

ISSUE

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A QUARTERLY  
NEWSLETTER FROM  
THE VAISHNAVI  
MINISTRY  
OF AUSTRALIA

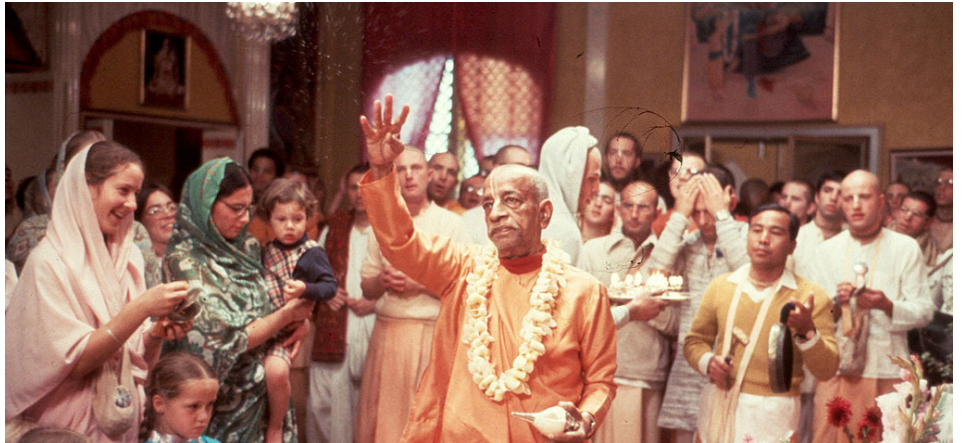
# THE Vaishnavi Voice

DEDICATED TO ISKCON'S FOUNDER-ACHARYA HIS DIVINE GRACE A.C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI PRABHUPADA



*“Among women I am fame,  
wealth, fine speech, memory,  
retention, fortitude and  
forgiveness.”*

*Bhagavad-gita 10.34*



## THIS ISSUE

### Hearing Krishna

p.2-3

### New Govardhana

p.3

### Melbourne: A Kids Powerhouse

p.4

### Perth Power

p.5

### Canberra: The Holy Name in Parliament House

p.6

### New Gokula Hunter Valley

p.7

### Living in Krishna Consciousness

p.8

### Sydney Action

p.9

### Adelaide Update

p.10

## EDITOR'S LETTER

Welcome to the third issue of *The Vaishnavi Voice* – a digital newsletter for the men and women of the Australian yatra.

The past three years were unprecedented as we all experienced a complete change in travel, and how we lived and interacted with each other. Finally, lockdowns seem to be over, travel is almost back to normal, and devotees are once again able to visit the holy places in India.

Digital outreach hasn't stopped with the cessation of lockdowns, however. This format of engagement continues to be a wonderful way of presenting Krishna consciousness to the world and engaging with each other via reading groups and online courses. Even many management meetings continue to be via the internet.

So, here is the third issue of *The Vaishnavi Voice*. I hope you all enjoy reading what's been going on in the different temples around our zone.

We are honoured to have a well-known guest writer this issue. Pranada devi dasi, a disciple of ISKCON's Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada is an award-winning author of *Wise Love: Bhakti and the Search for the Soul of Consciousness* as well as other books in her bhakti series. ([www.pranadacomtois.com](http://www.pranadacomtois.com))

I hope that you will find this edition both relevant and interesting. As this is your publication, I warmly invite you to contribute to the next issue. You can send your story idea or article to me at:

[krishnarupa.acbsp@gmail.com](mailto:krishnarupa.acbsp@gmail.com)

We welcome any feedback or suggestions on how to make this newsletter relevant to you and your spiritual journey in service. Please don't hesitate to contact me on the email above. 🙏

Krishnarupa devi dasi  
Editor

# Hearing Krishna

By Pranada devi dasi

Since 2000, Pranada dasi, a disciple of Srila Prabhupada, has meditated on how to write for a modern Western audience. In 2007 she began in earnest to learn to write, and now she has written three award-winning books presenting the gems of bhakti in a fresh, relatable way.

Do you notice when Krishna speaks to you? Do you feel that He does speak to you or are you of the opinion that He doesn't communicate with you? How often do you hear Him?

How do we know when we're being naive and gullible or attentive and in tune with another dimension?

Some people facetiously remark at every turn how they've received some otherworldly communication; others say they've never experienced anything beyond the mundane.

## HOW TO LISTEN?

Can we read too much into our environment or be blind to what is right before us? Of course, we can and we do it all the time.

I can't give you a formula how to determine when Krishna factually speaks to you, but I can say unequivocally that He does.

That said, I tend to dislike (even dismiss) claims from people who cheaply say that Krishna did something or said something. Still, in recent years, I've become more inclined to embrace what I experience as real instead of denying a genuine experience.

Isn't our path meant to give us direct experience of the theory we've accepted? If we've taken up a serious practice then inevitably, eventually, we will have direct experience and hear Krishna. He is not silent; He is not unfeeling.

Now when I feel that I've "heard" something I try to slow down and take notice instead of speeding ahead into the next activity or thought. There really is more to life than what meets the eye, but we can deny ourselves these connecting moments if we think everything is mundane and we don't take heed.

As a different response, what about taking a moment to dial in, or tune in, to what we heard or are hearing? If we are receiving communication, wouldn't we benefit by understanding what is being

Photo: Courtesy Google images



Lord Krishna listening to the bhajan of Shri Surdas.

said, why we're being told something, and what we might do about taking that communication to heart?

## THE LORD'S AFFECTION

I was recently reading a passage from *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu*. Srila Rupa Gosvami was describing how it is easy to serve Krishna and he offered a reference from the *Viṣṇu-dharma Purāna*:

"Affectionate to His devotees, the Lord sells Himself to them merely for a tulasi leaf and a handful of water."

Srila Jiva Gosvami comments:

"'Sells Himself' (*vikrīṇīte svam ātmānam*) means that He puts Himself completely or repeatedly under the control [of the devotees]."

As I read, I was suddenly struck: Krishna came alive and reached me in full dimension beyond the black letters on a flat, white page. I experienced Krishna. For a flash I understood something about His heart; who He is as a person. Tears welled up in my eyes.

He is an ocean of many kinds of sweetnesses. He is the person who has everything, who can give everything, who is love and beauty personified with extraordinary qualities and who is truly endearing considers that His most attractive quality is His tendency to give Himself in love to His devotees. He cannot help Himself. This quality defines Him more than any of His other qualities: in love He gives Himself to those who love Him.

Who is this incredible person?! I mused.

I marvelled at the gift of the moment and wondered when I would finally give myself fully. How could I break through all the barriers to loving Krishna? When would I change!

Then, I moved onto other things until later the same day I read this in the *Bhakti Sandarbha anuccheda* 153. Srila Jiva Gosvami writes,

"Next, it is seen that bhakti performed even just once with slight effort is instrumental even in bringing Sri Bhagavan under one's control. This is illustrated by Sri Siva in the *Brahma Purana*:

"'O best of the dvijas, Bhagavan perpetually looks upon a person who has [once] beheld His form. He reciprocally takes refuge in a person who has [once] sought His shelter, and He eternally worships a person who has [once] worshiped Him.' (*Brahma Purana* 226.55)

A similar statement is made in the *Viṣṇu-dharma*:

"'Bhagavan, who is full of affection for His devotees, sells Himself to His devotees merely by their offering Him a tulasi leaf and palmful of water. (*Viṣṇu-dharma*)'"

There it was: the same verse that had grabbed my attention earlier. It had spoken to me then; some communication had occurred, but I had carried on too quickly, losing an opportunity to go deeper. Now, here it was reaching through my dullness and ordinariness, begging for further consideration.

I've read verses like this before – many times before. Why was I astonished and feeling so much wonder this time?

When something grabs our attention – when we receive indications in the heart that are so complete and well developed – we can know it's no accident. For sure, I was receiving communication beyond the ordinary and something was being asked of me.

For a second time the meaning of the verse touched my heart with its simplicity and power. I read it again, savoring how I was being called: "Offer Krishna some water and tulasi with real feeling. Drop down into your heart and offer Krishna everything. Oh, how can I bridge what keeps me from making a full offering? So much awaits me!"

Though we're being guided in how to make a complete offering – which is far more than giving water or a tulasi leaf – still we begin and learn how to do it by how we approach the offering.

Krishna doesn't want an elaborate feast offered with ulterior motives. He doesn't like hypocritical approaches. He prefers simplicity, humility, and straightforward dealings. Duryodhana decorated the city to welcome Krishna and held a feast in His honor, but Krishna just saw hypocrisy: Duryodhana didn't actually respect

Krishna – he just wanted to win His favour for his own purposes.

We're going to have to offer water without ulterior motives for freedom or liberation or wealth or health or any number of things that seem important to us.

Do you offer Krishna water? If not, can you begin to offer Him water every day? If you do, what are you thinking about as you fill His cup?

How about when you set His cup in front of Him? Are you "seeing" the amazing person who gives Himself in love in exchange for your love? Are you begging to have the obstacles that keep you from "seeing" this removed?

What about saying a prayer when you place His water in front of Him, "Please accept this offering; please accept me as an offering."

What thoughts and desires – the ones that have your attention right now and the ones that lurk in shadows – are keeping you from being present with some feeling for Krishna?

It's moments like these when we have genuine communication – when

something touches the heart in a fresh or compelling way – that can thoroughly, or permanently, change us. If we choose.

We have to be willing to notice, to pause, to be self-reflective about how we're thinking and acting in relation to the practices, in relation to the communications we receive. We can take time to contemplate how we might change. And especially, how we can put change into practice.

I thought that every time I offer water to Krishna, I will offer myself.

When we can draw up commitments toward change, then we've actually heard. Let's embrace all the little (but significant) ways that Krishna communicates with us. As we do, we incline Him to speak with us more often. 🙏

The author's books are available from BBT Australia, Amazon and Book Depository. Wholesale orders are available by contacting Pranada dasi directly at [pranadacomtois@gmail.com](mailto:pranadacomtois@gmail.com)

## New Govardhana

By Krishnarupa devi dasi

Located in one of Australia's paradise spots, the New Govardhana farm and gurukula boasts a thriving community of devotees and spiritually inclined volunteers.

The cow protection program is going well, with new calves delighting the hearts of visitors and permanent residents alike. The *ahimsa* milk is on sale for devotees including paneer and yoghurt, while the Deities are offered milk products only from Their beautiful cows.

We now have two Vaishnavi Bhakti Circles who meet regularly to discuss topics of worth. Regular reading programs, such as the *Caitanya-caritamrta* sessions fortnightly are going on along with our Vaishnava Care program, our Mental Health Care program and the mentor initiative.

There are regular kirtana sessions, bhakti retreats and cooking classes that inspire so many of the guests. Sunday Feasts have started again after Covid lockdowns, with members of the community taking



Photo: ISKCON New Govardhana Facebook

*Shri Shri Radha Govardhanadhari.*

on the challenge of presenting stand-out programs monthly.

We have had some wonderful preachers visit recently – such as Bhanu Swami and Mahatma dasa. Their workshops and classes have inspired all of us. Mahatma prabhu also initiated three new disciples – long-term residents on the farm.

Krishna Pad construction has been completed and the accommodation offered to the group of former Krishna Village members is beautiful. The group is under the expert care of Krishna Gana and his wife, Dharma Rupini. Under their

guidance, many of these devotees are now aspiring for initiation, attend *mangal-aratika* each day and are dedicated to the project.

A new duplex is nearing completion, located between the brahmachari ashrama and the ladies ashrama. Other plans are afoot to create more housing to accommodate the many devotees who want to move to the area.

New Govardhana is a caring community for members young and old. And each festival takes us to the next level of devotion! 🙏

# Melbourne: A Kids' Powerhouse

By Yamuna Lila devi dasi

“I’ll catch Krishna first,” squealed ‘Balarama’ as he started running towards ‘Krishna’.

“No, I’ll be the first one to tag him!”

Giggling with unabandoned joy, Rishabha chased after Balarama. Laughing and prancing, many other children followed suit in their attempt to catch Krishna first.

While you might think that this is Lord Krishna’s pastime from 5,000 years ago that we are narrating here, this is actually a regular scene in the courtyard of the Hare Krishna Melbourne temple (which devotees fondly refer to as ‘Melbourne Mahaprabhu Mandir’).

## SPIRITUAL PLAYTIME

Enacting Krishna’s pastimes and playing games that the Supreme Lord used to play with His cowherd friends is a regular activity for the many children of the Melbourne devotee community when they come together during weekend feasts and festivals at the temple.

With flourishing preaching programs at the temple, and in various suburbs around Melbourne (outreach programs, Bhakti Vriksha groups and so on), the congregation of the temple has grown multi-fold in the past decade, and so has

Photo: Courtesy of Yamuna Lila dasi



*The children and youth of Melbourne temple are important members of the community.*

the community of children. To cater to these ever-growing children’s spiritual needs, and to give them a devotional atmosphere and like-minded association, we have a variety of classes and activities happening not only at the temple, but in homes, online on Zoom, outdoors and at our farm. Some of the programs we have are:

- There are classes for children as young as four years to their teenage years. Under the guidance of senior devotees, mothers and fathers from the congregation have taken up the service of being dedicated teachers of these classes. And we have a lot of help from the temple brahmacharis for fulfilling our boys’ groups’ needs. In these classes, children listen to and discuss stories from the scriptures,

learn verses from the scriptures, do fun activities such as arts and crafts, have brainstorming sessions, debates, group discussions and so on.

- We have approximately 25 Bhakti Vriksha groups happening around Melbourne, with each group having its own dedicated children’s program.
- There is a daily online japa session specially dedicated for children, where the kids from all over Melbourne come together on Zoom to chant from the comfort of their homes.
- Throughout the year, there are ‘children’s special’ retreats at our Hare Krishna Valley, with wonderful activities like cow feeding, cow-dung patty making, cleaning the dairy, cooking, bush walks, cycling, hiking etc.
- Our Janmashtami cultural program is the highlight of the year for the children as they come together to participate in spectacular dramas, traditional dances, songs and the like.
- And there are various outdoor and indoor sports activities run by parents like soccer, chess, cricket, bike-riding, basketball etc.

These activities not only keep our congregation children spiritually engaged while having fun, they also help them develop life-long skills like team building, leadership, creativity, making friends, and enhancing their physical and mental fitness. And the most important part is that these engagements are creating everlasting memories on their impressionable minds, memories they will fondly look back on, and will hold dear for the rest of their lives, wherever they are. 🌸

Photo: Courtesy of Yamuna Lila dasi



*Some of the children doing kirtana in Melbourne temple.*

# PERTH POWER

By Janapriya Yashoda devi dasi

The Vaishnavis in the Perth yatra have been enthusiastically performing their devotional service for the pleasure of Shri Shri Gaura Nitai this year. After lockdown, it was all action again.

Teams engaged the ladies according to their propensities, strengthening and nourishing their *bhakti lata*, helping the whole congregation grow.

## FESTIVALS GALORE

Vaishnavi *kirtaneers*, dancing and drama groups of different ages performed spectacularly and highlighted Perth's Sunday feasts, festivals and the fabulous Friday night *hari-namas*. The teams engaged in the temple decorations constantly produced glorious floral artistry for our temple altar along with gorgeous garlands and delicate satin smocking softening the display.

Challenges were eagerly embarked upon for the creative ladies: hundreds of woollen tassels were strung like pearls on a string across the temple ceiling; beautifully hand-painted pots were produced and bedazzled the sumptuous offerings, helping to set a Vrindavana mood.

## EXPLORING TALENTS

Sunday school had growing attendances due to the talented and generous



One of the many festivals celebrated in ISKCON temples.

Vaishnavi teachers. Cooking classes for Asian-style dishes were also a big attraction along with the fondant (icing) animals sculpted for Govardhan *puja*. Individuals and teams of expert ladies cooked daily offerings together on festival days in a uniting team effort, producing a multitude of preparations for the colourful *prasadam* pots that were sold as a fundraising opportunity.

Govindas Restaurant engaged ladies in serving and painting ambitious murals on its walls, while various outreach programmes engaged them in providing *prasadam* to the public at markets and other events, along with and most importantly

distributing Srila Prabhupada's books, constantly attracting newcomers.

Also, the Vaishnavis have been having regular outdoor catch-ups, such as trekking and picnics.

Through all these different services and events, the Vaishnavis of Perth continue to nurture and deepen their relationships together more and more, reflecting inwardly and outwardly a sense of joy and love from serving Krishna and His devotees, and thus perpetuating this beautiful culture of bhakti. 🙏



Srila Prabhupada murti in Perth temple.



One of the outdoor catch-ups the Perth Vaishnavis organised.

# Canberra: The Holy Name in Parliament House

By Sravaniya devi dasi

*ISKCON Canberra has been in the centre of various exciting developments and outreach activities. The devotees here have been as enthusiastic as ever to engage in a multitude of services over the year.*

Photos: Courtesy Sravaniya dasi



*Devotee representation at Canberra's National Multicultural Festival.*

## POLITICIANS CHANT HARE KRISHNA

As part of observing Diwali last year, our local devotees presented *kirtana* at the Australian Parliament House. Several Government and Opposition Ministers joined us in singing the Hare Krishna maha-mantra, including senior Defence personnel and prominent members of parliament. It was a historic moment to hear the maha-mantra echo through the walls of Parliament House.

## MULTICULTURAL EVENTS

We also actively participated in the annual National Multicultural Festival 2023 in Canberra. We engaged in *kirtana* and shared the chanting with the guests of honour, ACT Chief Minister Mr Andrew Barr and Mr Deepak Raj-Gupta (Australian Labor Party, Yerrabi electorate), and the multicultural community of Canberra. Vaishnavis led the *kirtana*, gracefully danced and were interviewed by Channel 10.

Over the past year, we have had several Vaishnavis take both Harinam and Brahmin initiation. This has encouraged them to commit to regular services at the temple and engage in devotional service according to their capacity. They engage in temple services such as Deity worship, garland making with new bhaktines, cooking for the Deities, giving lectures, singing *kirtanas* and organising programs such as the annual 24-hour *Kirtana Festival*.

They strive to balance their family duties with services at the temple, and set an example to one and all. 🙏



*Canberra is treated to the colourful sight of hari-nama.*



*Dignitaries come together to celebrate Diwali.*

# New Gokula Hunter Valley

By Jayashri dasi and Aniruddha dasi

New Gokula Farm, located in the beautiful Hunter Valley, has had many improvements recently.

Not so long ago, Their Lordships Shri Shri Radha Gokulananda were painted expertly by Bhakti dasi from Melbourne. Radharani is looking more exquisitely beautiful than ever. Chitrangi dasi from Canberra sews all the Deities night dresses, which are made from delicately printed pure silk she orders from abroad. Premala dasi designs and orders all the original designed day sets. The Deity paraphernalia room has also been very effectively organised by Jayasri dasi, who has been assisting with the temple management since 2017.

Located at the base of a mountain range, we have recently done extensive work to improve the underground drainage systems on the farm to prevent ongoing flooding issues from heavy rains. Among the many improvements is the addition of a new *bhoga* storeroom with adjacent cool room, a dedicated pot washing room and a dedicated waste management area.

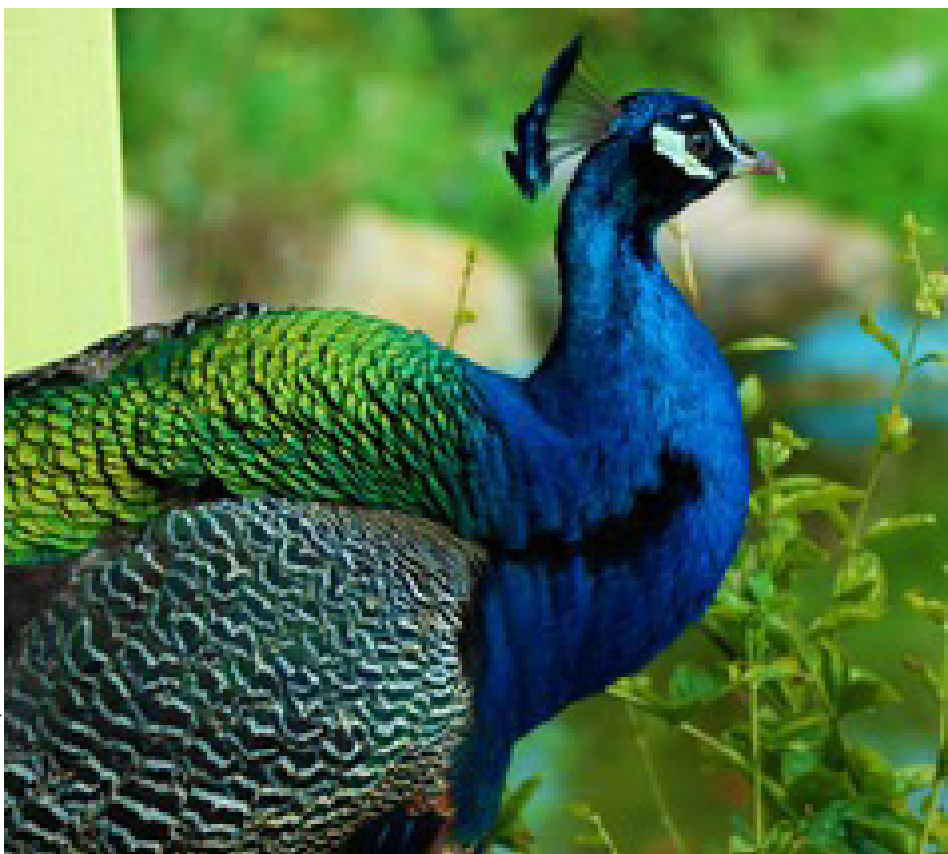
The Temple Shop has had a major makeover and now stocks gifts, books and exotic clothing from India.

An ostentation of Krishna's peacocks elegantly strut around the temple area, doing their circumambulation of the Lord as they look for choice titbits to nibble on. There is an addition of a very cute white rooster, with a short comb and feathered legs – and not prone to cockadoodling – who was dropped off at the temple! A myriad of lovely birds flit around the trees surrounding the temple, adding to the peaceful ambiance.

Over 20 varieties of fruit trees have been planted and are growing in the orchard, and 18 varieties of vegetables and several species of flowers in the large organic garden, all devotedly cared for by Manapati dasa. This season alone Manapati expects up to two tons of vegetables to be harvested from the garden.

Srikari dasi maintains a small but bountiful rose garden that provides her with flowers for making fragrant garlands for Their Lordships. She also looks after Tulasi devi with devotion.

Three wooden cabins have been constructed and are due for completion



Photos: Courtesy New Gokula

*One of the glorious peacocks at New Gokula.*

in March. The buildings are as cute as buttons, their exteriors each differently painted in bright, earthy colours. These will greatly benefit the farm by increasing accommodation facilities for new residents.

New Gokula is a cow sanctuary and is home to nearly 70 cows and bulls. During most weekends the cows are brought up close to the temple where they can be fed safely in paddocks with newly purpose-built post and rail wood fences.



*The flourishing garden thanks to Manapati's hard work.*



*One of the farm's much-loved cows gets some special attention.*

Up to a thousand guests visit New Gokula regularly on weekends eager to take *darshana* of the beautiful Deities and Their surrounds. The Deities, feeding the cows and taking videos of the dancing peacocks keep our guests coming back again and again and telling their friends about us.

There are only a few devotees living on the farm, so when you visit, there is sure to be some wonderful service you can offer to Shri Shri Radha Gokulananda, Gaura Nitai and Jagannatha, Baladeva and Subhadra. 🙏

# Living in Krishna Consciousness

By Kala from HKCCC (West Sydney)

Vaishnavis have always been integral to the burgeoning West Sydney's ISKCON community. In fact, they are the heart and soul of the Hare Krishna Cultural and Community Centre (HKCCC). The ladies are committed to serving the community and giving devotees opportunities to enrich their lives through devotion and service to Lord Krishna and Srimati Radharani.

## TEAM LEADERS

Vaishnavis are not only involved in the various services listed below, but are also taking leadership roles.

They are involved in fundraising and finances; devotee care; the cultural arts, such as *bhajan*s, design and decoration for the temple; reading and *sloka* groups; japa sessions; devotee support, such as involvement as Child Protection Officers and HR, and general preaching and *prasadam* distribution.

## DEITY SERVICES & GARLANDS

Our festivals would be incomplete without the ladies from the *pujari* team performing *abhishek* and *aratis*. The Vaishnavis at ISKCON West Sydney work extremely hard during festivals, Sunday programmes, and in regular *prasadam* distribution to serve not only Lord Krishna but also His devotees. Our garland team is deeply involved in serving Their Lordships by creating amazing flower garlands.

## DECORATION & DESIGN

We have an exclusive “ladies only” decoration team comprised of highly talented and creative Vaishnavis. Their creativity, innovative designs, and proficiencies are commendable. The decorations make devotees and guests joyful, and everyone is amazed at how magnificently the garlands, flowers and lights are orchestrated during the programmes.

## KITCHEN & PRASADAM

We are fortunate to have many Vaishnavi cooks who, experts in regional and ethnic cuisines, are involved in wholeheartedly serving Their Lordships. The latest



Photo: Courtesy HKCCC

Some of the vibrant Vaishnavis at HKCCC, West Sydney.

venture of IWS (ISKCON West Sydney) – FFL(Food For Life) *prasadam* distribution is also co-headed by one of the ladies with the purpose of spreading Krishna consciousness among the needy through delicious *prasadam*. Many Covid-affected families received regular meals during Covid. The Vaishnavi community worked hard to provide safe, healthy, and extremely nutritious food, blessing everyone and indirectly assisting everyone in “eating their way back to Godhead”.

## CULTURAL EVENTS

Whether we celebrate our festivals via zoom or in person, Vaishnava *bhajan*s and dance are an integral part of our programmes. Our famous cultural team is also humbly headed up by a special Vaishnavi. Many people are attracted towards our programmes through these performances – in particular the drama and dance performances of our little Vaikuntha Kids.

## DAILY JAPA & YOGA SESSION

HKCCC devotees start their day by attending the japa session followed by yoga and pranayama, both conducted by senior Vaishnavis in our congregation.

## GURUKULA & YOUTH

Our gurukula classes have grown so popular that we've started separate classes in each of our six to seven locations. The gurukula team is once again led by senior Vaishnavis, and all our lady teachers have extensive experience and knowledge of the scriptures.

## SASTRA CLASSES

Our congregation is blessed with so many senior Vaishnavis who have in-depth scriptural knowledge alongside deep realisations that they share in our weekly *Srimad-Bhagavatam* classes. Our ladies are actively involved in preaching to devotees not only in Sydney but also in other countries via virtual sessions.

## BE THE CHANGE

One of the innovative and one-of-a-kind projects is the HKCCC devotee care team, led by the most senior Vaishnavis. These weekly sessions help us understand how we can integrate our emotions and feelings into Krishna's service, develop inner qualities, open discussions on devotees' realisations on numerous practical situations in their personal and spiritual relationships, and so on.

## CHANTING THE HOLY NAMES

Every month, ISKCON West Sydney hosts several *hari-nama* groups to chant and spread Krishna's holy names. Beautifully dressed Vaishnavis of all ages are seriously involved in the *hari-nama* – not only do they lead the *hari-nama* on multiple occasions, but they also work in the background to ensure that everything runs smoothly so that everyone is safe, happy, and chanting.

## OUTREACH

The HKCCC ladies are the pioneers in preaching Krishna consciousness to indigenous Australians. They have been touring Moree, NSW, doing kirtana and *prasadam* and book distribution, Sunday feast programmes and so on, mainly focusing on the local community with great response over the past two years. This is part of our Hare Krishna Regional Connect (HKRC) annual retreat programme which happened during last year's Christmas holidays.

## FUNDRAISING & FINANCE

The fundraising for our new temple project is under the capable hands of expert, enthusiastic Vaishnavis. They are dedicated and hardworking with their main aim of giving Krishna to so many souls in this material world and encouraging them to be part of our epic project of building a temple for Sri Sri Radha Govinda in Western Sydney. 🌸

# Sydney Action

By Manibhusita Radha devi dasi

Getting back to pre-Covid interactions within the congregation was a challenging task this year. On one hand, devotees were eager to have the much-needed and desired face-to-face association, yet on the other hand, were extremely cautious about attending events in the wake of the changing patterns of Covid infections in the city.

## POST LOCKDOWNS

The year began with a Vaishnavi gathering at the Holi festival at a park close by the temple and ended with the Gita Jayanti celebrations!

A variety of initiatives, either online or in person, were re-instated after the 'Covid' gap or started anew. Some of these are outlined below:

- Reading groups. We re-kindled the awareness of existing reading groups as well as formed new ones online for the Vaishnavis. Reading in a group not only promotes regular study of Srila Prabhupada's books, but allows for a comfortable setting in which busy mothers can allocate at least 30 minutes per week for doing so. At least eight new groups were formed who meet regularly to read Srila Prabhupada's books.

Most of these groups are online, and hence allow a wider participation from diverse locations, thereby increasing the sense of community.



Photo: ISKCON Sydney Facebook page

*The captivating Shri Shri Radha Gopinatha in Sydney.*

- A team of Vaishnavis took a lead in successfully meeting the *prasadam* requirements for visiting guests, some of whom had restrictive dietary requirements.
- This year, as many as 28 ladies took the next step in their spiritual progress by committing to the *hari-nama* initiation process. Vijay Gopi devi dasi helped the Vaishnavis throughout this process.
- By meeting regularly locally, as well as going outdoors for walks and picnics, ensured the Vaishnavis were able to find some time for themselves (away from their family responsibilities), as well as being able to further build relationships

with each other. Several such events were arranged including:

- a trek along the famous Spit bridge to the Manly scenic trail arranged by myself;
- an informal get together of Vaishnavis in the Kogarah area, organised by Vandana mataji.
- Suman mataji arranged picnics, treks, yoga and online classes for Vaman kshetra Vaishnavis (our satellite group in Glenfield).

Besides these engagements, along with the regular festivals and events in the temple, ladies are taking up services more and more in the weekly Bhakti Vriksha groups and monthly hall programs.

A special mention needs to go to the garland team. Their excellence and ever-increasing quality of service towards Shri Shri Radha Gopinatha ensures an action-packed routine in Sydney! 🙏



Photo: Courtesy Manibhusita Radha devi dasi

*One of the picnics that Suman mataji organised for the Glenfield Group.*

If you want to be a part of these activities, please join the 'Vaishnavi Sydney sanga' Whatsapp group or visit our Vaisnavi Sanga Facebook group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/VaisnaviSangaSydney>

# Adelaide Update

By Padmini devi dasi

*It is very pleasing to note and report that the Vaishnavis in Adelaide continue to be been very active, doing various critical services.*

## WIDE VARIETY

**Sunday Gopal's School:** For Janmastami 2022, the Gopal's school students performed a brilliant stage presentation. The little children had also learned many *slokas* and recited them with confidence. The performances these beautiful children staged included various enactments of the *Bhagavad-gita*. The guests were totally amazed.

**Altar Services:** Vaishnavis are rostered to do altar services, including all aspects of Deity worship. They prepare the *bhoga* offerings (including many sweet preparations), ensure the Deity kitchen is kept to a high standard and are offering all these services with enthusiasm. They are also rostered on the Tulasi puja schedule.

**Restaurant Services:** This is such an important aspect of our temple here in Adelaide, and am so happy to advise that the Vaishnavis are working tirelessly and serving the restaurant guests in a professional way.

Photo: Courtesy Padmini dasi



*Srila Prabhupada murti on his grand vyasasana in Adelaide temple.*

**Garland services:** Many Vaishnavis are involved in the making of the garlands for Shri Shri Radha Shyamsundara and Gaura Nitai and Srila Prabhupada *murtis*. This is being handled so nicely with many being trained to perform this beautiful service.

Of course, these services outlined above are not strictly the domain of the ladies. Many of the male devotees in Adelaide are involved and either taking lead roles or assisting in the above.

## TEMPLE CONSTRUCTION

Temple construction has commenced and is rapidly taking shape. It is exciting to

see this underway, and we are all looking forward to its completion. It means we will have a much larger space for accommodating more and more devotees.

We are forever grateful to our Shri Shri Radha Shyamsundara and all the Deities and Srila Prabhupada for their special mercy on us all.

I'd like to also take this opportunity to thank Her Grace Krishnarupa devi dasi for her continued support and guidance as the Women's Minister for ISKCON Australia. 🙏

## Local Women's Representatives Australia

(in alphabetical order)

### ADELAIDE

Padmini Gopika devi dasi 0478 634947

### BRISBANE

Laxmi Priya devi dasi 0417 433 823

### CANBERRA

Sravaniya devi dasi 0434 552 150

### HUNTER VALLEY

Aniruddha devi dasi 0422 018 046

### MELBOURNE

Acintya Rupa devi dasi 0414 374 563

### NEW GOVARDHANA

Krishnarupa devi dasi, Women's Minister 0416 179 733

### PERTH

Janapriya Yashoda devi dasi 0407 262 703

### SYDNEY

Kala Janardhan (HKCCC) 0479 185 106

Madhavi devi dasi 0414 245 568

Manibhusita Radha devi dasi 0401 317 757

Radha Vandana devi dasi 0419 608 802

Suman Pathak 0412 111 402

Vijaya Gopi devi dasi 0402 352 952