

NEW ZEALAND THIRUMURUGAN TEMPLE SOCIETY INCORPORATED

PRESIDENT'S REPORT - SEPTEMBER 2005

Dear Members,

Good afternoon, a very warm welcome to all of you and our sincere thanks for your kind presence this afternoon. With absolute surrender to our beloved Lord Muruga, it gives me great pleasure to present the fourth President's report for the 12 months ended 30 September 2005.

New Zealand Thirumurugan Temple Society has now been functioning for nearly 6 years and is now well established as an integral part of our life style in New Zealand. It is pleasing to note that the patronage of the temple is continuing to grow. The committee is very committed to on going improvement. In the last 12 months our focus has been on:

- Consolidating temple's core activities – Festivals & Poojas
- Enhancing educational programmes for Children
- Improving Communication
- Financial Stability
- Planning for the future.

Consolidating Temple's Core Activities – Festivals & Poojas

Our Chief Priest "Vethaaha Mamani" Brahmashri Rajeswara Kurukkal" with invaluable assistance of his family and "Brahmashri Venkatarama Sharma" continue to ensure that all poojas and festivals are held to a high standard. Elaborate and appropriate decorations, well co-ordinated devotional singing etc have enhanced the major festivals. The participation of music students across Auckland on Fridays provides variety and fits the temple's objectives well.

Enhancing Educational Programmes

Hinduism and Thevara (Music) classes are well attended. In consistent with the overall patronage, the number of children attending these classes are on the rise. The results from the hard work and commitment put in by volunteer members & parents are becoming very evident in our children. In order to provide further incentive to children, the temple has now taken the responsibility of conducting the Academy of Fine Arts (London) Public Examination in Thirumurai Pannisai. This is a significant milestone that requires strong parental support to sustain and enhance over a long period.

Improving Communication

The committee is well aware that regular communication with the members and the wider 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. A periodic newsletter with information on upcoming festivals / events and other activities of interest is also published. Recently, we commenced our email communication initially with those who have advised us of their email addresses. We believe this will help to significantly enhance our communication with the community from now on.

Financial Stability

The Society places strong emphasis on responsible financial management, integrity and transparency. A code of financial policies and procedures is in place to ensure key internal controls are adhered to. An Internal Auditor, independent of the Finance committee reviews all transactions and Monthly accounts are presented at Management meetings. A significant milestone was achieved during the year when the Society completed the repayment of the bank loan obtained in June 2001 to purchase the temple building. However, it must be stressed that the Society continues to rely heavily on Devotees sponsoring Festivals and Friday Pooja to meet its operating expenses.

Planning for the Future

A strong foundation has been laid to build on for future. We have a community that fully understands and supports the objectives and direction of the temple. The Society has a huge responsibility and potential to make a difference to our community in the years to come. The increases in patronage, students, temple accessories / equipment etc present us with new but positive challenges. We have engaged a working group to investigate the issues and opportunities and recommend feasible options.

Greater involvement of Children and in particular the Youth in temple activities remains a key priority for us. We will look to strengthen this with more events of interest for young people in the future.

Membership

I wish to take this opportunity to remind all members and devotees that the temple's legal status is incorporated society. Therefore, membership of the community is central and fundamental to its status. We kindly request devotees to formalise your membership by completing the membership form and paying the annual subscriptions.

Goals & Objectives

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

Goal / Objective	Outcome / Progress
Construction of Hindu Temple	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1 (Purchasing and converting an existing building as temple) completed. • Phase 2 (Possible expansion to accommodate community activities) in planning stage. Workshops held. Sub Committee in place.
Promote educational, religious, spiritual moral of members and children including study and practice of Hinduism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily Pooja held mornings & evenings • All major festivals observed & celebrated • Weekly radio broadcasts, Guest speakers • Weekly Hinduism classes • Weekly Music classes • Weekly speech/reading by Children • Holiday Programmes / Study
Publish journals, periodicals, books etc that promotes Hindu philosophy, culture and practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of "Saiva Neethi" • Publication of "Thevara" book in Tamil & English • Various other regular educational pamphlets.
Establish a library to house books on Hinduism, Saivaite philosophy and Tamil Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On hold due to space limitations.
Promote active participation in charitable and welfare work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blood Donation Service • Distribution of food parcels to needy organizations • Regular Cultural Events • Participation in community needs • Recreational activities for Youth / Children
Promote and enhance health awareness amongst the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly Free health check clinics • "Health Talk" by team of doctors • Courses on self management of chronic conditions

Acknowledgements

It needs to be stressed again that the success of an organization like ours is entirely dependent on the voluntary support 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 wish to record 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.
- The invaluable contribution provided by Brahmashri Venkatarama Sharma is appreciated.
- 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.
- We wish to acknowledge the tremendous support of Music teachers, Thevara teachers, Hinduism teachers and the parents who support these important programmes.
- 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 God 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