



### Building in the UK

Dear Readers, Sai Ram!

April was again busy with various meetings and the weekend of the 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> saw the majority of your UKCC members attending a Special UKCC Projects meeting on the Saturday during the day (very kindly hosted by Region 2) followed by the SSLTP 2007/2009 Graduation ceremony in the evening at the Harrow Civic Centre. Those who graduated were honoured by the SSLTP Management team - including early founding member, Sri Kandiah, they praised and congratulated for their dedicated diligence and application to the course by the Central Coordinator for the UK and Ireland, Ishver Patel; and also by me. It was a lovely evening. For me, it was indeed a great privilege to sit in on most of the modules and observe the candidates (of all ages) and to also learn much, myself. One dedicated candidate flew in from Switzerland for each module and has already been instrumental in introducing the UK SSLTP course in continental Europe. A new programme will be rolled out shortly - if you are interested, do remember that the age for participation on the course is from 21 years upwards.

On Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> the majority of your UKCC members were to be found in Swindon, Wiltshire, where we ran the Region 7 ROAD Show to a small but very appreciative group. Each of these sessions raises interesting points that we take note of and they, I believe, help demonstrate not only the dedication, open, transparent, culture of the UKCC members but also the intelligence, wit and knowledge of them too!

I am writing this to you from Sydney, Australia, where I came immediately to be with my sister, when her husband died on April 20<sup>th</sup>. At such times I realise the great strength that we gain through studying Swami's teachings. Yet, despite that knowledge, there are certain emotional evolutions that we must all go through at certain times in life - and it is right that we do so.

How moving it was for us all when Swami openly wept at the loss of his beloved elephant, Sai Gita... The teachings we avidly follow are not to turn us into clinical

unresponsive robots but they most often are there to soften our hearts, making us better and more compassionate human beings. Love and compassion emanate from our true inner divine nature. The emotional body does not derive from there but sometimes it is the flowing, cleansing and purifying vehicle that pulls true love and compassion to the forefront.

As you may know, and will read in this issue, we are literally on the brink of obtaining (in one very large building), a permanent home. This will shelter not only our Sathya Sai School Leicester, but also the headquarters for our Organisation and for the British Institute of Sathya Sai Education.

It will provide a venue for many SSSSO UK activities, a home for nearby Leicester Sai Centres, be a flagship building for flying the ensign of the Sathya Sai Human Values and Teachings and it will, importantly, provide a physical address and permanent point of contact.

Certain individuals along with the Sri Sathya Sai Charitable Trust (UK) members are to be commended for their dedicated conviction and their faith that has brought this purchase about.

**Love and Light,  
Rosemary Perry, National Chair**

### A Step Closer to Having Our Own Building...



It was reported in the March 2009 edition of 'Love and Light' that Sri Sathya Sai Baba had approved and blessed a project for the SSSSO UK to purchase a building. Since then different parts of the Sai Organisation have

been working together to make His blessings a reality. We are glad to report that we have successfully taken the first step of exchanging a contract to purchase the building. The building is situated in Leicester (LE3 0BT) and is located on the main route into Leicester City Centre and has easy access by road and public transport.

Of course, taking this first step does not mean that we have yet fully acquired it - that will happen in July 2009, so that the Sathya Sai School Leicester may start its new academic year there.

The hard work begins now and with Sathya Sai Baba's grace and your support we can achieve this. We are having an '**Open Weekend**' on **16th and 17th May**, when you can come and view the building and sign-up to offer your services if you wish. The details are: Timings are: Saturday from 1pm to 4pm and on Sunday from 10am to 4pm  
Address: Bede College, Narborough Road, Leicester, LE3 0BT.

Once we have moved into the building, there will be ample opportunity to help further with this project e.g. with activities such as administrative support, provision of IT equipment, general maintenance; and decorating the building to make it reflect the philosophy of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. There will also be the additional opportunity to form a long-term partnership, through various projects and regular activities that can be held in the building.

**Ishver Patel, Central Coordinator for the UK and Ireland and Rosemary Perry, National Chair, SSSSO UK**

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## National Sathya Sai Retreat 2009

We have found the most perfect new venue for the 2009 Retreat, which will be held from Friday 28th to Sunday 30th August, at the Exeter University Campus, just off the M5 in Devon. It is a truly first class facility, with beautiful grounds that are filled with ancient trees, wide open spaces, interesting floral specimens and really comfortable, modern accommodation buildings, all in easy walking distance (for those who wish to) of the ancient City of Exeter.

This year everyone will be housed in one building, all rooms have en-suites, there is a superb dining room with panoramic views across the City and it is here we shall display the extensive 'Sai Baba Exhibition' and at the other end of this very large and comfortable meeting area, the Sathya Sai Bookshop stall. Arthur and Poppy Hillcoat from Australia (Swami's 'Ambassadors of Love') have been

invited and have agreed to be our main Speakers this year – sure to be full of wise and wonderful words.

There will, as always, be an interesting selection of workshops, but if just 'Being' is what you are looking for, there will be plenty of time and space for that as well.

This year, we have agreed that to help with the cost of the weekend, payment can be made in three instalments in May, June and July. For those of you who have been to the National Sathya Sai Retreat many times before, you will be delighted to know that, at this venue, all bedding and towels are provided by the University. Quite a major reduction in packing!

Please disseminate this information as far and wide as possible so that everyone can plan to be with us for a weekend that will show: "The Only Constant Is Change".

Application forms will be available in the very near future.

**Caroline Vasey (for the National Sathya Sai Retreat Planning Group)**

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## Regional 'ROAD' Shows

'ROAD Shows' (where 'ROAD' = 'Regional Organisation Awareness Day') - anyone and everyone from the Region's Centres and Groups may attend who is interested.

It was as the result of feedback at the first Regional Office Bearer Training Day, held in Region 1, on November 29<sup>th</sup> 2008, that we changed the name of that event to broaden the availability to beyond just 'office bearers'. With four 'ROAD Shows' already undertaken, and December 5<sup>th</sup> earmarked for Region 2, the remaining Regions 4, 5 and 6 are busy setting dates for theirs.

At all these days all – or the vast majority - of Council members will be there with you, making presentations, answering your questions and helping to facilitate discussions **relevant** to you and your Region.

We hope that it cuts down travel and cost for you if we all come to you rather than you all coming to one general national day! We really look forward to meeting you all there!

**UKCC**

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## Sathya Sai Bookshop

The bookshop has a regularly updated website. Please visit it at:

**[www.srisathyasaibookcentre.org.uk](http://www.srisathyasaibookcentre.org.uk)**

DVDs are often being compiled and released along with new interesting books.

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## **Spiritual Wing Joint Regions 1, 2, 3 and 6 Multi-faith Event**

To be held on Saturday 6th June 2009 from  
2.00pm to 6.30pm on the theme:

**"All Scriptures Lead to the One"  
All are most welcome.**

The programme includes talks, sketches,  
presentations, music, a panel discussion and  
more! For any enquiries phone:  
07740605306.

**Venue:**

St Andrews School,  
The Green, Totteridge Lane, London N20 8NX

**Jey Sivaloganathan,  
National Spiritual Coordinator**

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## **SSE Wing Group 3 year 2 and Group 3 year 3 projects.**

We would welcome title suggestions for group  
3 projects for the next academic year.  
Project 1 titles should be Sai Literature based  
analysis of a quote by Bhagawan Sri Sathya  
Sai Baba. This will enable students to  
research and deepen their understanding of  
Sri Sathya Sai Baba's teachings. Project 2  
titles should be a practical topic enabling  
students to deepen their understanding of the  
wings of the organization and how they  
interact. Please email titles to  
sathyasaieducation@ssso.org.uk or submit  
via your centre SSE coordinator by 31st May  
2009.

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**National Teachers' Day 2009**

### **NB Change of Diary Date:**

The date for the National SSE Teachers Day  
has been changed from  
Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> September

**to Sunday 20th September**

The venue is Desborough Suite, Windsor and  
Maidenhead Town Hall, St Ives Road,  
Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 1RF.

Our keynote speaker will be Phyllis Krystal.  
The day will be a wonderful celebration of Sai  
Spiritual Education in the United Kingdom,  
open to all. Please note the date in your  
diary. Further details will be available via  
your regional SSE coordinators.

**Lakshmi Puvanendran  
National SSE Coordinator**

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## **Youth Wing An Offering to God**

Swami has blessed and given permission for a  
very special 'Youth Sadhana Camp' to take  
place in Prashanti in August (from the 1st to  
13th of August 2009) for the UK Sai Youth.  
The trip is being organised and coordinated  
by the Heart Valve Bank and with Sri Ajit  
Popat leading it, with direct guidance from  
Bhagawan.

There has been a circular in pdf format that  
provides further details on the trip, dates for  
future meetings that all participants need to  
attend; and an application form for  
completion if you wish to go. Also included  
are all necessary contact details. Should you  
have any other queries please feel free to  
contact your Regional Youth Coordinator or  
myself.

There is a web link that has been set up for  
the trip with up to date information as well as  
preparatory notes on various activities  
planned (it will be updated over the course of  
the next few weeks). The link is:

**[www.sadhanacamp.org.uk](http://www.sadhanacamp.org.uk)**

This really is a wonderful opportunity and a  
great blessing that the UK youth have all  
been given, to participate in this programme.  
Please pass on this information to all your  
peers and youth groups.

**Mathan Arulvel,  
National Youth Coordinator**

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## **Youth in Harmony! Region 3 Youth Workshop**

### **'Music for Your Soul'**

The Mill Hill Youth, together with all the  
Region 3 youth wing, came together with the  
blessing of our loving Sathya Sai Baba to  
create a musically uplifting workshop entitled  
'Music for your soul'. This event was held on  
26th April 2009 at the Mill Hill Sai Centre in  
Totteridge from 10 am to 1 pm.

The objectives of the workshop programme  
were: to look at music and Devotional/Bhajan  
singing in a spiritual light in order to  
understand the purpose; to explore the  
reasoning behind devotional singing and to  
highlight the importance of having 'right  
thinking' behind the effort required for singing  
and listening to music. The day was  
unanimously 'stamped' as a thoroughly  
enjoyable day with eye-opening insights into  
the 'hows and whys' of music'.

The event started with an interesting African  
musical icebreaker. The whole audience came  
together in different groups, to sing a catchy  
African peace song in a harmonious choir  
without any rehearsals! It was a lesson

learned that with the strength of 'many', a path is created towards a powerful and beautiful outcome. Just as many weak strings tied together make a strong rope that holds a great ship, all the youth working together to sing the same song and arrive at the same goal, produced a beautiful melody that uplifted the whole audience!

This exercise was followed by an inspirational talk by the guest speaker, Renu Gidoomal. She has an amazing voice and ability to capture the audience with her melodious singing and guitar playing. She spoke on the importance of connecting to God through music, and how our life is made up of our 'first' and 'last' breath, and therefore that what we do to improve the quality of the time in between those two breaths will determine the value of our lives. It is our choice to be good or bad, our choice to choose what is right or wrong, our choice to be in the company of good or bad friends, and we ourselves have to make sure the 'quality' of our life is managed. She also highlighted the importance of singing with our hearts – with our very soul. Only then, she said, will we stir up the emotions in us, to make that connection with God. Without emotion, our song will be fruitless, without energy and without substance.

Music is used in therapy to treat cancer patients, children with ADD, to lower blood pressure, to boost immunity, to ease muscle tension and also to improve concentration. Even hospitals are beginning to use music therapy to help with pain management, depression, and to reduce stress. So, just imagine what the power of devotional songs can achieve, when they contain the name of the Lord Himself!

The next part of the workshop was a creative challenge, where everyone had to construct a few lines and make a musical tune. It was amazing how many of the 'non-musical' youth came together with the more musically talented youth, to create beautiful songs and melodies on the spur of the moment!

It was also amazing to see how 'lyric writing' and 'composing' talents were discovered by those who thought that these talents were non-existent in them, and interesting, too, to see how a collective effort, combining the lyrics and the tunes, produced so many new and beautiful melodies and songs!

Often, a very challenging start to a workshop, if persevered through with hard work and dedication, can become a very pleasant outcome at the end. This is similar to an orchestra which will only sound good if all players work together harmoniously. Not

every instrument will be as loud as another, but each is crucial to the overall piece. Music teaches us to be united in our effort towards a single goal.

The Mill Hill youth team, together with other youth from the Region, then performed a musical recital presenting devotional songs in different languages to represent the diverse forms of music. The underlying story was about a typical 'modern day youth' and how he was being drawn away from Divinity, in to worldly desires which would give no harvest in his spiritual development. He finally found the connection to God through devotional singing. The story went on to highlight how one should attend devotional singing sessions to sing from the heart instead of just singing in tune, to learn the meanings instead of listening to the beat of the drums, and to serve with love instead of trying to display musical talents by playing an instrument. One should sing from both the heart and the soul, so that the singing may imprint the love and spiritual bonds to God in the singer's or musician's heart.

The workshop ended with some closing thoughts on how all youth should look at the way they use their talents and abilities to lead them towards a higher purpose in life.

How do we interpret music? What does it mean? How do we approach devotional singing and the meaning behind it? Ask ourselves these questions and we shall spark the most important step in a divine musical journey - the connection to God from within each one of us.

Our talents and strengths are like diamonds. The diamond's brilliance will only shine according to how it is cut. So, too, our musical ability will only shine according to how much love we put into it, and on how we cut and mould this talent of ours with 'love'.

Swami asks, "*Why do you sing? Is it for the tune?*" He says, "*No it's not for the raga... it's not for the tune... It is to remove the disease; the roga; the suffering in you! Take the opportunity to receive the wonderful music vibrations created at our Sai centres, so that you hear Swami's divine voice; so that you engrave in your heart his love and grace in all its depths!*"

The aspect of time in a youth's life was highlighted as being very important. One should not wait around to use their musical or other talents later in life. Youth is the 'prime period' and one should use it wisely within this limited human birth. This birth may be our last birth for the next 100 years – who knows! So we must ensure that we use THIS birth wisely.



It was also highlighted that you don't have to be a great bhajan singer, a great music composer or an artist to shine in God's heart. It doesn't take a talented musician to spend time singing to an orphan, or join in on a sing-along with blind children, or sing a note to the lonely elderly who want to listen - who want your company. What one may think is insignificant may be valued so much by another. You may think your current ability to sing a song is non-existent, but sometimes it only takes the comfort of a lullaby to put a child to sleep – how powerful is a simple song when filled with love!

If you only have love in your heart when you sing, and even though the tune may be compromised, the music will be sweet as honey to the one who receives it! The 'greatness' of a musician, will be valued, if it is only considered 'great' in the heart of the Divine Lord!

The whole session ended with Aarthi and a wonderful healthy satvic meal prepared by the Mill Hill Centre. We are so very grateful to our loving Sathya Sai Baba for providing us with such an insightful and uplifting day.

**Region 3 Youth**

**Submitted by Mathan Arulvel,  
National Youth Coordinator**

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### Region 3

#### Lyrical Visit by Renu Gidoomal

We were very blessed to have in our midst Renu Gidoomal from the Philippines at the Mill Hill Sai Centre on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May. She led with some beautiful Krishna bhajans during the devotional singing session. Renu, who is no stranger to Mill Hill, then spoke about her travels from London to Dubai to the Philippines and then about her experiences of Swami.

She narrated the most fascinating story about a devotee who had been blessed with a ring given by Swami and his agony at losing the ring when he dropped it in a river. She told us how in a later interview with Swami the same devotee was blessed again by being given the very same ring. On asking Swami in amazement, "How did you get the ring back from the river?" Swami simply replied, "I am the river". This just brought home the fact that Swami is omnipresent. In another example, Renu casually mentioned that we are just like a fish that is swimming in water, surrounded by water and is made up of water; so we are made up of GOD, surrounded by GOD and swimming in the ocean of GOD.

As part of her own divine experiences, Renu spoke about attuning ourselves to God

through unity of thought, word and deed. She also described uplifting ourselves through Service and Spiritual practice to become instruments worthy to be used by Sathya Sai Baba. She related an incidence of when she was in doubt as to whether she was doing the right thing; Swami blessed her with a sign. A flower fell into her upturned palms as though gently placed there, the right way up. She repeated to us, "When in doubt pray to Swami, longingly pray to Him and He will give you a sign and show you the way forward". She concluded her powerful talk by saying 'Swami says, place the Lord in a seat in your heart and install him there. Do not place a sofa, where you place many and change at will. Pray with longing and sing devotional songs with a deep yearning like that of Radha calling out to her Krishna. Seek and you shall find."

**Written by Nupur Faujdar**

**Submitted by Gurmail Singh, Chair  
Region 3**

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### Region 4

#### Birmingham Sai Centre

Just before we forget the month of March, a very important day needs some mentioning: **Mother's Day**. This was honoured throughout the UK with love and Birmingham Centre which celebrated its Mother's day in advance on the 20th of March, was no exception. The gathering began by extolling our very special mother, Mother Sai, with some reverberating group devotional singing (GDS).

This was followed by the SSE children presenting each Mother and lady present with a daffodil flower, showing the significance of a Mother and also symbolised as the giver of new life in the form of spring flower.

Now, let's fast forward to the month of April, (which surprisingly was dry and a tad warmer betraying the conventional 'April showers'). This was an action packed month where we celebrated both the holy day of Ram Navmi and Easter together. This culminated in having our Centre's devotee of Lord Rama speak briefly on the significance of the day from his point of view, followed by our special guest of many years, the lady Vicar of St Paul and St Silas, Canon Jemima (who has tirelessly served one of Birmingham's deprived areas for more than a decade) speak on the importance of Good Friday and Easter in general.

Some high octane devotional songs soon followed, introduced by the SSE children and concluded by the Centre's members where everyone participated with joy and glee.

Please use your initiative to distribute this monthly newsletter as widely as possible to all devotees and interested parties.

It is usually believed that a noble event as this is not noble if no blessed food/prasadam is served. Hence flavoursome refreshments were served, prepared selflessly by our caring Centre ladies.

Since Good Friday was a recess time both for SSE children and the Centre, it was agreed to conduct GDS at a home for senior citizens.

There was a good attendance and warm and heart-rending songs were sung for the senior members of our society, so that they too could appreciate Swami's love from the very young to the very old.

One could not avoid noticing how this human form changes according to the cycles of karma, artha, dharma and moksha, finally hoping to merge with our beloved Lord.

The Centre also had a new service project for this Easter, wherein food parcels were gathered by its members in coalition with Canon Jemima to distribute to the very forgotten people of our society, which the government term as 'illegal immigrants' or 'refugees' and who no longer get any tokens or help from the state. From bags of rice to pasta, from tea bags to toiletries, much was collected and taken by the members to the church centre to be distributed. It was estimated that at least 100 people could have benefited from this service.

With this initial success, Region 4 is planning to initiate a similar regional activity requesting our Birmingham Centre to take the lead, which we hope with Swami's grace will be an ongoing 'Sai Service'.

**Written and compiled by Raju P Gadher, Sp. Coordinator, Birmingham Sai Centre. Submitted by Ramesh Mistry, Chair Region 4**

## Service Wing Certified Main Course

On the 18th April 2009, Region 4 organised a Food & Hygiene Course. It was the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health Certified Course (CIEH) - Level 2.

The course was made open to the whole of Region 4; and 10 people took advantage of this opportunity to do the course.

The course is a must for all Centres especially the key people who are the cooks or prepare food. I also recommend all Service Coordinators to do this course. From the knowledge gained by doing the course, we can train all our people to a higher level of consistency and efficiency

This is a whole day course from 10am to 4pm that includes breaks, lunch and an exam.

The exam paper is available in different languages for those who can't read English.

Shanti Kumar (a professional trainer) who is a Sai Devotee made the session lively and informal.

The course was an eye-opener and it covered the various Laws and legal requirements needed for our ongoing service to both our Regional and National events, food preparation, where and how to store food, cooling down and keeping temperatures correct.

After having done the course, we view all aspects - from the hygienic maintenance of a preparation area to the actual cooking food - from a different perspective and this is all for the betterment of our organisation.

**Rajendra Thakordas, Region 4 Service Coordinator**

**Submitted by Kirti Patel,  
National Service Coordinator**

## Stop Press! New DVD Release:

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### Dr Samuel and Mrs Sharon Sandweiss

#### "The Pilgrim, the Path and the Goal"



This recently released DVD, filmed and edited in the UK by 'SITA' (Sai Information Technology and the Arts), captures the fascinating talks given by Dr Samuel and Mrs Sharon Sandweiss, keynote speakers at the SSSSO UK Annual National Conference in January 2009.

Order your copy from the Sathya Sai Bookshop (see ad on page 2).

## 'Love and Light'

### Submission of Articles

The deadline for submission of articles to Love and Light is no later than the 4<sup>th</sup> of the month for publication on the 9<sup>th</sup> of the same month. Whilst every effort will be made to accommodate articles after this date, inclusion cannot be guaranteed.

An article can only be accepted via a member of the UKCC who will then forward it to the editorial team.

## 'Love and Light'

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Love and Light SSSSO UK Diary Dates 2009		
Month	Date	Event
May	9th	Buddha Purnima
May	31st	UKCC 2nd Quarter Meeting
June	6th	Westminster Inter-faith Walk
June	6th	Joint Regions' 1,2,3 & 6 Multi-faith Day
June	7th	NWC Meetings
June	13th / 14th	Regional Meetings
July	7th	Guru Purnima
July	11th	UKCC Projects Meeting
August	28th - 30th	National Sai Retreat
September	12th	UKCC 3rd Quarter Meeting
September	13th	NWC Meeting
September	17th / 18th / 19th	Seminar with Phyllis Krystal
September	20th	SSE National Teachers' Day
September	26th / 27th	Regional Meetings



The SSSSO UK  
National Website  
is to be found on:  
[www.srisathyasai.org.uk](http://www.srisathyasai.org.uk)



**BISSE**  
**British Institute of Sathya Sai Education**  
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[www.BISSE.org.uk](http://www.BISSE.org.uk)