to Shri Mataji to ask Her to vibrate it. I wasn't sure what the girl meant, but decided to approach Shri Mataji. She was sitting on an elevated platform and it was necessary to look up to see Her, as Her Feet were about the height of a table. When I held out my hand with the kumkum in it, I looked into Shri Mataji's eyes and it was as if She revealed the whole universe to me. I did not understand until later, when reading the Mahabharata, that Shri Krishna had done this with Arjuna.

For about eight hours afterwards I literally could not talk and people wondered what was wrong with me! I couldn't express the way it had felt to see that vision in Her eyes. That is perhaps the moment I understood, at least more completely, who Shri Mataji was.

Lori Wills

Presents, healing and help with a sari

Shri Mataji was so kind and gentle and we were all so full of nonsense. At various villages, while She gave realisation, we were given opportunities to lie in shady schoolrooms nearby and rest. We would fall asleep listening to Her voice over the amplifiers.

She sent us to bathe in rivers and sometimes came and sat on the bank with Her Feet in the water to give it vibrations. She kept inquiring if we had enough to eat and if the food was alright. She came to our rooms and suggested that the Spirit is always tidy and that we needed to be sensitive to that.

Shri Mataji gave us presents at every opportunity. With Her own hands She gave us each item. Gave to each one of us, with Her own hands, little bottles of rare scent distilled from flowers, or from the sea, and even from the earth (Hina). There were gifts of prayer-mats and pottery birds - ducks, which She told us were to make us lighter, and swans, to give us discrimination, all made from the clay of Maharashtra vibrated by the feet of so many incarnations and saints. And She gave us little gold-plated Shri Ganeshas, because Shri Mataji said we needed a little of that element in our pujas.

On countless occasions then we went to Her Feet for cleansing. We were so full of catches, and She worked on us all the time. We watched Her hands as they moved Her invisible weapons. A flick of the wrist as a discus was thrown, and then, a few seconds later, She would catch it.

Once at a public programme we had tried to clear a difficult right heart catch on an elderly lady. Then Shri Mataji came up, looked at the lady's back and took up the stance of archery and fired the arrow! We felt the catch go and looked at each other and smiled. No wonder we couldn't move that catch.

Once as we were leaving our guest house for a programme, Mother stopped a yogini who was looking very dishevelled. She called the women to stand around in a screen and then swiftly removed and replaced the same cotton sari which had previously looked so crumpled and shabby and now was crisp and elegant.

'I designed the sari to be worn firmly,' Shri Mataji said. 'It goes around you three and a half times. It must be firm, and the part which goes over the shoulder is loose so you can play with it and re-arrange it, that is very feminine.' Auspiciousness in every detail! The lady in question looked totally transformed of course.

Lyndal Vercoe

A tiger safari

We came into Nagpur one morning, early, and were still climbing out of our sleeping bunks.

'Shri Mataji is here,' the word came. And there She was, in a bright yellow sari, shining in at the window and telling us to be sure to lock the windows before coming with Her to the jungle.

At the jungle camp we sat around Her chair and She warned us not to go into the lake or the crocodiles might eat our toes! She sent us on a night-time safari in trucks and asked us to notice how quiet the jungle became when we saw the tigers. We were always forgetting this idea of quiet, always talking among ourselves. Once we were delayed at a hotel while our passports had to be re-examined by some authority. We became agitated because we were about an hour late for a meeting in a park with Shri Mataji.

'Why are you all catching on left Nabhi?' She asked when we arrived and sat before Her. Someone said that we were afraid we would miss Her because of the delay.

'I am your Mother. I will always find you,' She said, and how could we miss Her? Then She took us to the movies to see a modern film about a housewife who was really a goddess in disguise, and at the interval Shri Mataji bought us all ice creams.

Lyndal Vercoe

No wonder we couldn't move that one

In Nagpur, in February 1982, there was an elderly lady who had gone to school with Shri Mataji and this lady had a right heart catch, which some of us tried to help to clear, but eventually asked her to sit and wait for Shri Mataji, who was walking around the crowd. Shri Mataji came and greeted the woman and chatted for a minute and then She just stood behind her and placed an invisible arrow in an invisible bow and very obviously drew the string back and fired the arrow and we felt the heart clear.

‘Well, no wonder we couldn’t move that one!’ we said, and looked at each other.

Lyndal Vercoe

All the time Shri Mataji was there

In 1982 I went on my first India tour. It started in the first week of January and continued until March. There were only eighty-two yogis, mostly English, some Europeans and Americans and large number of Australians. We travelled around Maharashtra in local buses, with no suspension and very hard seats. It was hot sweaty, uncomfortable, physically demanding and one of the most amazing spiritual experiences of my life.

We got to see Shri Mataji nearly every day as we followed Her from town to village to town. She arranged the itinerary so we would visit special spiritual places such as Sitaji’s bathing place in the forest where Rama and Sita were exiled, the temple high up on a hill where Shri Ramdas, the incarnation of Shri Hanuman, took his samadhi, and the town near to where the Adi Guru Shri Sai Nath of Shirdi spent much of his life.

We bathed in cool rivers and lakes with soft mud and came out sparkingly refreshed and clean. Shri Mataji arranged for us to go to see classic Indian movies such as *Mother India*, *Ganga* and others which featured very strong spiritual women who were undaunted by life’s challenges and persevered through it all. Memories of these women and these movies helped deeply to shape my early understanding of Sahaja Yoga and the power of the woman.

There were wonderful processions arranged for Shri Mataji through village streets. She would be on a bullock cart lined with palm leaves, with supremely joyful devotees dancing along in front of Her. There were evening programmes filled with hundreds of new seekers, or small intimate gatherings where we would sit at Mother’s Feet and She would talk to us and ask how we were, and take us deeper into the depths of a spiritual plane where there were no words to describe the feelings of lightness and heavenliness that surrounded one. The whole atmosphere would become charged with vibrations and impregnated with in a way one never felt before - accompanied at times by deep physical pains. All the time Shri Mataji was there, guiding us through, comforting us and steadily and thoroughly breaking down all our conditionings and westernisations. The tour culminated of course in marriages.

Felicity Payment

Marriage

In 1982 I was on tour with my name on the list to be married. There were about of thirty of us on this list and it was to be one of the first Western collective marriages in Delhi.

One afternoon when we were all sitting in front of Shri Mataji She suddenly asked everyone who had their name on this list to stand up. She then proceeded

to methodically introduce each person to the group one at a time and to describe the good points and bad points of each candidate. She was very honest and left no skeletons in the cupboard. I was quite shocked at Her candour.

After Shri Mataji had finished She asked everyone to go away and think about those on the list and to write on a piece of paper who we would like to marry. I was very surprised and found this very difficult to do. I had always thought Shri Mataji would save me the difficulty and choose for me.

However a very nice match was found for me. We were told that we could only speak to our fiancés for two minutes each day and the wedding was in ten days' time. We were instructed not to talk about our past at all.

Felicity Payment

A completely new beginning

As the time for the marriages approached, one afternoon it was announced that Shri Mataji had especially asked a merchant to bring wedding saris for the brides to choose from and we should come and select one.

The tables were laid out with shimmering deep reds, verdant greens and soft pinks all embroidered with stunning gold trim and brocade. I was drawn to a pink one but felt this was too left sided for me and that I should branch out and change my style for my wedding. I really wanted a red one, but someone else took it. In the end I took the pink one, urged onto me by my sisters, although I did not feel quite right about this. At the same time my friend found a multi coloured one, heavily embroidered with silver. No one had ever seen anything like it. She was completely awestruck.

'Isn't this beautiful! What do you think? I really love it,' she asked me.

I felt it was way too flamboyant. Everyone would stare at it and I told her this, however she was determined and hung on to it. Just then Shri Mataji arrived and asked all the ladies to line up and show Her their choice. My friend showed Shri Mataji the multi coloured sari.

'Oh no, this won't do,' Shri Mataji immediately said, and picked out a red one for her, putting the rainbow one back in the pile. Then I showed Shri Mataji my pink one and She immediately shook Her head decisively.

'No you should have this one,' She said and pulled out my friend's choice. I was stunned.

'Do you like it?' She said, looking straight at me, challengingly. I swallowed hard and surrendered.

'Yes it's lovely, thank You,' I said, which was the only thing I could say, not meaning a word of it, which She knew.

But when I wore that sari on my wedding day, I felt like a completely new person. There was nothing in that sari related to my past. It was like a completely new beginning for me I was wearing a new skin. I was so grateful that She had pulled me out of that left side image I had had of myself and everyone else had of me also. Shri Mataji taught me to respect and enjoy the attention my unique sari brought to me. It was a complete blessing and She orchestrated the whole event, knowing exactly what I was feeling.

We went on to have a beautiful ceremony with twelve couples and a brahmin reciting the wedding mantras with Shri Mataji translating for us all to understand. As I heard each translation I kept thinking, 'Yes that is what I want to vow. That is just right.' For the whole of the rest of the day I felt that I was in the vibration of love. This is what the true meaning of the words to be in love

meant, I felt I was moving through love .I was in a sea of love and it was sparkling, completely in the present and very wonderful.

I felt in this holy state.

Felicity Payment

A wonderful leela of the Divine

I was in India on one of those magical trips through Maharashtra when Western Sahaja Yogis would board the buses and travel on dusty roads for hours on end to arrive at surprise places like a temple by a river or a village where a programme would be organized and we would always be welcomed with a meal that we would eat with our fingers, sitting on the ground. Delicious vegetarian food would be served on banana leaves. Shri Mataji would often surprise us by meeting us at the programme, or She would travel in front of the buses in Her grey Ambassador car with number plates MTJ.

One day we arrived at a musical programme organized by a young orchestra of yuva shaktis. Mother was present and I was sitting next to Her with Her bag on my lap - like was often the case for whoever was asked to accompany Her on those days - and these beautiful young Indian people started to play heavenly music. I felt totally overjoyed and in my heart I was praying, saying to myself, 'Wouldn't it be wonderful to have children so talented as to express such fragrant music, giving so much joy to people!'

At the end Shri Mataji asked for Her purse, took some money out and gave it to me to give to the yuvas; I was very pleased to have this mission and thanked Her: She looked at me with a smile. Soon after I got pregnant with my third child, and not even one year later with our twin girls: as it happens the three of them sing beautifully and now the twins are trained at singing classical Indian music - one professionally - and have delighted lots of people with their voices: What a wonderful leela of the Divine!

Antoinette Wells



This photo was taken on one of the early India tours, in 1982, and shows Shri Mataji eating an evening meal with the Sahaja Yogis in a rural setting. In those days the tours went to many villages in Maharashtra.



Public Programme in an Indian village



This photo was taken in 1982, at Bordi. I took it to Shri Mataji and She said, 'I am the Virata here.'

Derek Ferguson

The essence of creation

On the India tour in 1982, I was in a car with Mother and we were driving along and it was just after sunset. It was the time of the evening when it was neither dark nor light. Mother stopped the car and got out and we got out with Her.

'I made the sky so that the trees would be framed against it,' She said to me as She was looking at everything, while I was commenting on how beautiful it all looked. It sounds like simple words, but it was absolutely fabulous because we were already in a high state and we were looking at this beautiful scene of nature.

These were the few times when She suddenly let you know what She has done in a very matter of fact way, like when She told you of not being able to sleep and having to control the planets or solving some problem or issue way off in another dimension. It's something that makes you realise that hidden in this apparently human body was the essence of creation.

Bala Kanayson

The power of ragas

At the end of a concert of Debu's in Delhi in 1982 Shri Mataji asked him to play a particular raga. During the performance I started to remember my mother who had died several years before. I was not sad as such, but to my surprise tears started to run down my cheeks - I am not the type to cry easily. The next day I went to Debu's house for lunch and remarked on the wonderful performance and how I had cried during the last raga. He said he was also crying as he played and so was Shri Mataji. He said it was a raga that made you think of loved ones you were longing to see. The experience emphasised the explanation that Mother had given us that ragas are very subtle and create an ambience or mood.

Debu Chauderi, the sitar player, often said that every time he played he said it was a puja to Mother, but when he performed in front of Her, he went to another realm spiritually as well as musically.

Kay McHugh

The prasad of Annapurna

In about 1982, we had food cooked for about a hundred Sahaja Yogis and about two hundred or so turned up at our house in Delhi as Shri Mataji had also come. The cook got very worried, but nothing could be done as the rice had finished and was too late to go to the market at night. But everyone ate and no one said they had not got any food. After everyone left I went to the kitchen to check up on the biryani. There was about half a cup left if scraped from the big dish. The cook left it there and went to sleep.

Next morning he came running up to me.

'You also saw that there was only half a cup of biryani left, but come and see,' he said.

I went down and lo and behold the big dish was three quarters full and smelling good. I thought that perhaps he had another dish which he had forgotten to serve, so we distributed it to all the servants and drivers and thought it had finished. Of course there was still a little left at the bottom.

The next morning the same thing happened. It had filled up. We were stumped. Then my husband Yogi told Shri Mataji, and She said that this was the prasad of Annapurna, so better throw it in the River Yamuna. We did that and finally it stopped.

Deepa Mahajan

My attention has withdrawn

My faith in the effectiveness of Shri Mataji's photo, and therefore Her, was established from the very beginning, from the experience of my own transformation, without knowledge or effort. Mother Herself said that initially She was not sure how She would reach the whole world, but after a few years, realised that the photo could do the job, and then She knew it was going to work.

A photo can lose its vibrations. Shri Mataji told us the story of an Indian lady who came to Her in the early days with a picture to ask Her why the image had faded and was going dark. Mother asked if anybody had been negative towards it. The lady said her cousin was very derogatory towards it.

'That's it. My attention has withdrawn,' Shri Mataji said.

She also advised us not to use it as decoration around the house.

Kay McHugh

Going to Mother's Feet on a daily basis

On my first India tour, in 1982, there were just two coach loads of Sahaja Yogis. It was a daily privilege to go to Shri Mataji's Feet. I thought at the time, going to India to receive this blessing was enough, let alone all the auspicious places we visited, the experiences we had and the beautiful people we encountered.

Ann Lewis

I floated home on a sea of vibrations

When I arrived from Australia on my first India tour, in 1982, I thought I should merge with all the collectives around the world, and especially the Indian collective. It was on the last day of my tour, when the second tour had joined us. I realised that I had not spoken to Shri Mataji at all and probably would not have the opportunity. Shri Mother arrived in Her car, got out and started to walk away from where I stood, and the throngs of yogis all filed in behind. Suddenly She moved in a circle and after what seemed like a few moments She was only about twenty feet away from me.

'How did you enjoy your first tour of India?' She asked. I quickly recovered from my surprise and ran towards Her.

'Wonderful Mother,' was all I could gesture. She then said She would take Her tea there, and with table and chair quickly in place, She asked me to sit at Her Feet, where She shared Her food and laughter. I floated home on a sea of vibrations and love, sharing these experiences with all my beautiful new brothers and sisters.

Kristie Corden

Shri Mataji advised me to worship Shri Mahavira

'What happened to your left side?' Shri Mataji asked me on the India Tour of 1982. I'd never smoked nor drunk much, and I even had a job. Shri Mataji held my left hand and worked on me.

Just before the tour was to end we were in Delhi at the first temple/ashram at Safdarjung Enclave. I used to suffer from incessant thinking and emotional imbalance and asked Shri Mataji for help. Shri Mataji diagnosed it as a left side problem, and advised me to worship Shri Mahavira, to meditate with my left hand towards Her photograph and my right hand touching my super-ego. The left side problem improved gradually and reciting the mantras of Shri Mahavira and Shri Bhairava gave great relief.

By chance, over twenty years later, I got a job near to the burial site of William Blake who is the same spiritual personality as Shri Mahavira, even though at the time I was not aware of this. William Blake's memorial stone states that nearby lies William Blake and his wife and my husband and I felt a desire to find the exact location of Blake's grave. In order to do that we put our hands out and followed the vibrations. About twenty yards away from Blake's memorial stone, next to a big tree, we felt an incredibly strong divine fragrance and vibrations. Upon thorough research of the burial records it turned out that the place where we felt that divine fragrance and vibrations was the exact

location where William Blake is buried. Needless to say, while researching the grave of William Blake I felt an improvement in the condition of my left side.

Shri Mataji Herself commented in the eighties that the grave of William Blake is not adequate for a person of his spiritual stature* and is a sign that in England William Blake is still today not properly appreciated.

Carol Garrido

**Editor's note: following Luis and Carol Garrido's researches, the authorities in London are now going to rectify this situation.*

An invitation from Shri Mataji

I was twenty-seven when I met Shri Mataji. Shri Mataji, along with Her brother Baba Mama, came to my house in 1982, in Delhi, in preparation for a wedding between our families. It was a tradition that the bride's family should please the groom's family and that, until the marriage took place, they were to be catered for with full devotion and love. My wife and I were entrusted with the responsibility of looking after the groom's aunt and Her brother – that is, Shri Mataji and Baba Mama. That was indeed the biggest luck of my life. At the time I don't think I was aware of this great good fortune.

Shri Mataji immediately took charge of both me and my wife and started to tell us about Sahaja Yoga and its amazing powers. I began to wonder, 'Who is looking after whom?' Right from the beginning, Her attention was on my Vishuddhi. She started to work on my left Vishuddhi, as I used to often be very sad. She would ask me to sing songs to Her. Baba Mama would silently sit and watch how She worked on me.

Sanjay Talvar

A column of birds

At the Shivaratri Puja in Delhi in 1982, in the sky directly above Shri Mataji as we sat in the garden, a lot of birds, all different types, spiralled up as if around an invisible column directly over Her throne.

Lyndal Vercoe

An eternal moment

Standing in a crowded foyer in Delhi in 1982, I felt I must turn around and there was Shri Mataji coming down the stairs looking straight at me and smiling into my eyes. Her very glance made the Kundalini rise, and such moments are eternal. Or you might suddenly catch just a brief glimpse of Her Feet through a gap in a crowd. The image reverberates in your heart. Then you know what the real meaning of that saying: 'The eyes are the window of the soul,' when your heart fills with joy at the merest glimpse of those Lotus Feet.

On the first tour we were really being children, and She was very much our mother. It was so intimate. But in between, in 1983 Shri Mataji told us She could no longer treat us as children because Uranus was leaving the fifth house in Her chart, and entering the sixth house and we had to start to work.

Lyndal Vercoe

I woke up feeling fantastic.

In 1982, right at the end of the India Tour, there were only a few of us left with Shri Mataji. We were at an old Hindi film called *Jyoti*. We all got tickets and sat in the hall with all the other people and it was a typical movie with

dancing and singing – a very beautiful film. The heroine of the film at one point suddenly became Shri Durga. After that we went back and sat around Shri Mataji while we had our food. When Mother went to bed I slept on the couch where She had been, and had an amazing sleep. I woke up feeling fantastic.

The next day some people were in Her room – some man was there from a bank, and was a VIP sort of person. He was telling Shri Mataji all his problems, and She invited us in to work on him. I felt embarrassed to go in, but we did. He wasn't satisfied, and Mother asked us if his Kundalini was up.

'Yes, yes,' we said, 'his Kundalini is up!'

He wanted to carry on being worked on. Eventually he went. Shri Mataji explained that was how some of the people were – they would just come into Her room and demand to be worked on.

Jeremy Lamaison

Chapter 12

1982 March and April

London, Rome and France

Our inner secret garden

Shri Mataji was planning Her tour in Europe. It was in February 1982 and we were gathered around Her one evening in the London ashram in Chelsham Road. Several yogis from Switzerland were there, too. Apart from weekly lectures in London, Shri Mataji was only lecturing in Paris and Geneva once a year in those years. Austria had just started, as well as Italy.

In October 1981, She had given Her first programme in Rome. I was too shy and impressed by Her to take the liberty to talk to Her. While planning that evening in the ashram, Shri Mataji was asking for yogis to help organize programmes in Birmingham, Bristol, Brighton and also to Paris and Geneva. Sitting at the back of the room, I was waiting for Italy's turn to come. A young Swiss woman suggested to go to Rome, as Ruth needed help.

'Rome needs no help. Ruth will manage very well on her own,' Shri Mataji said. I was quite disappointed by this answer, but I consoled myself thinking I should get over my attachment towards Italy, because I had lived there for some time. Yet, a few days later, the yogi in charge of London told me Ruth had phoned him asking me and Adriana Orifici to come and help. We were rather embarrassed, for Shri Mataji had given different orders.

However, Ruth had insisted for us to come. The wisest solution seemed to be to tell Shri Mataji about Ruth's request and ask Her opinion, but we were too shy to talk to Her. So far, I had always communicated with Her through Her abstract form and I had never been near Her chatting like several other yogis. The date of our departure to Rome was close now. Needless to say we were very worried to go against Shri Mataji's decision, but what to do?

Two days before our departure, Shri Mataji came to Chelsham Road ashram to perform the Shri Rama Puja. The meditation room was packed with yogis from all over England. One chance was then left to us to tell Shri Mataji about our arrangement, but Adriana and I discovered bitterly we would never have the courage to do so. That evening, Shri Mataji told us about the story of Shri Sita and Rama. Then, suddenly in the middle of Her talk, She changed the subject.

'So, who is going to Rome then?' Adriana and I looked at each other, taken aback, with eyes wide open, blushing violently. We raised slowly our hands. Shri Mataji was looking straight in front of Her and could not see us, as we were seated on the right side of the room, near the wall. As soon as our hands were fully raised Shri Mataji turned Her head in our direction without any hesitation whatsoever, and our fiery cheeks suddenly faced Her dazzling smile, full of light. An infinite benevolence was coming straight on us, penetrating each cell of our being with full motherly sweetness. Her face was like the moon at midnight, enlightening the Earth plunged in darkness. Carrying on pouring the rays of Her marvellous smile right at the bottom of our hearts, Shri Mataji bowed gently to us, by which we could perceive the sign of Her deepest respect towards us. It was like a kind of reverence to the most beautiful, noblest and purest part of our being, which probably was our Spirit. She was bowing to us, as if we were queens.

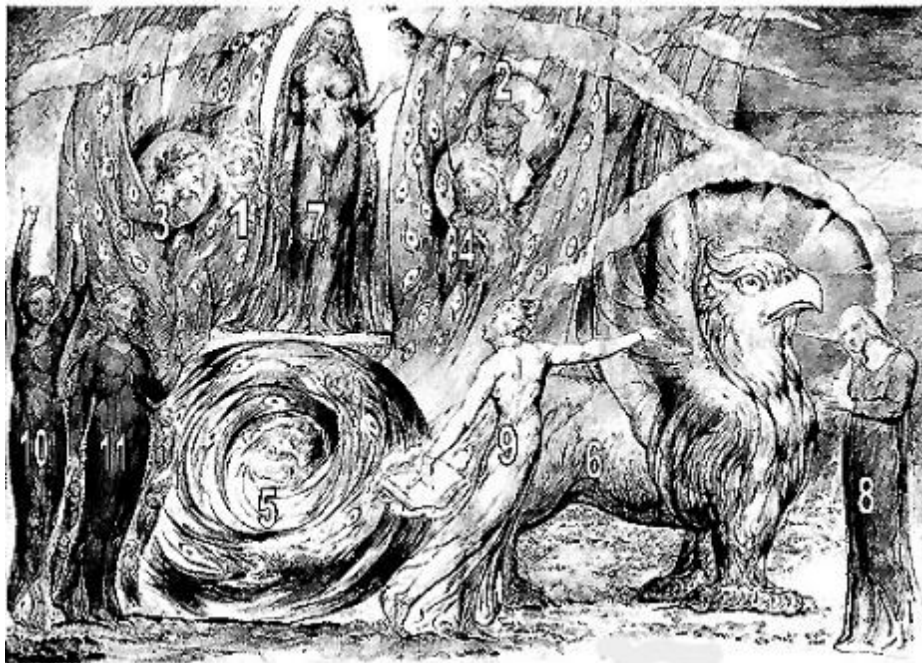
This was too much for us simple girls, used to walking unknown amongst men and women every day, all of them unable to identify within us the sparks of our inner secret garden. But here tonight, someone could see them shining and, better still, reproducing them to the infinite until we felt light, light and suddenly drowned in an unspeakable bliss.

‘Good, very good,’ She said, still smiling. ‘Ruth has got a very nice flat. You will see. You will feel very well there.’ She went back to Her talk where She had left it. The dream had come true. She had spoken to me for the first time in Her physical form.

Guillemette Metouri

Blake’s picture of the deities

When Shri Mataji saw the picture She said, ‘That’s just how it is,’ according to Graham Pottinger, who was with Her at the time. The location of the deities was given by Derek Ferguson who also heard it from Shri Mataji.



Beatrice addressing Dante from the car, sketch after William Blake

1. Shri Hanuman. 2. Shri Bhairava. 3. Shri Garuda. 4. Jesus Christ. 5. Adi Kundalini. 6. Shri Garuda.

Around 1982 some Sahaja Yogis in London showed the above painting to Shri Mataji.

‘That’s just how it is,’ Shri Mataji exclaimed. On that occasion Shri Mataji also pointed out the location of Shri Garuda, Shri Hanuman, Shri Bhairava, and Jesus Christ in this picture.

Luis and Carol Garrido, Derek Ferguson and Graham Pottinger

Just fly like birds

Although memory fades, many of the details, like viewing a landscape from a great distance, I remember sitting on the floor of the front room of Shri Mataji’s house in Brompton Square in central London. It was the day before

our departure from England to a new life back home in Canada in the company of my new wife.

In those days — it was the spring of 1982 — it was common to visit Shri Mataji. The relative handful of yogis who lived in London at the time often worked in Her house, plastering, painting gold leaf, working out their problems. On this day we sipped tea in Her company.

‘Fly like birds,’ She said. ‘Go back to Canada and be dynamic. Enjoy.’

These words remain in my memory. Most of the rest have faded. But the feeling remains, the inspiration and the direction She gave us.

‘I haven’t given you anything,’ She said, as the end of our visit neared.

The words immediately echoed in my head, followed by a list — my marriage, my realisation, a new life, hope, optimism, faith, meaning and two months in India. ‘What does She mean She hasn’t given me anything?’

Shri Mataji reached out to one of the few objects within reach. She grasped a glass vase from the end table. She offered us a rectangular glass vase as a combination wedding and bon voyage gift. It was graced by the image of an Austrian-looking couple waltzing. I remember too some objects on the coffee table between us — a spoon, a pen, perhaps a sugar bowl or paperweight.

‘See how the vibrations change?’ She said. She moved the objects around on the tabletop. The new arrangement was more pleasing. She was giving me a lesson in composition, in vibrations, in balance.

‘What time is your flight tomorrow? How will you get there?’ She told us how long it would take to travel by car from Wandsworth to Heathrow at that time of day.

‘Don’t worry about your flight,’ She told us repeatedly, knowing that we were worrying about our flight. ‘Everything will be all right. Just fly like birds.’

Richard Payment

Our wedding gift

We were recently married in Sahaja Yoga, and Shri Mataji called my husband and me to Her house in Brompton Square just before leaving to go to Vancouver in Canada. It was a very personal special visit. We were invited graciously into the beautiful living room with its royal maroon wall paper. We sat across from Shri Mataji, separated by a small wooden coffee table. We perched respectfully on a divan.

She began by asking us small details of when we were leaving and then spoke about the Prime Minister of Canada at that time. She revealed that She had met him and his wife and that She had anonymously sent them a statue of a deity, I think it was Shri Shiva, as a blessing. She told us that the Prime Minister was a good man with a strong sense of integrity.

‘You must write to him,’ She said. ‘Tell him to stay on as Prime Minister. Tell him about Sahaja Yoga. You must contact these people, these politicians.’

She sent for tea to be served to us. There we were feeling as if in a dream drinking cups of tea with the Goddess in Her drawing room. It all seemed a bit unreal.

‘I must give you something, for your marriage,’ She then said. ‘I have not given you anything yet,’ and She leaned forward and picked up a beautiful crystal glass vase. Engraved into the glass on the front was a young couple dancing twirling with lightness and joy. ‘Here, you must take this.’

Of course we protested. In truth She had given us so much already spiritually as well as materially including a necklace at the wedding ceremony in Delhi.

'You must fly like birds now,' She said. 'Forget the past.' It was an amazing testament to Her love and care and faith in all of us.

How She nurtured us all!

Felicity Payment

They feel the vibrations

When Brompton Square was well on the way to being habitable, in 1982, one night some of us slept there with Shri Mataji. I had slept a night in Her flat at Ashley Gardens, and on both occasions noticed the same thing. Outside both houses were gardens - the private gardens so often found behind London houses and also the shared gardens, in the case of Brompton Square a garden in the middle of the long narrow square.

Often if one wakes early in London in the summer, before the traffic noise drowns out everything else, one can hear the birds singing. However, in all my years in London - over ten in all - I only heard the birds singing all through the night on the two occasions I was staying in a house where Shri Mataji was sleeping. I asked Her about it and She said that they feel the vibrations. Shri Mataji often told us to meditate in the early morning just before the sun gets up, because the vibrations are good then, and of course this is just the moment the birds start to sing.

Linda Williams

Rubber plants

When I moved from a flat to an ashram in the 1980's, I had many rubber type plants, which all ended up in Shri Mataji's house in Brompton Square. She enjoyed them very much.

John Watkinson

I am at the Feet of God

Shri Mataji taught us how to be and how to love these memories which are threaded through each one of us eternally. In 1982, when Mother was giving weekly programmes in London She allowed the Sahaja Yogis to help in Her house with various activities, that were an obvious ploy to be worked on by Her divine vibrations. In those days I would often run straight from school or my childhood activities to 'help' in the house acquiring along the way a variety of previously unknown skills. One day we had all finished our work and Mother gathered the yogis around to listen to some bhajans She was explaining and translating.

'These are not actually for you people,' She said, 'this longing, this crying - because you have seen the face of God, you have found it.'

I was so engrossed I had not noticed the passing of time and had not left at my usual time to catch my train home across London. Suddenly Mother broke off from Her teachings.

'You had better stay the night. Go and phone your mum from My room and tell her,' She said.

In my naivety I thought that I was there unnoticed and yet She cared for every detail down to the kindness of letting my mum know I was safe. Shri Mataji then retired upstairs to watch some television and have Her dinner,

taking me by Her side. I sat at Her Feet watching them (not the television!) caressing them with my eyes. 'I am at the Feet of God,' I marvelled. I prayed that I could absorb Her vibrations and not disturb Her with my petty human troubles.

At this point Mother asked me to explain the plot of a particularly complicated murder mystery, insisting I sit by Her side on the sofa (I refused numerous times till it was disrespectful to disobey). She then fed me delicious morsels from Her own plate. Baffled by the convoluted plot unfolding on screen, I remember Her concurring that the protagonist had behaved that way because he had not known love as a child.

When it was time to retire I accompanied Her down to outside Her bedroom door, bowing at Her Feet and thanking Her for Her kindness. I was planning to go and sleep in the dining room with my shawl for a blanket.

'Wait here,' She said, as I got up from my namaskar.

Shri Mataji returned with toothbrush, toothpaste and one of Her petticoats to sleep in, telling me that after I had changed and used the bathroom I should come to Her room, and once there She showed me which side of the bed I was to have and how to turn off the lights. So I passed the night next to the Adi Shakti, as She slept by my side, as I had dreamed of in my own little childhood bed – that God was by my side in my room, I came to be by Her side. I looked out into the blackness of Her bedroom, imagining the deities all around, chaitanya swirling around like millions of galaxies. I don't think I slept or moved yet was so fresh when She awoke and asked for tea.

'Wait,' She said, after I got out of bed. 'Do you like saris?' She'd asked full of humour, hardly waiting an answer opening Her wardrobe and pulling out a simple white one with an orange and gold zari border. Laughing all the while, rapidly wrapping it three and a half times around my skinny teen frame before I knew what was happening. I remember the feeling of being wrapped up in one of Shri Mataji's saris by Her own loving hands – both physically and metaphorically wrapped up in Her love! Also Her explaining how the sari represented the Kundalini and telling a thrilled me that She'd worn it during realisation tours in Maharashtra. It was on that day too that She gave me a pair of Her golden chappals: 'To worship,' She'd clarified (just in case I was in any doubt).

My shyness melted and I no longer felt afraid in Her presence, She was my Mother and She loved me.

Danya Martoglio

It became obvious who the true doer really was

One day I came to Brompton Square quite early in the morning. Shri Mataji was just coming downstairs. She looked quite tired and was commenting on the limitations of the human body, calling it a 'sticky thing'. I began to worry thinking that I had come at the wrong time.

The minute Shri Mataji reached the ground floor the change which took place was difficult to describe. Suddenly Mother became like a young girl and Her Feet were hardly touching the ground, Her movements were so swift that I found it difficult to keep up while we walked around the house. It seemed that there was such a connection with Mother' that my chores felt more like spontaneous fulfillment of Her wishes, it became quite obvious who the true doer really was.

‘You have done quite a lot today,’ Shri Mataji commented with a smile.

Grazyna Anslow

Shri Mataji answered my thoughts

We all went through various mayas in those days. To begin with, I couldn’t accept that people could be negative. Shri Mataji explained to me that a particular person was very negative. I couldn’t really accept it and that person was affecting me quite badly on the vibrations. I was working at the front of the house and was burning off the old paint. It got to the point when you come round to the right way of thinking and I thought, ‘Shri Mataji, She knows everything and She must be right. If this person is affecting me badly, I mustn’t have anything to do with that person.’

‘Shri Mataji wants to see you,’ someone came up to me and said, immediately after I had been thinking that. So I went over into Her bedroom.

‘What were you thinking just now?’ She said. I explained that I had come round to accepting what She had said to me.

‘You are so much better,’ She said.

She knew exactly what you were thinking. Later on, while I was working for Her at Cabella, in certain situations, Shri Mataji would answer everything I was thinking. For example, it took five and a half years to get my wife over from India after we had married and I remember thinking, ‘What am I to do?’

‘Your wife will come within a few months.’ Shri Mataji said at that moment. These thoughts would pop into my head and Shri Mataji would answer them, as if I was speaking out loud.

John Watkinson

Just to enjoy

I once had the honour to go to Shri Mataji’s house in London and at one point in the afternoon I was standing on the roof garden and gazing at a beautiful magnolia in the neighbour’s garden. I wondered how long it had been there and how much money it must have cost.

That evening, Shri Mataji addressed a public programme in London and, during it, Shri Mataji mentioned how important it was just to enjoy, that it was silly that some people would look at a flower and waste their time thinking how long had it been there and how much it cost.

Bernard Rackham

You go and see him

It’s spring of 1982 and I’ve come up to London from Bristol to see a well-known musician, in concert at the Hammersmith Odeon. On the way, I call in at Shri Mataji’s house in Brompton Square. She had said that we should visit if we happened to be in London, and although I felt rather awkward about just dropping in like this, my wife has urged me to go. Shri Mataji is at home and we talk a little. Then it emerges that, this very night, She’s giving a public programme in Hampstead. Of course, I don’t want to miss it - but then I don’t want to miss the concert either. Thinking aloud, I say, ‘Oh, I was going to see a musician tonight...’

One could argue that a more intelligent man would have abandoned at once any thought of attending the concert, yet by no word or hint or glance does Shri Mataji make me feel this.

‘No, you go and see him,’ She says. But what is really striking is when She adds that he’s an old man, he hasn’t got much longer to live, and that I should try to give him his yoga.

This was true: he was comparatively old and didn’t have that much longer to live - and yet I hadn’t even mentioned his name, let alone his age. Without any effort, spontaneously, Shri Mataji just knew these things.

Chris Greaves

Every house in the universe

I remember being told at the time – in 1982 - that when someone asked Shri Mataji if She had built many houses like this, i.e. like 48 Brompton Square, which She was remaking from the inside out.

‘Every house in the universe,’ She replied without a pause.

Chris Greaves



Shri Mataji at Brompton Square in 1982

Shri Mataji’s wit was very quick

At 48, Brompton Square there was an area outside the house that everyone referred to as the well.

‘Where’s Fergy?’ Shri Mataji asked me one day.

‘He’s in the well,’ I said.

‘Who put him in? Shri Mataji replied.

‘Pardon Mother?’ I said.

‘Little Tommy Finn!’ Shri Mataji said. Shri Mataji’s wit was very quick, so quick that often at first we would not understand the joke.

John Watkinson

Editor’s note: this is the beginning of a well-known nursery rhyme:

Ding, dong, bell, pussy’s in the well,

Who put her in? Little Tommy Finn.

Pujas at Chelsham Road

When the meditation room at the back of Chelsham Road was finished we had many pujas there with Shri Mataji being physically present, until it became too small to fit everyone in. The men would get ready for the pujas, and usually I was busy upstairs in the kitchen, because we would serve a meal afterwards. We would first offer the meal to Shri Mataji, then we would all have a plate, and She would let us have the remains of Her food as prasad.

In those days the pujas were different. We didn't know many bhajans, and there were more mantras. She would have just one or two people to do the puja. One time I was upstairs cooking and Shri Mataji came a bit earlier than expected. I wasn't ready but couldn't leave the half made meal.

'Mother wants you to do the puja today,' someone came up and said, so I had to rush down, and did do the puja – painting Mother's Holy Feet and everything. It was the Shri Rama Puja in April 1982 and I had a great need of help on the Right Heart chakra, the place of Shri Rama. Shri Mataji's compassion was so great, She allowed the person who so needed help to do the puja, not the best qualified or most worthy.

She also had us all take a turn to wash Her hands at various different pujas.

Linda Williams

Shri Mataji was very encouraging

Many years ago, when all of us Sahaja Yogis in London were blessed to often be in the presence of Shri Mataji and could ask Her advice on many subjects, in the spring of 1982 I expressed a desire to write a novel which would help spread Sahaja Yoga. With a lot of help from many Sahaja brothers and sisters, the book was published, under the title *The Keys of Wisdom*. In the early eighties, when I started it, Shri Mataji gave me some advice which might be helpful to others.

When Shri Mataji saw the first draft She said the characters based on the deities were too obvious and should be veiled or toned down, or it would not be auspicious. Humans must be very careful when writing about the deities, She explained.

It was difficult to find names for the young people who are the heroes of the fantasy novel. She said one should use simple names in a book like this, and the name Lee would be a good one, so that name is from Her.

I said that the story started in a terrible country ruled by black magicians who called themselves high priests like I had heard ancient Atlantis was. I asked Her if Atlantis really existed.

'Yes,' Shri Mataji replied, 'it was like Nazi Germany but worse.'

There was another story She told which I adapted for the book. It went like this: when Shri Mataji's parents were in jail for their part in the freedom struggle, She would sometimes be sent to Gandhi's ashram. She told us that a number of young people were sent there and one was a young Maharaja. He had never shared a room with anyone and at the ashram the boys all slept together in a big hall. Mahatma Gandhi apologized when he asked for his own room, explaining there were none available, but said he could sleep outside in the yard. The other children knew what would happen but did not let on. In the night some snakes came to drink and the young Maharaja heard them coming.

He was only too happy to share a room after that

When Shri Mataji first saw the draft, She was very encouraging. Later, in 2006, some days after the Navaratri Puja in Los Angeles, Shri Mataji graciously blessed a copy by putting Her holy hand on it. She said the children of the world should read it.

Linda Williams

Diary extract, 5th April 1982

On the 21st March I took a plane to London in order to participate in the celebration of Shri Mataji's birthday which also coincides with the spring equinox and Mother's Day in England. A splendid puja took place at the ashram of Chelsham Road: Shri Mataji was covered with flowers; She was like the embodiment of Spring!

A great joy overwhelmed me when She entered the meditation room. There were a lot of yoginis who came to present their new born babies to Her and She would give them names. I was designated to give the present for Switzerland: a beautiful lamp for Her new house. I was at Her Feet.

'Why don't you come and visit My house?' She said, when I said I was flying back the following Monday.

I was so happy. So I visited Her house, entirely restored by Sahaja Yogis and we had tea. Shri Mataji talked to me about Geneva and also about the people who had had their realisation and to whom we had sent a letter but they did not come back. Upon my return to Geneva one of them - now a dear friend of mine - called me and asked me if I had thought of her throughout the whole weekend! This is a way Mother's attention worked.

Antoinette Wells



An anniversary gift

This photograph, above, was taken during Shri Mataji and Sir CP's wedding anniversary on the 7th of April, 1982, at Nightingale Lane. Sir CP bought Shri Mataji the sari which he presented to Her and to everyone's delight, Shri Mataji changed into it for all to see.

John Watkinson

Our daily life was completely integrated

This was in spring 1982, April, in Rome. I was a yogini of not even one year and Shri Mataji said She would come to Rome to give programmes again, and this time She would stay in my flat. She decided She would have three or four programmes and would come for six days. I had no experience of Shri Mataji staying in my home and I had never been on the front line to take care of Her, Her meals and Her well-being.

So Guillemette Metouri, who spoke Italian perfectly, came to Rome to help. There was also an English Sahaja Yogi and a little group of Italian yogis, who had got their realisation when Shri Mataji had come the previous November, so they were less than six months old in Sahaja Yoga. Maybe there were one or two Swiss yogis. Guillemette had no experience of being close to Mother and looking after Her either. She was in charge of the kitchen, and we would cook the same for Shri Mataji as for ourselves. Guillemette was also translating Shri Mataji and doing the introduction of the four programmes, and I had to oversee the whole.

Mother would sit at the table in the dining room, take Her meals with us. We would all be sitting and eating on the floor around Her. Mother would talk to us and Guillemette would translate, after having cooked for all of us, with some help. There was one bathroom for Mother and us, and about ten or fifteen yogis were sleeping in my flat. We would get ready in the morning and then clean up the bathroom, and while Shri Mataji was in the bathroom, we would quickly clean up Her bedroom, so it would be clean when She would come back. Needless to say, we were using the same kitchen for Shri Mataji and us, and the same tableware. I did not even have special sheets for Her. It must have been very hard for Her to take in all those vibrations of a new yogini.

I would go shopping with Shri Mataji, while Guillemette would stay and cook with a little team. Shri Mataji would stop in an ice cream parlour and we would have an ice cream with Her, and accompany Her here or there. She was rebuilding the house at Brompton Square, London, and She would look for things for Brompton Square, such as marble and wood for frames.

One morning, a Sahaja Yogi played the piano for Mother. This piano was not in the lounge where Shri Mataji would stay with us, but in the working room where we slept and where we would iron the towels and napkins for Shri Mataji.

Shri Mataji said She wanted to listen to him playing and came into this room, so we arranged a little cushion under Her Feet and She sat there. While She was sitting there, Guillemette was ironing, a Sahaja Yogi was playing the piano and I was folding what Guillemette had ironed. It was just such a feeling of family life of the children with their Mother and our daily life was completely integrated with Shri Mataji.

Ruth Eleanore

A simple beautiful puja

I asked Shri Mataji if She wanted to have a puja in Rome in Spring 1982 and told Her I had bought a sari in India for Her, just in case She wanted to have puja. Shri Mataji said She had not planned for a puja, but if we had a sari for Her, then, yes, why not have a puja in the morning, just before She would go to

the airport. We had nothing at all for puja, so we rushed into a shop and bought a big round plastic salad bowl and that was supposed to be the thali.

She asked me if I could read the hundred and eight names.

‘Yes, of course, Shri Mataji,’ I told Her, but then I read them completely wrong because, instead of saying a mantra, I would just say, ‘Shri Maharajni, Shri Gambhira’ and so on, however, She did not make any remarks. We read these names and you can imagine with nobody really having any experience for doing puja, it was really lacking in protocol. Shri Mataji told us what to do, but we had no experience. It was a very short and simple, but a beautiful puja and reading these names, their meaning in English and maybe in Italian. It was so extraordinary to read these names in front of Shri Mataji, a marvellous experience, beside or despite all the mistakes, which we were not aware of.

Ruth Eleanore

Do you know who gave Me My hair?

Shri Mataji came to Rome for a series of programmes in the spring of 1982 and I was in Her bedroom. She was getting ready to go shopping or to go to the programme.

‘So, do you know who gave Me My hair?’ She asked me.

‘Yes, Shri Mataji, Shri Yama.’

‘And do you know who gave Me My nose?’

‘Yes, Shri Mataji, Shri Kubera.’

‘Very well,’ She said. Then She went on talking about other things.

I understood afterwards that Shri Mataji was checking if I was ready to take care of a group of Sahaja Yogis and to teach them a certain number of things.

Ruth Eleanore

This vision

In Rome, Shri Mataji was chatting and She explained to us that when She was sleeping, She was guarding the thirteen other universes. Because there are fourteen universes — ours is one — and She had to go, while She was sleeping, to check what was happening in the other ones. She also said — but I suppose that this is well known — that when She combs Her hair during a puja, She is putting order in the universe.

Once we were talking about the present, the future and the past and how it worked, how Shri Mataji could know everything about the future and the past. She explained that it is like the planet, which is round. If you take a distance from the Earth, you see many sides of the planet at the same time. She explained that for the past and the future, it was the same. If She took a distance, then She could have this vision of the past and the future.

Ruth Eleanore

A lesson for other times

When Shri Mataji was in Rome I paid for some things for Her and She said She would reimburse me. When I saw Her next, in Paris, She had the money to give back to me, in pounds. She handed me back this money.

‘Shri Mataji, if You need it, You can keep it. You can give me back later,’ I insisted.

‘Ruth, don’t be complicated,’ She told me.

‘Yes, Shri Mataji’ I said. I took the money and that served me as a lesson for other times.

Ruth Eleanore

Walking in the streets of Rome

In 1982 Shri Mataji went to Rome to hold some public meetings, and I decided I would jump on a train and travel from London to help. It so happened that I was the only English person to go and I was very blessed and honoured to be invited to stay in the very same flat as Shri Mataji, and on several occasions we went shopping for marble and pictures etc.

On one occasion whilst walking through the cobbled streets of Rome Shri Mataji’s steps became very laboured, as though She was dragging a heavy weight. We wondered what could be the cause of this obvious discomfort to our Holy Mother. She explained that there were hundreds of souls hanging onto Her legs begging for redemption.

She also told us that it is for this same reason that we the Sahaja Yogis feel heavy at the end of the day. When we go out in our daily lives many souls who are unable to take a birth (they are stuck in a sort of limbo) see that we are realised souls. They know we have our connection with the Goddess and that we will be able to transport them to Shri Mataji. She explained that they are not bad and mean us no harm. When we sit and have our footsoak in the evening these tormented souls pass though the flame to Shri Mataji, and are then able to take another birth, thus being given another chance to get their self realisation.

Alan Henderson

I know you

In 1982 one of my sisters, who was living in Rome, got cancer and was supposed to die, so she went to Bolivia just to say good-bye to her family, but before that, she was walking in Rome’s streets trying to cope with the news and she saw a poster with Shri Mataji’s picture. She found the Mother that she was looking for to comfort her in those difficult moments and went to Her programme and got her realisation. When my sister went to our country of Bolivia, she gave my father, my cousin and I our realisation, and she also got cured of her cancer.

In 1985 my father was involved in a car accident and he couldn’t hear and his sight started to deteriorate. The doctor said that he needed laser rays, but in Bolivia that was not available so my brother who was living in Milan, Italy, took him there. When my father was in my brother’s house Shri Mataji went to Milan and they and all the Sahaja Yogis went to receive Her. They formed two lines and my brother was a leader of Sahaj in Milan at that time, so as he was behind Shri Mataji he couldn’t introduce my father. However, the moment that Shri Mataji got near my father and he offered his flower, Shri Mataji pointed with Her finger to him.

‘I know you,’ She said, and my father was so overcome by emotion that he started crying.

‘Shri Mataji, he is my father,’ my brother said.

Shri Mataji told him that my father was a saint. From there my father was invited to follow Shri Mataji in Her tour around Europe and he started to learn about Sahaja Yoga and started meditating, and later returned to Bolivia to start

Sahaja Yoga there.

Sylvia Vega

We are meeting again

I am called Christine and I have always felt a great connection to Christ. When we arrived in Paris in May 1982, we went to the ashram. Shri Mataji was supposed to be staying at another flat, but suddenly, when we arrived, we saw a lot of shoes outside and knew Shri Mataji was there. So we went in and the leader at the time introduced me to Shri Mataji.

'We are meeting again after two thousand years,' She said, and took me and gave me a hug.

Christine Haage

We felt we had not done anything

In 1982, we were five ladies from Mulhouse, a province of France. We went to Paris to see Shri Mataji and I was the only one to have seen Her before. At the public programme, we did not know how to work on people, so we just stood at the back and watched Shri Mataji, so happy to see our Mother.

'We are not helping,' we said, and were sad that we could not help Shri Mataji like the Paris Sahaja Yogis, who were all working on new people. We just enjoyed Her presence. Afterwards, when She had finished the programme, She came out and stopped in front of us.

'Thank you so much. You have no idea how much you helped Me this evening,' She said. Then She left. We didn't understand what She meant because we felt we had not done anything.

Christina Sweet



Public programme in Paris, May 1982

17th May 1982 (diary extract)

It is now more than ten days since the Sahasrara Puja took place in Paris: I had taken the children with me and there we stayed at the house of a lovely young yogini called Natalie. The house had been given to her by her father and it was used as an ashram. There were around a hundred Sahaja Yogis staying there, sleeping in the garden or in the house on the floor. My cousin Brigitte, myself and our children were given a little room right at the top of the house, and we felt very cosy all wrapped up in our sleeping bags. The next day, it was the 5th of May and we prepared a flower garland, it was the third garland that my little team of sisters and myself were privileged to make this year.

Shri Mataji arrived and started to talk and it was very beautiful when She described how She had opened the seventh chakra of humanity, such nobility as well as modesty was emanating from Her. Towards the end of the puja we just crowned Her with beautiful flowers. Another crown had been prepared but it felt right to do it this way. Shri Mataji granted the assembly with a beaming smile and the children were in the first row.

After the puja we all went into the garden for a havan and everybody felt totally cleansed and happy. In the evening Shri Mataji sat on the floor with a harmonium and started to sing and teach us the bhajan *Jai Jagadamba*. It was

very touching, tender and soothing, and we were all surrounding Her and felt very relaxed. Shri Mataji then spoke sweetly to my little children and then called me in Her room to talk about Geneva.

‘I give you My protection,’ She said at the end.

I took Her hand and put it on my forehead and felt totally thoughtless. I also told Her that I had written a letter to Her and we had felt Her attention and protection strongly on Geneva; She replied that She never received the letter: so we laughed!

Antoinette Wells



Sahasrara Puja weekend, France 1982

How are you, My child?

I went to a public programme in Brighton Pavilion in May 1982 and I was a bit sceptical to begin with, but as soon as Shri Mataji came into the room I felt a very powerful presence. It was a kind of recognition, and when She spoke it seemed that every point She made was hitting the nail on the head. I didn't feel much when first given realisation, but then some yogis came and worked on me

and I felt a strong cool breeze, but I was sure they were blowing on my head and was still a bit sceptical. Meanwhile Shri Mataji was going round the hall, personally working on the new people.

‘Do you think She might come over here?’ I said to the yogis who were working on me, but they said probably not as I had already felt the cool breeze. So I sat and meditated, and then a little later Shri Mataji came and walked past me and just stroked my cheek.

‘How are you, My child?’ She said, as if She knew I really wanted Her to come to me, because the room was full of people.

I stayed right to the end and there was an older Arab man who was sitting there, and he couldn’t feel anything after everyone had worked on him. Shri Mataji came up and was standing in front of him so majestically. She seemed very big and tall, and he was on the chair with some yogis around him. She put Her finger on his Agnya and turned it. He still couldn’t feel it and She started stamping Her Foot on the floor. It felt like the whole place was vibrating and again She put Her finger on his Agnya and turned it, and again She stamped Her Foot. She raised Her hand, and suddenly you could see his face, and yes! He could feel it.

‘Ha!’ She said as She raised Her hand up, ‘Now you feel it.’ It was amazing to see his recognition, and so powerful the way Shri Mataji was stamping on the floor. To see that on somebody else helped me realise what was happening. Shri Mataji has mentioned that the bija mantra for the raising of the Kundalini is ‘Ha!’ Which is why She said it and raised up Her hand up the Kundalini when working on people.

Maggie Keet

A small flock of seagulls

After a public programme in Brighton, Sahaja Yogis gathered outside the venue to see Shri Mataji off in Her car. I had not managed to present Her with the flowers I had brought. She had just finished speaking with some yogis and was just about to drive off, when one of the yogis called out to Shri Mataji and Her car door opened enabling my flowers to be presented.

As Shri Mataji’s car pulled away everyone’s attention was drawn above the car to a small flock of seagulls. There were about seven gulls flying clockwise and forming a perfect circle and their white feathers seemed to catch the streetlights giving them a dove-like appearance. They followed the car along the road and even kept formation as the car turned the corner.

Sean Kelly

Editor’s note: In the Christian tradition, a white dove represents the Holy Spirit, who is Shri Mataji.

The fragrance was incredible

Once going to a meeting in Brighton, I was just approaching it and Shri Mataji was obviously there because the fragrance was incredible.

Another time, Mother had a rose and She smelt it and said that all of us should be able to smell the rose with Her.

Pamela Bromley

I can remember standing in Pam Bromley's house in Brighton, and feeling so many of Shri Mataji's vibrations there. When She came She just filled it with Her vibrations.

Felicity Payment

Chapter 13
1982 – May
France, Portugal and Spain

A memorable train journey

I remember a journey by train with Shri Mataji. We had gone to Lille in the north of France with Her to where some programmes were going to take place in May 1982. After a small puja to Shri Krishna performed with some yogis in a small apartment, where Shri Mataji asked me to read the names in Sanskrit - I had never done that before - needless to say that these brought me in a state of thoughtlessness which lasted until the programme when She asked me to introduce Her on stage. I had no idea about what I was going to say but in Her close proximity the words trickled from an unknown region into my mouth and my voice carried them out to the public. I felt inspired and talked about Sahaja Yoga as a Maha Yoga and went on to talk about the integration of all the yogas and religions.

The next day we took the train and Mother was nowhere to be seen. She must have boarded the train with one or two yogis so when we were in it we were very anxious to find Her. At that time the French trains had compartments with a sliding door so we were running down the train looking inside all the compartments and lo and behold we reached the compartment where Shri Mataji was sitting and She greeted us with one of Her luminous smiles.

‘There you are! Come in, come in,’ She said, so the five or six of us sat down, delighted after this kind of hide and seek that we had found Her. She started to quiz us on the Zodiac signs. We were all in such a light mood and when it was my turn I said my sun was in Aquarius.

‘Very good, very good,’ She said, ‘you see the Aquarius is the water carrier, the kumba and it holds the divine waters which are the vibrations.’ As usual our divine Mother would bring what was a light subject into another more profound realm; the domain of Nirmala Vidya. We arrived in Paris in no time or infinite time, and Shri Mataji was going to another programme that evening.

Antoinette Wells

Your Mother is cooking

At Le Raincy, Paris, around 5th May 1982, Mother asked me ‘What are you doing?’ I was quite new in Sahaja Yoga and today I would have said much less and in different words.

‘I want to take photos of the whole atmosphere, Mother, and of our Guru who is cooking for us,’ I then said.

‘It is Your Mother who is cooking,’ Shri Mataji replied, and She smiled with joy.

Robbert Ruigrok

Mother, I am my own guru

I first met Shri Mataji in Portugal in May 1982. My knowledge of English was far from perfect. In fact to me the word vibrations meant the type of phenomenon that one experiences when a building is vibrating, for instance as a result of loud music. Shri Mataji, who was sitting at a distance of about three metres, asked me if I could feel the vibrations, as She blew them in my

direction. I said no. She increased the flow and again asked, and again I said no. She increased the flow once more and by now the feeling of ecstasy was very distinct as well as the coolness of an all pervading cool breeze. Again I confessed to not feeling vibrations but yes to strong cool breeze. It was an incredible experience to see how Shri Mataji was completely in control of this cool wind, deciding where it went.

Shri Mataji was working on a new lady and told me to translate the following mantra for that lady to say aloud while She worked on her back. The mantra was: 'Mother I am my own guru'. Being very new to Sahaja knowledge and inexperienced at translating English I reasoned that the correct mantra must have been 'Mother I am *not* my own guru'. After that lady repeated this wrong version of the mantra in Portuguese, Shri Mataji said the vibrations were getting worse and the translation must be wrong. That's when I was introduced to this incredible mantra: 'Mother I am my own guru,' which corrected the vibrations.

Luis Garrido

The Lady of the Rock

In May 1982, Shri Mataji came to Lisbon for a few days for two public programmes and subsequent follow-ups. The programmes were held in a school in the old part of the town and the last follow-up programme was held on a Saturday morning. The caretaker of the hall requested us to leave at a certain fixed time as he had to go to a fair on the outskirts of the capital, and one of the Yogis was supposed to take him there.

When Shri Mataji was informed of this, She mentioned She would like to go to this fair, and see the handicrafts of the country, so we all went in the same small car. Arriving near the spot, Shri Mataji asked what was the story of the place, why a fair was done there, and whether a sanctuary existed, because She could feel strong vibrations. The caretaker then explained that this fair took place only two Saturdays per year, because an apparition of the Holy Virgin's statue had occurred many years before.

'Two children playing in the fields entered a hidden cave and found a statue of the Virgin Mary. They went to tell some people, and when returned, the statue had changed place, in the same cave; people then decided to build a small chapel on the spot, and the statue is still in the cave underneath, where it can be visited by everyone.'



Shri Mataji decided to go and see all the handicrafts and ceramics, and at the end She mentioned She would like to visit the cave as well. There was a queue of people waiting to go inside, and therefore I did not wish Shri Mataji to wait in the sun, but She insisted She should go in. We queued for a little while, and once inside the cave could see the statue. How to explain in words the feelings in your heart when you are visiting a sanctuary where the Virgin Mary appeared long-time back, accompanying Mother Mary Herself in human form? And there She was, the same almond eyes, the same long black hair.

As people were leaving some money for the church, I asked Shri Mataji whether we should also give some money.

'You people should, not Me; after all, what is the need to give money to Myself?' was Her answer.

This sanctuary was a real one, representing a true apparition of the Virgin, and this fact is not known at all! The apparition in Fatima is known world-wide, but not this one, though it is as true. But Shri Mataji came and took us there, to show another hidden treasure of the country.

Marie-Amélia de Kalbermatten

The Portuguese swayambhu

In August 1385 Portugal was attacked by Spain. A battle took place on the eve of the Festival of the Virgin Mary, the Portuguese forces prayed for Her assistance and won against Spain's much larger army - the victory was attributed to Her. The King of Portugal declared that the country and crown belonged to the Virgin Mary, Her statue was crowned and She was declared the Queen and Patroness of Portugal.

During Shri Mataji's visit to Portugal for Diwali Puja in the 1980's, a Portuguese Sahaja Yogi related this story and declared that She was the one with the right to the Portuguese crown because She was the living Mother Goddess. The Sahaja Yogi also said that a day would come when all countries in the world would acknowledge this fact. Shri Mataji smiled graciously and accepted this praise.

In 1822, during a civil war, some children discovered a statue of the Virgin Mary in a grotto, on the outskirts of Lisbon. This discovery was accompanied by wondrous events and miraculous cures and took people's interest away from the business of neighbour killing neighbour that is typical of a civil war, so it was called Our Lady of the Counter Revolution.

When Shri Mataji came to Portugal in 1982, apart from the people who lived in the neighbourhood, nobody knew about it. The chances of Her finding this statue were very slim because it was only taken out of the church for a procession on the 31st of May, but She went to there on that very day.

'The vibrations are far too good, there must be something holy in this area,' Shri Mataji commented, before arriving there. The Portuguese Sahaja Yogis were not aware of anything special. 'Do you have here something holy such as a tooth of Lord Buddha or some hairs of the Prophet Mohammed?' She asked.

'Surely if there was something that precious we would have heard of it?' the Sahaja Yogis continued.

'It could be there is a swayambhu somewhere nearby,' Shri Mataji said. At last Her car reached the spot where the procession was taking place and She exclaimed, 'That's your swayambhu, go and find out the story of this statue,' and having examined it She commented, 'It looks rather like Me.'

The Sahaja Yogis asked Shri Mataji about the apparitions of the Virgin Mary in Portugal, in the village of Fatima, in 1917. Shri Mataji confirmed that they were genuine but advised them not to get too involved with all this. During one of Her visits, Shri Mataji asked to be driven to the area of Fatima.

Luis Garrido

Small daily miracles in Lisbon

Arriving in Lisbon in mid May 1982 to prepare the public programmes, from the plane I saw a new town under a blue sky, shining ochre roofs with a bright freshness I had never noticed before. While preparing we could feel the helping hand of Shri Hanuman. Knowing that Shri Mataji preferred not to stay in a hotel, although we were old it was impossible, we found and rented a house for

one week, a beautiful old sixteenth century house, with an internal patio, five minutes walking distance from the hall rented for the programmes.

We had contacted the radio, TV and newspapers, requested journalists to come and to interview Shri Mataji, but none gave us an answer. So, a bit sad, we went to the airport to receive Her in our country. I went to the luggage hall and stood in front of the passport control. I saw lots of journalists and photographers, which made me even sadder, as they told us they were coming to welcome a famous musical group. One of the journalists asked me why I was asking, and I answered that I thought maybe it was to welcome Shri Mataji. To my amazement, he told me that one of his colleagues was there for that reason, that he was waiting for an Indian Lady who was a guru! We, the 'big organisers' did not even know it! I pretended I knew he was to come and gave a little explanation on Sahaja Yoga while waiting. When Shri Mataji arrived, illuminating the hall with Her radiance, She gave an interview right there, in the middle of the luggage. The journalist did a nice article and came to one of the programmes.

Marie-Amélia de Kalbermatten

The effect of Shri Mataji's photo

Before meeting Shri Mataji, in May 1982, I had a glance of Her photograph which set everything in motion. As a seeker of truth I had gone through many spiritual books, some from false gurus and some from genuinely divine personalities. I never gave up praying to Christ but felt I never got an answer from Him, but when I saw Shri Mataji's photograph, at last He had a message for me.

My parents had gone to meet Shri Mataji in the evening and came home very late. My mum was so excited that she woke me up at 4 am and showed me Her picture. I went back to sleep and Christ appeared in my dream.

'I was hungry and you gave Me no food, I had no clothes and you gave Me nothing to cover myself with, I was in jail and you did not come to visit Me,' He said, three times.

On waking up I recognised some of these words as being from the Bible, but what did this mean to me? The answer hit me as a flash of lightning. I had, for the last three years, refused to visit my cousin who was in jail for drug offences, but after this dream I went to see him that very day. I took my girlfriend to introduce her to him and on the way back we went to see Shri Mataji for the first time. To my surprise She told me to visit my cousin and raise his Kundalini. Shri Mataji explained that She had already seen a photograph of him and given him self realisation from a distance at my aunt's request. I was proud to be able to tell Shri Mataji I had just been to see him.

Luis Garrido



Shri Mataji arriving, and leaving, Lisbon airport

Meeting Shri Mataji

We were told to sit and wait because Shri Mataji was having a siesta, and it would be a while before She could see us. We had no difficulty going into a siesta like mood since the atmosphere was impregnated with silence and spirituality, and felt as if we were in a temple. Later I got a glimpse of a person I recognised and followed him to get his attention, but was trying not to make any noise since Shri Mataji was resting. She came out of Her room and he told Her that several people had arrived to see Her.

From that angle all I could see was the profile of Her face, but I had the most amazing experience. I saw in quick succession many previous lives of mine and in every life Shri Mataji was my mother and creator, She had watched over me and knew everything I had done. A few seconds later She came into the room to see us. Shri Mataji addressed me in English as if She knew I could speak this language. She said I could translate for Her when She was speaking to the other people. This gave me a chance to move closer to Her and I felt an enormous energy radiating from Her as well as a feeling of holiness and joy that beamed from Her being.

‘Thank you, Mr William Blake,’ I said to myself, because I had been taking English lessons hoping to read his poetry in English. Later I learnt that in Sahaja Yoga one often finds people interested in William Blake.

This house had a beautiful inner courtyard and garden and Shri Mataji remarked that it was similar to certain Indian houses in layout. It had been rented for Her stay, plus an extra month. Her bedroom was the largest room in the house and since more people were still arriving to see Her we were all invited into it to listen to Her.

Sitting on Her bed, Shri Mataji gave a long lecture that was translated by a Sahaja Yogi. She talked of many things including the Virgin Mary, but I was ill and did not manage to listen properly, so just relaxed and fell into a daze. By the end I was feeling much better and fully recharged. Shri Mataji mentioned the Kundalini several times, and this interested me a lot.

Luis Garrido

The girlfriend

Just before going into the house my girlfriend said she was an atheist and a communist and ought not to meet a spiritual person like Shri Mataji. I took no

notice and dragged her inside. When Shri Mataji came to see the people that were there to meet Her, She pointed at my girl-friend and looked at me.

‘What is this woman doing here?’ She said. I answered that she was my girlfriend.

‘I don’t know the meaning of the word girlfriend. It’s something very indecent; do you really love her?’ Shri Mataji replied. I was unable to say that I did and She asked again, ‘Do you really love her, because if you did you would marry her rather than treating her like this. In societies like India this type of relationship of boyfriend, girlfriend is considered highly immoral.’

When Shri Mataji started giving realisation to the new people on a one to one basis the first person She worked on and cured was my girlfriend. Shri Mataji explained that she was very sick and that she couldn’t have children, and spent a long time with her. About a week later I proposed marriage, but she told me she did not want to marry me and we ended the relationship. She soon got married and later I heard she was expecting a child.

Luis Garrido

The last to be worked on

Shri Mataji worked on everyone who had come to see Her and told me to go to the end of the queue. My turn came up a few times.

‘Sir, please go to the end of the queue,’ Shri Mataji said each time, so I was the last person She worked on and our family were the last to leave - my girlfriend, my mum and dad, my younger sister and my aunt and uncle. My aunt had brought a photo of my cousin who was in jail.

‘You all came together but you did not bring Me the most important person,’ She said to us. My aunt knew straight away that Shri Mataji meant we had not brought our grandmother.

When my turn came I understood why She had asked me to wait until last. It was getting very late, She spent at least forty minutes on me and this would have caused a great delay to the other people who had come to see Her.

Shri Mataji spent a long time saying Sanskrit mantras in my ear against the false gurus I had visited. I can remember a fragment of the mantras - ‘Aham sakshat ...mardini.’ Then She told me to turn my back to Her, as I was kneeling on the floor at Her Feet. Without warning She held my head, with full force gave a fast twist to my neck to the left, and it made a clicking noise and felt as if a great tension was released. Shri Mataji knew what She was doing. She did the same in the opposite direction, the neck made the same clicking noise and another blockage was released. By now I was immersed in a sea of bliss.

It was quite common for Shri Mataji to ask people to take off their coats or jackets while She was working on them so people did not carry too much (vibrational) baggage while getting their self realisation and She also told me to take my jacket off. I saw Her telling people to wash their spectacles before putting them back on after receiving self realisation. For that reason I washed my glasses prior to my own session with Shri Mataji. She told me to remove them during the exercise.

While I was still kneeling with my back towards Her, Shri Mataji took out of Her handbag an Indian medicine called Netranjan and applied a liberal portion of it to the inside of my eyes. I did not know exactly what had happened at the time except that another strong blockage had just been release, the waves of bliss were even stronger and I felt safe in Her hands. The temporary loss of

sight I experienced had been caused by the application of Netranjan. A few minutes later I was able to see again, much better than before. Then Shri Mataji told me that I no longer needed my spectacles. This was true because I could now see much clearer without the glasses than with them. People who were wearing necklaces or bracelets associated with false gurus were told by Shri Mataji to take them off. She would not proceed until they were removed. Before leaving, Shri Mataji left me a piece of advice that proved very important and also demonstrated to me Her prophetic powers.

‘If ever you have a problem go and seek her advice, she is a very good person with a good heart,’ She said to me, pointing at my aunt.

A couple of months later I was conscripted into the army. I remembered Shri Mataji’s words and my aunt informed me that if I applied to be classed as a conscientious objector I would be able to delay the date of joining, which I did, and never had to do military service.

Luis Garrido

The dog

When Shri Mataji was talking to people on that first evening, a big dog managed to install herself on the same settee that She was sitting on. Most people felt that the dog ought to be removed, but Shri Mataji waved Her hand signalling to let it be. People were enthralled by Her words and no one noticed that very discreetly the dog inched herself bit by bit towards Shri Mataji until her head was resting on Her leg very devotedly. Shri Mataji laid Her hand on the dog’s head for quite a while.

‘Even this dog realises who I am and she loves Me too,’ She declared.

The dog was now safe from being removed from the settee and became very aggressive when anyone tried to move it off.

‘Did you notice how careful this dog was not to disturb Me and how very slowly and with what great care and protocol this dog came to share the same settee with Me?’ Shri Mataji remarked.

This dog was very old and had been declared sterile by several vets. She belonged to a Sahaja Yogi who was an orphan and lived with his grandmother, who felt very lonely when this Sahaja Yogi left home and took the dog with him. The grandmother demanded that either the Sahaja Yogi came back to live with her or the dog must be returned to her for company. After Shri Mataji had touched the dog she had a litter of puppies that were given to the grandmother. Shri Mataji must have cured this dog’s infertility.

Luis Garrido

A stronger treatment

I had been suffering from a constant headache for many years, on the left of my forehead. In Sahaj terms this coincides with the area of the Ego, the place in our body where Lord Buddha resides, but I did not know it at the time. After Sahaja Yoga this pain started to go away but from time to time it would come back, especially if I engaged in an intellectual debate or an argument. At one point I asked Shri Mataji if She could remove it. In less than a second She did, just by passing Her hand gently over my forehead. I was amazed, and assumed that She had removed this problem once and for all. Later I had a light argument with someone and the pain came back. I went to Shri Mataji and told Her.

'I did cure it for you but you have to learn to do it yourself, it is not completely cured, and you will have to work hard at it to master it completely. It could take you several years,' She said.

'Don't you have some stronger technique to wipe this problem out for ever?' I asked.

'One stronger technique is, if you want, you can rub My Feet, this might help,' Shri Mataji replied.

I said I would like to try. She was sitting down and removed Her shoes, so I came forward and rubbed Her Feet. For a second I thought that it was going to be embarrassing to be seen doing this in a room full of people who were waiting for Shri Mataji to start Her usual lecture. While rubbing Her Feet I felt lost in an ocean of bliss, a sensation similar to the one I had felt while She was giving me self realisation. I could feel cool vibrations coming into my head, the headache was completely gone and I hadn't felt so well for years. I was busy rubbing Shri Mataji's Feet when I felt a tap on my shoulder.

'I've decided to go back home but my car has a puncture. I want you to come and change the tyre for me,' my father said.

I didn't want to interrupt my treatment of rubbing Shri Mataji's Feet because I could feel how much I was benefitting from it but didn't want to let my father down. I translated my father's request.

'That's no problem, the other Sahaja Yogis can go and change the tyre and you can stay where you are,' Shri Mataji said promptly.

I was able to stay for another fifteen minutes rubbing Her Feet, while She started Her lecture. The pain in my forehead didn't trouble me again.

Luis Garrido

The trip to the airport

The next morning I went round early, hoping to see Shri Mataji again. I decided to cook a special breakfast for Her. It consisted of strong tea from the Portuguese ex-colonies in Africa, buttered toast, a few slices of yellow Portuguese corn bread, two hard boiled eggs off the shell, and a few slices of smoked ham. A Sahaja Yogini, seeing the food, warned me that She was currently on a diet, and I had prepared a typical Portuguese breakfast which was not something She had ever eaten. The Sahaja Yogini saw that I was very disappointed so she took the tray to Shri Mataji just to show Her. Some time later she came back.

'I can't believe it, Shri Mataji ate the whole breakfast that you prepared for Her. She said She enjoyed it very much and is now ready to see you,' she said.

'You may travel in the car with Me to the airport,' Shri Mataji said, and I left the room feeling completely transported into the divine realms. Mother was truly extraordinary, what a feeling being in Her presence!

An hour later She left for the airport. The front seat was occupied by a large Indian Sahaja Yogi. On the back seat was Shri Mataji and next to Her the Sahaja Yogini who had opened the door in the morning for me. I was about to get in when suddenly the dog, which belonged to the driver, got in and took my place.

I looked at Shri Mataji and She understood my predicament as I wanted to go in the car with Her. She tried to push the dog out but it started snarling at Her, and we were worried that She might get bitten. I was amazed at Her courage

when struggling with such an aggressive dog. The people in the car begged Shri Mataji to give up, because it was dangerous.

‘You see this dog, she also loves Me and wants to come with Me. What can I do?’ She said.

‘That’s alright, I understand,’ I replied, and besides I did not want Shri Mataji to be bitten. ‘Why don’t you find some other transport, perhaps a taxi?’ She suggested.

‘That’s a good idea,’ I replied, and Her car left for the airport.

We started our journey more than an hour after Shri Mataji had left but arrived at the same time as Her, and our taxi driver stopped right next to Her car. I asked one of the Sahaja Yogis how this happened.

‘It’s very simple,’ he replied, ‘the Sahaja Yogi driving Shri Mataji’s car today, when he picked Her up from the airport a week ago, had an accident whilst She was in the car, involving a motorbike. Today he drove very slowly and did not know the best route to the airport. Shri Mataji advised that it is best not to ride motorbikes in the West.’

I was grateful for this advice because I had recently had an accident on my motorbike, and was still wearing plaster from a broken rib sustained then, but it was fine after Mother worked on me. Inside the airport we said goodbye to Shri Mataji.

‘What am I going to do now, when You are gone?’ I asked.

‘Fear not and have faith,’ She replied, ‘and see this Indian Sahaja Yogi, he is staying behind and he can teach you about Sahaja Yoga.’

On the way back I went in the Sahaja Yogi’s car, next to the dog. I was curious to find out more about the car accident when Shri Mataji was a passenger. They told me that the driver had just passed his test and that at a traffic light his attention wavered a bit while waiting for it to change, then there was a crash against a motorbike. Luckily the motorbike driver was not injured. Shri Mataji said that they should not worry too much about this and the negativity of the motorbike rider played a major part.

She took pity on the driver, who was feeling guilty for causing this mishap. She told him not to feel guilty and to drive with full confidence, and kept Her hand lightly on his left Vishuddhi shoulder to remove his feelings of guilt. She also reassured him that there would be no serious legal consequences arising from this accident.

Luis Garrido

A sleeping bag

After the programmes Shri Mataji visited the handicrafts fair, where She bought some ceramics. They were to be taken to Madrid, where some yogis from the UK were preparing the public programmes and our Mother’s visit. Shri Mataji mentioned that as just I was accompanying Her in the plane, it was better that I did not have a suitcase, so we could carry all the items bought in Portugal which were to be taken to UK by the Yogis from England who were staying in Madrid. She never forgot any detail, and mentioned that my personal belongings needed for the three days in Spain could go in Her own suitcase! I was very shy to put my clothes in Her suitcase, but She insisted, and so it was done. The only luggage I had was my sleeping bag.

Arriving at Madrid, I carefully counted all the parcels, making sure I was not forgetting Her suitcase and all the other boxes with the ceramics; and was so concentrated that I forgot to look for my sleeping bag.

‘What about your sleeping bag? Did you collect it?’ Shri Mataji asked me when we were leaving the luggage hall. She was the Mother looking after Her child and her belongings.

Marie-Amélia de Kalbermatten

Shri Mataji had never been to Madrid before

Let me tell you some little stories which show the power of Shri Mataji in little details of life, for example in 1982, at the first public programme in Spain. At that time I lived in England and we were a little group of yogis from England who came to Madrid to prepare and organise that programme. It was very difficult to get halls and hotels, because it was the football World Cup. We had to get a very simple flat to accommodate Shri Mataji. In England, before that, Shri Mataji was talking about the ambassador of India to Madrid, that She knew.

I wrote him a letter, saying that Shri Mataji was going to Madrid. I asked if he could help us to get a hall. He gave me a letter of recommendation so I could go to the Indian embassy and they could forward me to other people. I didn’t know much Spanish then, and I don’t know how it was possible for me to talk and ask. Shri Mataji really worked through me. The Indian Embassy gave me a letter for the Ministry of Sport, and we went there, told the man what we needed and he got us a hall.

The ambassador organised a reception for Shri Mataji in his home, before the public programme. There were no Sahaja Yogis in Madrid then, so I found myself driving Shri Mataji’s car. My sister-in-law Marie-Amelia had just come from Portugal with Shri Mataji. My sister-in-law and I decided to drive to the ambassador’s house the afternoon before, because we had never driven in that town before, but when we went in the evening, with Shri Mataji we got completely lost. We were talking in French and wondering where to go, and didn’t dare to say anything to Shri Mataji.

‘Keep right – turn left – go straight,’ Shri Mataji suddenly said, and She directed us perfectly to the house of the ambassador. It was absolutely amazing, because She had never been to Madrid and had never been to that house before.

Of course we arrived late at the reception, where there were many Indian people. We were worried, because the public programme was supposed to start, and we had one yogi who was to do an introduction. We arrived an hour and a half after it had begun, but the hall was still full. Of the two hundred people who had come, only six had left. Everyone got realisation.

Marie-Laure Cernay

Madrid

My sister-in-law Marie-Laure was in Madrid and we were very happy to see each other, as we had rarely had the occasion since she had left Switzerland and gone to live in UK. As we were busy with all the preparations, we did not have much time to chat together. Shri Mataji showed us how She knew Her children well, with a nice little ‘detail’. Her passport needed an extension, and She requested us both to take it to the consulate, so we had three complete hours

together in Madrid. When we came back, radiant and smiling, Shri Mataji looked at us and smiled, asking us if we had had a nice time together!

This short visit was full of these kind of nice details, showing Her divine attention and also sense of humour. The Indian ambassador invited Shri Mataji for tea and to give realisation to a group of Indians living in Madrid.

Shri Mataji requested Marie-Laure and myself to accompany Her. Marie-Laure was driving and I had a map and was supposed to be the co-pilot. None of us knew the way, but with the map I thought we could manage. Shri Mataji was sitting in the back seat, alone. I carefully chose the streets to take to the ambassador's residence. But each street I indicated Marie-Laure to take, had the traffic going only the wrong way. Therefore, instead of approaching the area, we were going further and further away. I started feeling very hot, and did not know what to do, and was worried we would be late.

'Are you sure this is the way? I have the feeling we are going in the wrong direction,' Shri Mataji suddenly asked, then added, 'Maria-Amélia, your hair is standing up on your head.'

All the heat I was feeling was putting my hair up. We laughed a lot, Shri Mataji started indicating the streets to take and miracle of miracles, without a map, the streets She was indicating were not one way streets going the wrong way, so therefore we arrived in minutes.

These details show us how Her attention and guidance is always present, especially when we are doing Her work, but doing Her work without being the doers, just being the instruments. Shri Mataji gave us the opportunity to enjoy Her great sense of humour.

Marie-Amélia de Kalbermatten

He knows who I am

When we went to Spain for the first time in 1982, we prepared the room for Shri Mataji and put a candle next to Her bed. She smiled at us.

'I don't need a candle in My room,' She said.

Of the new people who came in Madrid, there was a lawyer who spoke no English and was an amazingly charismatic character. He had a large personality and seemed to enjoy Sahaj and Shri Mataji very much. She also enjoyed him, even though there was a language problem.

'It seems to Me that people can only really take to Sahaj if they have some sort of intelligence,' She said. One of Mother's names means this: She cannot be worshipped by the stupid or the cowardly.

She enjoyed this man very much and when we were leaving, She was anxiously looking at the airport up and down to see if he would come and say goodbye. Her face lit up as She was so happy to see him come to wish Her farewell. She was putting Her coat on and he lifted Her hair and helped Her.

'There, now I have touched the hair of the Goddess, I can never die,' he said in Spanish.

'You see, he knows who I am,' She said.

Kay McHugh

The new Sahaja Yogi

In 1982, five days after Shri Mataji left Portugal for Spain, we received the unexpected news that on Her way back from Spain She would stop over in Portugal again for a few days and would stay in the same residence as before.

We went to receive Shri Mataji at the airport. I had a bunch of flowers for Her, and felt tempted to smell them, but something told me that one should not smell the flowers before offering them. I asked one of the Sahaja Yogis about this and he confirmed that this was indeed the case. He also explained that as Sahaja Yogis we are able to feel inside what is the right protocol towards Her. Shri Mataji invited me to travel in Her car to where She was staying.

‘I was hoping to meet you again, and I have been told that since I left you have been learning and practicing Sahaja Yoga assiduously,’ I was very pleased to hear Her say to me, ‘it’s only been a week, but you have become a Sahaja Yogi.’ Then turning towards the other Sahaja Yogis She said, ‘You have been asking Me to send you a new Sahaja Yogi, well here he is, your new brother.’ My reply set everybody laughing.

‘Yes Shri Mataji I really would like to join this organisation and I’m going to get some photos for a Sahaja Yoga identity card,’ I said.

‘We don’t have identity cards or application forms for joining Sahaja Yoga, you are already a Sahaja Yogi,’ She explained, setting me straight.

‘In Portugal to be a member of any organisation one has to fill in an application form, give photos for the identity card and pay a joining fee,’ I replied.

‘Sahaja Yoga is free to all,’ Shri Mataji said.

She told us to contact the people who had met Her before, as She was keen to meet them again. By the evening lots of familiar faces came back to meet Her, including my parents.

Luis Garrido

It felt appropriate to call Her Mother

Many people who came to see Shri Mataji brought gifts of the best Portuguese dishes and cakes. She was not a great eater, though as a guest She used to eat whatever was served to Her. In order not to let such good food go to waste, we younger people were being sumptuously fed, and this delicious food had been brought with love to Shri Mataji as a way of thanking Her for the help, the healing and joy that She was spreading around.

No one failed to notice how much love poured out of Her to each and every person, and how Shri Mataji treated everybody like Her own son or daughter. It felt appropriate to call Her Mother, and that is what everybody called Her in those days. Very few people called Her Shri Mataji except on very formal occasions.

Luis Garrido

They are all My children

In Portugal people liked shaking hands with Mother before going home, and though She was not in the habit of this, She allowed them to do so when saying goodbye. I also shook hands with Shri Mataji the first time that I met Her, but my uncle went a step further. He had been suffering from a bad back pain and She got up and showed him some exercises to relieve it. Having given a demonstration Shri Mataji helped him do the exercises and stretches properly. By the time this was finished my uncle felt much better and in his euphoria hugged and kissed Her on the cheek. There was a strong feeling of disapproval amongst all present, and it was obvious that he should not have done so.

'It's alright, they are all My children,' Shri Mataji said to our stern faces looking disapprovingly at my uncle. I felt very grateful for Her quick intervention because I was deeply embarrassed by his behaviour.

Luis Garrido

A pleasant surprise

In the evening Shri Mataji said, talking to the only Sahaja Yogini present, that her vibrations had improved so much during this Portuguese and Spanish tour, and her Swadishthan chakra was now in such good condition that she should have no problem becoming a mother very soon. She had been married for some time and soon after Shri Mataji left for England she discovered she was pregnant. We had never seen her so happy.

Luis Garrido

Better to avoid beef

I was told by the Sahaja Yogis that the first time Shri Mataji came to Portugal they served Her beef not knowing that this was completely off the menu, and after eating some She explained that Her gums would probably bleed the next day as a result, and advised Sahaja Yogis to avoid eating beef in the future. At the time Shri Mataji was also given bananas to eat, and after eating them said She had not eaten bananas since the wedding day of one of Her daughters.

Luis Garrido

Shri Gruha Lakshmi

On one occasion Shri Mataji decided to go shopping. I was not invited, maybe there was not enough room in the car, but I felt a bit despondent. Then I realised that maybe it was because I was mostly interested when Shri Mataji was talking about chakras and vibrations and I might have disapproved, seeing Her shopping. It was hard for me to understand that apart from being a spiritual guru, She also had to perform the tasks that wives do, like going shopping.

The morning Shri Mataji was going back to England we were all in Her bedroom and Her suitcase was being packed. I was hoping that the packing would be quickly out of the way and She might revert to talking about chakras and yoga, but She asked for several saris to be taken out of Her suitcase as She wanted one of the Sahaja Yogis to see them.

My heart sank, I was hoping for something about chakras. To my surprise Shri Mataji used the patterns in Her saris to demonstrate how the traditional patterns and colours were associated with specific chakras and this was intended as an art lesson for one of the Sahaja Yogis who wanted to become a professional painter. It was typical of Shri Mataji to turn the mundane task of packing a suitcase into a deep lecture on traditional Indian art.

Luis Garrido

Lessons in photography

The artistic Sahaja Yogi showed an album of photographs of Shri Mataji that he had taken. The first thing She said, looking at the photos, was that certain photographs did not reflect Her face and this was because of vibrations. She

explained that the person taking the photos would get the best results if he or she was in the centre and in thoughtless awareness at the time of taking them.

‘In this photograph, this is not My face at all,’ Shri Mataji pointed out. ‘Can you see your own face in this particular photo? Ah! See this photo, this is your nose, isn’t it? That’s not My face at all.’

This was about some photos in which the vibrations of the photographer were not in the centre and had affected the photo badly. All along Shri Mataji was praising him very much for taking such beautiful photographs and confirmed that he had a great talent for art. She also advised him to turn some of his talent into learning about ceramics. She explained that this would give him an opportunity to work with clay, which is very beneficial for the Mooladhara chakra, because earth is the element of Shri Ganesha. Again, we went from photos back to the Indian deities and their elements, and how to improve our chakras with this knowledge.

Luis Garrido

Innocence and joy

There were times when I felt so happy that I could not hide it. I had known this type of feeling when very young and some of my relatives asked, ‘Where does the joy come from? He seems lost in it sometimes.’ Having met Shri Mataji, this feeling of innocence and joy was coming back, something precious I had lost for many years. On one occasion She told me that I was a born realised soul and that most members of my family were too.

Luis Garrido

Portugal was not quite ready for Sahaja Yoga

It was not so easy, talking to people about self realisation in those days in Portugal. Shri Mataji told us that the country was not quite ready for Sahaja Yoga. A year later She advised the Portuguese Sahaja Yogis to go to other countries where Sahaja Yoga was flourishing.

‘Portugal is part of the liver, and we cannot abandon our liver, but the right time will come later,’ She told us. She added that there were many seekers in Portugal but that until such time as the material wellbeing of the country improved it would be difficult to establish Sahaja Yoga because people’s attention was mostly on earning a living.

Luis Garrido

A garland of red chillies

Shri Mataji vibrated a large basket of lemons and chillies and gave them away to new people. When my turn came they were all gone, and I had been queuing for them, not knowing what they were for. Shri Mataji seemed sorry that they were all gone, and asked the yogis to check whether there were some in the kitchen. There were none, except for a garland of dry chillies for cooking, and She had been distributing fresh chillies, not dry ones. She vibrated the garland and told me to put it under my pillow during the night, to remove negativity. It took me a month before I gathered the courage to do this. If I had been given fresh lemons and chillies they would have rotted away by then, thus it was providential that I was given dry ones.

Luis Garrido

Real gurus and false ones

Several people brought books to Shri Mataji to ask Her opinion about them. Most were by false gurus, but the notable exceptions were those relating to the real Sai Baba of Shirdi and Shri Ramana Maharishi. These were very great, genuine, Indian gurus according to Shri Mataji. I brought Her a book about a Bulgarian guru and She told me he was very right-sided. Being new to Sahaja Yoga I asked Shri Mataji whether this was good or bad.

‘For a spiritual guru that’s a terrible thing. A real guru has to be in the centre,’ She told me.

There was a list of false gurus and for each one a specific mantra. Shri Mataji was very particular that Sahaja Yogis who had been to them practiced the correct mantra against their false guru as an antidote. Even though results were immediate it was necessary to do this in the beginning assiduously and then later on from time to time because the attack and the bad influence could come back if not kept in check.

Shri Mataji told me to visit some of the centres of false gurus in Lisbon and tell their disciples about Sahaja Yoga. Before going I was told by the Sahaja Yogis to rub some oil and kumkum on my Centre Heart chakra under the shirt, and to put some vibrated oil on my forehead, in particular on the Agnya chakra, because wearing oil is more discrete than a red dot. I could carry a photo of Shri Mataji in my breast pocket and put some vibrated lemons and chillies in my coat pockets. I was told to check before buying incense that it had not been manufactured at a factory belonging to a false guru as it would not have good vibrations. Once Shri Mataji was coming home and there was some incense burning.

‘That’s nice incense,’ She said. This was a Padmini dhoop stick which came in tiny boxes about two inches long.

Luis Garrido

The evils of spiritualism

A lady who was suffering from throat cancer came to meet Shri Mataji. She asked her whether she had been to any false gurus to which she replied, only spiritualism, and that only a few times.

‘There you are, even once is enough to cause the development of cancer. Spiritualism is very dangerous and not an authorised practice,’ Shri Mataji replied.

‘But don’t they perform certain cures through spiritualism?’ I asked.

‘They may perform a temporary cure of the body now and then but later on the patient will contract several serious diseases, because in the process of working with dead souls, spiritualism plants an extra source of disease in the patient,’ She explained.

Luis Garrido

Candle treatment

At one point Shri Mataji told me to cleanse myself through a candle flame. This meant putting my left hand towards the candle and the right hand towards Shri Mataji. Meanwhile She was talking and we were all sitting down listening to Her. I forgot about the candle and burnt my hand on it, and cried out. Shri Mataji commented that it was better for the hand to perish than the whole soul. I knew She was quoting Christ.

**‘Shri Mataji, do you believe in Christ?’ I asked.
‘But of course, He is the Son of God,’ She replied.
Still today I cherish those words.**

Luis Garrido

Instructions for baldness

Just before Shri Mataji left for England a new person came to see Her and asked Her for a cure for baldness. We all laughed and She advised him to rub oil on the scalp of his head, took some Amla hair oil and applied it to this young man’s bald patch. I was also suffering from thinning hair and a bald patch at the back of the head but felt ashamed to ask for the same treatment. To my amazement when Shri Mataji had gone back to England, She left behind Her own hair oil with instructions that it should be given to me. This made me laugh because I thought that I had managed to conceal my desire from Her.

Luis Garrido

Shri Mataji and letters

Before travelling back to the UK, Shri Mataji told me to write to Her and to come and visit Her in London. Three months later I did write to Her, and another three months after that I was able to, but I never informed Her that I was coming. Once in Shri Mataji’s home I was very touched to see that the letter I had sent Her three months earlier was lying on a side table in the dining room. Even though I had met Her six months earlier in another country, I felt She had not forgotten me, and She cared for everyone She met.

Luis Garrido

Chapter 14
1982 - Summer
London, the USSR and Yorkshire

Back in London

Shri Mataji made several visits to Darwin Court, once when some French yogis came to stay there. Another occasion was when Shri Mataji came to see William, the first baby born to Graham and Gail Pottinger, who were living there from 1981 to 1982.

Patricia Proenza



Shri Mataji, Her grandchildren and baby Pottinger

A talk to Moslem ladies

In the summer of 1982 Shri Mataji was invited to give a talk to a Moslem ladies' organisation at the Regents Park Mosque, London. Several Sahaja Yoginis were invited by Shri Mataji to attend this talk.

Patricia Proenza

Shri Mataji on saris

Shri Mataji said the sari was the piece of clothing God created for women to wear. It is very auspicious, because if you include the palloo - the end bit - being put over one's right shoulder for modesty and/or warmth, it is three and a half coils, like the Kundalini. She also said a lot of the traditional decorations are chakras, temples etc. On the sari Shri Mataji is wearing in the photo below, which She gave to me in the summer of 1982, the V shaped designs are temples. The photo is of a puja in Maharashtra in 1980.

Linda Williams



Shri Mataji in Uzbekistan

This photo was taken in 1982, when Shri Mataji was on an official trip to Uzbekistan with Her husband Sir CP Srivastava, for the United Nations.



Shri Mataji in Uzbekistan 1982



This photo was taken in Uzbekistan in 1982. Here Shri Mataji is seen with Sir CP and others in Tashkent.

Maxim Belyanin

Jokes

Shri Mataji told us this joke. There was a man who had to go to his wedding somewhere in Punjab. He went on the night train and told the guard to wake him up and throw him off at a certain station. He warned the guard that he was a very heavy sleeper, and he would shout and complain, but nevertheless the guard should just pick him up and put him on the platform. In the morning the man woke up, way beyond his destination and still on the train. He questioned the guard.

‘Why did you not put me off as I told you to?’

‘Oh sir, I woke up this man, and he complained so much and was so angry with me when I put him off, I was sure it must have been you.’

There was another joke which Shri Mataji told and it went something like this:

There was a lady who had a daughter who was very dark skinned, and dark skin is not considered desirable in India. The mother finally found a possible match for her and was going on the train with this daughter to meet the prospective bridegroom. The mother was talking about the girl’s dark skin with another lady in the carriage, and the other lady was giving various suggestions to help overcome the problem. They reached the town where they were going and went their separate ways. When they got to the house and met the boy and his family, the mother of the boy was none other than the lady on the train who had been giving the suggestions.

Anonymous

Lost presents

The sari in the classic black and white photo was made into a child’s dress for one of Shri Mataji’s grandchildren. It was pink, with a gold border. When the granddaughter grew out of it Mother gave it to my daughter and she wore it a few times. Then I put it in a trunk with a lot of other presents from Shri Mataji, and left the trunk at Chelsham Road when I went to live in the country

in the summer of 1982. Regrettably someone gave the trunk to the rag and bone man, and I also lost a number of saris from Mother, a ruby necklace She had given me, and a number of other wonderful gifts.

However, Shri Mataji said there were some other things in the trunk which had bad vibrations so it had to go. At least a lot of people in the poorer areas of London had some stunning jewellery and saris with fantastic vibrations.

Linda Williams

One day you will know

In London, in the early eighties, Shri Mataji said to us, 'One day you will know all about the past and the future, but for now stay in the present.'

Anonymous

See My face

In the dining room in Brompton Square, Shri Mataji had all these different tea sets: teapots and cups and saucers and other things, around the picture rail, from about 1982. We had bought some of them in Hong Kong when She was there, from the local Chinese emporium for not very much money at all, but when they were in Shri Adi Shakti's dining room they looked absolutely stunning. We did a lot of shopping in this Chinese emporium in Hong Kong and saw lots of statues of Quan Yin there.

'See My face. See My face there,' Shri Mataji said, about all the Quan Yin statues in a china shop. That was in 1981.

Kay McHugh

Updating the bible

In about 1981, in Brompton Square, Shri Mataji's house in London, there was a public programme that Shri Mataji did not go to and She stayed at home. She asked someone to bring a copy of the bible and asked them to read out the part about John and the revelations. When it came to the quote that only 144,000 people would be saved, She smiled and said there would be more people than that.

Derek Ferguson

Whatever you praise increases

One day my mum, Magda, had been invited to help at Shri Mataji's Brompton Square house. As everyone knows, Shri Mataji was always very hands-on in all aspects of Her housing projects. No detail was too small to escape Her divine attention – even down to the quality of the products being used.

Shri Mataji handed my mum a small bottle of 'very good varnish' and asked if she could varnish a little wooden bedside cabinet. Magda looked at the bottle and then at the cabinet and thought, there's probably just enough to cover it. When the cabinet was finished Shri Mataji returned, inspecting the work She declared it a job well done.

'Good job! It is really good varnish isn't it Magda?' She said. Full of enthusiasm, Shri Mataji decided to join in with the varnishing, getting a new brush for Herself. 'How about we varnish this chest of drawers as well?'

My mum looked at the little bottle, and looked at the big chest of drawers thinking - we'll definitely need to get some more varnish soon. However, she

knew better than to put in her tuppence worth. Alongside my overjoyed mum, Shri Mataji started painting that lucky piece of furniture, giving it a rich, glossy sheen. And so my mum entered into a wonderful, lively divine leela, bubbling with joy to be working next to Shri Mataji.

Every piece of furniture in the room received the same loving attention from Shri Mataji; and each time one varnishing project was finished She would playfully proclaim, 'What wonderful varnish!' And they would both laugh.

Finally, when everything had been painted, Shri Mataji handed back the little bottle to mum who rested it on some newspaper. As she placed the bottle down, a little bit of the dark liquid bubbled out of the top.

'Maybe we praised it a bit too much!' and then said: 'You see Magda, whatever you praise, increases,' Shri Mataji glanced at the spillage, smiled and commented.

Danya Martoglio

Fragrance

In England we have a flower called a daffodil which traditionally does not have any fragrance. However once when we were working at Brompton Square, Shri Mataji came up the stairs from the basement with a daffodil in Her hand and asked us to smell it. She put the flower in front of my nose and, slightly sheepishly, I inhaled. My whole head was filled with a delightful fragrance.

'You see,' She said, 'now even the daffodils have fragrance.'

Chris Marlow

A miracle at Brompton Square

It was a wonderful time for all of us when Shri Mataji was renovating Her house in Brompton Square off Knightsbridge. We were often there, sometimes for days together, and always working under Her personal directions.

One day Mother asked two of us to clean the marble in all the bathrooms. We didn't know what to use

'Try this,' She said, handing us a tin of brown liquid furniture polish. There wasn't that much in the tin, probably about a quarter full. This was a very pleasant job, and we worked for some hours, finally arriving at the top of the house to finish the last bathroom. It was Sir CP's room. Mother was with us and my friend remarked how amazing it was that we had cleaned all this marble, and yet there was still polish in the tin. Shri Mataji agreed and we all looked at the tin, marvelling that the polish had lasted so long. At that moment, the polish overflowed out of the tin and made a huge stain on the beautiful new pale yellow carpet. We were amazed and shocked.

'Oh, we must have praised the polish so much, it has overflowed,' Mother said. As for the stain, She told us to sprinkle some water on it and then She gave it a bandhan, and told us not to worry about it.

The next day I went to the house as usual, and I was asked to arrange some things in Sir CP's room. I had forgotten the stain on the carpet and was busy arranging the linen when I suddenly remembered it. I could not find any evidence at all of any stain whatsoever. The carpet looked just like new, not a single mark on it!

Patty Prole

A large ashram called Nirmala Palace

In 1982, a large former nursing home in Nightingale Lane, Balham, South West London, was rented by the Sahaja Housing Coop, and it became an ashram. It was renamed Nirmala Palace. This mansion-like house was about half-way down Nightingale Lane, on the left hand side when coming from Clapham South underground station. Shri Mataji visited on many occasions, giving many talks, and some pujas were held there. The Guru Puja 1982 was held there, in the garden, and began early in the morning.



Guru Puja 1982 at Nightingale Lane, Clapham

Nightingale Lane, Clapham, London



Guru Puja at Nightingale Lane, 1982

Editor's note: The first large ashram in London was Nightingale Lane. It was obtained through the Sahaja Housing Co-op, had been nursing a home and had a large garden. About twenty or more Sahaja Yogis lived there in 1982, and Shri Mataji blessed it with Her presence at a number of pujas, including the Guru Puja in the summer, seen here, and the puja on Shri Guru Nanak's birthday in the autumn.

Many of us knew Shri Mataji from previous lives

I was working in London, close to Shri Mataji, but I also felt the urge to visit Derby ashram, because of what Shri Mataji had told me. It happened after a Guru Puja in 1982, at the London ashram when She was giving out some small gifts to those present. I was seated near Her, helping with the gifts. When Bala, from the Derby ashram, came up to receive his gift, Shri Mataji turned to me and spoke to him very lovingly as She handed him his gift. She said how (at that time) all the 'old seekers' came to Sahaja Yoga through him, 'each one better than the other'. In fact these seekers were much older than Bala – many old enough to be his father. Shri Mataji said that many of us knew Mother from previous lives.

I recall a puja in London where Shri Mataji would not allow us to begin even though it was getting late. Then, an hour after the proposed start time, we heard the front door of the ashram open.

'Ah, Bala is here, now we can start,' She said, without looking. He had come by train from Birmingham.

A note from Shri Mataji

There was a letter pinned to the notice board in Nightingale Lane ashram (Nirmala Palace) back in the early eighties. It was from Shri Mataji to one of Her doubting sons. In it She communicated that of course She didn't know everything.

‘But does a broom need to know the history and relationship between each and every particle of dust in order to sweep it out of the door?’ She said.

Marylin Leate

A gift for Shri Mataji

I did a watercolour when I was about twelve, as a present for Shri Mataji. My father also helped me with it, as it was a bit complicated for my technical skills at that age. In the original, the area in the bottom half was depicted as though it was rising from the earth, or was made out of it. I gave it to Shri Mataji at Nightingale Lane Ashram in South London, in about 1982. Anyone who remembers the Nightingale Lane house will recall that Shri Mataji had a room on the ground floor overlooking the garden which was in a long corridor that went almost the length of the house and the room was also near to the entrance hall, which had a large staircase leading around it to the upper floor.

The garden was quite large for a suburban house; the building had once been a nursing home, but there was more than enough space for pujas as there weren't very many yogis then, and some pujas took place in the middle of the garden with plenty of grass around. I recall one where I was sitting towards at the back, and can't have been more than thirty feet from Shri Mataji.

I cannot recall the occasion when I gave the image to Shri Mataji with great precision, but I do remember sitting outside in the corridor waiting to see Her, and being able to hear Her talking and laughing behind the closed door. When I was little I never felt or thought about the awe and opportunity of being in Shri Mataji's presence, but by that age I had started to become more self-conscious, and would worry about whether I was doing the right thing or my attention was in the right place when near to Her. That was why I was rather worried that She would not approve of the present and my heart was thumping as I waited. Fortunately She did enjoy it. She studied it quite intently for a few seconds before looking up and making a comment which I do not remember, but it completely relieved my worries.

I also recall, around that time, the yogis sitting up with Shri Mataji most of the night watching Indian movies in a large room to the right of the entrance hall, which was also where we had pujas when She was not present. The movies were the classic kind with great booming villains with massive handlebar moustaches and one was probably a version of the Ramayana, as I recall endless shots of arrows flying in the air. I remember the occasion fairly well as it was the first time I had ever been up into the small hours. Sitting in the dark, with the light of the little TV illuminating Shri Mataji and the yogis around Her seemed like some kind of unusual world I was suddenly lucky enough to experience - though I had difficulty staying awake after it got quite late.

Kevin Anslow

Education

Shri Mataji spoke about Rabindranath Tagore's school, Shantiniketan in Bengal. She said it was all very well their learning to make nice garlands, but it did not help them pass their exams, and this is a necessary part of a school, to qualify people for life. Right back in 1982, She said She would start a junior school, a senior school, and a university.

Linda Williams

I felt very much at home

When I first came to Sahaja Yoga in 1982 I was seven, and was fortunate enough to meet Shri Mataji. The first time was in Caxton Hall where Shri Mataji used to give weekly programmes. My mother and I walked into the room where there were all the Sahaja Yogis and I felt very much at home – immediately fine. We were introduced to Shri Mataji. I had a fringe of hair at the time, covering my forehead, and Shri Mataji moved it out of the way. She stroked my cheek.

At another weekly programme my mother and I went up on the stage to talk to Shri Mataji, because I had been having very bad nightmares for years. Shri Mataji said I was born realised so there shouldn't be a problem, but my mother said I was having bad dreams. Shri Mataji said it was all the alcohol that we had in the house was attacking me, and we should do lemons and chillies, because at that time my father had a wine business. (He gave it up soon after). She said realised souls couldn't bear it and the negativity was coming in.

We went home, and my mother put some lemons and chillies under the bed. I had had the same nightmare every night for three years, and it had terrorised me, and after that I never had that nightmare again. Shri Mataji had completely absorbed it, and this was confirmation at a very early age of who Shri Mataji is. From that moment I have felt Her established in my heart.

Alexandra Fuente

You are the great ego

Mother had often told us to ask for something when we came to take vibrations from Her Feet. Of course we were always thoughtless and just absorbed the vibrations. After a meeting at Caxton Hall I remembered this and wanted to surrender. As I gave Shri Mataji a flower I placed my hands under Her Feet and bowed my head on top of Her Feet. Into my head and from my heart I said that 'Mother You are the great ego.' I waited for Her to flick Her Feet signalling that I should get up but it didn't come. Again from my heart I said over and over again, 'Mother You are the great ego.' At last came the flick of the Feet and as I looked up Shri Mataji smiled into my face so that She was all I could see. It felt like we shared a secret.

Gilly Grimshaw

England's green and pleasant land

In the summer of 1982 I spoke to Shri Mataji about how beautifully the poets, including William Blake, had described the countryside of England but that today a lot of it was so ruined with industries and motorways and ugly high rise housing developments and no longer beautiful. She said that not to worry because England would be beautiful in the future, when it is finished.

Linda Williams

My guru and my guest

I had a cottage in West Yorkshire, in the north of England in a little village called Mytholmroyd. In those early days Shri Mataji would travel all over the country, and later all over the world, whenever anyone asked for Her. I asked Her if She would come to Yorkshire.

‘For one person I will go anywhere,’ Shri Mataji said. She came by train in July 1982. She also brought Her two granddaughters, aged about six and eight, and about eight Sahaja Yogis came to support the meeting we arranged in the village hall. About fifty people attended; some came from Halifax, about eight miles away, and others from Manchester, twenty-four miles on the train. The granddaughters were delighted by the local wild flowers and went picking them by the meeting hall with another little Sahaja Yogi child.

As Shri Mataji came up the path to the front door of my cottage, there was a patch of tall white marguerite daisies on the right hand side.

‘They are lovely,’ Shri Mataji said.

‘It’s a pity they smell so pungent,’ I added.

‘They’re all right now, daisies everywhere will never smell too strong again, because My sari brushed against them as I passed.’ I was astonished, because when I smelled them what She said was true. They had lost that over-strong smell and were very agreeable.

Shri Mataji said She felt happy in the cottage, and my neighbours helped with the cooking for so many guests! We did a lot of chickens, and someone gave me the recipe of how Mother liked them. The man who cooked for the village bakery made dozens of onion and potato pasties. After Shri Mataji came down to eat, I thought I shouldn’t spend all my time with Her, so I was feeding the other people present.

‘Rita, I am enjoying this lovely food and you are not noticing!’ She said. So I enjoyed myself watching Her in my home being happy, and I felt very privileged. In the evening Mother was upstairs in the bedroom and She asked if I could go up and massage Her Feet. She was sitting at the side of the bed, and I had no idea who Mother was at this time. I knelt on the floor and massaged Her Feet, thoroughly hoping that She felt some relief. It was only months later that I knew what a blessing this was for me!

About 5.00 am the next morning we all got up and went to see the district with Shri Mataji. We drove all over the Pennine valleys. We went along a dreary bit of road by the station and suddenly there were four colourful bullfinches flying round the car. Shri Mataji said we could bless all the rivers nearby. The River Calder was one and the River Hebdene was another, so all who put their feet in the rivers would be blessed.

Afterwards we went through some lovely woods, to Pecket Well, and into the National Trust valley known as Hardcastle Craggs. Shri Mataji loved this. We turned right to Old Town, and there were the ruins of an old asbestos mill which had given many of the local people cancer. It was being pulled down and there was rubble everywhere.

‘No one will ever get ill from the dust,’ and She waved Her hand over it in blessing.

Shri Mataji’s train was leaving at nine o’clock in the morning; She was going to Derby for a public programme. By the station was a small craft shop with beautiful china sculptures made by a local artist. There was one which Shri Mataji particularly liked, a shepherd with his dog and a group of sheep by a

dusty stone wall. Unfortunately the shop hadn't opened as it was only eight-thirty. The next time I went to see Shri Mataji, at Chelsham Road in London, I brought Her a set of these sculptures and Her eyes lit up with joy to such an extent that everyone in the room clapped.

I am so grateful that in this life I have been so blessed as to have Shri Mataji as my guru and my guest.

Rita Davies

I felt the rivers of Her infinite cleansing love

I came up to Yorkshire in a car full of yogis to Mytholmroyd, on the 30th July 1982, where Shri Mataji was to have a public programme. During the programme I volunteered to look after Her two granddaughters. Later we returned to Rita Davies' house with Shri Mataji and the yogis and I noticed how pretty Rita's cottage was; so typically English with large swathes of daisies inside the gate.

We were given supper and Shri Mataji talked at length about some inauspicious lady, who had not behaved properly. This aspect of Shri Mataji touched an inner fear that I had had from my religious background about God. I found it impossible to repress my sobs and started crying. Shri Mataji immediately beckoned me to come over to Her and made me settle my head on Her lap whilst stroking my Vishuddhi.

'You see; she has the same problems as you,' She said to another yogi. This was a very significant moment for me as I had once, long ago, surrendered my troubles in my own mother's lap, and had registered that moment as having had a divine nature.

After that we all went to bed and Shri Mataji suggested I sleep in Her room. Before I settled on the floor near Her bed, which She was sharing with Her two granddaughters, they asked me to fetch Shri Mataji's brush and hair oil.

I remember feeling terribly inadequate, having had no experience of being that close to Shri Mataji. I was very new in Sahaja Yoga at that time; it was my birthday that day and I had only received my realisation on 12th June at Caxton Hall. I had already learned the mantras and had attended Guru Puja in Nightingale Lane, where Shri Mataji had asked my name which She made me repeat several times. She had kept on saying 'Santal', like the French for sandal wood. The more She opened Her mouth when talking the more I became aware of the universe contained within it. She then invited me to wash Her Feet and again I felt the rivers of Her infinite cleansing love washing over my whole body inside and out.

'See, better now?' She smiled and asked me, in that cottage in Yorkshire.

Before going to sleep Shri Mataji asked me to shut the window; even though it was a hot night and there were four of us in the bedroom. I fell asleep with my hands towards Her. This must have been well after midnight.

Very early next morning, perhaps before 5 am, Shri Mataji asked me if I could get Her a cup of tea. There were quite a few yoginis already waiting by Her door meditating. I asked them to get the tea and it arrived quite promptly. I took it in to Shri Mataji, who was by then sitting on the side of the bed facing the window I had closed the previous night. She beckoned me to stay at Her Feet and asked me to talk about myself.

As I attempted to give an account of myself, I felt the most astonishing sensation of being unwound like a magnetic tape which had recorded my life, or

lives and was now being read back at high speed. It may have only lasted an instant but seemed to last a lifetime. I felt very vulnerable in the presence of Her all-seeing eyes. I remember thinking ‘So that’s how God knows everything.’ In that same moment Shri Mataji told me that I was a saint. I hadn’t thought that possible since I was a little child when I had wondered how I could use my life to help others.

I talked to Shri Mataji about my life in the ‘alternative’ world of Neal’s Yard, a yard in Central London with all sorts of interesting places, rooms, offices and alternative shops, cafes and Neal’s Yard Dairy, where I worked. She told me that many dead souls had been at the window all night begging for their rebirth. Shri Mataji finished Her cup of tea and somehow my interview seemed to be over.

Soon afterwards – around mid morning, Shri Mataji as well a small party of yogis were preparing to take a ride in the car and somehow I was included in the group. We visited the beautiful country around and then passed Halifax.

We then went on to the Cowley Manor Seminar in Gloucestershire where She revealed Herself as having come this time for Her children with all Her powers!

Chantal Harris

Editor’s note: a yogi who was present at the time remembers Shri Mataji saying that the souls came from the nearby graveyard and asked for their liberation, and that they were good people so She gave it to them.

Chapter 15
1982 – August
Cheltenham and the West Country

Cowley Manor, Cheltenham



Cowley Manor



Shri Mataji at the Cheltenham seminar
Top left during the havan, top right in the garden
Lower picture during the puja

A beaming smile of great beauty

I remember us going to Cowley Manor, near Cheltenham, at the end of July, in the summer of 1982, to set up the seminar, and feeling a little nervous, having never done anything like that before, but as ever Mother made it very easy for us. I don't think the people at the manor knew what had hit them when

we all arrived as they had never witnessed anything like it before and probably not since!

I shall never forget Shri Mataji saying we must have a havan and before we knew it Sahaja Yogis were running about picking up anything they could find that could be used for a havan: things like a barbecue to contain the fire. When the management saw what was happening, they were none too pleased. When they asked us what we were doing we told them we were doing a havan.

‘Under no circumstances,’ they said, were we to light a fire. I remember thinking ‘Oh no! What will Mother say?’ So plucking up courage I approached Mother and gave Her the news.

‘We must have a havan,’ She said, in a nice but slightly forceful way. ‘Go and tell them.’ Gulp, I thought, this is it! For the first time in my life I was going to have to assert myself. This would not have bothered a lot of people, but for me it seemed like a mountain to climb. I went to meet the manager and took some other Sahaja Yogis with me for moral support.

‘This havan is a very important ceremony for us. Could you possibly let us use an isolated area where we could safely have a small fire?’ I said. The voices of several Sahaja Yogis rang out with similar sentiments.

‘OK,’ the manager said. I was absolutely dumbfounded. I could not believe they had changed their minds so easily. With joy-filled hearts we made our way back to Shri Mataji and gave Her the news. A beaming smile of great beauty that filled my heart shone on Mother’s face and in Her eyes. She lifted Her Vishuddhi finger and waved it in my direction.

‘See,’ She said, with a laugh in Her voice. It was a great lesson for me, for which I am eternally grateful, as it was a turning point in my life. We really can move mountains, if only we have faith.

Alan Henderson

I was hovering about in the hall

When we were expecting our second child, there was a seminar at the source of the River Thames at Cowley Manor in 1982. Because I was very pregnant — it was July or August and the child was due in September — they put me in the next room to Shri Mataji. Rosie Lyons was very pregnant as well and she was in the next room.

The next morning Shri Mataji was there, and there was a Sahaja Yogini looking after Mother, and I was hovering about in the hall first thing in the morning. I was still in my nightclothes with a dressing gown and Mother asked who was out in the passage.

‘A pregnant Sahaja Yogini,’ someone said.

‘I wasn’t sure if it was you or Rosie,’ Shri Mataji said, and called me in. She started working on my Left Swadisthan and Left Vishuddhi. She worked on me for forty minutes and said that it would help my delivery. Innocent was born on the 16th September and the birth took forty minutes from start to finish.

Maureen Rossi

The breath of the pure spirit

I received my self realisation at a small programme in Reading. The first collective event I ever went to was a seminar near Cheltenham, at Cowley Manor. During the afternoon Shri Mataji lay down in the reception area of the hotel and asked a few of the yoginis around Her to place one hand onto one of

Her chakras and the other hand to the ether. I was asked to place my hand on the Left Swadishthan, and was told this was clearing the whole of the left side, while Shri Mataji worked out something in the collective consciousness. As I did so, I became aware of the most profound and beautiful perfume of roses and a feeling of depth beyond measure. Someone explained to me later that the fragrance of the roses was that of the Devi.

A puja was performed the next day at this seminar. As I was very new and did not know what a puja was, I was asked to sit at the back. I could not see what was happening at the front, but I began to feel an incredible wind blowing from the room. It became so strong that I thought that my hair must surely be blowing back in this breeze. It was not so, however, and everything around me was still. I knew that this wind was the vibrations from Shri Mataji Herself, and yet it was so powerful, I felt as though it would blow until we would be but the breath of the pure spirit.

Gill Woltron

I remember just how awed I felt

‘I reveal Myself with all My powers,’ Shri Mataji said at that puja in Cowley Manor in July 1982. She had obviously made that weekend to really reveal something about Herself, which was, ‘I’ve come to tell you who I really am. I am the Adi Shakti.’ I remember just how awed I felt.

The fact is we, the Sahaja Yogis, had forgotten all the puja things. On the Sunday morning we had the puja, but there was no proper silver there, and just one or two flowers. There was no amrit; we didn’t know any names; we couldn’t sing aarti, anything, and because the people had forgotten the puja stuff, the plates and silverware, we had to make do with very, very elementary things and yet She was telling us She was Shri Adi Shakti, who had come for all Her children with all Her powers this time to give us ordinary people this state. She tried to bring us up, instead of coming down to our level.

Ray Harris

We formed a circle

At the Cheltenham seminar Shri Mataji asked me to put my hand under Her left Foot and everyone had to form a circle with the last person holding their hand out of the window.

Derek Ferguson

This will clear England out

‘Now, this will clear England out.’ She said, and the Thames has been very vibrated. It was a very polluted river then but since then it has cleared out.

Anonymous English Sahaja Yogi

It became a much nicer place

On the day after the puja, there were just a few of us still there and She took us up to the Seven Springs, the source of the River Thames, above Cheltenham. Shri Mataji took Her shoes off and went down to where there was some water on the stones.

It wasn’t flowing much and there were flies around the place. We all put our feet into the water of the springs, but it was very cold. Then when Shri Mataji put Her Feet in, the water started to flow and all the flies went away and it

became a much nicer place. The actual water level rose up once Shri Mataji's Feet were in it.

John Watkinson

Editor's note: Shri Mataji explained that the Seven Springs, the source of the Thames, is the Kundalini of England, and that Thames is for tamasa, which, of course, is the left side and London, through which the Thames runs, is the city of the moon - Luna. On another occasion She said that Shri Adi Guru Dattatreya did tapasya on the banks of the Thames, where London now is.



Shri Mataji's Holy Feet vibrating the source of the River Thames

She amplified the points I had made

It's 1982 and there's a public programme at the Friend's Meeting House in Cheltenham. It's a hot summer's night and the programme is so well attended that people are spilling out onto the pavement. This, together with the heat and something about the bare, undecorated room, lends the occasion an atmosphere which seems almost biblical. I give an introduction, briefly covering a number of points, and then Shri Mataji arrives. Without even sitting down, She introduces Sahaja Yoga in an exceptionally maternal, energetic manner. But what strikes me most is that although Her arrival came after my own talk had finished, She takes every one of the points I had made and amplifies them, while the one point I had almost made but then decided not to - to do with Jung's assertion that a form of collective consciousness was the next step for mankind - She makes Herself.

Chris Greaves

A sari for a puja

After a couple of years, in 1982, the yogis and the Exeter centre were doing very well. We felt that if Shri Mataji had a puja in the area it would greatly improve the vibrations and enable even more people to join the collective. We mentioned this to Shri Mataji and She said that maybe She would come.

I went to Southall* to buy a sari for Shri Mataji to have it ready just in case She decided to have the puja. I entered the sari shop and saw Shri Mataji standing at the counter surrounded by a few Sahaja Yogis!

‘Hello,’ said Shri Mataji, ‘why are you here?’

‘I have come to buy a sari for the puja in Exeter,’ I dared to reply.

‘Shri Mataji, now You have to have a puja in Exeter,’ somebody said jokingly.

‘I will choose a sari for the puja,’ Mother said, smiling and feeling my heart with indescribable joy. From that moment the ball of events just started to roll very fast. Four days or so prior to the puja I got a message from David Prole, who had been working very hard, arranging TV interviews for Shri Mataji all over England. He said that BBC South West in Plymouth wanted to do an interview on the day of the puja, to be broadcasted later on during prime viewing time.

Grazyna Anslow

****Editor’s note: Southall is a large suburb of London where Shri Mataji occasionally went shopping. It is some distance from where She lived. The statistical chance of meeting Her unexpectedly in a shop there would be minimal.***

No crazy people

In the summer of 1982 Shri Mataji visited the West Country of the UK, namely Bristol and Exeter. Mother did a public programme in Bristol. Originally She was to come the previous weekend. A lot of posters had been put up and some advertising had been done on the local radio. Then Mother had to cancel, but the Bristol people went on with the programme all the same. Quite a few people came and got their realisation, but a lot of them were a bit crazy or very critical.

The next week Shri Mataji was able to come, and although hardly any publicity had been done compared to the first programme, far more people came and no crazy ones. It was as if they had all come and then gone away again the first week.

Linda Williams

Curried quail

There was a time when Shri Mataji spent the summer on a realisation tour. The tour started in the West Country with a public programme in Bristol. Mother travelled to Bristol from Paddington Station on a British Rail train. She wore a beautiful pink and purple silk sari that day, and was brimming with joy as the train pulled from the platform. The train trundled through the outer suburbs of London and into the English countryside and was soon clattering beside the gracefully sloping pale green Wiltshire downs under a promising early summer sky that mixed blue with soft billowing sunlit clouds. My sister Danya and I, being students, and having the time to do so, were fortunate enough to follow Shri Mataji on much of this tour.

On the train we ended up sitting close to Shri Mataji. Danya I believe may have been looking after Mother's grandchildren at the time, so sat with Shri Mataji. I somehow managed to find a seat (which I think someone vacated) opposite to where Mother sat just across the aisle from their four seater configuration, with table in between. Some stories have already been written of Shri Mataji's amazing cooking, Her ability to delight the taste buds and provide hearty replenishing food whether She was preparing to feed three hundred people, or thirty or just three. Her recipes were always most delicious.

‘Have you eaten? Not yet? You must eat. It is lunch time now,’ Shri Mataji said with a smile when we had been on the train about an hour and a half.

She reached into a bag and brought out some small packages, wrapped in silver foil and passed them out. I carefully peeled away the wrapping. Inside it looked like a tikka masala preparation.

‘Curried quail’ Shri Mataji said, ‘I think you will like it.’

I did not realise how hungry I was, and sank my teeth in gladly to this delicacy, prepared by Her hand. It was just so delicious, and strangely enough thirty years later I can feel my mouth watering just describing it. After this very tasty and unexpected picnic with Shri Mataji on the train, in no time, it seemed our journey came to an end. Shri Mataji always enjoyed looking out the window at the shapes, colours and forms of Her creation when traveling and I remember Her expressing pleasure at the landscape we passed through.

Caleb Williams

She just puts you right

The first time I ever spoke to Shri Mataji was in Bristol. I was living in the ashram in Bristol and Mother had come to Bristol to do a public programme. All the other people had been in Sahaja Yoga much longer than me and had already had contact with Shri Mataji. So I was the new boy and the other people were in and out of Mother’s room. I didn’t know how to approach Her at all.

One morning, we were sitting down in the meditation room, which was just underneath the room where Shri Mataji was sleeping. I remember seeing all the people going in and out of Mother’s room and thinking, ‘I must just go into meditation and be close to Her that way,’ but nevertheless there was a great desire to be with Her physically, which was a bit different. There was this debate going on in my head. Then one of the people who was with Shri Mataji came down.

‘Mother wants to see Robert. Who’s Robert?’ someone said. I leapt up and rushed upstairs and knocked on the door.

‘Come in,’ She said.

I opened the door and I hadn’t really thought about what I was doing at all. I was so excited about being called up to see Shri Mataji. I opened the door and this room was a beautiful peach and cream colour. It had been painted that colour and the bed sheets were all that colour, too. There was a big window and Mother was sitting on the bed, very relaxed. I had this beautiful vision of Her, a lot of light and these beautiful, soft colours. I couldn’t breathe for a moment. I was so overwhelmed by the whole thing. Mother just looked at me.

‘It’s all right, it’s all right,’ She said, or something like that, and just smiled.

That smile - I had this block in my chest, in my Centre Heart and with that smile She just melted this block. Not only that, it was like She had concentrated in that moment on a kind of deep-rooted, long standing insecurity within me. At that moment it disappeared and never returned, She just cut it away. It always reminds me of those pictures of the Goddess on the tiger having terrible battles with the demons, yet She is smiling in those pictures, as if She is totally unperturbed by the bloodshed and horror going on around Her. She just smiled at me, but in smiling, She was fighting a battle.

Shri Mataji invited me in and asked me to sit down and I expected Her to talk about the cosmos or the universe or the meaning of life. Instead She just asked me questions like, ‘What are you studying? How old are you? Do you like

Bristol? What do you think of people who live here?’ She asked me about my parents and maybe even about my favourite food and I was totally blissful. I could feel these incredibly beautiful vibrations and afterwards understood that with Her conversation She had touched every hurting point inside me and soothed it.

I came out of the room and it seemed that She hadn’t wanted to say anything in particular. I wondered why She had wanted to speak to me. She didn’t ask me to do anything, She just spoke to me. But I was in a state of complete bliss and I’d been totally cured of anything that might have been wrong at that moment. It was one of the most beautiful experiences I have ever had with Shri Mataji. It indicates how She operates. She is totally the master. She never tells you what to do. She is never overt. She doesn’t have to be.

She just put you right, even without saying anything to you.

Robert Hunter

The West Country

The south west is a very ancient part of the UK. Its landscapes are made up from patchwork fields and narrow country lanes bordered with thick, shaggy dark green hedge-rows. Iron-age hill-forts punctuate the horizon, there are stone circles from druidic times, and pretty market towns, with many medieval buildings, castles and ruins dotted around.

At one point during Her visit to the West Country, Shri Mataji mentioned Christ to us and said He had also visited this part of the UK 2,000 years before. I think She said this was when He was with His uncle, a sailor who traded in tin with miners in Cornwall. This of course is an old legend which is also alluded to in the verses of William Blake’s Jerusalem, ‘And did those feet in ancient times walk upon England’s mountains green/and was the Holy Lamb of God on England’s pleasant pastures seen?’ Shri Mataji also mentioned the chalk carving of a large white horse on a Wiltshire hillside describing it as a Shri Kalki symbol from the collective unconscious. It was so nice to feel the way She enjoyed that part of the England, and to witness Her ‘countenance Divine shining forth upon our clouded hills’.

Another moment from Shri Mataji’s time in the West Country I remember was being with Her and Linda Williams, as Shri Mataji was looking at exhibition of art works on paper by British pop artist Patrick Caulfield. In his works objects are always banded in a thick, dark outline, and surrounding spaces filled in with bright colour. Some of the images were of landscapes.

‘Oh, this is Patrick Caulfield, he’s very well known. Do You like him, Mother?’ I remember Linda saying, as we wandered through the gallery space.

‘There is something there, I would say, but sometimes I wonder if these people really ‘see’, really see what the great thing is, Nature, that they are painting,’ Shri Mataji replied diplomatically.

Caleb Williams

That amazing day

Shri Mataji decided to have a public programme in Exeter after the interview in Plymouth. It was such a busy day for Our Holy Mother. The puja was scheduled for 12.00 o’clock and Shri Mataji had to travel from Bristol. It was the Devi Puja, which lasted for just over an hour. I knew that some things have

been omitted during the puja and started feeling a bit worried about it, but at the end of it Shri Mataji looked very sternly at me.

‘It was a good puja,’ She said, kindly putting my mind at rest. After the puja Shri Mataji with David and Patricia Prole and other yogis went to Plymouth for the TV interview. Apparently the director and the producer welcomed Mother very respectfully on the steps of the studio and later on, along with the rest on the crew, they both received their realisation.

The public programme in the evening was at 7.30 pm. One man who walked in at the beginning of the talk and Shri Mataji stopped and asked him how he was feeling.

‘Very well,’ he replied, and could not stop grinning. Later on he told us that he was eating his fish and chips supper when the TV interview came on. Suddenly he was blown away. He rushed out to try to find the hall where the meeting was.

After the public programme Shri Mataji went back to Bristol and spent Her time clearing and vibrating some areas of Bristol right to the early hours of the morning. Just like all the English Sahaja Yogis today, the future generations will be so grateful to Mother for that amazing day when Her love reached every corner of the West Country.

Grazyna Anslow

Shri Mataji talked to the deaf man through his Sahasrara

In the public programme in Exeter Shri Mataji got off the stage and to work on all the new people. There was a man who was deaf when Shri Mataji started to work on him and She cupped Her right hand then placed it on his Sahasrara, then talked to him through his Sahasrara. He said he could hear Her talking to him, and it was very moving. My eyes were welling up with tears to see a deaf man start to hear again.

We went to someone’s house in Exeter to watch the TV interview live as it was broadcast.

Derek Ferguson

The talk was so deep

We went straight to the TV studios in Plymouth for a half hour chat show programme on TV South West, then went back to someone’s house in Exeter to watch the TV interview live with Mother as it was broadcast. Shri Mataji and the interviewer were sitting around the table and the talk was so deep that the interviewer couldn’t understand it; he was stunned. Mother spoke like a puja talk.

Derek Ferguson

Comets

While we were in Exeter Halley’s Comet was spotted far out in the solar system. Mother explained that the reason why comets were, in the old days, considered to bring bad fortune was because the long period ones come from right outside the solar system and brought a different form of vibrations with them, which would help people transform. But because most people do not want to transform, this input of new vibrations could cause a problem.

After the puja Shri Mataji went in Her car down to Plymouth, to do a radio programme. It was another hour’s drive. Only one person phoned up from the

programme, but he later got his realisation and became a very good Sahaja Yogi. Mother, in Her love and boundless energy and compassion, had gone all the way there for just the one person.

Linda Williams

How many humans could be that selfless?

It had been a long day for Shri Mataji in Exeter, in 1982, and, after that, we all still had the drive back to Bristol, to the flat where we were spending the night. Mother took the wife of the flat owner, and her husband came with me in my car. We set off ahead of Mother's car and assumed we would get to Bristol some time before Her. We were going along the motorway in the pitch dark and were just passing a services place, when there was a dreadful noise from under the car and we ground to a halt.

We phoned up the Automobile Association and waited for maybe a couple of hours before the breakdown truck arrived. The flat owner, with me, discovered to his horror that he had the only key to the flat, which meant Shri Mataji could not get into the house when She arrived back in Bristol. We didn't even want to think about how awful this was, especially when Mother was so tired after such a long day. Unable to contact anyone, we piled into the breakdown truck, car on the back, set off to Bristol and finally arrived just before dawn.

Shri Mataji had waited in the car outside the flat, waiting for us to return for a long time, and then had finally gone to the student flat of some young Sahaja Yogis for what was left of the night. When we saw Her the next morning, we just did not know how to apologize, but Shri Mataji smiled sweetly and told us that it was necessary for Her to have spent some hours outside the flat in the dark of the night. The flat was in a former rectory and was surrounded by a large piece of grass with a children's playground in it. The wife of the flat owner was in the early stages of pregnancy with her first child.

Shri Mataji explained that the playground was an old churchyard and that there were a lot of dead souls hanging around. She wanted to clear them out before the baby, who would be a born realised soul, would come into the world because it would not be good for the baby to have those dead spirits hanging around where they lived. So Shri Mataji had inconvenienced Herself to such an enormous extent, after such an incredibly long day, to do yet another kind and loving act for a baby who was yet to come.

How many humans could be that selfless?

Linda Williams

A multi-faceted incident

An incident occurred during Shri Mataji's third visit to Bristol, in 1982. We had a flat in a former vicarage, on St Andrew's Road, Montpelier. It was the second morning of Her stay, and we drove down to Exeter for a puja and a public programme. In Exeter about a dozen of us performed a puja to Shri Mataji. She gave a TV interview and then in the evening held a public programme. Afterwards, we returned to Bristol.

My wife travelled with Shri Mataji in one car. I went back in another. The only problem was that we had just the one key to our flat, and it was in my pocket. This shouldn't have mattered, had the car I was travelling in not broken down. Fortunately this happened just as we were coming to a service station. We called the AA (Automobile Association) and made ourselves comfortable.

But these were the days before mobile phones, and there was no way we could let my wife know what had happened. The AA man took a good while to arrive; he decided to tow the car back to Bristol, and a long, slow journey homeward ensued.

Meanwhile, Shri Mataji, my wife Ruth and the others arrived at our flat but could not get in. They parked in the car park outside the building and waited. Time went by. Shri Mataji let them try Her keys in the door, but none of them fitted. Eventually She suggested that they go to get a drink somewhere. By now it was one in the morning and everywhere was shut. They drove around for some time and finally found a street vendor. They drank hot chocolate out of plastic cups, then returned to our flat. Still no sign of us.

They continued to wait. Shri Mataji slept for a while. Of course, they could have gone to a hotel, but this was never Shri Mataji's practice; She preferred to be with Her children. A further hour or two went by, and then as a last resort Ruth proposed that they go to another flat a mile or two away, where some Sahaja Yogis lived. It was a basement flat with a tiny kitchen and an even smaller toilet. We had lived there for a few months before moving to the Old Vicarage, and it had hardly seemed a proper place to bring the Adi Shakti.

'Yes, why not?' Shri Mataji said, so they drove there and woke up a very surprised - and sleepy - yogi. Nothing had been prepared and there wasn't even a bed in the only bedroom, so Shri Mataji slept on a mattress on the floor. Ruth and Janet, another Sahaja Yogini who had been in Shri Mataji's car, slept in the corridor outside, while the men who were present slept in the sitting room.

Mother asked to be woken at eight in the morning, so Ruth and Janet went into Her room where She was still asleep. They knelt down on the floor, uncertain what to do - and promptly fell back asleep themselves! By the time they woke again, Shri Mataji was also awake. She asked them where they had spent the night.

'Oh, but you should have slept in here with Me,' She said when they told Her. Ruth apologised for the wholly unsuitable arrangements, but Mother only asked 'What's wrong? I've had a lovely bed to sleep on and everything's fine. There's nothing to apologise for.' She told Ruth to go and ring the Old Vicarage and see what had happened to us, at which point Ruth learned of our breakdown on the motorway. Then we all met up in order to see our Mother off to London.

There were further aspects to this. Next door to the Old Vicarage and its car park was a public garden which included a children's playground. Although there was very little outward sign of it, this garden had formerly been a graveyard attached to a church which had long since been pulled down. What was more, although we didn't know it at the time, we were soon to have our first child. Hence the long wait in the car at night enabled Shri Mataji to clear the little park of dead souls etc.

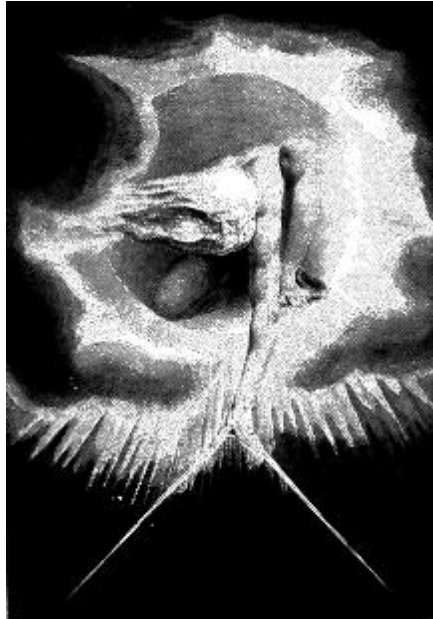
Chris Greaves

The Vishuddhi of England

We went back to Bristol from Exeter in the night after the programmes and puja and when we got near the house where we were staying in Bristol, Shri Mataji wanted a Polaroid camera, to take an instant passport photo for Her passport, but no one had one. So I mentioned that there was a machine at the bus station. She said we should go there and when we arrived at the station it

was closed, but the doors were open, so the driver drove in and parked the car, and waited for us. Then I took Shri Mataji to the two photo machines, one for colour and one for black and white. She sat down and had Her photo taken in both machines and when they came out Shri Mataji was looking like a young girl. I looked in amazement so She read my mind, and said that She was Mahamaya, in that She could look as She wanted to. Also no one saw us there and challenged us; it was as if we were invisible.

When Shri Mataji was staying in Bristol, She saw one of William Blake's paintings, the Ancient of Days, and said that the picture was Christ in the Agnya chakra, pushing down the ego, and the white hair was the Sahasrara.



Sketch of the William Blake painting

The Vishuddhi of England

When I was at that house I saw a picture on the wall that was an old map of Bristol, from the 1800's, and Shri Mataji could see all the chakra points of the town on the map, which we went round to visit. Years later it was found out that the coach station that we visited was the Vishuddhi of the UK, in that Bristol itself is the Vishuddhi. I came from Jamaica, which is part of the Vishuddhi. Shri Mataji engineered the whole thing so She could sit down and vibrate the actual point of the Vishuddhi, and even now, when you go to that coach station, the vibrations are still there.

Derek Ferguson

Just wash My Feet, sing My aarti, finished

In the summer of 1982 and we went on a tour of Reading, Bristol, Exeter and the West Country. Shri Mataji had a puja with about a dozen of us, in a little hall in Exeter. Some of the yogis had come from London. They had a book of Vedic puja hymns and we got it all out, ready to start chanting.

'What are you doing?' said Shri Mataji.

'These are the Vedic prayers.'

'You don't need all that,' Shri Mataji said. 'Just wash My Feet, sing My aarti, finished.'

Ray Harris



Exeter Puja 1982

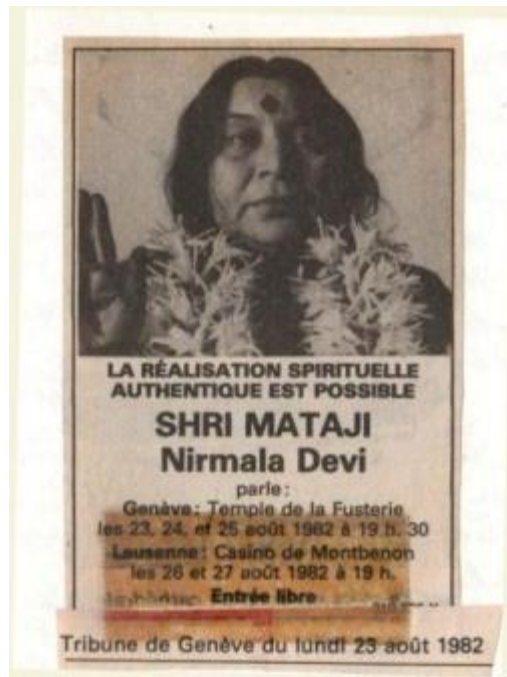
Vibrated water

After the Cheltenham seminar, which I had arranged, but did not get to because my kids had measles, we went to Exeter and had a beautiful puja. Shri Mataji asked us to bring water to Her from the different rivers of the UK for Her to vibrate, so while I was driving there I stopped at the Seven Springs, the source of the Thames, which was on the way, and scooped up a jar of water. I did not know that Shri Mataji had put Her Feet in the springs after the seminar a little time before.

‘But this water is already vibrated!’ She said, when I offered the water to Her after the puja.

Linda Williams

Chapter 16
1982 – August to October
Europe and England



Advertisement for the Geneva public programme

29th August 1982, diary extract

This time the public programme was in the heart of the city, in the very centre of Geneva. Shri Mataji spoke in one of the oldest protestant temples of Geneva and it was a historical moment, especially on the second evening when She denounced the wrongdoings of Christianity in the world, along with the colonialism, the banks, the weaponry etc. Shri Mataji asked me to do the introduction the first evening. Before coming in front of the microphone I did not know what I was going to say and during the afternoon after Shri Mataji had asked me to introduce Her I felt quite nervous, however when I was in front of more than four hundred people, including professors of my university, pastors and eminent personalities of Geneva, I felt in the centre and the inspiration of Shri Mataji was flowing through. I started with the theme of the lady guru in the temple, which was in the newspapers and on the posters around the town.

That very morning an excellent journalist had interviewed Shri Mataji in my home and got her self realisation.

The first evening of the programmes the temple was full. There was also a fundamentalist Christian sect, who interrupted Shri Mataji and they were shouting with tiny black bibles in their hands, then a crazy man came down running towards Her shouting 'Christ! Christ!' and when he arrived near the stage he fell on his knees at Her Feet.

Shri Mataji in Her compassion tried to give him vibrations, but then the whole group left and after every sentence uttered by Shri Mataji, people were applauding. Many were those who got realisation this evening as well as the two following ones.

Antoinette Wells

Only I can bear so many children

On Her visit to Switzerland in 1982, Shri Mataji gave public programmes in several towns. While going from Geneva to Zürich by train, She was looking through the window and admiring the landscape. As it was spring, the fields were very green and due to plantations of rapeseed, large fields were yellow, thus offering a nice spectacle to our eyes of bright colours – green and yellow. She smiled and attracted our attention.

‘Look at the beautiful nature and colours, – this is why I have chosen to wear this sari today.’

Shri Mataji’s sari was a beautiful bright yellow with a deep green border, the same colours that we could admire in the nature from our train windows.

In the autumn of that year Shri Mataji again came to Switzerland, and when we were in Zürich, I was resting in the afternoon, being pregnant at that time, and when She entered the room Shri Mataji looked at me.

‘Yes, you are tired, and you need to rest. You see, it is not easy to bear a child. Only I can bear so many children,’ She commented.

Marie-Amelia de Kalbermatten

The Polish people have good hearts

It was in 1982; there was a puja in Switzerland and I brought a Polish eagle, made by Polish artisans, and a small carpet as a present for Shri Mataji. I put it under the Feet of Shri Mataji, and She was in a long meditation.

‘Spiritual growth will be very difficult for the Polish people for the next few years,’ She said. She spoke about why the Polish people are so sensitive, and why they are so much on the left side. During the Second World War a lot of people died and because of this, the Kundalinis cannot go to God, but stay near the earth.

Shri Mataji said she had been in Poland with Her husband at one time, and had been to Cracow, to a big reception and some church dignitaries were there. She gave one man realisation, but he didn’t take it, even though he later became the most important in their hierarchy. Shri Mataji spoke about Sahaja Yoga and Poland, and said it would be difficult in Poland until it was established in Russia, and with the help of Russian Sahaja Yogis. In fact, it did happen like that.

Dorota Nocera

A lost soul

Shri Mataji gave a lecture at New Hall College in Cambridge in September 1982 and that is how I came to Sahaja Yoga, a lost soul as I was at that time. I had seen a poster advertising Sahaja Yoga at my college and as I had just spent five months doing voluntary work in India I was curious to know more about Indian spirituality. Shri Mataji came round and gave me realisation, She may have even put Her hand on my head. At that meeting Shri Mataji gave some attention to a really incapacitated person who could not walk properly and that person stood up and walked some steps across the hall.

For me, Shri Mataji and Sahaja Yoga have been lifesaving. Jai Shri Mataji!

Andrew Low

A trip to Cambridge

In September 1982, Shri Mataji was going to Cambridge for a public

programme. I was blessed to go with Her in the train. It was a lovely day in early summer and as we looked out of the train window there were lots of red poppies and white ox-eye daisies in bloom. Shri Mataji remarked how daisies didn't used to have a perfume, but since She had been in the UK they had developed a nice one.

On the way back we arrived a bit late for the train but it was still standing in the station. I ran down the platform and opened some of the doors, because a train does not leave if the doors are open. Shri Mataji said I should not have done that.

'I am Kali (time) and trains don't leave without Me,' She said.

Linda Williams



Shri Mataji at the railway station

She is the One

I am from Amsterdam. In September 1982, when I first came to Sahaja Yoga, we were trying to put a video together for the local TV. We filmed some doctors, and also some miracle photos, and then were in Shri Mataji's room, asking Her how we should do it. She said to tell the viewers that She is the one who has come to save the world, and to tell them clearly so that they know.

Andreas van England



Shri Mataji at Maarkedal

Incredible generosity

This photo was taken during Shri Mataji's visit to Belgium on the 19th or 20th September, 1982, at Maarkedal. It was late evening after Shri Mataji's first public programme in Ghent on the 19th September. No shopping had been

done, the yogis and Mother turned up unexpectedly, and the fridge kept producing food! Mother was at the dinner table and all fourteen yogis that were there were standing or sitting around the same table while She had dinner. During the meal I offered Her a slice of bread.

‘No thank you, people eat too much bread,’ She said.

After it turned midnight, it was the 20th September, I told Shri Mataji that it was the birthday of my father who was there and although he wasn’t a practicing yogi had helped prepare for Her visit and had arranged for the brass bowl with the candle, as he knew She liked candles. Mother took Her handbag and browsed through it for quite a while to try and find something. Then as it seemed She could not find what She was looking for, She took the diamond ring She was wearing off Her finger, and gave it to my father for his birthday. What incredible generosity - I had never seen anyone do this before or since!

‘He is a child of Mine,’ She said.

Shri Mataji also signed the guest book.

Robbert Ruigrok

Divine approval

When Shri Mataji visited Holland and Belgium in 1982, Robert Ruigrok had lined up a programme in Brussels. Shri Mataji was driven from somewhere near Ghent to Brussels.

‘Look ahead, look ahead,’ She said at one point. There was a rainbow directly over the road, totally balanced.

‘There you are, you see, we are getting divine approval for this programme,’ She said, ‘and here we are driving through the middle of a rainbow.’

It was like we sailed straight through this rainbow and, as we came through it, it dissolved.

Brian Bell

Shri Mataji’s serious warning

At the end of a visit to Holland and Belgium in 1982, while Shri Mataji bought chocolates at the airport, I was given a copy of an Indian magazine called *Today* and asked to show Her an article in it. I told Her I had the magazine in my bag and the matter dropped out my mind.

‘Now what is this letter?’ Shri Mataji said, after we had settled on the plane. My mind was totally blank – letter? letter? Then I realised and passed the communication I had been given over to Her.

The article was about the leader of a very damaging cult who was hoping to resettle from Switzerland to India, and who wanted the Indian government to waive any tax claim on the money he aimed to transfer. The article included a map which showed the Indian properties he owned. Shri Mataji pointed out how they were clustered around army, navy and air force headquarters, in Pune, and Calcutta, for instance. She talked about the dangers of this, put a bandhan on it and handed it back to me.

‘You know that what this rakshasa is doing?’ She said later. ‘He pushes his followers as far as possible into the left. He prevents them from taking garlic and cuts down on their protein, so that when they die they will die far out in the left. He can then control the bhuts that they become, so he can have an army of bhuts under his command.’

Suddenly Her comments about this rakshasa’s properties, and the way he

was creating these armies of bhuts, took on terrifying overtones. Fortunately - because of Shri Mataji's bandhan - the Indian government refused to waive its legal claims and the rakshasa never resettled in the land of his birth.

Brian Bell

Such paradise

When Shri Mataji went to Austria for the first time, in autumn 1982, September, She stayed at Gregoire and Catherine de Kalbermatten's home for five or six days, and it was just paradise. We were about twelve sleeping in their flat with Shri Mataji.

In the early morning around six o'clock Shri Mataji would go and sit in the lounge and we would bring Her first cup of tea. Slowly all the yogis would wake up and gather round Her while She sipped Her tea. Shri Mataji's breakfast would come much later and She would speak about things and tell stories. One morning She started talking about the astrological signs, and asked the yogis which sign they were, and gave a description of each astrological sign.

In the evening, after the programme, we would eat there. Shri Mataji would sit at the table and mostly She ate with us, not in Her bedroom. We would sit all round Her and we, the yoginis, would go round the table, serving everything silently while She was speaking. It was just fantastic.

Ruth Eleanore



In the Kalbermatten's flat

Shri Mataji was working on the whole city

It is interesting how the pujas have changed from the early days to now. In 1982 we had a puja in Gregoire's house, just before the first public programme in Vienna. Shri Mataji could not sleep in the night because there was a lot of negativity and She was working on the whole city. Then we had a puja; there were very few of us and Shri Mataji worked on each and every person. Everyone used to wash Her Feet and then we kept our hands under Her Feet, we would stay there for some time and She would suck in all our negativity.

Throughout the puja She would say things like, 'You go there in the corner and clean your Agnya', so it was like a cleansing moment.

Duilio Cartocci

Extract from my diary

When Shri Mataji went to Vienna for the first time we were a small group of Sahaja Yogis staying with Her in my brother Gregoire's house and on Sunday we had a puja to Shri Durga. It was very powerful; ancient weapons had been laid around the Feet of Shri Mataji as a symbol of the Goddess fighting the

negativity. She said that this puja was so strong that it could have been for at least 6,000 people, as the vibrations were so strong. The very evening of the puja there was a public programme, followed by three others which were more and more fantastic. The people of Vienna received Shri Mataji and Sahaja Yoga in a very good way. The newspapers and the radio were positive - and this a Catholic country! But it is also at the very centre of Europe. Upon Her return to the house She talked to us whilst I was massaging Her left Foot.

Antoinette Wells



Shri Durga Puja



Shri Mataji in Vienna



Shri Mataji speaking at the first public programme in Vienna

Her smile went directly into my heart

It was a nice, sunny afternoon on September 28th, 1982, in Vienna. I was walking home from work and the prospects of the evening ahead were partying

with friends. Inside me was a strong feeling of sadness and darkness. I saw a newspaper on the ground and something made me pick it up. I opened it and saw a picture of an Indian lady smiling at me. This smile had a profound impact on me and was so irresistible that I just kept looking at Her picture. After a while I noticed that at the end of the article was an invitation to a lecture by this Indian lady, and it was today, less than two hours hence.

I rushed home, changed and rushed back to the programme place. From all this rushing I was one of the first people there, and took a centre seat in the front row. A man came on stage and started speaking German with strong French accent, talking about chakras and Kundalini and my mind kept telling me to leave as I had a party that night. But my heart was so much looking forward to actually meeting this Indian lady.

Then She came, walking slowly, in a white sari and with the same radiant smile She had in the paper. Her smile went directly into my heart! It felt amazingly soothing and comfortable. When She started speaking I noticed the subject She spoke about was somehow flowing like a strong current high above my head. I did not understand much and felt much too small to tap into this powerful river flowing above my head.

‘Let’s have a meditation,’ She said, to prove, on our nervous system, if what She had said was right. I thought, how can that be? I don’t know how to meditate, and I don’t understand much about chakras and subtle energies, but then I realised that Shri Mataji was guiding us through a simple meditation and I felt comfortable to follow. At the end I felt a cool breeze coming out of my own head and on my hands, and I had no thoughts in my mind. It felt wonderful, so joyful and relaxed.

After the meditation Shri Mataji asked those who were interested to come forward and meet Her. As I was already sitting right in front of Her, I just got up and made a few steps towards Her. She stretched Her hands out to me, took my hands into Hers.

‘It is so beautiful that you came!’ She said with a warm smile. I did not know what to say, but also did not feel the need to say anything. I just felt like I had come home from a very long journey, and here I was, completely relaxed and comfortable. Other people were waiting in line so I stepped aside, and it took me quite some time to actually leave the hall, a long time after Shri Mataji had left.

When I finally realised I was still sitting in my chair and that everyone except me had already left, I looked around and noticed one young man was patiently waiting for me at the exit. So I got up and walked back towards him, still ‘floating’ above the ground in the newfound thoughtlessness. I smiled at him while passing and saw a bunch of beautiful red roses in his hand. He smiled back at me and offered me one.

‘Take this, this is from Shri Mataji!’ he said. Such a simple gesture! But what an effect it had on me, as if I had been touched by the ocean of love itself. I walked out, with the rose from Shri Mataji held towards my heart, and as soon as I reached home, I put it into a vase to keep it a while longer. Eventually the flower dried out, but I still kept it next to my new meditation set-up, as it reminded me so much of that moment of magic.

Herbert Reininger



Advertisement for the public programme

Nirmalam Sakshat

Shri Mataji's voice kept ringing in my ears for days after my realisation in September 1982. During the programme in which I got my realisation, Shri Mataji used the mantra 'Nirmalam Sakshat', and the effect was quite amazing for me.

Herbert Reininger

Shri Ganesha Puja 1982

In 1982 there was a Shri Ganesha Puja at Irchester, near Wellingborough, small town in central England, in the house of a Greek Sahaja Yogini who lived there.

Editor's note: As was often the case in those days, after the puja Shri Mataji offered us a boon, meaning that we could ask for something in our hearts as we knelt down at the end of the puja, and our prayer would be answered.



Upper photo - puja at Irchester

Lower photo - Derek Ferguson taking vibrations after the puja

Food and realisation

In 1982, during a three day seminar and after the Shri Ganesha Puja in Irchester, we expected around sixty people with their sleeping bags to stay at my house (all the men downstairs and all the women upstairs with Shri Mataji who shared Her bedroom with some Sahaja Yoginis). I cooked for sixty people but over a hundred arrived. I started getting worried that there would not be enough food for everyone.

The day before, Shri Mataji had had a housewife's talk with me on cooking, and I took the opportunity to ask Her for a recipe to use for the next day. After the puja I started filling the plates for all the Sahaja Yogis with the food from Shri Mataji's recipe and at the same time I was very concerned that there would not be enough to feed everybody. To my surprise all the casserole dishes were not becoming empty. All Sahaja Yogis had second helpings until they were fully satisfied. Then a stranger who was passing by knocked at the door and came in, saying that he had sniffed some good cooking and he wanted some. I told Shri Mataji, She was very amused and asked him to come in front of Her. She asked him what he wanted.

‘All I want is something to eat,’ he answered.

‘All right, give him some food,’ Shri Mataji laughed in amusement and said.

Of course this man, apart from the food, got his realisation too. The casserole dishes were emptied completely after everybody was fully satisfied.

Maria Laventzi

A recipe for chicken, carrot salad and aubergines

Here is Shri Mataji’s recipe for that day, exactly as She gave it.

Clean the chicken and cut it in small pieces. Add a lot of yogurt and crushed garlic plus ginger powder and salt, and keep it for a while to marinate. Cut lots of onions long wise, add unsalted butter or ghee with garam masala and bay leaves and sauté them (semi-fry them). Simultaneously put the marinated chicken in the oven with the rest of the ingredients. Cook them in the oven until slightly soft. If the yogurt has dried out add some fresh cream. Wash the basmati rice and mix it with salt, saffron and lots of butter and place it on top of the chicken. Cook for an extra ten minutes, until the rice has separated. Add fresh fennel and coriander leaves to the mixture.

Wash and grate some carrots. Clean (wash) raisins and add to the carrots. Add sliced olives. Marinate in lemon and honey.

Boil some aubergines and put them in the oven for five to ten minutes. Peel them, mix with onions, tomatoes, coriander leaves, garlic and salt.

Maria Laventzi

You look so incredibly beautiful

I was staying with some Sahaja Yogis near Bedford, England, in October 1982. They had organised a public programme there, and Mother had met some important people, like the mayor. I was sick at the time, but when I came to the place where Mother was meeting these people, in the basement of the Town Hall, Mother looked so incredibly beautiful. I was right in front of Her.

‘Oh Mother You look so incredibly beautiful!’ I said, and She tilted Her head on one side.

‘You think so? Come!’ She said, almost with amusement, and opened Her arms really wide, and gave me the hugest hug. It was really amazing.

Susie Lumsden

An Indian lady getting out of Her car

At that same period we held a meeting at the Bedford Guild Hall where the Mayor of the town and his wife were invited, plus the media, to cover the meeting. While Shri Mataji was giving Her Sahaj lecture at the Guild House in Harpur Street, an accident occurred in another street of Bedford where this boy (Jason Haynes) was driving on his motorbike from Sainsburys supermarket, where he was working, to his house. He was knocked down by a car. When he recovered his senses, he said that he saw an Indian lady getting out of Her car and approaching him while he was lying down on the road. She put Her hand at the lower part of his spine and he felt immediately the pain going away. The next day this boy saw one of the posters with Shri Mataji’s photo and said that that was the lady who helped him at the accident. At the precise moment of the accident, Shri Mataji was giving Her lecture at the Guild Hall, a few streets away from the accident. After that meeting, Shri Mataji exchanged a nice

conversation with the Mayor and his wife. They were very pleased to have met Her, indicating that Shri Mataji would be welcome in town any time.

The incident was published by the media in the local papers but some individuals being sceptical about it passed on some comments which displeased Mother who asked me to write a prayer. Here it is:

Spirit Divine

Oh! Mother of Heaven, Oh! Spirit Divine, I need to be closer, each day and each night.

Sweet ether's whisper, You speak in my heart, You carry me higher, with one mere glance.

Please, nourish my being, with amrut and water, and mind and soul, dwell at Your altar.

Please, help me surrender, please, let me become one with Your ocean, one with Your heart.

Maria Laventzi

First darshan

I had been in Sahaja Yoga for a couple of months but being winter Shri Mataji was in India, so when She returned I was keen to see Her and started to imagine what extraordinary things might happen when I finally came in the Divine Presence having already had some powerful experiences, and was feeling cool vibrations on my hands almost continuously. There was to be a public programme in Holborn Library in London, in 1983.

The stage was sumptuously decorated with flowers and saris and a large armchair, and all the usual speeches were made before Shri Mataji came. When She arrived, instead of coming onto the stage She came in by the public entrance and stood in front of the stage to give Her speech, wearing a simple white sari.

After Her talk and giving realisation, all the new people went to the front, including me although I was not technically new, and were worked on by Sahaja Yogis while Shri Mataji gave them advice. In my case She lifted up Her right forefinger and said, 'Vishuddhi,' to the person working on me. Strangely in the whole programme I had not felt anything, not even cool breeze on my hands. At the end of the programme the armchair was brought down from the stage and Shri Mataji sat there taking flowers and talking to the yogis. I was standing at the back with a flower that I had brought but did not want to push through to the front.

'What about that gentleman, did he feel anything?' Shri Mataji asked, and everyone turned round to look at me. I was looking behind me but there was no one there.

'Yes, you,' Shri Mataji said.

The crowd of Sahaja Yogis parted to create a corridor with Shri Mataji sitting at the end smiling, so I walked up to Her, knelt down and offered Her my flower which She took.

'Did you feel anything?' She asked again.

I was slightly at a loss to answer as I had felt plenty before but nothing on this evening.

'Yes, I felt something,' I said, which seemed to satisfy Her and then She wound up the meeting and left.

Chris Marlow

The boy in Bedford was a good receiver

During the 1983 tour of America, while Shri Mataji was in Los Angeles She did a half hour radio interview. Two of us were waiting with Her for the studio to become clear.

This was shortly after the incident which happened in England, the so-called 'Bedford Boy,' who had had an accident on his motor bike and when he was taken to hospital he told the doctor of this strange thing that had happened. While he was lying there waiting for the ambulance, a Mercedes had come up and stopped nearby. A lady in a long white dress had got out of it and smiled at him, come over to him, passed her hand over him, and had then gone back into her Mercedes and driven off.

'Yes, that is a very interesting story,' the doctor had said. 'The reporter is somewhere. You should tell him.'

So the boy told the reporter and the reporter reported this incident, which had a number of sequels, one of which was that the injured boy saw the picture of Shri Mataji.

'Oh, that was the lady. That was the lady who came to me when I had my accident,' the boy said later.

The doctors were amazed that even though he had had this accident, very little damage had been done to him. The other interesting thing was that this happened while Shri Mataji was delivering a public programme at Bedford Town Hall.

Before this radio programme in Los Angeles, Shri Mataji was talking about this.

'Shri Mataji, were you conscious of that? Were You conscious of being with that boy at the accident?' The Sahaja Yogini with me asked. Shri Mataji didn't answer immediately. She thought about it for a moment.

'It's like this — the divine is always transmitting. The message is always going out from the divine. Whether it is picked up or not depends on the quality of the receiver. If the receiver is good, then the divine message is picked up,' were more or less Her words.

Presumably the boy in Bedford was a good receiver.

Brian Bell

Shri Mataji did not leave

I was at that Bedford programme, except that because my baby was crying so much, I had to take him out and sit in the back of my car with him. Shri Mataji's car was near mine in the car park, just outside the main door into the Town Hall.

Shri Mataji did not leave the Town Hall during the programme and Her car certainly did not leave the car park. I know because I was sitting there wishing I could go inside, except with a fractious child I couldn't. I was watching the door intently all the way through, waiting for Mother to come out. She finally did, at about ten o'clock, accompanied by the other Sahaja Yogis. The Bedford boy incident had happened earlier in the evening.

Linda Williams



The article that appeared in the local Bedford paper

‘As motor scooter rider Jason Haynes, seventeen, lay in a crumpled heap after a crash, he says a woman spiritualist came up to him and eased his pain by simply laying her hands on him.

But at the time of the crash on Thursday night, ‘Holy Mother’ Mataji Nirmala Devi was a quarter of a mile away at a public meeting in Harpur Street....

Jason said: ‘I was just laying in the road in pain. People were standing about saying, ‘Don’t touch him — he may have broken his back.’

‘Then I was aware of this Indian lady over me. She said: ‘Do you have faith in me?’ I said, ‘Yes.’

‘She put her hands on my head, my shoulders, my arms, my body.

‘As she took her hands away from each spot, the pain just vanished. I thought I had broken my arm, but she said I hadn’t.’

He didn’t see the lady after that and minutes later was taken to the hospital in an ambulance....’

And the final word from Jason: ‘I definitely saw this woman and she helped me. There was only one spot that she didn’t touch, my lower back, and that is still hurting.’

Ross Francis, Bedfordshire Journal

Editor’s note: ‘It’s marvellous to think that such occurrences are happening in this country, and it is a blessing.’ Shri Mataji said, when told of the strange event.

Ajwan and a boon

After the Bedford public programme, we went back to Maria’s house at Irchester. Shri Mataji had settled in Maria’s house with a cup of tea, and was talking to us all about various things, so an ajwan treatment was suggested. Preparations were made with a very large pan etc. As soon as the ajwan seeds were hot enough we all began to inhale the smoke from them, whilst underneath a large blanket. Most of us could only manage to stay under the blanket for a short while because of the effect the smoke was having on our eyes, noses and throat. Shri Mataji was laughing at us all, with our watery eyes

and runny noses and suggested we stay under the blanket as long as possible. Of course none of us could.

Still laughing, She suggested that She should sit under the blanket too. A proper seat was arranged and Shri Mataji sat inhaling the smoke, we were all then invited to join Her under the blanket, and we all tried to stay under it while She was there, but of course we could not, and we kept leaving the blanket with streaming eyes etc. This went on for some considerable time; many of us tried to stay longer but eventually we had to give up. The whole of this time Shri Mataji sat under the blanket inhaling the smoke, which seemed to have no effect at all. After all this was finished and put away, Shri Mataji spoke to us all about cleansing the chakras and then granted us all a boon or wish.

Bill Hansel

Editor's note: ajwan treatment is done by inhaling the ajwan smoke, where it is either put on a dry pan which has been heated, or on burning charcoal.



Letter written to the paper after the 'Miracle Boy' article appeared

Chapter 17
1982 October and November
USA



Left: Shri Ganesha Puja, centre: meeting Shri Mataji at the airport, right: Scott Gaddy serving food to Shri Mataji in 1982



Shri Mataji in the Gaddy's apartment, on 92nd St and Broadway, Manhattan, New York



Shri Mataji with the Gaddy boys

You are My instruments

As the earliest beginners in Sahaja Yoga in the USA, or seekers, as Shri Mataji called us, we were so scrambled as to need background music to meditate, to seek the peace and find the silence.

‘No problem, just be pleasantly placed,’ She said. We were able to see Her guidance in every deepening development - the mantras, the bhajans, the

holidays, the tender touches, and we began to realise we were changing our troubled world. Shri Mataji invited us to India to travel with Her. She placed us all over the world, with new challenges for growth and said She would send us new seekers with greater depth. We grew to be able to speak about the chakras and share guided meditations. Shri Mataji provided humour in large doses so that we did not take ourselves too seriously. She was blunt in redirecting me on one occasion.

‘You know what is wrong with you?’ She said, ‘You have no discrimination.’ Another thing I remember Her saying was that She would work us out but, ‘You must give up joyless pursuits.’

‘You are My hands, you are My instruments,’ She would say, but ‘You must introspect, you must correct yourselves. First, you must be pure. After all, I love to play with My children.’

The initial shock of so much information and vibrations stunned me and I asked a more seasoned sister as to how to cope with everything. She suggested I say to myself, ‘Shri Mataji, You do everything, I do nothing,’ and that eventually I would be able to mature into, ‘Shri Mataji, You do everything, I enjoy everything You do.’

Judy Gaddy

Three days continuous driving to be at the puja

During the fall (autumn) of 1982 Shri Mataji visited the USA and stayed in the home of a yogini in New Jersey. Several of us from Vancouver drove right across Canada to New York, in a utility van with no seats in it, to be there. We took turns driving, sleeping and eating and made the trip in just over three days. A Shri Krishna Puja was held in the lady’s home and a handful of yogis and yoginis attended. We were all very blessed to have Shri Mataji’s undivided attention for about three days and thirstily absorbed all of Her words and suggestions.

Lori Wills

Sahaja Yogis in the future

In New York in 1982, after the puja we showed Shri Mataji the old *Star Wars* films. It was the one with the little furry creatures in it, and She said these were the Sahaja Yogis in the future.

After some debate among ourselves we made popcorn for Shri Mataji and gave Her some. We weren’t sure whether this was the right thing to do, but we offered Shri Adi Shakti popcorn, because this is what you do when you watch a movie. She was tremendously happy with it because She said She could eat more than channa, and so could eat more bhuts.

Patrick Redican

Be relaxed

In 1982 Shri Mataji graced North America with Her presence in New York at a seminar and public programme in late October. We decided to drive from Vancouver in an old cargo van. There were seven of us, and there were no passenger seats in the back, just mattresses. We thought nothing of the journey, over 4,000 miles through the majestic Rocky Mountains, across the early snow covered fields of the flat grain prairies, around the windswept Great Lakes, through the raw wild nature of Canada to cross the border into New York State.

The excitement of going to greet our Mother, whom some of us had never seen before, buoyed us up with an energy of delight and joy.

We stayed altogether in a yogini's flat. There were her five children and about thirty yogis in a two bedroom flat in the heart of the city. In those days the Goddess blessed us with Her most Motherly form, always asking after our welfare and taking care of our individual needs. We sat at Her Feet, crowded into the living room, while She talked about different things and we thirstily absorbed into our beings Her divine vibrations.

In the evening She invited several women to sleep in Her room with Her, to ease the overcrowding of the floor sleepers in the living room. She made Herself so accessible to us, although in Her physical presence one was always very aware of a certain formality and protocol that must be observed. Shri Mataji's presence commanded respect and recognition of who She was. In return all Her blessings flowed upon you. The more humble and open hearted one became the more one felt. In Her presence one could experience states of being one could not ever imagine feeling. It is hard to describe the well of depth one could slip into. Being in a place in direct connection with Shri Mataji created this depth of awareness not felt otherwise. It was like there was a comforting hand over everything, a weight in the air, but if one was too familiar there was an immediate correction felt inside oneself and an awareness one had over stepped the boundaries.

In the bedroom that evening Shri Mataji invited me to sleep on the bed next to Her. I was very overwhelmed at this. I was seven months pregnant and somewhat over tired from our journey. Shri Mataji was always compassionate and giving. In the morning I awoke to see Her already awake and talking with others who had slept on the floor. I leapt off the bed, feeling how inauspicious to be asleep in Shri Mataji's presence.

'You must never wake up like that,' She immediately turned and said. 'Be relaxed, take it slowly. How are you feeling?' I had slept very deeply.

Felicity Payment

Shri Mataji in New York, 1982

The first time I met Shri Mataji in North America was in New York City in October of 1982. I met Her at the airport, stayed in the same apartment in the city with Her, along with several other people, and even accompanied Her on a shopping excursion for chandeliers.



In the left hand photo, Shri Mataji is in the apartment, telling us how to grow in Sahaja Yoga, on the 27th October. In the centre, She is on the streets of New

York City, on the 28th. In the right hand one She is bidding us farewell at the airport, on the 29th.

There was a public programme in New York. While staying at the apartment with Her, we ate all kinds of American take-out food, including Chinese food and pizza. One evening we watched the video of *Star Wars, Episode 4, A New Hope*, with Shri Mataji.

At the apartment She explained how everything had been created and then evolved to its present form. We also had the opportunity to talk personally with Her. I could not feel any vibrations and Shri Mataji put Her attention on me. She lifted up Her arm from down low to above Her head in a strong motion, with Her attention directly on me as I sat before Her. As soon as She made that gesture I felt the cool vibrations flowing in my hands.

Mark Taylor

A papatsh

Shri Mataji gave me so many papatshes that I cannot remember them all in detail. Perhaps it is better because it was so sad not to be able to give Her joy.

There are at least two on tape and concerning one of these not many people know the whole story. It was a puja to Shri Guru Nanak in November 1982 at Nightingale Lane. At that time I was staying with my mother in the country, and the leader phoned me from London and said I was to leave her and to come with the children to stay at Nightingale Lane - that very day. So I duly did as I was told.

Imagine my surprise when in the middle of the talk, Shri Mataji suddenly told me that I had to go back to stay with my mother and look after her, and not leave her alone. Soon after, Shri Mataji asked me to live in India.

Linda Williams

Shri Mataji's Zen Painting

Whilst trying to still my mind for meditation today, I was reminded of a very special car journey I had once with Shri Mataji. I'd been helping at Her Brompton Square London home and the yogis had been told that Mother would be going out shopping - therefore it was unlikely that we'd enjoy Her darshan that day.

Swallowing back my disappointment I continued with the designated errands, trying instead to focus on the incredible blessing of being permitted to dust and pack up the vibrated china plates. I was, I confess, a bit nervous when a yogi suddenly came and said, 'Mother wants to see you now ...' without any hint of the reason for the summons, my mind scanned various possibilities. Had I perhaps done something wrong? Or maybe, as had happened before, She needed some suitcases to be packed.

Not knowing what to expect, I gently knocked on Her bedroom door and waited to be told. I found Shri Mataji all ready to leave; wearing Her soft camel coat, paisley scarf and shiny patent burgundy shoes.

'Danya, I think you'd really love this wallpaper shop I'm going to,' She said upon seeing me, 'I think you should come with me today.'

Surprised and delighted to be even spoken to, I didn't stop to question why She thought I'd love that shop so much. She went on to explain that they had very nice designs and was hoping to choose some new wallpaper for some guest rooms. I admit to having no previous interest in wallpaper at all, I was just

thrilled to be going anywhere with Her - for the first time!

Shri Mataji's car was out of service that day - but there was available a very modest white builder's van with only a front bench seat for three people at a squeeze. Shri Mataji decided to sit in the middle next to the driver with me on the other side. At the beginning of the journey I remember trying to press my body next to the car door so that She could have some space, I was trying to make myself small, trying to still my mind, trying to keep my attention on Sahasrara, in fact, trying much too hard instead of just relishing this amazing blessing.

On the way to the wallpaper shop the driver needed to make a stopover first for materials. He parked the van on the kerb and went to fetch them; yet for some reason he seemed to be gone for absolutely ages. Shri Mataji was completely unruffled by the driver's disappearing act, She remained in a contemplative mood and we mainly sat in a companionable silence looking through the window at the unremarkable view of a non-descript and rather shabby street, that is until She did something quite magical.

Absolutely from nowhere giant star shaped, feathery snowflakes began to gently float in front of the window-screen. Slowly, slowly the snow began to settle (settling snow was so rare in London that time of year). I was aware that Shri Mataji was smiling, delighted to see the beautiful entertainment She was creating while we waited. She was beautifying the grey urban scene - and calming my chattering mind at the same time. When the driver returned, there was a blanket of snow covering all the houses and trees and I remember being completely in bliss.

'Everything is so still and silent now - like a Zen painting all done in black and white,' Shri Mataji commented as we drove off through the freshly painted streets.

What a privilege to have been sitting next to the Artist! It is strange because I have absolutely no memory of the wallpaper shop - yet the memory of Her divine design remains imprinted on my memory forever.

Danya Martoglio

Mother and child

Back then, as was the habit of the time, when we addressed Shri Mataji it was more usual to call Her Mother. This was a widely established practice in the UK in the 80's. It was never done in a casual or forgetful manner but rather in a tone of great reverence. In fact Shri Mataji, if She phoned the flat my family lived in, which happened quite a bit in 1985 when She moved into our neighbourhood, tended to begin the conversation on recognising my 'Hello?' with 'Ahh, Caleb, it's Mother here'. In the affirmations that She developed in the early 80's as part of the realisation process Shri Mataji also instructed new people to say 'Mother, please give me my Self Realisation,' etc. So, for these reasons and others the common practice when we were working in and around Brompton Square was usually to call Shri Mataji, 'Mother'. This could produce some simply wonderful moments if one asked Shri Mataji a question, moments of great sweetness and intimacy.

'Mother?' An eager young face bounds up the stairs anxious to report a development, or to receive a new piece of instruction about some practical task maybe half done, and now requiring Shri Mataji's authoritative eye or

knowledge, a beat of time, an eye blink later, Shri Mataji looks up ...'Yes, My child?'

'Yes, My child', the words, so simple, but what an infinite tenderness they conveyed. The way Shri Mataji said those words sometimes almost made it impossible to remember what you wanted to say next. You just wanted to stay there in front of Her pondering that beautiful softness of tone.

When I heard Shri Mataji call me 'My child', as I did on a couple of occasions it filled me with tingling delight. One felt that I, we, every one of us working on Brompton Square was a precious, loved and deeply known child. From the way She said those few words you intuited Shri Mataji's knowledge of not just who you were in this life, but in many prior births, someone who had earned the right to be called 'Her child'. What a blessing! Those words wrapped you in incredible warmth. They also contained such deep patience, and sometimes playfulness. The voice that said them was soft and peace-filled.

In hearing that brief phrase spoken, one felt part of an ancient current of profound seeking and blissfully rewarded finding. Simple. Glorious. Beautiful. Unforgettable.

Caleb Williams

Working on a cupboard

One of my first times in close proximity to Shri Mataji was when I was invited to go and do some carpentry in Her house in Brompton Square. I was asked to bring some wood to put a floor in a cupboard, so on my way I found something suitable in a skip. I don't know if this was auspicious or not but this was my style at the time. I spent some time in the cupboard cutting and fitting the wood. I had just got to the last piece and decided to try it in the remaining hole and to my amazement it fitted perfectly without being cut. I was just pondering on the event when I became aware that someone was standing in the door of the cupboard. It was Shri Mataji, smiling.

'How's it going?' She asked.

'Very well, thank You,' I stammered.

'You've spent long enough in there,' She said.

We were all invited into Her bedroom to watch a Hindi movie or two. Shri Mataji sat on a sofa in a very relaxed way and gave us a running translation of the movies. I was naturally amazed at how relaxed and informal it all was and spent the next few days with a kind of special glow at having been honoured to have been there.

Chris Marlow

Mother's humour, love and care

It is those everyday things, those little personal moments - of humour, love, Mother's care for each of us - which continue to stir in our memories and which resonate so tremendously for me now that She has left us. I keep thinking about being in Brompton Square with Mother, back in December 1982, sitting on the floor in Her bedroom the night before She was leaving for India the next morning. Many of us had been in the house that day doing little jobs - helping out - we were wrapped up in coats and thick jumpers, as the house was still something of a building site, and very cold.

Mother was seated on Her bed sorting through Her big white handbag. She paused, having found a packet of Polo mints and She offered me one and took

one Herself. She then sat reflectively on the bed in silence, sucking the mint, enjoying the pause in activities and preparations.

‘Ahhh ... no peace for the crooked,’ Mother sighed, and said in a wry, joking voice, and began to rummage in Her handbag again. It was a lovely moment of Her twinklingly mischievous humour.

Mother thank You for Your love. Thank You for all You gave to each of us.

Caleb Williams

Chapter 18

1982 – December

India

A present of a nose ring, for the blessings of Shri Kubera

In 1982, after a public programme at Andheri, Mumbai, Mother gave presents of nose rings to the Sahaja Yoginis who used to wear them, so I also got one from Her. She later noticed that I had not put in the nose ring She had given me. She asked me why I was not wearing it and I said that the one in my nose was so tight that only a goldsmith could remove it so I could put the new one in, and She said OK.

Shri Mataji later explained that if we put a nose ring in, we improve the blessings of Shri Kubera.

Shakuntala Tandale

Finally I had met my Mother

I had had my self realisation for a year and a half. During that time, we had listened to Shri Mataji's talks and watched Her on video and seen Her photos, but most importantly experienced Her presence and love in meditation and in all the little miracles that occurred in my daily life. In December 1982 I was finally going on the India tour and would, for the first time, see Shri Mataji. I could hardly wait.

Our trip to India was exciting. Travelling with a group of Sahaja Yogis is always fun. We arrived in Mumbai and went by bus to Lonavala where we disembarked from the buses, unloaded the suitcases and stood in a car park underneath a hotel. My desire to see Shri Mataji was overwhelming, but we were informed that we would probably not see Her until the next day. I remember feeling very disappointed, as if I could not wait another second.

So there we were standing with our suitcases, mine was right in front of me, just waiting, as one does a lot in India. A car pulled up. I vaguely remember someone saying Shri Mataji was here and, in what seemed like seconds, She was coming towards me. I was very conscious of my suitcase being in the way. Then I saw Her. My first impression was that Shri Mataji was not very tall.

Then She was right in front of me and I was overwhelmed with the love that was pouring from Her. She moved fast through everyone, as if gliding, not walking, and smiled and welcomed everyone. There was a coolness all around Her. We all burst into tears, oceans of tears of joy, our hearts opening and just overflowing, exploding with love, like a release. It is very hard to explain. It seemed like everyone was just standing there and crying. It was quite extraordinary. Later Shri Mataji said at the puja that the tears were the result of the power of Mahakali, opening the left side.

Finally, I had met my Mother.

Gillian Patankar



Lunch on the India tour

With Shri Mataji in the Indian villages

I visited India for the second time in December 1982. We spent some time in Lonavala, Maharashtra, and then went to a village called Paud. Shri Mataji arrived in a car and the trunk was opened. She explained that a very good fruit to help sooth down our hot, irritated livers was guava and proceeded to hand out a guava to each of us to eat.



In these photos, Shri Mataji is in the village of Paud, and is handing out guavas to each of us. Everywhere we went in rural India, we attracted a crowd of curious onlookers - we were a group of about 120 Westerners from Canada, USA, Australia, and European countries such as Switzerland, UK, France and Italy. We all wore traditional Indian dress - plain white cotton for the men, colourful saris for the ladies. There were so few of us it was easy to get close for good photographs of Shri Mataji, even without a zoom camera.

Shri Mataji was concerned about our food, our health and our comfort throughout the time we stayed in India. She instructed our hosts in every village to cook mild food, without hot spices and advised us not to stay out in the blazing sun. One day She saw me wearing a hat (following Her advice, I was protecting the top of my head from the sun). She warned me not to wear too

tight a hat or it would restrict circulation to my scalp and not be good for my hair.

We travelled in buses and met up with Shri Mataji for some of Her programmes in rural villages, such as Paud.

Mark Taylor

You lie down behind My chair

Right at the beginning of my being in Sahaja Yoga, in 1982, on the India tour, in a village there had been a puja and I felt so ill. I got up and went to Shri Mataji.

‘What is wrong with her?’ Shri Mataji said. I don’t know what was wrong, but She went on, ‘You lie down behind My chair, there.’

So I did and Her sari was hanging down and I held on to it. There was some music and Shri Mataji swayed a little, and said She was reacting to the music. After that I could drive with Her in the car to the next village. There was an English doctor in the car and she wanted to give me a pill, a paracetamol, and Shri Mataji said, ‘Take it.’

Patricia Deene

You know better than me

I had my realisation on the 22nd April 1982 in India. I saw Shri Mataji in Lonavala, on the Maharashtra tour 1982. Mother was distributing presents to Sahaja Yogis. She gave me a present of a sari, my very first present from Mother. When my friend Mrs Surawkar’s sari was announced, I had to go and collect it. That time Mother asked me whether my friend would like this sari.

‘Mother, You know better than me,’ I said. This was my very first conversation with Mother. She looked at me top to bottom, changed the sari and gave me another.

‘This sari your friend will like,’ She said.

Shakuntala Tandale

You have just received a gift from God

After one of the first pujas on the India tour in 1982/3, we were lining up to receive a gift from Shri Mataji, a little mat. This was the first time I would have direct contact with Shri Mataji. My heart was beating as I waited.

Then there I was in front of Her. She smiled at me and handed me the mat, then asked me to hold out my hands to Her. Up until then, I had not felt the cool breeze very strongly on my hands, but as I held them out to Her, they were flooded with a beautiful coolness and I felt such joy. Shri Mataji looked at me and smiled. I was overwhelmed and went to Her Feet. In those days, we used to put our hands under Her Feet, palms up and our head on Her Feet. I went thoughtless. It was so beautiful.

‘You know you have just received a gift from God?’ a Sahaja Yogi said to me when I returned to my seat. All I could do was smile and nod my head. My heart knew this was true. My brain was trying to comprehend it.

Gillian Patankar

Chikkus

When I was looking after Mother on the India tour, I never got more than two or three hours sleep, yet never felt tired at all. We were in the car with Mother

one time, and a very poor Sahaja Yogi gave some fruits, chikkus, to Mother. They were left in the car for some days.

‘Get those chikkus from the car,’ Mother said to me. I thought that they must have gone off by then, as chikkus are soft fruit and do not last long, but I got them and Mother ate some.

‘What sweet chikkus!’ She said. Even though they were not that good, She wanted to make the Sahaja Yogi feel good, and he was so happy when he was told She had had them and liked them. It was as if Mother ate them to please him - because they had been given from the heart.

Meenakshi Murdoch

A marvellous moment

It was in India, in January 1982. I had been in Sahaja Yoga something like six months. Shri Mataji had sent for me after a programme or a havan, and took me along to stay with Her. It was in a village in Maharashtra, in a little house. I found myself in the same room as Her. There were two beds, She in one and I in the other and a bathroom en-suite. Shri Mataji put on Her new sari, and showed me how to fold the old one She had taken off, by putting both extremities together, to fold it in two and then again folding it in two and again folding it in two. It was just such a marvellous moment of intimacy.

Ruth Eleanore

She had taken it into Her own body

When we were at Satara in December 1982, at a dam and staying in the guesthouse, one of the Sahaja Yogis had become quite sunburned. He was very ill and was lying in a heap somewhere. Someone told Shri Mataji. During those tours, She would travel alongside us, in that when we were in the buses, She would often go by in the car and would be with us pretty much every single day. So we wouldn’t just see Her for the pujas, but also when we were eating and a lot of the time, every day.

Mother was sitting at the foot of a tree and in India a lot of the trees have seats built of concrete almost like a step around the bottom of it. Shri Mataji was sitting on one of these at the guesthouse and we were all sitting round Her. She called this boy out and he came and sat next to Her. She worked on him for quite a long time and he was sent off to go to sleep. When he woke up, he was feeling infinitely better and the next morning someone who had been close to Shri Mataji said that She had had a very bad night. Her skin was dark and black and looked as if it was covered in sunburn.

Shri Mataji had taken the sunburn from this person into Her own body and had worked it out through Herself.

Auriol Purdie

The most beautiful day of my life

This story is about the India tour in 1982/3. We were in a small village where there was a big dam. Every night Shri Mataji called ten women to come and sleep in Her house. We went there, had something to eat and fell asleep. It was a very nice sleep – I don’t remember anything, but in the morning Shri Mataji called us to come into Her room. She was sitting on a chair in a very motherly way. She asked us to take breakfast, and tea with Her. She asked us nice

questions – like, ‘What do you do?’ ‘How long are you in Sahaja Yoga?’ She was very, very sweet.

After that She asked us to massage Her Feet. We were a little bit afraid, because none of us had done this before. I was the third or fourth person to do this. It was a really beautiful sensation to touch Mother’s Feet. When we were doing this She asked us to use a paste – yellow-brownish with herbs, a little bit. She asked us to put an old newspaper under Her Feet and said not to worry, but the paper could catch all the bits of herbs that were falling from Her legs. She started to tell us this story that this was how She made Shri Ganesha. A herbal paste was mixed, and She put it together and gave it life, and in this way a little boy called Ganesha was born. It was absolutely beautiful to massage Shri Mataji’s Feet, and to have all these incredible vibrations, and to hear this beautiful story directly from Mother.

When we were finished, it was completely beyond time and a few hours had passed. It was a very sunny day and we had to go in the open air, back to where we were staying, about two kilometres, around one o’clock in the afternoon. Suddenly a very dark cloud, but a little cloud, came and covered the sun to protect us from too much sun. You could see kilometres around, and there were no clouds anywhere else and there was no one around. Suddenly we heard the sound of a bullock cart behind us, and we turned round and there was a nice man on the cart, who took us on it to the village. But only two minutes before there had been nobody, and we could see for a very long way all around.

It was the most beautiful day of my life.

Dorota Nocera

When I decided to get married

Shri Mataji would always point out someone to me.

‘What about the girl in the blue sari?’ She would say. I would say nothing and disappear to the other end of the hall to avoid the subject. Mother never pushed me, saying it must be this girl, or something. That year during the tour, around places like Rahuri, I went to Shri Mataji.

‘Yes, I’d like to be married,’ I said.

‘I’ve got two girls in mind, an Australian and an Indian,’ She said.

‘All right, yes. Mother, I’d like to marry the Indian girl.’

‘Well, she’s that girl over there.’ I knew instantly who it was. I’d stayed in their house overnight because they were near the airport.

‘Let me know in a few days’ time what you want to do,’ Mother said.

‘Okay, Mother. Thank You.’ I got Patrick Redican to go and be my spy.

‘Go and speak to this girl to see what she’s like,’ I said. I couldn’t do it myself. I’d be too embarrassed. So he came back and gave a good report and during this whole time, Meenakshi had no idea about it. I eventually went to Shri Mataji.

‘I’ll accept her,’ I said, that kind of thing.

‘It may take a little time because I haven’t spoken to the girl and I haven’t spoken to the family.’ She called in Raolbai. I expected to wait a few days, for Her to speak to the parents, so we went outside and in about half an hour Shri Mataji came out to speak to the Sahaja Yogis.

‘I’ve got some good news that Malcolm and Kamakshi,’ She said during the conversation (Meenakshi was then called Kamakshi) ‘are to be married.’ Of course, we were all sitting there cross-legged on the ground with these two

heads which popped up, because I was expecting it to take some time. Meenakshi had no time to think about it because she'd only just been called and probably her father had been called too. She agreed without any hesitation.

Malcolm Murdoch

I thought She wanted a handkerchief

'There is a boy in England, but I don't know, the human mind is such that we always look in the human way. We never think of how the divine is trying to play the game,' Mother said to me in the car. I didn't want to get married before I finished my degree. A few years later, things were still not working out, because Mother had Her own plans for me. So I went to Mother's feet.

'Mother, I surrender all my ego at Your Lotus Feet and I am ready to get married to whoever You give me as long as he is a Sahaja Yogi,' I said. So if you have ego or conditionings, Mother doesn't force you, but you have to grow and realise it. When Mother asked me about Malcolm I was quite stunned. I knew Malcolm, and Mother wanted me to be quite sure. I asked Her to clear the doubt in my mind which was still there, but I was still not quite sure. Then at Rahuri Mother announced my engagement to Malcolm on the mike. I misheard, and thought the reason Mother mentioned my name was because She wanted a handkerchief from Her handbag, because I was holding it at the time. So I ran, and was so embarrassed, and then Malcolm was also there.

Meenakshi Murdoch

Shri Mataji knows everything

Shri Mataji told me to visit Rahuri when She was there. I did not know where it was but got a bus from Mumbai to Rahuri from the State Transport Bus Station. We arrived at midnight, having left Mumbai in the morning at 8.00 am. The conductor said there were three bus stops in Rahuri: the Sugar Mill, the Patil's House and the University, and where would we like to debus? Something guided me from within and I told him, 'Patil's House'.

As we got down from the bus I felt a very strong fragrance of roses. The conductor put us in a tonga (horse cab) and told the driver to take us to the Patil's House. As we reached it, Raolbai (Shri Mataji's helper) also arrived there in a jeep. She told us that Shri Mataji had asked her to go to the bus stop as the guests from Delhi had arrived. I asked Raolbai how Shri Mataji knew this when I myself did not know where we were.

'She knows everything,' she said simply.

Nirmala Verma

Better now?

Early in the 1982/3 India tour, we were at a hill station, waiting for Shri Mataji. I was wearing a sloppy track suit, and assumed there would be some time before Shri Mataji arrived, but suddenly She came, and we all sat down and I realised there would be no time to change. Shri Mataji started talking.

'Who are the people who are going to do the puja?' She asked. The leader suggested John Kant and myself to do the puja, which would be the following day.

'Come up here,' She said, looking serious.

John was looking immaculate, but I was looking scruffy. We wended our way through the crowd and Shri Mataji beckoned us to come to Her Feet. I

remember thinking what an honour it was, and that I mustn't think as my hands were at Her Lotus Feet. Our backs were uppermost, and I couldn't see what was going on, but I could hear Her bangles tinkling as She worked on our chakras, revolving Her hands above them. When She had finished, we straightened up on our haunches. Shri Mataji looked at us.

'Better now?' She said.

'Yes, Shri Mataji,' I replied, stunned and thoughtless.

I didn't know anything was wrong, but I definitely felt better when I left. Obviously something needed to be sorted out before the puja, because when the people doing the puja are clear, the vibrations flow better to the other assembled participants.

Albert Lewis

A magical journey I've never forgotten

Of the India tours my first, 1982/3, remains the most vivid - probably because as a youngster of sixteen I saw it all through wide innocent eyes. It was thrilling to visit the places where Shri Rama and Shri Sita walked the earth, and to see where the Goddess fought Her battles, as witnessed by Markendeya - we even saw the spot where he shot his arrow to recall that battle, as well as the vibrated pilgrimage sites and swayambhus of Maharashtra.

We also stayed in Delhi, where Mother gave those famous lectures on a different chakra each night. As a grand finale She kindly organised a trip for us to visit the Himalayas; who could ask for more of a first experience of India? Being away from home for the first time there were moments of home-sickness. One day on our way to the next destination, our beloved Mother, who would often travel in convoy with the buses, perhaps sensing this, stopped the car and invited me to travel beside Her.

I was whisked from the dusty, delightful municipal bus to sit in Her air-conditioned car for a magical journey I've never forgotten. What an honour to sit beside the Goddess as She marvelled at Her own creation, enjoying each scene as if it was a painting in motion. She gave a running commentary on everything, explaining how the Maharashtrian land was formed by volcanoes - I wondered if She was seeing those ancient creation scenes in Her mind's eye as She spoke. She would point out tiny details such as the delicate decorative patterns painted on the mud huts that nestled by lush sugarcane fields. No detail missed Her all seeing gaze. She sounded so proud of India when She spoke, pouring out Her love on each village and villager that passed Her by. I still remember the buffalo that stood near the car when we stopped at a junction - he looked into the car watching Shri Mataji with big, liquid dark eyes. She laughed delightedly.

'What intelligent creatures they are!' She said.

Danya Martoglio

Gifts of saris

I can remember the softness of those cotton saris chosen so lovingly by Mother for us ladies on the early India tours ... so soothing, I am convinced they cooled my liver down! And a few in the collection that I would never have chosen.

This reminds me of the first sari Shri Mataji ever gave my mum - it was one of Her own and highly vibrated - orange silk with a thick green border (orange

was one colour my mum never wore). Needless to say when she put it on we all gasped as she looked so beautiful - and Shri Mataji told her that orange was the colour of detachment.

Danya Martoglio

She is the eternal Mother

Whether by some past good deeds or because of a blessing in this lifetime, I had the good fortune to attend a number of India tours as a child. The first was in 1982 and we also attended the full tour over the following three or four years after that and the half tour for a good number of years. I have such wonderful memories of those times.

There was just something so utterly magical about the early India tours. Often we travelled alongside Mother and many a time we would stop and spend time at Her Feet while She spoke to us about many different things, ranging from how to use neem twigs as toothbrushes to explaining the complicated history of the area or expanding on the mysteries of the cosmos. I recall so many times staying near dams and swimming in the water while Mother watched over us. She had us swimming in so many rivers! I am sure it was to wash away any negativity that we still carried and not just to cool us down.

Mother took us to so many interesting places from huge paper and sugar factories to beautiful temples and hidden places like where Shri Ram, Sita and Laxmana lived. It was in a small valley and there were caves in which they lived. There was one cave in which there were two springs and one flowed with warm water, a little miracle provided by Shri Ram for the comfort of his beloved wife.

I will never forget the processions: Shri Mataji seated on a beautifully bedecked cart pulled by a pair of painted oxen while all around Her yogis sung and danced along to the music. Because I was so small often Mother would have me on the cart with Her and I would just watch in wonder.

The very first puja I attended in India was up in the hills between Bombay and Pune, at Lonavala, in December 1982. There cannot have been many people, perhaps a few hundred at the very most. That was a feature of the earlier tours, the closeness with Mother because there were not many of us. We started out with just a few bone rattling buses but by the end of my experience of those tours there were up to fifteen or so buses. I can still hear the call of, 'On the buses!' the smell of ajwain tea in the early hours of the morning, and the cool of the Maharashtrian dawn contrasting with the fierce heat of the afternoons.

Mother used to send us to watch Hindi movies. It was on those tours that I honed the skill of sleeping whenever and wherever possible because who knew when we may be treated to a recital from some astounding musician (whose eminence we had no idea of!) who would play for Mother through the night under a marquee in the middle of a field.

My mother tells a lovely story of accompanying Shri Mataji when She went to purchase saris for all the ladies on the tour. Do you remember those wonderful saris? Mother spent hours at the factory choosing each and every one of them. She spent so much time making sure that we were comfortable and happy.

She is the eternal Mother.

Auriol Purdie



A music programme during the India tour of 1982/3, in Maharashtra

The feeling of coming home

My first India tour in 1982/83 was a very spontaneous decision. Before our plane landed in Mumbai we flew over the slums and could see the brown soil. Whether the intense and high expectations of finally arriving in India which for many of us was like the Promised Land and gave my soul the feeling of coming home, or whether it was the strong left side – I don't know.

We were accommodated in a hall in Mumbai. In the evening an elder yogi worked on me and by asking a simple question concerning a chakra which was catching triggered a storm of emotions of which I had not been aware before. Then there was nothing but silence. This joy went on almost the whole tour and I gained confidence in my power to work on yogis and to allow the vibrations to flow through me.

Vaitarna was the first stop after Mumbai and I have rarely felt such strong vibrations. I sat on the earth and felt a stream of vibrations coming out of it. Then we went to Nasik. In the evening all the visiting yogis met with the Nasik yogis. We did not have a bhajan group, and had not sung much yet. The Nasik group performed, and were requested to sing about the Devi. They sang *Ughada Sahasrara Mate*, *Namostute* and *Adi Ma* for the first time, and other songs which we now know as classics, and I felt like hugging the musicians. It was enlightening music, spirituality joined rhythm and words in praise of Shri Mataji - a great celebration and the beginning of a long-lasting journey in which She taught us what classical Indian music and bhajans can trigger in us. Later, we all experienced the joy and depths of singing, playing and dancing. She showed the often stiff Western yogis how to express their feelings and let go our self-control.

We went to the sugar cane farm of Mr Dhumal, one of the most active yogis in India, who had arranged programmes for thousands of seekers. Lunch was prepared and we lined up in front of the house holding the most beautiful banana leaf plates. The joy and aesthetics of this simplicity was a subtle and deep experience. It made us more flexible, tolerant and able to break out of some of the temptations of the consumer society.



Shri Mataji, who was wearing a simple white and green cotton sari, was sitting at the end of the lines in front of the house. I dared to go with my camera to the very front and ask Her, with a gesture, whether I could take a photo. This picture expressed such compassion and understanding, and something hard for me to express which was working deep in my soul.

Thomas Menge



Fruits, coconut and bangles etc being offered to Shri Mataji during the puja at Mr Dhumal's farm. Also Shri Mataji is applying kajal to Her eyes and the ladies are about to crown Shri Mataji. The lady in the red sari is Mrs Dhumal.

John Watkinson



Puja at Rahuri

Chapter 19
1983 – January and February
India

We would form a procession

I'm sure everyone has seen photographs of Shri Mataji on a bullock cart. On the earlier tours that I went to in the eighties, from 1982 to '87, we had public programmes in the villages all around Maharashtra. There weren't many of us on the tours — only two to three busloads on the earlier tours, about fifty to a hundred people.

After a very long bus journey we would arrive at a village, get out of the buses and there would be a bullock cart waiting, all beautifully decorated. The bullocks would also be decorated, their horns would be painted in different colours, they would be all shiny and would have little pompoms and the bullocks would be decorated all over. They would be attached to a cart and it would have a little seat built into it and would be decorated, usually with banana leaves. Then Shri Mataji would arrive and She would sit on the cart. Musicians would appear with drums and bells and we would sing bhajans and would form a procession and Shri Mataji would follow us. We would dance and sing and enjoy ourselves all the way to wherever the programme was being held, which was usually a school ground or the temple.

Because I was so small, quite often Shri Mataji would ask me to come up onto the bullock cart and stand next to Her, which was obviously a great honour for me, and saved my feet. Those were wonderful times and we were so blessed to have Shri Mataji's attention on us.

Auriol Purdie



On the bullock cart with Shri Mataji



Shri Mataji in a village showing thousands of people how to raise the Kundalini and do a bandhan, on the 1982/83 tour.

John Watkinson

A huge pile of kumkum

I was generally the only child on the India tour in the early 1980's, so I was very often blessed to do the puja to Shri Mataji. In 1983, January, in Kolhapur, there was a puja and Shri Mataji asked us to do a kumkum puja, instead of a water puja or an amrit puja. In this puja, I poured heaps upon heaps upon heaps of kumkum all over Mother's Feet.

I was wearing a long bridesmaid's dress and it was white with little pinky-red flowers on it. Because of the way I was sitting, the dress was sort of furled under Shri Mataji's Feet. Although there was a plate, which was collecting the kumkum, a lot of the kumkum spilled onto me, onto my dress. When I stood up, my dress had completely changed colour, but it was very vibrated. There was a huge pile of kumkum, almost up to Shri Mataji's knees.

Auriol Purdie



The kumkum puja

Only fifteen minutes had passed

Some time ago, Shri Mataji and a few yogis went to Kolhapur for a Sahaja Yoga programme. After a few days, while staying in a hotel, Shri Mataji called Mr Chavhan at about 3.00 am to ask for a cup of Indian tea, chai. Mr Chavhan said that he would have it ready in about fifteen minutes. He went outside but discovered that the hotel did not have any cooking facilities, and everything in the town was closed.

He knew of one lady, a Sahaja Yogi, who lived about three miles down the road, out of town, so he went outside to find that the whole town was asleep. He was out in the empty street, but a rickshaw suddenly came around the corner and gave him a ride to the lady's house.

When he arrived there he found, unexpectedly, that she was awake and doing meditation. She was worried and wanted to know if there was some problem. Mr Chavhan said there was not, but that Shri Mataji wanted a cup of tea. So she quickly made a cup, packed it up so as to keep it hot, and sent Mr Chavhan on his way. When he went outside, there was no transport so he had to walk, and in fact he was there before he knew it. When he gave Shri Mataji Her cup of tea, only fifteen minutes had passed!

PD Chavhan

Shri Mataji kept bandhaning it

In the early eighties my father was in Kolhapur with Shri Mataji. They were near the Mahalakshmi temple complex and there are a lot of shops where they sell all the puja items. My grandmother was a devotee of Shri Mahalakshmi and had asked my father to buy her a little, what we call a 'tak', a little brass plate with an engraved silver idol of the Mahalakshmi statue. So he excused himself from Shri Mataji for a short time and went and bought one. When he came back he explained to Her that his mother had asked for this. My grandmother was realised and Shri Mataji asked to see it. Shri Mataji took it in Her hands and gave it a bandhan. She kept bandhaning it then gave it back to my father.

'Take it,' She said. 'Now She looks like Me. Look!' And sure enough, when you looked at it, it had similar features to Shri Mataji: Her cheeks, Her nose, those arching eyebrows, exactly like Mother.

'Now give it to your grandmother,' She said. My grandmother was an old lady who believed in the traditional deities.

Jayant Patankar

Attending the aarti

The Kadam family, who stay in Malgond, near Ganapatipule, were travelling with Shri Mataji to Kolhapur to do some jewellery shopping. They went to a shop which was opposite the Mahalakshmi temple. When they got out of the Jeep, they could hear that the bhaktas at the temple were singing aarti to Shri Mahalakshmi in the temple. Shri Mataji then stood there outside the temple until the aarti was over. This was puzzling the Sahaja Yogis who were with Shri Mataji. She said afterwards that they were singing aarti to Her, so She had to attend the aarti.

Naina Staff

Photographing Shri Mataji

I bought a camera to take on my first India tour in 1983. Shri Mataji asked for all the yogis from a particular country to come and visit Her at the house where She was staying in Vaitarna. Because of this we found ourselves close to Her, and when I was photographing Her, She made a joke, saying that She could never see me, because my face was always behind a camera.

Colin Heinson



Shri Mataji in Her house at Vaitarna

On another occasion, we were in Rahuri and were offering a puja to Shri Mataji as Shri Lakshmi. At the end of the puja She was fully decorated. She sat in Her chair, so I went close up to take some photographs. She looked straight into the camera and gave out vibrations with all Her majesty. There was no one else with a camera, and I felt so privileged, and kept wondering why was I so blessed to be in such a situation, at the right place at the right time, with a camera?

Colin Heinson



Shri Mataji at Rahuri, Shri Lakshmi-Vishnu Puja

You are all right now

During the 1982/3 tour I developed a cough, which was quite uncomfortable and went on for some days. Nothing seemed to fix it. We were in Vaitarna in January 1983 and there was to be a procession ending in a public programme.

Shri Mataji was radiant in a decorated bullock cart and the musicians were playing and everyone was dancing. We received a message from Shri Mataji to dance barefooted around the bullock cart, which we all did with great joy and enthusiasm.

The procession ended and the programme proceeded. After the programme, we all went to Her Feet. When my turn came, I went to Her Feet as normal and then heard Her laugh. I looked up and Her hands were folded in namaskar. She was looking at me with such love.

‘Look, you are all right now,’ She said, and, sure enough, my cough had completely gone.

Gillian Patankar

Solar power

At this time, Shri Mataji asked if there were any scientists present, and spoke about how primitive petrol driven vehicles are, and asked if it was not time to use the power of the sun.

Derek Ferguson

To me it was magic

We were in Maharashtra, in the middle of the tour. We were up on the plateau, way inland at a large village. It seemed quite ancient. Shri Mataji had organized that we should have a procession through the town and She rode on a bullock cart. We waited for about an hour in the sun and were all getting quite hot in our saris and kurta-pyjamas.

Then the bullock cart came carrying Shri Mataji, and there were also some musicians accompanying Her. Shri Mataji led us, with the musicians, through the village to a pendal. The pendal had a back side — three open sides and a top that covered us so that we weren’t in the sun. There was a stage with a backdrop. Shri Mataji sat on the stage and the musicians played. She tried to get all the Westerners in out of the sun, but could only get about half of us into the shade and was quite concerned.

It was on a high plateau and you could see for miles. There were low mountains in the distance and not a cloud in the sky, which was totally blue. Shri Mataji looked out from the stage to the centre of the sky and concentrated on that point. I looked up and there was not a cloud anywhere, not even on the horizon. She concentrated quite hard and then looked away and looked at the musicians and us. Then She looked back up at the sky and I watched Her again. Then She looked at us and a few minutes later She looked back at the sky and I looked back as well.

Right in the middle of the sky where Shri Mataji was concentrating, a grey cloud was starting to form quite thickly and it was like magic. You could see a cloud starting to form from nothing a dense grey cloud, a heavy sort of cloud and as She was concentrating on it, it was growing from the centre outwards. Then Shri Mataji stopped looking at it and looked back at us. Within minutes, the cloud had grown and grown and was now spreading out and within about ten minutes it covered the whole sky. Within about fifteen minutes we were completely covered in shade from this heavy, thick cloud. In not much more time it reached right out to the horizon.

Shri Mataji had covered the whole sky with clouds just to protect us from the hot sun.



Shri Mataji in a village



Shri Mataji eating sugar cane

Shri Mataji had incredibly strong teeth. I remember most of us struggling to bite the sugar cane, but for Shri Mataji it was no problem.

John Watkinson

I can still see Her

We had all been on a long climb to a temple called Septashringi, outside Nasik, during the India tour of 1982/3, in January 1983, and it had taken us hours to climb up and down. We arrived back very hot and were standing around in the sun waiting for the buses, when a car pulled up. Shri Mataji alighted and said we were all too hot and our livers were hot. The car boot was opened and it was full of green guavas and green channa, still on the branches. Shri Mataji distributed these to everyone and, as we ate, you could just feel

yourself cooling down. I can still see Her standing there full of so much concern and love for everyone.

Gillian Patankar



Shri Mataji at a village programme

Ekachakra

On one of the India tours, in 1983, we went to a village called Ekachakra in Maharashtra. We had lunch with Mr Dhumal's sister, who lived near there, and afterwards went to see an ancient temple. The statue – murti – was Shri Ardanishwara – Shri Shiva as half man, half woman. Shri Mataji told us the temple was 5,000 years old and had been built by the Pandava brothers of the Mahabharata, in thanks for when Bhima, the third brother, killed a rakshasa who lived there and terrorised the villagers at the time. Periodically the rakshasa demanded an ox cart full of sweets driven by a maiden and he ate the lot – including the maiden. Bhima dressed up as the maiden and killed the rakshasa.

Linda Williams



Shri Saraswati Puja, Dhulia

This photo is of Shri Mataji at the end of the Shri Saraswati Puja in January 1983. Shri Mataji took us all by surprise when She suddenly stood up. To me She appeared to be very much larger than life, I mean Shri Mataji appeared to be huge.

John Watkinson

Find her a sari!

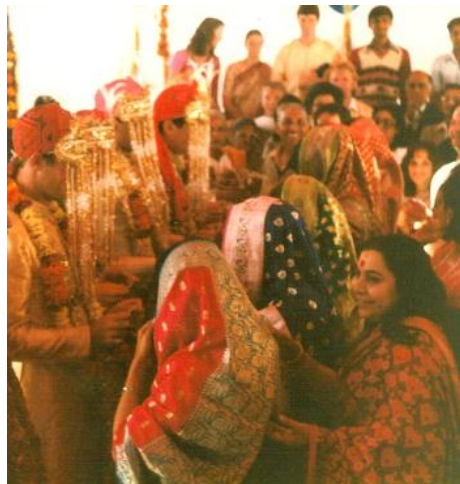
There is a miracle photo of Mother with the sun in Her hand. It was taken a puja at Bordi, in 1983. Behind Mother is a red sari, and on the day of the weddings, one lady came very late, and the weddings were already starting.

'Find her a sari to wear,' Shri Mataji said, so, with Shri Mataji's permission, we took down the red sari from behind Shri Mataji and dressed the lady who had come late in it, for her wedding. It must have had beautiful vibrations. The marriage has been very successful.

Linda Williams



Puja at Bordi



**Shri Mataji helping the couples at the weddings,
Bordi 1983**

My first meeting with Shri Mataji and the Sahaja Yogis

I was in India to make a documentary on Ayurvedic medicine. After interviewing many Ayurvedic doctors I felt that probably I could get cured from some psychosomatic problems I had had since long. I met one of the most respected Ayurvedic doctors in Delhi.

‘I can cure your liver and your colitis, but for your hectic brain I cannot do anything. You have to practice yoga and have devotion to God,’ he said, and put me on to some Sahaja Yogis. I received my realisation and a few weeks later went to Shri Mataji’s programme at the FICCI Auditorium, on the 27th January, 1983.

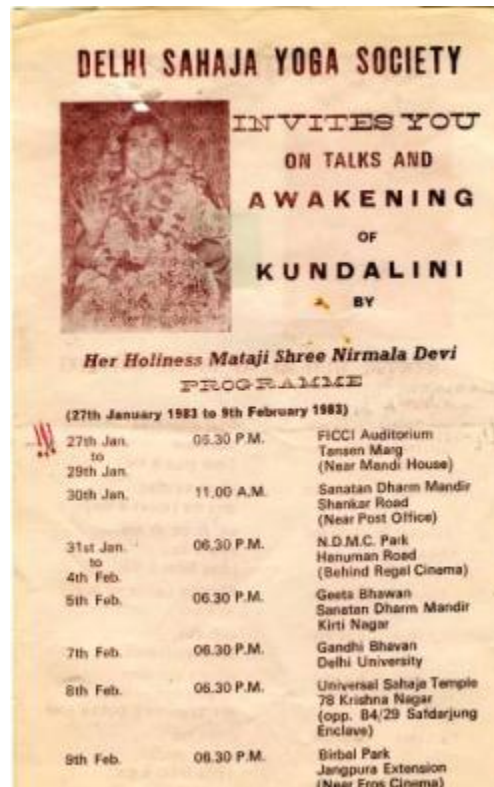
Finally the day arrived. It was the day of the first public programme, of the series that Shri Mataji held in Delhi that year. When I reached the auditorium there were some Indians, until suddenly, to my great surprise, the hall filled up with a large number of Westerners, the men dressed in white kurta-pyjamas and the ladies in saris. Who were these people? I started walking around among the row of seats, introducing myself to some of these people and trying to find out more about Shri Mataji, Sahaja Yoga and the reason they were there. Suddenly everyone was invited to seat down.

Shri Mataji was entering the hall. She came in from the left side of the stage, appearing from behind a curtain, wearing a sari of a light beige colour with a red border. As She walked in I saw Her completely surrounded by an aura of light, as if She had golden sparkles around Her body, which were following Her to the centre of the stage, where She began Her speech.

I didn’t understand much of what She said but at moments during Her speech I felt as if I was enclosed into a kind of egg, as if an invisible frame was enveloping my body. At the end, when She gave realisation to all the people, I felt an incredibly strong pressure inside my body ending on top of my head where I felt a kind of pin-like pulsation all around my fontanel bone.

A few days later I joined the hundred and twenty Western Sahaja Yogis for my first India Tour. I went to all the public programmes in Delhi where Shri Mataji gave Her speeches, to the sitar concert with Debu Chauderi and finally to the Mahashivaratri Puja in Shri Mataji’s presence in the temple at Safdarjung, Krishna Nagar, Delhi.

Alessandra Pallini



Handout for Shri Mataji's introductory programmes, Delhi 1983

It was bound to happen

In 1983, due to some health problems, the doctors said that I did not have much time left. I was so sick that my wife was extremely tense, and that time, luckily, Shri Mataji was in Delhi. My wife had tears in her eyes as I was under depression and not able to speak. She took me in a taxi to Shri Mataji's house. The person in charge at Her home looked at my state and completely banned my entry into Her room.

'Who are they? They are our own people. Let them in! Let them in,' Shri Mataji said loudly from inside.

My wife took me inside and I looked at Mother.

'Arrey yeah kyaa hua tumko,' ('What happened to you?') She said, and told me to sit near Her Feet. While She was speaking She kept Her Lotus Feet right on my chest for about fifteen minutes, and yes, as was bound to happen, She cured me completely.

Surender Pal Angurala

The back ache disappeared, never to return

I used to suffer from terrible migraines. After coming to Sahaja Yoga in Delhi, in the early 1980's, due to meditation I do not remember when my migraine disappeared totally. I used to suffer from acute back ache. My doctors had told me that it was incurable. Then one day while sitting with Shri Mataji, I requested Her to let me press Her legs. She agreed to let me get some Ponds cream and massage Her legs.

Then Shri Mataji put Her Foot in my lap and asked me to massage it, and as I started massaging Her Foot I felt a terrible pain in my back. I kept massaging as long as I could. Then I said to myself that with such severe pain in my back, it was not possible for me to carry on, but if Mother wanted me to do it, She

could end my terrible back ache. The back ache disappeared there and then. It has never occurred after that.

Suman Mathur

Her leukemia was totally gone

I am a medical doctor by profession, and when I got my realisation in Delhi, in 1983, on the first day I did not feel anything, but Shri Mataji called for those newcomers who were either sick or who had not felt the cool breeze. I should have gone on the stage because I had not felt anything and my mother was sick with chronic leukemia, however we did not go. The next evening the programme was in a different place, at Hanuman Park, near Connaught Place. After the realisation session was over I still had not felt anything but then I went near the stage and suddenly felt a gush of cool breeze on my hands.

‘Did you feel anything?’ I asked my uncle, who was with me. He said he also felt a rush of coolness on his hands. On the third evening I was sitting in front of Shri Mataji with a lot of other people. A French boy came and asked me whether I felt anything, and gave me vibrations. After some time I still did not feel anything but he assured me my Kundalini had risen. I was surprised. A few minutes later someone took me to Shri Mataji, and She just looked at me ‘This fellow is already cleared!’ Shri Mataji said and looked at my mother.

‘This lady has had to bear a lot,’ She said, and moved Her hands on top of my mother’s head. Immediately my mother’s entire body started shivering, and she got fever. It remained for the next four days, and on the last day of that seven-day programme Shri Mataji told my mother she had got her realisation.

‘Now she is cleared,’ Shri Mataji told my mother. We came back home to Kolkata and after three months we had her blood checked, and except for a little anemia, her leukemia was totally gone without any medication at all.

Gautam Sarkar

Is there something that you want to tell Me?

There were a lot of Sahaja marriages in Delhi in the early 1980’s, and a lot of shopping to be done for the marriages. In 1982 we went shopping to Connaught Place in Delhi and afterwards we went back in the car. There were some Sahaja Yogis who knew where they usually went for lunch.

‘No, today we will let Tarachandra choose,’ Shri Mataji said. I was so happy. She somehow knew I wanted to take Her. I took Her to a place that was newly opened, a South Indian restaurant and prayed that She would like it. As we were walking towards the restaurant, Shri Mataji put Her hand on my shoulder

‘Is there something that you want to tell Me?’ She said. In fact, there was something on my mind. My name had come up for possible selection for Air India. She asked if I had approached someone higher up, some minister or something and I said I had not. Then Shri Mataji said I should not be surprised that I had been selected because then I would be able to look Her up all over the world. I understood why, without my asking, this offer had suddenly come. The lunch was even better than expected and Shri Mataji was very pleased.

Tarachandra

It works! Sahaja works!

In Delhi, in the early 1980’s, I had gone to the house of Shri Mataji at the appointed time. I was a bit late and felt a bit guilty. The car was all right until I

got just in front of Shri Mataji's house and then it stopped. It just wouldn't go, no matter how many times I tried to make it.

Some people tried to get it to go and later the car started, but I was feeling guilty that I was late for Shri Mataji. I tried to forgive myself and saw Her in the room when I came in. I bowed down and apologized for having been delayed. She said it was all right and got into my car and we drove off together. As we drove off, I asked some other people to drive with us in case my car should break down again, so we should have another car just in case. But once on the road the other cars went on ahead. In a while, my car did start to misbehave again and I apologized again. Shri Mataji said it was all right and just gave some bandhans to the dashboard. As soon as She gave the bandhan, the engine picked up and became normal again and there was no problem.

'See, it works! Sahaja works!' Shri Mataji said.

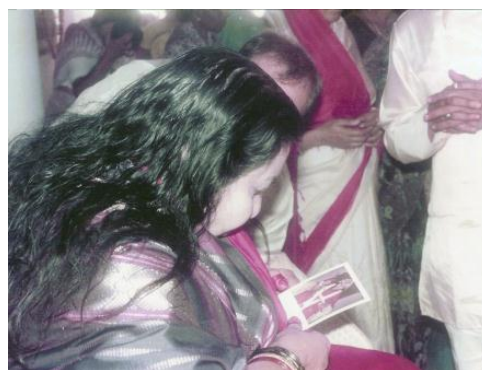
The next day I took it to the garage and they said everything was perfect.

Tarachandra

Photos taken at the Safdarjung Temple, Delhi, 1983



Shri Mataji talking to some of the Delhi Sahaja Yogis



Shri Mataji looking at a photo taken at a recent puja



The Delhi Sahaja Yogis playing Holi in the presence of Shri Mataji at the Safdarjung Temple



Shri Mataji watching the Sahaja Yogis playing Holi



Shivaratri Puja, Safdarjung Mandir, Delhi 1983

This was the part of the puja where Shri Mataji was dressed in a simple white cloth and gheru (brown powder, mixed with water) was put on Her forehead, like Lord Shiva.

Derek Ferguson

He was completely cured

In 1983, Shri Mataji also saved my sister-in-law's son from Septicemia. The baby had turned blue as oxygen could not flow properly any more and the doctors had given up, all of them expecting him to die. The whole family was desperate, and he was brought to Shri Mataji as the last hope. Shri Mataji applied a bottle of mustard oil on his Sahasrara and massaged it for a long time. After such a treatment, he turned suddenly pink and normal again and was completely cured.

Madhur Rai

Thanking my wife for looking after the children

We were in Delhi, in 1983 and Shri Mataji was giving a talk prior to the puja 'Now we will give a bandhan that all the non-seekers will get their realisation,' She said at one point and we all did this with Her. I remember thinking that there might still be a chance for my ex-wife Pam. We had argued ourselves apart, and it had ended in divorce, although I knew that with Sahaja Yoga we could get back together again, especially as we did not dislike each other, and there were no third parties involved. At that point I had not managed to give her realisation.

At the end of the India tour we had a day of shopping and I bought gifts for my children and ex-wife. At Shri Mataji's farewell talk She said, 'You will go back like traders.' When I returned home to Australia I went to see my family with the gifts and finished up giving my wife realisation.

Shortly after that, in 1983, Shri Mataji visited Australia, and Pam came to all Mother's talks and programmes at Burwood. One evening I spoke to the leader and he said I should give our marriage another try, and he arranged a private meeting with Shri Mataji. I poured out my troubles and Shri Mataji said that She didn't know who to thank more, me for coming to Sahaja Yoga, or Pam for being the good mother and looking after the children.

We got back together, and are still together over twenty years later, and Shri Mataji's bandhan and the collective desire worked beautifully.

Albert Lewis

The candles flickered

It was my first year in India, in March 1983, after one of the tours. I was helping with the videos and we were in Calcutta, walking along to have lunch in a restaurant with Shri Mataji, who was ahead, with the Australian leader and some Indian yogis. I was quite a way behind with some Indian yogis who I had never met before. We arrived at the restaurant and it was dark and candle lit. Mother was at the head of a table on one side of the restaurant and I was on the other side with the Indian yogis.

'Robin,' little voice suddenly said, and it was Shri Mataji beckoning me over to sit next to Her, which was absolutely amazing. After a while a cone of silence came, which people talk about when they are with Mother, where it was as if the restaurant was completely empty and I swear that there was nobody there but Shri Mataji and myself, as if everybody had left; it felt like that anyway, completely.

'Do you see this candle in front of Me has burnt down much more than any of the other ones?' Shri Mataji said.

'Yes,' I replied.

'When I look at that one over there, do you see it flickers?' She went on, and looked at a different candle. Then She looked at yet another candle and said, 'And if I look at that one over there it flickers as soon as I look at it.'

Robin Reid

Editor's note: when the candle flickers, and there is no apparent reason for it to do so, it is often absorbing negativity.

What we need in Sahaja are strong individuals

We were staying in India in the early 1980's with a Sahaja Yogi, and Shri

Mataji called him to a meeting with some others.

‘What do you think of modern art?’ Shri Mataji said to me after a while. I was rather taken aback and said that I thought it was rather individualistic.

‘Individualism is when everyone is trying to be an individual, but is no longer individual. What we need in Sahaja are strong individuals,’ Mother emphasized.

The next day Shri Mataji talked about art in the puja talk.

Robin Reid

Are you better now?

On an early India tour, when we arrived in Kolhapur, there was a group of people sitting in a room waiting for Shri Mataji. It was an opportunity to see Her so I went and sat with them. It was very sweet when Shri Mataji came; She talked with each of them.

‘Mother I shall never be able to love You as I should,’ one woman said.

‘Well, don’t worry whether you love Me; it’s important to know that I love you,’ Shri Mataji replied. Then there was a woman who had been carting around heavy video equipment. ‘There were plenty of men to carry it around,’ Shri Mataji told her.

At the end I was feeling rather above this, thinking, ‘I’m not one of these people, who were all getting corrected.’

The nice thing was, as I went past Her She said, ‘Are you better now?’

Robin Reid

By Your grace, Mother

At the end of the Foreigners’ India Tour in 1982/3 Shri Mataji asked me to stay on in India, and for that year my children and I were living where the Dharmshala school is nowadays, before it was there.

After the 1983 tour, we were in Delhi in February 1984, and I received a hand written note from one of the leaders saying, ‘Shri Mataji wants you and your children to go to Dehra Dun’. I was told this was because there were good schools there.

A major problem was staying in the country. Foreigners were only allowed to stay for six months. Somehow I always got my visa extended until such time as it felt right to go back to Britain, after six years. One time Shri Mataji asked me how I managed this, as it was theoretically almost impossible.

‘By Your grace, Mother,’ I replied and She and I both laughed.

Linda Williams

Shri Mataji sent the India tour to me

It was in the winter of 1982/83. I had not been able to go on India tour and was quite upset. The Swiss yogis transited through my flat in Rome, taking the train between Geneva and Rome. Because I had not been able to go to India, I went for a long weekend to Vienna to see Gregoire and Catherine. They had given me my realisation and taught me about Sahaja Yoga.

On the Saturday morning, when they went shopping, I decided to clean their bedroom and there they had a little altar of Shri Mataji and on it there was a pair of chappals (sandals) of Shri Mataji. Because, just before, I had been reading the Ramayana and had been impressed by the story of the brother, Bharat, who was ruling the country during the fourteen years that Rama and

Lakshmana were in the jungles. He had taken the chappals of Shri Rama, put them on the throne and he was ruling from next to the throne. Knowing that, the notion of Shri Mataji's chappals was very important to me. I also cleaned the altar and put the chappals somewhere else to clean the cloth underneath. While carrying them I thought, 'Oh, my goodness, I wish one day I also have some chappals of Shri Mataji.' Then I finished cleaning the altar in their room and forgot completely about it.

Maybe a week afterwards, the yogis from India tour came back to Rome and came to my flat, a yogini came to me with a plastic bag.

'Here is something from Shri Mataji for you,' she said. 'She gave this to me and said, "Give this to Ruth because she asked for it."' I opened the bag and there was a pair of Her chappals.

Later, I saw photos from the India tour and recognised the chappals She was wearing. They were the ones She had given to me. I could not go to India but She sent India tour to me through these chappals.

I put them in my bedroom on a little altar close to my bed. For a while, because I was sick for a few days, I was lying in bed and working on a Sahaja translation from English into Italian. Every time I would work on it, I would smell Shri Mataji's marvellous perfume floating from these chappals and coming into my nostrils and when I stopped working on the translation, this perfume would disappear. I could smell it for quite a while, maybe a week or two. It was more and more subtle. It took a long time before it completely disappeared.

Ruth Eleanore

Chapter 20
1983 - March
Australia

A special place

When Shri Mataji first visited Perth in 1983, She was being driven from the airport.

‘Ah, feel the vibrations of Perth,’ She remarked. Western Australia is one of the most ancient lands on earth, much older than Eastern Australia.

Lyndal Vercoe

Shri Mataji’s first visit

In 1983 when Mother arrived at the airport, I was asked to give Her the garland. She gave me a hug and kissed my cheek, Tim was standing next to me.

‘You lucky thing!’ he said. That was when we were both children.

Katy Mankar

Do you remember anything else about the 1983 visit in Perth apart from putting the garland on?

Lyndal Vercoe

Yes - a few days later Shri Mataji had a headache, and asked for ice. Kay McHugh was putting it on Shri Mataji’s head, and She asked for ice on Her Feet and a Sahaja Yogi massaged one Foot, and I was massaging the ice on the other for some time.

Katy Mankar

I remember Shri Mataji hugging all of us ladies goodbye at the airport. Yes. She’d given us a big hug and a kiss before going.

Lyndal Vercoe

They were as excited as we were

In 1983 we were getting ready for Shri Mataji’s first visit to Perth. We got a new ashram and there had been a long hot summer and the previous tenants had not watered the rose garden, so we pruned them. Then we watered every day, telling the roses they must be ready by March the first because Shri Adi Shakti was due that day.

Four weeks later, they were all bearing good foliage and lots of buds. Shri Mataji arrived with the dawn the following day and the roses all opened on cue, so we had masses of flowers for the puja that morning. They were as excited as we were!

Lyn Vasudeva

A fine photo

In the Perth ashram in 1983 a reporter and a photographer came to interview Shri Mataji. The photographer was very taken with Her and remarked how beautiful the photo of Shri Mataji was that was hanging on the wall. She knew everything about it.

‘That was taken by a boy who was seventeen at the time. He is born realised,’ She said.

The reporter was amazed that someone so young could take such a fine photo.

'That's what happens when you get your realisation,' She said, trying to encourage him.

Kay McHugh

I am Shri Ganesha

In Perth, in March 1983, Shri Mataji was holding a Shri Ganesha Puja and just after the beginning She stopped the proceedings.

'I am Ganesha, and it is Me you are doing puja to!' She said.

Collectively, we must have been thinking that Shri Ganesha was a nebulous being somewhere far away, and it must have been evident in our lack of attention. We were remiss in not acknowledging how all encompassing our Holy Mother was. The puja continued after that correction.

Albert Lewis

Every ashram should have a dog

At Dalkeith, Perth, in 1983, we all sat in the kitchen. Shri Mataji was having a meal at a little table, we were all sitting around on the floor, and the dog and the cat kept trying to come and sit under Her chair and people kept chasing them out.

'It's all right, the dog is like the disciple of the guru and they teach us devotion. Every ashram should have a dog,' She said eventually.

Shri Mataji used to call us in to Her room when She was having Her morning cup of tea and said we could ask questions, but we mostly couldn't think of anything to ask, of course.

Lyndal Vercoe

Aham sakshat Mahakali

At the public programme during Shri Mataji's 1983 Perth visit, we were going around the audience to the people and there were several lovely young women sitting together. We checked their vibrations and one was really cool, a couple were ok and one was quite hot.

Shri Mataji came up and I asked Her to see the hot one, who had liver. Shri Mataji worked on her and asked if she did Hatha Yoga. She said she did and was a teacher of it. Shri Mataji pointed out that it heats the right side and in India so many Hatha Yoga teachers are divorced because it affects the right heart. All these young women were looking so adoringly at Shri Mataji, and then She asked if anyone else needed Her to work on them. The cool girl nodded and Shri Mataji laughed.

'But you've got it!' She said.

'But I just wanted You to touch me, Mother,' the girl laughed and said. Mother looked so very young Herself, then She playfully patted the girl's shoulder and everyone laughed.

We had a follow-up programme at the ashram the next day and the people who came were obviously deep but so very damaged that they could hardly sit on the earth. We worked on them in pairs and all the while Shri Mataji moved about amongst them. Even when She was working on someone with Her back to us we could feel Her attention on the person we were with. Her eyes were everywhere.

In those days there were a lot of people from various false gurus, definitely seekers but it was very sad to see how their Kundalinis would pulsate visibly at every chakra in the effort to rise, but would fall back again if we removed our hands. It was the most shockingly sad experience.

Once we were asked to go to the bedside of a dying man. He had been operated on for brain tumours and the doctors told him he might live two weeks. He was paralysed on one side and could talk faintly. We couldn't use candles in the hospital so we put a picture of Mother on the wall at the foot of the bed so he could see Her easily and we said the Lord's Prayer, after giving bandhans, and his Kundalini came up with force. It was very hot - he said, feeling with his good hand, that he could cook toast on it. We left him with a lemon and thought we'd probably seen the last of him. Within a day or two we heard that he was feeling much better and would like us to visit again.

We went back and saw his eyes had changed; no longer the eyes of a dying man. We gave him vibrations and introduced him to more mantras. We left more lemons, which went rotten overnight. He was up in a wheel chair in a week or two and into rehabilitation. The doctors said it was spontaneous remission and the inoperable tumours shrank away. Shri Mataji personally worked on him when She came, and cured his partial paralysis, painting a swastika on his head with kumkum.

'Aham sakshat Mahakali,' She said in his ear.

We learnt so much from that experience and especially about how Shri Mataji has empowered us to use the Lord's Prayer, and ordinary lemons.

Lyndal Vercoe

Shri Mataji was stamping on the ground

In 1983, Robert, our brother-in-law, was diagnosed as having a terrible cancer in his brain. The doctors told his wife it was absolutely incurable and he only had about two weeks to live. We had only been in Sahaja a week or two, and came to say goodbye to him, not with any intention to give him realisation.

'Do you want to learn to meditate?' we somehow said. After meditating with him, we said, 'Put your hand above your head. What did you feel?' He said it felt like it was like an incinerator, red hot. He had also had a stroke and his left side was completely immobile. So we told him to say the Our Father, which he did, and to raise his Kundalini, and we put a picture of Mother up on his wall. After when we visited him again, people who came in said that it was strange that this room was so much cooler than anywhere else in the hospital. Meanwhile, he kept saying the Our Father and forgiving.

We went in twice a week and meditated with him, and raised his Kundalini. His next CAT scan, about three weeks later showed that the octopus of cancer was withdrawing its limbs and in about two months he walked out of the hospital with a stick. I used to go and meditate with him perhaps twice a week and he came to the ashram a couple of times, but I don't think he enjoyed it.

Eventually Mother came that year, and we introduced him to Her. The only sign that he had been completely paralyzed was that his little finger was tightly curled in. Mother took it and straightened it out and it was straight and perfectly well. Then Shri Mataji worked on him from behind, and She was stamping on the ground while She worked on him.

Robert was perfectly well and working for some time after leaving hospital but stopped meditating and then started to have little heart attacks and ended up in a nursing home, where he lived for another ten years.

Robin Reid

We were so privileged

At a puja in Perth in 1983 we washed Shri Mataji's Holy Feet.

'You see, you can't feel any bones. There are no bones. My Feet are Shri Ganesha. My hands are Shri Krishna and my head is Shri Adi Shakti,' She commented as we did so. It was true, I realised, as Shri Mataji spoke, I could feel that Her Feet actually felt like lotus flowers to touch.

We were so few then. After the puja, we five ladies squeezed into the back of the car while Shri Mataji rode in the front. We were all so excited, sitting upright and breathless, ears and eyes alert as antennae.

At the airport, when She was leaving, Shri Mataji said She wanted to kiss all the ladies goodbye. She actually hugged each one of us and kissed our cheeks. Looking back now I wonder, how could anyone ever be prepared for that? I still find it hard to grasp, that we were so privileged to be so physically near Her.

Lyndal Vercoe

The desert is God's place

Once I asked Shri Mataji why we become irritable when the wind is from the northeast.

'That would be the wind from the desert. The desert is God's place,' Shri Mataji said.

Lyndal Vercoe

A statue of Shri Mary

When Shri Mataji was in Perth, we were gift shopping for Her and I mentioned to a Sahaja Yogi that I had a lovely little statue of Shri Mary that I had restored and painted and would he like that to be part of the gift. The Sahaja Yogi was fine with this. When Shri Mataji received it, She was very happy with it, asked who painted it.

'Look, you've painted it the same colours that I am wearing today,' She said to me.

Diana Selentin

A ball of cool air

My husband Ben decided to go to a public programme to meet Shri Mataji. His wish was granted and She asked what work he did.

'Sheet metal worker,' he replied, and as She does with people, She took his hands in Hers. Shri Mataji made sweeping movements across them. He describes how a ball of cool air was felt on his hands and how the ball lifted slightly above his hands and then swirled around each finger.

'Did you feel that?' Shri Mataji said.

My husband said that Her face seemed to expand and filled up his entire vision and he seemed to be drawn into the perimeter and nothing else existed.

Diana Selentin

Shri Mataji looked so radiant

There were no yogis living in Adelaide when Shri Mataji arrived there in 1983, because they had all packed up and gone on the India Tour. When I arrived back after the India Tour a few yogis and I went down to prepare for Her arrival. We hired a town house because there was no ashram, and we were all staying in it with Shri Mataji. The person we hired the house from came round to deliver some items like linen and we had put all the puja things in the main room. He said he could not go into the house because it had such a feel about it and if he went in he would leave a mark. He left everything by the door. The vibrations had already started to build up in the house, and we had also spent a lot of time posterizing for the public programmes.

When Shri Mataji arrived we met Her at the airport, and I had this distinct feeling that She was just gliding, not walking, down the stairs in a pink sari. She looked so radiant and so fresh and joyful when She arrived in Adelaide.

Gillian Patankar



Shri Mataji at Adelaide airport

A sense of joy and lightness

It was twenty-eight years ago today, in March 1983, that I first met Shri Mataji, at a public programme in Adelaide, South Australia. For almost ten years I had been seeking a way to the Divine. In the weeks leading up to the programme, after seeing the posters, I was feeling this increasing sense of joy and lightness in my life. On the evening I picked some fresh fruit from our garden and put it in my bag to take with me, as I knew one should always take an offering when meeting a great saint.

I got a front row seat in the hall and waited for the programme to begin. When Shri Mataji arrived my mind started to rebel. This short Indian woman, elegantly dressed in a plain sari, couldn't possibly be a saint, according to my idea and experience of what yogis looked like. She spoke plainly and simply and Her followers dressed in normal clothes (much too normal for my taste). And yet I couldn't move. I was awestruck. After the realisation She came and talked to people.

'Are you married?' She asked me, which caught me off guard. At this time I was very much playing the ascetic.

'No!' I replied in no uncertain terms.

'Are you against marriage?' She went on.

I was not sure what to reply. As my brain tried to figure out where I stood on marriage, Shri Mataji moved on. I felt too shy to offer Her the fruit in my bag.

Despite the minor inner turmoil, I went back for the second meeting. I don't remember a lot about it, only that I didn't want to leave Her presence afterwards, even if my mind was still trying to throw up obstacles.

That weekend there was a workshop in the park on the bank of the River Torrens. The group there was not very big and Shri Mataji was seated on a chair in the shade of the trees. I sat at the back listening and taking photos. People kept going up to be worked on, but I wasn't sure about joining the queue, until one of the yogis came up to me

'Go up,' he said. I said there were too many people, to which he replied, 'Push in, if you don't you may regret it for the rest of your life.' So I did.

I sat at Her Feet and She asked me questions about my seeking. As I rattled off the things I had done and the 'gurus' I had been involved with (luckily I avoided the major league baddies, mostly due to poverty, and possibly divine intervention) She told me about them. She placed Her Foot deep into the left side of my stomach and left it there for around twenty minutes while She worked on other people. I lost track of time. Eventually She gave that familiar look.

'Better,' She said in Her way that was partly a question. I don't remember what I answered. I was in another world. As they got ready to leave the same yogi came up to me again, offered me a tissue and told me to wipe my forehead before I left. It was covered in red. And I still hadn't offered Shri Mataji any of the fruit I'd taken.

My brain wasn't completely ready to surrender, but everything else had. I was well and truly hooked. From then on I was at the ashram almost every day. It took me a few weeks to pluck up the courage to ask if I could move in, but I did and spent the most amazing first year of Sahaja Yoga there, which ended up, on the exact first anniversary, in India sitting in Shri Mataji's room where I had been summoned along a small group of yogis, many of whom are still close friends.

Chris Patmore

Australians should learn to make fine art and fine pottery

We went shopping with Shri Mataji in Adelaide. She wanted to go and see all the crafts that were being made in Australia. So we took Her round the shops and She made the comment that the crafts in Australia were more of a rustic kind, not a very fine kind and that it was important that Australians should learn to make fine art and fine pottery. We went into a glass shop and there was a very - what we call 'ocker'- Australian there - untidily dressed and not very sophisticated. Shri Mataji wanted to go into the shop, and the man kept telling Her that most of the brass in it was from India. Shri Mataji was looking at everything. Around the top were all these pressed copper pictures of ships, and She looked up at them.

'What about those?' She said. The shopkeeper looked up.

'Yes, actually those are made in Australia,' he said, and Shri Mataji bought quite a few.

Gillian Patankar

A beautiful double storey house

There was the time when Shri Mataji found the Adelaide ashram. We didn't have an ashram and She said it was important that we had one. She was looking through the newspaper, and suddenly put Her finger on an advertisement.

'This one,' She said. So we rang up the real estate agent and they said we could go round and see it. As we were driving in the car to go and see this house – none of us had ever been there.

'I think it is to the right,' one of the yogis said.

'No, no it is to the left,' Shri Mataji said. And sure enough, there it was, right in front of us. It was a beautiful double storey blue sandstone house, what they call Adelaide Blue. Shri Mataji went inside and walked right round. It was really big, with plenty of space, kitchens and was on two levels. It had big bedrooms with high ceilings, overlooking the park, a nice garden, and even had lampshades that were lotuses. She stood at the top of the cellar at one point.

'Oh, that's a nice big cellar,' She said. Later I stood there, and you couldn't see into the cellar from the top of the stairs, but She could.

Then Shri Mataji went out into the garden and there was just one rose, and some daisies in the garden, which we picked and gave to Her. She smelled the daisies.

'Now that I have smelled them, they will have fragrance.'

The other amazing thing about that house was that we took it on lease and the real estate agent was very puzzled. He hadn't received any calls from anybody wanting to rent it, even though it was in such a prestigious area and was such a sought after type of house. Because of this he gave it to us at a very reduced rent. As soon as we signed the lease he got flooded with phone calls from people who wanted it, at a much higher rent.

Gillian Patankar

Shri Mataji knows my name

In Adelaide, Australia in 1983, we were sharing a townhouse with Shri Mataji, about fourteen of us. It was the first time She had come to Adelaide. We had just come back from India Tour, my first tour and the first time I had seen Her.

We had two public programmes in the Adelaide Town Hall and a puja in this small townhouse. Over these three or four days, a persistent thought kept on coming into my head. 'I have been with Mother for all these days and She does not know my name. She has never said my name.' I know it was daft, but it was persistent.

On the last day, when Shri Mataji was leaving — I can see Her so clearly — we had sugar, rice, etc. in bowls at the bottom of the stairs for Her to vibrate on Her way out. She looked glorious and radiant as She glided down the stairs. She vibrated the items and then walked past. As She did, the thought came back, She turned around and looked at me.

'Gillian,' She said. I nearly fell over backwards with surprise. She then smiled and walked on.

Later on, while waiting at the airport, we were all sitting at Her Feet and Shri Mataji looked at me again and said, 'Gillian.'

Gillian Patankar

Who won the Davis Cup tennis?

It was in Adelaide, and we were going for a walk around the lake with Shri Mataji.

‘Who won the Davis Cup tennis?’ She said to everybody present, and nobody knew. Then Shri Mataji said, ‘Well, God only knows. But then again, She doesn’t, does She?’

Gillian Patankar

Such special things

In the sitting room in Adelaide ashram Shri Mataji pointed to a tea cup and saucer sitting on a mantelpiece being used as decoration because no one knew where it came from. She saw it and told us the history of that cup, that it had been bought by a Sahaja Yogi many years before in London and it was a very expensive one. He had got a few of them at a good price and had sent them to various places. She then said apologetically that She has to use such special things because of who She is. We served Her tea in that cup from then on.

Lyn Vasudeva

The interviewer suddenly understood what Shri Mataji was saying

One of the clearest expositions of Sahaja Yoga Shri Mataji gave was in an Adelaide interview, where the interviewer suddenly understood what She was saying, and started to ask really good questions.

Frances Henke



Shri Mataji at the Adelaide ashram

Seemed like a miracle

There was a public programme in Adelaide at which Shri Mataji was addressing a smallish audience of about three hundred people and a group of lesbian bikies* came and sat in the front to disturb and heckle.

We were hardly half a dozen Sahaja Yogis and the men had been told to ask the bikies to leave, as no one could hear Shri Mataji. They were nervous about asking them to leave, in case these women started fighting with them, so they asked us girls to ask them to leave.

I kept looking around for someone else to go and ask them to leave, as their shouting was getting louder and I had a baby in my lap. Finally, I stood up and

requested in a loud voice that if there were any ladies in the audience who would like the trouble-makers to leave, could they please accompany me to the front. Somehow, with baby under one arm and all the ladies in the auditorium following behind me, I ended up in front of a huge, leather-clad, shouting female person. I requested her to kindly leave.

‘Try and make me!’ she replied.

With Shri Mataji watching with an amused smile, I reached out my one free arm and picked her up by the collar and dumped her in the aisle, whereupon she grabbed her helmet and her girlfriends and ran out of the auditorium.

Seemed like a miracle and the programme continued without further interruption.

Lyn Vasudeva

*Editor’s note: *Lesbian bikies: Here, masculine looking women who ride motor bikes, often with the distinctive clothing of leather, and high boots.*

Shri Mataji gave Adelaide a bandhan

When Shri Mataji was in Adelaide we had two public programmes and just before She arrived there had been some horrendous bush fires, that had gone through the Adelaide Hills. The bush fires seemed to have some kind of discrimination – they would burn some houses and then go round others. For example they went right round a school and did not hurt the children, but burnt down a pub. In the talk Shri Mataji spoke about the power of the elements to be discriminating and how the elements become enlightened.

We went for a drive up into the mountains with Shri Mataji and She looked at the devastated areas, stopped at a point where you could see Adelaide through the hills, and gave Adelaide a bandhan.

Gillian Patankar

Shri Mataji worked on people

There was also a workshop where people came up and Shri Mataji worked on people. She gave someone a neck adjustment – She cricked their neck – and then that person started to feel vibrations.

Gillian Patankar

Editor’s note: it is not advisable for just anyone to do this, unless they know exactly what they are doing.

Cool flowing across my hands

When She was in Adelaide, Shri Mataji asked us if any of us had problems. I explained that I couldn’t feel vibrations much on my hands. She took my Right Agnya finger and put it on Her Agnya Chakra, on Her forehead, for quite a long time. Then I started to feel cool flowing across my hands.

‘It is alright now,’ She said, or something similar.

Gillian Patankar

Wonder rain

The day after the Shri Ganesha Puja on the beach at Melbourne, in March 1983, we all travelled to Sydney to celebrate Shri Mataji’s sixtieth Birthday Puja. The evening before the puja I was helping another yogini to prepare the garland for the puja. Suddenly there was a crack of thunder, and flash of lightning, and it all began, torrents of rain came down. It was incredible, the first rain which

Australia had seen in four months. It was about 3 am when it happened and the rain did not stop, it rained and rained and rained, soaking the beautiful red earth all around Australia which was thirsty to be drenched after such a long time. During the puja, one could hardly hear Shri Mataji's speech, the rain was so noisy. Shri Mataji was full of joy.

'You see, all the devas and deities are rejoicing My birthday today.' Shri Mataji had told us by the sea at Her Shri Ganesha Puja, that Australia's drought would be over, and so it was. It rained solidly for three weeks and the newspapers headlines were saying 'Wonder rain' - and even quoted that grass was growing around the bottom of Ayers Rock in the middle of Australia (normally no grass grows there), the green kusha grass that Shri Mataji Herself offered to the Shri Ganesha swayambhu. The whole of Australia received rainfall on this day, it was tremendous!

I was a very blessed yogini this day to have been allowed to paint the Holy Feet of Our Divine Mother. The vibrations were so powerful, a puja to our Divine Mother, the all-powerful, the pure incarnation of innocence itself, in Her land of Shri Ganesha.

Gauri Mehrani-Mylany

The right idea

At a press conference at the Windsor Hotel in Melbourne in 1983 a reporter was busy interviewing Shri Mataji while the photographer was diligently taking photos. At one stage he took his large spotlight from the front and put it behind Shri Mataji's chair so She had light radiating all around Her. He then proceeded to click away, taking quite a few shots.

'It's artificial, but he's got the right idea,' Shri Mataji smiled and remarked.

Kay McHugh

But how do you tie them?

When Shri Mataji came to Australia in 1983 there was a picnic held at Lane Cove Park by the river. As usual Shri Mataji brought gifts including dhotis for the men.

'But how do you tie them?' someone said, so She gave a lesson.

Frances Henke



Shri Mataji at the Lane Cove picnic



Shri Mataji giving dhotis as gifts at Lane Cove River Park

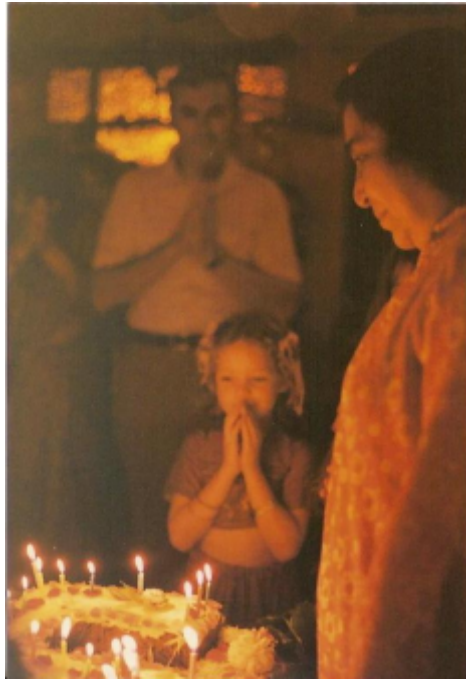


Shri Mataji gives a dhoti tying lesson

Shri Mataji's sixtieth birthday cake

This photo is from the Melbourne visit in 1983. It was Shri Mataji's sixtieth birthday. This photo was taken in candle light. The cake was in the shape of a bandhan.

Frances Henke



Shri Mataji's sixtieth birthday cake

That is the least I can do

1983 was a special year for me. I was Shri Mataji's driver during Her Melbourne visit and was in Her presence on many occasions during this time. On the way to a press conference at the Windsor Hotel after receiving Shri Mataji at the airport I mentioned to Her about the bushfires and severe drought conditions.

'It will rain now. That is the least I can do,' She replied.

At the conclusion of the press conference it began to rain. We yogis were overjoyed that the promise had been fulfilled so quickly. As Shri Mataji was getting into the car She pointed out the rain to the journalists. That shower of rain lasted until we arrived at the new ashram at Kew, when it ceased. Alighting from the car, She walked around the house, which was set in an acre of grounds, before making Her entrance.

Shri Mataji's visit that year had an extraordinary intimate and informal quality which I have never seen repeated. She encouraged us to just behave as children playing at the Feet of the Mother. All our activities, such as our meals, watching TV, shopping, a trip to the movies to see *The Man from Snowy River*, and of course, the puja at the sea, were spent with Shri Mataji in a relaxed, informal atmosphere in which everyone was able to converse freely with Her.

Shri Mataji had requested that we have a havan which, as was the custom in those days, was to be held in Her presence in order to clear negativity. On the day appointed for the havan there was a total fire ban. It was with some embarrassment that we conveyed this information to Shri Mataji, thinking that if the havan did not go ahead it would be a victory for the negativity. She immediately suggested that we have a puja at the sea instead, so we quickly made the necessary preparations.

'When does it rain in Melbourne?' Shri Mataji asked me that morning. I replied that it seemed to me to be mostly in summer and in winter.

'That is not good' She said. 'It is a sign of imbalance. It should rain in spring and autumn. That will change now.'

So we had a wonderful outing to the sea, with a puja to Shri Mataji as the Shri Vishnu principle, followed by a picnic. The puja is recorded on a video. It conveys the informal atmosphere of the occasion. Shri Mataji made a Ganesha in the sand and decorated it with kumkum, turmeric and flowers, then encouraged us all to do the same and make our own Shri Ganeshas. We felt like children building sand castles under the watchful eye of our loving mother.

A couple of points I recall were that during the puja ceremony, Shri Mataji instructed me to go out to the edge of the rocks and pour some oil into the sea for Shri Krishna, as it was Saturday. Before the puja Shri Mataji had asked which direction was south. She sat down on a rock facing south with Her Lotus Feet placed upon the sand, and throughout the puja looked south to the horizon. At the end Shri Mataji pointed to the horizon, where we could see a blue-grey haze. She said that if we looked carefully we could see the vibrations as vertical lines shooting up from the horizon. Half closing our eyes made this easier.

Driving back from the puja was one of the most privileged tasks I have ever been called upon to perform. Shri Mataji slept in the front passenger's seat, which we had partially laid back to make Her comfortable. The three passengers in the back also slept. With the afternoon sun streaming into the car, staying awake became quite difficult.

The sad day of departure soon arrived. We all assembled at Melbourne Airport to bid farewell to our Holy Mother and to wish Her a safe journey to Sydney for the next part of Her Australian Tour and the celebration of Her sixtieth birthday. She spoke to every one of us individually, giving last minute instructions. She looked around at all our shining faces. We were all struggling to hold back the tears - a mixture of sadness and joy.

'Alright now? All the problems are now finished..... I'll see you all in Sydney,' were Shri Mataji's departing words.

Peter Brownscombe

Rain

When Shri Mataji first came to Melbourne, She did a sea puja at Shoreham, a beach near where we live, to help resolve Melbourne's water problems. This was the 1983 tour - we had the bad bush fires and then rain.

My husband Ian and I moved on to Sydney to help with PR. And as we left Shri Mataji's press conference at the Windsor Hotel the first drops of rain fell. We met a journalist coming out of the conference and said, 'Told you so'. She never forgot that we'd told her to expect rain following Shri Mataji's visit.

Frances

Henke

The right idea

At another press conference at the Windsor Hotel in Melbourne in 1983 a reporter was busy interviewing Shri Mataji while the photographer was diligently taking photos. At one stage he took his large spotlight from the front and put it behind Shri Mataji's chair so She had light radiating all around Her. He then proceeded to click away, taking quite a few shots.

'It's artificial, but he's got the right idea,' Shri Mataji smiled and remarked.

Frances Henke

A little cup and saucer

In Melbourne I got a little cup and saucer. All the children got a cup and saucer, and in Sydney we were given other gifts. I was given a photo album with a boab tree on it, from Shri Mataji.

Katy Mankar



Shri Mataji with the children at Melbourne Airport

Part of the havan protocol

It was while we were having a havan in Melbourne in 1983 with Shri Mataji controlling the proceedings that She told us to make an eye in the fire in the way we arranged the sticks, prior to lighting it. Shri Mataji also stopped us while reading the hundred and eight names and told us to read the interpretations as part of the havan protocol.

Albert Lewis

Churning the ocean

Shri Mataji came to Melbourne. She wanted some shoes, so we went to a store, Myers Department store. We went up on the first floor and had a look at all the shoes and nothing fitted Her. I was looking at these shoes.

‘Yes,’ She said, ‘the reason why I have a tremendous difficulty with shoe fitting is because my arch is too high and that was the result of the churning of the ocean.’

I don’t think any of the puranas have that detail.

John Henshaw

I wanted to paint

In 1983, after being in Sahaja for four weeks, I desperately wanted to paint a portrait of this wonderful lady called Shri Mataji and give it as a gift to the collective. While painting the portrait, I felt a tremendous energy passing from the portrait to me, which I couldn’t understand. After an indefinite time, the leader of Australia found it and suggested that it would be given to Shri Mataji as a gift. I was honoured and thrilled, but stunned when he said that I should present it to Her in Her bedroom.

I was very nervous and lightly knocked on the door. I was asked to come in and, as I didn’t know the correct protocol, I moved into the room half bowed over with the painting under my arm and, horror of horrors, I lost my voice. So one of the ladies there answered the questions that Shri Mataji asked for me.

She took the painting and was very pleased with it. I had captured the likeness of Her eyes, She said. The right eye is more stern and the left eye

expresses more compassion. She talked about the colours and how they vibrated, and She was so thrilled to learn that we were giving it to Her as a gift.

She then told us how She made a piece of craftwork — I don't remember what it was — put it in an exhibition and won first prize. She was amazed that She did. Of course, we weren't.

Diana Selentin

Today, I will be doing a puja to Shri Ganesha Myself

After the second India Tour we were very blessed to welcome Shri Mataji to our newly renovated ashram in Kew, Melbourne in March 1983. We were meditating in front of the door of Shri Mataji's room and suddenly She came out.

'Why don't we go to the sea today? We could have a puja there,' Shri Mataji said. We had all been desiring this and were overjoyed that our desires had been answered. So, like busy little bees, we began to prepare all that was necessary for a puja and all packed into cars and followed Shri Mataji to the sea. We were only about fifteen Sahaja Yogis altogether and the weather was glorious. Shri Mataji sat down on a smooth rock covered with a shawl with Her Feet in a shallow pool of sea water. We just watched Her in awe, such an amazing feeling for us to be in the nature with our Holy Mother.

'You won't be doing a puja to Me today, I will be doing a puja to Shri Ganesha Myself,' Shri Mataji said as we were sitting there. The weather had been so dry in Melbourne and all over Australia there had been drought for at least four months - we were getting desperate for rainfall. Many bush fires had broken out around this area and many homes had been lost in the fires. Shri Mataji had decided to do this puja so that Australia would be blessed with rain.

She began by drawing a form of Shri Ganesha in the sand. We all just thoughtlessly watched Shri Adi Shakti drawing this form of Shri Ganesha. The feeling of timelessness came across us all, everything was so silent; we could only hear the sound of the sea as the waves reached the shore. The sea began to react to the presence of Shri Mataji and the waves began to come in higher and more rapidly. Shri Mataji looked up.

'I was born from the sea, that is why she is reacting so much,'* She said, with one wave of Her hand. 'Quieten down please, quieten down,' and the ocean was immediately calm once again.

As Shri Mataji was drawing the Shri Ganesha in the sand, She was absolutely silent. The vibrations were incredible and it was a very blissful experience. She offered kumkum, turmeric, rice and flowers to Her Shri Ganesha.

'Now Australia will have no more problems with drought!' She said at the end. We were all overjoyed and were allowed to bow to Her Holy Lotus Feet through the water. As each of us went forward She blessed us and patted us on the back.

'Wonderful, excellent, good,' She said, so full of compassion for Her children.

Afterwards, we looked across at the city of Melbourne where there would be a public programme that evening.

'Too much negativity!' Shri Mataji said. 'It is looking very black over there.' She raised Her hand. 'Let's try and get rid of some of the negativity before the programme tonight,' She said. She moved Her hand over the city and one could see clearing lines in the sky, clear lines going from the city to the sky where Shri Mataji had cleared away the negativity that hung over the city. That night we had over four hundred people at the programme. A record for Melbourne!

**Editor's note: at one point Shri Mataji was shown a photograph of some wild flowers growing on a beach just north of Cape Town, South Africa. She was surprised that such beautiful flowers could grow on the beach. 'That is where I came out of the ocean,' She said.*

Gauri Mehrani-Mylany

Chick pea curry

The next day we had our follow-up programme in the huge gardens of the Melbourne ashram. Shri Mataji had given us instructions the day before how we were to cook the meal. She came into the kitchen in the morning and decided to help us. She put on an apron and then took a wooden spoon and began to instruct us as to how many Indian spices we were to prepare. Shri Mataji put butter into a pan, and all the previously chopped herbs and spices. It smelt incredibly strong and very clearing for the Vishuddhi as She told me several times to smell the spices. I was grinding up the chick peas and Shri Mataji put Her hand over my shoulder and was nearly touching Her face on mine as She helped me. It was a tremendous feeling to be cooking in God's kitchen and with Shri Mataji as She prepared a fantastic meal for all the seekers who were to come on that day.

The end result was a very big pot of chick pea curry and a big pot of rice. At least a hundred and fifty to two hundred people were to eat food from these two pots, which to me looked like it would only feed about thirty people. As Shri Mataji had finished Her address to the hundred and fifty new people, She then offered them food. We were serving it out, and miraculously the pot seemed to be filling up in front of my eyes. There was so much food that everyone was coming for seconds and the pot didn't empty. There was even half the pot of food left over at the end of the seminar. For me this was a miracle the same as the one recorded at the time of Christ, when a few fishes and loaves fed the multitudes.

Gauri Mehrani-Mylany

Press and TV coverage

The media in the 1980's were more interested in visiting spiritual leaders than they are now. Pictured is Shri Mataji's press conference at the Windsor Hotel where She gave realisation to a TV reporter. Also in Melbourne - in the lower picture - is a reporter from a community television station and Fran Henke interviewing Shri Mataji for the *Melbourne Herald* in the garden at Burwood where Cheryl and Greg Bradshaw, two Sahaja Yogis lived.

Frances Henke



Shri Mataji giving realisation to a reporter



Shri Mataji conducting a TV interview

A historic announcement

The dear Henshaw family took me to see Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi at the Maccabean Hall in Sydney. For some time I had known I had to connect to the Holy Spirit. The leader who was introducing Shri Mataji said that for the first time in Australia, he had been authorised to say that Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi was the Holy Spirit. The synchronicity was so meaningful to me. It was 17th March, St. Patrick's Day, 1983, and it was the first time I was seeing Shri Mataji, and being told She was the Holy Spirit.

As we have all experienced, She answers our questions, She knows before we do what concerns us, what we are seeking. I knew I was looking for the Great Mother and the Holy Spirit. I felt they were archetypes to be experienced through the collective unconscious, but I had no idea they were one and the same being, and that the Divine Mother would, in Her boundless love, incarnate amongst us and give us en masse self realisation.

'I come out of love, I come for you.' She said when She was outside, as She was leaving the hall.

Of course, it took some time for all this to process, but that was the night I received my self realisation.

Heather Jeffrey

This is where I am forever

Our beloved Shri Mother is visiting Sydney in the early eighties. We are all sitting in the main room in Burwood, singing the three great mantras to Her. She leaves Her throne and walks among us as we remain seated on the floor, singing. As usual, I cannot take my eyes from Her face. She walks among us, and stops while approaching me. In monumental bliss, I am singing my head off, and as She stops in front of me, beaming, it seems as if everyone else fades away and there is just a Mother and Her child enjoying a deep and 'mutual' adoration, gazing with love into each other's eyes while the child sings its heart out to its Mother. Time stops; I have always lived like this, in adoration of Her, on the floor at Her Feet; this is where I have been forever.

In Sydney time it lasts for about half of one of the three mantras, then She moves on. It is my most glorious experience of love given and received in 'human' form in this life.

Jenny Watling

You are a realised soul

We were all gathered together for a follow-up programme at a hall in Kings Cross, Sydney. I felt concern for our Holy Mother, because this was a 'nightclub area'. My youngest daughter, Ann, was standing behind the adults.

Shri Mataji came into the hall, She reached over the adults, took the little girl's hand and did not let it go. Ann had to walk with Shri Mataji up to Her chair.

'You are a realised soul,' She said when She took Ann's hand.

Heather Jeffrey

Her attention was on me

Shri Mataji was in Australia when I had the news I was pregnant with our first child. We had been married in India and She came to Australia in March 1983, and I had the opportunity to tell Her myself. Shri Mataji was at Burwood, and had given us a talk. She was leaving the main room to go back to Her bedroom, and I went and knelt at Her Feet. I was only very young in Sahaja, and She looked straight down on my Sahasrara. It felt like I was made of glass, and all I was, was chakras, with Her attention on me. I felt that was when the spirit of that baby entered me.

'I think I'm pregnant,' I said.

'Yes, of course you are,' She replied.

Caroline Henwood

He will be alright now

On that weekend, in March 1983, Shri Mataji stayed at Burwood Ashram in Sydney as it was Her sixtieth birthday. The collective of about seventy were sitting before Her and She had one yogi sitting out front off to one side. Without warning my body started shaking. I put up my hand to ask for help.

'Yes?' She said.

'Mother, Your help is needed here!' I replied.

'Have you been to a false guru?' Shri Mother asked.

'Yes Mother,' came the reply.

'Come out here, you silly boy!' Shri Mataji said.

Next I was sitting at Shri Mataji's Feet facing Her with my hands out. As She poured Her love on me and the other man, a lady sitting in the collective was asked, 'Have you been to one too?' As this lady sat down at the front, she began hyperventilating.

'Help her, help her!' Shri Mataji called to the collective, looked down at me. 'Better now?'

'Yes Mother,' I replied, as we had been told a year earlier if we were speaking with Shri Mataji we must not say 'No'. But as it so happened I felt no better. After more words to the collective, Shri Mataji looked at me again and asked.

'Better now?'

‘Yes Mother,’ I replied again, which was not the case. More time elapsed and again She looked down to me.

‘Better now?’ She asked.

‘No Mother!’ I said, and pulled my ears.

‘Turn around,’ She said.

Suddenly sixty-four pairs of eyes were looking at me and I closed mine, next Shri Mataji struck my Left Vishuddhi with Her closed fist, giving it three blows.

‘Better now?’ She asked.

‘Yes Mother,’ came the reply, as the black cloud that always hung above me was gone. A chiropractor came from the collective and checked my neck.

‘His neck’s like a rock, Mother,’ he said.

‘He will be alright now!’ She answered.

Peter Corden

Chapter 21
1983 – March to May
Malaysia, India and Switzerland

Singapore

In August 1993, I attended the Shri Krishna Puja in Cabella, where I met Bala Kanayson, a Sahaja Yogi born in Singapore but later relocated to England and to the US. Bala recounted his experiences with Shri Mataji in Singapore in the mid 1980's. Shri Mataji would stay at his mum's house at Siglap many times, often for days at a time, and once for about two weeks where Mother ran some programmes. Bala would travel in from England, where he was working then, to help with the programmes. They would use the house as a base from which Mother would fly to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia to give public programmes. Shri Mataji also had some public meetings at the Shri Senpaga Vinayagar, Ganesha temple at the Ceylon Road in Katong. Unfortunately, Sahaja Yoga did not take root in Singapore at that time.

Gerald Lim

The greatness of the earth of India

We were in Kuala Lumpur in 1983 and Shri Mataji was talking about the greatness of the Indian earth, and how it was the land of Yoga Bhumi, a land where saints and incarnations had walked and vibrated the earth. She had been in Kuala Lumpur many years before, in the seventies, travelling with Her husband. Some Indian people arranged a programme in a large garden, but they were not Sahaja Yogis as Sahaja had not been established there at that time. Shri Mataji was there alone, and a lot of the people who came were sick. She wondered how to raise their Kundalinis. They were all sitting on the Mother Earth and so She put Her hands to the Mother Earth and asked her to help, but nothing happened.

'I am from the great Yoga Bhumi, please help,' She then said, and the Mother Earth started sucking in the impurity and the people's Kundalinis started rising. 'You see, even the earth recognises the greatness of the earth of India,' She explained.

These may not have been Shri Mataji's exact words, but this is the essence of the story.

Kay McHugh

A puja in Malaysia

In May 1983 Shri Mataji had just completed a lecture tour of Australia and had stopped over at Kuala Lumpur, en route to India, where She was to give some public programmes and have a puja.



**Shri Mataji graciously giving Her blessing after the puja
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1983**



Public programme in Kuala Lumpur, 1983

It's a myth

In 1983 we were in Singapore and I was with Shri Mataji, alone in Bala Kanayson's house. I was worrying about packing the bags and getting Shri Mataji's breakfast.

'Come here,' She said. She put Her Agnya finger on my Agnya and twisted it. 'It's a myth, looking after Me. You're not really looking after Me at all.'

Kay McHugh

The correct auspicious beat

In March 1983, I went to India for the purpose of videoing Shri Mataji's Birthday Puja and felicitations and at the end of the puja we were singing the aarti. The clapping was random, and Shri Mataji stopped the aarti, and demonstrated the auspicious way to clap. It is – clap, clap, clap, then pause, clap, clap, clap then pause, one, two, three, pause etc. So the aarti was restarted with the correct auspicious beat, after Shri Mataji's demonstration.

Albert Lewis

Advice on singing the aarti

In Delhi in 1983, at the end of a puja everyone was singing the aarti to Shri Mataji. It was all over the place, different tunes, different timing and so on. Shri Mataji stopped the singing and said it was important to sing it totally in unison, not too fast and not too slow, and with due reverence. On another occasion, during the India Tour at about that time, She said to clap in three-time when singing the aarti, the right hand on the Sahasrara (the palm) of the left hand, and that when we clap like this it activates the Sahasrara.

Linda Williams

Mother knows our every thought and desire

In 1983 two yogis and I were staying in Shri Mataji's flat and She suggested we travel to North India to see a temple dedicated to Shri Mahavira. We did this, a three day round trip, and saw it, with exquisite carvings around the inside walls of an open roofed temple.

We returned and were present at the sixtieth birthday celebrations. There was a havan, and also a puja and felicitations. We were at Shri Mataji's flat during this period, and there were a number of leaders gathered together, discussing some upcoming events with Shri Mataji, such as Shri Mataji's tours for that year. My video duties were finished and I was relaxing in a corner, watching the leaders trying to keep up with all the changes that were being made in the plans. The Australian leader was not there, and it crossed my mind that I should have been writing all the plans down, but then I thought, 'It is not necessary, because it will all be changed anyway.' At that moment Shri Mataji looked at me.

'You should be writing all this down,' She said.

Later in the evening there was a meeting with some of the founding Indian Sahaja Yogis about the plans for the design and layout of the proposed school at Vashi (later this became the Belapur clinic). The plans and sketches were spread out on the coffee table in front of Her, with the attending yogis seated on the floor around the table.

It was the most amazing scene and many ideas and suggestions were coming forth. It seemed that in the maya the protocol was dropped. There were interjections, and more suggestions coming from first Shri Mataji and then everyone else. Several times when there was a lull in the fracas Shri Mataji kept it on the boil.

'My father said you should have it like this!' She said, and She would sketch something, and then the enthusiastic suggestions would be up and running again.

It was against this backdrop that it was time for the other Australian Sahaja Yogi and myself to take our leave and start our journey back to Australia. I wanted to quietly thank Shri Mataji for sorting me out, and to say goodbye, and I tried to penetrate this wall of enthusiastic designers, but there was no opening, and time was ticking away. Suddenly Shri Mataji looked at me.

'So, you go back and marry that wife of yours!' She said, and I immediately burst out laughing, because Mother knows our every thought and desire.

Albert Lewis

One with Mother

It was Easter 1983 and Shri Mataji had asked at the last minute for one representative per Western country to go to India for Her birthday celebrations, which were very close to Easter. So everybody jumped in a plane and we stayed there for quite a few days. We stayed in a guest house and would spend the whole day with Shri Mataji in a teensy flat, where She was staying. We were quite cramped and She would receive all the people and work on them and it was just wonderful.

The day before Shri Mataji left Mumbai was Easter Sunday. She went to a Sahaja Yogi's flat and there were only us, the Westerners who had been invited, our host and one or two Indians. She received a high personality from Mumbai, but it was a totally different atmosphere than in the little flat where She had been the rest of the week, seeing everyone. After the official gentleman left, Shri Mataji said we westerners could go to Her Feet. That was a few hours before She left for the airport and we were also supposed to take our planes and go back to our respective countries.

At that time, She would lift Her Feet. We would slip our hands, one hand under each of Her Feet, our head touching the top of Her Feet and She would signal by lifting Her Feet, so our hands would be free for us to withdraw. One after the other, we could go to Her Feet and this was a treat, even at that time when it happened relatively frequently.

The event described here is the strongest, deepest spiritual experience I have had with Shri Mataji. My turn came. I put my hands under Her Feet and soon after I felt and heard a crack in my forehead. It was not only a feeling, but also a noise. After this crack, I felt that my forehead was one with Her Feet. My forehead was touching Her Feet, the top of Her Feet. It was one with Her Feet, I was integrated in the same blood circulation as Hers and there was no more any physical separation between Shri Mataji and me. I was absolutely one with Her. That was an unbelievable moment of bliss. The exuberance and joy of just being one with Mother and one with God! That lasted and lasted and I was in a state of exultation. I had no notion of time at all. Then She lifted Her Feet. I withdrew and was in such a state of joy and bliss. 'I'm one with Mother! I'm one with Mother!'

A little later, Mother left for the airport and She called me to sit next to Her in the car. It was a little car and there were three of us in the back. I was squeezed against Her and the state of bliss continued. We accompanied Mother to the airport. We waved Her goodbye as we usually do and there, for the first time, I was not crying at all and not in the mood for crying. I was waving goodbye in a state of perfect joy and just feeling, 'I'm one with Mother.' So it was obvious that I was not going to be sad.

Until then every time Shri Mataji would go away and I would say goodbye to Her, I would cry and feel like an orphan or an abandoned child. For many years after that, I did not cry any more when Mother would leave.

Ruth Eleanore

I will follow this lady to the ends of the earth

When I first came into Sahaja Yoga in November 1982, I was told my Kundalini had risen strongly, but I hadn't felt a thing – except their care on an emotional level. I had respect for Sahaja Yoga and persisted. I got my realisation from some of the London Sahaja Yogis and when Mother came back

from India in the following spring I was invited to Heathrow Airport to meet Her.

Shri Mataji arrived wearing a beautiful camel hair coat, She had a silk scarf on Her head, wore a beautiful sari and had a radiant smile. She asked how things were going in the UK and someone mentioned that there were some new yogis. I was one of them and got ushered to towards Her. She looked at me and gave me Her hand, with the palm down as a queen would for Her subject to kiss.

I am half Italian and had been told by my father to kiss the hand of married ladies, bow to a lady of nobility, but if I should ever meet a queen I should go down on one knee first as I took her hand. I was before Shri Mataji, and instinctively went down on both my knees and kissed Her hand. I remember as a child, my father saying that it is only when we address God in prayer that we kneel on both knees. Somehow Mother knew where I was coming from and I felt, 'I will follow this lady to the ends of the earth.'

Victor Vertunni

And she was born realised

While Shri Mataji was visiting Geneva in April 1983, we did a programme in Lausanne. In it Shri Mataji attacked various corrupt and evil institutions and as the programme continued, quite a large handful of people sedately stood up and left. At the end of a programme Shri Mataji would move amongst the people who remained and talk to them. She would work on them: rub their Agnya foreheads, tap them round the Vishuddhi and so on.

Shri Mataji worked on one girl who was perhaps twenty-one, an attractive young woman and She worked and worked on her. Shri Mataji rubbed her forehead, rubbed her hand, held her hand and talked to her. Then She moved away, but turned round, came back and worked on her for a second time. As She moved away that time, She mentioned that this girl had been involved with a well-known false guru. Then Shri Mataji went back a third time and worked again on this girl, over a period of five minutes.

'This false guru!' She said. 'I cannot get her Kundalini up. And she was born realised.'

Brian Bell

She burst into tears and embraced Shri Mataji

In Lausanne, Switzerland, in April 1983, after a public programme Shri Mataji met a Portuguese lady who had lost her hearing. Shri Mataji asked her to come back the next day to the house of a Sahaja Yogi with whom She was staying.

The following morning, we were once again in Her presence, in the drawing room of that house. Mother gave vibrational treatment to several people, leaving the Portuguese lady till the last. This lady had lost her hearing many years previously and an operation had not succeeded in restoring it. Shri Mataji worked on her with vibrations for about ten minutes, during which all communication with the lady was with written notes on scraps of paper, translated from Portuguese to French and then to English. Then, at one moment, the lady started to hear more clearly what was being said. She burst into tears and embraced Shri Mataji. Her hearing continued to improve.

Said Ait-Chaalal

Shri Mataji

Shri Mataji was in Switzerland in the early eighties. She was talking to us, a little group of yogis. She said to us that from now on we should call Her Shri Mataji rather than Mataji. In my diary I referred to Her as 'Mataji' up to 1983. I was there when She said that.

Antoinette

Wells

On the other side of that ocean

I was staying with some Sahaja Yogis in Pietermaritzburg, Natal, South Africa in 1990 and we were looking through their photo album of photos of Mother. I saw one of the back of Mother's head and behind was a sky the colour of apricot over the sea, with some coconut palms.



'That was at Gorai Creek,' I said. 'Did someone give you a copy of the photos I took?'

'No,' my host replied, 'I took those photos myself.'

'There was one other person with a camera. Was that you?' So here we were, on the other side of the Indian Ocean, years later.

Gorai was a beach north of Mumbai, on a peninsula. We went down from Delhi and stayed in Mumbai and, to get to the Sahasrara Day Puja, took a suburban train to the end of the line, then a tonga pony cart and finally a ferry across the creek to the beach. The place of the puja was on the beach under the palm trees and, being May 1983, it was hot and the breeze through the trees was most welcome. Mother talked about the palm trees in the puja talk and said they always bend towards the ocean and recognize it as their father, Lord Vishnu.

After the puja was finished many people hurried to get back to the ferry, because it was said that the ferry stopped at dusk and it was nearly dusk then. Some of us did not want to leave Mother, who was still there, and the now cool beach. Mother walked down towards the sea. It was a wide beach and the tide was out.

Linda Williams



A divine experience

After I came into Sahaja Yoga, for nearly one and a half years I could not believe in it. I kept saying to myself that if I could have a divine experience, then I would. One day, when I was with Shri Mataji at Goregaon, (Gorai Creek) She asked us to call the sea. At that time the sea was very far from where we were standing. She asked us to stand on both Her sides and recite the Samudra Devata mantra. We did so and after a short while, to my total surprise, the sea came right up to where we were and first bathed the Feet of Shri Mataji and then the image of Shri Ganesha that She had made in the sand. I became a true Sahaja Yogini.

Suman Mathur



Shri Mataji on the beach at Gorai, with the image of Shri Ganesha

Power and majesty emanated from Her

Shri Mother stopped some distance from the retreating tide. She bent down and began to create a Shri Ganesha in the sand and then ornamented it with flowers and kumkum. She moved a few paces forward and stood quite still, with an intent expression, and looked out to the sea and the sunset-reddened

horizon. Great power and majesty emanated from Her. To some present, it felt as though the Adi Shakti was ushering out forever the dying embers of the Kali Yuga and invoking the ocean, Dharma, to assert itself.

The image of Shri Ganesha lay in the sand, a symbol of the advent of the age of truth, innocence and wisdom. Shri Mataji called on the sea to wash over us all. We chanted the mantra to Samudra Devata, the God of the Ocean, asking His blessings. Several Sahaja Yogis saw the wave coming inward towards the shore. Then the sea came rushing up to Shri Mother, flowed past everyone present and encircled the Shri Ganesha.

The evening star, Venus — the Devi's own sign — was seen high in the twilight sky directly opposite the Devi, our most beneficent Mother.

Bogunia Bensaude

Shri Samudra Devatur sakshat

From seemingly nowhere, a man appeared with a basket of flowers for Mother and She decorated the Shri Ganesha. We stood back and admired it, after which Mother looked towards the sea, a good fifty metres off and dead calm, with little ripples and certainly no big waves. She told us all to say the mantra to the sea, Samudra Devatur.

So we started saying, 'Aum twameva sakshat Shri Samudra Devatur sakshat.' After we had said it a few times, the most extraordinary thing happened. The sea came up to the Shri Ganesha in the sand in a narrow stream about a metre wide, not violently, but just enough to bathe the Shri Ganesha and dissolve it into the seawater. Mother walked down to the sea, where the shoreline was some way out and the water receded again, but Mother put Her Feet in the ocean and said something like, 'Whenever I put My Feet in the ocean, I vibrate the whole ocean because the current takes the water right round to all the shores touched by it, all the shorelines of the Indian Ocean.'

After this, Mother went away and we began quite a long walk to the ferry. As we were going up the track, a bit dubious as to whether there was even going to be a ferry when we got there because it was pitch dark by this time, a car went past us and stopped.

'Don't worry. I have asked the ferry to wait and there is a truck to take you there,' a beloved voice said. Thank You, Mother, as always.

Bogunia Bensaude

Chapter 22
1983 May and June
London, Paris and Madrid

A catch on the left Nabhi

In London in 1983, after giving self realisation to all the people present Shri Mataji conducted a Sahaja workshop. She was working on a gentleman from the front, while two other Sahaja Yogis and I were working on him from the back. Shri Mataji asked us to raise his Kundalini and later on to give a bandhan to his Sahasrara.

‘What catches can you feel?’ Shri Mataji asked us.

One by one, the three of us enumerated the different catches but none of us mentioned the catch on the Nabhi.

‘You mentioned so many catches but none of you was able to feel the catch on the Nabhi chakra, and this is the main catch for this gentleman. Do you know why none of you could feel it?’ She commented.

‘No, Mother,’ we said.

‘That is because the Nabhi chakra is also your main catch, so much so that you can’t even feel it,’ She told us. ‘Do you know why the Nabhi chakra is your main catch?’

‘No Mother,’ we said.

‘Because none of you has married yet. Do you know what’s to be done?’ Shri Mataji replied. By now we were looking a bit serious but Shri Mataji was smiling. ‘It looks like I’ll have to find a nice wife for each of you.’ We all laughed. Then Shri Mataji enquired about this gentleman’s profession.

‘I am a priest,’ he replied.

Shri Mataji explained to him that the idea of celibacy as the best way for spiritual ascent is a misguided belief and this was causing an obstacle at the level of his Nabhi chakra. The priest commented that he was bound by his vows, to which Shri Mataji replied that She was not suggesting or encouraging him to break his vows but that the wrong idea that celibacy is the only or the best way for spiritual ascent was the obstacle at the level of the Nabhi chakra. After this his Kundalini rose strongly and his face was transformed.

Luis Garrido

Shri Mataji playing with a child

One day, in the late spring of 1983, Shri Mataji arrived at the Brighton ashram in the morning and distributed presents to the children. Among the presents there were some small brass tea pots, less than an inch high. Some of us thought the teapots were far too small. Shri Mataji was able to read our minds and explained that children prefer things on a small scale, like small tables and chairs, and they appreciate tiny objects very much.

Then Shri Mataji delivered a lecture to all present. Meanwhile a small girl of about four years old kept trying to take some roasted chickpeas from Her side plate. She managed to stop the child from getting to the chickpeas because these were hot spicy ones, not suitable to a child of tender age, but the child kept trying. Shri Mataji interrupted Her talk and commented that usually a small child would have followed Her directions, which raised the question of whether this child was quite hungry. She addressed the mother.

‘Did you give breakfast to your daughter this morning?’

The mother was shocked to realise that with the morning rush to catch the train she had indeed forgotten her daughter’s breakfast. The omission was remedied immediately and the child was taken to the kitchen. By the time Shri Mataji had finished Her talk the child returned to the sitting room carrying her tiny brass teapot. Shri Mataji waved at her and she came forward. Then She started playing with her by inserting chickpeas into the teapot. The little girl found this game extremely funny and laughed out loud every time Shri Mataji did that. Even three chickpeas would have been enough to fill up the teapot but Shri Mataji kept inserting more and more and the child giggled uncontrollably every time the game was repeated. Laughter is contagious and soon everybody was laughing. Gradually it dawned on us that what Shri Mataji was doing went beyond the usual laws of physics. A Sahaja Yogi started to count out loud every time She inserted a chickpea and went up to twenty one. By now we were no longer laughing.

Suddenly the child took the teapot away and rushed back to her mum. As if nothing had happened, Shri Mataji started to greet some of the people She had not met before.

Luis Garrido

Rubbing oil and salt on the hands

A puja to Shri Mataji as Shri Buddha was held in the Brighton Ashram in the summer of 1983. The day before the puja, Shri Mataji arrived and noticed we were all sitting down and feeling rather lethargic, so She gave the example of standing up and instructed us all to sit up and sit down a few times in succession. Then while standing up, She started bending to the front and to the back and then to the left and right just like in an gymnastics class but the movements were gentle and each stretch was held for about one minute. Then it started again and we did a total of four sets. Shri Mataji told us that these exercises were good for the Swadishthan. We all felt terrific doing them with Her.

Once we were all sitting down again we were instructed to rub our thumbs. She rubbed Her own thumbs firmly for about five minutes and we all did the same. After what seemed a long time, some of us had stopped but She told us to continue until no catch was left on the thumbs. She specifically instructed that we should not allow any catch to stick to the thumbs and that we should rub the catch out, and if we wanted we could also rub oil on the thumbs. About a year later a message from Shri Mataji was circulated that rubbing vibrated salt on the palms of the hands and thumbs is another cleansing technique for the chakras.

Luis Garrido



Shri Mataji at the Shri Buddha Puja 1983

Clockwise on the Sahasrara from both front and back

In 1983 at a public programme in London Shri Mataji was working on a new person and at the same time a few of us were working on him. Shri Mataji was facing him and the Sahaja Yogis were working from the back. When it came to giving a bandhan to the Sahasrara chakra, Shri Mataji explained that on the top of the head, on the Sahasrara, the direction was clockwise, not anti-clockwise, even though we were working from the back of the person.

Luis Garrido

Gentle rebukes

In 1983 at Brompton Square there was such a close relationship between Shri Mataji and all Her children that we all felt if at any time She gave us a rebuke, She was perfectly entitled to do so, and had earned that right by being so loving and caring towards our wellbeing, both spiritually and in matters of our mundane life. In Her rare rebukes Shri Mataji was very gentle and mindful of not hurting us, like a loving Mother. Her speciality laid in continuously forgiving us and overlooking our faults.

Luis Garrido

Vasco da Gama

In 1983 at Brompton Square Shri Mataji told me a story about Vasco da Gama, the Portuguese navigator who commanded the first ships to sail from Portugal to India in 1498. On landing in South India, he saw numerous statues of Shri Kali and Shri Durga, assumed they were statues of the Virgin Mary and wrote to the King of Portugal informing him that he had reached a land that was more devoted to the Virgin Mary than Portugal. He concluded that Portugal should not wage war against a country of great Christians like India, but that the two countries should trade.

Shri Mataji said that later other Portuguese people came and took a different approach. They even used cannon balls against the statues of Lord Shiva at Elephanta, which gave bad karma to Portugal and explained why Portugal was plagued by certain false gurus from India, but She reassured us that this would

stop eventually. She also told us that the Portuguese Sahaja Yogis were not personally responsible for these past mistakes and we should not feel guilty for them.

Luis Garrido

You can have dinner with us, and then I will explain Sahaja Yoga

I am from Delhi, India, and work as a travel agent. I met Shri Mataji at gatherings in my house where She talked to me like any relative would, because I am related to Her by marriage. She asked me about myself and like any other person I said I was fine, but She said there was a problem with one of my chakras. Before I could even understand She was pinpointing the exact area where She felt I had a problem, but wasn't aware of it. Later I discovered She was propagating Sahaja Yoga. She invited me to stay with Her in London.

Later, when I was going to Canada, there was a delay in the flight, so I stopped over in London and took a walk in the evening, because I didn't know how to kill the time. I saw Shri Mataji's picture, and nearby there was a hall where Her public programme was going on. I entered and remembered Her from the party where I had met Her, back home. Shri Mataji was talking to a lot of people and the process of self realisation was to start. The moment I entered the hall She spotted me and asked some people to guide me to the front row. There I was, sitting with my hands towards Her.

'Did you feel the vibrations?' She asked, 'Did you feel the cool breeze?' but I felt nothing. After the programme was over some yogis took me to Shri Mataji.

'I'm glad you came,' She said.

'Shri Mataji, my flight was delayed,' I replied.

'If you are not doing anything, why don't you come home?' She said. So they took me to Her car when She was leaving the programme. I sat with Shri Mataji in the car and went to Her house.

'I am cooking today,' She told me. 'If you like you can have dinner with us and then I will explain to you about Sahaja Yoga, and I'm sure you will be able to feel the cool breeze and the vibrations.'

First Shri Mataji gave me good food, and at the dining table told me what Sahaja Yoga is all about. Then She asked me to put my hands out and I could feel the vibrations, the cool breeze. It was the fourth of July and I cannot forget that day.

'You are the guru,' Shri Mataji told me, 'you have to believe in yourself. And it is you who will finally make up your mind what you want out of your life, you will decide, you will do everything.' I suddenly felt so rejuvenated, that my own self, my being, could make a self discovery. And once that happened there were no obstacles, there were no problems.

Sanjay Talvar

We have won Paris

In 1983, on the 16th, 17th and 18th of June, Shri Mataji gave three wonderful public programmes in a hall in Paris, at the Place St Germain des Prés, famous for being the area where intellectuals used to meet. It was a masterly series of programmes, attracting around 150 - 200 seekers every evening, which was a lot in France at that time.

On the last evening, exactly at the time when Shri Mataji came out of the building, a huge firework burst in the sky.

'We have won Paris,' She said before entering in the car, because starting and establishing Sahaja Yoga in France was not easy.

Christophe Rivaud

I am always with you in your hearts

Before a public programme in Paris, we introduced a newly realised man to Shri Mataji. He told Her he was travelling all around the world to find Her.

'You don't have to travel all around the world, I am always with you in your hearts,' She replied.

Christine Haage

The importance of meditation

I was living in the Paris ashram of Le Raincy in about 1983. Our collective meditations started at a 'reasonable' 7.30 or 8 in the morning, but I was often unable to get ready on time or would leave before the end. Occasionally our ashram leader would try to help, saying, 'If you don't meditate every day, you can't grow in Sahaj,' which made me feel even more guilty.

One day I rebelled, 'Enough of this left Vishuddhi catch! I am not being honest with the Divine because I am not true to myself. Let's see if I can do what I enjoy and not feel guilty about it!' So I stopped meditating altogether and went to the movies instead. As soon as I sat in the car, strong vibrations started flowing, all the way to the cinema, and even more so during the movie.

This went on for about four months, and we went to greet Mother at the airport. When the Goddess appeared through the gates there were no words for the magic of those vibrations, Her beauty and Her smile as She walked towards us.

'Hello, how are you?' She said from a distance, and said a few sweet words to each Yogi along the way. I was half hiding at the back but next thing I knew, She was walking towards me.

'Hello, how are you? Oh much better!' She said, louder and still smiling, then looking around went on, 'She is much better, don't you find?' Then She looked straight back at me with a delightful playful expression and said, 'What did you do?' She paused, 'Meditate?' and She winked at me.

Natalie Amram

The four-legged disciple

At Le Raincy, in about 1983, Shri Mataji had been praising dogs and explained to us that they represented the perfect disciple that was always obeying his master, only wanting to please his master and that we, as their gurus, should also be strong and imbibe the qualities of the guru.

'Mother, which dog is good?' someone asked.

'All dogs are good,' She paused, 'except bulldogs,' and laughed, then went on, 'German Shepherds are good, like the one she has,' pointing to Vanda, the German Shepherd that was sitting among us. 'See, she loves everyone.'

Another Yogi that was present asked about boxer dogs, and Mother said that they were journalists.

'Mother, what about cats?' Someone asked.

'Cats are all right,' She said, then someone asked whether cats were not negative, and Mother replied, 'No, no, cats are all right. But they have lost their powers.'



The good dog

Take some vibrated water from the puja

In June 1983 my father had just met Shri Mataji for the first time, in Paris. He was a simple countryman, a very deep and loving soul. That year, Shri Mataji invited all the new French people from different parts of the country, about thirty, to come and meet Her in Her room. She addressed a nice word to each individual.

‘I would recommend,’ Shri Mataji said, ‘each of you to take some vibrated water from the puja we had together and sprinkle it in your houses and everywhere around, where you feel there is some negativity. It will clear things out!’

My father went back to Brittany with a tiny bottle of vibrated water. The following morning, he decided to go and give a special treatment to the field he had planted with potatoes. A common disease called mildew had been developing amongst the plants, by which the leaves were turning yellow. If nothing was done, the crops were at risk. That morning was foggy and we couldn’t see at two metres ahead of us. Following Shri Mataji’s advice, my father added some vibrated water to the product he prepared to sprinkle around the field. At about two or three in the afternoon, the sun came out and the fog disappeared. My father came running to me.

‘Come quickly, this is extraordinary! Come and see! This is Shri Mataji for sure!’ I rushed to the field and discovered the leaves of the potatoes had turned green again (normally it would take a few days before they could get back to their original colour). Most incredible of all, they had grown by four to five centimetres within a few hours! Our neighbour, a rather gross farmer, was shouting in a strong dialect.

‘How come? I don’t understand! This morning your potatoes were yellow and now they’re green! On top of that, they’ve grown!’ Also, a couple of months later all the village farmers were intensively busy discussing the amazing size of our potatoes compared to theirs.

Guillemette Metouri

Shri Mataji has come on this earth as Shri Mahamaya

These three short stories show how Shri Mataji came on this earth as Shri Mahamaya.

It was in the early eighties, in Paris, and She was resting in Her room. Somebody came in.

‘Shri Mataji is sleeping, take care,’ my wife said.

‘I was not sleeping,’ She said, opening Her eyes. ‘If I was sleeping, this world would be destroyed.’

On another occasion I was taking vibrations from Shri Mataji. She often asked us to do this, and said it helped Her.

‘You know, I have seven worlds to manage,’ She said. ‘I was somewhere else.’

Another time, after a public programme in Paris, also in the eighties, She was very happy with it and we were coming out of Paris to go back to the ashram in the suburb.

‘Patrick, can you see how Lord Shiva is happy with the programme? Can you see the red colour in the sky?’ She said.

‘No Shri Mataji, I don’t see it,’ I replied, because I was driving and there was a lot of traffic.

‘Oh just a minute,’ She went on. The colour that was at the back just came in front of me so I could see it while I was driving.

In the eighties Shri Mataji was very much the Mother with the yogis who were with Her. For example, She would put a shawl around the shoulders of a yogini who needed to be more secure, or warmer, a very motherly gesture.

In the nineties, Shri Mataji was very much the guru, telling us what to do.

Patrick Lantoin

Planes wait for Mother

After Mother’s visit to Paris in June 1983, we were all sitting listening to Her at the airport, prior to Her departure for Spain. I was floating in the awesomeness of the fact that Mother had asked me to travel with Her. I felt a bit shy and nervous from my ignorance of the protocol, so I can’t remember whether yogis looked anxiously at their watches or mentioned something to Mother, but I remember that She scolded us a little.

‘Planes wait for Me, don’t you know?’ She said. After which we instantly forgot all about time. Later Mother got up and the boarding proceeded as normal. As soon as we were comfortably seated and the plane’s door closed, there was the first cabin announcement, ‘Ladies and gentlemen, we apologise for the twenty minute delay due to a technical problem. We are now ready for take-off.’

In fact Mother even offered to pay for my ticket since She asked me on short notice.

‘Oh thank You very much Mother, no need at all. The ticket was very cheap,’ I replied.

‘Yes, the ticket was very cheap, wasn’t it?’ Mother then said with a divine twinkle in Her eyes.

Natalie Amram

Almonds

Once Mother asked me about my studying and I said that I had trouble with keeping good concentration.

‘You must eat almonds,’ Mother said.

One of the first Eastern Yoginis also told me that Mother had said that eating a small amount of almonds a day is good for the brain.

Natalie Amram

Just checking

During Shri Mataji's visit to Madrid in June 1983 She often said that the Spanish had a 'very, very big heart', more like Indians, and that She hoped that as they were also a developing country, they would not make the same mistake of following the Western ways. She mentioned that there seemed to be only synthetic products in the shop windows.

As often, during Shri Mataji's tours, there was a shopping trip where She knew the best things for presents, among them a type of warm velvety blanket. She said they would be good for some family members (or maybe Yogis) living in India, and that it was all right if they were synthetic as they were not directly on the skin, and practical for India's cold nights. Mother lovingly advised the humble and gentle Spanish Yogis on how to organize the packing for the departure flight. I seem to remember that the Goddess even helped with the choice of boxes. I was responsible for the blankets, so tried to think of everything, packing them safely, with care and big labels on all sides.

'Where are the blankets?' Shri Mataji asked me, when we were at the airport.

She was looking even after the smallest detail. I had completely forgotten! How could I? I looked desperately at the clock, but it was impossible to go back in the time left. I looked down for a few seconds and, just as I glimpsed up pleadingly feeling that I would not be able to hold the tears any longer, She said with a gracious movement of Her head: 'Don't worry, I think of everything!'

I knew then that the boxes were snugly amongst the other things on the trolley that was arriving, pushed by brothers.

Natalie Amram

Saffron

While shopping in Madrid with the Sahaja Yogis, Shri Mataji bought Spanish saffron. She said it was good for the left Vishuddhi.

Natalie Amram

The meaning of the word Madrid

Shri Mataji explained to us that Madrid means the place given by the Mother. The word for mother in Spanish is madre.

Fernando Alonso



Shri Mataji in Madrid in 1983

Somebody equal to Christ

The seeker being worked on in the photo below, by Shri Mataji, is my brother. His Agnya was catching because he was studying Theology and wanted to become a priest.

‘Somebody equal to Christ is alive and on this earth; come to see Her,’ I told him.

This was Madrid 1983. As these were the times when Shri Mataji stayed in the same flat as us, my brother could stay there also for the night. In the morning, when he was leaving, he told me, 'I would like to say good bye to Mataji'. My brother entered Her room, and explained to Shri Mataji that he just wanted to say good bye, that he was studying theology and wanted to become a priest. She never tried to dissuade him.

‘Now when you administer baptism you will be giving real baptism,’ She just told him.

He meditated for some time but discovered that here there was something else, that Sahaja meditation was not just ‘a help’ for his Christian spiritual life. He had to make a decision. Finally he opted for the priesthood. He was more the type of social-work seeker. He was and still is working for the education of young people. He told me that for one year or so he felt that he was wearing something like a hat on his head.

Fernando Alonso



Shri Mataji with Fernando's brother

A wedding reception

Shri Mataji honoured the Sahaja Yogis with Her presence when Ray and Chantal Harris held their wedding reception at my flat at Darwin Court, Regents Park, in June 1983.

Patricia Proenza

Perfect timing

‘Shall we open the presents now?’ we asked ourselves. There was some hesitation, and it was decided, and we opened them. It took quite some time and everybody appreciated every present. The moment the last present was finished, there was a space, ‘Well, what do we do now?’

‘Shri Mataji's coming,’ someone said. Absolutely perfect timing.

Chris Marlow

A sandalwood box

This is about my wedding in June 1983, in London - a personal experience with Shri Mataji. She actually came over for a short time. There was a party, with about ninety Sahaja Yogis there. It was a very large room and we had already had the ceremony earlier that day.

'I'm sorry I'm late,' Shri Mataji said when She arrived. We had been opening presents and talking and as She arrived, the whole place lit up, as it does when Shri Mataji arrives anywhere.

It was lovely before, there were Sahaja Yogis around and our families, but when Shri Mataji arrived it was like the epitome of the whole thing. Everybody started to shine and the flowers looked beautiful and it really was a very awesome thing for Shri Mataji to come to one's wedding. She made a short speech, saying how the weddings in Sahaja Yoga are not just for the individuals getting married, but they should be for the good of the collective, for everyone to enjoy.

'I couldn't find very much. I just found this present,' She said and gave us a parcel. We opened it and it was a sandalwood box with four elephants on the top and She said, 'That's four elephants for your four children.' And we do have four children, even though we only intended to have two!

There have been one or two weddings where Shri Mataji has attended. They are very, very special occasions. Since then, when everybody goes to weddings, they all enjoy it. Sahaja weddings have always been very collective affairs, not just family affairs — lovely vibrations. Seeing Shri Mataji, you realise all the Sahaja Yogis are your family and all the human race is your family.

Ray Harris

Chapter 23

1983 – July to September

Sweden, London and Rome

Shri Mataji in Sweden

Although Shri Mataji did not visit Sweden for Sahaja Yoga programmes, She did vibrate the land with Her Holy Feet when She accompanied Her husband there on an official visit. This photo shows Shri Mataji with Sir CP at the International Maritime University at Malmo, Sweden, of which he is the Chancellor. The photo was taken on 4th July 1983, the day the university was inaugurated..

Linda Williams



The symbolic significance of our work

We were about seven Italians who had the enormous good fortune to be called to work here at Brompton Square before the Guru Puja in July 1983. The young men were to redo all the floors of the ground floor in Carrara marble, including the dining room. That morning we had to sort out the marble slabs which were too dark or too light in colour. Shri Mataji appeared in the doorway of the dining room and praised the Italians for their speed and ability. She also spoke of the power of marble, which is very cool, to absorb negativity and the great power of this stone to purify, above all in Her house.

She worked a little on one of the young Italian men, who was not so well, and Her attention was on him at that time. Then She explained the symbolic significance of our work in Her house. We, She said, were working to build the New Jerusalem and we were the 'golden builders' of the city of God – which is symbolically Her house – and in a more extended sense London and the world is. Her house, She went on, is a house without foundations, built like a bridge on the banks of a subterranean stream, in one of the places already mentioned by William Blake, the great 'seer', in his poems. It was together with the house at Chelsham Road, and at Surbiton where there was also an ashram, and at

other locations that I did not know about.

Thus the work that we Sahaja Yogis had done – because only Sahaja Yogis were working there – was a work which had an incalculable significance, much deeper than the material side of it, and it was an act of devotion to the divine. Shri Adi Shakti accommodated us in Her house, fed us, took us into Her room with great respect and love and gave us the opportunity to work for Her, and while working for Her She would work on us, and clear us. Also staying in the house was Her daughter with two grandchildren, who put on a little show for us with dancing, singing and comedy, with much laughter. At this moment Sir CP came in to see the floor of the dining room and thanked us so much, while one of our group replied that it was a pleasure to be here to finish the work.

Alessandra Pallini

The endless sack of cement

When we were in Brompton Square in July 1983, Shri Mataji was still doing some work in the house. The Italian boys were doing the floor with blocks of Carrara marble.

Alessandra Pallini

As an architect, I was familiar with this kind of job, but only from a theoretical standpoint and none of us had any practical experience in this domain. We were a little nervous, as tiling with marble was not supposed to be easy, but we knew that with Mother's blessings all is possible and we started the work.

Duilio Cartocci

Shri Mataji asked me and another boy to put some marble tiles on the floor. I had never done this sort of thing before, but She told me to just try to do it. At a certain point, the cement was nearly finished. Shri Mataji came to visit us and we told Her this. She said we should give a bandhan. I hardly knew what this meant and thought maybe this meant that we would find a shop open.

Giovanni Albinesi

We asked an English Sahaja Yogi to go to the shops and buy more, but he shortly returned saying the shops were closed. Some time later, Shri Mataji Herself came to see how the work was going and, when we told Her that we were running out of cement, She very gently pointed out the urgency of finishing that day.

'Just give a bandhan,' She smiled and said.

Duilio Cartocci

'Don't worry and just keep going and go on with your work,' She said. They went on and this bucket of cement never ended. They went on and on and it was still full, so they could finish the whole room and it was finished by the time we had to leave for the Guru Puja.

Alessandra Pallini

It was my job to mix the cement with the water and the more I took out from the sack, the more I found inside. When we finished the marble floor, we still

had cement left over, which turned out to be precisely sufficient to tile the corridor leading to the kitchen. The bucket emptied just as we finished.

While we were working, a little child walked up to the freshly laid tiles and disturbed them. When the child had left, we spent a few minutes putting the tiles back into place.

Duilio Cartocci

Giovanni had just finished the tiling and he put two pieces of wood on the entrance of the dining room because he didn't want the people to step on the tiles just yet. Then Shri Mataji came down the stairs and into the corridor, which was also just done.

He had put some wooden pieces around. She walked on the corridor and went to the dining room and looked inside. She also walked in there. Giovanni was thinking, 'Oh, now I am going to have to do it all again,' because it must be all out of place.

Alessandra Pallini

'Well,' we thought to ourselves humbly, 'whatever Mother wants to do, that's fine. We can reset the tiles afterwards, no problem.' But when She left we looked closely and discovered that the only tiles that had moved were those which we ourselves had slightly mis-set and which were now exactly in the right position.

Duilio Cartocci

Then Giovanni looked at the tiles and they were perfectly all right. There wasn't even one millimetre moved out of place — completely in place, as if Shri Mataji had no weight.

Alessandra Pallini

Shri Mataji asked them to move Her bed

On that same weekend of Guru Puja in 1983, some people were supposed to come and visit the house, so many yogis were moving everything, including the furniture. Shri Mataji asked some Italian yogis, strong young men, to move Her solid wood bed. They were trying to push it, but could not manage.

I was in the room, packing Shri Mataji's suitcase. She approached the bed and just pushed it with Her knee and it moved. The Italian yogis said, 'Ah,' in big shock and surprise. Shri Mataji laughed.

'Well, after all, I am Adi Shakti, so it's normal that I can push this bed,' She said. Everybody was in awe in front of Her.

Ruth Eleanore

Three of us had to move a very heavy wooden bed. We were at the foot of the bed, on our knees and we pushed and pushed but it didn't move. After some time, Shri Mataji said to push again. In that moment, I turned my head and I saw Shri Mataji touching with Her knee the foot of the bed. In the same moment, the bed flew against the wall in the right position and we fell on the ground.

Duilio Cartocci

Then there was a big cupboard, wardrobe for clothes. They needed to move this cupboard and no one could move it. But when Shri Mataji just touched it with Her finger, it just moved easily.

Giovanni Albinesi



Havan at the Guru Puja 1983

This photograph of a havan is at the Guru Puja which took place at a location north of Brighton around July 1983. The then leader of Mumbai was there and was asked by Mother to read the thousand names of Shri Adi Guru for this havan.

Djamel Metouri



Guru Puja, England, 1983

Write about the spirit

It was the Guru Puja in 1983. I had never been to a puja and knew nothing about pujas. We were having a barbecue and Mother was sitting eating, and She called me down and I knelt in front of Her. She began talking to me, and told me to go back home and write about Sahaja Yoga.

‘Write about the spirit,’ Shri Mataji said. At that time I wasn’t writing, but I did eventually become a journalist. When Mother says something like that, it doesn’t matter whether it is then or ten years later, you must do it. My husband was a journalist and later he taught me to be one, so as to teach me a profession if he wasn’t there to look after me. We worked together and wrote for Scottish newspapers and magazines. This brought our marriage together.

Melody Hodgson

Shri Mataji is not from this earth

When my son Elliot was seven years old, he met Mother for the first time at a Guru Puja in England. Afterwards I asked him what he thought of Shri Mataji.

‘She is not from this earth. She is super imposed,’ he replied.

Melody Hodgson

The Surbiton ashram

In 1983 another ashram was found in London, a large house in Surbiton, a suburb in West London. Shri Mataji visited this ashram often, and worked very hard in getting the ashram started, instructing various yogis to move there, and even advised them on sorting out the plumbing work and repairs needed! On August 21st 1983, Shri Mataji held a Shri Bhumi Devi Puja in the garden of the ashram.

Patricia Proenza

Editor’s note: This puja was also in preparation for Shri Mataji’s upcoming America tour.



**The house that was the Surbiton ashram, at 102 Ditton Road,
Surbiton
(The whole of the ground floor was occupied by Shri Mataji)**



Puja for America, Surbiton, August 1983



Puja for America, Surbiton Ashram, August 1983

A head bath

We were doing puja at the Surbiton ashram in the UK and a cloud came over. Rain began to fall and we started to stand up.

‘It’s only a head bath, stay there,’ Shri Mataji said. And sure enough it was just a head bath. We still stand out in light showers for that head bath – very refreshing.

Frances Henke

You always please Me

We had worshipped Shri Mataji as Shri Bhumi Devi in the garden at Surbiton ashram, in 1983. When it was time to go home we were chatting by the car parked at the end of the drive way furthest away from the house, when Shri Mataji came out and spoke to some of the yogis nearest to Her. She then began to walk across the car park. My only ‘thought’ was that She incarnated to come to us and She even (physically) was walking towards us. In my heart I felt that this was too much. I found myself at Her Feet.

‘Mother, how can we please You?’ I asked.

‘You always please Me,’ She replied, and picked me up.

I understood this in the sense that we ‘do’ this when we want to please Her with our hearts. Then She rubbed my hand, but I could not feel Her hand- I saw only the expanse of stars and space flowing from the stream of Her hair.

Gillian Woltron

Technology to help us

Before I got married I stayed for a while with a Sahaj family – as in a training camp, so to speak - supporting the mother-to-be as she was soon to have her baby.

When the time of birth came the couple went to the hospital and I stayed back in the house. Suddenly I received a phone call by the father asking me to immediately call Shri Mataji and say that there were complications and that a caesarean had been advised.

As asked, I called Brompton Square and to my surprise spoke directly to Shri Mataji Herself. Mother was so calming and Her tone so soft and comforting. She told me to let them know that they should not worry.

‘After all,’ Shri Mataji said, ‘I invented all this technology to help you and anyway, I shall be there.’

The baby was born through a caesarean, without any complications for mother and child.

Gillian Woltron

How is it that I am here in Mulhouse?

Shri Mataji gave a public programme in Mulhouse, France, on the 1st of September 1983.

‘How is it that I am here in Mulhouse? It was not planned on the tour. It is the desire of one lady who told Me,’ She said at the beginning of the programme. She repeated the sentences I had spoken to Her in my heart in the meditation room of the ashram near Geneva, Switzerland, inviting Her to come to give realisation to the seekers.

Christine Haage

The best present

The day after the programme in Mulhouse, the yogis from there offered Shri Mataji a self made silk printed shawl. Because I had been so busy with the organisation, I didn’t have time to work on this present and in my heart, I apologized to Her. She looked at me.

‘But you already gave Me the best present, with all these people who got realisation yesterday,’ She said.

Christine Haage

Take us with You (diary entry)

Shri Mataji arrived at Fiumicino airport on Wednesday, 7th of September, 1983. Rome was shining because of the splendidly sunny days and because of the vibrations of four thousand posters of Shri Adi Shakti, put up on the main roads of the city to announce Her coming. We have been much helped this year by the Commune (Town Council) who have patronised the three public programmes of Shri Mataji. They printed five hundred large posters in colour put them up for free on the walls of the city. Very auspicious for Rome!

The day after, the 8th of September, was the first programme at the Sala Borromini, (Borromini Room) designed by the great baroque architect of that name, in Corso Vittorio. The hall, with about three hundred seats, was completely full of seekers of ‘deep quality’ as Mother told us later. On the roof of the hall was a fresco: a triangle of gold, the symbol of the Holy Spirit, with all the rays going out from the centre and spreading from the top of the skies onto the people below in the room. Behind Shri Mataji was written, in big letters, an inscription in Latin which said, ‘trahe nos post te’ which means ‘take us with You’. It was as if this hall, around three hundred years old, was constructed just for that event, so the people could bathe in the immense ocean of love of our Mother.

The people, altogether as a group, behaved in a very positive way and did not ask any inopportune questions. They did not interrupt nor were they aggressive. Almost everyone got their realisation and at the end of the talk many people went up to Shri Mataji. Some were already absorbed in Her, with their eyes fixed on Her and with their hands open to Her. The miracle of realisation had already started and their Kundalinis were already working even though they were not aware of it.

When Shri Mataji left the hall, some Sahaja Yogis had to open the way to the exit through the crowd of people around Her. The first two programmes took place in this hall and the third and last was in the auditorium of the national TV studios, where there were about five hundred people, because the programme had been announced on the radio. The Goddess was beautiful and radiant and She was immersed in Her vibrations which reverberated throughout the whole room. When Shri Mataji said, 'I bow to all the seekers of joy,' there was silence and profound joy. Probably the people had recognised Her, deep within themselves.

Alessandra Pallini



Shri Mataji speaking at the Sala Borromini, 8th September 1983



Shri Mataji on the terrace of the Pincio, Rome, after the public programme

During the day Shri Mataji passed some of the time in Her room with the Italian Sahaja Yogis, having familiar and intimate conversations. She spoke of Italy and said that this country is very blessed with a very pleasant climate, a beautiful seashore and a sweet countryside.

The most beautiful of the blessings that Shri Mataji mentioned in these private conversations, at Ruth's home in Via Mercalli, was when She told us that the Italians, together with the Indians and Chinese, are the closest to God, because they have a sense of the holiness of sanctity. What a blessing! Part of the time She spent shopping in the centre of Rome looking for Italian specialities. In a bag shop the owner called Her 'Mother', like us.

On Saturday the 10th we left Ruth's flat in her little Fiat Uno car. Ruth was driving and Shri Mataji was in the passenger seat next to her and I was in the back. We went towards the ashram near Tivoli where we met the other Sahaja Yogis from all over the world – about fifty of them, for the Shri Ganesh Puja.

Alessandra Pallini



Derek Ferguson offering a garland at the puja at Tivoli, September 1985

A havan and a puja

We had a havan with the participation of some of the new people from the last programmes and offered to the fire all the possible and imaginable baddhas. On the request of the new people Shri Mataji gave them a baptism with water. She also received some gifts, among them was a portrait of an Indian lady dressed in a sari, by one of the new Sahaja Yogis who had come from the last programme at the Sala Borromini, painted one year before, when he had not yet met Her. It was exactly the portrait of Shri Mataji with a sari of the same colour which She was wearing that very day!

In Shri Mataji's room we had brought some fresh figs for Her which She appreciated very much. She said that they were very good for Left Nabhi problems and She added that She knew they would grow in Italy, because from the moment She saw them, 'There, where the olive grows, like in Palestine, they would grow too'.

Sunday morning we had the Shri Ganesh Puja. At the end of the puja a number of engagements were announced. Then She called the couples and had enormous watermelons and some little yellow melons brought, the little melons were given to the men and the big watermelons were given to the girls, and She was laughing from Her heart, and said that that would be the weight that they would have to take on when they married. While we sang the aarti it was as if all the sons and daughters were reunited with their Mother to sing to Her of their love. The vibrations were tremendous and the heart opened with joy flowing.

The Adi Shakti left Italy that same day, but in Her generosity She gave more of Her precious time to those who had the good fortune to go with Her to the airport. The plane was two hours late and the time was spent sitting at Her Lotus Feet at Fiumicino airport, up to the moment when She embarked. She left, with no one to accompany Her. She departed in the solitude of Her divine nature.

A special cradle



Shri Mataji with the baby

A baby girl was born to us in London in August 1983. We were young, and happily poor in those days and of course very glad to receive things from other yogis for the baby, including a pram, which had been around some babies before ours. When the time came for my husband Djamel to bring the pram down from the top of our cupboard, he felt a terrible pain in the Left Nabhi. Our baby girl, who had been ok since coming back from the hospital, started crying a lot, despite the fact we were giving her vibrations regularly. Djamel mentioned that the pram originally belonged to someone who was not all right, but I said it did not matter, that other baby yogis had used it, as I was totally unaware of the effect of material things on human beings.

Then, one evening around midnight, when the baby was three weeks old, Shri Mataji came to our flat in Earl's Court, London, to see her.

'Warm up some olive oil,' She said, 'I'll baptise her!' As soon as the little girl was in Shri Mataji's arms, she started crying and crying. Needless to say we felt rather embarrassed. Mother applied the oil on her head and showed us how to do massage, by filling the Sahasrara, 'Like a cup,' She said, bringing the oil from the down side to the top of the head, all around again and again. Yet, after such a treatment, the baby was still screaming.

'Mother, may be this is because of the pram!' Djamel ventured, and he started explaining to Shri Mataji what he had felt, and gave the name of the owner. Shri Mataji's reaction was very swift. She scolded us for having accepted a pram from such a caught up person and told us to throw it away immediately.

'Look,' She said, 'I send you realised souls, and see the way you treat them! The poor child is suffering now; her Back Agnya is caught up.' I was speechless and under shock. 'Anyway,' continued Shri Mataji after a while, with a lovely smile, 'you don't have to worry any more now, for I have Myself ordered a new cot for her. You will get it tomorrow. But from now on, you must never accept second hand things or clothes from other people unless they come from

Me. So, I have vibrated this new cot, and after you finish using it for your daughter, pass it to the yogini mothers who will need it for their babies. It should be passed on because it comes from Me and it is vibrated!' Then She

turned towards the child and spoke tenderly to her. 'Don't worry, they are young parents, they don't know how to look after you, but they will learn, you will see!'

Needless to say I was in shock until Shri Mataji was about to leave, and I could not speak. I felt terribly guilty and clumsy. She talked to my husband and scolded him because She knew he could take it better than me. Yet She knew I was the culprit because I had not listened to my husband's vibrations but She did not mention anything to me. On the contrary, before Shri Mataji left, after we had offered Her some dinner, She stood before me - wrapped in Her coat and Her headscarf on Her head, looking so human now, so sweet, like any other mother - lifting Her face towards mine, with closed eyes, full of love and Her lips shaped ready to kiss me and waiting for me to bend down to receive Her divine kiss on my cheek. I did, completely stunned by such unexpected gesture.

'May God bless you,' She said with a radiant smile full of love, and She left in the night. Divine astonishing Mother! So She forgave me completely! And the most amazing thing of all, She had been aware of the need of a crib without anyone informing Her, for us Her penniless children. As promised, the day after, a cradle arrived in our flat, brand new, a wooden swinging cradle, light honey coloured, nicely shaped with bars all around. This happened long time back, in 1983, but I heard from an English yogini some years later that the crib was still putting children to sleep in the company of the angels, fulfilling its divine mission in the green land of England.

Guillemette Metouri

Return to Vienna

<p>JAI MATAJI</p>	<p>October '83</p>
<h3>Austria-One Year Later</h3>	
<p>What a difference. The whole place feels transformed. The atmosphere is lighter and happier, ever since Shri Mataji's first visit here. In September 1982 the weather has been so dry and sunny that no-one can believe it. Day after day it goes on.</p> <p>In contrast, on the eve of Shri Mataji's arrival here for the second time in September '83 Shri Indra blasted the negativity and the city was wakened by a tremendous thunderstorm.</p> <p>This time Austrian Sahaja Yogis were joyfully and proudly waiting to greet Their Mother at the airport, and no less than thirty of them at that. Only Shri Mataji knows how long we had waited for this moment.</p> <p>The weeks leading up to it were packed with a tremendous buzz of organization in which everyone took part, taking responsibility upon themselves and pulling their weight. We learnt a lot about collectivity in practice and generally things went smoothly so that we could really feel that it is Our Mother who is the Door and we just Her instruments.</p> <p>We had no difficulty booking the hall for the programmes, which took place in a famous building in the centre of Vienna right on the banks of the river Danube, which is the largest river in Europe and which carries the vibrations all the way to Russia and the Black Sea.</p> <p>Much time was also spent in scrubbing and painting our ashram which we received by Shri Mataji's Grace two months before Her visit. Just in time to welcome all our dear brothers and sisters from other countries, many of whom we had been able to meet in</p>	<p>Paris or at Guru Pujas earlier in the year. Since getting their realization just over a year ago many of the Austrians have become suddenly "jet-setters" of Sahaja Yoga, and have done more travelling in this year than ever before in their desire to be close to Their Mother now that they have found Her again after so long.</p> <p>And now here She was in Vienna itself. Everyone gathered at a Sahaja Yoga's flat to wait for Shri Mataji's darshan. Mr. Dhruval spoke some introductory words and the excitement mounted till, suddenly, Shri Mataji arrived: radiant, beautiful in a green sari, smiling and sitting to talk to us gathered eagerly at Her Feet.</p> <p>She spoke to us about the subtle side of Shri Adi Bhoomi. It was she who created Shri Kundalini. As Mother Earth she gives food to the plants, animals and human beings. Shri Kundalini is the nourishing Mother within us all. The other four elements are the outwardly creative, the masculine aspects.</p> <p>In connection with this Shri Mataji emphasized the special duties and characteristics of men and women, clearly stating that feminism is a misdirected consciousness of women. As Austria, and the bordering eastern countries which were formerly a part of it, represent the pancreas of the universe they are thus part of the Left Nabhii chakra and indeed the role of women is especially misunderstood in this area of the world and in northern Europe as a whole. Shri Mataji said that She will be dealing with such topics in the future and that She hopes that the Germans will take to it when She visits Germany in 1984.</p> <p>We pray that the nourishment of Shri Kundalini may now spread into the somewhat</p>
<p>Nirmala Yoga</p>	<p>39</p>

haves north of Europe, and intend to organize programmes in Munich and Budapest in order to express the key function of the "bridge", which Shri Mataji says that Austria has in the divine plan, between East and West, left and right.

At the public programmes all the Sahaja Yoga were taken throughout at the unimpeachable brilliance with which Shri Mataji worked out the whole plan. Just before the giving of initiation at the last programme all the Sahaja Yogis stood apart the side of the packed auditorium and sang a hymn to Sri Adi Shakti written by seekers centuries ago.

"Come, O guru my confessor,
Enter into my heart,
Come, O Shri from above,
Inflow us with Thy love,
That we may be filled with holy bliss,
Come, O Spirit from above."

This came as quite a surprise to some people who were there for the first few weeks only minutes before Shri Mataji had strongly attacked the "Christian Churches".

About a month after Sri Mataji's departure we wrote to all those seekers who had left their address with us and invited them to

attend a seminar in Descender Castle, which is situated near the border with Czechoslovakia. Many new people came and all of us enjoyed a chance to really submerge ourselves in vibrations, outside of the city, away from jobs and non-spiritual family. For many people this proved to be a turning point and as a result some strong new Sahaja Yogis came up.

We offered a Puja to Our Mother on the Sunday and witnessed something remarkable: we started reading the holy names of the Devi and within minutes a fierce snow and thunderstorm had developed out of the blue. It was so powerful that all the windows started rattling like mad. Then, so suddenly as it had appeared, the storm departed taking clouds, both gross and more subtle with it and leaving us bathed in the heavenly blue of an autumn sky. Sometimes, Vibrations.

Shri Mataji we pray that the light may break through as more and more overcast clouds of this Mother Earth, that all our brothers and sisters may know the joy of witnessing Your ever beautiful, always surprising and eternally splendid divine play.

Solo Solo Shri Jagannath Shri Mataji Ji Ji

This article appeared in the Sahaja magazine, Nirmala Yoga, in October 1983

Chapter 24

1983 – September

North America

Blessed with heaven

Here is the story to the Ekadesha Rudra Puja in our apartment at 215, West 92nd St, New York City, in September 1983. An Indian Sahaja Yogi did the puja recitations, Christine Kirby helped place the garland and John Partridge videoed the puja. I am pretty sure I was the only one with a camera. In this puja Shri Mataji stated that all who decorated Her Feet would be blessed with heaven, or safe in eternity.

‘The only difference between you and Me physically is that My heart is here,’ She said, pointing to the V in Her hairline along Her forehead. We are Her children, conceived in Her heart. It would take me fifteen years to find the miracle She had given me, a radiant light beam from the sari store in Her heart.

Judy Gaddy

A Mother’s love for Her children

In 1983 Shri Mataji came to New York and spent a week at the apartment of Herman and Judy Gaddy. Word went out that She was coming and yogis came from as far away as Vancouver to stay with Shri Mataji and have Her darshan. As Sahaja Yoga was quite new in America, it meant that there were only about thirty-five of us but it was quite a squeeze in that apartment.

She described the purpose of this visit as simply ‘a Mother’s love for Her children.’

Kristine Kirby

Stories of the deities

It was the Ekadesha Rudra Puja in 1983 in New York. I was assigned to make the crown. I cut it out of cardboard, covered it with blue velvet and decorated it with five gold stars. In the puja Shri Mataji explained that the distinctive powers of the Ekadesha would now be used constructively and to transform.

After the puja we went into Shri Mataji’s room to take vibrations from Her body. Rustom Burjorgee was out in the living room watching a video of the puja, and I remember Shri Mataji saying, ‘No more mantras!’ as Her body was already overflowing with vibrations. So we placed our hands at various places on Her body. I had my hand on Her right hip and She began to tell us stories of the deities.

The one I remember was about the rakshasa Ravana and his burning desire to ‘possess’ the Adi Shakti, which was the reason he stole Shri Sita from Shri Rama. Prior to that, apparently, Ravana had earned a boon from Shri Shiva, and this rakshasa insisted that He hand over Shri Parvati. Shri Shiva could not say ‘No’, having already agreed to offer a boon, so he handed Her over but with the warning not to let Her touch the Mother Earth. Since that was Parvati’s mother, She would be rescued and swallowed up by the Bhumi Devi. So Ravana carried the Adi Shakti on his back and flew through the air with his prize. Shri Vishnu, seeing the plight of his sister, sent the sage Narada to thwart Ravana. Narada flew up beside the demon.

‘Why, oh why, are you carrying that old woman on your back?’ he asked.
‘Old woman? What do you mean? This is a very beautiful goddess I have here!’ Ravana replied.

‘Just look and see,’ Narada went on. So he turned his head around and saw Adi Shakti in an ancient aspect, as a wrinkled elderly woman, laughing at him through a toothless grin! Shocked, he dropped Her, and as She reached the Mother Earth, She was swallowed up by Her mother.

After the story, we asked about the false guru who is an incarnation of the demon Ravana, who Shri Mataji had visited at his so called ashram at his invitation, in 1970, just before opening the Sahasrara.

‘Why did he invite You, when he recognised You and knew You could destroy him?’ we asked Shri Mataji.

‘Aha!’ She said. ‘It was his old desire (to possess the Adi Shakti) manifesting again!’ He could not help himself.

Kristine Kirby



Ekadesha Rudra Puja in New York, 1983

For my heart's consolation

Shri Mataji celebrated an Ekadesha Rudra Puja in a New York City apartment in 1983, approximately a year after I'd become a yogi. The local leader had explained that Shri Mataji works on several levels, both on the conscious and subconscious levels. She said that Shri Mataji often did work on

us in the dream state, but sometimes we just imagined Shri Mataji was in our dreams. She indicated that when Shri Mataji was actually there working, one awakened with a definite feeling that She was there. I didn't really understand.

Since this was my first puja in Shri Mataji's presence, I was extremely excited — so excited that I dreamt of Her. The dream was set at a public programme and Her Holiness was lecturing, when suddenly She turned and pointed Her right Vishuddhi finger at me and said, 'Open your mouth! Open your mouth!' Her attention and command was so direct and startling that, when I awoke, my mouth was wide open to the point of being sore around the jaw. Of course, I remembered the discussions about whether Shri Mataji was really present in a dream or not, so, while preparing for puja, I wrestled with the question.

Finally, puja day arrived and I sat with about thirty others in the living room of the puja location, gazing at our beautiful Sat Guru. Despite trying to focus on the puja itself, the question of Her presence in the dream kept surfacing. Finally, I quietly begged Shri Adi Shakti to put the question to rest, 'Were You in my dream, telling me to open my mouth?' She, of course, proceeded with the puja talk.

Despite listening intently, my internal questions kept surfacing. It was then that Shri Mataji, the beneficent, began telling a story of little Lord Krishna. She spoke of how the mischievous toddler loved to steal the butter, thus weakening the strength of the rakshasas, who battled the righteous. Shri Mataji spoke of how, one day in particular, Shri Krishna's mother was preparing some food, when the butter disappeared from the table. She asked her beloved child if He knew where the butter was and the ever-playful Shri Krishna shook His head.

'No,' He said.

'Open your mouth, open your mouth,' His mother commanded. In His mouth was the sight of the universe.

Suddenly, as I listened, I knew Shri Mataji had given me my answer, as only She could — subtly, compassionately and purposefully, for my ears and my heart's consolation. Stunned, I sat quietly, thoughtlessly, doubtlessly, assured that here, at Her Lotus Feet, lay not only the answer of my dream, but the answers of the universe.

Andrea Cousins

A life lesson

In 1983, when Shri Mataji visited us again in New York, we had to be instructed that if we wanted to have Her return we would have to invite Her. I thought this was so cool, because I knew that the false gurus just showed up at their convenience.

We were led in the puja by Dr Rustom and Patrick Redican. The crown we offered was based on brown cardboard and white paste - what innocence this exuberant childlike love created among us. Saris were shared and kurta-pyjamas secured from a whole other world, from Indian Queens, Forest Hill, New York. After the puja Shri Mataji went into the back bedroom. We decided to watch the just taped video of the puja and after a few minutes we heard Mother's voice.

'What are you watching out there?'

'The puja, Mother,' we sang out in unison.

'Well turn it off. You didn't absorb it the first time,' She was totally practical.

It was a life lesson we all learned and had many years ahead to absorb fully.

Judy Gaddy

A rare and treasured opportunity

On another evening during that same trip in 1983, Shri Mataji was watching the *Star Wars* movie on the video and was eating from a large bowl of popcorn that had been prepared for Her. After the movie, which She enjoyed, She put Her hand on Her stomach.

‘Oh my God, I have eaten so many bhuts!’ She exclaimed.

This occasion of spending several days staying in an apartment with Shri Mataji with so few of us and in such close proximity was a rare and treasured opportunity.

Kristine Kirby

In a semi-circle around Shri Mataji’s Feet

One visit to the Gaddy’s apartment in New York with Shri Mataji was for the Shri Ekadesha Rudra Puja in 1983. There was a beautiful talk where She talks about how the destructive powers are to be used for transformation; that is their purpose.

After watching the *Star Wars* movie Rustom Burjorjee summarized it for Shri Mataji by saying the Force, from the movie, is like the Shakti, and that Shri Mataji said these ideas have definitely come from the unconscious. My additions to Patrick Redican’s story about watching this movie with Shri Mataji is that the little creatures were the characters called ‘Smurfs’ and Shri Mataji said they were the ganas; that they looked just like that and particularly their little noses. At the end of the puja, the Gaddy children collected their little toy Smurfs (they had quite a lot of them) and brought them in and had them all placed in the namaskar position in a semi-circle around at Shri Mataji’s Feet. She did it for the sake of the children, I think; Judy’s children whom She dearly loved.

Kristine

Kirby

Shri Mataji showed us how to be normal

The Smurfs, as they were known, were all the craze at the time with the young children, and it seemed such a sweet thing for Shri Mataji to say that they were Shri Ganesha’s ganas.

I remember sitting in the room watching the *Star Wars* movie. It was a somewhat surreal experience as I never went to the movies or watched TV. It always seemed to me to be not a very spiritual thing to do and I could not quite believe that there we all were, sitting with Shri Adi Shakti watching this video in the living room, with Shri Mataji laughing and enjoying the popcorn. It was yet another example for me of how She broke down all our conditionings and just showed us how to be ordinary relaxed normal people.

Felicity Payment

The Smurfs

In the early eighties Shri Mataji was in Judy Gaddy’s apartment in New York and there was a puja. Shri Mataji had been talking about the French Yogis, saying they were difficult or whatever. Judy found out the Smurfs (a toy made

after some characters in the *Star Wars* movies) were made in France, and got the idea for her children to show them to Mother when She asked about them. She said they looked like ganas, and asked the children to put them at Her Feet with the flowers.

Annie Calvas-Blanchon



The Smurfs at Shri Mataji's side



The Smurfs at Shri Mataji's Feet

What have I done to have this blessing?

When Shri Mataji was in New York in the early eighties, I was sometimes driving Her around the city. I had a small Toyota and Shri Mataji would sit next to me, discussing things like an ordinary lady would. You forgot who She was and how to be, and then you grabbed yourself, and would say to yourself, 'Wait a minute, this is Shri Adi Shakti, talking to you about Her human life.' There were very few Sahaja Yogis around and She was with us for a week on end, and we were in Her company all this time.

And there I was sitting next to Her in my car, saying to myself, 'What have I done to have this blessing of having my Shri Guru Mata sitting next to me, sharing Her stories of Her worldly life, as if She was just another lady?'

Michael Petrunia

From now on we will bring gifts for the boys

Back in early years, when I was a small child, Shri Mataji would visit for pujas and public programmes She would always bring gifts for the women, but not for the men. I did not enjoy the feeling of being left out. So one day after She

arrived and laid out all the gifts for the ladies very nicely and everyone was enjoying.

‘Mother, how come you only bring gifts for the girls?’ I spoke my piece from the back of the room, boldly crossing my little arms. I remember a few people in the room gasping and everyone looking at me.

‘You hear that, how come I don’t bring gifts for the boys?’ Shri Mataji said. Everyone looked around, not knowing what to say, and then She kindly stated, ‘He is correct, from now on we will bring gifts for the boys as well. Alright?’ I smiled and was very excited about the prospect of the gifts I would receive the next time She came to town.

You’ve got to love the liberties of being a child in the presence of Her Holiness, Jai!

Scott Vijay

Gaddy

Something very powerful to help me

My family used to live on the East Coast of the USA at that time, the beginning of the 1980’s, and I had just started practising Sahaja Yoga. Before Sahaja Yoga I had an alcohol addiction. Shri Mataji advised me to try to quit drinking as my drinking habit was affecting my small daughter. I tried very hard, but was unable to get rid of the habit.

‘What shall we do with you?’ Shri Mataji told me one day. She asked me to sit near Her and put Her thumb on my Sahasrara and pressed it hard. Then something unusual happened. I felt as if Her finger went deep inside my brain. This way She was working on me for a while. When I returned home I looked in the mirror and noticed that there was a circle on my head around my Sahasrara about half an inch in radius where my hair was short, as if singed due to a very high temperature. I never craved for alcohol again.

Shri Mataji did something very powerful to help me.

B.W.



Shri Mataji speaking at the New Age Institute, New York, in 1983

One last puff of cool breeze

We were on the America tour with Shri Mataji, in September 1983. We were in a car with Shri Mataji going between San Diego and Los Angeles and this happened during the sailing race for the Americas Cup, which Australia had entered for the first time. There had been a front cover on *Time*, or some magazine with the headline, ‘The Australians are coming’. This was

interesting, because for the first time four Australians were coming to America for Shri Mataji's tour.

'Why are four Australians significant?' My husband asked. Shri Mataji said we were the ganas, Shri Ganesha's helpers. Inside the magazine was a full page advertisement of an elephant, ears flying towards the camera - that was us.

Shri Mataji was in the front of the car, with Dr Worliker and others. My husband Ian, who loves sailing, wanted to listen to the race. He said he hoped the Australians won because the Americans were so egotistical about the race. Just as we turned the radio on, the announcer said, 'Yachts are coming back to the dock now.'

'We've lost,' Ian said, deflated. Then the announcer on the radio said, 'Just to repeat the news, Australia has won the Americas Cup.' Ian and I were overjoyed and cried out, just as we were pulling into a Chinese restaurant for lunch.

'What has happened?' asked Shri Mataji. 'You have such a glow about you.'

'Australia has won the Americas Cup,' we said, still glowing with national pride.

Apparently we got over the line on just one last puff of cool breeze.

We had a lovely meal in the restaurant with Shri Mataji and everyone had fortune cookies after the food. The prediction inside Shri Mataji's was 'You are the centre of everyone's attention'. We all had a good laugh over that.

Frances Henke

Alive and Well

On Shri Mataji's first major American tour She did the rounds of radio and television stations in Los Angeles, with the help of a public relations agency, which had on its staff an Australian. We wrote them a script, and one of the girls rang around, making bookings. Pictured below that is the result of one of those calls, Shri Mataji on *Alive and Well* in Los Angeles.

Frances Henke



Shri Mataji on *Alive and Well* TV show



Shri Mataji during the Shri Ganesha Puja, Santa Cruz, 1983

Ironing Mother's sari

In San Diego, California, in 1983, Shri Mataji had just finished Her breakfast in the hotel room and went over to Her suitcase to remove a sari that She would change into before travelling north from San Diego to Los Angeles where She was scheduled to give a public programme later that evening.

She took a sari that we are all familiar with out of Her suitcase, a white sari with a red border. This is the sari worn by our beloved guru when She greets Her new children and disciples. I noticed it was quite wrinkled. I offered to iron it and Shri Mataji replied that She thought it, the sari, was ok. I told Mother that I would be happy to iron Her sari. Again She sweetly declined my offer. Mother said I did not have to trouble myself but I assured Her it was no bother. I had never ironed a sari but did not think it could be so difficult. I felt bad, thinking it would be inexcusable not to do this small task for Mother, to let Her put on a badly wrinkled sari. So, once again I insisted that I would be happy to iron Her sari. Mother graciously acquiesced.

I took out the iron and ironing board and Shri Mataji sat down on Her bed to wait, and I noticed the sari was also soiled. Placing the sari on the other bed, I began to iron one end of it and it slipped off the ironing board. I picked it up, feeling bad for having let it slip off the board and fall onto the carpet and again began to iron. Again it slipped off! I felt clumsy but knew that once it was underway, I would be able to iron it just fine. Moments later, it slipped off the board yet again. I was surprised. How could it continue to fall off the board?

At that moment it dawned on me how foolish I was being. I picked up the sari and looked up at Shri Mataji, who was smiling at me. I was humbled by my folly and bowed to Her. She walked over and took the sari out of my hands, saying the sari would be all right. I put away the iron and board and sat down to wait while Shri Mataji went to change.

Minutes later She stepped into the room looking radiant in Her beautiful and perfect sari. There was not a single wrinkle or spot on it! It looked brand new. I sat in awe of the Divine Mother for whom a few wrinkles and dirt are effortlessly dispelled. Again that glorious smile bathed me in its love.

Tracy Tischuk

A special programme

In October 1983 Shri Mataji came to Vancouver with some Australian and English yogis. The English yogis came about two weeks beforehand to assist in preparing the ashram and the programmes. The ashram was in West Vancouver, a large home in one of the more elite parts of the city. We had about six people living there at that time and perhaps another dozen or so realised souls who were coming regularly.

The public programme was very successful with Shri Mataji giving realisation to approximately eighty people at the Robson Square Media Centre in downtown Vancouver. She also did something unexpected, and invited everyone who attended the programme to come the next morning to the ashram where She would hold a special programme and cook lunch for everyone.

The following morning about fifty people came and we were blessed to do a simple, short puja to Shri Ganesha. The Ganesha Atharva Sheersha was read aloud, but only the English translation, and Shri Mataji's hands were washed and the amrit ingredients offered to Her. Shri Mataji blessed our kitchen by cooking an amazing lunch and, in the process, gave some of us instructions as to how to prepare Her special recipes. All who attended the puja stayed on for lunch and unanimously raved about the amazingly tasty food Shri Mataji had made. They were so happy and so full of vibrations, they seemed ready to conquer the world, and everyone promised to come back and to keep meditating.

The following day, before noon, in a small Honda car owned by one of the yoginis, we safely delivered Shri Mataji to the airport where we said good-bye; saw Her through customs and on Her way. It was a whirlwind visit and we again felt completely blessed and blissed out by Shri Mataji's attention.

Lori Wills

The weight of the world was lifted

On one occasion I did something which I felt was wrong involving my young son, and which I was concerned might have offended Shri Mataji.

As it happened, Shri Mataji took a taxi to the public programme in Vancouver in 1983, and She invited a few of us to come along in the back seat. My son and I were squeezed in and I was sitting on the edge of the back seat, right up against the front seat with my son in my arms.

I was aware of Who Shri Mataji was right from the outset, and in the taxi I was silently praying to Her. It was during these prayers that Shri Mataji opened Her purse — I was sitting just behind Her left shoulder — and drew out a small bottle of perfume.

I knew beyond a doubt that it was the very same bottle of perfume I had sent Her the year before with a message of love and gratitude for my self realisation and for the opportunity of having been able to see Her in New York. She sprayed some on Her wrists and put it back in Her purse.

At that moment, I closed my eyes and the weight of the world was lifted from me. I suddenly felt very light and very much loved. We hadn't exchanged even a glance.

I felt a deep comfort that Shri Mataji knew everything and everyone in this same way as I had just experienced.

Liallyn Fitzpatrick

An exquisitely beautiful little teddy bear

When my son was an infant, Shri Mataji came to Vancouver and I was very grateful that She consented to give him a name after the Shri Ganesha Puja in 1983, at which all the people from the public programme the night before in the city were invited to! At that time She also gave my son an exquisitely beautiful little teddy bear and the vibrations of this gorgeous little thing were amazing (and the teddy's face my newborn daughter had, as I discovered four years later, so it must have been a shakti teddy). I was told by someone who was there that Shri Mataji had once said that each stuffed animal had a gana attached to it, and that's why children feel secure with them, for which I was eternally grateful due to my family situation at the time.

Liallyn Fitzpatrick

Shri Mataji raised the Kundalini of many a child's cuddly. She would make the little monkey or bear meditate nicely. Manipulating its little paws roly poly up the body, She would make seven bandhans and then sit it down to meditate, paws out in front of the delighted children.

Marilyn Leate

I remember Shri Mataji saying something about teddies protecting children from bhuts while they sleep.

Danya Martoglio

God knows everything

Back in 1983, when I was something like a 'yuva shakti' in our small Vancouver collective, I had the amazing honour of chauffeuring Shri Mataji in a rented Lincoln Continental. One drive took us to a local television studio, where, at the end of the interview, I was beside myself with joy to see Shri Mataji giving realisation to everyone present. On the way there, I was told to drive fast, as Shri Mataji sometimes allowed it when running late.

One evening, it was my turn to drive Her to the public programme in the city (another boy and I took turns over the few days that Shri Mataji was with us). Shri Mataji stayed very long working on the seekers. I found out, thirteen years later, that She had even taken the hand of my father and asked how he was. Although he was a life-long heavy smoker, he was surprised to feel a cool breeze flowing from his head.

I was outside the hall, enthusiastically talking to friends who also attended. At some point, Shri Mataji came out and walked passed us, stopping to talk to my friend's little daughter. As She walked on, a yogi asked me if I was still driving. I went from bliss to shock in a split second. I ran up the three flights of stairs to the street level, then down the street to the park house. I drove at full speed up to the block to where God was standing, smiling in front of the public event venue.

On the way home to the Vancouver ashram, I heard Shri Mataji mention that She would like to cook for everyone coming the following day. The local leader insisted that everything was closed, as it was close to midnight. The next thing I knew, a Sahaja Yogi was telling me to turn around and drive to the Indian area of Vancouver. I promptly obeyed. There, the Sahaja Yogis went into an Indian restaurant where the owner sold them all the spices Shri Mataji needed, and woke up his friend across the street, who opened his shop to sell us all the other ingredients.

At Shri Mataji's invitation, over fifty 'new people' attended the Shri Gauri Puja on the first day of Navaratri in the ashram.

Edward Saugstad

Shri Mataji wanted to go shopping

In October 1983, Shri Mataji came to Toronto and on the first morning announced that She wanted to go out shopping. There were about twelve of us in the room with Her.

'Who wants to come out shopping with Me?' She asked, and practically everyone in the room except me volunteered. She turned to me and said, 'All right, Patrick, you can come out with Me.'

The puja was on the Canadian Thanksgiving Day. In Toronto there were just a few of us and we were all men. Shri Mataji cooked up the puja dinner for us; She came into the kitchen and cooked it.

Patrick Redican

Cut them like you like to cut them

When Shri Mataji was in Boston in October 1983, a few of us were staying in the ashram there. We'd had a meeting and Mother had asked everybody back for puja. Everyone who had been to the public programme was asked back to have lunch and a puja the following day.

We were cooking for that and I was chopping onions. I've done a lot of cooking in my time and I was standing there with this knife, which was as blunt as anything. I was struggling, and Shri Mataji came in.

'Are you chopping the onions?' She asked. I was chopping them in squares, which was how I'd always been taught and Mother said, 'Let Me show you.'

She took the knife from me and it was so blunt you could hardly cut butter with it. She took the onion and sliced it in the thinnest and most delicate little slices I have ever seen, in two seconds, and then She gave me the knife and the other half of the onion.

'You cut them as you like to cut them because that's good, too,' Shri Mataji said. The knife was still so blunt when I used it, but with Her it was wonderful.

Mary Heaton

Now everyone can feel it

In 1983 Shri Mataji came to Boston. I am from there. She spent quite a long time with us that year.

The memories that I have of Her time in Boston are very precious because we had a small ashram. Shri Mataji stayed in the ashram with a small number of us and we got to spend some time in the living room with Her. The most extraordinary event I can remember was listening to music. There were about fifteen of us and She was sitting with us.

‘Let us have some nice music,’ She said.

What immediately jumped into our minds was to let Shri Mataji listen to a jazz artist that we were very fond of, who we thought might be a realised soul. So I put the tape of his music into the tape machine and I pressed ‘play’, and it just wouldn’t go. I couldn’t figure why because the tape machine had been working up to that point and there was nothing wrong with the tape.

‘Here, let me try a different tape,’ I suggested, ‘so we can see if it is the machine or the tape.’ The other tape I picked up was some Indian flute music by Vijay Raghav Rao. I put it in and immediately the tape worked.

‘Ah yes! This is beautiful music. This is wonderful music,’ Shri Mataji said immediately, so of course, we listened to that. We sat in a semi-circle around Her.

‘Whatever is happening in the atmosphere, whatever is happening in the universe is reflected in My body. Even the rhythm of this music is happening in My body,’ She said.

She had me put my left hand under Her Foot and a very complicated rhythm was pulsing on the sole, corresponding to the rhythm of the music: the rhythm of the tabla that was playing with the flute music. I felt it with my own hands.

‘Now everybody can feel it,’ Shri Mataji said.

Kristine Kirby

The baby danced to the rhythm

‘See, feel the vibrations flow around the circle,’ Shri Mataji said to us. We could feel the vibrations flow around the circle and there was a lady there who was pregnant and she could feel the baby dancing to the rhythm. Mother was in the circle, holding hands with us all.

Mary Heaton

We experienced something really amazing

Shri Mataji had us link hands in such a fashion so my right hand was into the left hand of the person sitting next to me, whose hand was facing up and then they took their right hand and put it into the left hand of the person next to them. In this way, in this semi-circle, we all linked hands and the person on the other end — this is where I am not sure I am remembering correctly — but that person may also have put their right hand under Shri Mataji’s other Foot. My left hand was under Her right Foot and everybody felt it. Everybody felt the rhythm of the music. We sat in that way for about five minutes, experiencing something really amazing, something really miraculous.

Kristine Kirby

I think that one is a realised soul

We were walking. Shri Mataji wanted to do shopping, so we went to Bloomingdales in Chestnut Hill in the Boston area and wandered through the store. She was particularly interested at that time in freshwater pearls and was looking at a beautiful freshwater pearl necklace where all the pearls were perfect.

Then we wandered to a different part of the store where they had home goods, cutlery and things like that and as we were there, Seiji Ozawa, then the director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and quite a famous director, passed by us. I recognized him.

‘Shri Mataji, that is the conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra,’ I said.

‘I think that one is a realised soul. He must be a realised soul — born realised,’ She said.

‘Really, Shri Mataji?’ I replied.

‘Yes, because his pupils dilated when he saw Me, when he walked past.’

Kristine Kirby

Chapter 25

1983 - October and November

London

Her perfume of beautiful vibrations

I met Shri Mataji in 1983 at Heathrow Airport. I took along a big bunch of flowers and was waiting to give them to Her with everyone else. She arrived, and was smaller than I imagined. She had a glorious smile on Her face. I saw one yogi standing there with his hands out towards Shri Mataji and I wondered what he was doing. It was as if he was breathing in deep breaths. I realised he was sucking in Shri Mataji's vibrations. When Shri Mataji came over to me and took my bunch of flowers, I too felt that incredible bliss that this man was feeling. I understood why he was standing there, so serene, with his hands out to Shri Mataji, and I too was breathing in Her perfume of beautiful vibrations. That was my first experience of Shri Mataji and I felt so totally joyful and blissful.

Leanne Huet

Two days before the Diwali Puja, November 1983

On the 5th November 1983, there was a great celebration at Surbiton ashram. In the presence of Shri Mataji an enormous bonfire was lit* – it was not exactly a havan – which purifies, but was symbolic of this festival. Deepa – awali means a river of lights. Fire is the element that when it burns lightens the darkness. It is at this time that Shri Adi Shakti opens the gates of hell to put in all the demons.

**Editor's note: Alessandra, being Italian, may not have been aware that November 5th is the night when the English traditionally light a bonfire and have fireworks to commemorate Guy Fawkes, who tried to blow up the Houses of Parliament in the seventeenth century, but it seems that the paramchaitanya has created a little festival of light, even for those, like the English, who are mostly unaware of Diwali.*

Alessandra Pallini



Shri Mataji at Surbiton

A puja and advice

We had some celebrations for Diwali at Surbiton ashram in 1983 – Shri

Mataji talked to us and then we had fireworks in the garden which Shri Mataji watched from inside Her flat, and Debu Choudhuri came to give a sitar concert, but was not feeling well and the concert had to be delayed. Shri Mataji spent some time healing his Swadishthan chakra and liver and ultimately he felt so well that he gave what he considered one of his best concerts.

Shri Mataji invited everybody to stay the night at the ashram after the celebrations and suggested that we all get up at 4 am for meditation the next day. The celebrations finished late so there was hardly any sleep but Shri Mataji was there in person in Her flat and we could all feel Her presence in the ashram, and getting up collectively in big numbers very early for meditation was a memorable occasion and a very deep experience. We were all mindful not to make noise as the noise travelled through the floorboards from the first floor onto Shri Mataji's apartment on the ground floor.

Shri Mataji mentioned at the time that She was not pleased that something had been published in a London Sahaja Yoga newsletter, i.e. an isolated quote of Hers, taken out of context, and which might have caused misunderstandings. The issue was to do with neighbours. In a certain talk Shri Mataji had warned that some neighbours can at times give problems to Sahaja Yoga. We all know that Shri Mataji does not preach hatred towards neighbours, much to the contrary, and great care has always been needed in selecting isolated statements.

Luis Garrido

The Sahaja Yogis' desire (diary entry)

In 1983 the Diwali Puja was to be celebrated in London on the 7th November. The puja concluded a series of celebrations which take place at this time of year. Each one has a particular significance, Shri Mataji explained, during a marvellous introductory conversation the evening before the puja, at the Surbiton ashram in south London.

The struggle against evil is particularly intense, and Diwali is the final, concluding moment of a drama that She plays out every year to show the victory of our Mother. This is shown clearly, internally in the chakras, where the work is done on a larger scale.

Shri Mataji was so beautiful; She spoke about America, from where She had returned the week before, with great satisfaction. She explained how the attention and desire of all the Sahaja Yogis of the world had made it possible for the Adi Shakti to intervene and save even this lost part of humanity. It was the compassion of we who know the normal state of consciousness of humans, but who have risen to a level that is closer to the divine, that in the form of a request, an appeal, to the divine compassion has made this miracle possible.

Alessandra Pallini

Diwali Puja, 1983 (diary entry)

The 7th of November was the day of the puja. That morning Shri Mataji spoke to us of the aspect of the divine which is worshipped at Diwali (Shri Lakshmi in Her eight forms), of the behaviour of the Sahaja Yogis and their shortcomings in respect to the qualities of this chakra. She spoke in particular about the miserliness of the English, their economic problems and their lack of generosity. We then went from the Surbiton ashram to the Temple of All Faiths, in Hampstead, where we had the puja.

The vibrations at the puja were extremely strong. In Her discourse Shri Mataji spoke of the importance of stabilising the principle of Shri Lakshmi within us, in the form of material wellbeing and satisfaction, because only then can our attention be on the divine, and the principle of Lakshmi can evolve into Mahalakshmi.

At the end of the puja gifts were offered to Shri Mataji, and She said that we should not give Her any more saris - this happened when She was covered with so many saris of many colours, shining with gold inlay, which went right down to Her Feet, and adorned Her like a rainbow, as bright as the sun, the colours of the Sahasrara. They had been presented by the different English and European centres. Her face expressed a state of complete and profound satisfaction and the serenity of the Spirit.

After the puja we remained with Shri Mataji and had our meal in Her presence, sitting around Her. Then various people went to pay their respects to Her, to Her Feet, and to talk to Her. She listened to everyone and spoke to everyone. She gave Her attention to everyone in Her form of Shri Mahamaya, in Her human aspect, and was in all of us in Her subtle form as the individual Kundalini. She continued to work on each and every one of us. At a certain point Her look met mine - naturally I had my eyes fixed on Her and for a few seconds had the reassuring and marvellous sensation of Her love and attention on me, and it was within me, without my needing to go to Her Feet or speak to Her.

At about six o'clock Shri Mataji left, very pleased that we had absorbed the vibrations which were so strong. She said that the fact we had meditated the evening before, when we were waiting for Her to come to Surbiton, and so when we were in Her presence had already been cleansed, meant we could be good instruments to receive the grace of the divine. From Her this flowed, to our open chakras. Shri Mataji said at the end, smiling, that She hoped that we would all become rich! Let us hope so!

Alessandra Pallini



Diwali Puja, London 1983

Shri Mataji waved Her hand

We had been invited to Shri Mataji's ashram in Surbiton, London, around the time of Diwali. This was soon after getting realisation, in about November 1983, and Sean had only just been made aware of Her status as Sakshat Shri Adi Shakti. Shri Mataji was speaking with some Indian businessmen and trying to explain to them about vibratory awareness.

‘Look at all the people in the room with their hands towards Me,’ She said. The room was packed, with most seated on the floor. We were standing close to the open door where the gathering spilled out into the hall. Sean had been given a lift to the venue by other yogis who had to leave and Sean felt uncomfortable at having to leave so early, especially without asking Mother’s permission, so in his heart asked if it was all right to go.

Astonishingly, Shri Mataji looked over towards him across the crowded room and waved, Her wrist bangles making the event somewhat musical. Sean was amazed at this and couldn’t quite believe it had happened, so he bowed his head and went into a short meditation. When Sean looked up at Mother, She again looked over and waved Her hand. Sean performed namaste and departed completely at ease.

Sean Kelly

That started my seeking

About two months before I got realisation, in 1983, I had to do a gilding job, some chairs and a sofa, because that is my work. I had to deliver them to Brompton Square, just up from Shri Mataji’s house. One afternoon I was driving round Brompton Square very slowly, looking for the house where the chairs had to go. I got to the other side and saw a beautiful lady wearing a wonderful sari.

I now know it was Shri Mataji and She must have just got back from a function with Sir CP. I was surprised, because I had never seen an Indian lady dressed as beautifully, it was fantastic and that stuck in my mind.

As I got to the house where I had to go, near Shri Mataji’s house, I am sure that Mother looked at me and then went back inside Her house. That started my seeking.

Antonio Scialo

About shoe beating

One day at Brompton Square (about 1983) Shri Mataji was reading some letters. A Sahaja Yogi had gone to Spain to spread Sahaja Yoga, and Shri Mataji had asked him to write and report on the situation, but his letter was all about his own shoe beating. Because he was living in a high rise block of flats and did not have a garden, his only option was shoe beating on the outside part of the windowsill, but he was overlooked by neighbours and could not concentrate properly. Shri Mataji said it was sad that people wrote to Her and discussed such minor problems. For this reason we did not dare ask the answer, though we wanted to know. This question had already been asked to Shri Mataji by other yogis and the answer was that if circumstances didn’t allow one to do shoe beating outdoors, one can do it indoors. If one is worried about causing noise one can do it on a pillow, but one must do it somehow.

On several occasions when someone came to visit Shri Mataji, She would instruct one or two yogis to go outside onto the patio and shoe beat the name of that person. At times we saw Shri Mataji Herself doing a different style of destroying negativity, while sitting barefoot on a settee. She would put Her attention on a certain problem and then hit the floor with Her heel. This would take hardly a minute or two with Shri Mataji counting and concentrating on the problem, and there was a rhythm in the beating. She did not speak while doing this.

We also saw Shri Mataji doing a different version of shoe beating very discreetly in the streets, while wearing Her shoes. She would tap the ground with Her left heel, standing by a wall. All this was so discreet that no member of the public would have noticed it, because She was hardly lifting the foot up, though the tapping was with a fast rhythm and virtually noiseless. She did not talk while doing it. I once saw Her do this before going into a public programme, while outside.

Luis Garrido

I am your Mother

Shri Mataji's endless love, compassion and generosity – She was always giving and sharing everything from Her food to Her saris and even one day, in 1983, I was about to leave Brompton Square to return to my part time job at Harrods. I had taken Shri Mataji Her lunch and was about to leave when She suddenly appeared, as She did on many occasions.

'Thelma, have you had your lunch?' She asked me.

'I will get a sandwich,' I replied.

'No such thing, sit down,' She said, then She started to prepare me food, I was so shocked.

'Mother, I am supposed to be taking care of You. I will get into trouble from...' I said.

'I am your Mother!' She said.

This is poignant because as an elder sibling I had always prepared food, bathed and looked after my younger siblings in the home and in fact could not remember my own mother preparing food for me or even asking me if I had eaten. It dawned on me that of course Shri Mataji knew that and wanted to give me the experience of a real Mother's love. She cooked the most delicious biryani I have ever tasted. As I sat there, watching Her stirring and adding spices and telling me about Her daughters and grandchildren and their food preferences, friendships etc, laughing and enjoying, She also told me that cooking and feeding people was a great way to spread vibrations. So having Lakshmi Tattwa I just knew that one day I would have to share these amazing vibrations with others, as I soaked up Her presence and amazed that the Mother of Christ was actually serving me food.

'You don't have to eat those,' She said, as I ate (even the chillies) - too late!

I knew She was clearing me and I was and always will be in awe and thankful that She would even give me Her divine attention. So with that in mind I cater and bake for the Chinese here in Shanghai as often as I can.

Thelma Fishley Patmore

Gifts

Many will remember pujas when Shri Mataji used to hand out gifts at the end, sitting tirelessly on stage into the small hours oblivious both to the cold and the late hour. She would also often give spontaneously to those who came to Her home. Should any guest express pleasure on seeing an object, or should their eyes even linger momentarily on a piece of art, they risked going home with it.

'Please have it! I was wondering what I was going to give you,' Shri Mataji would implore.

The gifts given often expressed both Shri Mataji's great love for Her

children— and Her great sense of humour. I recall someone once being given a beautiful ceramic cockerel; in Her own words this was to help them wake up in the morning!

There were also days when Shri Mataji would decide to ‘sort out’ surplus belongings. One would find Her seated among a sea of objects piled up around Her; from saris to crockery. She would then rapidly distribute these vibrated items to the delight of those present. Each gift given so spontaneously, and seemingly randomly, was always highly pertinent to the recipient.

During one of those great sorting out days Shri Mataji was in full flow, hardly looking down at the next object to be given, when She spotted me and said, ‘I want to give something for your father,’ (he had recently come into Sahaj). As She reached down Her hand touched a small ornamental brass wagon, the wagon was carrying an elegant crystal drinks decanter and six crystal glasses, just the ornamental horses were missing to pull the cart. As Shri Mataji handed it to me to carry home, the private significance of the gift was not lost and we shared a little smile as I bowed down in thanks.

As mentioned in an earlier recollection, when all our family first came to Sahaj my father held back from meeting Shri Mataji because he felt ashamed to still be drinking alcohol. Though a life-long seeker, he had struggled to give up drinking. Many times he had gone ‘on the wagon’ - this was the special expression he always used for a period of abstaining, these periods usually lasted no more than six months. One day Shri Mataji asked why he wouldn’t come and my mum told about him wanting to stop drinking completely before meeting Her.

‘But that’s My job! Doesn’t he know it? It’s My job to wash all the sins of the seekers away,’ I remember Shri Mataji exclaiming.

Soon after, he put away his fears and did come to Her Lotus Feet, and as a happy by-product of his self-realisation, was able to stay ‘on the wagon’ till the end of his days.

Danya Martoglio

Saint Ann

I recall Shri Mataji saying that Saint Ann, the mother of Mary was an (anch?) avatar of Shri Mahakali.

Gregoire de Kalbermatten

The vibrations are not alright

There was a group of about six young men at Brompton Square one day in 1983. We were all feeling rather lethargic and sat down expecting to spend a nice time at Shri Mataji’s Feet listening to Her soothing motherly words and knowledge, but on that occasion Shri Mataji surprised us.

‘The vibrations in this room are not alright, let us turn them around,’ She stated, and had us moving furniture in all directions, but ‘No, it’s not working,’ She kept saying.

We were still rather serious and worried that we might have to make a few extra changes to the room before the vibrations would lift up. Shri Mataji suggested we bring in additional furniture from the upstairs rooms. This was turning into serious hard work and we were starting to feel a bit tired and worried, but we acceded. Nothing would work, the furniture was too big to fit in

and had to be taken back upstairs and still the vibrations were not alright according to Shri Mataji.

We all felt responsible for fixing this and jumped out of our inertia and started grabbing whatever furniture we felt might be the right size and colour from the adjacent rooms. Then we realised how much energy we had if only we put our hearts into solving this problem. But the vibrations were still not right! We were on the verge of bursting into arguments and were all full of intelligent suggestions, offering them to Shri Mataji, but nothing would work. At one point we all fell to the ground having a good laugh and after a few more attempts Shri Mataji took charge.

‘Just put this one here and push that one a little bit there,’ She patiently said.

Lo and behold everything fell into place and it was incredibly beautiful and different from anything we had ever seen. Now we were elated, thus we sat down again in front of Shri Mataji’s seat expecting Her usual address and comforting words. We were all rather red and sweaty, yet feeling very happy that we had earned the right to sit down.

‘Sometimes it is alright to experiment a little bit, isn’t it?’ Shri Mataji commented. ‘Can someone please open this window for Me?’ One of us stood up and did so, and She went on, ‘Truly you should all have got up at the same time to open the window.’

Then we knew we were still not quite yet there as a group, though we had made some progress from sheer lethargy into action. Shri Mataji closed Her eyes and went into meditation and so did we all, and what a blissful experience Mother gave us while we meditated at Her Feet. There was never a boring moment in the presence of Shri Mataji.

Luis Garrido

Divine plasterwork at Brompton Square



X marks the panel, five bars up on the left hand side, where Shri Mataji demonstrated the plastering of the outside. The plastering was the smoothest ever!

Shri Mataji asked us to repair the outside plaster which was all pitted. She put some dry Polyfilla powder into the paint and we mixed it up together, and we then painted it on. When it was finished we tried to make a new batch but it didn’t work and went lumpy. We asked one of the leaders to tell Shri Mataji,

and She came out and asked us how we had mixed it. When we mentioned that we'd done it the same as Her mix She said that was wrong and we should mix the Polyfilla with water first before mixing it with the paint. I realised Shri Mataji had played a little game with us and I said the mantra, 'Om twameva sakshat Shri Vishvakarma sakshat....' (You are the divine architect). She was standing by the door looking towards me as I was saying it - ending with 'Ki jai!' and everyone also said 'Ki jai!' She took my trowel and smoothed the bit on the left, and then it all went ok.

Derek Ferguson



Shri Mataji with some Sahaja Yogis at Brompton Square

Another way to renovate us

There were several of us working in Shri Mataji's house in London. The complete redecoration of this house was another of our Mother's ventures through which She could renovate us. So: I am hammering a nail into a piece of skirting board when I hit my finger instead - not too hard, but hard enough for me to look at it and shake it. Then all at once I see Shri Mataji hurrying over from the other side of the room: the Holy Spirit in the guise of a human being. Her concern that I might have hurt myself is so great that it surprises me: I feel abashed and say, 'No, no, it's all right, it's fine.'

Chris Greaves

Myth and reality

We were in Brompton Square.

'You see the glass from one side, and I see it from the other,' Shri Mataji said, about reality. In other words, She said that we see the material world as reality and the spiritual world as myth, but for Her, 'I see the spiritual world as reality, and the physical world as myth.' I cannot remember, thirty years later, whether She used the word myth, or some simile.

She also said, in Her bedroom, to a group of us, 'You must keep saying to yourself, I am the Spirit, I am the Spirit,' whereas I have to keep saying to Myself, 'I am a human being, I am a human being,' and of course we all laughed.

Kay McHugh

Always the gifts would be perfect

Most of the Sahaja Yogis from England went to work and help at Brompton Square. Shri Mataji always wanted to buy something for them, to give

something to them. She went out and bought these wonderful suits. You would come and there would be ten or fifteen suits laid out.

‘Oh this one will be good for John, as it is his size and this is good for Pat and this is good for Fergy,’ Shri Mataji would say. She knew exactly what to buy and what to get. Shri Mataji would say to each of us, ‘Try this one.’ And the size would be perfect. Sometimes She would say, ‘No that one doesn’t look good on you, change it over.’ But always the gifts would be perfect. We were so looked after by Her. We were working on Her house, but She was working on us. She would always go out and buy us a suit or jumpers or ties. She always, all the time, would come back with something for us.

Antonio Scialo

‘Thou art one with her and knowest not of self in thy supreme joy’

I arrived in the basement and there was Shri Mataji in the kitchen, which was in the basement. I came in through the door.

‘Hello, come here. Just put your hand on My Centre Heart,’ Shri Mataji said, so I walked over and put my hand on Her back at the Centre Heart. There were various people there working and She was moving around the kitchen, so I was walking after Her.

‘Push harder,’ She would say every now and again, and I was pushing so hard, but She was solid as a rock. That went on for a few minutes.

‘Thank you very much,’ She said and that was it. I just went off to work. It had completely cleared my Centre Heart and I had so much energy, I was running around the house and hugging everyone and I felt love for everyone and everything. I got so much work done that day because my Centre Heart was so clear.

John Watkinson

Shri Mataji would get involved in all the work

Brompton Square was a jewellery box. Shri Mataji would get involved with all the work, She showed yogis how to stain furniture, all kinds of things and it would surprise some tradesmen that She even showed how to apply filler on the walls. On the outside of the house Shri Mataji applied filler and it was as smooth as glass. Shri Mataji would wear the same coat and shoes and headscarf, and would be involved with the work, or sometimes sit in a room with all the work going on around Her while talking to us or working on us.

John Watkinson

Picking up on the right protocols

Whilst staying at Brompton Square, I saw how subtly Shri Mataji taught us things. One day She told me to let the kitchen servant know that it would be best for her if she would respectfully touch Shri Mataji’s Feet each morning. I had been, just prior to that, in a quandary as to whether or not it was protocol to go to Mother’s Feet or not. Not wanting to behave inappropriately, especially in Her own home, I didn’t know what to do. So I had my answer. I was to tell the servant she was to touch Mother’s Feet each day and clearly that was a message for me as well.

I took the cue and the next morning greeted Mother in the traditional way by touching Her Feet; it was quite evident by the vibrations that it was the right thing to do. Later when it was appropriate for me to leave or not to touch Her

Feet any more, it also became very obvious that it was no longer the thing to do — a very subtle way of picking up the right protocols.

Vicki Halperin

See how beautiful nature is

One day, after a shopping trip in London, Shri Mataji left it to me to give the directions to the driver to get back to Her house at Brompton Square, while expressing Her concern that it had become very late. It was during the rush hour and I'd suggested a route through Hyde Park, which once we'd embarked on, it wasn't really possible to turn back.

'This way gets very busy. It may not be quicker,' Shri Mataji said when we were well on the way.

I was upset because I felt I had made a wrong choice and was responsible for causing Her some inconvenience. The traffic was almost at a standstill. She must have known I was feeling guilty, as She started admiring the trees. It was late autumn and She looked at the bare branches and the finer twigs.

'See, what lace - see how beautiful nature is to entertain us and to give us such joy,' She said. Whereupon it changed from a tortuous journey through the traffic to this amazing experience and admiration of nature and, of course, my heart lifted up again.

Vicki Halperin

Thank you for not arguing

I had a few experiences driving Shri Mataji around. It's strange how when you drove Shri Mataji around in Her car, the geography of the streets changed. She was basically working on us. She was working on me in particular at that time.

'You should always know that I have a reason for telling you these things,' She said. It was like 'thank you for not arguing,' because we assumed we knew the way to go to those places.

Ray Harris

There's a reason

I was with you, Ray. Do you remember when we drove round and round the Barbican Centre in the City of London. Shri Mataji was in the back of the car and I was sitting in the front with you driving. We were heading back to Brompton Square after Mother had been shopping in the East End of London; She had bought suits and other things to take back to India as gifts for Her brothers. You and I both thought we knew the way back and which turnings to take but Mother would disagree each time.

'No, no, go the other way,' She said.

'Yes, Mother,' Ray said. We ended up in the heartland of the Barbican and had great difficulty getting our bearings again we just couldn't find our way out. It was like a maze, we kept trying to get out but kept passing the Theatre again and again.

'You see,' said Shri Mataji, 'I have to be in this place. There's a reason.'

Vicki Halperin

He's all right now

I started off driving really carefully. 'Her car,' I thought. 'I mustn't crash the car.' I was really, really careful.

'Give Ray a bandhan,' Shri Mataji said at one point, I think it must have been the same day, on the way back west, just as we had gone shopping. I was still feeling very, very careful and I think maybe that's why She gave me a bandhan. Suddenly, I just went off, driving like forty-five, fifty just like everyone else on the Great West Road.

'Oh, he's all right now,' She said.

Ray Harris

You are here to enjoy yourself

At the end of a public programme Shri Mataji was giving at the Hampstead Town Hall, London, in November 1983, She was patiently listening to an old English gentleman talk away to Her for what seemed a long time and then all of a sudden, as if Shri Mataji felt me looking at Her, She looked at me and in a comical way raised Her eyes in an upward gesture as if to share the fun and humour of the situation while this man continued to speak such nonsense to Her!

Later, at another programme I went to give Shri Mataji a flower. I remember at the time feeling so busy with thoughts, concerned with what Mother wanted me to do and how She wanted me to live my life. Not saying anything, I gave Her the flower, and Mother just looked at me as if to answer my thoughts.

'Just enjoy yourself. You are here to enjoy yourself!' She said. It has become the mantra of my life ever since.

Colin Heinsen



Shri Mataji at Hampstead Town Hall

I do so remember that feeling of holding Shri Mataji's soft shawl - sometimes wishing that I could be a thread in that shawl ... or a flower in Her garland. She told us each garment/object had a Gana attached to it so I was always aware of this when holding anything belonging to Her!

Danya Martoglio

Forgive the white people

These recollections are from a public programme in Hampstead Town Hall, London.

'Where's he catching?' Shri Mataji asked, while working on a young man who followed a certain cult*, a newcomer.

‘Agnya,’ someone replied.

‘Forgive, forgive the white people,’ She said loudly, then, ‘Ha! Got it.’

At the same programme She was working on an older intellectual man, Her hands pressing on his head.

‘Hmm, you’ve read too many books. What books have you read?’ She asked. The gentleman reeled out a list of impressive authors, including some so-called literary masterpieces. ‘No good, no good, these are catching up your Swadishthan and Agnya. You should read Barbara Cartland*, she’s a realised soul.’

**Editor’s note: members of this cult are of African origin, and Barbara Cartland was a writer of light romantic novels.*

Marilyn Leate

An overwhelming feeling of joy and divine bliss

I first saw Shri Mataji at a public programme in Hampstead Town Hall, in 1983. I was right up the front with the new people, and when Shri Mataji entered the hall we all stood up and I turned around. She came from the back, and immediately She entered the hall I had an incredible experience. My Kundalini was just shooting through my Agnya and Sahasrara. There is the song *Your face shines like a thousand suns*. It was like that. Shri Mataji came and sat down, and gave Her talk. Afterwards we were invited to come and meet Her. I bowed down to Her and She asked me how I was.

‘You felt it, didn’t you?’ She asked. I couldn’t speak. I was absolutely speechless. I nodded my head. I had an overwhelming feeling of joy and divine bliss.

Leanne Huet

A black heart

Once at a public meeting at a London venue in the early 1980’s a man asked a question from the audience after a lecture by Shri Mataji. It came across to me as a cheeky, arrogant, facetious question, although I can’t remember exactly what it was. Shri Mataji said that the man was a ‘black heart’ or that the answer was it was because of a ‘black heart’. The man asked what that was. Shri Mataji told the man he knew very well what a black heart was.

Andrew Low

The white handbag

It had been a long while since Shri Mataji had given Her darshan to the English collective because She had been travelling abroad. Then an invitation arrived for the whole collective to gather for a Diwali celebration at Her residence, the flat below the Surbiton Ashram. Shri Mataji had also invited a sitar maestro to give a concert to us.

Since Shri Mataji would spend Christmas in India the UK Sahaja Yogis arranged a Diwali present for Her in lieu of a Christmas present. It was a white leather handbag. Shri Mataji seemed pleased with the gesture and accepted it.



Shri Mataji with the white handbag

Someone pointed out that inside was a small coin wallet in the same white leather. She opened the handbag, searched for the wallet and having found it, opened it.

‘But it is empty, there are no coins in it,’ She said.

Then Shri Mataji asked for Her own handbag to be brought so She could put some coins in it as it was not auspicious for it to be empty. Some Sahaja Yogis came forward with a couple of coins, but She said She would only accept one quarter of a pound, because traditionally when one is giving £100 to charity, it is more auspicious to give £101 instead of £100. Conversely, when receiving, it is more auspicious to ask for less. This principle is also related to the notion some shopkeepers have that it is better to charge £9.99 instead of £10.

At the beginning of Her talk Shri Mataji stated that She was feeling better and She had recovered from Her cold because collectively we had desired that She got better. In those days She allowed the Sahaja Yogis to say a prayer wishing Her a long life and good health, but gradually over the years She did not allow this practice to continue.

The next day Shri Mataji commented in private that while She was giving Her talk the day before the vibrations were not flowing from Her to the back of the room because a lady very new to Sahaja Yoga, still in a bad vibrational state, had sat right in front of Her and had blocked the flow. We all knew who it was, but to our amazement Shri Mataji invited her to come and stay with Her as a guest. Some time later, redecoration was taking place at another of Shri Mataji’s residences.

‘Shri Mataji, this place is looking more beautiful every day!’ I exclaimed.

‘What I enjoy most is seeing, for instance how this lady is looking so well now that her vibrations have improved,’ She replied. ‘It’s one thing to make a place look nice, but to redecorate human beings is only possible if they cooperate. I cannot do it against their will. What pleases Me most is seeing people who at one time were not well and now are progressing well, and I never forget how much they have changed.’

Luis Garrido

An inauspicious day to travel

In December 1983, there was an incident involving the late Mr Dhumal, who in the early days of Sahaja Yoga in India gave realisation to a great number of

people. He came to see Shri Mataji in London at Surbiton ashram. A week later, on the day he was going to travel back to India, he did not have a chance to see Shri Mataji in person to take leave. He asked me to inform Shri Mataji that he was travelling back that day. I had an opportunity to see Her that morning and related that he was about to travel back to India. Shri Mataji told me to tell him not to travel as it was not an auspicious day and it was also a Wednesday.

Dhumal did not make alternative arrangements to travel on a different day and tried to take a flight that very day. The next day Shri Mataji Herself was travelling to India. We, the whole collective, were invited to come to the airport to see Her off. Arriving at the airport we were surprised to see the Mr Dhumal still there, looking very tired and unable to get on a flight. His flight had been cancelled the previous day and there was no flight available for him to travel back, this being a busy travelling time close to Christmas. He had spent the previous day waiting at the airport and had spent the night on a bench at the airport lounge.

He was surprised to see Shri Mataji arriving at the airport as he did not know that She was travelling that very day. Mr Dhumal told Shri Mataji that if he had followed Her advice he could have saved himself a lot of trouble and still he had no flight and he had already waited a whole day and night without success. Then Shri Mataji made some travelling enquiries at the airport and was able to arrange a place for him on the very same flight in which She was travelling and thus took Mr Dhumal out of his predicament. Then we remembered how accurate Shri Mataji had been when warning him not to travel the previous day on account of it being an inauspicious day for him to travel.

Luis Garrido

Shri Mataji was looking at the vibrations

There was a Christmas Puja at the Temple of All Faiths in Hampstead, London. Shri Mataji gave me a picture. For some of the other older Sahaja Yogis, She had different things. She had a lot of ties, and She had wrapped them all up. They were all wrapped up in exactly the same way. They were all different, but they were all wrapped up the same way, so there was no way of knowing one from the other. Shri Mataji was giving packages out - She gave one to somebody, and then off he went, and She gave a couple more out.

‘No, don’t take that one. Give me that one back, please,’ She said. Then She gave them to someone else. Then She gave him another sealed parcel, and he opened it up and it matched the suit he was wearing exactly.

Douglas Fry

Chapter 26

1983 - December

India

A nativity play

We did a nativity play to Mother in Delhi, in the old temple at Safdarjung Enclave, in December 1983. The Nepali ladies had come from Dharmshala and did the aarti to Mother as She came in. The Indian Sahaja Yogis had mostly never seen a nativity play and quite enjoyed it. Mother was, as always, gracious and wonderful towards the children. She gave all of us involved in the production handmade ceramic tile, after the play.

‘These are the foundations of the new educational system,’ She said.

I recall the sweetness of the children, with Joseph walking to one side of the stage and Mary to the other, of our rehearsals of carol singing with the Indian Yoginis, of the graciousness and beautiful smile and joy emanating from Shri Mataji, as She sat beside Sir CP on the altar dais.

Bogunia Bensaude

A kumkum story

We were in Delhi, at the Safdarjung Temple, in 1983. Shri Mataji was sitting on the dais and I was standing near the door of the bedroom. Another Delhi Sahaja Yogini, Mrs Mathur, was next to me. We were watching the yogis and yoginis going up and giving things to Shri Mataji to vibrate. Mrs Mathur wanted to get some kumkum vibrated, so she fetched a potful to give to Shri Mataji, and was waiting her turn. When it came she asked Shri Mataji a couple of times, but there was no response.

‘I heard you what you are asking, but check the kumkum box - there is no kumkum inside,’ Shri Mataji told her. Mrs Mathur felt so embarrassed, and checked the container - it was empty!

Oh Divine Mother, nothing is hidden from You! Your glance can penetrate anywhere and into anything. You are beyond our comprehension.

Pramila Mehra

The blessing of children

I was with Shri Mataji in Delhi, where She was staying, along with my family. At the time we did not have any idea about the good news that we were about to receive.

‘You know a great soul is coming in your family?’ She mentioned.

Soon after this my son and daughter-in-law were blessed with a son, and Shri Mataji gave him the name Arjun. Later on when he was a year old She said he needed company and a year after that another son was born, and She gave him the name Amrut.

Pramila Mehra

Good to feel the catch

I was in the Sahaja Temple at Safdarjung, in Delhi, and was standing near to Shri Mataji. I got a chance to tell Her that I felt a pain in my right side, under the ribs, when I paid attention to that spot. She said it was a good sign that I could feel it, because usually people do not feel anything, and eat what they are

not supposed to. She told me She would take the problem out of my liver. Shri Mataji gave me so much contentment and security and I am extremely thankful to Her for Her love and care.

Pramila Mehra

Protected by Shri Ganesha

When Maneesh Singh was getting married in Delhi, we stayed in some flats, with the relations. We all went out for Shri Mataji's programme; we left early and came back late in the evening. The main door of the apartment was wide open and everyone was worried about their jewellery and valuables, but nothing was missing, and even my small dog, which would normally have gone out onto the road, was still in the flat.

When we were again at the programme I mentioned to Shri Mataji about this and She said the innocence of the person is always protected by Shri Ganesha. She has done so many miracles for us, and we do not have enough words to thank Her.

Pramila Mehra

Kumkum

The first time I attended a Sahaja puja in Delhi, a young girl was applying kumkum to everyone, and when my turn came I stopped her. She was taken aback.

'This is a must for everyone,' she said.

'If it is so then when Shri Mataji will tell me and I will do it,' I replied. Everyone who was listening was surprised, and but left it at that.

Some time later I was in Nasik in the house of some Sahaja Yogis where Shri Mataji was staying. She called me in Her room and was sitting on Her bed and some Sahaja Yogis were there too. She asked one of them to bring some kumkum which was on Her dressing table, called me and applied it on my forehead.

'It is big like My bindi, but it looks good on you – I know you like a small one,' She said. That experience gave me such deep silence, and total thoughtlessness, I cannot describe it in words, but wanted to enjoy it as long as I could. When I went to the bathroom and looked in the mirror, I could not recognise my face; it was glowing pink and serene.

Pramila Mehra

A very special Christmas

In 1983 I was staying in the Delhi Temple – the Sahaja Yoga centre – with two Western Sahaja Yogis. Along with a few yogis from Delhi we were invited to travel to Nagpur to spend Christmas with Shri Mataji and Her family. We took the train from Delhi, an experience in itself, arrived at Nagpur and reached the place where Shri Mataji was staying. Bogunia, from Australia, and I were told which room Shri Mataji was in, so along we went, and knocked on the door, and heard Her voice.

'Come in!'

Shri Mataji was sitting on a low stool looking through some photographs. One of Her daughters and Her son-in-law were also there, in another part of the same room, reading a newspaper, and it was so casual and easy.

We went straight to Mother's Feet and bowed down. Then She started sharing with us the family photographs and explaining them to us. I particularly remember seeing one when She was very young, beautiful and serene, that many of us know as pendants.

'Look, this is Me when I was sixteen,' She said.

There was a big lunch outdoors in a marquee – a real family gathering that we were fortunate to be a part of.

On Christmas Eve there was another large gathering, again in a marquee. One of Mother's brothers, who was involved in the church, gave a Christmas speech – a pre-Christmas sermon really. There were various entertainments and here was Shri Mataji amongst Her family, at Christmas time.

At some point during the evening Mother suggested that Bogunia, myself and Linda, from England, should sing a Christmas carol. We knelt at Her Feet, She pulled Her sari over Her head, and we sang to Her – beautiful, profound – an amazing moment, to be sitting at the Lotus Feet of Mary Herself, on this unforgettable Christmas Eve, singing a carol, performing a puja. Time stood still, and we were just in that moment, with our beloved Mother.

The next day, Christmas Day, we were invited to go to church, to the service that Shri Mataji would also attend. When we arrived it was pretty full and they had put rows of benches outside for the overflow. We went and sat on one, and could see Shri Mataji inside through an open door. It started to drizzle and She asked us come and sit with Her – somehow we squeezed right in front of Her, sitting on the floor, in the church.

The service went on with hymns, carols and a sermon or two. I remember hearing Mother's bangles jangling all through the service – like there was a lot of 'work' going on, and by the end Her bindi was smudged right across Her forehead. When the money collection came round, before Shri Mataji put Her contribution in, She bandhaned the bowl a few times. After the service we followed Mother out of the church with Her family members and there were lots of 'Happy Christmases' and exchanges of greetings.

'Come with Me,' Shri Mataji said to us yogis, after a while.

We followed Her back into the church, up the aisle and out of the main entrance. Many people were gathered here, chatting away. Among the crowd was an elderly gentleman in a wheelchair.

'Nirmala!' he exclaimed on seeing Mother.

She walked over to him - he had been Shri Mataji's father's valet. After exchanging a few words Mother told us to gather round. She started working on him and we joined in. After some time he stood up and took a few steps, in sheer delight and astonishment. Mother had performed a miracle on the threshold of the church, on Christmas Day, and no one really noticed, except the Sahaja Yogis – and did we really understand what we had just witnessed?

Tina Cesbron

Christmas with Shri Mataji

A few days before Christmas in 1983, Shri Mataji said that at Christmas, the city of Nagpur was arranging for the official unveiling of a statue Her father, Shri PK Salve. Mother said that any Sahaja Yogis who wanted to go and spend Christmas in Nagpur with Her and the family were welcome to do so. In the end, there were about seven of us.

The ceremony for the dedication of the statue was as it should have been, very grand, with many dignitaries there, including the Vice President of India and the Premier for the State of Maharashtra. Mr Salve was praised and remembered in about five languages, a tribute to his genius as a linguist, and they all said what a great soul he had been and how he had always thought of himself as an Indian, not a Maharashtrian or a member of any one religious group. In his speech, Sir CP also praised Shri Mataji.

There were hundreds of people, including a lot of members of the Salve family. By chance or design, Mother later said the place where the statue was put up was very auspicious because it was exactly on that spot that Her father had stood up to and strongly reprimanded a British soldier who had spoken in a rude manner to Shri Mataji, many years before when She had been going to school in a tonga.

In the evening we three Western Sahaja Yogis sang some English carols, and were rather nervous in front of everyone, a gathering of the family. We were all invited to the family church on Christmas Day. Those of us who were not part of the family were given chairs to sit on in the garden outside the church because it was not big enough for everyone. However, the rain came down just after the service started and we all ran inside through a side door and happened to finish up sitting on the floor at Shri Mataji's Holy Feet. It was strange to be at a church service with Mother, who was sitting in the front row, in the congregation. Her brother, who was a bishop, was giving a sermon at that moment.

After the service, all the people in the church, mostly members of the Salve family, went out and began greeting each other in the area round about the church. The ladies were dressed in gorgeous silks and jewellery and the men also looked very smart because it was Christmas Day. Mother remained seated in the church until the crowd had cleared and there were some Sahaja Yogis with Her. Then She got up and walked down the main aisle and we followed Her. We all went out of the main door with Shri Mataji, and only the Sahaja Yogis were with Her at that point. There was a portico outside and in one corner was an old man in a wheelchair. He hadn't walked for years.

'Oh, it's little Nirmala! I was a servant in your father's household,' he said in Marathi.

'Get up and walk,' said Mother. And he did. He got up out of his wheelchair and walked towards Mother.

Linda Williams

Shri Mataji looked like Mother Mary

Visiting Nagpur over the Christmas season and staying in the compound with Shri Mataji and Her family was another great blessing. My memories have a dream-like quality, of the three of us Sahaja Yogis sitting in a semi-circle on the ground of the pendal before Shri Mataji and Her family, and singing *Silent Night*. On looking up, I saw Shri Mataji had covered Her head with Her blue sari and looked like Mother Mary. Her face was lustrous and beautiful, young, joyous, serene, yet sad and perhaps wistful. For those brief minutes it was as though we were doing a puja.

Earlier that afternoon, while passing Shri Mataji's room, She had called me in to come and have a look. She and Her daughters were seated on the bed, looking at photos. Shri Mataji showed me a family grouping. She was standing

**in the midst of it — a young woman, with the eternally sweet smile and dignity
and gravity.**

Bogunia Bensaude

Contributors

1. Alan Henderson
2. Albert Lewis
3. Alessandra Pallini
4. Alexandra Fuente
5. Alison Rovina
6. Andrea Cousins
7. Andreas van England
8. Andrew Low
9. Ann Lewis
10. Annie Calvas-Blanchon
11. Antoinette Wells
12. Antonio Scialo
13. Auriol Purdie
14. Bala Kanayson
15. Bernard Rackham
16. Bill Hansel
17. Bogunia Bensaude
18. Brian Bell
19. B.W.
20. Caleb Williams
21. Carol Garrido
22. Caroline Henwood
23. Chantal Harris
24. Cheryl Bradshaw
25. Chris Greaves
26. Chris Kyriacou
27. Chris Marlow
28. Chris Patmore
29. Christina Sweet
30. Christine Haage
31. Christophe Rivaud
32. Claire Nesdale
33. Colin Heinsen
34. Danya Martoglio
35. David Prole
36. Deepa Mahajan
37. Derek Ferguson
38. Diana Selentin
39. Djamel Metouri
40. Dorota Nocera
41. Douglas Fry
42. Duilio Cartocci
43. Edward Saugstad
44. Felicity Payment
45. Fernando Alonso
46. Frances Henke
47. Gail Pottinger
48. Gauri Mehrani-Mylany
49. Gautam Sarkar
50. Gerald Lim
51. Gill Woltron
52. Gillian Patankar
53. Gillian Woltron
54. Gilly Grimshaw
55. Giovanni Albinesi
56. Grazyna Anslow
57. Guillemette Metouri
58. Heather Jeffrey
59. Herbert Reininger
60. Jayant Patankar
61. Jenny Watling
62. Jeremy Lamaison
63. Jim Thomas
64. Joga Singh
65. John Henshaw
66. John Watkinson
67. Judy Gaddy
68. Katy Mankar
69. Kay McHugh
70. Kay O'Connell
71. Kingsley Flint
72. Kristie Corden
73. Kristine Kirby
74. Leanne Huet
75. Liallyn Fitzpatrick
76. Linda Williams
77. Lori Wills
78. Luis Garrido
79. Lyn Vasudeva
80. Lyndal Vercoe
81. Madhur Rai
82. Maggie Keet
83. Malcolm Murdoch
84. Mangal Singh Dillon
85. Maria Laventzi
86. Marie-Amélia de Kalbermatten
87. Marie-Laure Cernay
88. Marie-Martine de Techtermann
89. Marilyn Leate
90. Mark Callahan
91. Mark Taylor
92. Mary Heaton
93. Maureen Rossi
94. Maxim Belyanin
95. Meenakshi Murdoch
96. Melody Hodgson

- 97. Michael Petrunia
- 98. Miodrag Radosavlevic
- 99. Naina Staff
- 100. Natalie Amram
- 101. Nirmala Verma
- 102. Palinita Mavinkurve
- 103. Pamela Bromley
- 104. Patricia Deene
- 105. Patricia Proenza
- 106. Patrick Lantoin
- 107. Patrick Redican
- 108. Patty Prole
- 109. PD Chavhan
- 110. Peter Brownscombe
- 111. Peter Corden
- 112. Pramila Mehra
- 113. Raju Koli
- 114. Raman Kulkarni
- 115. Ray Harris
- 116. Richard Payment
- 117. Rita Davies
- 118. Robbert Ruigrok
- 119. Robert Hunter
- 120. Robin Reid
- 121. Rosie Lyons
- 122. RR Singh
- 123. Rustom Burjorjee
- 124. Ruth Eleanore
- 125. Ruth Greaves
- 126. Said Ait-Chaalal
- 127. Sandeep Gadkary
- 128. Sanjay Talvar
- 129. Sarah Frankcombe
- 130. Scott Vijay Gaddy
- 131. Sean Kelly
- 132. Shakuntala Tandale
- 133. Suman Mathur
- 134. Surender Pal Angurala
- 135. Susie Lumsden
- 136. Sylvia Vega
- 137. Tarachandra
- 138. Thelma Fishley Patmore
- 139. Thomas Menge
- 140. Tina Cesbron
- 141. Tracy Tischuk
- 142. Vicky Halperin
- 143. Victor Vertunni
- 144. Wendy Barrett