

September 2017



# THE CONCH

[www.conch.org.au](http://www.conch.org.au)

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

## NEWSLETTER

New Govardhana Community



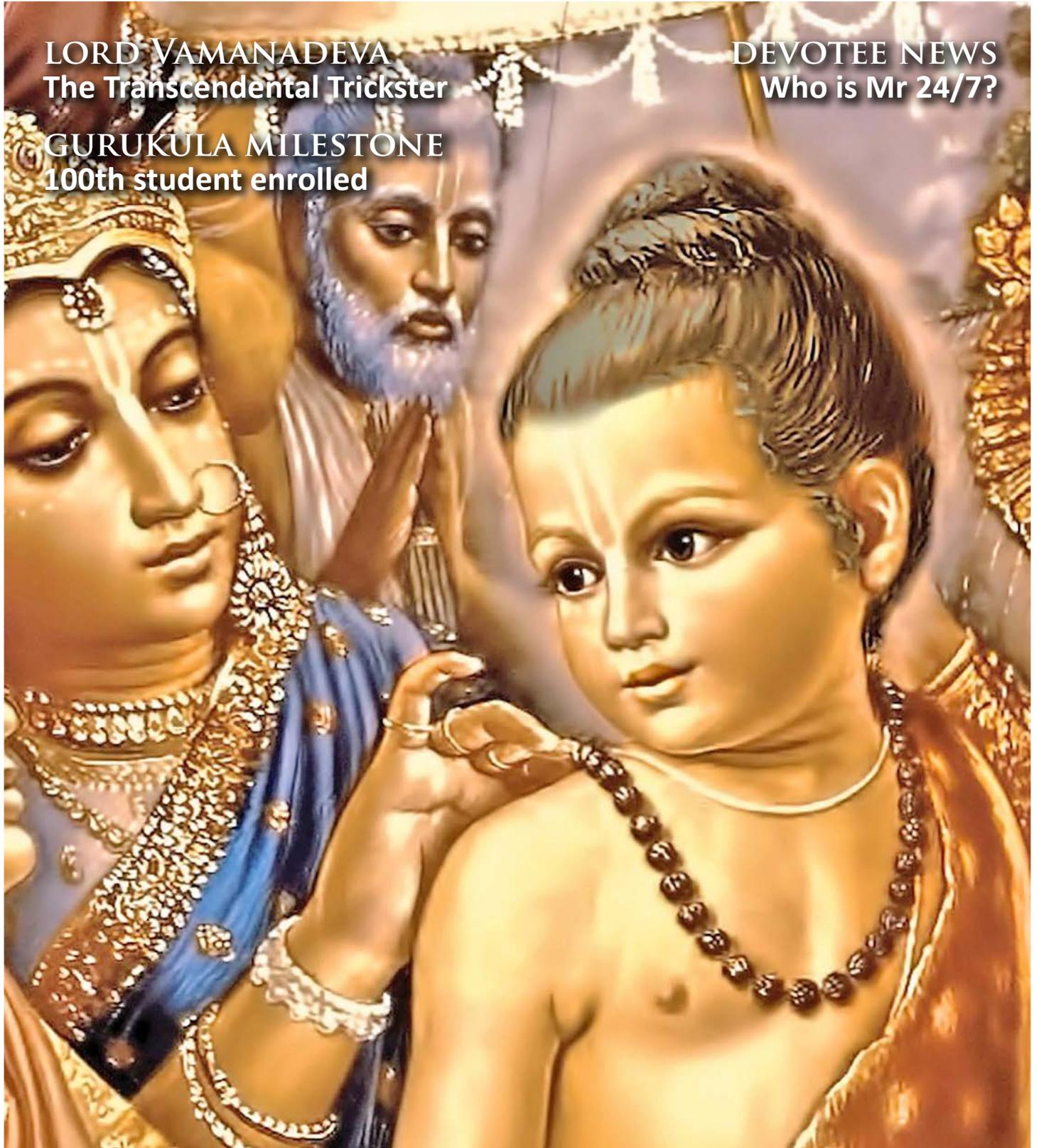
krishnafarm.com

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

LORD VAMANADEVA  
The Transcendental Trickster

GURUKULA MILESTONE  
100th student enrolled

DEVOTEE NEWS  
Who is Mr 24/7?



IN FOCUS + TULASI HOUSE UPDATE + GOSHALLA GOSS

# VAMANADEV: TRANSCENDENTAL TRICKSTER

By *Kisori devi dasi*

For the welfare of Indra, the king of heaven, Lord Vishnu appeared in the form of a dwarf *brahmachari*, Vamana, and tricked Bali Maharaja by begging for only three paces of land but ended up taking all the three worlds.

Ultimately, being very pleased with Bali Maharaja for surrendering all his possessions and even his own body, the Lord returned his kingdom and made him even richer than the opulent King Indra.

In the planet known as Sutala, Bali Maharaja, the most pious king resides. He is, even now, engaged in devotional service by worshipping the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Lord, having being won over by his devotional service, is acting as his doorkeeper.

Bali Maharaja is honoured as one of the 12 *mahajanas* – that is, a devotee whose example we are meant to learn from, one who is authorised by God, one who knows what is the law of God and what is religion.

Lord Vamanadeva appeared in this world from the womb of Aditi, completely equipped with conchshell, disc, club and lotus. His bodily hue was blackish and he was dressed in yellow garments. His appearance was on Sravana-dvadasi at an auspicious moment when the Abhijit star had arisen.

His parents, Aditi and Kashyapa, were both astonished at the Lord's appearance, and soon after the Lord assumed the form of a dwarf.

When Lord Vamana visited the sacrificial arena to ask Bali Maharaja for charity, He was wearing a belt made of *munja* straw, an upper garment of deerskin and a sacred thread. He carried in His hands a rod, an umbrella and a waterpot. He emitted a bright effulgence and all the priests stood to offer him respects.

Lord Vamanadeva's Appearance Day will be observed on the 3 September at New Govardhana. 🐾

**Source: *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, Cantos 5 and 8.**

- For more information about this festival celebration at New Govardhana, please visit ISKCON New Govardhana Facebook.

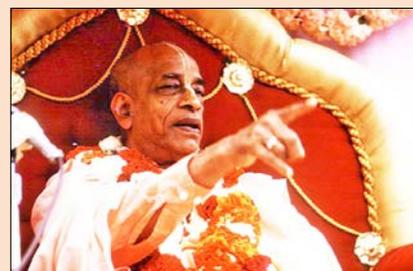


Photo: worldholyname.org

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

*Srila Prabhupada Uvaca*

So this Bhaktivinoda Thakura's birthday, we should adore, we should worship, because in the modern age he reintroduced the disciplic succession ... Five hundred years ago, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu taught this philosophy, but within two hundred years ... because this material world is so made that whatever you introduce, in due course of time it will deteriorate. You make a nice house, but after one hundred years, two hundred years, or nowadays, even after fifty years, it becomes dilapidated. That is the nature's law, *kala*. Time will destroy everything.

Now, British empire, such a big, vast empire, now it is finished. The *kala*, the time, will make everything finished. That is material. Anything material, it has birth, it has growth, it has got some opulence, then dwindling, then finished. ... So we are interested in spiritual subject matter. Therefore the process is *adau gurv-asrayam*. One has to accept a bona fide spiritual master. That is our process. Without accepting a bona fide spiritual master, we cannot make any progress. It is impossible.

So Bhaktivinoda Thakura happens to be ... one of the *acharyas*. And he has left behind him many books. *Caitanya-sikshamrita*, *Jaiva Dharma*. These are very important books ... He has prepared many books of song ...

So we are trying to present Bhaktivinoda Thakura's books also in English translation ... So our adoration, our worship to Bhaktivinoda Thakura today because he may bless us to make peacefully progress in Krishna consciousness. *Acharya-upasana*, simply by the blessings of the *acharyas* we can make very rapid progress.

*(Appearance Day lecture on His Divine Grace Srila Sac Cid Ananda Bhaktivinoda Thakur by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, 23 September 1969, London )*

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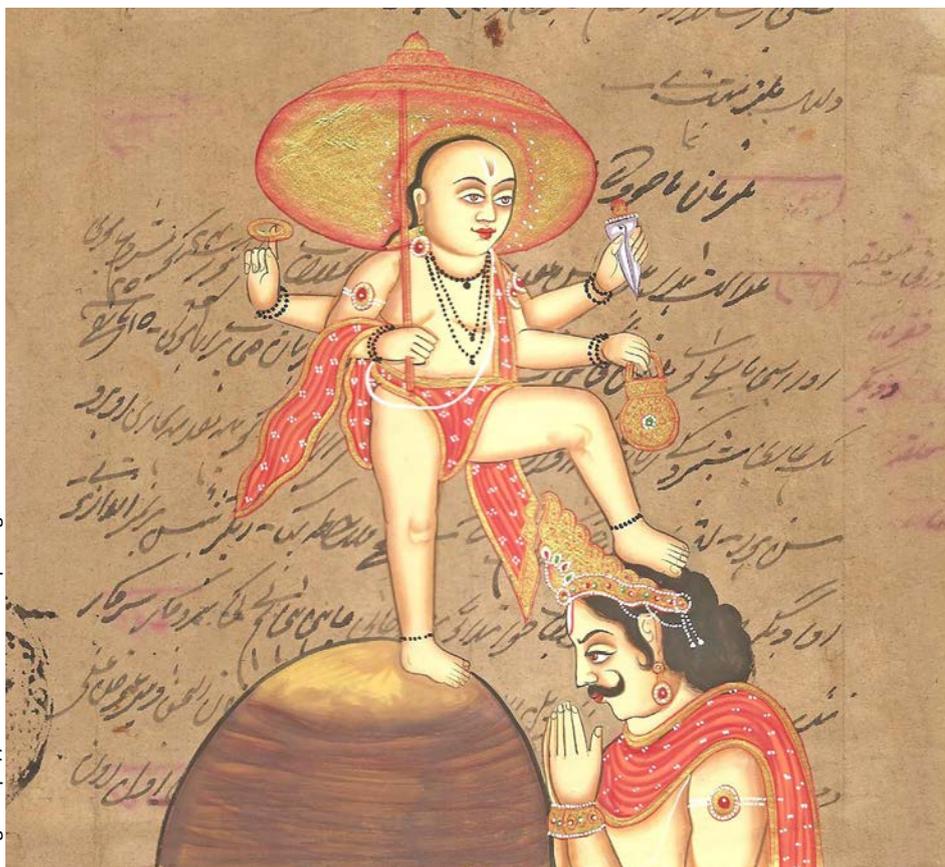


Image: <https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com>

*Bali Maharaja's full surrender at Vamanadeva's lotus feet.*

## MR 24/7: BHAKTA OWEN

By *Bharat Devanani*

Since 19 June this year, Bhakta Owen has taken on the role of kitchen manager at New Govardhana. He delegates tasks to the volunteers from the Krishna Village, which include cleaning the dining area, food preparation and other kitchen duties. He also oversees the serving of *prasadam* at breakfast and dinner whenever possible.

Bhakta Owen's other duties include managing the supply of stock for the *bhoga* storage rooms and their maintenance, as well as ensuring the big kitchen and surrounding areas are kept neat and clean at all times.

With a friendly smile on his face and always on call, Bhakta Owen now has the nickname "24/7" for being on call at all times.

Bhakta Owen says, "I love working with people!"



Photo: Trevor Gore

*Bhakta Owen in action.*

Farm residents like to shout out to him, saying, "And we love working with you, Bhakta Owen!"

On behalf of the New Govardhana community, I would like to thank him for his endless enthusiasm and wish him all the best for his continued success in his spiritual life. 🙏

*"Leadership is action,  
not position."*

– Donald H. McGannon

## SADHU SANGA

By *Manjulali devi dasi*

In discussion with her spiritual master, His Holiness Mukunda Goswami, Sita devi dasi decided to commence Vaishnava *sanga* programs in her home. She had been studying *Bhakti Shastri* and Mukunda Goswami encouraged her to put that knowledge to good use by giving classes. She was holding back for half a year as she was nervous about beginning, but then she decided just to 'give it a go'.

Sita's father used to hold programs when she was a child, so it was natural for her to be in that environment. Sita and her husband, Syama, have now held three programs with a lovely group of devotees attending. Sita's talks are honest, balanced and enlivening, often leading to interesting group discussions afterwards.

We then share delicious *prasadam* cooked by Sita. It is a nice opportunity for devotees to get together and be inspired in their Krishna consciousness.



Photo: Kisoro devi dasi

*Sita devi dasi joyfully serves devotees at her Crystal Creek home at her recent Vaishnava Sanga program attended by approximately 25 guests.*

Despite her initial nervousness to commence the program, Sita's greatest reward came after doing her first program, hearing her *guru maharaja's* pleasure as she recounted

the events of the evening. She feels an inner satisfaction after each program and is inspired to deepen her relationships with devotees through the Vaishnava *sanga*. 🙏

# RAINBOW RIDGE STEINER SCHOOL VISIT

By **Bharat Devanani**

On 27 July, a group of 8–10 year-olds from Rainbow Ridge Steiner School visited New Govardhana.

Their bus arrived mid-morning, with a first stop to see the cows. Most of the children had brought vegetables and fruits from home to feed the cows, and were delighted to see the animals gobble down their treats. Venugopal dasa had organised a bale of hay as well, which the young visitors also fed to the happy cows.

After a tea break at the Krishna Village, they then observed Krishna Kirtana dasa training the bullocks. Some of the children attempted to give commands to one of the bulls – a once in a lifetime experience!

A tour of Gokula dasa's and Vilasa Manjari devi dasi's mud brick house was next. There was a spinning and weaving demonstration, and the couple also showed different examples of sustainable living.

By then it was lunchtime and the hungry group then honoured delicious *prasadam*. Afterwards, the kids were ushered into the temple for a lively *kirtana*. After a quick introduction to chanting, they soon became absorbed in the *kirtana*.

To conclude, Krishna Gana dasa fielded a successful Q&A session with these young inquisitive minds.

During their school week, the students created little farms and models of cows and bulls, which are on display in their classroom.

Many thanks to all those devotees who helped make the visit such a success. We hope to have many more such visits in the near future. 🙏



Students from local Steiner school.

# COW BABIES GALORE

By **Venugopal dasa**

At the time of writing, we have seen the arrival of four new calves – two girls and two boys. They are known as Shivani, Gopika, Vidhura and Nandi and are all in excellent health. What's more, there are another four on the way!

All these babies are such great ambassadors for giving people a new sense of how wonderful cows actually are. We have half a dozen guests a day dropping by at milking just to spend time with these beautiful creatures and inevitably they all go away enlivened with a positive experience. 🙏

**COW  
SPONSORSHIP**

**If you would like the unique opportunity to sponsor any of New Govardhana's cows, please contact Venugopal dasa for details 0411 444 934**



Nandi.



Photography: Venugopal dasa

Vidura.



Gopika.



Shivani.

## IN FOCUS: SRI HARI BHAKTI

*Interviewed by The Conch*

This month *The Conch* (TC) interviews Sri Hari Bhakti devi dasi.

TC: *What service do you have at the Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula?*

SHB: I go to the *gurukula* three days a week, 8.30am until 12pm, as the receptionist. I also have other administrative responsibilities – and also deal with the odd emergency, such as kids with a hurt finger or knee that needs attending.

TC: *You also oversee gurukula accommodation. What does that entail?*

SHB: The system is not fully set-up yet. We are working towards having tenancy leases and upgrading the maintenance to make sure that the teachers are as comfortable as possible. I also ensure that the teachers are happy with the maintenance work or troubleshoot if there are any issues with it.

It is an interesting service and keeps me busy. I think the tenancy of the *gurukula* accommodation housing is a bit challenging, although it hasn't really gotten off the ground so far. At present, we are trying to get all the work done. But since the meeting of the board, we will be able to move along much quicker.

TC: *You have lived in Murwillumbah for 10 years. Before that you lived in Melbourne?*



Photo: Trevor Gore

*Sri Hari Bhakti devi dasi at the Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula, New Govardhana.*

SHB: For more than 20 years, I had been spending six months in Mayapur and six months in Melbourne, but I found it was very wearing, especially as I was getting older.

It was my husband, Sadbhuj dasa's decision to move to New Govardhana because it was too cold in Melbourne. At first, for me, it was a bit of a strain living in the sticks! But now I see that it has been a really good move. Moving from an apartment in Melbourne to a house here has provided a nice situation for me.

TC: *You are originally from Melbourne temple? What services did you do there?*

SHB: I looked after the women's *ashrama*, went to our Crossways restaurant five days, and went on *sankirtana* almost every day. I also cleaned the Lord's paraphernalia when I first joined. I cooked the 7 o'clock offering, made the fruit offering and sometimes breakfast.

TC: *What are your thoughts about the New Govardhana community?*

SHB: Well, I think it is a growing community. There are lots of changes as new devotees come in. I like living near New Govardhana – it's a good place for retirement, too, because it is very peaceful.

TC: *What do you do in your spare time?*

SHB: I like to keep active by swimming and walking. I also enjoy going every second Tuesday to Bhaktagana devi dasi's home for the book club. I also love going out on *harinama*, which I do every second week. I have been very much encouraged by Vishnujana dasa in this service. He has been very sweet and kind, allowing me to lead the *kirtana*. I haven't been going out as much lately, though, because I have tendonitis. 🐟

Note: Sri Hari Bhakti's service to the *gurukula* is done on a voluntary basis and is very much appreciated.

## 100<sup>TH</sup> STUDENT MILESTONE

*By Kisori devi dasi*

The *gurukula* now has more than 100 students and on Monday, 31 July celebrated its success by a special assembly and a delicious cake Dhritigopi devi dasi baked.

Mukunda Maharaja also graced the occasion as the VIP guest.

Principal Vinod Bihari das said he was honoured that many parents were relocating to the Tweed in order for their children to attend the school.

As the school expands, preparations are underway for more classrooms to facilitate the 120 students enrolled

for the 2018 school year, including 20 HSC students enrolled for Years 11 and 12.

In a 31 July *Tweed Daily News* article, Vinod Bihari is quoted as saying: "This phase includes two classroom

buildings, a full size basketball court, pathways and gardens to preserve the natural beauty of our school's surroundings." 🐟



Photo: Courtesy of Tweed Daily News

*Students help celebrate the landmark occasion at the gurukula.*

## TULASI GROWS BY BHAKTI

By Jhulan devi dasi

During one of Ramai Swami's visits to New Govardhana, he said, "The prosperity of the temple can be measured by how flourishing the *tulasi* plants are and by the mood of the *kirtana*."

*Tulasi*, then, is another aspect of New Govardhana that grows by *bhakti*.

Approximately there are 60 *tulasi* plants growing in the *tulasi* garden under the long-term care of Vilasa Manjari devi dasi and husband, Gokula dasa. Recently they began re-building the old *tulasi* house.

Vilasa Manjari explains, "It has been 10 years since *tulasi* had the old house. A few years ago a large tree fell on it, but It took us a long time to build a new one, since there were so many other building projects going on the farm. First we asked Bhakti, who

is a mechanic from Sri Lanka, to help with this project. My husband, Gokula is expert in building, so they worked together on the base structure.

"The new house will keep the *tulasi* warm so that they can survive well in winter. Having proper housing for *tulasi* protects them from disease and unexpected visitors, and also provides a nice environment for worship," says Vilasa Manjari.

"Progress on the structure has been slow, however," explains Gokula. "The poles were bent when we first got them, so we had to straighten them, and also there weren't suitable products for the joints, so we had to make those ourselves."

The new *tulasi* house has been a group project, with Bhakti working on the early stages of the structure and Bhakta Owen painting the frames.

"Now Ezra [Thallon] is helping us," says Gokula. "He went to *gurukula* at New Govardhana a long time ago. When he came back here, he was soon offered this service."

At the time of writing, the structure's completion is one month away. 🙏



Photo: Trevor Gore

Gokula dasa and Ezra Thallon, dedicated builders of the new *tulasi* house.

## LEARNING AT KRISHNA VILLAGE

By Clarissa Pollack

Rolling tones of Sanskrit chanted in call-and-response reverberate through the golden-hued trees and melt into the birdsongs of early evening. The Bhakti Shastri course is held on the grass bi-weekly, and students from across the globe converge to learn more about Vedic philosophy. In the Yoga Hall, yoga teachers-in-training welcome guests to evening *asana* practice.

Yoga is offered twice each day and an hour-long philosophy class follows community *kirtana* at 12:30pm. Classes open with the sonorous lines "om *ajnanatimirandhasya jnanjana-salakaya* ..." and bring students from all walks of life together to delve into *asana*, *pranayama*, Ayurveda, meditation, *kirtana*, Vedic philosophy and more.

After *kirtana* and class, lunchtime is a jovial affair of scrumptious salads,



Photo: Courtesy Krishna Village

Students gather in the Yoga Hall to hear Michael Olabode lecture on the Yoga Sutras.

seasonal soups, and pasta and rice dishes. Most of the vegetables served come fresh from the organic gardens that the Krishna Village volunteers lovingly tend.

The oasis of community, culture and natural beauty of Krishna Village attracts travellers from all over the world to experience 'Simple Living, High Thinking'. Living a sattvic lifestyle in this revitalising space provides people with a safe and supportive environment to nurture spiritual

exploration and meet likeminded individuals. Many guests remark that it is a community of healing and getting in tune with their true life's purpose. 🙏

All are welcome to yoga classes at 5am and 4.15pm, with lectures at 1pm. For more information, check in with the Krishna Village (02) 6672 7876.

# FESTIVAL OF COLOURS: INVITATION FOR PERFORMERS

By *Syama Sakhi devi dasi*

After last year's success, the second Colour Festival will be held at the Hare Krishna School on the 16 December.

We would like to invite all devotees who are interested in performing

on stage to kindly contact Indranila devi dasi. It is a fun-filled and joyful day with many people attending and participating.

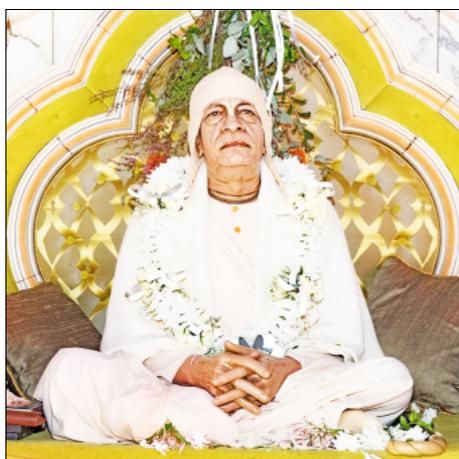
Families and their children up to teenage years are our target audience. Our wider community will also be invited. We are looking for performers in any area such as: yoga, dance, drama presentation, devotional songs and *kirtana* singers, magicians, or any other performers that could represent our culture and can be relevant to all ages.

We are also looking for an enthusiastic MC for the festival.

In addition, anyone who would like to participate by helping set up the festival, help with safety and security, food distribution, sound system, and marketing is very much encouraged to contact the festival organisers.

If you feel inspired to help and participate or have any further questions, please contact Indranila at 0450 503 570. 🐞

# JANMASTAMI SNAPSHOTS



## SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

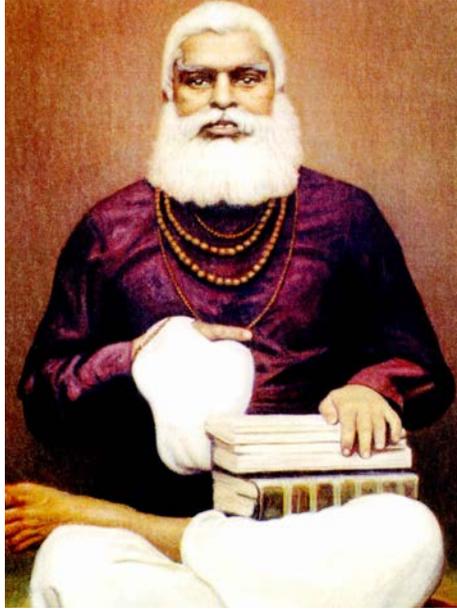
*The Conch* is your community newsletter, and we invite you to submit articles for publication. Articles should be 300 words or less and supplied in MS Word via email to [caroleditor@gmail.com](mailto:caroleditor@gmail.com). Photographs must be in JPG format. Please provide the name of the author and

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 will be edited, proofread and may be rejected without notice.



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**LAYOUT AND GRAPHIC DESIGN:**  
*Urvasi devi dasi and Jhulan dasi*  
 For enquiries, comments or suggestions, contact: [www.conch.org.au](http://www.conch.org.au)

# FESTIVALS THIS MONTH



## EVENT DETAILS

For more information about this month's festivals, please visit ISKCON New Govardhana's Facebook page.

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**

## Lord Vamanadeva's Appearance Day

**Sunday**  
**3 September**

(See New Govardhana's Facebook page)

## Bhaktivinoda's Appearance Day

**Monday**  
**4 September**

(See New Govardhana's Facebook page)

## HARINAMA SANKIRTANA KI JAYA!



**Daily** at various locations  
Contact **Garuda dasa** for details  
[garuda108das@hotmail.com](mailto:garuda108das@hotmail.com)

### Sunday Mornings

#### Northern NSW & Gold Coast

3 September Byron Bay Market  
10 September Coolangatta Market  
17 September Broadbeach Market  
24 September Burleigh Heads Market

Contact **Visnujana dasa** for details  
**0498 141 021**

# SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

(from Vaishnava calendar [www.vaisnavacalendar.com](http://www.vaisnavacalendar.com))

- 2 Sat Fast for Parsva Ekadasi  
Fast today for Vamanadeva
- 3 Sun Dvadasi break fast 5.58 – 9.50am  
Sri Vamana Dvadasi – Appearance of Lord Vamanadeva  
(Fasting is done yesterday, today is feast)
- 4 Mon Bhaktivinoda Thakura – Appearance (Fast till noon)
- 5 Tue Haridasa Thakura – Disappearance  
Last day of 2nd month of Caturmasya
- 6 Wed Acceptance of *sannyasa* by Srila Prabhupada  
3rd month Caturmasya (Fasting from milk)
- 13 Wed Srila Prabhupada's arrival in the US
- 16 Sat Fasting for Putrada Ekadasi
- 17 Sun Dvadasi break fast 6.11 – 7.54am
- 30 Sat Sripad Madhvacarya – Appearance