

Bhai Dalip Singh Paonta Sahib Wale



Birth

Bhai sahib was born in 1943 at Gujjaranwala, now in Pakistan. His father was Bhai Seva Singh and his mother was Khusyalya Kaur. After the partition, his family moved to Hoshiarpur, Jamunanagar and in 1964 to Paonta Sahib.

Family

He got married to Iqbal Kaur at the age of 20 year at at Gardsharkankar. He has **2 sons** Ratanjit Singh (Bunty) born in 1965 and Gurpreet Singh (Sonu), born in 1972 and two daughters, Sharanjit Kuar, born in 1969 and Baljit Kaur, born in 1974. They are all married. Both the daughters live in the Punjab with their families and both the sons live in Paonta Sahib.

Arrival at Paonta Sahib

Two months after Bhai Sahib arrived at Paonta Sahib in 1964, he opened a shop selling pots and pans, utensils and kitchenware known as ***Singh Bartan Bhandar*** . He ran this business for his entire life and at present the younger son Gurpreet (Sonu) is running it very successfully.

Religious

After he came to Paonta Sahib Bhai Sahib met Baba Nihal Singh Harian Welan Wale in 1964. This was about the time when Baba Nihal Singh and his jatha had taken action against the Mahants to free the control over Sri Darbar sahib from the Mahants. During the course of the action to vest control from the Mahants, eleven Singh were martyred. Baba Ji himself was injured. Bhai sahib went to the hospital to visit him there. Ever since then, they established a loving and genuine relationship that lasted till of Bhai sahib's passing.

Bhai sahib had been baptised before he came to Paonta Sahib. But after his arrival at Paonta Sahib, he began attending programs organised by the Akhand Kirtani Jatha on a regular basis. He was

fortunate to have met Bhai Sahib Bhai Randir Singh during his lifetime. Bhai Sahib regularly attended the Desura samagams at Delhi.

Seva

Bhai Sahib was passionate about his commitment to serve the panth and his devotion was unflinching. His dedication and resolve in starting and maintaining various kinds of seva at Paonta Sahib were an inspiration to many.

For twelve continuous years he did daily nishkaam seva at Sri Darbar Sahib at Paonta Sahib to clean, wash, maintain and display the Shastar of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji. After the new Gurdwara Sahib was built, he did the Chowki Sahib di seva.

Bhai Sahib loved to play *gatka* and was extremely good at it. He had a passion for performing and training others in gatka. He founded the Sahib *Hargobind Shahstar Vadiala* in 1965 and ran it almost single handedly for forty years. This was a remarkable achievement and one that attracted the attention and inspiration of Sikhs not just from the Punjab but also from North America. He gave gatka training to almost three hundred North American Sikhs, including Nanak Dev Singh. Nanak Dev Singh wrote about this in a book that he later published. The books contain various pictures of Bhai sahib.

Bhai Sahib had a deep reverence and love for Gurbani and the Shabad Guru. For eighteen years, he was the President of *Sukhmani Sahib Society* in Paonta Sahib.

Bhai Jasbir Singh Ji Khalsa Khaney Wale

Bhai Sahib first met Bhai Jasbir Singh Khalsa Khaney Waley in 1989 at Paonta Sahib. This was when Bhai Jasbir Singh Ji had gone there for a kirtan samagam. They formed an instant attachment and developed an intense love and respect for each other that lasted for the rest of their lives.

After that first meeting, they continued to meet regularly at Paonta Sahib, as well as Sohana. They also travelled together to samagams at Delhi, Mansuri, Shimla, Dehra Dun and Rishikesh.

Bhai Jasbir Singh made between twenty five to thirty visits to Paonta Sahib to meet Bhai Sahib. The marriage ceremonies of Bhai sahib's elder son, Ratanjit Singh as well as his elder daughter, Swarnjit Kaur were held at Sohana and the kirtan was sung by Bhai Jasbir Singh Ji. Two days before

Ratanjit's wedding, Bhai Jasbir Singh attended unannounced at Bhai Sahib's residence at Paonta Sahib and gave them a pleasant surprise. Ratanjit's wedding was also attended by Baba Nihal Singh and Baba Ram Singh, Nanaksar wale.

Such was the love and closeness between the two of them that Bhai Jasbir Singh Ji attended all the family functions of Bhai sahib at Paonta Sahib. Bhai sahib also used to visit Bhai Jasbir Singh at Sohana every month or other month. They had a telepathic relationship and whenever one of them felt a longing to be with the other, one of them would find his way to meet the other.

Bhai Jasbir Singh was proud to state in the sangat on various occasions that he accepted Bhai Dalip Singh as his elder brother. He stated proudly that he received a gift from Paonta Sahib in the form of an elder brother

Passing

Bhai Sahib passed away on Jan 3rd 2006. Bhai Jasbir Singh Ji was in Delhi on that day. He was attending a three day samagam at Delhi when he heard the news of his friend's passing. Bhai Jasbir Singh Ji cut short his engagement at the Delhi samagam and left immediately for Paonta Sahib. He was present for the funeral and the antim ardas. Although he was overcome by emotion, he did kirtan at the Bhog ceremony.

During the kirtan Bhai Jasbir Singh Ji stated that it was at the same place when he attended in 1989 that Bhai Sahib had heard his kirtan for the first time and he was now doing kirtan in his memory at the exact same place for the last time. (*Bhai Jasbir Singh never went to Paonta Sahib after that*).

Between fifteen to twenty

thousand people attended Bhai sahib's funeral and antim ardas. Sangat from all over India, including Delhi, Kanpur, Bombay and Ludhiana attended in buses. Businesses in the entire town was closed as a mark of respect after he passed.

Stature in Paonta Sahib

Bhai sahib was a very well respected Gursikh in Paonta Sahib, He was respected and loved not just by the Sikh community but by people from all religions. He was always willing to help anyone in need.

Baba Nihal Singh maintains close ties to Bhai Sahib's family and visits Paonta Sahib annually on May 22nd - the date on which Sri Darbar Sahib was freed from the control of the Mahants. Bhai sahib's elder son, Ratanjit Singh (Bunty) continues to do the Chowki Sahib di seva every day as was done by his father.