

The Journey Of Radha Kishen Kaul (Karihaloo)

On January 31, 2012, at 4:38 P.M., the journey of Radha Kishen Kaul (Karihaloo) came to an end at Willow Glen Nursing Home, San Jose, California. He was in a state of declining health since 2001. He was 84.

Baitoth, as we fondly called him, was born on April 13, 1927 at Namachbal, Fateh Kadal, to Late Dama and Devmaal Kaul (Karihaloo). The Karihaloo clan of six brothers and their families, supported by an army of servants, must have developed in him the instincts and skills of survival, which he later must have used all his life with finesse. Also, being one in a large group of siblings and cousins must have made him competitive and an attention-seeker.

After regular schooling in Srinagar, the bulk of his family and he moved to Shimla, Punjab (now Himachal Pradesh). There he began the Werther period of his life. He was sensitive, thoughtful, morose, and solitary. During this interlude I visited him in Kothgarh, a few hours from Shimla in bus, where he was working. The two of us, somewhat similar at that stage of our lives, bonded invisibly.

Baitoth graduated from Punjab University in 1950 and joined State Bank Of India in Shimla in 1951. On October 10, 1952 he married Shanta Shangloo of Kralkhud (near Habba Kadal), in Srinagar, through the marriage brokering by my mother, Arunaji. In 1954 he moved to Kashmir for good and lived in the family premises at Mandir Bagh. In 1956 his family moved to Lambert Lane (near The Bundh).

His marriage and move to Lambert Lane ushered an entirely new phase in Baitoth's life, and more significantly gave birth to a new Baitoth. He became more social, hard-working, and worldly than ever before. He kept long hours at his work and dreamt of property ownership and high-end networking. He launched

the construction of a new house at 446 Jawahar Nagar in 1959. During the construction, at times, he lived in the construction tent, but without missing a day of his work. His consistent hard work at his employment accrued a steady growth in his position. His social life continued to grow, to the extent that Lambert Lane became a hub of the Karihaloo family and even touched the clan. The family expanded with the arrival of three children: Vinay, Promila, and Rashmi. His adrenaline then must have been flowing high.

How did a man of his sensitivity and preoccupation with himself become a man of the world must remain a challenge to the human personality scientists. I think his marriage put him against a big challenge. He had a small job at the time of his marriage, without any significant financial resources to boot. He took the challenge and set his mind and heart, and worked hard, to acquire material security to his and his family's life. His persistent hard work turned his efforts into success.

If it were only the worldly success that was associated with Baitoth's life, there would not have been much to write about his life. After all, he didn't become super-rich. His old self - sensitive, affectionate, and caring nature had not died, but was still alive. It is that aspect of Baitoth that we celebrate today. He became a caring node of the Karihaloo clan, after the death of its seniors. He networked extensively in it. He worried about his relatives' misfortunes, illnesses, and other problems, and was always willing to help them if he could. He was involved in their lives, though in a low-key manner. His homes at Lambert Lane and Jawahar Nagar became the public squares to meet for his relatives. When a relative met him one could see the emotion coursing through him. He was inherently a hopelessly family-man. He couldn't have lived alone. What is interesting is that he continued to have his self-involved and shy persona.

He would not have succeeded in the world as much as he did, if it were not for the special personality of his wife, Shanta. Her qualities of patience, tact, tenacity, and consistency, provided him with encouragement in his efforts, made Baitoth the man of the world he became. They were among a handful of our relatives

whose marriages worked. They were different and yet what created the magic between them was their complimentary attributes. But more credit goes to her because of her self-effacing partnership.

Baitoth retired from State Bank Of India in 1988 at the position of a Public Relations Officer. He reveled in that role as it afforded networking opportunities with the rich, famous, poor, and ordinary. In 1989 he moved to Delhi, selling his Jawahar Nagar house in 2000. He lived there in Vasant Kunj in a previously acquired house. In Delhi he worked for some time in a financial institution, and then with Dharamvir Batra Group Of Industries. He also briefly flirted with carpet business. Kashmir was the best phase of his life. Forced to move out from there and sell his house by the political circumstances was sorrowful for him. He could never build another sanctuary anywhere.

All his children are well-settled and well-adjusted in their lives. They have acquired their father's tug of heart for their relatives.

Did we know Baitoth fully? There may be in the minds and hearts of people special feelings and thoughts, which were engendered by special situations in their lives, which others may not be aware of. So, each person may have an element of mystery about him, which he carries with him to the other world. And that is the way it should be. I believe Baitoth has carried with him that mystery to the abode of eternity where he is resting now.

Bitoth is survived by:

His wife: Shanta, San Jose, California

Their children:

Vinay and his wife Sushma, San Jose, California. Grandchildren: Ashish, his wife Ishika, and Nidhi

Promila and her husband Romesh Kaul. New Delhi, India. Grandchildren: Nikhil and Ayusha

Rashmi and her husband Anil Kaul. Tulsa, Oklahoma. Grandchildren: Shivani and Pranav

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