

October 2014



THE CONCH

www.conch.org.au

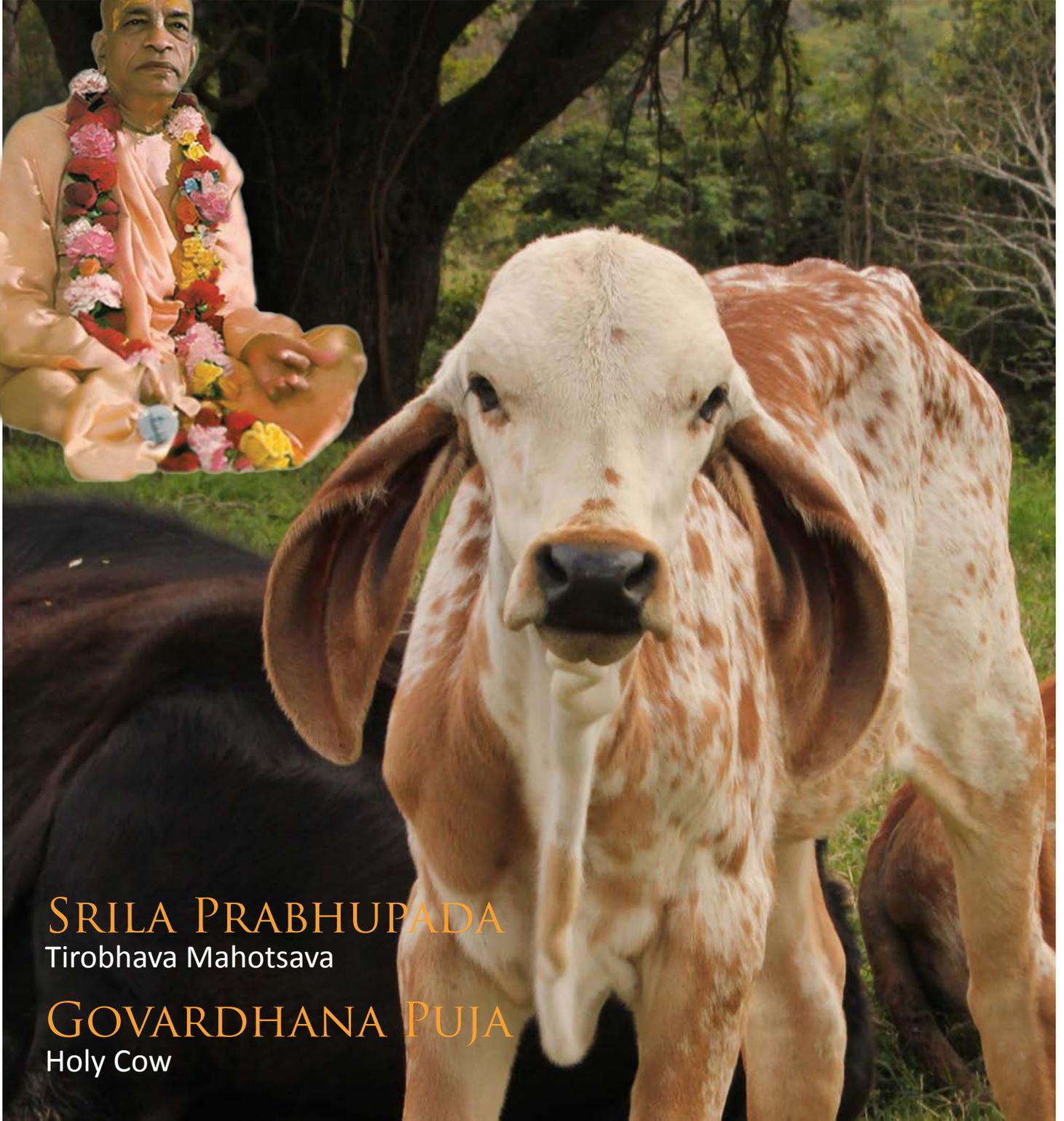
“Lord Sri Krishna and Arjuna blew their celestial conches to rally and enthuse the devotees.”

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



SRILA PRABHUPADA

Tirobhava Mahotsava

GOVARDHANA PUJA

Holy Cow

SRILA PRABHUPADA UVACA + IN FOCUS + GOSHALLA GOSS + UPCOMING EVENTS

SRILA PRABHUPADA'S DISAPPEARANCE DAY

By Ambika devi dasi

On 14 November 1977, at 7.25 pm in Vrindavana dhama, during the holy month of Kartika, the Founder-Acharya of ISKCON, Srila Prabhupada, returned to the spiritual world to engage in his eternal lila with Sri Sri Radha Krishna.

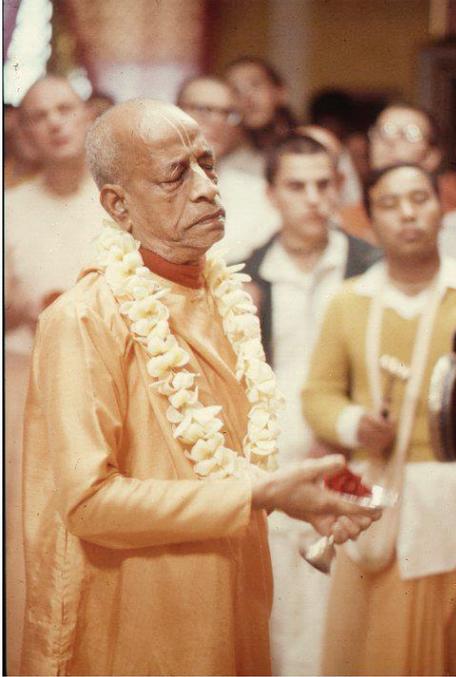


Photo: Facebook

We are celebrating that holy event on 28 October (see page 8 for details), and everyone is invited to come and participate in celebrating the life of this extraordinary and pure devotee of Lord Krishna and Srimati Radharani.

Srila Prabhupada lived an exemplary life of devotion. He used every waking moment to serve Krishna and reach all the fallen conditioned souls of Kali-yuga. He was the perfect *acharya* because he taught by example. His goal of life was to please his spiritual master, Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, and for that he worked tirelessly. Due to Prabhupada's intense spiritual potency, he attracted thousands of disciples from the Western world, who assisted him in spreading the Vedic teachings back to India and throughout the planet.

The legacy of Srila Prabhupada's life is nothing short of amazing. His books are printed in more than 100 languages and are widely

read throughout the world. These wonderful books are admired and studied by scholars, theologians and devotees alike. Translated from Sanskrit and Bengali, as well as written in English they are the 'bricks' of this movement because they provide the basis for philosophical understanding of Krishna and the process of *bhakti-yoga*.

Thanks to Srila Prabhupada, there are more than 200 temples, spread over every continent. There are also schools, *prasadam* restaurants, preaching centres, farms, Rathayatras and preaching events throughout the world. His books are translated, printed and distributed daily throughout the world. They have been read by millions of people and are the catalyst for many to take up spiritual life.

All who have been touched by this Hare Krishna movement owe gratitude to Srila Prabhupada for his austerities, his dynamic preaching, his wonderfully loving personal characteristics, and his pure dedication to pleasing his divine spiritual master.

Jaya Srila Prabhupada!

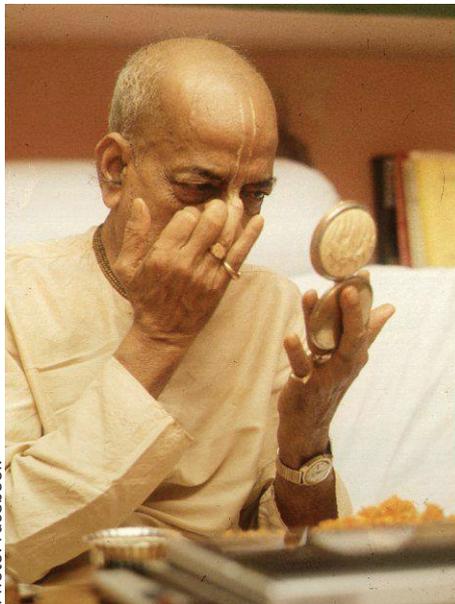


Photo: Facebook



Photo: Facebook



Photo: Facebook

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

Srila Prabhupada Uvaca

Today Govardhanadhārī, Giridhārī, Lord Krishna lifted the mountain. According to Vedic literature there are different demigods. Sometimes you will find in Greek mythology gods of the water [or] gods of the thunderbolt. These are not imagination. Actually they are facts. But due to our insufficient knowledge we do not know how the material nature is being controlled. So when Krishna was on this planet He was playing the part of a cowherd boy, and it was known all over the universe that "God has come, taken incarnation, and He is on the earth planet, and He is at Vrindavana playing the part of a cowherd boy ..."

... when Krishna was actually present on this earth, it is not that everybody understood that Krishna was the Supreme Personality of Godhead. So that incident is today, Govardhana-puja.

**Lecture, New York,
4 November 1966**

**Front cover image: Urvasi devi dasi
Janaki (on the cover) was recently
born at New Govardhana.**



Tennis Champ

The North Coast Independent Schools Tennis Championship 2014 was held on 3 September in Grafton. Abhay Reissenberger, aged 12, represented the Hare Krishna School (*gurukula*), in the 14 and under age group (Juniors – High School). He defeated eight players on his way to the finals and finished runner-up. A mighty effort!

Abhay, wearing the yellow cap, is pictured above with his trophy.



New Arrival

Congratulations to Rupa Raghunatha dasa and Krishna Rupa devi dasi on the birth of their new baby, Vishakha Priya Rose Hassal, who was born on 4 July 2014. The family would like to offer a special thank you to Karunika devi dasi for all her wonderful help in the birth of their new daughter.

Pictured above are (L to R) Lalita Sakhi, Vrindavanesvari and Vishakha Priya Rose.



Anna-kuta-ksetra Mural

Vrnda Gleeson spent a number of weeks creating the mural that can be seen on the New Govardhana Parikrama Path. She will take up an artist residency in Orissa in October and is selling prints of her drawings to fund her trip. They are available in A4 (\$15) and A5 (\$10) on quality 110gsm paper. Contact her at vrindagleeson@gmail.com for more information.

KULI CATCHUP ... VARSHABHAVANI

By Govardhana Seva dasa

Q. Tell me where and when were you born?

A. In Watford, UK, on 26 July 1993. Watford is a few minutes drive from Bhaktivedanta Manor (BM).

Q. Were your parents Krishna devotees?

A. Yes, my mother, Rukmini devi dasi, was born into Krishna consciousness, and my father, Jaya Krsna dasa, joined when he was 17. My mother works full-time in Watford, while my father is a priest and conducts the many weddings at BM. He also produces and directs the drama productions of the Bhaktivedanta Players.

Q. Did you attend the Bhaktivedanta Manor Gurukula?

A. Yes, I started in the Nursery School, aged three, moving on to Primary when I reached five.

Q. What are your recollections of your days in the *gurukula*?

A. The beautiful setting of the *gurukula*: the morning prayers with Mother Moksa; our special breakfast time with its own prayers; but most of all the re-enactment *lilas* and plays of Radha and Krishna.

Q. What did you do when you left *gurukula*?

A. At eight years old I left to attend Bushey Meads Secondary School. I completed my A Level Certificate at 18. I then worked at BM at the weddings, and then for a Market Research firm. I was saving money to travel with my father.

Q. Where did you travel with your father?

A. To Thailand, Bali, Cambodia, South India, US, UK, Italy, Germany, France and Belgium. We visited most of each country's major temples.

Q. What made you decide to come to Australia, particularly New Govardhana?

A. I was influenced by the many Australian friends I made while travelling in India, and it seemed like a wonderful place to be.

Q. How do you like it here?

A. I love it – the beautiful temple in its lovely setting; the people are so friendly and helpful that it feels like one big family. I feel so grateful to everyone for the welcome I have received.

Q. When will you be returning to the Manor?

A. At the end of the year, but my father is planning to visit before then, and I am looking forward to introducing him to New Govardhana and all my new friends. 🙏



Photo: Source Unknown

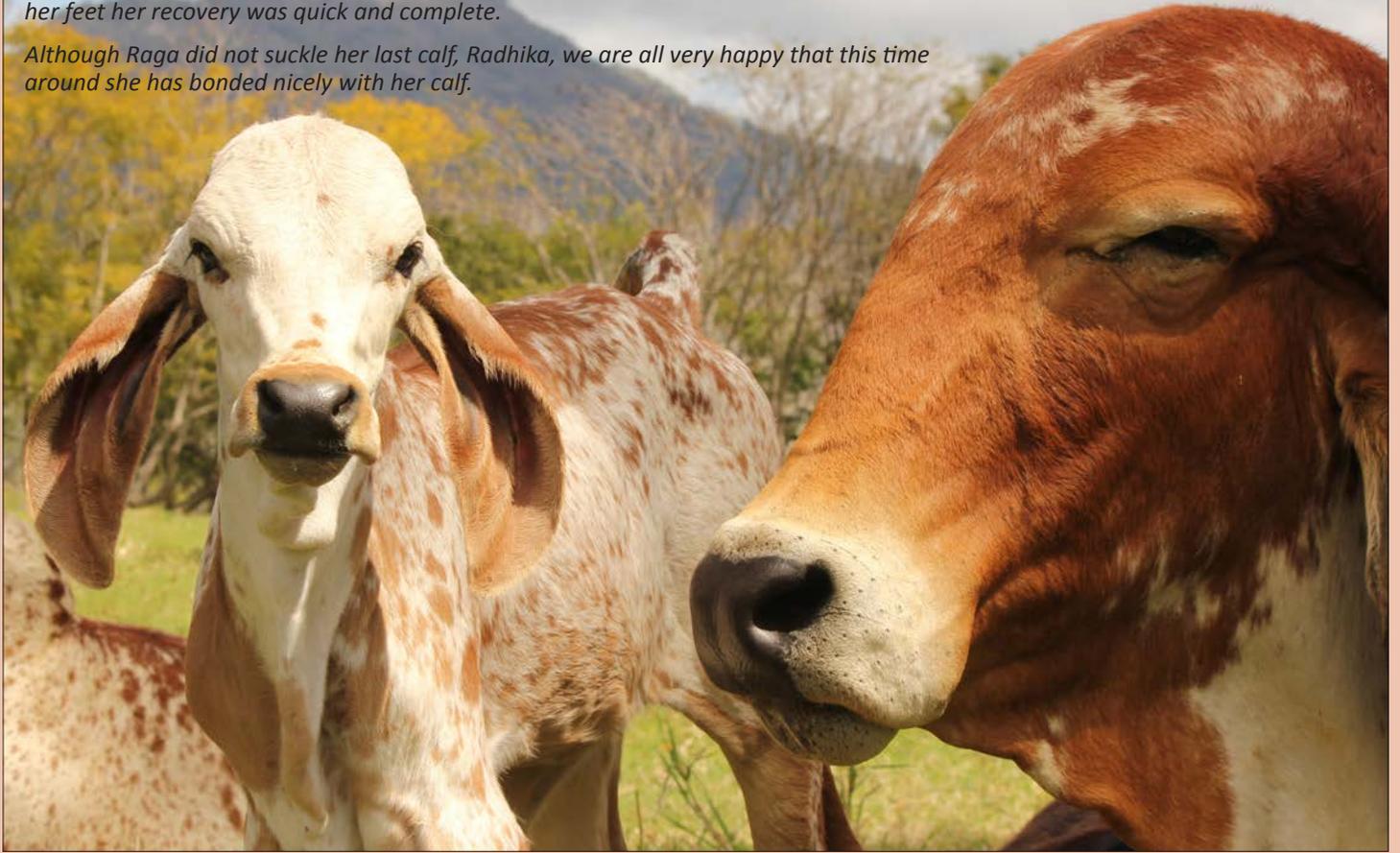
Varshabhanavi is visiting New Govardhana until the end of the year.

GOSHALA GOSS *by Urvasi devi dasi*

Recently one of our Girs, Raga (pictured right) gave birth to a calf who has been named Janaki. She was born in late August, in the early hours of the morning. As Janaki was premature, she was not able to stand and remained in the cold mud for hours before being found. It took most of the morning for the cowherds to restore her temperature to normal, but once she was up on her feet her recovery was quick and complete.

Although Raga did not suckle her last calf, Radhika, we are all very happy that this time around she has bonded nicely with her calf.

Photography: Urvasi devi dasi



The cowherds farewelled one of New Govardhana's bullocks, Jaya (pictured right). He was born on the farm approximately 23 years ago and left his body peacefully on 9 September 2014. The cowherd team spent the last few days with him around-the-clock. A special big thank you to Bhaktine Sharne who went above and beyond the call of duty to care for him. Gita Govinda dasi made a wooden altar (inset right) for the Jagannatha Deities who will now be present whenever one of the cows or bullocks leave their bodies.



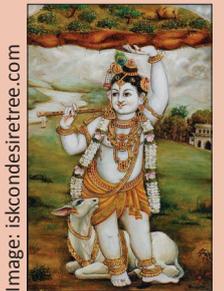
GOVARDHANA PUJA

The day after Diwali is called Annakuta, or Govardhana Puja. On this day the inhabitants of Vrindavana would hold a festival to honour King Indra, the demigod responsible for providing the rains essential for a successful harvest.

One day, however, sensing that Indra had become overly proud of his position as king of heaven, Lord Krishna convinced the residents of Vrindavana to modify their festival and celebrate Govardhana Hill instead. They argued that it was the fertile soils on the hill that provided the grass upon which the cows and bulls grazed, and that the cows and bulls who provided milk and ploughed the lands should be worshiped instead. This turn of events naturally upset the mighty Indra, who retaliated with terrifying rains and thunderstorms.

Seeing this, Lord Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, calmly lifted Govardhana Hill with the little finger of His left hand and held it up like a giant umbrella, providing a shelter for the people and animals of Vrindavana from the torrential downpours. Finally, after seven days, beholding the wonder of the situation and realising the futility of his own actions, King Indra surrendered, with folded hands, offering prayers and asking for forgiveness. He then realised his true position as servant of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

To celebrate this festival, devotees build a replica of Govardhana Hill made of various opulent foods, worship Lord Krishna as the lifter of Govardhana Hill, worship the hill as His incarnation, and worship the cows and bulls who are dear to the Lord. At the end of the festival, the hill of *prasadam* (sanctified food) is distributed to the public. All Vaishnava temples in India and throughout the world observe this ceremony, and hundreds of people are fed *prasadam* according to the capacity of each temple. (Reference: krishna.com)



THE EMPEROR OF KIRTANA

By *Ambika devi dasi*

The auspicious passing of Madhudvisa prabhu on 6 August 2014 invoked feelings of gratitude and respect in those who knew him.

On Srila Prabhupada's order he entered the fledgling Australian *yatra* as a *sannyasi* in May 1972. Madhudvisa endeared himself to the devotees with his enthusiasm, his *kirtanas* and his encouragement.

He and Buddhimanta dasa inspired the devotees to become the top book distributors in the world. Among other achievements, Madhudvisa also orchestrated the purchase of the Melbourne temple and organised and obtained permission for annual Rathayatra festivals against great odds. He headed up Sydney temple's double-decker bus and proceeded to preach and perform *kirtanas* nationally. As an integral part of his service, Madhudvisa visited the

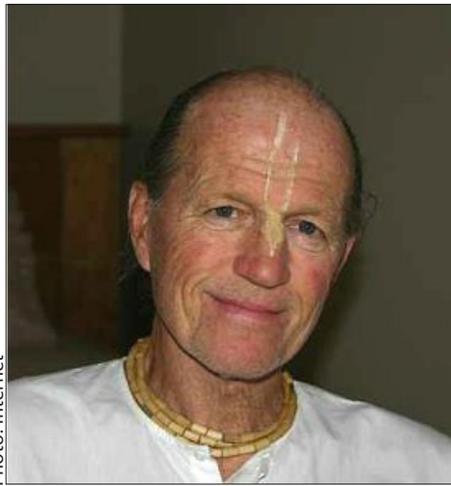


Photo: Internet

His Grace Madhudvisa dasa.

temples in Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane, inspiring devotees with his classes and exuberant *kirtanas*, tirelessly leading and dancing for hours on end.

Srila Prabhupada was very pleased with Madhudvisa's service, and on his annual visits Prabhupada requested the devotees to simply follow Madhudvisa. He named Madhudvisa as the 'Emperor of *Kirtana*'.

After four years of intense service, Madhudvisa left Australia and took up household life. He and his wife had three sons. When he returned to Australia in the mid 1990s, many more devotees were able to take his association. They appreciated his honesty and his love for Srila Prabhupada.

In his later life Madhudvisa lived near the Los Angeles temple. He loved Rathayatra festivals and was able to lead *kirtanas* in front of all three carts, just two days before his demise, despite being debilitated by ill health, almost blind and confined to a wheelchair.

Madhudvisa left his mortal frame with a huge smile on his face. He was hearing the holy name, and there were various auspicious signs to indicate that the demigods came to offer respect to him before he departed.

We offer thanks to a devoted servant of Srila Prabhupada, who assisted so nicely in the *sankirtana* movement, and who inspired so many of us. 🙏

FROM WWOOFER TO DEVOTEE

By *Govardhana Seva dasa*

Jue Kim was born on 25 November 1985, in Jeju, Korea. After finishing school, she worked in different part-time jobs and helped at the family farm to make money to travel. She came to Australia in



Photo: Urvasi devi dasi

2012, eventually arriving at New Govardhana as a WWOOFer.

She soon became interested in Krishna consciousness. After some time Jue decided to become a *bhaktine* and is mentored by Padma devi dasi.

Jue is scheduled to receive first initiation this month from HH Kadamba Kanana Swami. When asked what influenced her to become first a WWOOFer, then a devotee, she replied, "The first thing was the Sunday feasts; it was the best food ever, so I decided to stay on as a WWOOFer. The next

was Prabhupada's books. He was answering all of my questions so perfectly. I just have to follow his instructions because everything he said makes so much sense! In addition, the devotees on the farm showed me a good example of what life is like living as a devotee. Actually my life became much simpler after I became a devotee.

"I would like to say a special thank you to Madreya dasa. Without his dedication to the WWOOFer program, what happened to me would never have otherwise occurred." 🙏

THE CONCH TURNS THREE!

By *Mukunda Goswami*

The Conch newsletter celebrates three years this month. The first issue was only four pages long but created 'pride of association', to borrow a phrase from the corporate world.

The mainstay of each issue has been, from the very start, Urvasi devi dasi as the designer and Govardhana Seva dasa on the editing team of *The Conch*.

Krsnarupa (ACBSP) devi dasi, Damodara Pandit dasa and Mandakini devi dasi, all experienced with similar projects, have added professionalism to *The Conch*.

Currently, 100 issues of *The Conch* are printed each month, and the online edition is sent out to more than 1600 people.

To read the first issue, log on to the following link:

<http://www.conch.org.au/assets/october2011.pdf>, then click on October 2011. 🙏



Photo: Malini devi dasi

Everybody 'reads' *The Conch* – baby Ishaya Durr looking for Lord Jagannatha.

MAKE A DATE WITH STUDIO 88

By Mandakini devi dasi

Dhanesvara dasa (Benson) had long been on the lookout for a local studio to exhibit his artwork. His search was recently rewarded when he came across a first floor rental in Main Street, Murwillumbah.

After personally refurbishing the whole floor, Dhanesvara rents some of the rooms to other talented devotees. The space has rapidly become a hive of creative activity.

Ramana Benson designs and creates for the fashion industry. Mohini devi dasi teaches music and astrology as well as offers astrological readings. Brhat Mrdanga dasa paints traditional Aboriginal artefacts and Vilasa Manjari devi dasi teaches oil painting.

A special display area showcases the devotees' completed works and will eventually include jewellery, health products and alternative clothing.

The large painting gallery becomes transformed for Wednesday morning and evening yoga classes taught by Tracy Litherland. Tracy specialises in Hatha Yoga and restorative classes for those in need of stress release or injury recovery. Workshops and seminars will also be held in this area.

WWOOFer facilitator, Henrike Schreer will be sharing her one-on-one life coaching skills as well as teaching Mindset Mastery.

Additionally, there is a healing room for massage therapy, and practitioners of other modalities are welcome to hire the space.

Pro-active Dhanesvara has had much experience in the art world for the past 40 years. His work graces the homes of many well-known personalities such as Greg Norman and John Fay. He has also shared art exhibition space with famous celebrities from the art world.

With his ever-infectious enthusiasm, Dhanesvara is keen to put the devotees 'on the map' and is excited that they are now assuming a prominent presence in the town. 🐾

The official opening date of Studio 88 will be announced in an upcoming issue of The Conch.

FROM MUSIC TO MYSTICISM

By Mandakini devi dasi

Venugopal dasa recalls seeing vividly graphic images in his childhood dreams. These recurring visions always featured an elderly spiritual gentleman and a handsome young couple!

Not surprisingly, his early interest in metaphysics blossomed at a rapid pace. He soon recognised the futility of mundane existence and yearned for higher awareness.



Venu Gopal dasa taking the herd out to pasture.

An interest in music simultaneously emerged. As early as seven years of age, Venu knew all the popular radio songs verbatim, and would sing himself to sleep. Much to his mother's exasperation, this nightly ritual would take two or three hours.

From age 11, the course was set as Venu instinctively began his youthful career in various boy bands, including a couple of memorable stints on TV.

His obsession for 'truth' continued and was further stimulated when his drummer friend presented him with a *Back to Godhead* magazine in 1971. The intriguing editorial immersed his consciousness fully. He wanted to give up all other aspirations and simply surrender to guru and Krishna.

The now 15 year old (already a vegetarian for two years), made his own chanting beads and began following all the regulations of Krishna consciousness that he had read about.

Taking note of Srila Prabhupada's definitive instructions on the importance of devotee association, Venu eventually joined ISKCON in 1973, becoming Srila Prabhupada's formal disciple in 1974.

He was first based in Brisbane and later in Adelaide, where he learned to cook and make milk sweets as a full-time *pujari* for Panca-Tattva.

In 1977, Venugopal was requested to relocate to NG farm as head *pujari*. He nostalgically remembers serving Gaura-Nitai in the White House, cooking on an open fire and distributing *prasadam* to the many Nimbin hippies who would visit.

In 1981, Venu teamed up with Ramai Swami's Travelling Bus Party, eventually taking over that service.

The visits to Cairns were found to be lucrative for the preaching mission and Venu was encouraged to take up the role of Temple President there.

In 1986 he returned to New Govardhana to manage Krishna's cows. Inwardly he nurtured a desire to populate the herd with the very transcendental Gir cows.

Venu works closely with Madreya dasa in the WWOOFer programme; looks after the worm farm; ploughs the land; and maintains the fencing.

He is a Co-Manager of New Govardhana and is the official Australasian Minister for Cow Protection. As Minister, these duties include acting in an advisory capacity and submitting reports for the annual meetings.

Still involved in making music, Venu fronts the local *kirtana* band 'The Bhajana Babas'. This very lively and popular group is presently working on producing a CD. 🐾

Adopt-a-Cow

Contact Venu Gopal dasa on 0411 444 934 if you would like to sponsor one of the cows, bullocks or calves at New Govardhana. Sponsorships start at \$35 p/m.

SNAPSHOTS

Photography: Trevor Gore



Photography: Toowoomba Chronicle



(Left column top to bottom) Small Radha Govardhandhari being bathed during the Radhastami abhisheka; Janmastami midnight arati; Damodara Pandit dasa displays special preparations made for Krishna on His birthday. (Right column top to bottom) Srila Prabhupada on his refurbished vyasasana; first Toowoomba Ratha-yatra wins prize.



SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

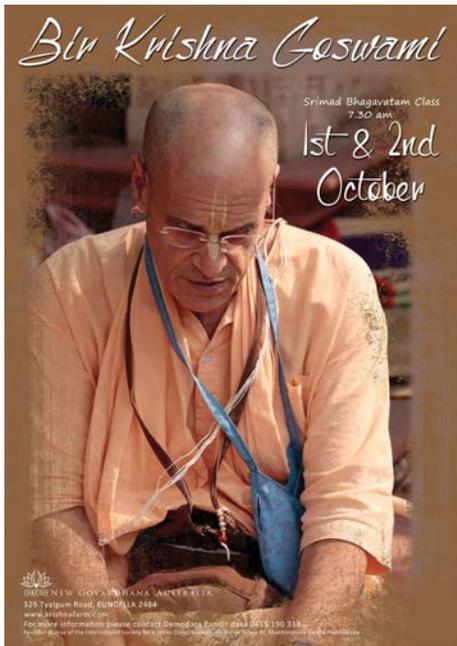
The Conch is your community newsletter, and we invite you to submit articles for publication. Articles should be 300 words or less and supplied in MS Word via email to newgovconch@gmail.com. Photographs must be in JPG format. Please provide the name of the author and

the photographer. Anonymous submissions will not be published. Deadline is the 12th of each month. Occasionally a submission could be held over to a later edition. All submissions may be edited, proofread or rejected without notice.



EDITORIAL BOARD:
 Damodara Pandit dasa, Govardhana Seva dasa,
 Krishnarupa devi dasi (ACBSP),
 Mandakini devi dasi, Urvasi devi dasi (layout
 and graphic design).
 For enquiries, comments or suggestions,
 contact: newgovconch@gmail.com

UPCOMING EVENTS



Artwork: Urvashi devi dasi

HH Bir Krishna Maharaj
Wednesday, 1 and Thursday,
2 October

7.30 am Srimad-Bhagavatam Class



Photo: kkswami.com

HH Kadamba Kanana Swami
Thursday, 2 October

6.00 pm Welcome talk and kirtana

Friday, 3 October

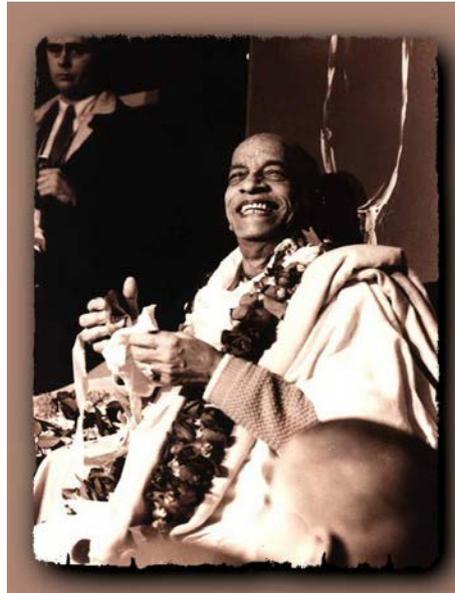
7.30 am Srimad-Bhagavatam Class

5.00 pm Maha Kirtana Night
 (till late)

Hare Krishna Hare Krishna
 Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
 Hare Rama Hare Rama
 Rama Rama Hare Hare

Govardhana Puja Sunday 26 October

- 2.00 pm Bhajanas
- 2.30 pm Intro, welcoming, discourse
- 3.00 pm Go Puja and feeding of the cows.
- 3.30 pm Giriraja Abhisheka
- 4.00 pm Play
- 4.30 pm Bhoga Offerings to Govardhana Hill
- 5.00 pm Feast



Srila Prabhupada's Disappearance Day Tuesday, 28 October

- 10.00 am Bhajanas and readings
- 11.45 am Bhoga offering
- 11.55 am Puspanjali
- 12.00 am Arati
- 12.30 pm Feast
- 7.24 pm Candlelit arati for Srila Prabhupada followed by movie



HARINAMA SANKIRTANA KI JAYA

Wednesdays 10.30 am

Byron Bay *harinama* 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
folkishna.com/program.htm
 Isvara dasa 0411 825 549

OCTOBER CALENDAR

(from *Vaishnava calendar* www.vaisnavacalendar.com)

- 4 Sat Ramacandra Vijayotsava
 Sri Madhvacharya – Appearance
- 5 Sun Fasting for Pasankusa Ekadasi
- 6 Mon Dvadasi break fast 6.20 – 6.58 am
 Srila Raghunatha Dasa Gosvami – Disappearance
 Srila Raghunatha Bhatta Gosvami – Disappearance
- 7 Tue Last day of the third Caturmasya month
- 8 Wed Sri Murari Gupta – Disappearance
 Fourth month of Caturmasya begins
 (urad dal fast for one month)
- 13 Mon Srila Narottama Dasa Thakura – Disappearance
- 19 Sun Ekadasi Fasting for Rama Ekadasi
- 20 Mon Dvadasi Break fast 9.12 – 10.22 am
- 25 Sat Go Puja, Go Krda, Govardhana Puja
- 31 Fri Gopastami, Gosthastami
 Sri Srinivasa Acarya – Disappearance

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