

ON UP
Reaching Allah Most High



SYDNEY SUHBA 2012

JUNE 8 – 11, 2012

SHEIKH NUH KELLER



WELCOME

Welcome to the 2012 Sydney Suhba. This document contains some useful resources that may benefit you during your stay, as well as a reminder of the proper adab of attending the Suhba.

Please note that the official Suhba program will commence on Friday, 8 June 2012 until Monday, 11 June 2012 with the full schedule detailed on page 6 of this document.

Sheikh Nuh Keller will be giving a public lecture prior to the commencement of the Suhba with the details as follows:

Title: **Sufism and the Twenty-First Century Muslim**
Location: Lakemba Mosque, 71-75 Wangee Road, Lakemba NSW 2195
Date/Time: Thursday, 7 June 2012, after Isha prayers (approximately 7:00pm)

Please forward any enquiries to info@sydneysuhba.com

About Sheikh Nuh Keller

Sheikh Nuh Keller was born in 1954 and raised as a Roman Catholic in rural Washington State. He is a third-generation American of German ancestry on his father's side, and German, Scottish, and Irish on his mother's. During the 1970's and 1980's between his academic studies and work as a commercial fisherman in the North Pacific, he underwent a journey of reflection that culminated in his becoming Muslim. Nearly three decades later, he has become one of the most authoritative voices of traditional, moderate Islam in the English-speaking world.

Sheikh Nuh studied philosophy, focusing on the epistemology of ethical theory, with Andrew J. Bjelland at Gonzaga University and with the French philosopher Paul Ricoeur, author of *The Symbolism of Evil* and *The Conflict of Interpretations*, at the University of Chicago. He became interested in the Qur'an and began studying Classical Arabic at Chicago in 1975. He traveled to Cairo, Egypt in 1976, where he became Muslim at the famed al-Azhar University in 1977. He completed a graduate degree in philosophy from the University of California at Los Angeles in 1979.

Later that year he returned to the Middle East to pursue private studies with Islamic scholars in Syria and Jordan. In Damascus, he read Shafi'i jurisprudence (fiqh) and tenets of faith ('aqida) with Sheikh 'Abd al-Wakil al-Durubi, and Sufism and tenets of faith with Sheikh 'Abd al-Rahman al-Shaghouri. In Amman, he read Shafi'i fiqh and Qur'an recital (tajwid) with Sheikh Yunus Hamdan, Hanafi fiqh with Sheikh Ahmad al-Khudari, Shafi'i fiqh and tenets of faith with Sheikh Nuh 'Ali Salman al-Qudah, prophetic aphorisms and practices (hadith) and Hanafi fiqh with Sheikh Shu'ayb al-Arna'ut, and Hanafi fiqh and tenets of faith with Sheikh Ahmad al-Jammal.

In 1982 he took the Shadhili tariqa from Sheikh Abdul Rahman Shaghouri in

Damascus. Though often separated from him for extended periods of time due to political exigencies, Sheikh Nuh assiduously applied the teachings of the Shadhili tariqa and Islamic Sacred Law. Nearly 15 years after first taking Sheikh Nuh as his student, Sheikh Abdul Rahman Shaghouri in 1996 invested him as a full sheikh of the tariqa to guide disciples to ihsan, or "worshipping Allah as though you see Him," as defined by Islamic tradition.

Sheikh Nuh has a wide following of students. Most reside in English-speaking countries—the United States, Canada, England, and Australia—as well as Turkey, Pakistan, and the Middle East. To better serve his students, he holds suhbas—informal gatherings where a Sufi sheikh teaches about the path—in various cities throughout the world. He has also given public lectures at universities such as Oxford, Cambridge, Stanford, Harvard, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and the University of California at Los Angeles.

In addition to teaching Sufism, Sheikh Nuh has written several books and articles on a wide range of subjects. Perhaps his most important work to date is the voluminous *Reliance of the Traveller*, an annotated English translation of 'Umdat al-Salik, a Shafi'i legal work by Ahmad ibn Naqib al-Misri (d. 769/1368). It contains over six thousand legal rulings, and was the first English translation of an Islamic legal work to be certified by al-Azhar University. The translation was begun in 1982 and reviewed over a course of five years with Sheikh 'Abd al-Wakil al-Durubi and Sheikh Nuh Ali Salman al-Qudah, both of whom gave written certifications to him for it. Since its first publication in 1990, over thirty thousand copies have been printed. It has not only gained a wide readership among Western Muslims, but has also become the standard reference for non-Muslim academics in America and Britain who teach Islamic jurisprudence at university level.

Other works include *Port in a Storm*, a comprehensive treatment of the Muslim direction of prayer, as well as a short account of the author's conversion entitled *Becoming Muslim*. The Sheikh also produced a number of tariqa-related literature and recordings, including a translation of selected Shadhili litanies and a booklet explaining the practices and structure of the tariqa entitled *The High Path*. In early 2011, Sheikh Nuh completed the writing of *Sea Without Shore: A Manual of the Sufi Path*. This is a practical manual for those travelling the path of Sufism.

With the appearance of *Reliance of the Traveller*, Muslims in the West looked to Sheikh Nuh as a spokesman for traditional Islam. He gave a number of seminars and speaking tours to promote the book's basic manifesto—the superiority of traditional Islam over the reformist versions espoused by the Salafi/Wahhabi and modernist camps. He is joined in this effort by other writers and speakers such as Habib Umar bin Hafiz, Habib Ali al-Jifri, and Imam Zaid Shakir. These scholars have sparked something of a mini-Renaissance among Muslims around the world, inspiring many to seek traditional Islamic knowledge of the four Sunni legal schools (madhhabs). The rejection of parochial modernism and Wahhabi ideology is perhaps one of the more significant influences that Sheikh Nuh and similar scholars have had on the practice of Islam in the West.

Current information about the Sheikh can be found at www.masud.co.uk, a website devoted to expositing traditional Islam via the Internet, and www.shadhilitariqa.com, a site maintained by Sheikh Nuh's students that provides a comprehensive introduction to the Shadhili tariqa. He continues to divide his time between translating, writing, and teaching disciples about the Sufi path. He resides with his wife in Amman, Jordan.

Adab



“Adab is one of the biggest secrets of the spiritual path”

“Often the madad (spiritual help) is contained in the first few minutes of the session”

Adab is one of the biggest secrets of the spiritual path, and exhibiting poor adab disrupts the spiritual haal of the Suhba. In order to facilitate this noble gathering, the following is a reminder of the instructions of the Sheikh regarding the adab of attending the Suhba:

- One should always be on wudu' during the Suhba sessions.
- Brothers are required to cover their heads during the Suhba; a white cap is preferable, but other Islamic headdresses are also permitted.
- Sisters are required to wear a face veil (niqab) whilst on the premises.
- For men wearing perfume, please only wear high quality, alcohol-free scents such as rose, 'oud, or sandalwood.
- Please switch off your mobile phone before entering the building.

- Being late to the mudhakara sessions is an insult to the knowledge being taught. Often the madad (spiritual help) is contained in the first few minutes of the session. Please be seated in the hall at least ten minutes before the start of the session.

- One should not yawn in the presence of the Sheikh, slouch, fidget, look at one's watch or the like, because of the unconcern and lack of adab it shows. One must watch for the benefit Allah creates in the presence of the Sheikh as a cat waits at a mouse-hole.

- Questions asked to the Sheikh during the Suhba should be related to tasawwuf. Questions of fiqh and aqeeda should only be asked if they pertain to the spiritual path.

- Please do not bring or use any recording equipment such as MP3 players to record the sessions. The organisers of the Suhba will take on this responsibility and the recordings will be made available after the Suhba.

- The Sheikh requests that no cameras, video equipment, camera phones or any photographic paraphernalia be used at any time during the Suhba.

- If you have any concerns regarding the building or surroundings, please bring them to the attention of the Suhba organisers.

- It is part of good Adab to not park illegally and block our neighbours' driveways and garages.

- Please do not loiter in the front or surrounding areas of the Zawiya after the lessons are over so as not to disturb the neighbours.

Details

Children

The Sydney Suhba is an adult educational event and children under twelve years old, including babies, will not be admitted. Children over twelve must be able to sit quietly for extended periods of time during the sessions. Parents are requested to make their own child care arrangements.

Dress Requirements

Brothers are required to dress appropriately and to wear a head covering during the entire duration of the Suhba and when on the premises of the Zawiya.

Sisters are required to wear a face veil (niqab) when attending the sessions for the Suhba. For those who do not want to wear the niqab or unable to do so for any reasons, they are requested to sit in the back hall of the Zawiya. Please bring your own niqabs for the Suhba.

Venue and Facilities

The venue for the Suhba is the Shadhili Zawiya at 52 Park Road, Auburn NSW 2144. The premises is located a short ten minute walk from Auburn train station. Toilets and wudu' facilities for both men and women are located at the rear of the premises.

Parking

At present, there have been difficulties finding parking on the main street, Park Road, as well as the surrounding side streets. Please ensure that you do not park illegally or block driveways to attend the Suhba. We have maintained good relationships with the neighbours surrounding the Zawiya so please do not jeopardise this by parking your vehicles illegally or blocking driveways and garages. Where possible, it is advised that car pooling be utilised as an option to get to the Suhba venue.

Arrival

On Arrival there will be people assigned to help direct you to the appropriate entrance. Brothers enter via the pathway on the right, and sisters to the left. Please do not loiter around the front of the building. When walking up the pathways, please be mindful of noise so as to not disturb the proceedings inside.

If you require any assistance or have any questions, then please ask those wearing name tags who have been assigned to assist.

Bazaar

A small bazaar will be open for trade during breaks and free time, and will be closed during the mudhakara sessions and prayer times. Awrad books of the Shadhili Tariqa as well as other Tariqa-related material will be available for purchase including the famed Dala'il al-Khayrat and Sheikh Nuh's latest book, Sea Without Shore.

Food

Lunch and late supper will be provided for those attending the Suhba. Halal food outlets are also plentiful in the main street of Auburn, which are located only a few blocks away.

If you have any special dietary requirements or restrictions then please contact prior to the Suhba:

Abdullah Ahmed khidmah@sydneysuhba.com

International and Interstate Attendees

We recommend staying at the Best Western Lidcombe Motor Inn which is around 5 minutes by car or taxi from the Zawiya. The contact details are as follows:

Best Western Lidcombe Motor Inn

Cnr Mark and Taylor Streets
Lidcombe NSW 2141
Sydney, Australia

Telephone: +61 2 9646 5799
Fax: +61 2 9749 1648

Discounted bookings can be made online through
<http://lidcombe.bestwestern.com.au/features.aspx>

Any interstate or international mureeds or guests who are intending to attend the Sydney Suhba 2012, please email Sidi Karim Amin at travel@sydneysuhba.com for further information and assistance with your travel plans.

Useful Contacts

If you have any further questions regarding the Suhba, please feel free to contact the following people:

Omar Helal	0420.375.403
Yahya Lim	0466.999.332

Email Enquiries:

info@sydneysuhba.com

2012 SYDNEY SUHBA SCHEDULE

<i>Friday 8th June</i>		<i>Sunday, 10th June</i>	
5:45pm - 6:15pm	Welcoming Guests	10:30 am - 12:00pm	5th Mudhakara Session
6:20pm - 6:50 pm	Isha Prayer	12:00pm - 12:30pm	Dhuhr Prayer
7:00pm - 8:00pm	1st Mudhakara Session with Q & A	12:30pm - 1:30pm	6th Mudhakara Session - Q & A
8:15pm - 9:00pm	Light Supper	1:30pm - 2:15pm	Women's Lesson - Sheikh Nuh
		2:30pm - 3:40pm	Lunch and Asr Prayer
<i>Saturday, 9th June</i>			
10:00 am - 12:00pm	2nd Mudhakara Session	3:40pm - 4:50pm	Free Time
12:00pm - 12:30pm	Dhuhr Prayer	5:00pm - 6:20pm	Maghrib Prayer and Free Time
12:30pm - 1:30pm	3rd Mudhakara Session - Q & A	6:20pm - 6:50 pm	Isha Prayer
2:00pm - 3:30pm	Lunch and Asr Prayer	7:00pm - 8:00pm	7th Mudhakara Session with Q & A
3:30pm - 4:50pm	Free Time	8:15pm - 9:00pm	Light Supper
5:00pm- 6:20pm	Maghrib Prayer and Free Time		
		<i>Monday, 11th June</i>	
6:20pm - 6:50 pm	Isha Prayer	10:00 am - 12:00pm	8th Mudhakara Session
7:00pm - 8:00pm	4th Mudhakara Session with Q & A	12:00pm - 12:30pm	Dhuhr Prayer
8:15pm - 9:00pm	Light Supper	12:30pm - 1:30pm	Lunch
N.B. This schedule is subject to change. Please refer to the latest schedule posted near the entrances, or as announced during the Suhba. If in doubt, approach the organisers with name tags for schedule updates.		N.B. Take note that there will be Inshad sessions and possibly a Mawlid and/or Hadra during the free periods where there are no lessons scheduled. Announcements will be made to advise of these additional sessions.	

