



June 2015



THE CONCH

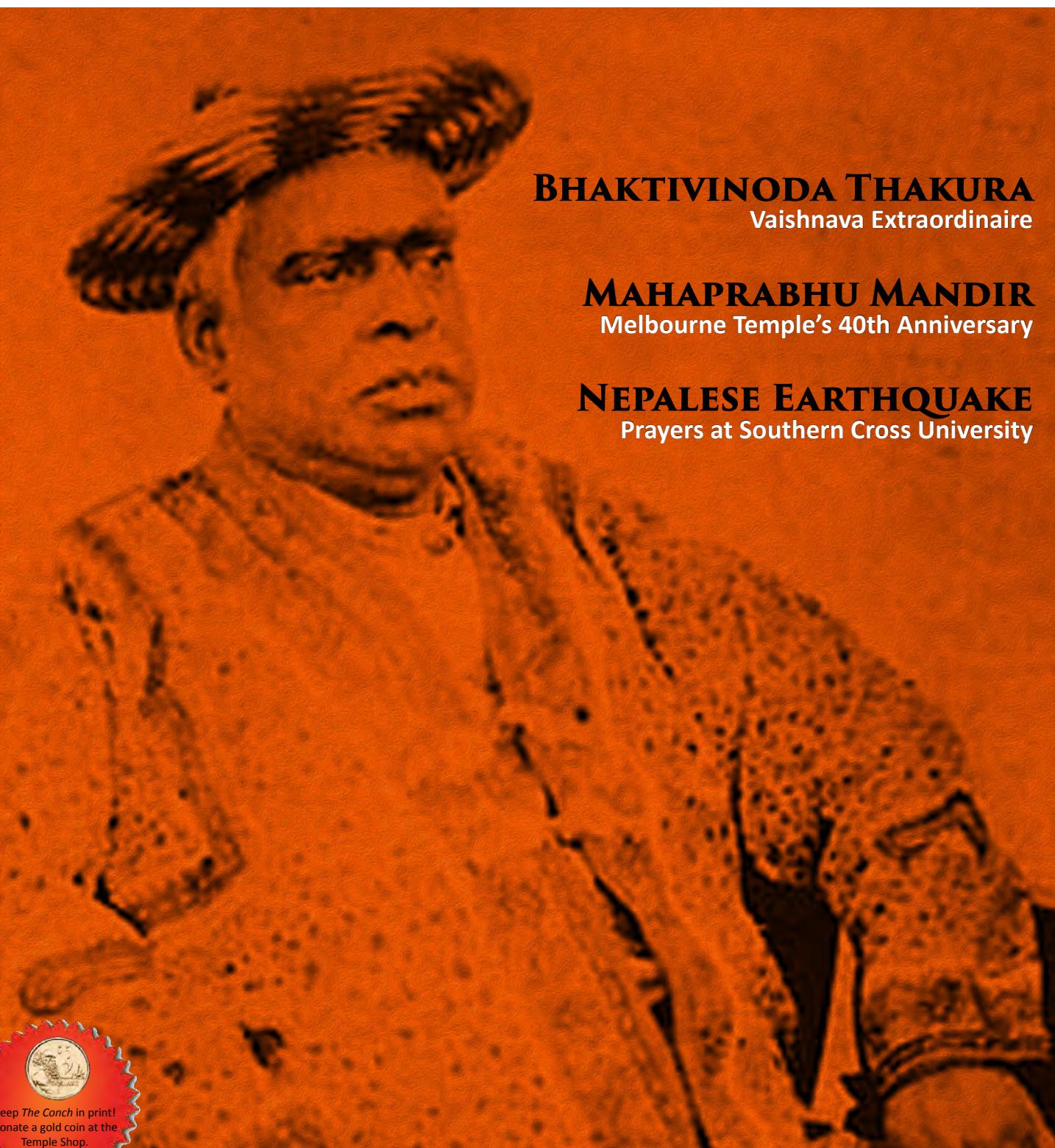
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"Lord Sri Krishna and Arjuna blew their celestial conches to rally and enthuse the devotees."



NEWSLETTER New Govardhana Community

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



krishnafarm.com

BHAKTIVINODA THAKURA Vaishnava Extraordinaire

MAHAPRABHU MANDIR Melbourne Temple's 40th Anniversary

NEPALESE EARTHQUAKE Prayers at Southern Cross University



Keep *The Conch* in print!
Donate a gold coin at the
Temple Shop.

SRILA PRABHUPADA UVACA + GOSHALLA GOSS + SNAPSHOTS + UPOMING EVENTS

BHAKTIVINODA THAKURA

By Ambika devi dasi

The Disappearance Day of the great Vaishnava *acharya*, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura (1838–1914) takes place on 12 June this year. He led an inspiring life that was characterised by great determination, vision and profound devotion.

Although born into an opulent family, at 11, on the death of his father, his family became poverty-stricken. During this time, he displayed great endurance.

After a thorough education in English in Calcutta, he established a school for English education. He married young and had a son before, sadly, his wife passed away. He later married Bhagyavati devi, and at this time accepted the position of deputy magistrate in Bengal. He became fluent in Urdu and Persian languages.

Discovering the Chaitanya-charitamrta, he became attracted to Vaishnavism, hungrily reading many scriptures dealing with Krishna. Seeing the disrepute Vaishnavism had fallen into, he prayed for a ray of Vishnu to assist him in preaching Krishna consciousness. His fourth son, Bimala Prasad (Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura), took birth in Puri after this prayer.

Bhaktivinoda Thakura dealt sharply with various charlatans who were misleading the public into worshipping them, including one powerful mystic yogi, Bishika Sena, who made threats against the Thakura and his family. Despite him and his daughter falling seriously ill during the yogi's trial, he persisted and the yogi soon after died in jail.

His daily schedule was regimented and included little time for eating and sleeping, with many hours set aside for chanting, studying scripture and writing.

In Puri, as manager of the Jagannatha temple he regulated the seva to the Deities. This ensured 56 timely offerings were made to the Lord. He also organised daily *Srimad-Bhagavatam* classes.

His works (written in English and Bengali) include more than 100 publications, including profound

and deeply moving books such as *Sri Krsna Samhita* and *Kalyana-Kalpataru*. He penned profuse articles for magazines and small books – one of which he sent to several overseas universities.

He wrote many beautiful songs, revealing his mood of humility and devotion.

The Thakura discovered the birth site of Lord Chaitanya, also erecting a temple/school there.

While residing at Godrumdvip on the bank of the Jalangi, he had a wonderful vision of a devotional city rising up across the river that would accommodate devotees from all corners of the earth.

In 1910, he secluded himself and performed *bhajana* in solitude. His departure from this world was in 1914. All glories to this exalted Vaishnava *acharya*! 

Source:
The Seventh Goswami by Rupa Vilasa dasa.



(Above and Below) Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura – visionary, pure devotee, prolific author, magistrate and family man.

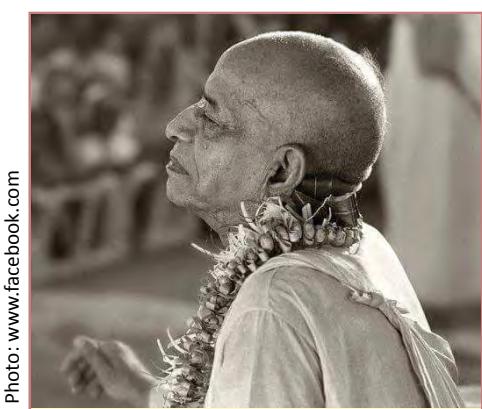


Photo: www.facebook.com

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

Srila Prabhupada Uvaca

So Bhaktivinoda Thakura is an ideal guru. He was not a *sannyasi*; he was *grihastha*, householder, living with family, wife, children. Still, he was guru. So anyone can become guru. Not that a *sannyasi* can become guru. A householder also can become guru, provided he knows the science. ... Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was a *sannyasi*, very highly born in brahmana family, very learned scholar. So He was talking with Ramananda Raya, a *grihastha*, governor of Madras. And He was questioning and Ramananda Raya was answering. That means he was taking the part of guru, and Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was taking the part of a disciple. So *kiba vipra, kiba sudra*. He may be a first-grade human being or the lowest grade human being, or he may become a *sannyasi* or a *grihastha*. It does not matter. Anyone who knows the science of Krishna, he can become a guru. This is the verdict.

Excerpted from a lecture by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, given 23 September 1969 in London.

"This Krishna consciousness temple is the hospital for the diseased spirit soul. And everyone is diseased. Come to this hospital. We shall take care of you and cure your material disease."

Srila Prabhupada
Auckland, April 14, 1972

Cover Photo:
www.bingimages.com.au

ISKCON'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY UPDATE

By Mukunda Goswami

On the morning of Sunday, 10 May 2015 a meeting was held at the New Govardhana Temple Shop to discuss ways that the 50th anniversary of ISKCON could be celebrated locally.

The attendees were Damodara Pandit dasa, Ajita dasa, Krsna Kirtana dasa, Krsnarupa dasi (acbsp) and myself.

Basically the group approved of the following initiatives:

- A display on World Environment Week 2016 at Knox Park in Murwillumbah
- A special invitee-only dinner, including a presentation for prominent locals and a gala at the Tweed Town Hall
- Host an Open Day at New Govardhana in July 2016
- Create a Food for Life programme for regional residents
- Encourage a Youth Bus Tour to occur from approximately 10–26 January 2016
- Add 50th branding to *Harinamas*, Ratha-yatra festivals and Govindas Catering
- Purchase and distribute the ISKCON 50th Anniversary Magazine

– Conduct 10 Ratha-yatras in 2016 in northern New South Wales and south-western Queensland with 50th branding and flyer distribution

– Have a cinema event—maybe characterised as a Short Film Festival at the Regent Cinema—that includes Yadubara dasa's documentary, *Acharya and Krishna-lila dasi's Joy of Devotion*

– Enact a tree-planting ceremony by myself on an astrologically auspicious date near the ISKCON inauguration date (13–18 July)

– Visit up to 50 homes for the elderly, in the Murwillumbah-Tweed area. Bhaktivedanta Gurukula students could be part of these proposed visits

– Conduct a *Padayatra* through the Byron Bay area

The attendees of the New Govardhana meeting also briefly discussed the global magazine that will highlight the accomplishments of ISKCON over the past 50 years.

These plans were presented to ISKCON's Australian National Council (ANC) in May. (The ANC is traditionally attended by temple presidents, regional secretaries, Australian Governing Body representatives, and other Australian leaders.)

Please participate in these events and also consider planning your own 50th Anniversary offering. 

OLD TIME DEVOTEES MEET IN MELBOURNE

By Mandakini devi dasi

Australian and international devotees gathered in force at Melbourne's Mahaprabhu Mandir for the 40th anniversary celebrations held on 16–17 May. The awe-inspiring event commemorated the opening of the Danks Street Temple and Srila Prabhupada's installation of Sri Sri Gaura Nitai.

Despite the chilly weather, inside the temple room devotees were on fire!

A morning *japa* walk in the Botanical Gardens, carrying Srila Prabhupada's *murti* in procession, was a special highlight. Super-

energetic *kirtanas*, Indian dance, dramas, grand *abhishekas* and archival films contributed to the constant mood of excitement. Much to the joy of younger devotees, seniors shared many humorous stories and remembrances. 



L. to R. Sukla, Sri Hari Bhakti, Krsnarupa (with commemorative brochure), Ambika, Rasarani and Mandakini in Melbourne.

Photo: Aravinda dasa

WEDDING 'BELLS'

By Krsnarupa devi dasi (acbsp)

Akincana Krishna dasa and Bhaktine Liliko Arai were married on 10 May at Govinda Charana's house in Murwillumbah.

Akincana Krishna originally hails from Chesham, England and bride Liliko is from Tokyo, Japan.

Both are enthusiastic servants of Radha Govardhanadhari.

We would like to extend our warmest congratulations and blessings to the happy couple. 



Photo: Trevor Gore

Akincana Krishna dasa and Liliko Arai 'tie the knot' at their recent Vedic wedding.



*Above: Sri Sri Gaura Nitai, Melbourne.
Below: The recent event was enthusiastically attended.*



IN FOCUS: BHAKTA ARIEL

Padma devi dasi catches up with Bhakta Ariel, who recently celebrated his 19th birthday:

Padma Devi Dasi (PDD): How long have you been a part of the New Govardhana community?

Bhakta Ariel (BA): I came to live here in January 2009.

PDD: Where did you do your schooling?

BA: Before moving here I did my primary schooling in Western Australia. When I came here I went to Murwillumbah High School and TAFE. I also went to Sri Mayapur International School. I am now thinking about getting back to TAFE to complete Years 11 and 12.

PDD: Since an early age you have loved doing *kirtana*. What led to this?

BA: I started getting into *kirtana* when my dad [Ekendra dasa] put *kirtana* and *bhajanas* in my iPod, when I was 13 years old. I liked listening to Gaura Vani, then to the Mayapuris. I really liked Janardhana's *kirtanas* and also Aindra's *kirtanas*.

PDD: So the taste for *kirtanas* came by listening to other devotees?



Photo: Padma devi dasi

Bhakta Ariel is not only an enthusiastic singer of kirtana, but he is also learning harmonium and mrdanga.

BA: Yes – listening to *kirtanas* such as those on the Radha Krishna Temple record album.

PDD: Did anyone teach you how to play instruments such as the harmonium, *karatalas* and *mridanga*?

BA: Some devotee just showed me the basic rhythms and then somehow I figured out how to play. I watched some videos on how to play *mrdanga* and I also learned how to play when I was in Mayapur. I also saw some

YouTube videos on this. I saw a video of Vyasaki teaching how to play harmonium scales – then I started practising. Hari Bhakti Dey gave me singing lessons. But mostly I just practised by myself and listened to *kirtanas*. I learned to play by ear. I practised a lot. Now I can work out almost any tune.

PDD: Going on *harinama* is now your main service?

BA: Yes, I love *harinama*. I absorb myself in the mantra. I like giving the mantra to the public. I love the atmosphere of chanting the Holy Name with other devotees.

PDD: Is New Govardhana farm your home now?

BA: I love this place. I love the devotees. The farm is so green and pristine. The Deities are so beautiful. I love the *prasadam* and I also like attending classes.

PDD: Is there anything more you would like to add?

BA: I hope that the devotees will keep inspiring me and encouraging me to keep developing my devotional life. I have just been given Venugopal dasa as my mentor and I am looking forward to my meetings with him. 

PRAYER SERVICE AT SOUTHERN CROSS UNIVERSITY

By Padma devi dasi

On Monday 11 May, starting at 11.00 am, 11 devotees participated in a special program for Nepalese students at Southern Cross University.

One week earlier, the university's chaplain office had contacted New Govardhana farm. They requested that devotees conduct a special prayer service for students who were experiencing hardship due to the devastating earthquake that hit Nepal recently.

In the outdoor pavilion, four-feet high Deities of Sri Sri Gaura Nitai, who had travelled from Saranya devi dasi's house, graced the make-

shift altar with Their transcendental appearance. Also on the altar were Jyestha devi dasi's Lord Nrsimhadeva Deity, Yasoda devi dasi's deity of Lord Ganesha and Srila Prabhupada *murti*. Prior to the event, the Nepalese students had made a special request that Lord Ganesha be present on the altar for the service.

The service began with the garlanding of the chaplain, as well as the representative of the Nepalese student body. Bhakta Ariel then lead a *kirtana*, teaching the students how to chant the *maha-mantra*. During the *kirtana*, each student offered flowers and incense to the deities on the altar. They also made offerings to a framed photograph of the picturesque Kathmandu Valley.

Garuda dasa then gave a short *Bhagavad-gita* class, which was followed by Bhaktine Natasha leading

the students in the Lord Nrsimhadeva prayers. Finally delicious *prasadam*, cooked by Bhusaya dasa, was served.

All who attended were very happy with the program, which lead to us being invited to hold more such programs at the university. The main chaplain, who is a devout Christian minister, purchased Srila Prabhupada's *Science of Self-Realization!* 



Photo: Jyestha devi dasi
Students line up to offer flowers and incense to the deities at the university.

GOSHALA GOSS

By Urvashi devi dasi

May has been a very busy month at the cow shed.

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Rukmini, one of our older milking Friesians. The vet diagnosed liver failure and only a matter of days later she left her body. She leaves behind a six month old calf, Shyamalika. Rukmini was a sweet cow and will be greatly missed by her sponsor, Puja, and all the cowherds.



Rukmini hiding in the tall grasses of New Govardhana.

On Narasimha Caturdasi, Kunti gave birth to a healthy bull calf named Prahlad Narasimha. While at first he found it hard to navigate the large Gir teats, he has since been able to figure out a way to suckle directly from his mum. He has been sponsored by Shyamasundara dasa and family.



Prahlada Narasimha is a full breed Gir born on Lord Narasimha's Appearance Day.

In mid-May farm residents may have heard an increase in the amount of calling between the mothers and calves. This was due to five of the elder calves being separated from their mothers. There is no harm in this and usually, quite quickly, the calves enjoy their new independence. These elder calves Brihat, Ekadasi, Kausalya, Shanti and Shyamalika are all very close friends having grown up together. Their transition seems to be going well.

The goshalla building is having the floor re-graded and a better surface

installed. This is only a temporary measure to offer more shelter to the cows in the inclement weather or if the cowherds need to care for sick cows.

50/50 Go Seva

Unlike the current Adopt-a-Cow programme, where funds go directly to the monthly maintenance of the cows, the 50/50 Go Seva programme will allocate all funds towards the construction of a proposed new *goshalla* at New Govardhana.

Earlier this year I heard a talk about the celebrations for the 50th Anniversary of ISKCON. The speaker encouraged the audience to think of 50 "somethings" that each of us could do as an offering to Srila Prabhupada. I went away and thought about it and decided that I would pledge to get 50 sponsors to sponsor 50 cows at \$50 a month, with all the proceeds going towards the building of a new *goshalla*. The 50/50 Go Seva Sponsorship program



Five young calves were recently weaned.

is a special initiative just for the 50th Anniversary. It is available until July 2016. I encourage everyone to get on board with this one and help us show Srila Prabhupada that we are serious about pushing on the cow protection program at New Govardhana.

If you would like to be among the first 50 sponsors, here are two options for payment:

1. \$50 x 12 monthly payments

2. \$600 one time payment

As our way to say thank you, the first 50 sponsors will be given a complimentary two year Adopt-a-Cow membership, and will have their names engraved on a commemorative plaque that will be installed in the new *goshalla*.

Next month *The Conch* plans to interview Venugopal dasa about plans for a proposed new *goshalla*. 



Goshalla pens are in need of repair and the first stage has begun.



L. to R. Govardhana, Radhika and Urvashi devi dasi.

MEET THE PUJARIS: GURU PRASAD DEVI DASI

By Mandakini devi dasi

Guru Prasad devi dasi was first trained to dress Deities in Melbourne, where she joined in 1995. She spent a busy four years in the *ashrama* doing paraphernalia and *sankirtana* services. She also dressed Lord Jagannatha, big Gaura Nitai and small Radha Ballabha Deities.

She was married in 1999 to Gokulananda Caitanya dasa, settling down to *grihastha* life and raising their two children, Vrinda (14) and Shyam (11).

The family moved to New Govardhana in 2013, where Gokulananda had previously spent four years as Head Pujari. After a decade in the *grihastha ashrama*, Guru Prasad missed being on the altar and was keen to once again experience that special connection with Their Lordships.

Guru Prasad particularly appreciates the opportunity to come close to the Deities, convinced that this will certainly help her to become a better devotee.

"For me, this service requires a lot of concentration, to be present and



Main: Guru Prasad offering flowers to Sri Sri Govardhanadhari.
Inset: At her clinic in Murwillumbah

mindful. At times I feel affected by the mode of passion where everything seems to go wrong. Other times I am conscious to be alert and attentive," she says.

"I find it is a different mood with each set of Deities and the interaction varies. On occasions I find myself meditating on Their pastimes or I focus on colour co-ordination. It is a very important *seva* for me and the highlight of my day. I hope I may always be allowed to serve in this way for the rest of my life."

Besides Deity dressing several times a week, Guru Prasad is expert in making milk sweets. Each Tuesday she produces a weekly batch of *rasagullas*, sweet rice, *sandesh* and *rasamalais* for Their Lordships.

Her other skills include temple decoration and floral arrangement. An expert massage therapist, she also runs a small but successful business in town, Alexis Mitsiou Myotherapist and Remedial Massage (Phone: 0417 130 191 | website: www.murwillumbahmassage.com.au).

NEPAL APPEAL

By His Holiness Janananda Swami

The earthquake in Nepal in late April had a devastating effect. The ISKCON temple was also damaged severely, but fortunately none of the ISKCON devotees lost their lives.

The devotees are engaged in as much *prasadam* distribution as possible and need all the financial help they can get.

On behalf of the devotees of Nepal, Janananda Gosvami requests devotees and the community to please send contributions, whether large or small, to the Relief account in Mayapur, India.

At the time of writing, the banks in Nepal are not working properly and it is very difficult to operate the local ISKCON Nepal bank account. To

solve this issue, with the help of His Holiness Jayapataka Maharaja and His Holiness Bhakti Purushottama Maharaja, this Mayapur Relief account is being used.

For information on how to donate, please contact:

[+91 9910576903](tel:+919910576903) – Patri das (Co-



L. and R. Disaster in Nepal.

Regional Secretary, ISKCON NEPAL)
patri.pvs@pamho.net
[+977 9801205727](tel:+9779801205727) – Rupeswor Gour das (ISKCON Kathmandu Temple President) vaisnav@gmail.com
[+977 9801080108](tel:+9779801080108) – (BBT, Food for Life Director)

Thank you very much for your support and prayers.



SNAPSHOTS - BRISBANE RATHAYATRA 2015

Photos: Natalie Fairbairn



SPREADING KNOWLEDGE

By Rupa Raghunatha dasa

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Srila Prabhupada, Founder-Acharya of ISKCON, wrote many books that he requested us to study and distribute throughout the world in order to spread his message of love of God.

Srila Prabhupada's books are invested with transcendental power and are the literary incarnation of Krishna. Many times books alone have inspired people to take up spiritual life. In my travelling throughout Australia selling Srila Prabhupada's books, I meet many interested souls who are eager to receive the special gift of spiritual knowledge, no matter

Photos Supplied by Rupa Raghunatha dasa



Above: Happy recipients of Srila Prabhupada's books.

what religion they follow, what work they do or country they are from.

I would like to encourage the community of devotees to enthusiastically take up this service of distributing Srila Prabhupada's books.

It is a service very pleasing to Lord Caitanya and Srila Prabhupada. 

• To distribute or sponsor these books, please contact Rupa Raghunatha on 0423 121 589 or Caranaravinda dasa on 0433 831 438.

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.



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and graphic design).
For enquiries, comments or suggestions,
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UPCOMING EVENTS

SPECIAL NOTE

This year from 17 June – 16 July is Purusottama Adhika Masa or the month of Purusottama.

This special month appears this year in the middle of the month of Vamana and as such all festivals are delayed by one month.

Photo: www.gosai.com



Photo: www.lanternparade.com



Photo: www.dandavats.com

Her Grace Anuradha devi dasi will be visiting New Govardhana on 1 June 2015 for one month. She will be giving lectures and assisting with the ladies ashrama.



Saturday, 6 June 2015

Cooly Rocks On – Rathayatra Parade at Coolangatta. Parade begins at 9.30 am at Winston Street, Kirra



HARINAMA SANKIRTANA KI JAYA



Photo: Natalie Fairbairn

JUNE CALENDAR

(from Vaishnava calendar www.vaisnavacalendar.com)

2 Fri	Snana Yatra Sri Mukunda Datta – Disappearance Sri Sridhara Pandit – Disappearance
3 Sat	Sri Syamananda Prabhu – Disappearance
7 Thu	Sri Vakresvara Pandita – Appearance
12 Fri	Sri Srivasa Pandita – Disappearance
13 Sat	Fasting for Yogini Ekadasi
14 Sun	Trayodashi: Break fast 6.35 am – 10.02 am
16 Tue	Sri Gadadhara Pandita – Disappearance Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura – Disappearance, fast till noon
28 Sun	Fasting for Padmini Ekadasi
29 Mon	Dvadasi, break fast 6.39 am – 10.06 am

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
Visnujana dasa 0498 141 021