



# Friends of Avatar's Abode

Avatar's Abode Friends Report 2014/2015

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***Dear Friends in Beloved Baba,***

***The following information is intended to keep you up to date and informed about the latest happenings at Avatar's Abode. Please feel free to use the contact information provided at the bottom of each page or on the Avatar's Abode website to get in touch if you have any comments or questions pertaining to what you read here. Avatar Meher Baba Ki Jai!***

***Buildings:***

Rada – daughter of the Rouses – has spent much time, with her husband Brad, sorting through and clearing Robert and Lorna's belongings after Robert's passing. Rada has generously left many items that are useful to the house and to the property. This was the poignant first phase in preparing 'The Original Farm House' (Rouse residence) to serve its new purpose. The Trust is currently looking at different options for renovating the house, taking into consideration its historical significance as the original building on the property, as well as the fact that Baba himself walked throughout it.

Baba's House has seen the installation of new louvre windows late last year. While the old windows were original, they were definitely looking their 56 years of age. Some did not close properly and were unable to be locked. Apart from looking much better, the new windows are of a higher quality. They have thicker glass, more durable frames, are more weatherproof, and are generally more secure. The windows in Baba's Room were replaced in 2005. Two new Tasmanian Oak chairs have been donated, offering a variety of seating for visitors along with the four cane club chairs that were placed in Baba's House prior to the last Friends' Report. Also in Baba's House, three new simple suspended ceiling lights have been installed. This was the final touch to the re-roofing and internal painting project reported previously. The Baba's House committee thanks all those who do the regular jobs around Baba's House and Square: tending the gardens, co-ordinating the flower roster, regularly cleaning Baba's House and Room, the Meeting Hall and the toilets.

While staying on Avatar's Abode, Rod Tyson painted the inside of Francis' cabin and also gave it a spring clean (in autumn). The combination of fresh paint and cleaning has made the cabin very fresh. The drinking water supply at Francis's Cabin has been augmented by a new 10,000 litre tank, while all the runoff from the roof has been connected for the first time. Dam water is still connected for outdoor and toilet use.

Another point of interest is the proscenium arch of the stage in the entertainment shed is being renewed. If you are planning on attending this year's Anniversary, you will see that it has been rebuilt and repainted by Jim Frisino and Amir Naderi.

***Grounds:***

The pavers have been reset in front of the pilgrim quarters and in front of the reception centre by a professional paver. It has given a more even surface to walk on and a more appealing look. Recent visitors to Baba's House will also have noticed the beautiful new path between Baba's House and the Meeting Hall, and the widening of the path between Baba's House and the toilet block. General wear and, to some extent, tree roots had resulted in unevenness in the Meeting Hall path creating a tripping hazard.

A section of the paving at the entrance to Baba's House was also re-laid. As a part of this job the gardenia at the entrance was removed; this greatly improves access, particularly for wheel chairs. Another safety issue was the pool of water, which would form at the opening to a drain near the Meeting Hall after heavy and consistent rain. This depression has been filled with rocks which has eliminated the hazard while still allowing water to flow into the drain.

Thanks to the application of fertilizer and this year's good wet season, the grass in Baba's Square is thicker and healthier. It is mowed more regularly now and at a higher setting, which is aimed at improving its health and appearance, particularly during our drier winters.

The pruning of trees and shrubs in Baba's Square, as elsewhere around Avatar's Abode, is an ongoing task. Although in the short term this can sometimes appear a little drastic, with the Sunshine Coast's wet, sub-tropical conditions, the pruned vegetation invariably looks better than ever within a few short months; note the now very healthy looking and neat shrubbery around the flagpole and the mango tree in Baba's Square.

Reg Love and helpers have laid grass on the pathway between Baba's House and the Shed, which will be finished off and levelled before the June Anniversary. Reg and Felix have also been working on Francis' Cabin garden and lawn which is now close to completion.

Several trees close to Judith's Cottage have been professionally removed. This has provided logs for garden use and an abundance of chipped wood for mulching. Increased sunlight is enabling better garden establishment, the fire hazard is reduced, and coastal views have been enhanced.

The Building Grounds' Work Group continues to maintain the gardens in and around buildings on Avatar's Abode including Baba's Square. There has been planting of native shrubs near the pilgrim accommodation buildings, and more frequent mowing of the lawns and grasslands. The area along the entrance and exit roads has also been cleaned up with the removal of dead and weedy trees.

### ***Community:***

Ward Parks is again sharing his company with us at Avatar's Abode. He is staying in the Pilgrims Quarters while he is working on Francis Brabazon archival material and preparing a three day seminar on Francis's epic work *Stay with God*. After the passing of our dear Sam Saunders, the Wine Shop Singers have regrouped with Lorraine Brown as their co-ordinator. The singers now practice on Saturday mornings and have been joined by Jake Horsey and Ward Parks.

The community coffee mornings organised by Kaelin Rimmelzwaan and Ira Hodgkins continue on Sundays from 9:30 am to 11:00 am. The mornings have become a regular part of many people's weekends- often bringing friends, family and other people new to Baba and Avatar's Abode. These mornings have been a welcome addition to the usual programming for families with young children as they are able to enjoy the atmosphere of Avatar's Abode in a setting that is fun and inclusive of our littlest community members. Beyond the fellowship and fun for all who attend, the coffee mornings have been a fantastic fundraiser and have so far raised over \$3000 towards the new children's playground purely on a suggested gold coin donation per cup. The playground has been built in the style of a tree-house around the Leopard tree on the mound between the kitchen and entertainment shed. A large amount of good quality timber as well as a slide from the previous playground has been able to be recycled for the new structure.

Gusi's vegetarian community lunches have resumed on every second Wednesday, opening with the singing of Baba's Arti. The food is delicious and the atmosphere is warm with a welcoming feeling of family.

### ***Committees:***

**Board of Directors:** Often referred to as the "Trust," the Board of Directors is responsible for Avatar's Abode finances, legal issues, correspondence, and for creating a future vision for the property. The members meet every second month on a Saturday.

Members: Bill LePage (chairman), Denis Carmody, David Hobson, Roy Hayes, Bernard Bruford, Leigh Rowan, Mehera Moroney, Liz Gaskin, Peter Davies, Kaelin Rimmelzwaan

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**Admin:** The Admin committee is responsible for implementing certain Board and Management decisions, and for handling urgent day-to-day issues that arise and cannot wait for a Board meeting. These issues are usually of a more general nature and more serious issues are referred back to the Board.

Members: Roy Hayes, Bernard Bruford, Sim Symons

**Management:** The management committee oversees the general upkeep of all buildings and grounds of Avatar's Abode and has a level of financial and judgemental autonomy defined by the Board. This committee meets every month on a Saturday.

Members: All directors, Joe Harloff, Felix Schmid, Reg Love, Greg Rimmelzwaan

Subcommittees **Building Grounds Workgroup:** Coordinated by Felix Schmid

**Building Maintenance Workgroup:** Coordinated by Greg Rimmelzwaan

**Archives:** The Archives committee is responsible for researching the most appropriate ways to deal with things of archival significance at Avatar's Abode and making recommendations to the Board for their preservation.

Members: Coordinated by David Bowling

The following committees have a fluid membership, often taking on new members each year and always welcoming fresh faces and creative input:

**Baba's House:** The Baba's House committee oversees the general upkeep of Baba's House, the Meeting Hall, and Baba's Square.

Members: Coordinated by David Hobson

**Anniversary:** The Anniversary Committee is responsible for all of the logistics of running the June Anniversary of Baba's visit to Avatar's Abode.

Members: Coordinated by Denis Carmody, Bernard Bruford

**Spring Sahavas:** The Spring Sahavas committee is responsible for all of the logistics associated with running the Spring Sahavas.

Members: Coordinated by David Hobson

**Youth Sahavas:** The Youth Sahavas committee is responsible for all of the logistics associated with running the Youth Sahavas.

Members: Coordinated by Mehera Moroney and Kaelin Rimmelzwaan

**Friends:** The Friends committee is responsible for keeping the Australian Baba community informed and up to date with the happenings of Avatar's Abode and to assist the Board in fundraising and community initiatives.

Members: Coordinated by Kaelin Rimmelzwaan



### ***Financial Support:***

The year to 30 June 2014 was a pleasing result in that that donations adequately covered our unavoidable fixed expenses. Some wonderful donations towards the production of the quarterly newsletter Meher Baba Australia and towards the two major events for the year enabled the end result to be just a minor deficit. These events, the June Anniversary and the Spring Sahavas can have wide financial fluctuations from year to year, dependent largely on the amount spent in hosting overseas guests.

Last year after the period of the attached financial statement the Trust received an estate donation of \$200,000 providing for the first time a significant financial buffer and a source of interest income towards expenditure. Up to \$30,000 has been set aside for stage 1 of renovations to the original farmhouse (occupied by the Rouse family for 56 years). It is the wish of the executor that major work be done on the roads on Avatar's Abode which is still in the planning stage.

If you are able and willing to assist financially please note the details below and see the included supporter's donation form. The form can also be downloaded from the Trust's website [http://www.avatarsabode.com.au/financial\\_support.html](http://www.avatarsabode.com.au/financial_support.html) which also offers PayPal facility (see details below).

- For those with credit cards who would care to become regular donors, an option is to give the Trust authority to debit their card at set intervals for a fixed amount. No amount is too small for these regular donations. This authority can be cancelled or altered at any time by contacting either of the Trust Treasurers Bernard Bruford (07) 5442 1487 or Liz Gaskin (07) 5472 7252.
- Please make any Cheques or Money Orders payable to - Avatar's Abode Pty Ltd Friends Account
- If making a deposit at a bank or via your online account, please fill in the Reference section with a name so that the donor can be known and a receipt issued.

### **Donations via PayPal:**

Please visit the Make a Donation page on the Avatar's Abode website to make a donation via PayPal <http://avatarsabode.com.au/donations.html>. Note that you do not need a PayPal account to use PayPal; your bank account or credit card can also be used.

With Love in Him,

Friends Committee  
for the Avatar's Abode Board of Directors

## Friends of Avatar's Abode Financial Support

YES! I would like to become a *Friends of Avatar's Abode Financial Supporter*.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

You can give your support in any of the following ways.

*Please Tick and complete the section or sections that work for you.*

**1) I would like to make *periodic contributions* to Avatar's Abode as follows-  
(Select Method):**

**A) •automatic transfer from my bank account to Avatar's Abode Pty Ltd – Friends Account  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_**

•Per month •Bi-monthly •Quarterly •Bi-annually •Annually  
(Please organise these transfers with your Bank).

**B) •automatic deductions from my credit card by Avatar 's Abode Pty Ltd– Friends Account  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_**

•Per Month •Bi-monthly •Quarterly •Bi-annually •Annually, until I notify you otherwise.

Credit card type: •Visa •MasterCard •Other \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card No.:- \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name on Card

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

You don't have to organise card deductions with your bank.

This authority can be cancelled or altered at any time.

**C) •a contribution by cheque / Money Order to Avatar 's Abode Pty Ltd – Friends Account  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_**

•Per month •Bi-monthly •Quarterly •Bi-annually •Annually

**2) I am at this time making a one off contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

by •Cheque / Money Order •Direct deposit

### **Banking Details:-**

Please make Transfers/Cheques/Money Orders payable to **Avatar's Abode Pty Ltd - Friends Account:**

Nambour Commonwealth Bank account identification No. **06442410373465**

(This number is made up with BSB No. 064424 and Account No. 10373465)

After the receipt of this form we will contact you to confirm we have received your donation details.

How do you wish to be contacted?

•Email

•Mail

•Phone

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for becoming a Friends of Avatar's Abode Financial Supporter and helping maintain and develop His Abode. Jai Meher Baba!

Please return to PO Box 184, Woombye Qld 4559.