



July 2016



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

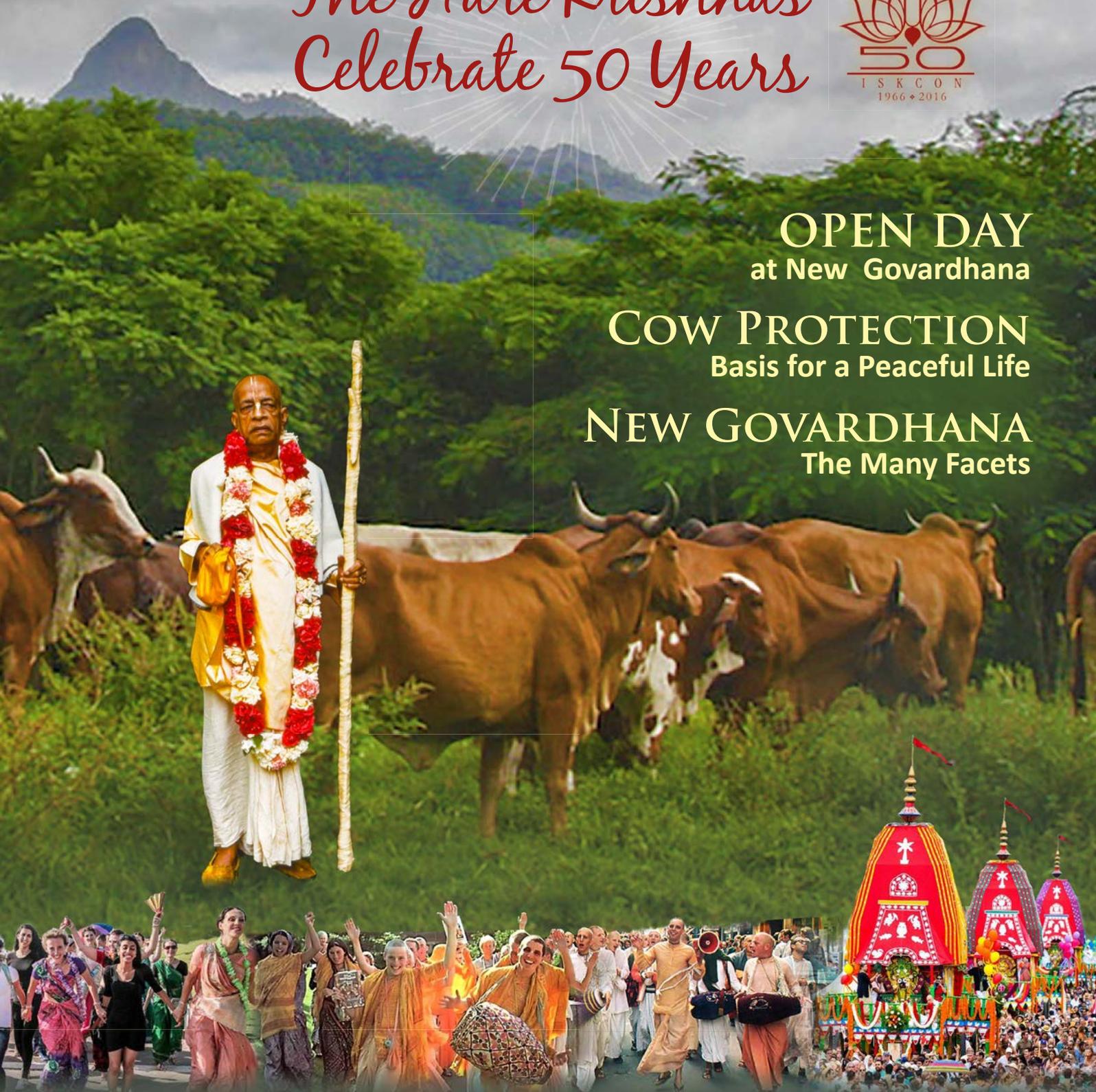


krishnafarm.com

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

Special Commemorative Issue

The Hare Krishnas Celebrate 50 Years



OPEN DAY
at New Govardhana

COW PROTECTION
Basis for a Peaceful Life

NEW GOVARDHANA
The Many Facets

ISKCON BEGINS + OUR SCHOOL + KRISHNA VILLAGE ECO YOGA COMMUNITY

ISKCON BEGINS

By Mukunda Goswami

Mukunda Goswami, author and one of the society's initiating spiritual masters, is one of the very first disciples of ISKCON's Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. Mukunda Goswami presents a peek into those precious beginnings of an organisation that grew exponentially in a very short period of time. From one small shopfront in 1966, in 2016 ISKCON is estimated to now have 650 centres, temples, schools and colleges worldwide with approximately 95,000 formally spiritually initiated members. The International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) has also distributed an estimated more than 3 billion vegetarian meals worldwide and published 516 million books and magazines. This year ISKCON is celebrating its 50th Anniversary with many festivals and programs throughout the world.



Photo: googleimages.com

Mukunda Goswami garlands Srila Prabhupada in the early days.

It was a hot, muggy day in lower Manhattan during the month of May 1966. I pedalled to 26 Second Avenue where I met the Swami, a friend named Carl and the rental agent, Paul Gardiner, a short, chunky man who was wearing blue denim trousers and a white, short-sleeved t-shirt. We hired the storefront at 26 Second Avenue for \$100 per month and a first-storey flat in the same building for \$85 per month.

The storefront soon became a temple, and the Swami lectured there every day. By October he was hosting philosophical discussions in his small flat.



Where it all began – 26 Second Avenue, New York.

On 13 July 1966 I signed a paper that became the Swami's first corporation. It was called The International Society for Krishna Consciousness or ISKCON. I didn't really think it very important at the time and really didn't care. I thought that whatever the Swami wanted was okay.

In November of 1968 I drove to California where I met a former college mate, and together we started the second ISKCON temple at 518 Frederick Street in the Haight-Ashbury neighbourhood of San Francisco. The area was the mecca of the hippies, and June-August of 1967 became the famous 'Summer of Love'. The Swami (later to be known as Srila Prabhupada) regularly chanted with the 'flower people' in 'Hippie Hill', Golden Gate Park.

In September 1968, along with five others, I travelled to London, where after a year of scuffling financially, we rented a five-storey building on Bury Place, a stone's throw from the British Museum. That year a colleague had met The Beatles, and in April of 1969 we recorded "The Hare Krishna Mantra", which soon charted to number 13 in England and rose to number one in other countries.

At the same time, ISKCON was spreading rapidly all over the world.

Note: Turn to page 3 for the history of New Govardhana, Murwillumbah. 🐼

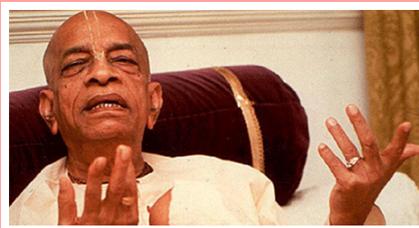


Photo: googleimages.com

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

Srila Prabhupada Uvaca

"Srila Prabhupada was most enlivened to hear the report of New Govardhana Farm. His Divine Grace in the last month or so has been stressing the importance of these farm projects, and said, 'This is the next aspect of Krsna consciousness which I wish to push forward. If I am able to travel again, then I shall visit the farms and make them perfect. On these farms we can demonstrate the full varnasrama system. If these farms become successful then the whole world will be enveloped by Krsna consciousness.'

"From your letter I can understand how nice this farm is. I am very happy to see fresh vegetables, fresh fruits, grains, the devotees taking sumptuous prasadam and chanting Hare Krsna. This is the actual meaning of human life. It is a very good farm, from your letter I can understand. Whatever you build, get the building materials locally. If you can manufacture tiles locally, then your house problem is solved. Build up bamboo frame, and on it place tiles. In any event get everything locally. I wish to make a farm tour and then I shall surely visit your farm.'

"So Srila Prabhupada wants you to develop this farm very nicely as it will be the future program to present to the world as the ideal of Krsna consciousness. In the cities, we are interested for preaching but we cannot present the ideal varnasrama system, this is only possible at the farms, so they are very important."

Excerpt of letter from Tamal Krishna Goswami, 10 August 1977 to Hari Sauri dasa, ISKCON Melbourne (sent from Krishna Balarama Mandir, Vrindavana).

THE PIONEER DAYS OF NEW GOVARDHANA

By Govardhana Seva dasa

In 1977 a devotee by the name of Sabhapati dasa, accompanied by several new devotees were driving around Australia in a bus preaching the message of Krishna consciousness. Attracted by the climate of northern NSW, he decided to look for some land where they could set up a centre. They found a property of 1000 acres up for sale at \$80,000. With permission from ISKCON's Governing Body Commission (GBC), the purchase went ahead.



Photo: Supplied by Ajita dasa

One of the only two houses on the property in 1977, the 'White House' served as the first temple

With just a handful of devotees, they moved onto the property, which consisted of 350 acres of arable land and the rest mountainous forest. There was no bridge across the Oxley River at that time and access to the property was by driving through the creek.

The whole area was well known locally for the amount of snakes on the property. One hill in particular was named 'Death Adder Hill'. Besides the death adders, eastern brown snakes and large pythons were also prolific.

There were only two houses on the property at the time: the 'White House' – which still stands and is the first building on the right as you drive up to the main temple area. The second house was on the other side of the property, which also had a large cowshed.

The Deities, Gaura Nitai, who had previously been on the travelling

bus, were installed in the upper level of the White House. Everyone else moved into the lower level, which had only a dirt floor and walls that were clad with spaced wooden slats.

Conditions were primitive and everyone slept on the dirt floor, together with 50 to 60 rats and several large snakes. The bathroom facilities were also rudimentary with everyone sharing the single outdoor toilet, or 'Thunderbox'. There was one cold-water shower, which consisted of a single pipe coming through the wall, with no showerhead!

In 1978, a candle factory was established downstairs in the White House and the profits from sales

built the existing A-frame temple, located at the top of the hill. Also at that time Janmijaya dasa supervised the building of the bridge across the creek that forms part of the Oxley River.

He was also innovative in making many pieces of equipment that were used on the farm and the temple, including the current altar gates.

In the early 1980s, Ramai Swami was appointed director of the farm. He was responsible for the installation of the dams, lakes and the building of more houses and other structures.

Somehow, even though the early days were very austere with primitive conditions, the devotees laboured on and now we see New Govardhana with a school, the hall and all the infrastructure of a small village. We are looking forward to seeing what the future holds. 🙏

KRISHNA VILLAGE ECO YOGA COMMUNITY

by Krishnarupa devi dasi (ACBSP)

Just over the bridge as you enter New Govardhana Hare Krishna Community, before heading up the hill to the main temple area, you will find signs on the left indicating the Krishna Village Eco Yoga Community.

For the past few years we have been developing the Krishna Village from a completely volunteer-based farming community to a retreat space for people focused on their personal development and spiritual growth. Staying at the Village allows guests to be immersed in a supportive community of spiritual seekers from all over the world who are coming together with the intention of sharing their gifts and talents and supporting each other's learning and growth.

The Krishna Village endeavours to provide the blueprint of a simple, mindful, spiritually based lifestyle. Guests share this experience by way of short- or long-term stays in a myriad of ways.

Apart from the volunteering aspect, Krishna Village offers a range of classes and activities, including internationally certified yoga teacher training; accredited therapeutic massage courses; life coaching; and yoga classes. And some visitors stay for just a friendly, peaceful place to have a short break by the river.

For more information, please visit <http://krishnavillage-retreat.com> 🙏



Photo: Trevor Gore

The peaceful surrounds of the Krishna Village Eco Yoga Community located near the entrance of New Govardhana.

THE MANY FACETS OF NEW GOVARDHANA

By Carsani devi dasi

The New Govardhana community has come a long way since it was established almost forty years ago. Here's a snapshot of some of New Govardhana's major projects today:

RADHA KRISHNA TEMPLE

The heart of New Govardhana is our temple, which is open seven days a week from 4.30am until 9pm. It's a lovely place to visit, and many guests enjoy the opportunity to pray, meditate or read spiritual books during their visit.



New Govardhana Temple.

SUNDAY FEAST

It is one of New Govardhana's most popular public events. Beginning at 3.30pm until 9pm, the Sunday Feast program consists of *kirtana* (devotional singing), a discussion on *Bhagavad-gita* (one of India's ancient yogic texts) and lots of delicious vegetarian food. The program is a great opportunity for those who are new to *bhakti-yoga*, or curious about meditation to learn more. Many guests also enjoy visiting the Temple Gift Shop where a wide variety of devotional items are available.

DAIRY

The protection of cows is of great importance in the Hare Krishna way of life and here at New Govardhana we tend to a sizeable herd of these gentle creatures. To find out more, please turn to page 6.

SCHOOL

New Govardhana farm is also home to one of Australia's most unique independent schools. Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula caters to children from pre-K up to Year 10, with a current enrolment of 90 students,



Purpose-built mobile catering unit travels all over the east coast of Australia.

and in 2017 Year 11 and in 2018, Year 12 will be opening. In addition to offering high quality tuition in the major learning areas, the school places a strong emphasis on spiritual values and character building. For more information see page 5.

CATERING

Srila Prabhupada sometimes described his spiritual movement as 'the kitchen religion', due to its emphasis on the widespread distribution of sanctified vegetarian food, *prasadam*. New Govardhana's catering program with its hard-working crew, led by Krishna Gana dasa travel up and down the east coast and beyond in their iconic Govinda's Catering vans. They successfully cater for music festivals, community fairs and other large public programs.

GOVINDAS RESTAURANT

If you have a soft spot for Hare Krishna food, make sure you visit Govindas vegetarian restaurant, which is affiliated with and managed by New Govardhana. Situated at 20 James Street in Burleigh Heads, Govindas has developed a great reputation for some of the most delicious vegetarian fare on the Gold Coast. Visit: <http://govindas.net.au/>



CHANTING GOD'S HOLY NAME

One of the things that Hare Krishna's are best known for is chanting and

dancing on the streets. This ancient Gaudiya Vaishnava tradition has been practised in India for thousands of years. To celebrate ISKCON's 50th anniversary teams go out daily from New Govardhana chanting and dancing all around northern NSW and southern Qld.

KRISHNA VILLAGE ECO YOGA COMMUNITY

Over recent years there has been a growing interest in holistic lifestyle practices within the wider community – a need that Krishna Village, New Govardhana's Eco Yoga Community is addressing through its retreat packages, workshops and other programs. Turn to page 3 for more information.

ACCOMMODATION

Overlooking some of the farm's most picturesque countryside, eight new cabins provide comfortable accommodation consisting of a double bed, two single beds, a small kitchenette and en-suite bathroom. Two meals a day are also included in the price – breakfast and dinner.

In addition, there are nine rooms available for visitors in the current Guesthouse Retreat located on the hill facing the temple. These are of various sizes, and are suitable for singles, couples and family groups. Other features of the guesthouse include a charming communal living room with space for yoga or meditation and shady verandas with spectacular views.

If you have a special yoga event you want to host, it is available for hire. For more information about New Govardhana accommodation:

<http://www.krishnafarm.net/accommodation/>



COW PROTECTION

Excerpt from www.levkunst.com/why-the-cow/ by *Urvashi devi dasi*

In most indigenous cultures cows and bulls are considered the wealth of a family or village.

In certain African tribes, warriors lay down their lives to protect their cows. In fact, one tribe prefers to go hungry rather than slaughter their cows when food is scarce. The Vedic culture of India, which can be traced back at least 5000 years, was based on an agrarian lifestyle and culture, which placed bovines at the centre of the social fabric. All mankind's most basic needs could be met through the protection of cows and bulls. Vedic culture has produced highly advanced systems of mathematics, astronomy, astrology, medicine, architecture, agriculture, etc., so it would benefit us to take a look at why such a sophisticated and developed culture would regard the cow with so much respect.

REAL WEALTH

Real, long lasting and sustainable wealth is realised through working the land and tending cows. Cows are gentle creatures with the ability to turn ordinary, everyday grass into the miraculous food – milk. From milk we get the basic ingredients (yoghurt, cheese, paneer, cream, whey, butter, ghee) from which thousands of delicious and healthful preparations can be made.

Bulls are generally employed for breeding, while bullocks (castrated males) love to work. If left to live out their natural lives they will also provide leather, and much more. If protected and cared for, rather than exploited for every last drop of milk or slaughtered for their flesh, bovines form the basis of an eco-friendly and sustainable economy that brings about peace and prosperity, as well as nourishing the body, mind and soul of those who protect them.

BENEFITS OF THE COW

Utility of cow dung and urine for sustainable agriculture as well as for disease prevention was an integral part of the Vedic culture. The cow, according to the *Vedas*, provides four products for human use: (i) *Godudha* (cow milk): As per Ayurveda, cow milk has fat, carbohydrates, minerals



Photo: Trevor Gore

There are many festivals and events throughout the year at New Govardhana where cows, residents and guests get 'up close and personal'.

and Vitamin B, and even a capacity for body resistance to radiation and for regenerating brain cells. (ii) *Goghru*ta (ghee): The best ghee is, as per Ayurvedic medicine, useful in many disorders. When used in certain Vedic rituals, it improves the air's oxygen level. (iii) *Gomutra* (urine): Eight types of urine are used for medicinal purposes nowadays, among which cow urine is held to be the best. The Americans are busy patenting it, as it contains anti-cancer, anti-bacterial, anti-fungal and antioxidant properties. Cow urine has immune-modulator properties, which makes it useful for immune deficiency diseases. In the classics there are many references to cow urine as a drug of choice. Lastly, (iv), *Gomaya* (dung) is considered as valuable as *Gomutra* and used to purify the environment, as it has radium and checks radiation effects. (Subramanian Swami)

Cow milk contains all life-giving properties. In fact, the *bos indicus* (Indian cow) has a vein in the hump called *surya ketu nadi*, which is absent in *bos taurus* (non-Indian breeds). This *nadi* (vein) absorbs all the energies and radiations from the sun, the moon and the luminaries in the universe, producing gold salts in the cows' and bulls' blood. These salts are present in the milk and urine and can cure many diseases. These divine effects of *surya ketu nadi* are absent in the milk, dung and urine of western cow breeds.

HUG A COW AND CALM DOWN

Due to their mode of goodness, peaceful nature, simply being around cows will cause a sense of calm and the lowering of blood pressure. Working around the cow shed, breathing in the air and walking barefoot in the dung (full of beneficial microbes and antiseptic properties) is actually a health-giving experience.

There are workshops being given in Europe in 'Cow Cuddling' and 'Cow-munication' aimed at relieving stress. Cow cuddling or hugging cows is known of widely in Holland as a great remedy against stress. Dutch cows not only give healthy milk, they also provide 'Mindfulness Therapy' against stress. This 'Cow-munication Workshop' originated at a Dutch farm "Hof Noord Empe" and is now known internationally. Cow-munication inspires human communication without violence, for healthy co-operation between family and friends.

(<http://www.itbholland.com>).

Check out the links below for further reading.

<http://www.onegreenplanet.org/environment/world-hunger-population-growth-ditching-meat/>
<https://news.vice.com/article/drastic-reductions-in-meat-consumption-worldwide-could-help-fight-climate-change> 🐾



Photo: Urvashi devi dasi

Bullocks are at the centre of an agrarian lifestyle. They are trained to till the land and other useful tasks such as pulling carts and driving turbines. Bovines also provide their dung, which is the perfect fertiliser as well as a neutraliser of radiation.

GOVARDHANA TRAIL

By Kishori devi dasi

Lying across two states – Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh in India – there is a mystical mountain called ‘Govardhana’. Govardhana is located in the middle of a forest called Vrindavana, Lord Krishna’s childhood home. This mountain is considered sacred and non-different from Krishna Himself.

Nowadays there are still some pockets of the Vrindavana forest remaining and although Govardhana has reduced in size externally and is now more of a hill, it still remains lushly green.

Here, in Eungella, the Hare Krishna Community is called ‘New Govardhana’, named after this sacred Govardhana in India.

A member of the community at New Govardhana, Maha-mantra dasa has taken up the task of creating a replica of Govardhana at the farm.



Photos: Urvasi devi dasi

Various festivals are held on the Govardhana Trail each year.

Braj Gauranga dasa provided initial funding for the excavation works five years ago, setting Maha-mantra off to a good start.

So far Indian-style bathing steps have been built, lakes dug out and filled, trees planted, a small hill created, with a beautifully painted pavilion built, as well as many shady shelters along the walking path.

Maha-mantra is working towards landscaped gardens and displaying impressive statues and dioramas depicting various pastimes that occurred at Govardhana in India more than 5000 years ago.

He aims to create a wonderful meditative space that everyone can appreciate, both members of the Hare Krishna community as well as guests and visitors. 🙏



Students perform a drama depicting pastimes of Govardhana Hill.

EDUCATION AT NEW GOVARDHANA

By Syama Sakhi devi dasi

Situated in the idyllic mountain scenery of the ISKCON Hare Krishna community in Eungella, NSW, the Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula School is the only Hare Krishna school in Australia. It is a small but enthusiastic school with a current enrolment of 90 students and 17 teaching and support staff. The school was established more than 30 years ago, serving the community and its children by providing quality education that follows the Australian curriculum and offering spiritual guidance and mentorship.

The school is a member of the Australian Association of Independent Schools through which it receives the ongoing professional support of educational consultants in relation to its academic program and positive behaviour development. This year, the school opened its first pre-K class in a new purpose-built building adjoining the K-2 classroom in the Primary School campus and just



Photos: Supplied by Syama Sakhi devi dasi

Primary school students of the Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula.

recently proudly announced the opening of Year 11 in 2017 and Year 12 in 2018. Hence, the school has become the only Hare Krishna school in the entire Western world offering a complete educational package from pre-K to Year 12.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

The primary school at the Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula School has implemented several highly acclaimed programs to ensure academic excellence. One such framework is the Direct Instruction methodology utilised in the Reading Mastery and Spelling Mastery programs across Years K-6. Consequently, the school achieved

above-national results in the 2015 NAPLAN test for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in both Literacy and Numeracy. To further the success of its Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan, at the start of 2016 the school engaged Direct Instruction coach, Donna Dressman from the US. In an Australian first, Donna monitors live and recorded classroom sessions during the Reading Mastery and Spelling Mastery sessions to provide explicit feedback aimed at continuously raising best instructional practises.

Complementary to enhancing the academic program, at the forefront of the school’s vision is the social and spiritual wellbeing of the students.

Continued on page 7



School assembly with students and teaching staff.

Continued from page 6

In the primary school, the value-based learning program systematically focuses on key themes so that students' minds and hearts grow with inspiration, dedication and realisation every day.

HIGH SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT

The development of the high school over the past few years has also been a tremendous success. The students study subjects in accordance with the Australian curriculum with a variety of electives to choose from to support their various interests and growth. One of these is the first Board-approved *Bhagavad-gita* elective.



High school students visit pilgrimage places in India each year.

The high school follows 'The Tree of Life' program, which supports students' academic, mental, physical, social and spiritual wellbeing. To nourish their hearts and minds students start the day with chanting and worship. Following that, they participate in various spiritual activities such as value-based learning, hearing scriptural stories from the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*, and meditative chanting.

For their physical and mental wellbeing, students participate in weekly PE and sport programs, encouraging them to move and stay physically fit. Through the Physical Development and Health program,



Sports Day is one of the most popular days of the school year where the whole community gets together.

students also receive ongoing mentorship to strengthen their resilience and improve their social wellbeing.

One of the many highlights is the annual field trip. For the past two years students participated in overseas trips to India where they had the chance to offer service, deepen their connection with peers and challenge themselves within a whole different culture and lifestyle. Students created incredible memories to last a life-time. This year students will attend the 50th anniversary of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness celebration in Sydney, followed by a trip to the snow.

With small classroom numbers, the high school students receive an enormous amount of support and guidance from their teachers that results in continuous academic development. It has proven to be an excellent way for students to bond in their friendships and support each other throughout their education and teenage years. In a significant undertaking, plans are underway to expand the high school campus to provide facilities for growing student numbers and their diverse interests.

The Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula School is pleased to reflect upon its growth over the years. With the

support of parents and the wider community, students receive a unique educational experience that nourishes their development on all levels. Its loving environment allows every student to feel intrinsically safe to become the very best they can be and emerge as competent, conscious, global citizens. 🐚



The Bhaktivedanta Gurukula school offers a well-rounded and happy school experience.

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 gordon108@bigpond.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 will be edited, proofread and may be rejected without notice.



EDITORIAL BOARD:

Damodara Pandit dasa, Govardhana Seva dasa, Krishnarupa devi dasi (ACBSP), Urvashi devi dasi (layout and graphic design).

For enquiries, comments or suggestions, contact: newgovconch@gmail.com

UPCOMING EVENTS



Artwork: Nitai Chandra aDas

Open Day Festival: The Hare Krishnas Celebrate 50 Years Sunday, 10 July 2016

Market Stalls, Kids activities, Live Performances, Feast & more ...

10.00 am	Assemble at the start of property just over the bridge
10.30 am	Chariot Festival Parade-Ratha Yatra
12.30 pm	Artika-kirtan singing
1.00 pm	50th Stage Show
3.00 pm	Vegetarian Feast
4.00 pm	Youth Stage Kirtan into the evening

Sunday Feast 'Celebrating Women'

In order to help the women in the community connect with each other and offer support in a nurturing environment, Krishnarupa devi dasi (ACBSP) will be organising a committee of ISKCON women – young and old – to come together and organise a special Sunday Feast program. Date to be determined.

The theme will be 'Celebrating Gaudiya Vaisnava Women' with ladies cooking the feast, being MC, giving a discourse on great Vaisnava women, leading *arati*, *kirtanas* and so on.

Please contact Krishnarupa at krishnarupa.acbsp@gmail.com if you would like to participate.

Please join us each
Ekadasi for
Srimad-Bhagavatam
class given by His Divine
Grace Srila Prabhupada.
These classes will
feature subtitles.

Darshan arati 7am
Class 7.30am

The Hare Krishnas Celebrate 50 Years 13 July

HARINAMA SANKIRTANA KI JAYA!



Wednesdays 10.30am

Byron Bay *harinama* at the park opposite the Post Office. For further details and transport information, contact
Parama Karuna dasa
0439 280 362

Daily at various locations
Contact **Garuda dasa** for details
garuda108das@hotmail.com

Sunday Mornings

Northern NSW & Gold Coast
Visnujana dasa 0498 141 021

JULY CALENDAR

(from Vaishnava calendar www.vaisnavacalendar.com)

1 Fri	Ekadasi: Fasting for Yogini Ekadasi
2 Sat	Trayodasi: Break fast 6.39 – 10.06am
5 Tue	Ratha-yatra (observed Sunday, 10 July)
6 Wed	Sri Svarupa Damodara Goswami - Disappearance Sri Sivananda Sena – Disappearance
10 Sun	New Govardhana Open Day – 50th Anniversary Ratha-yatra Sri Vakresvara Pandita – Disappearance
13 Wed	The incorporation of ISKCON in New York Hera Pancami (4 days after Ratha-yatra)
14 Thu	Return Yatra (8 days after Ratha-yatra)
16 Sat	Ekadasi: Fasting for Sayana Ekadasi Unmilani Mahadvdasi
17 Sun	Dvadasi: Break fast 6.36 – 8.04am
20 Wed	Guru (Vyasa) Purnima Srila Sanatana Goswami – Disappearance
24 Sun	Srila Gopala Bhatta Goswami – Disappearance
27 Wed	Srila Lokanatha Goswami – Disappearance
30 Sa	Ekadasi: Fasting for Kamika Ekadasi
31 Sun	Dvadasi: Break fast 6.29 – 10.05am