

Every Town & Village

Newsletter for Front Line Preachers

Issue 1, May 2005

Harinam in Leicester

by Gauranga Sundara das

Devotees from the Hare Krishna Centre for Vedic Studies perform regularly Harinam on the busy Belgrave Road in Leicester. It has been their favourite spot for the past 10 years. People in Belgrave expect the devotees' presence. They have become an intrinsic part of the Belgrave scene. People come to this area of the city from as far as London to do their monthly shopping. Both, Indians and Westerners are getting a good dose of Lord Krishna's mercy in the form of His Holy Name. The walkway is filled with pedestrians and the congested road itself is, with its slow moving traffic, an ideal place to also reach the motorists.

Everyone seems to be happy to see the devotees, who are sitting on the pavement with harmonium, *mrdangam*, *jimbee drum* and *karatal*s. They bring with them Lord Jagannath, Baladeva and Subadra to

distributed.

Recently Rasamandala Prabhu joined the team, bringing with him an amplifier and microphones. He is an expert *Jimbee* player who makes the whole of the Belgrave area rock to the blissful sounds of the *Maha Mantra*. The spiritual atmosphere is so intense that even the Muslims are unable to escape. They smile and nod at the devotees who are engulfed in the bliss of the Holy Name.



Devotees perform Harinam in Leicester

The recipe for such success is easy. Devotees themselves enjoy the kirtan by diving

deeply into the nectar ocean of Lord Krishna's Holy Name. This blissful atmosphere is so contagious that not many manage to escape. It appears that a large area has become submerged into the transcendental sound vibration.

inundate everyone in the ever increasing ocean of transcendental bliss. Many books, CDs and even a set of Srimad Bhagavatam are waiting for those seeking transcendental knowledge. People are interested, no doubt, and a good number of books are easily

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Tolcarne Farm Organic Growing for Sustainable Living

by Dhirasanta das

Tolcarne Farm is situated on the western side of Bodmin Moore, which is approximately 5 miles from Launceston. In this part of Cornwall time stands still and the experience is that of going back many hundreds of years. The farm has a total of five acres. Our aims are to live a natural, sustainable lifestyle, growing vegetables, fruits and herbs by organic methods. This

also includes working with the natural environment by enhancing biodiversity and promoting waste recycling through composting.

Having spent most of my past years in Krishna consciousness living in cities, it is a welcome change to be based in a farm setting like this. Learning to live and understand the importance of rural communal living along side the practices of devotional service to Krishna, is an interesting new experience.

The Vedic scriptures state, "Human prosperity flourishes by

natural gifts and not by industrial development. If we have sufficient grains, minerals, cotton, water etc, why should we hanker after terrible industrial enterprises so that a few can live lavishly at the cost of the many?" It is becoming more and more understood, the more we selfishly exploit the earth's resources, the more we become victimised by scarcity, pollution and catastrophe. Nature's gifts are given to us by the grace of Krishna and by pleasing Him there is a natural ecological balance, thus ensuring a life of peace and prosperity.

This is a place where devotees or like minded people may come, both to retreat temporarily from the world at large for their own personal reasons, but also to work practically on the land and experience the life of sustainable living.



Tolcarne Farm

Round Trip - May 2005

by **Bhakta Rob**

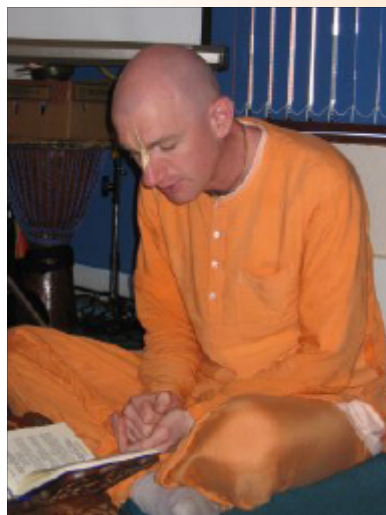
New York: Mother Tri Sakti gave birth to a beautiful baby boy on Sunday May 1st. Ravindra Svarupa Prabhu named him Bhadrasena. Jai! Bhadrasena Prabhu will be there for his first darshan of the deities this Sunday for Lord Nrisimhadeva's appearance day - very auspicious. I have also been dragged into a sketch (I'm playing the part of the wicked teachers and other assorted baddies in the play - I think that's what's called dovetailing your tendencies for the service of the Lord ...)

Brighton: H.H. Maha Vishnu Swami came to visit the Brighton centre last week, where things are blossoming under the care of Dina-Dayadra Prabhu. We also met Yaduvendu Prabhu who has taken on the awesome and no doubt very nectarean task of compiling the Tribhuvanatha Lila for a book out next year. He's been interviewing many people, and I'm lucky to get the chance to interview one or two devotees myself about their recollections of Tribhuvanatha. I can't wait to read the book when it's finished. It's certain to be one of those you can't put down.

Bristol: Minaketanarama Prabhu is planning to officially open his new centre soon.

Despite maya's usual antics and trouble-making, things are on track for a special programme on World Holy Name Day on 12th June. I'll miss it unfortunately, as I'll still be in America, but it'll be ecstatic. Looking forward to harinams there in the summer.

Manchester: Dvaipayana Prabhu is doing great things, distributing up to 50 free meals a night to students and homeless guys in Manchester City Centre. A couple of new guys have started to help, one of whom, Kamran, I was very fortunate to meet - he's a great devotee waiting to happen!



Bhakta Rob in Leicester

Dublin: Praghosha Prabhu took me to see his two restaurants,

the second of which has 3 stories above ideal for a future temple/centre. It was great to see things working so successfully, and Praghosha was very supportive of the Brighton restaurant project. On a half-hour walk round the city I was stopped three times by young people who recognised the outfit and who wanted to chat to me about Hare Krishna. Another guy wanted to take a photo. There's a really encouraging mood here. I hope I can visit again and maybe go to Inisrath Island, our temple out on a lake in Northern Ireland.

London: Parasurama Prabhu is close to opening his new centre in King's Cross and I'm really happy to be able to be helping out there over the next few months. The new centre will be aimed at students and younger people, and we hope to get grant funding for an electronic music project, as well as inviting Jason Prabhu from Brighton to come and organise a few classical Indian music recitals there. There's so much potential. It's a pretty small place, but hopefully we'll make it enough of a success to convince Krishna to give us somewhere much bigger!! Really looking forward to working with my friend Arjuna Prabhu, who was one of the first devotees I met at Glastonbury festival a couple of years ago. He didn't speak much English then so we didn't

really chat but he was always smiling and working very hard. All these great devotees everywhere!

Running out of time, but just to say I visited **Birmingham**, where I met with Chris and Mani (it's great work that they are doing), and **Worcester** to chat

with Leon who's a top chap, and also **Cambridge** to chat with my mate Max who's also a bit of a champion bloke himself! And last but not least I had a lovely day at **Leicester** with the devotees there, such a nice programme and I wish them well with all their endeavours. Bhakta Jimmy was a really nice

guy - it was great to meet him.

Anyone who has the chance I recommend a trip round the UK to see all these great souls at work - its an inspiration!

Easy Pickings

by Bhakta Jimmy

As I knock on the door I stand back and admire a picture of Baby Krishna, which pervades half of the glass door. There are many such pictures, which adorn the doors and windows of this area, whose inhabitants are predominately Gujaratis.

The door opens. I say hello and present my pitch. Smiling, the man says Hare Krishna and then informs me he is a life member and gives regularly to Watford. Reaching into my bag I pull out a tin and offer him some Scottish *maha prasadam*. With his nails he breaks off a microscopic piece and after circumambulating his head three times he pops it into his mouth (I am actually convinced that it is still stuck to his finger, but never mind). I wish him well and move to the next house.

All these houses have swastikas, *om* signs, *chakras* and pictures of demigods stuck to their doors. Unfortunately they also have curtains which have mysterious twitches, and doors which never open.

And so for the next five or so doors all I have for my repeated knocks are lamentations of what might have been. Then finally a door opens and facing me is a Misses *Vaikuntha* herself. It's as if *Laksmi devi* seeing my distress has manifested on a Belgrave doorstep to relief me of my suffering.

An immaculate gold sari adorns her slim graceful body. Vermillion marks the parting of her hair and like a third eye a

large red dot seems to stare at me from the centre of her forehead. Her hands are painted with henna and her slender dark brown arms are filled with colourful bangles. I convey to her the reason for my presence and in a deep heavily accented voice she says NO!! and shuts the door in my face.

Ten doors later I begin to recover and finally I get a donation, 50 pence and he wants a receipt. And so it goes on. One man gave me 5 pence (though he surprised me by not asking for a receipt). One woman gave 2 pence and one man, a Mr Patel, was so shocked that he first of all spluttered that there was no one home, which confused the hell out of me considering that I was standing at the door talking to him. Realising his mistake he blurted out that his wife wasn't home and then immediately followed that one by revealing that he was actually quite ill. He then concluded his performance by very expertly shutting the door in my face.

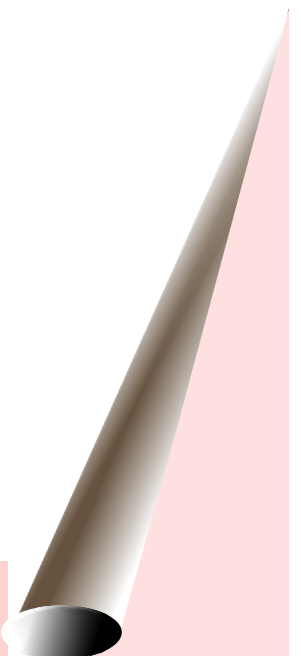
As I stood there my vision filled with swastikas, *chakras*, Durga devis and Sai Babas. I thought to myself: "Welcome to easy pickings Leicester".

Actually when I finally finished it wasn't that bad. I had distributed 30 BTGs, one Bhagavad-gita, collected £50 and many people had received the remnants of the residing deities of Karuna Bhavan in Scotland.

Srila Prabhupada once put his two fingers close together so they were nearly touching. "The Hindus", he said, "are that far

from Krishna, but they are going the wrong way."

For all my roller coaster ride I had received during the day's preaching I felt satisfied that I had at least got off my backside and made an attempt to point them the right way. Making my way home I began to think of tomorrow's sankirtan. Enthusiastically I turned my head once again towards Belgrave, and far beyond it, to that pleasant little Jewish community in Loughborough.



Local Harinam by Ananta Purusottama das

Inspired originally by Sukadeva Prabhu, both myself and Titiksu regularly take part in the Harinam along with Abhay Prabhu and a few Manor devotees. Altogether we are about ten or more devotees. More recently Premarnava is also a regular with us.

We give out prasadam sweets (put into small plastic bags and labelled with the ingredients, we find this makes it easier to give them out) and some leaflets about the Holy Name, taken from Srila Prabhupada's famous Hare Krishna address lecture, plus a little from Bhagavad-gita verse 2.20 purport (including the verse of course).

We also include the contact information for the Manor and Soho and the Manor's web address. We felt this is important also, not that people just hear the Holy Name, but they also get some information about what we are doing, why we do it, and where they can find out more about it. Sukadeva has to be given a lot of credit. He personally makes the sweets, pays for the leaflets to get printed, and also bought yellow Harinam chaddas which we all wear on Harinam.

I felt the need to do something to boost my spiritual life and also to please Lord Krishna. My service at the Manor, being office bound, can get a bit dry at times and not so enlivening. Moreover, I was struggling with the modes and realised I had to do something to help myself.

It has proved to have made a difference to me. My outlook is slowly changing regarding my service and my life overall. I am happy to see people appreciating the chanting and also I see people opposed, though not so often, maybe the

odd occasion. Some young jobs shout some abuse or a fanatical Christian tells us we are doomed.

Such challenges, though small as they are, have also been good for me. I have for too long sat in the office never having to face up to these things which preachers do. It only helps to strengthen my own conviction in the long run, even if I have had to ask myself some serious questions and look deeper into



Harinam in Towns around the Manor

my spiritual life, which going on Harinam has made me do.

We started the Harinam at the beginning of February and I haven't looked back. Now I find the more I go the easier it is, as the mind tried to offer some excuse from time to time.

The towns we go to are Watford, St. Albans, Hemel Hempstead, Harrow and even Borehamwood. Each town has its own flavour. We tend to go to Watford more as it is the nearest and has shelter from the rain, which none of the other towns do. As you know, shopping centres don't allow us in. Overall the people in Watford are favourable as most people will have seen us plenty of times in the past, but I guess there are always some new faces.

We often take a few small books as well, which at least two devotees will pass out, and get the chance to talk to people along the way. To date we have only been to Hemel Hempstead and St. Albans once (but do intend to go more). Hemel was

interesting as I tend to shop there sometimes. I have always thought it a bit of a yobbish town but was pleasantly surprised at the response even from the teenagers.

In fact two young boys, about 13 or 14, joined in with us for about half an hour eagerly trying to follow the mantra on the leaflet. Borehamwood is interesting also, they seem to love us or hate us. We even get old ladies jiggling around and clapping, but mostly the young kids there are a bit rough (we had sweets and chocolate thrown at us once, not too bad!).

But one time a small band of 4 or 5 kids followed us around for a while, though probably mostly done in jest, still they benefit greatly. I feel it is important to go to all towns whether people love us or hate us. St. Albans is a nice town, having its famous cathedral and a big college campus, so there are lots of youngsters about. Overall the response was okay, though perhaps a bit muted. I don't think people see us so regularly; therefore they were a bit surprised. But certainly no real negative response was felt by any of us.

Lastly Harrow, as you know there are many Indians living there. However, on the main streets and the shopping centre we saw more white faces. Definitely they outnumbered the Indians. Still the response is very good there; it is almost a London suburb. I imagine there are many ethnic minorities living there. Therefore Harrow is a bit of a favourite.

Once we went along Holloway Road as Kripamoya had one of his 'Meet the Monks' programs in a hall nearby and he wanted us to hand out leaflets (we got three people to go to the program from that, though I think about 50 attended). But what I mean to say is Harrow does have that feeling of London in that people are not just English and so we found the

overall response very good, as the English can be a bit reserved at times.

So we shall continue, and with our article in the Manor newsletter we are hoping to

encourage a few more devotees to join us when they are able to. When any of you who are reading this happen to be around the Manor on a Saturday morning and have nothing in particular to do then please

come along, as did Arjunanatha one morning.

Harinam sankirtana, ki jaya!!

The Lord appears in Manchester

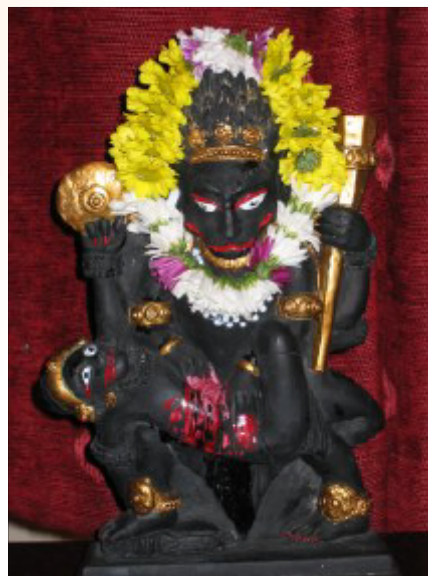
by Audrey Walker

The appearance of Lord Nrsimhadeva was celebrated in Manchester with Janananda Prabhu, Abhay Prabhu and Gauranga Sundara Prabhu from the Leicester Hare Krishna Centre.

It was a lovely programme with a wonderful play narrated by Janananda Prabhu. Devotees listened attentively while he narrated the pastimes of the Lord. Janananda Prabhu involved many of the children and adults. Tustakrishna Prabhu played Lord Nrsimhadeva, making a grand and spectacular appearance.

He came crashing through the altar curtains as Lord Nrsimhadeva and got hold of Hiranyakasipu, tore open his chest and hung his intestines around his neck. Everyone enjoyed the play. It was like having Lord Nrsimhadeva there in person. There was a big feast afterwards, which was cooked by Abhay Prabhu and other congregational members for the pleasure of Lord Nrsimhadeva.

Gauranga Sundara Prabhu kept the kirtan going till after 8 pm. Many devotees fasted till dusk. The matajis at the temple decorated the altar wonderfully. It was a very transcendental atmosphere and we all got Lord Nrsimhadeva's mercy. We hope to have many more festivals like this in the near future.



Lord Nrsimhadeva in Manchester

Food for Life in Manchester

by Dvaipayana das

Here in Manchester Partha Pita Prabhu and myself have been giving out prasadam in the city centre; we do it in the evening between 8 and 9 o'clock. At first we had a few hiccups with another organisation that give out ham sandwiches! They said we couldn't come near their patch, so we moved a little further up from them and tried to be humble. One of the volunteers was not happy and asked to see our charity number. Luckily Partha Pita is a council member here in Manchester and has been for many years. When he showed his badge our problems were over.

Now we have a good patch and we even have their volunteers taking prasadam and loving it.

We are doing Monday to Thursday and we give out an average of 30 to 40 plates each day. Most of the prasadam is gone in 20 minutes. I think it is going to get bigger as more people get a taste. Krishna is giving us so much mercy. One man has already said he will supply us all the rice that we need.

Everything was going so smoothly and I was thinking that maya is going to have a go at us. That is exactly what happened. On Thursday a Christian guy had a shouting match with us. Partha Pita cooled him down and he went away smiling after a plate of kitchari.

I would like to thank His Grace Bhakta Rob for inspiring me to do this here in Manchester. It was amazing when I went to Brighton and saw all the people that he was feeding there. There

is nothing as wonderful as seeing a devotee who is very enthusiastic. It's definitely contagious! One devotee said to me the other day, "who is Rob, he's not even initiated". Who cares?

I would also like to thank His Grace Parasurama Prabhu (it sound like I am doing a speech for an Oscar here!) for giving us the vision and insight to see how wonderful it is to give these poor suffering souls Krishna's mercy. I am learning how to be humble from the homeless people, which can only be a good thing. I pray that Srila Prabhupada and our sweet Lord will accept our service. All glories to His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada, saviour of the fallen.