

November 2013



THE CONCH

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"Lord Sri Krishna and Arjuna blew their celestial conches to rally and enthuse the devotees."

NEWSLETTER

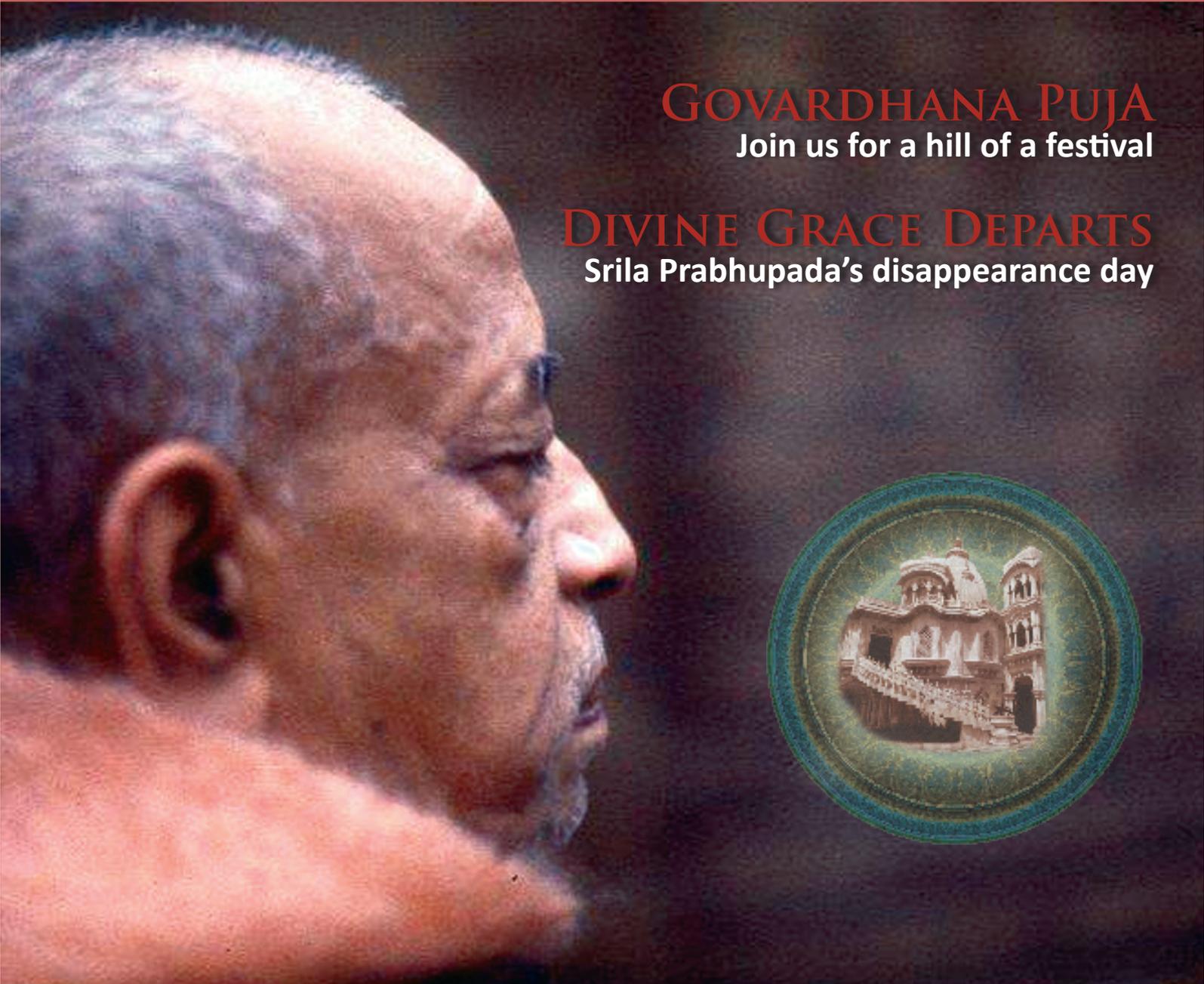
New Govardhana Community



krishnafarm.com

Dedicated to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, Founder-Acharya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

Tirobhava Mahotsava of *Srila Prabhupada* Thursday, 7 November 2013



GOVARDHANA PUJA

Join us for a hill of a festival

DIVINE GRACE DEPARTS

Srila Prabhupada's disappearance day

GOVARDHANA PUJA

By *Ambika devi dasi*

The name 'Govardhana' has two meanings: 'Go' means 'cows' and 'vardhana' means 'nourishment'. 'Go' also means 'the senses' and 'vardhana' is 'to increase'. So Govardhana nourishes the cows and increases the senses in attraction to Krishna.

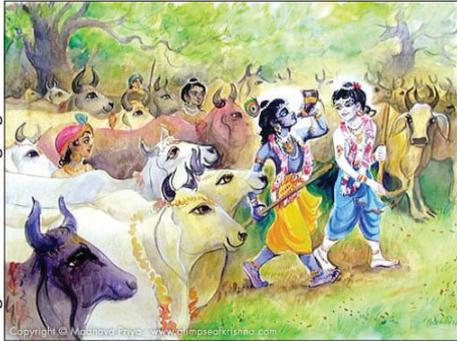


Image: www.iskconctg.org

Govardhana Hill is actually formed in the shape of a peacock. In the introduction to *Madhurya Dham* by Padmalocana dasa, it is described: "Within the Holy Vraja Dham, Govardhana Hill is topmost. Radha-kunda and Shyama-kunda are the tear-filled eyes of Govardhana where Radha Krishna enjoy Their most nectarean pastimes.

"Govardhana manifested from the heart of Lord Shri Krishna by the desire of Shrimati Radharani. He is non-different to Radha Krishna. His mood is as Their servant. He also serves all the residents of Vraja."

The Vrindavana cowherd men began preparing a sacrifice for pleasing the water supplier – Lord Indra. Wishing to firmly establish exclusive devotional service during His presence in Vrindavana, Krishna persuaded His father to put aside



Image: back2godhead.com

The pastime of lifting Govardhana Hill is the only pastime of Lord Krishna when all the residents of Vrindavana are present.

the traditional ceremony in favour of worshipping Govardhana Hill. To please Krishna, Nanda Maharaja agreed to worship Govardhana Hill and the local *brahmanas*.

Krishna instructed the residents to prepare very tasty foodstuffs, to invite the local *brahmanas* and give them charity, to worship Govardhana Hill, to decorate and feed the cows, and to give out sumptuous *prasadam*.

When everything was complete, Krishna assumed a gigantic transcendental form and declared that He Himself was Govardhana Hill. He ate hundreds of offerings that had been presented and requested more! Indra responded with fury. He sent lightning, thunder, severe wind and incessant rain as thick as pillars to devastate Vrindavana.

When Vrindavana began to flood, the trembling residents, including the animals, approached Govinda for shelter. As a child picks up a mushroom, He lifted Govardhana Hill on His left pinkie and remained holding the hill for seven days. No-one was troubled by hunger, thirst or any discomfort. Thus Indra's pride was smashed and Krishna's beloved devotees were saved.

This important festival in honour of Krishna's unique pastime will be celebrated at New Govardhana on Sunday, 3 November.

References: *Krishna Book; Madhurya Dham, Introduction, by Padmalocana dasa.*



Photograph: Urvasi devi dasi

Devotees offer the cows of New Govardhana fresh new grasses as part of the Go Puja festivities.

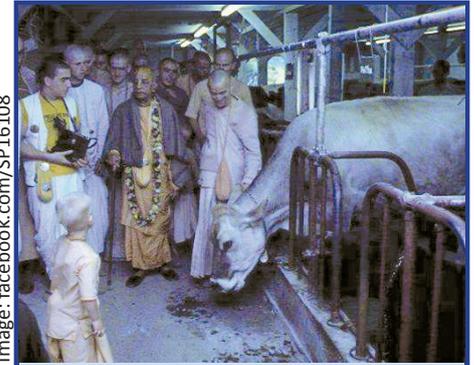


Image: facebook.com/SP16108

ISKCON Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Srila Prabhupada Uvaca

Lord Krishna wanted to encourage His cowherd boyfriends, who had been swallowed by Aghasura and then stolen by Lord Brahma. Therefore the Lord decided to bring them into the palm-tree forest called Talavana, where there were many delicious ripe fruits.

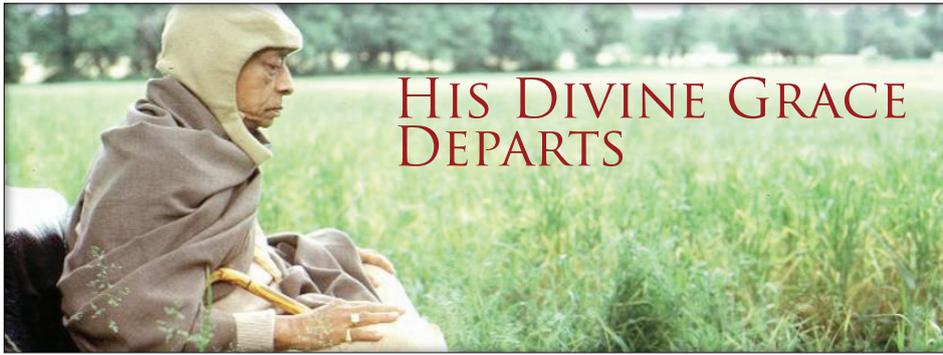
Since Lord Krishna's spiritual body had apparently grown slightly in age and strength, the senior men of Vrindavana, headed by Nanda Maharaja, decided to promote Krishna from the task of herding calves to the status of a regular cowherd boy. He would now take care of the full-grown cows, bulls and oxen. Out of great affection, Nanda Maharaja had previously considered Krishna too small and immature to take care of full-grown cows and bulls.

It is stated in the Karttika-mahatmya section of the *Padma Purana*:

"The eighth lunar day of the bright fortnight of the month of Karttika is known by authorities as Gopastami. From that day, Lord Vasudeva served as a cowherd, whereas previously He had tended the calves."

The word *padai* ... indicates that Lord Krishna blessed the earth by walking on her surface with His lotus feet. The Lord wore no shoes or other footgear but walked barefoot in the forest, giving great anxiety to the girls of Vrindavana, who feared that His soft lotus feet would be injured.

Purport Srimad-Bhagavatam 10:15:1



By Mukunda Goswami

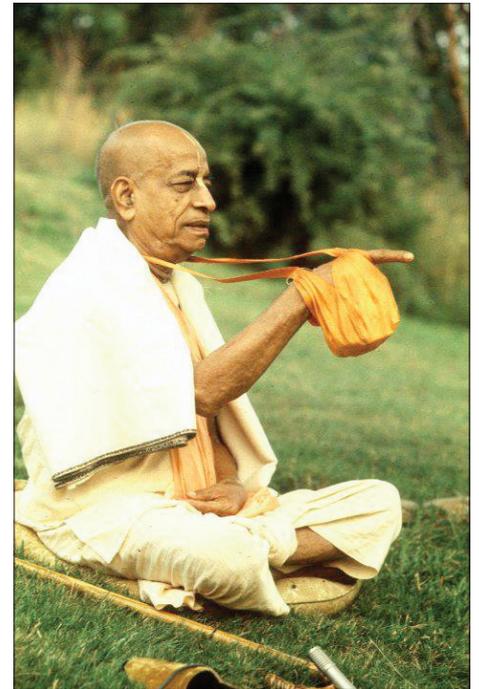
Some say that Srila Prabhupada came directly from the spiritual world. Others may disagree, but almost all of his followers regard him as being beyond just a saintly person. He singlehandedly took Krishna consciousness to the western world and with the help of enthusiastic young disciples, in a very short time grew his seedling movement into the worldwide, thriving International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON).

Srila Prabhupada (A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami), the Founder-Acharya of ISKCON, often referred to his movement, ISKCON, as an institution. He insisted that ISKCON be incorporated, initially in the US, England and India. All this goes to show that he was keenly conscious of the 'culture of succession'. He knew he wouldn't physically be in this world forever. He even established, during his time with us, what he named the 'Governing Body Commission' (GBC) to manage ISKCON internationally.

Thirty-three years after his passing from this world on 14 November 1977, a prominent worldly publication (*Newsweek* magazine) recognised him by saying this:

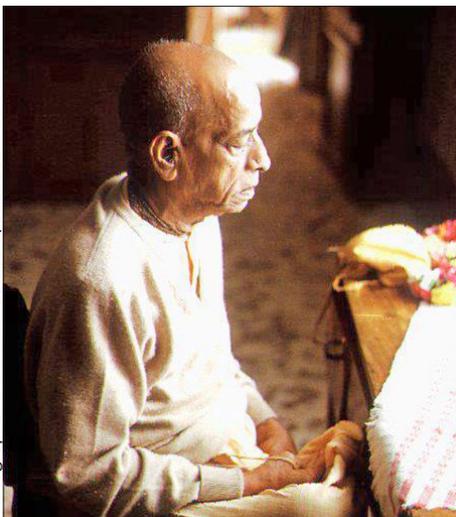
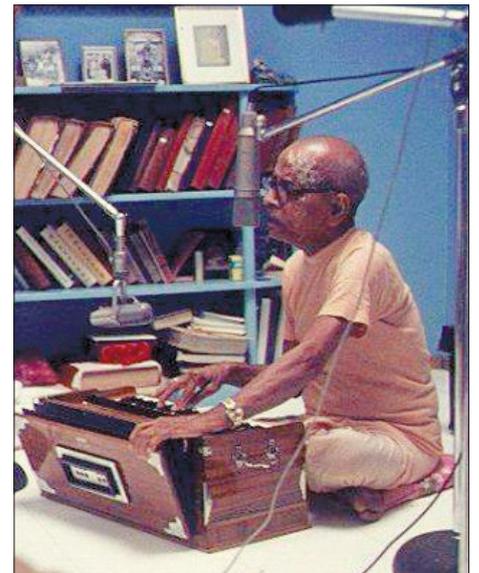
"A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Srila Prabhupada's spiritual journey began early in life, but it wasn't until he went to New York from India in 1965 that the Hare Krishna phenomenon went global. Prabhupada, 69 years old at the time and holding about \$7 to his name, made the trip alone from India to America on an ocean freighter. Soon after, he founded the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, the organization through which he recruited more followers to the denomination known as the Hare Krishna Movement. The movement was rooted in Hindu culture but embraced the idea of a single God. Prabhupada began touring the world on lecture tours, circling the globe 14 times in 11 years. He eventually wrote more than 70 books before he died in 1977 at 81."

Srila Prabhupada has left an indelible mark on our psyche and our hearts, and he has extended his mercy to not only his direct disciples but to his grand disciples and great grand disciples. Although we are left inconsolable at the loss of seeing his divine form, we understand that Prabhupada lives forever in his instructions and in his many books. 🙏



"He reasons ill who tells that Vaishnavas die, When thou art living still in sound! The Vaishnavas die to live, and living try to spread the holy name around!"

– Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura



GROW GREEN AT NEW GOVARDHANA

By **Damodara Pandit dasa**

The past few years have seen some bumper crops emerge from the flourishing New Govardhana gardens.

This year, 2.5 acres have been cultivated under the supervision of Madreya dasa and Akelis. Each day, 8–10 devotees and volunteers work in the garden for five hours at a time. On average the garden is supplying 35 boxes of vegetables a week.

The most abundant veggies have been potatoes, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, silverbeet, kale, carrots and beetroot.

“During the month of June, the garden produced a record 94 boxes of veggies,” says Madreya dasa. “These boxes mainly go to the Temple, but the surplus goes to Govindas restaurant and is also sold to guests during the Sunday Feast.”

If you would like a box of fresh organic veggies, please contact Henrike on 0450 246 542. 📞



Photo: Urvashi devi dasi



Photo: Urvashi devi dasi



Photo: Trevor Gore

It's all happening in the veggie gardens at New Govardhana.

NEWS FROM THE COWSHED

By **Venu Gopal dasa**

The *goshalla* at New Govardhana, in its current location, is now in its fifth year, and although life is a bit slower living with cows, that doesn't mean nothing happens. What does happen with the cows is ecstatic, but unfortunately sometimes it goes over our busy heads.

If you slow down a bit and take their association, you will find an abundant wealth of action going on in their wonderfully *sattvic* lives. I can't help noticing how much the devotees love taking time out to mingle with the cows. It is gratifying to see how hearts become filled with goodness just by being in the association of our four-legged mothers and fathers.

The past five years have afforded much happiness with many beautiful calves growing into fine cows and bullocks. But we have also had our fair share of sadness with the loss of many fine elderlies and calves. However, we push on to the best of our abilities and trust that our efforts are pleasing to Srila Prabhupada and the Supreme Lord and the devotees.

Some substantial achievements in New Govardhana Cow Protection have been reached, such as new fencing for the entire property, which

is 70 per cent completed, and the adopt-a-cow program. Shelters have been built in all the paddocks to protect the cows in harsh weather conditions, and we are also improving pasture quality and weed eradication. A reliable and diverse water supply is also a priority.

We are building a selective breeding program with the aim of achieving steady herd numbers and quality offspring. A major initiative is establishing a quality herd of pure-bred Girs. I want to secure the future of this superlative breed, which is almost non-existent in Australia and has even become endangered in India.

The *goshalla* provides the Deities sufficient milk for Their daily worship and pleasure, and we are creating an outlet to supply New Govardhana milk products to our community. The cows are not just about milk, so we are supplying manure to the organic gardens at the farm – and the bullocks are being trained for ploughing and transportation.

I'd like to thank all of the devotees who give some of their precious time to make it all happen. You know who you are, so many thanks! 🙏

SEEDLINGS NEEDED!

The Krishna Village team is planning to increase sustainability, planting even more trees – fruit, nuts and patches of rainforest. If you have any small trees, particularly orange and mandarin, or other veggie or fruit seedlings that you could donate to this program, please get in touch.

Contact Henrike: 0450 246 542.



Photo: Trevor Gore

Venu Gopal dasa training Govardhana to follow voice commands.

FRIENDS FROM MULLUM HIGH SCHOOL

By Yasoda devi dasi

Recently I received a request from Mary, one of the teachers of Year Nine students from Mullumbimby High school. They were studying International Studies and wished to visit New Govardhana on a bus tour. The students had recently finished a unit of work about food and culture and wanted to experience aspects of this within our community.

I organised Madreya dasa to lead the group through the gardens to discuss how they produce the vegetables, fruit, nuts and flowers in the WWOOFer program. We finished by all squeezing into the quiet reading room for a *kirtana* led by Madreya on guitar with Henrike and friends accompanying them.

We then headed up the hill to the Temple room where I spoke to them about the significance of food within our culture, as well as about the catering projects that we do at the many festivals both near and far. I dressed two volunteer students in a *sari* and *dhoti*, and all the class wanted to wear *tilaka*.

I spoke about how we offer our food to the Deities, after which *arati* started. All the students enthusiastically chanted and danced in a large circle during the *kirtana*, which was led by Uddhava Priya dasa and Bhakta Ariel. Bhakta Allan cooked a wonderful feast, which all of the students thoroughly enjoyed. Afterwards, the young visitors had fun meeting the students and teachers at the *gurukula*.

We have a range of people who visit New Govardhana on bus tours – they vary from the very young to seniors. We can cater to specific levels of these requirements. For more information, please email Yasoda on yasodaj@hotmail.com 🙏

KULI CATCH-UP Q&A

In our new segment, 'Kuli Catch-up Q&A' we will interview former New Govardhana *gurukula* students. For our inaugural interview, Damodara Pandit dasa shines the spotlight on Sri Prahlad dasa.



Photo: Source unknown

Sri Prahlad recently received his PhD.

DP: Can you tell us which *gurukulas* you attended and when?

SP: I attended four different *gurukulas* between 1980 and 1989 (ages 5–14). I was among the first eight children to enrol in the New Govardhana *gurukula* in 1980. In 1983, I went to India and enrolled in the Vrindavana *gurukula*. A year later, in 1984, I enrolled in Mayapur *gurukula*. In 1986–1987, I was between the Murwillumbah and Mayapur schools and in 1988–1989 I studied in the Hare Krishna School in Auckland, New Zealand.

DP: How did you enjoy your time in the ISKCON schooling system?

SP: My happiest childhood memories are from the New Govardhana *gurukula*. There was a lot of love and support from the community and the environment was so wholesome and beautiful. Moving to India exposed me to life's harsher aspects, and I quickly matured beyond my age.



Photo: Ananta Vrindanva dasa

Sri Pradhlad dasa, one of ISKCON's prominent kirtaneers.

DP: What would you say to any students currently attending *gurukula*?

SP: My message to devotee children is: Krishna knows you are special. He loves you and is always with you. Even if you make mistakes, Krishna will always be your best friend, guide and protector. With Krishna's help you can achieve anything in life.

DP: And to parents of students, do you have any suggestions?

SP: It is important for every child to be reassured that they are worthy of love – they should not doubt themselves regarding any apparent inadequacies. Encourage your child by emphasising their virtues and strengths.

DP: You have recently been awarded a PhD. What was the topic of your thesis and how will you use your qualifications to serve Srila Prabhupada?

SP: My doctorate was on compassion as a complex social relational process (i.e. Krishna's description of charity in *Bhagavad-gita* 17.20–22). My qualification facilitates my service to Srila Prabhupada both directly and indirectly. Indirect engagement comes from having a good job as a university lecturer, which financially supports my family and my sharing of *bhakti* in the community. Direct engagement comes from the trust people have in my degree and occupation, allowing them to be more open to my sharing *bhakti* with them. 🙏

Designer Wanted

The Conch is looking for an enthusiastic assistant designer to help produce the monthly newsletter and other projects.

Basic Indesign experience is essential. You will receive further training from our designer, Urvasi devi dasi. Your own computer with Indesign is required.

Please contact Urvasi via email at: devidasi_108@yahoo.com

KATYAYANI VRATA

By Mandakini devi dasi

In Vedic tradition, the month of Magasirsha (mid-October to mid-November) is a time when unmarried girls of Gokula aged between 10–14 years would observe a special vow to acquire a suitable husband.

For one month, they would eat unspiced *kichari*, which purifies the body, prior to performing ritualistic ceremonies.

Early in the morning, all the young *gopis* in Vrindavana would call out to each other, hold hands and loudly sing the pastimes of the Lord while bathing in the Yamuna river.

They would worship the goddess Katyayani by preparing a deity made from sand mixed with earth from the riverbank.

With earnest devotion, the *gopis* would offer *chandana*, flowers,



Goddess Katyayani (Durga) on her lion.

incense, fruit and grains. Daily they would pray: “O goddess, please be kind to us and arrange for our marriage with the son of Nanda Maharaja, Krishna.”

Understanding the minds of the *gopis*, Krishna mercifully fulfilled their desires.

Appearing on the bank of the river while they bathed, Krishna stole their garments, teasingly calling them to come before Him one by one to retrieve their clothes.

A woman cannot appear naked before any male except her husband, so Krishna by His trickery would compel the shivering damsels to come forward and in this way fulfill their ardent desire to have Him as their husband. 🙏

Source: Srimad-Bhagavatam, Tenth Canto, Chapter 22.

VRINDAVANA UNCOVERED

By Urvashi devi dasi

A disciple of Sri Gadadhara Pandit, Shri Bhugarbha Goswami shared an intimate friendship with Sri Lokanatha Goswami. Inspired by Lord Chaitanya, they were the first and most senior devotees to settle in Vrindavana.

Before the arrival of Shri Rupa and Shri Sanatana Goswamis, they tried to uncover the lost holy places of Radha-Govindaji. Unlike the aggressive approach of modern scientists to discover the unknown, Bhugarbha and Lokanatha Goswamis found Shri Krishna’s pastime forests by the humble method of surrender.

They simply wandered around Vrindavana calling out the names of her 12 forests, “Bhandiravan, Kamyavan, Mahavan, Talavan ...” And Shrimati Vrinda Devi (the maintainer of the forests and an expansion of Krishna’s pastime potency) revealed the exact location of each and every forest.

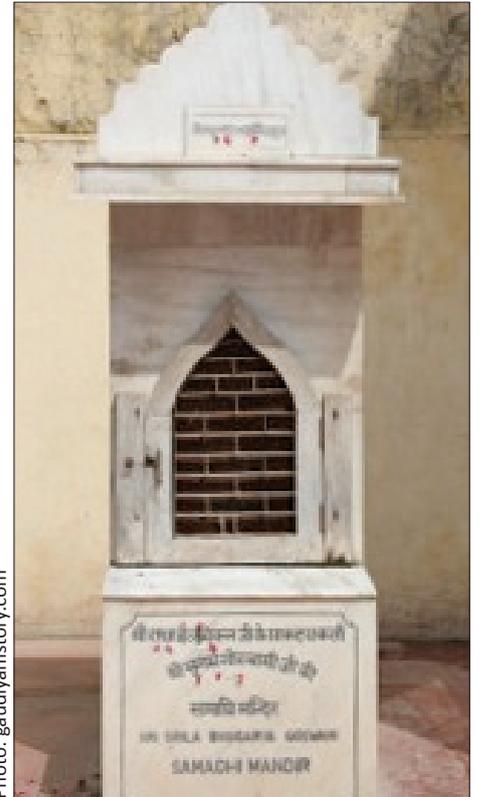
It is told that to avoid material distractions, Bhugarbha would perform his *bhajana* underground. So he received the name ‘Bhugarbha’ (*bhu* means ‘earth’, *garbha* means ‘cave’, ‘womb’, ‘hidden place’). He is Prema Manjari or Bhadra Rekhika in Radha Gopinatha’s *nitya-nikunja lila*.

Bhugarbha Goswami’s *samadhi* stands near Shri Rupa Goswami’s in the Radha Damodara Temple courtyard.

*shakha-nirnayamrita gosvaminam ca bhugarbham
bhugarbhottham suvishrutam
sada mahashayam vande krishna-prema-pradam prabhum
shrila-govinda-devasya seva-sukha-vilasinam
dayalum premadam svaccham nityam ananda-vigraham
(Shakha-nirnayamrita)*

I offer my reverence to the illustrious Bhugarbha prabhu, who is said to have been born from the bowels of the earth. He bestows love of Krishna; he takes pleasure in the service of Govinda Deva, is compassionate, simple and always joyful. 🙏

Source: <http://gaudiyahistory.com/sri-bhugarbha-goswami>



Samadhi (memorial) of Srila Bhugarbha Goswami, Vrindavana. Just as there is very little mentioned in the scriptures about the life of Srila Lokanatha Goswami, in the same way there is little written about his dear friend Srila Bhugarbha Goswami. Srila Lokanatha and Sri Bhugarbha Goswami were of one heart and mind.

HOLY NAME RETREAT ROCKS

By *Krsnarupa devi dasi (ACBSP)*

The 'Holy Name and Krishna Katha Retreat – The Great Journey to Vrindavana' held 4–7 October at New Govardhana was a great success. The speakers were Srila Prabhupada disciples Bhurijana dasa and his wife, Jagattarini devi dasi.

"I relished the advice from Jagattarini *mataji* because I understood them on a personal level. I could relate so easily, and I'll be able to apply her recommendations to my daily life," said Joan Miller from Sydney.

Set in the environment of New Govardhana's lush rolling hills, approximately 150 devotees attended *japa* workshops and listened to heart-capturing narrations of Krishna's wonderful pastimes in Vrindavana.

Steven Henderson, also from Sydney, said, "I'm taking away a better and deeper foundation for my *japa* practice. It is very inspiring."

"I feel so nourished, encouraged and valued after this retreat," says

Krishnangi devi dasi. "Some questions I had internally have been answered so eloquently and so practically by the speakers. I felt their genuine love for the devotees. It's been wonderful to have the concentrated association of so many Vaishnavas."

Registrations for the May 2014 Holy Name retreat will be opening shortly. Next year's retreat will be led by Sacinandana Swami and world-famous *kirtaneer* Madhava dasa. Don't miss out on the next one! 🍷

IN FOCUS

By *Mandakini devi dasi*

Advaita Chandra was born to devotee parents, Ambika devi dasi and Deva Dharma dasa, in 1983. He attended New Govardhana *gurukula* for five years before continuing his education in Vrindavana and Mayapur.

When he turned 18, Advaita signed up for six years in the Australian Air Force to be trained as an Avionics Technician. This highly specialised profession requires expertise in the servicing, maintenance and repair of fighter jets.

After his initial term was finished, Advaita opted to re-enlist for a further five years.

A period of travel followed his voluntary discharge, when he visited places like India, South America and Europe. Advaita now works as a personal trainer at national gym franchise Fitness First.

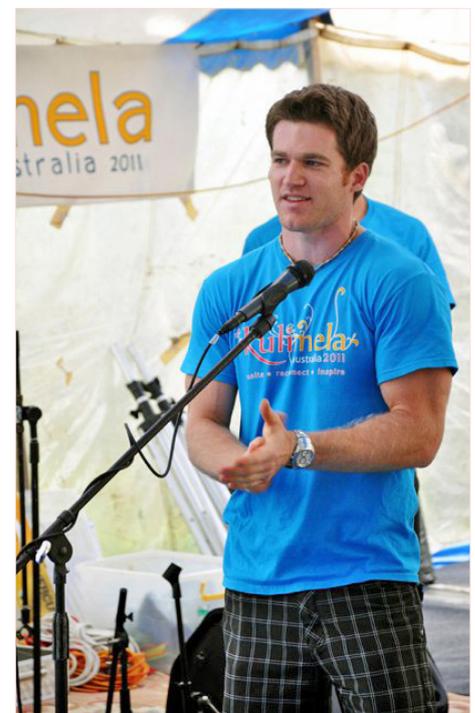
It was in 2009, after helping out with Kulimela gatherings in Los Angeles, Belgium and Australia that he felt particularly inspired to join forces with other older ex-gurukulis like

Sridham Navadvipa dasa (locally known as Shridas Johnson), Syama McRae, Nitai Durr and Dhruvananda dasa in presenting a venue ('Hanuman House') for the younger devotees.

Shridas conceived the idea for 'Hanuman House' at New Govardhana. This project is strongly supported by Ajita dasa who hosts the fortnightly club meetings at his home. The idea behind the project is that older mentors can impart their knowledge and skills to the younger generation. 🍷



High flyer Advaita Chandra.



Advaita Chandra at the New Govardhana 2011 Kulimela.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

The Conch is your community newsletter, and we invite you to submit articles for publication. Articles should be 200 words or less and supplied in MS Word via email to newgovconch@gmail.com. Photographs must be in JPG format. Please provide the name of the author and

the photographer. Anonymous submissions will not be published.

Deadline is the 12th of each month for publication in future editions. Occasionally a submission could be held over to a later edition. All submissions may be edited, proofread or rejected without notice.



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Damodara Pandit dasa

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Govardhana Seva dasa

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(layout and graphic design)

Trevor Gore (photography)

For enquiries, comments or suggestions,

contact: newgovconch@gmail.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

Govardhana Puja Festival Sunday, 3 November 2013

The festival will be held at Govardhana Hill, at the Parikrama Path. Lake Paddock. Follow the flags!

2.30 pm	Procession from the Temple to Govardhana Hill
3.00 pm	Bhajanas Class with Venu Gopal and Maha Mantra prabhus Go Puja Feeding the cows
4.30 pm	Abhishek
5.00 pm	Dhan Gati Pastime Drama
5.30 pm	Circumambulate Giriraja, Govardhana Hill Kirtana
6.00 pm	Feast



Image: www.wallneer.com

Srila Prabhupada Tirobhava Mahotsava Thursday, 7 November 2013

7.30 am	Srimad Bhagavatam class
10.00 am	Bhajanas and readings
11.45 am	Bhoga offering
11.55 am	Puspanjali
12.00 pm	Arati
12.30 pm	Feast
7.24 pm	Candlelit arati for Srila Prabhupada

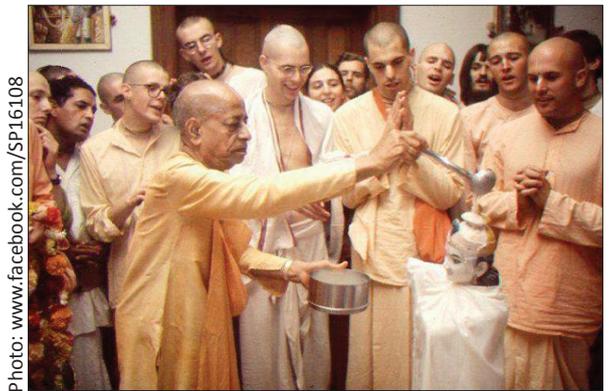


Photo: www.facebook.com/SP16108

HARI-NAMA SANKIRTANA KI JAYA



Image: www.bingimages.com

Wednesdays 10.30 am

Byron Bay *hari-nama* at the park opposite the Post Office. For further details and transport information, contact

Parama Karuna dasa
0439 280 362

Friday Evenings 6.30 pm

Bhakti Centre Surfers Paradise
bhakticentregoldcoast.com.au

Sunday Mornings

Northern NSW & Gold Coast
folkkrishna.com/program.htm
Isvara dasa 0411 825 549

NOVEMBER CALENDAR

(from Vaishnava calendar www.vaisnavacalendar.com)

3 Sun	Dipa dana, Dipavali, (Kali Puja)
4 Mon	Go Puja, Go Krda, Govardhana Puja (celebrated 3 Nov) Sri Rasikananda – Appearance
5 Tue	Sri Vasudeva Ghosh – Disappearance
7 Thu	Srila Prabhupada – Disappearance
11 Mon	Gopastami, Gosthastami Sri Gadadhara Dasa Gosvami – Disappearance Sri Dhananjaya Pandita – Disappearance Sri Srinivasa Acarya – Disappearance
13 Wed	Ekadasi (suitable for fasting) Utthana Ekadasi Srila Gaura Kisora Dasa Babaji – Disappearance First day of Bhisma Pancaka
14 Thu	Dvadasi break fast 6.38 am – 10.15 am
16 Sat	Sri Bhugarbha Gosvami – Disappearance Sri Kasisvara Pandita – Disappearance Last day of the fourth Caturmasya month
17 Sun	Sri Krsna Rasayatra Tulasi-Saligrama Vivaha (marriage) Sri Nimbarkacarya – Appearance Last day of Bhisma Pancaka
18 Mon	Katyayani vrata begins
29 Fri	Ekadasi (suitable for fasting) Utpanna Ekadasi Sri Narahari Sarakara Thakura – Disappearance
30 Sat	Dvadasi break fast 5.41 am – 10.17 am Sri Kaliya Krsnadasa – Disappearance