

Gitananda Yoga Association

ENewsletter: December 2015

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SEASON'S GREETINGS

Season's greetings and heartfelt wishes for a Peace filled year 2016 to all our GYA members. Our Guru Dr. Swami Gitananda once said *"The Yogic concept of exploring inner goodness, moment to moment, day by day, could be one of the answers to how peace - real peace – could come to this earth once again... .. if it ever has been here... and the message ... is a simple one. 'Let there be peace..... let it begin with me'."*

So in 2016 may you find renewed commitment to the invaluable Principles and Practices of Gitananda Yoga bequeathed to us by our cherished Guru and passionately nurtured , sustained and continued by our beloved Amma and Dr. Ananda; and may you and yours be blessed with Good Health, Happiness and Inner Peace.

108TH JAYANTHI YEAR OF YOGAMAHARISHI DR. SWAMI GITANANDA

December is a sacred time for our yoga family at Ananda Ashram, as it is the month our Guru YOGAMAHARISHI DR. SWAMI GITANANDA GIRI GURUMAHARAJ obtained Moksha and on December 27 the ashram will celebrate the 22nd Anniversary of his Maha Samadhi with NAVARASA a spectacular full length dance drama on the nine emotions of Bharata Natyam. This will be an auspicious and beautiful event presented by the students of Yoganjali Natyalayam. On behalf of our GYA members, who are not able to attend in person, we wish you a successful night and send our thoughts, prayers, blessings and love to all involved; we will all be there with you in spirit, mind and heart.

GYA GET-TOGETHER MERMAID BEACH: October 13-18 2016

Our 2015 Get-together was a great success. In fact it was so successful that we have booked the same mansion (241 Hedges Avenue, Mermaid Beach) for our Get-Together in 2016. We have also booked 237 Hedges Avenue which is two houses away to enable us to accommodate a few more people. The house at No. 237 has 3 bedrooms: there is a queen bed, a double or 2 singles and a room with 4 bunks but to give people more space we will only use two of the bunks.

No. 237 also has direct beach access and has a basketball court which we hope will be suitable for us to use for some classes. The two houses can accommodate 21 people, however to ensure everyone's comfort we are limiting the total number of places to 17 so if you are considering joining us in 2016 it would be advisable to send Murali an email ASAP at muralidharan33@yahoo.com.au .

COSTS & BOOKING:

A deposit of \$100 AUD is required to make a booking and membership must be current to 2017. The cost for the 5 days is \$450 excluding food as the in-house food costs will be worked out and shared between us all. The participation fee for those who choose to book other accommodation will be \$150 and should you wish to have a King, Queen or twin room to yourself, an extra supplement of \$350 will be required.

New Zealand members should contact Murali muralidharan33@yahoo.com.au or Cathryn Doornekamp lotus.yoga.centre@paradise.net.nz regarding booking and payment.

MEMBERS COMMENTS - GYA GET-TOGETHER, MERMAID BEACH 2015 –

Gowri (Wendy Snape) - Cooktown, Queensland

The retreat for Gitananda yoga students and teachers of Australia was held at Mermaid Beach, Gold Coast, Australia from the 15th to 21st October 2015. There were 13 who attended, two of whom were staying with their husbands in nearby accommodation. On arrival on Thursday evening we were soon inspired by the holiday house and its location on Mermaid Beach, where the Pacific surf rolled in. On several occasions during our stay we were treated to a view of the annual migration of humped back whales travelling north. Not an unwelcome distraction. The weather stayed sunny and fine for whole time.

There couldn't have been a better time and place for hatha yoga on the beach at sunrise. This was a not-to-miss activity. The A.G.M. was held on Friday afternoon, the same committee was elected, and we discussed Dr. Ananda's 2017 visit to Australia, and thought it a pity he would not be able to fit in a visit to the Gold Coast that year. A brave person volunteered to do the cooking on Saturday, and soon others pitched in and managed most meals until we left on Tuesday morning.

Murali led Loma Viloma Vidya one morning, and two Pranayama and two Yantra yoga sessions, imparting his wealth of knowledge. In between times we watched videos of some of Swamiji's talks. All too soon it was time to leave, however we have already booked the same venue in October next year. Special thanks to Margo and Murali for arranging such a successful and enjoyable yoga retreat.

Heather Box – Brisbane, Queensland

Many thanks once more to Margo & Murali for a very successful Gitananda Get-together at Mermaid Beach. The house was spectacular and being able to walk straight out to the beach at sunrise for morning yoga was perfect. I believe if Amma could have seen us she would say we were Bhogis not Yogis.

The knowledge shared by Murali, especially on Yantra was most welcome and as we seemed to have quite a bit of spare time, maybe Murali would be open to sharing more Gitananda practices next time. It was interesting to watch the DVD's of Dr Ananda and Dr. Swami Gitananda, especially hearing Swamiji's voice, such knowledge!

The only thing I felt lacking in the house, was an open space where we could have more room to practice together as it was difficult to hear instruction on the beach. An added bonus was the whales and their babies swimming south, possibly from Hervey Bay after calving. Every day they did a show for us directly out from the house.

Thank you also to the three wonderful "cooks" – Yum!!! Spending time with kindred spirits is so uplifting and what a perfect place to do so.

Jenny Lloyd - Sydney, NSW

On 15th October a group of us settled into a beautiful home at Mermaid Beach, Gold Coast for five days retreat in Yoga mode. The venue could not have been better, the house was spacious so that we were not cramped together in just the one spot, it was well equipped and for me, coming from a home with bush outlook which in itself is quite wonderful, it really made a nice change to just walk out of the back door straight onto the beach. It was uplifting to be able to greet the sunrise every morning and we were so blessed with the weather being in our favour, neither too hot nor too cold.

We gathered every morning at 5:00 am for yoga asanas and meditation which usually went on for 1.5 to 2 hours. Breakfast followed where we just served ourselves and ate at our own pace, some sitting here some sitting there, nothing regimented, just being ourselves.

Time appeared to stand still in the early part of the morning when we seemed to get so much done, yet it might only have been 7:00 or 8:00 am. The magic of rising early was clearly felt. The remainder of the morning was usually free for swimming, walking, shopping for groceries for lunch and evening meal. We were fortunate to have ladies who were so keen to please that they offered to cook for us and we enjoyed some delicious meals but still had the opportunity to dine out some of the time.

Murali was kind enough to share his knowledge of Yantra with us and we would gather each afternoon to find out more. We enjoyed the experience of forced breathing techniques as well as asanas for cleansing the body of toxins. Margo conducted a session in back-walking; walking the feet up and down the spine which was an enjoyable experience both in giving and receiving.

There were three participants from NSW, the remainder from various areas of Queensland. It was a treat to be in the company of such beautiful souls who all got on well and I have to say that I came back home refreshed and felt as if I'd really had a holiday.

There are a couple of people who deserve a big thank you, Murali and Margo put in so much effort in organising these wonderful few days, without their participation and leadership none of this would have been possible. So thanks to you both and to the cooks/chefs and fellow housemates who made our stay so pleasant and to the people who stayed in separate accommodation, thanks to you too for your company. It was great to catch up with you all again.

Julia and Lyla Ballinger – Toowoomba, Queensland

Lyla and I thoroughly enjoyed the Gitananda get-together and think it is such a great idea and way to stay connected. The pace and content of the programme was perfect for us.

Swamiji's video lectures were very interesting and would be a welcome addition to next year's get together. Murali's Yantra sessions were so enjoyable and we would like to participate in same again, if Murali was up for it!

Our understanding was that these few days were a 'Gitananda get-together' as opposed to a more formal yoga retreat and we felt that the yoga programme led by Murali and Margo created an atmosphere of consistency of both Gitananda practice and teachings. Thank you both for organising such a splendid event and providing the opportunity to come together in a beautiful space and to experience the Gitananda teachings with like minds.

Louise Sharman - Brisbane, Queensland

It was lovely to catch up with our yoga friends and I really appreciate the efforts of those who travelled from FNQ and interstate to join us. Early morning yoga on the beach was a lovely way to start each day. The retreat had a lovely slow pace after the rush to arrive although some people may have struggled at first to change to a different pace. The gaps in the programme gave us a chance to chill out and get to know each other on a much deeper level.

Murali's sessions on Yantra were fascinating and I suspect that the ICYER will see a jump in orders for Swamiji's Yantra book! Swamiji's videos were very interesting although I would need to

listen to them many times to begin to understand his messages. I'm looking forward to next year already.

Zigi Georges - Noosa, Queensland

Thanks again to Margo and Murali, and all the other participants for having created a memorable experience.

Margo Hutchison – Brisbane Queensland

When Murali and I planned this get-together, we devised a programme roughly based on the daily programme at the Ashram but as we soon discovered, various unforeseen things had to be dealt with it and as the circumstances changed it was simply a matter of going with the flow. For those 'living out' this could have proved a bit challenging at times however everyone adjusted to the changes beautifully.

As the sun rose each morning at 5 a.m. it was simply magnificent to do our yoga practice on the beach with some leading, some following, and some doing their own thing. There were a few people out walking at that hour but mostly we had the beach to ourselves. The whale sightings from the top floor balcony were an extra special bonus. It seemed as if the mothers were demonstrating 'Whale Behaviour 101'. A large whale would breach or flap a flipper or slap a tail, closely followed by a smaller version of the same thing; almost as if the baby whale was saying 'look Mum, I can do that too. I am including a link to this interesting information I found on the net.

<http://whalespotter.com.au/?page_id=261>

After breakfast there were opportunities to swim, sunbathe or walk to the shops for food before the Pranayama session. After lunch there were videos of Swamiji or Dr. Ananda to watch and no one had difficulty filling in the free time. It was a great privilege and a blessing to have experienced Ashram life and to have received the teachings directly from Swamiji, Amma and Dr. Ananda and watching the videos of Swamiji in Satsanga, discussing the Chakras and other topics, really makes one aware of fortunate we were to have had that experience.

Our sessions with Murali were perfect, he lead us in Loma -Viloma polarity asanas on the beach in the morning, guided us through Nadi Shodhana/Nadi Shuddhi; Hathenas and Sukha Purvaka Pranayama which we did with a metronome and unravelled some of the deeper meaning of Yantra. On a few evenings we ate at a local Thai restaurant or the local Surf Club however we were very fortunate to have, Wendy, Kathy and Maratana who took over the kitchen and produced some excellent meals for us all and this was a real bonus.

We all agreed that we had shared a wonderful experience, together rather like the family holidays spent at the beach growing up only better. So it is on again next October and you are all welcome to join us, although I would advise you to get in early as there are 13 people intending to go again.

ICYER AT ANANDA ASHRAM - NEWS

Click on the link below for the latest news from ICYER. When it opens in Dropbox, click on: *icyer for newsletter_dec2015.doc* in the left upper corner of the screen.

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/8xx2v1vp3hohq45/AABuZ-9p6wISnOokvMpdw56Wa/icyer%20for%20newsletter_dec2015.doc?dl=0

YANTRA COURSE – FEBRUARY 2016

The Yantra course is conducted at the Ashram each year in conjunction with the current six month course, if you are interested in attending please let me know as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made with Ammaji. (Approximate costs will be given upon enquiry).

DR ANANDA IN AUSTRALIA 2017

Dr. Ananda will attend the IYTA 50th Anniversary in Sydney 26-29th October 2017 as a special guest and on the prior weekend 20-22nd October he will be conducting a retreat in Adelaide. Unfortunately his time in Australia will be limited to these two events.

GITANANDA QUOTES:

“Your Yoga must also be carefully nurtured on a daily, hourly basis. It will simply go away if it is not properly tended or maintained. Yoga Sadhana is like a wife, a husband, or a garden. If you don’t take care of it, it simply goes away. Be aware. Yoga will never fail you. It is always there. But you may fail it. You may fall away from it. You may neglect it and lose it”.

(‘The Yoga Dristhi of Yogamaharishi Dr. SWAMI GITANANDA GIRI GURU MAHARAJ’ P 153)

“Doing is the key to being. You have to DO what you need. Yoga doesn’t fail you, you fail Yoga. Real doing doesn’t take energy. Decisions take energy... The way of Yoga is to build up a potential energy which is always there when we want it; to climb mountains and swim oceans, to fast and to endure. Every time we move the body we alter the electrical flows of the body; the yogis knew this and constructed a system to balance these energy flows. Shakti is power, energy; Tantric practices are designed to make us power houses. Hatha Yoga is necessary to produce good energy force.

(Margo’s notes - March 1980)

We wish for Peace in our hearts, Peace in our homes and Peace in all lands.

With much love,

Margo & Murali