

## ***Aum Muruga***

# NEW ZEALAND THIRUMURUGAN TEMPLE SOCIETY INCORPORATED

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT - SEPTEMBER 2004

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AUM MURUGA!!!

Good afternoon Ladies & Gentlemen, a very warm welcome to all of you and our sincere thank you for your kind presence this afternoon. With absolute surrender to the Almighty our beloved Lord Muruga, it gives me great pleasure to present the President's report for the last 12 months.

New Zealand Thirumurugan Temple Society has now been functioning for nearly 5 years and I am sure you will all agree that, we as a Community and the Society have achieved some major milestones during this period. Given our relatively short history, it is fair to say that our main priorities during the last twelve months have been on consolidating the temple's core activities, putting systems and procedures in place and focusing on the welfare & educational objectives of the Society.

### Goals & Objectives

The following is a brief summary of the Society's progress in relation to the objectives of the Society.

<b>Goal / Objective</b>	<b>Outcome / Progress</b>
Construction of Hindu Temple	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Floor covering and heating facilities completed in Apr - May 04. All modifications as per Stage 1 Plan (Converting an existing building as temple) completed.</li><li>• Stage 2 (Building traditional temple) is viewed as a long-term objective with planning to commence within the next 3 years.</li></ul>
Promote educational, religious, spiritual moral of members and children including study and practice of Hinduism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Daily Pooja held mornings &amp; evenings</li><li>• All major festivals observed &amp; celebrated</li><li>• Weekly radio broadcasts, Guest speakers</li><li>• Weekly Hinduism classes</li><li>• Weekly Music classes</li><li>• Weekly speech/reading by Children</li><li>• Holiday Programmes / Study</li></ul>
Publish journals, periodicals, books etc that promotes Hindu philosophy, culture and practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Publication of "Saiva Neethi"</li><li>• Publication of "Thevara" book in Tamil &amp; English</li><li>• Various other regular educational pamphlets.</li></ul>
Establish a library to house books on Hinduism, Saivaite philosophy and Tamil Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Construction of shelves (mezzanine floor) to store books completed. Project "on hold" due to advice from Structural Engineer that the "load bearing capacity" must be confirmed before proceeding.</li><li>• Books to be ordered from Overseas.</li></ul>
Promote active participation in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Blood Donation Service</li></ul>

charitable and welfare work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribution of food parcels to needy organizations</li> <li>• Regular Cultural Events</li> <li>• Participation in community needs</li> <li>• Recreational activities for Youth / Children</li> </ul>
Promote and enhance health awareness amongst the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quarterly Free health check clinics</li> <li>• "Health Talk" by team of doctors held in March – Apr 03</li> <li>• Courses on self management of chronic conditions (Arthritis) held in March 03.</li> </ul>

## Communication

The Society views that regular communication with the members and the community is paramount. Regular communications are done through weekly radio broadcasts, weekly announcements at the temple, temple's own web site, flyers of one off events etc. During the festival months of Sept – April, a monthly newsletter with information on upcoming festivals / events and other activities of interest are published. This newsletter could be emailed to those devotees who wish to be included in our email group. We are always striving to improve our communication and we do welcome suggestions and in particular help to achieve this.

## Financial

The Society places strong emphasis on financial integrity and transparency. Financial policies and procedures have been put in place that incorporates all key internal controls. An Internal Auditor, independent of the Finance committee reviews all transactions and Monthly accounts are presented at Management meetings. The Society completed the financial year as at 30 June 04 with an operating surplus of \$608. The net equity of the Society at the same period was \$437,369. The Society relies heavily on Devotees sponsoring Festivals and Friday Pooja to meet most of its operating expenses which includes interest costs on the bank loan. Repayment of the bank loan as soon as possible remains a financial burden and priority.

## Future

We believe that a strong foundation has been laid to establish a benchmark for the Society's activities. However, on going review and enhancement will be necessary to continue the progress of this evolving organisation. In our view, the Society has a huge responsibility and potential to make a difference in the lives of our community.

- The present reliance on high levels of voluntary input from a small number of people is a constraint to the development of the Society and cannot be sustained over a longer period. We have structured the various tasks & duties in such a way that more devotees can take on small, regular responsibilities than a few people take on huge responsibilities. Member participation is absolutely paramount for this to be effective.
- Greater involvement of the Youth and Children in temple events & activities is a key priority for us. We will look to consolidate this with more events of interest for young people.

A successful workshop involving a number of active workers of the Society was held last month to discuss in particular, the issue of more community involvement and also possible long term expansion. A number of valuable suggestions were provided in this forum and the Management Committee would address them in the near future.

## Acknowledgements

It goes without saying that the success of an organization like ours is entirely dependent upon the voluntary contribution of a large number of individuals and families. Significant amount of financial, physical and moral support has been given at every step along the way by numerous people. To this end, the Board of Trustees and the Management Committee records its sincere appreciation to each and everyone who has been part of the on going growth of the Society.

- The Society is blessed to have as our Chief Priest, "Vethaaha Mamani" Brahmashri Rajeswara Kurukkal, someone with profound knowledge of Hindu rites and traditions conducting his duties at the highest standard.

- It is also our beloved Lord Muruga's grace that gave us Brahmashri Venkatarama Sharma whose dedication and untiring contribution to the temple is beyond measure.
- We are grateful to our patron Mr P Murugasu for his valuable advice and guidance at all times.
- The Management Committee would like to acknowledge the support and direction of the Board of Trustees.
- The regular donations / financial contribution made by all devotees are absolutely vital and therefore deserve our sincere acknowledgement.
- There have been also many in the community who have supported the Society by physical contributions, providing sponsorship, providing cultural events etc. We wish to sincerely acknowledge all their support.
- Finally, the remarkable, unwavering, continuous support of the whole community including everyone mentioned above has been tremendous and deserves a special mention.

We the members of the management committee are humbled by all your support and we are truly grateful to the Almighty for giving us this opportunity to serve the community to the best of our abilities.

May our Lord Muruga's blessing be with everyone

T. Varnakulasingham  
PRESIDENT