

Avatar Meher Baba Guruprasad Memorial



BUND GARDEN ROAD, PUNE, INDIA

GURUPRASAD

Guruprasad—the Guru’s gift—is always special. Today you are standing in a space that was once part of a large palace owned by the Maharani of Baroda, Shantadevi. Avatar of the Age Meher Baba sanctified this



Baba's chair during the 1969 Darshan

palace with His presence by using it as His summer retreat in the 1960s.

Situated on Bund Garden Road, Pune Cantonment, Guruprasad was a pristine, white marble structure with a dome on the top. It sat in a very large garden full of flowers and trees. The main building was approached by a long driveway on both sides of the main entrance porch. It had a veranda that ran around it on three sides and large windows with “Guruprasad” etched in opaque glass.

What is the significance of Guruprasad? Why do we continue to come to this memorial?

Baba giving darshan in 1962 in Guruprasad.



1962 East-West Gathering



Guruprasad was different from Meherabad and Meherazad, His two ashram homes near Ahmednagar. It was a place where the Avatar could relax somewhat, whereas both the ashrams were sites of intense

work, both for Him and for His close ones, the mandali. Meher Baba spent three months each summer in this palace for a decade. While He was in residence, He made Himself freely available to many, throwing open the gates of His Love and His Presence. During His stays here, many Baba lovers could come and see Baba repeatedly, for weeks on end, in an intimate and very personal setting. Although Baba held many small and large darshan programmes here, the best-known being the East-West Gathering in 1962, it was through private visits that many hundreds

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MEHER BABA

Merwan Sheriar Irani, known as Meher Baba, was born in Poona on February 25, 1894, of Persian parents of Zoroastrian faith. He attended a Christian high school in Poona and later Decan College. In 1913, while still in



Meher Baba, Guruprasad, November 1962.

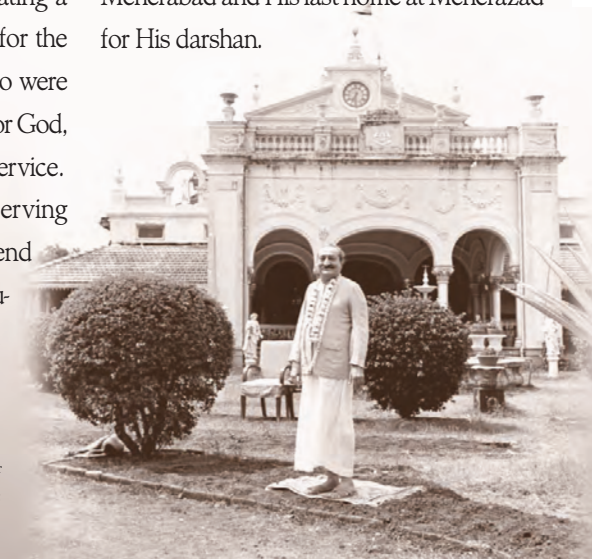
college, the Mohammedan Perfect Master, Hazrat Babajan, gave Him God-Realization and made Him aware of His high spiritual destiny. Over the next seven years, the Hindu Perfect Master Upasni Maharaj of Sakori bestowed on Merwan Divine Knowledge, and Sai Baba of Shirdi declared Him the Avatar. In 1921, He drew together His first close disciples, who gave Him the name Meher Baba, meaning “Compassionate Father.”

Meher Baba established a colony near Ahmednagar called Meherabad, creating a free school, a hospital, and shelters for the poor, while training His disciples, who were of different castes and creeds, in love for God, spiritual understanding, and selfless service.

On July 10, 1925, He began observing Silence that He maintained until the end of His life on January 31, 1969, communicating with an alphabet board and later only through hand gestures.

From 1931, Meher Baba traveled

Meher Baba in front of Guruprasad, 1960s



to the West many times. Centres were formed in England, the USA, and Australia. In India, as many as one hundred thousand people have come in one day to seek His darshan, or blessing.

Meher Baba’s work included

contacting hundreds of spiritually intoxicated pilgrims known in India as *masts*, bathing lepers, washing the feet of thousands of poor, and distributing grain and cloth to the destitute.

Meher Baba asserts that He is the same Ancient One, come again to guide individuals to realize their true Self, which is God. Meher Baba is acknowledged by His many followers all over the world as the Avatar of the Age, and they journey to His Tomb-Shrine at Meherabad and His last home at Meherazad for His darshan.

became acquainted with the life of the Man as opposed to the Divinity of the God-Man. Here they had the chance to sit in a relatively small group, not just seeing Him from afar, while listening to messages or songs in His praise, up close and personal. While He joked and

teased, played cards, or had correspondence read out, they had the unique chance to visit with the Avatar of the Age “at home”! Being in His presence was such that one and all felt they had been in the Tavern of the Lord and come away saturated in His Grace. It was the place where many had their hearts unlocked so that they could love Baba in a personal way instead of only worshipping His Divinity.

This in no way detracts from the immense Universal Work Meher Baba did in Guruprasad. During each of the small and large darshans, thousands were given the opportunity to be in His Presence and to have contact with the physical form of God Himself. He was also in seclusion here during the summer of 1968, severely testing His body and taking on Himself unimaginable suffering for us all and all creation.

Even after Meher Baba dropped His body in 1969, Guruprasad continued to be

imbued with His presence. Those who came here at His invitation between April and July 1969 describe how strong His presence was. Even His close companions, the mandali, were amazed. His Divinity poured forth from the devotion of His new lovers who came for what came to be called “The Great Darshan of 1969.” It was astounding that so many had honoured His invitation to come for His darshan when He was no longer physically present. Those who came said how strong Baba’s physical presence was during that magical time. Most had never met Baba, yet none went away disappointed.

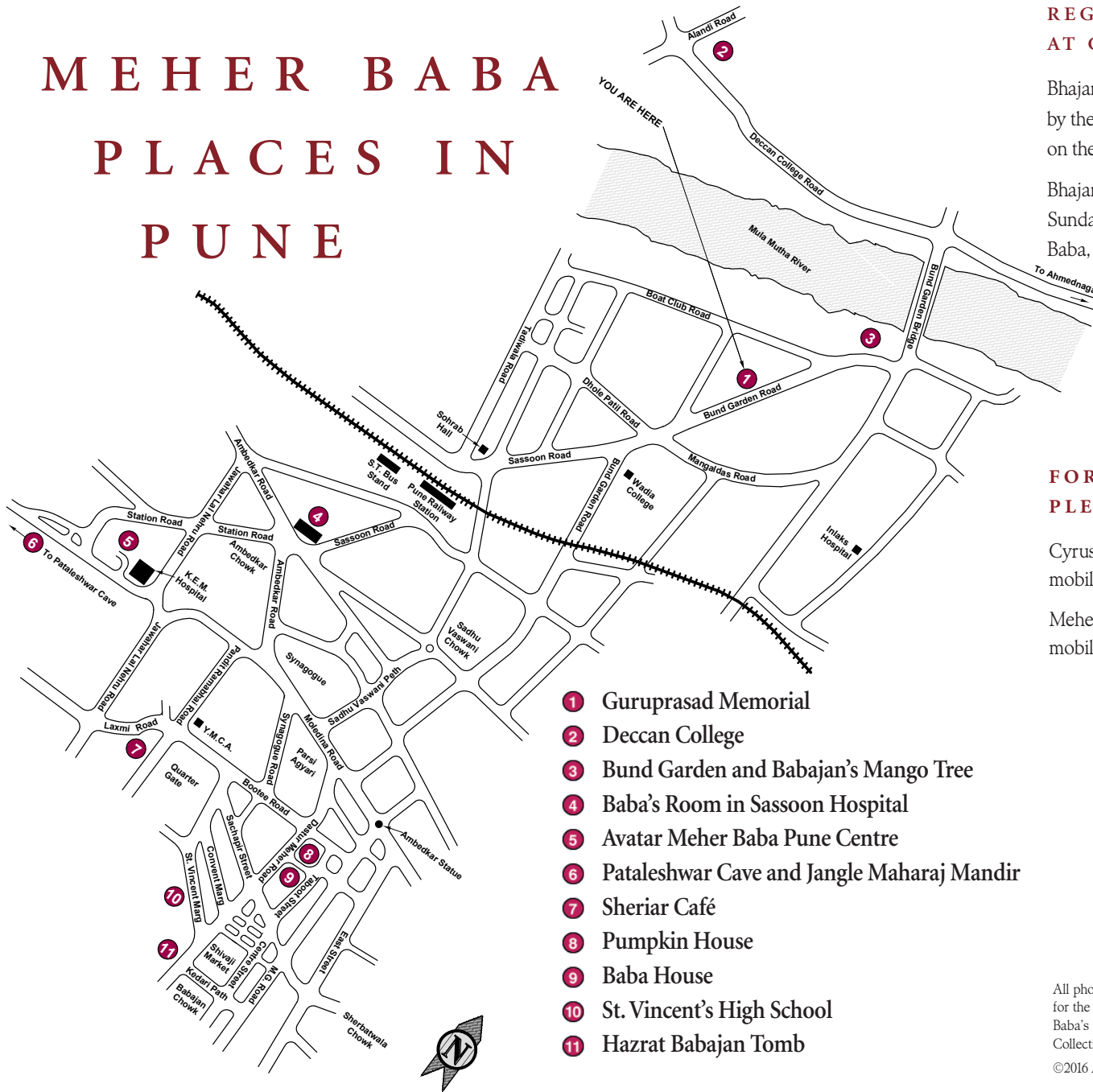
Maharani Shantadevi offered to give Guruprasad to Baba, but He did not accept it. After Baba dropped His body, the palace and its grounds were sold off to a local builder, Atur Sangtani. Although Mr. Sangtani was not a Baba lover, he respected Baba and wanted to do something to commemorate the Avatar’s presence on this particular part of the planet. After discussions with the Avatar Meher Baba Trust, plans were drawn up and this memorial was erected so that posterity could come and be in the space the Avatar occupied in Guruprasad. The materials used in the construction are from the original building, and some are even from Meher Baba’s own bedroom.

The chair you see here is the same one on which Meher Baba sat for many darshans and intimate gatherings. It has remained here for His present and future lovers to partake of His darshan.



Meher Baba walking in Guruprasad

MEHER BABA PLACES IN PUNE



- 1 Guruprasad Memorial
- 2 Deccan College
- 3 Bund Garden and Babajan's Mango Tree
- 4 Baba's Room in Sassoon Hospital
- 5 Avatar Meher Baba Pune Centre
- 6 Pataleshwar Cave and Jangle Maharaj Mandir
- 7 Sheriar Café
- 8 Pumpkin House
- 9 Baba House
- 10 St. Vincent's High School
- 11 Hazrat Babajan Tomb

REGULAR EVENTS AT GURUPRASAD MEMORIAL:

Bhajan programs are held every month by the Avatar Meher Baba Poona Centre on the second Sunday from 6.30 pm to 8.00 pm.

Bhajan programs are held every three months on a Sunday (not the second Sunday) by the Avatar Meher Baba, Pimpri, Centre.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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All photographs are courtesy of Meher Nazar Publications, except for the photograph of Baba in front of Guruprasad on page 3, and Baba's Samadhi on the back page, which are courtesy of the MSI Collection.

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WHAT IS THE AVATAR MEHER BABA TRUST?



Created in 1959 under Meher Baba's direction, the Avatar Meher Baba Trust has the purpose of fulfilling the objectives in the Trust Deed set out by Baba and the Trustees He appointed. The Trust Deed calls for the maintenance of Avatar Meher Baba's Tomb; for the creation of pilgrim facilities; for educational, medical, and other charitable services; for estate development and procurement of sources of water; for the advancement of Avatar Meher Baba's love-message through melas, museums, lectures, publications, and the arts; and for spiritual training.

DIRECTIONS TO MEHER BABA'S SAMADHI

Ahmednagar, Maharashtra, is 6 hours by road from Mumbai; 120 km northeast of Pune; and 114 km from Aurangabad. Near Ahmednagar City and railway station, proceed from Kinetic Chowk on Daund Rd. 5 km to the blue sign "Meherabad" on left; "Avatar Meher Baba Samadhi" sign on right. Follow footpath uphill to the Samadhi or turn left to the Welcome & Information Centre for driving directions.

Pilgrim Reservations: <http://www.ambpct.org/reservations.php>

HOW TO MAKE DONATIONS TO THE TRUST

All donations from the heart are welcome but cannot be accepted at the Guruprasad Memorial. You may send a cheque or money order in the name of "Avatar Meher Baba P.P.C. Trust" to: The Chairman, Avatar Meher Baba P.P.C. Trust, Post Bag No 31, Kings Rd., Ahmednagar, M.S. 414001. Kindly include your full name & address and mention the donation use as 'for Corpus of the Trust'. If donation is Rs.5000/- or above, PAN number is necessary. For information regarding NEFT/RTGS/wire transfer or online donation, please refer Trust website under 'Where to Contribute'.