

AUM MURUGA

President's Report – 25 September 2016

Dear Thirumurugan Devotees,

"Vanakkam" and a very warm welcome to all of you. Our Management Committee sincerely and wholeheartedly thank you all for your presence this morning for our Annual General Meeting (AGM).

We are greatly delighted and pleased to inform you that with the grace and blessings of our Lord Murugan, we have built a permanent residence to our Lord Murugan and also shrines to all other deities at 145 Church Street, Otahuhu, in accordance with Saivite agamas and traditional norms.

All happened as planned by the grace of our Lord Murugan.

Balasthapanam

With the grace of our beloved Lord Murugan, we shifted the deities from Marua Road temple, Ellerslie to Church Street Otahuhu on 13th December 2013, an auspicious day for "Balasthapanam." Religious ceremonies were conducted by our temple priests with the guidance of a specialist priest from Sydney, Nirmaleswara Kurukkal. Lots of Thirumurugan devotees attended this ceremony.

Construction of Shrines

Construction works commenced in February 2014 and continued till June 2014 at a rapid speed. The Building Committee and the Finance Committee worked hand in hand to complete the shrine works. Our Contractors worked day and night and completed majority of the works in the mid of May 2014.

Kumbabhisegam

On Sunday, 8th June 2014, our temple Kumbabhisegam was held to all the deities on the auspicious time. A group of priests, under the leadership of Nirmaleswara Kurukkal, chanted the Vedas and mantras for all five days. All Hindu communities from all over New Zealand attended this special function. The day was a remarkable milestone in the history of the New Zealand Thirumurugan Temple Society in Auckland. Now we have a traditional Saiva Agama temple in Auckland with all the congenial and divine atmosphere to our devotees.

MahaUtsavam(AnnualThiruvizha)-2015

The Management Committee made a decision to celebrate the annual Maha Utsavam in the month of January/February period (including Thai Pooam). With the advice from our chief priest, dates were fixed to celebrate this festival, Kodi Etram in January 2015 and Poogavanam in the first week of February 2015. 15 days festivals were delegated to 15 Local Board areas. Area coordinators were appointed to all 15 areas to organise these poojas and thiruvizha. These festivals included MampalaThiruvizha, Sapparam, Theroddam, Thaipooam and Poogavanam. Devotees from all over Auckland participated in this Utsavam and the support given by them was memorable.

Maha Utsavam (AnnualThiruvizha)-2016

This year Annual Thiruvizha, Maha Utsavam was celebrated in the of January/February period. 15 days festivals were celebrated with devotees from 15 Local Board areas. The highlight of the festivals was the playing of Nathaswaram and Thavil by specialist musicians from Canada. Both these specialist were well renowned artists.

This divine music attracted more and more devotees to these festivals.

This was a milestone of progress in the Auckland Thirumurugan history.

Works completed in 2015/16

The following works were completed in 2015/2016:

- I) Standard Fencing in the front area. (A resource consent requirement)

With the generous support from one of our devotees, we were able to complete this work this year.

The Management Committee would like to thank this anonymous devotee for his generous donation towards this divine project.

- ii) Carpeting and Tiling in temple area (building consent requirements)

A few devotees initiated these projects and completed the works to the Council requirements. Our Management Committee would like to thank these devotees for their kind contribution towards the temple development.

We could see now the increase in numbers to our temple, when we provide all the facilities to our devotees.

Remaining works in the Temple and Community Hall Area

The outstanding works need to be completed as per the building consent in the temple area are:

- I) Heating and Air conditioning
- II) Gibbing, insulation and finishing East and West end wall
- III) Ceiling
- IV) Community Hall
- V) Raja Gopuram

Auckland Council granted an extension of time to complete all these works before 18th August 2016.

In January 2016, Management Committee made a decision to borrow \$400,000 from ASB Bank to complete all the outstanding works (except Raja Gopuram) as requested by Council. A Contractor was selected in May 2016 to complete all the works before the end of August. Due to the interruptions in the temple area, the Contractor was unable to complete the assigned works on time and he is taking all endeavours to complete this task before end of September 2016.

My sincere thanks to our Management Committee members Sathyaselvan and Manoharan for project managing these remaining works.

We will apply for Council's Certificate of Compliance (COC) after completing items I) to IV) and leave the Raja Gopuram for a later stage.

Youth participation

The contributions our youth are making by participating regularly in the temple devotional singing, the various dramas and musical programs they have been taking part in, such as Pannum Parathamum, Muthucharam, InnisaiThendral are commendable. This year Innisai Thendral musical programme, as in the previous years, was a great success.

It must be recognised here that sports and music have been designed to confer health and happiness on youths. Physical fitness and mental health are equally important. Three unique benefits are can be derived from sports and music: Team spirit, mutual understanding, and joy. Hence sports and music should be encouraged.

It should be mentioned in this report that a young engineer has happily joined our Management Committee without any hesitation and helping us in the temple website development and coordinating youth activities.

Our Management Committee is encouraging our youths to participate in music, sports and also in temple activities. Our sincere thanks for our youth and our Management Committee would welcome their active involvement and their greater responsibilities in future.

Appreciation & Acknowledgement

Our Management Committee would like to appreciate and acknowledge some of our devotees for their great support and enormous contribution in the temple activities:

- The regular financial donors without whose support we will not be able to meet our on-going costs of construction works and maintenance/operational costs.
- The organisers of "Musical Journey" and "Deepavali Food Festival". The Temple receive approximately \$15,000 each year from the organisers of these programmes.
- Our priests Brammashri Raja Rajeswara Kurukkal and Mayuranatha Kurukkal for their commitment in conducting poojas and special festivals at the highest standard.
- Our Honorary Auditor Mr S Navaneethan for his auditing services and recommendations.
- The volunteers who cook food items and serve them to our devotees on Friday nights. Annathanam is the best service practised in all Hindu temples all over the world.
- Our temple devotees who regularly volunteer their time to look after the reception area and also help out with pooja proceedings.
- The ladies who make garlands for the temple every week on Fridays.
- The volunteers who support our food parcel and other fund raising activities with order taking, purchasing, cooking, packing, delivering and cleaning.
- The music teachers, students and parents for their contribution of singing Thevaram, particularly every Friday night.
- The volunteers taking responsibility for on-going maintenance, and regular cleaning after poojas.

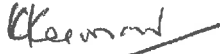
I may have missed out to thank some of you in this report. Overall, we would not have achieved this task without the support from you all financially and physically.

Even though the work is not fully completed yet, now we have a proper temple in Auckland to perform our prayers and celebrate all important festivals. With the provision of new facilities, now you could see an increase in public participation in our temple, and more and more new people are coming to the temple. Due to financial constraints we have not started the Raja Gopuram work. Once our financial situation improves, we will be able to complete the Raja Gopuram work. . Again, we humbly request you all to contribute financially towards the completion of these outstanding works.

"Our Lord Murugan will have his own plan." "He is the doer."

I conclude this report with a divine saying that touched my heart recently.

The Sadhaka (spiritual aspirant) must have an attitude of fear that the Lord is everywhere and seeing everything, an ever present apprehension that one might slide into sin. He must have a natural bent towards truth and right conduct. He must direct his mind towards the welfare of all mankind. Dharma (righteousness) will shine and illumine only the person who serves all and confers joy on all. Such a person will not only receive the grace of the Lord, but also attain the ultimate goal of merging in Him.



(Kandiah Kumārasamy)

President (2012-2016)

The New Zealand Thirumurugan Temple Society

Auckland