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The main marquee was a spectacle of music, dance and drama. Special guest Bhakti Charu Swami spoke about the birth of Lord Krishna, and there were concerts by singers Jahnavi Harrison and Ananda Monet. Later the Jah-Laduta – Krishna Reggae band got people dancing in the aisles! This was followed by the performance by The Bhaktivedanta Players theatre troupe, who this year presented their acclaimed version of The Mahabharat.

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Open Day

On Saturday 1st August, the grounds of Bhaktivedanta Manor were buzzing with the sounds of summer fun, as the Temple hosted its annual family open day.

Attendees had the opportunity to tour the Manor grounds on carts pulled by bulls, to try on sarees, as well as learn about meditation and yoga. For the kids there was a bouncy castle, face painting and farm visits, as well as a free vegetarian lunch. Meanwhile, devotees on the front lawn sang live bhajans, creating a very spiritual atmosphere.

"It was an amazing day and first and foremost the weather held out,” said Srutidharma das. “The open day is a great initiative - it opens the doors to the local community so that they can come and explore what we do here. Many families spent the whole day here and had a lot of fun.”
Children's Chess Tournament

Students of Bhaktivedanta Manor School invited Skyswood School from St Albans along with their head teacher Bob Bridle to a friendly chess tournament. The chess master Tony Corfe and his wife joined them, as well as some of the parents of the Skyswood children. Following snacks the children were taken on a tour of the Manor grounds before departing. Everyone had a great time and it was a good exercise in working in partnership with another local school to create learning opportunities for the children on all levels.

Unity in diversity: A celebration of faith

Faith representatives, special guests and children gathered at Hertsmere Borough Council’s Chamber for a celebration of unity in diversity. Representatives of all local faith groups gave presentations on the theme ‘food and faith’. Along with Radha Mohan das, Bhaktivedanta Manor’s representatives included Shreya and Sneha Paul from the Manor School, who charmed everyone present. Special guests included Cllr Martin Worster the Mayor of Hertsmere, Oliver Dowden MP and Dione Grimstone the Countess of Verulam. Afterwards everyone gathered for vegetarian snacks made by the various faith groups.

Manor Schools showcases talent at The Ark Community Theatre

This year Bhaktivedanta Manor School and Manor Preschool decided to really showcase the children's talents by putting on some splendid performances at the Ark Theatre in Borehamwood. There were two shows which included items from the Preschool all the way up to Year 6. Highlights of the show were The Ramayan by the 3-4 year olds under the direction of Jagaddhatri dasi; The Appearance of Radha Kunda directed by Devyani dasi and Dantasya dasi; The story of Prahlad under the expert direction of Priya and Saraswati and The Appearance of Lord Jagannath - The Musical, an old classic written by Govardhan dasi and directed by Moksha Laksmi.

There was also a live musical accompaniment by Bhakta James and Kishor Murti dasa on guitar and the children entranced the audience with their sweet melodies. A special feature was the children's choir with 3 songs in their repertoire.
Eco path leads to Rome

Devotee Sheila Chauhan was one of 100 environmentalists selected from across the world to attend a climate change march and an Emerging Leaders Multi-Faith Climate Convergence in Rome.

Thousands of people took to the streets in Rome with thought provoking banners and giant leaves that quoted key verses from religious scriptures on caring for the environment – such as the Atharva Veda verse: “Supreme Lord, let there be peace in the sky and in the atmosphere.”. Hundreds of leaves were given out to passers-by to join in the march and there was a chanting procession led by devotees from the Rome temple. The march culminated at St. Peters Square, Vatican City, where Pope Francis thanked the different faith groups for coming together to show their solidarity for climate action.

Sheila was selected to take part for her efforts in helping to enhance Bhaktivedanta Manor’s environmental policy, mixed recycling and food waste bins and her campaign work during several Janmashtami festivals called 'Karma to Climate Change' which toured around England to different audiences from University students to bankers in Canary Wharf. Karma to Climate Change has also been recognised by UNESCO as a campaign of best practice in education for sustainable development in cultural diversity.

Sheila, said, “It was my service on the Environment Committee under the guidance of Sita Rama das which gave me the impetus to create environmental campaigns to the congregation. Rome was an empowering and humbling experience to meet like-minded people from different religions from across the globe, all passionately talking about the importance of using faith and stewardship to drive climate action.”

In Memoriam - Nek Chand

John Maizels, Bhaktivedanta Manor’s neighbour in Letchmore Heath village, was delighted to host Jaya Krishna das and Godruma das who performed a ceremony to honour the life of the late Nek Chand, at a function in Chichester. Nek was a self-taught artist, known for building the Rock Garden of Chandigarh, an eighteen-acre sculpture garden in Chandigarh, India.

John Maizels gifted one of Nek Chand’s sculptures of Lord Krishna, which can be found within the Manor’s gardens.
Festivals in Dartford and Pershore

A housing estate in Dartford became the scene of transcendence as the Temple Hill Community Centre came alive with the Hare Krishna Festival experience. After a quiet start, by the end of a stunning presentation by special guest speaker Bhakti Charu Swami, numbers grew considerably. The same month, the Festival Team braved a torrential downpour to take part in the annual Plum Festival in Pershore, Worcestershire.

Cottage Renovation

Throughout June and July, Lad Construction and the Manor’s Maintenance team joined together to completely renovate the historic cottage building which houses the ladies ashram. Extensive renovation work included building two new kitchenettes, renovation of the bathroom and showers, new flooring, cupboards, beds, furniture, windows and window frames. After work was complete, the re-opening of the Cottage was performed with an opening ceremony.

Serving the Divine Couple

Every morning during the annual five-day swing festival of Jhulan Yatra, the deities of Sri Sri Radha Gokulananda were placed on a beautifully decorated swing in the temple room. Devotees showered Them with flower petals and took the opportunity to gently pull the swing.
Devotees from across the UK came together in Leicester for the first ever ISKCON UK National Convention, organised as part of the celebrations for ISKCON’s 50th anniversary.

Taking place in ISKCON Leicester’s magnificent Grade II listed building in the city centre, hundreds of devotees took part in a day of collaboration and learning, and celebrated the successes and new developments taking place in the UK today. This was the first time in the history of ISKCON UK that such an event was organised on this scale.

Inspiring presentations were delivered by many senior devotees, including Bhakti Charu Swami, who spoke about unity in diversity in ISKCON. In addition, devotees heard from GBC Praghosa sas, who spoke about Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada and celebrating the successes of ISKCON UK, and from GBC Minister for Communications Anuttama das, who delivered a talk on ISKCON being ‘50 years young and roaring on’.

There were also a number of exciting workshops delivered by devotees from across the UK; Jahnavi Harrison discussed kirtan yoga, Visnu Murti das ran a deity worship workshop, Visvambhara das and Sutapa das spoke about the art and science of book distribution, and Radha Govinda das spoke on outreach.

It was an inspiring day that really fostered a sense of unity and positive communication, and celebrated the wonderful achievements made by ISKCON temples from across the UK.

ISKCON Manchester Rathayatra

Throughout last summer, kirtan has been the main focus of attention for ISKCON Manchester. They had their largest ever Ratha Yatra this year and in July, the community was excited to welcome Madhava das and his wife Radhika dasi, who visited the city for the first time to take part in the 6 hour kirtan event.
A splendid, interesting and mentally stimulating afternoon. I really appreciated all the hospitality, friendliness, smiling and sense of peace. A lesson for us all in Hertfordshire!

Cllr Roger Beeching, Vice Chairman of Hertfordshire County Council

The culmination of the festivities was the “Abisheka” bathing of Lord Krishna in His deity form, heralding the time of His divine appearance on earth over 5000 years ago.

Janmashtami is so impressive that every year it attracts a myriad of regular political dignitaries such as the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Therea Villiers MP, and Dione Grimstone, the Countess of Verulam. The new Chairman of the Conservative Party Lord Andrew Feldman and Zac Goldsmith, the MP for Richmond Park, experienced their first ever Janmashtami festival and were deeply impressed by their visit.

The entire festival was managed and run by over 1000 volunteers from the community who gathered every evening after work for a month prior to the event, putting in countless hours of selfless service for the occasion.

I was so impressed by the whole event and having met so many followers I truly can say that your faith is one of kindness and tranquillity.

I in fact revisited the Manor yesterday to personally thank everybody for such a splendid afternoon and had the extreme pleasure of seeing again your President... what a delight!

Cllr Lawrence Davis

continued from page 1... packed story with a message, called “I’mmoral”.

Celebrating Shree Krishna 2015
It was a real treat and inspiration to attend the festival in very happy and tranquil surroundings. The hospitality afforded to myself and the Mayoress was really appreciated. The tenants and believers of the Bhaktivedanta manor community are an inspiration to everyone who attends and to the wider world.
Community Engagement: ‘A Pleasurable Evening’

In August, Queens School auditorium was transformed with colourful displays, transcendental music, and the arrival of devotees from the Bhaktivedanta Manor community. Devotees gathered to hear and participate in discussions about the Manor’s future aspirations.

The evening got off to a great start with a lively series of three minute elevator pitches by team leaders responsible for implementing the vision. At times humorous, inspirational and thought provoking, the job of fitting all the important points from the vision statement into three minutes was no small feat.

After the presentations came the breakout sessions in which all those attending could sit and take time to share their thoughts and ideas with each team leader.

Returning to a plenary session the team leaders took a minute to share what they had learned from the breakout groups. To end the evening we gathered round Rupa Vilasa Prabhu to hear the wonderful pastimes of Srila Prabhupada. Everyone was enthralled by his stories of the early days with Srila Prabhupada.

The George Harrison connection

Olivia Harrison, George Harrison’s widow, maintains a connection between Friar Park and the George Harrison Garden within Bhaktivedanta Manor. The gardiners from Friar Park in Buckinghamshire came to the Manor’s George Harrison Garden for a spot of weeding and a meditation session. The session was co-ordinated by Ghyasym Priya das who runs introductory Mindfulness workshops within the corporate world.
On 13th August a grand celebration marked the day that Srila Prabhupada sailed off from Kolkatta on his voyage to America, aboard the steamship Jaladuta. The huge flagship event, which received extensive media coverage across India, marked inauguration of the global events to mark fifty years of the International Society of Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), most of which will be held in 2016.

The 12,000-seat Nethaji Subhash Indoor Stadium in Kolkatta included ISKCON members and friends from more than 108 countries, as testament to the global impact of Srila Prabhupada’s teachings.

As part of the festival, two intricately carved sculptures of Srila Prabhupada by a leading Ukrainian artist were unveiled by the Governor of West Bengal, and will be installed at Kidderpore Dock (Kolkata) and Boston Harbour.

In addition, senior ISKCON leaders, Swamis and other guests spoke in appreciation of Srila Prabhupada’s contributions, and there were artistic performances including The Prince Group Dance, based in Orissa, and winner of “India’s Got Talent” TV Award, who performed a drama enacting Srila Prabhupada’s life and departure to the West. The evening concluded with a performance of devotional music by noted bhajan artist Anup Jalota.

The celebrations will continue in Boston, where Srila Prabhupada first landed in the United States.

UK celebrations

Meanwhile, in the UK, ISKCON London hosted a full day event with a special altar design to officially launch the 50th Anniversary there, and this was followed by other events including chanting and singing on top of three buses around central London!

Bhaktivedanta Manor’s street chanting team made their opening contribution by performing a huge hari nama on the streets of Watford, and there is much more to come.

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Other UK events included an 8hr kirtan festival hosted by ISKCON Birmingham and the first ever ISKCON National Convention held at ISKCON Leicester.

2016 marks the official 50th Anniversary year of ISKCON. Devotees of Bhaktivedanta Manor and temples across the UK have already been sharing ideas how to celebrate, and many exciting events are lined up. ISKCON will have the biggest year of celebrations in its history!

If you have an suggestions of your own, or would like to share what you are doing to mark ISKCON’s 50th, please contact Farish (the representative for ISKCON 50th at Bhaktivedanta Manor): farish@krishnatemple.com
After 30 glorious years of performance, including almost 20 international tours, the Bhaktivedanta Players marked their outstanding contribution to devotional art with a gala performance of The Mahabharata. This was a brand new production conceived and directed by Jaya Krishna das, and acted by a cast of more than 20. With the soundtrack arranged by actor and musician, Kishor Murti das, and new props and costumes, the stage was set for a riveting experience.

A 730 strong audience flocked to the Kadwa Patidar Centre in Kenton for the premier. For over two hours the audience were led by Lord Krishna Himself, in the role of narrator, into an ancient world of warriors and mystic saints. The scenes were artfully conceived to encapsulate highlights from the epic, including Bhismadeva’s death on the battlefield, and the dramatic attempted disrobing of Draupadi. The impressive fight scenes were choreographed by Markandeya ‘Mark’ Kelly, who works as a stuntman for Hollywood movies.

Costuming, lighting and special effects were rich and detailed, thanks to Dwarka Puri das’ devoted service. Overall the experience was moving, not just because each actor gave their focus and heart to their respective roles, but because the mood of devotion permeated the whole production.

The show toured to Ilford, Croydon and Harrow too, with enthusiastic audiences in each location. We wish the Bhaktivedanta Players success for the decades to come!
Senagetaway 2015

This year the Pandava Sena went to the beautiful Radhadesh castle in Belgium on their annual international retreat. A first time attendee, Rishi Chavda, who studies Computer Science at City University London shared the following about his experiences on the trip:

On the 1st of August 2015, I went on a spiritual retreat with an organization called ISKCON Pandava Sena who work closely with young people and spread Krishna Consciousness. The trip was an amazing experience for me and I would definitely recommend it to anyone, whether you're religious or not. The trip this year included some great devotees from Mumbai and Spain who came to Radhadesh Castle in Belgium for this retreat. The devotee association is so powerful that you're always thinking about doing more service and everyone is in a completely selfless mind-set so much so that everyone wants to serve each other and be happy together. It is an amazing experience and can give you an entirely different perspective on life when you return, so much so that you will succeed in some things that you thought were impossible. Hare Krishna!

HIMESH PARMAR
Age: 16
Studying: A Levels

How did you find out about Pandava Sena?
I was approached by enthusiastic members of the Pandava Sena informing me about the endless possibilities of how engaging this youth group is and the number of events they hold. They also told me about how it can enhance your spiritual views and how you can meet loads of new people.

What do you like about Pandava Sena?
I have met loads of great people by attending events and I have learnt a lot of things spiritually. I appreciate the effort being put in for all the youth to learn more and have such a great time.

What service do you currently do?
During my start at being involved with Pandava Sena, right away I have been part of the PS play and being involved with the harrow jamming team. I enjoy the service as I get to associate myself with many people and learn many things.

ISKCON PandavaSena
@iskconpsena
iskconpandavasena
50 years on: Honouring our Founder Acarya

This year’s Srila Prabhupada Vyasa Puja was especially surcharged because precisely 50 years ago he was on the cargo ship Jaladuta, bound for America. On 13th August 1965, he climbed aboard at Calcutta docks for a 38-day journey to New York. During that voyage he suffered two heart-attacks and repeated sea-sickness, but recounted in his diary his faith and determination to fulfill the desire of his spiritual master, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur, to spread Krishna consciousness around the world.

After he arrived at New York harbour he simply did not know “whether to turn left or right’ and all he had were his books, a typewriter, a few dollars and a bag of cereal. Yet after such humble beginnings, in the 12 years that followed he established ISKCON as a huge international movement with thousands of disciples, 108 temples including farms and schools, a Scientific Institute and the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust.

In the words of Bhakti Charu Swami “Srila Prabhupada is the undisputed central figure and unifying factor for the whole of ISKCON for now and in the future”.

**October**

- Sun 4th  50th Anniversary of Srila Prabhupada’s arrival in the USA
- Thur 8th  Indira Ekadasi
- Thur 22nd  Appearance of Sri Madhvacarya (Dusshera)
- Fri 23rd  Pasankusa Ekadasi
- Sun 25th  Dusshera festival at Manor
- Wed 28th  Month of Kartik begins

**November**

- Sat 7th  Rama Ekadasi
- Sun 8th  Diwali festival at Manor
- Thur 12th  Govardhana Puja, Annakuta
- Sun 15th  Disapp of Srila Prabhupada (fast

**Special guests for the Janmashtami festival this year included our MP for Hertsmere Oliver Dowden, Lord Popat, HH Bhakti Charu Swami, Lord Feldman and Zac Goldsmith MP for Richmond Park.**

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