



Hamilton Kerala Samajam Incorporated

Registered under Incorporated Societies Act 1908
Reg No. 1764776

ANNUAL REPORT 2008-2009

Namaskāram, Greetings to all,

The 2008-09 period was remarkable for Hamilton Kerala Samajam. It was extensive in terms of our program, profiling, quality, innovation, cultural development and community participation. We not only achieved our goals but exceeded expectations and went further than we ever could have imagined. We have not only delivered but evaluated and continued to set the future direction of Hamilton Kerala Samajam as an organisation, a pivotal strength and partner in delivering cultural diversity in a multicultural Hamilton. The Executive Committee took some huge steps in delivering our Forward Planning Program. We, the Executive Committee of the Samajam are proud and honoured to present this Report which outlines our achievements from 1st April 2008 to 31st March 2009.

THE EXECUTIVE

The following members elected by the Annual General Meeting formed the Executive Committee of the Samajam:-

1. Mr. Thomas Philip	President
2. Mrs. Usha M. Prabhakaran	Vice President
3. Mr. Sony Stephen	Secretary
4. Mr. Shibu Thomas	Joint Secretary
5. Mr. Varghese Vadakkan	Treasurer
6. Mr. Beno George	Committee Member
7. Mr. Prakash Joseph	Committee Member
8. Mr. Roby Thomas	Committee Member
9. Ms. Tintu Francis	Committee Member

CELEBRATIONS / FESTIVITIES

1. *Easter-Vishu Celebration 2008*

Easter and Vishu were celebrated with a colourful cultural function on 12th April 2008 at Melville High School Auditorium from 6.30pm onwards. The three hour long programme consisted of songs, cinematic and classical dances, skits and a colourful fashion show depicting the diversity of India. Rev.Fr. Shinu Thomas delivered the Easter message and Mr. Narasimham Subrahmaniam in his speech reminded of us the

fervour in which Vishu is celebrated .The programme was attended by over 150 people who also enjoyed the delicious dinner prepared by Samajam under the leadership of Mr. Alex Varghese. We would like to congratulate and thank the programme co-ordinator Ms. Jenny Alex.

2. Onam Celebrations

Onam, the national festival of Kerala which is the only festival celebrated by all Malayalees irrespective of caste, creed or religion, was celebrated by Samajam on 1st September 2007 with the same spirit as it is celebrated in our native land. It was a whole day long programme which started at 9am and finished at 6pm. The floral arrangement (Athappokalam) brought colour to the function. Various native sports and games competitions were held along with arts competition. The high light of the function was the traditional **Onam Sadhya** (onam feast) which comprised of 28 mouth watering dishes served on banana leaves. This brought nostalgia to most of the 150 members and guests gathered. Among them were our VIP guest Mr. David Bennett MP, Mrs. Davinder Khalsa, Fr. Joseph Akkara, Fr. Shinu Thomas, and Fr. Seejo Antony. The programme concluded by the prize distribution ceremony and vote of thanks by the Vice President.

3. Christmas and New Year Celebrations

Christmas was celebrated in its full colour and zeal at the Hamilton West School on 31st December 2008. Traditional carol songs, Nativity Play by children, drama, dances and Christmas Messages were the highlight for the day. Christmas message was delivered by Fr. Joseph Akkara. Traditional Kerala Christmas Dinner followed this. There were Christmas presents for every member who attended which was given off by Santa. Members also enjoyed a fireworks display at 12 midnight to welcome the New Year 2009 before they left for their homes.

FAMILY MEETINGS & PICNIC

1. Winter Festival

A family gathering was held to introduce the new members of Samajam at Hamilton West School on 7th June 2008. The function named WINTER FESTIVAL was a fun thrilled evening with lots of games and music followed by delicious Indian BBQ dinner. More than 150 members participated the function.

2. Summer Festival

The second family gathering named SUMMER FESTIVAL was held on 30th November 2008 at Hamilton Gardens. The evening started with a photo session by the Turtle Lake at Hamilton Gardens followed by games competitions and cultural activities. The evening ended with mouth watering Indian dinner for the members.

3. Family Picnic to McLaren Falls Park

Members enjoyed the one day picnic to McLaren Falls Park and Mount Maunganui Beach on 28 March 2009. Members ended their whole day amusement and fun on their return to Hamilton by attending the Balloons over Waikato closing ceremony.

SPORTS, GAMES AND ARTS

The arts and sports wing of the Samajam is doing a wonderful job in training members and the children in various sports, games, entertainment and arts activities. The Samajam hires Hamilton West School Hall every weekend and uses the School basketball and football courts for training in various sports and arts activities. Currently members practice basketball, soccer, badminton, chess, caroms and cards. The arts wing practices their dance, songs, skits and various traditional art forms. Our sincere gratitude to the Hamilton West School authorities for letting us use their facilities.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND GENERAL MEETINGS

The Samajam Executive Committee met 10 times during the report year. Annual General Meeting and one Special General Meeting were also held during the year. A big thank you to all the members who participated in these meetings.

FINANCE

Financially we have proved Samajam that Samajam can manage the limited funds wisely for the betterment of the community especially in the tough times. The only disappointment at times is the fact that funding received does not always reflect the valuable and innovative work Samajam undertakes. Samajam is often praised for its efforts, used as a model, remarked on about the effort the organisation puts into planning, organising and initiating -yet funding sources and levels do not reflect this work. Strong verbal support, which is encouraging, does not pay the bills and cannot always take the organisation to its next level. Samajam calls on those in control of funding sources to look closely, examine and evaluate the efforts of Hamilton Kerala Samajam and to provide the funding commensurate to the projects being undertaken by Samajam. We, the Executive Committee, are proud of our efforts, and our financial reports demonstrate that the organisation is financially sound, has an achievable mission and delivering.

A NOTE OF THANKS

We take this opportunity to thank Hamilton West School authorities, Hamilton City Council, M/s Trust Waikato, Mr. Mark Crean of Millennium Insurance Group, M/s Kiwi Fresh Bader Street and all the individuals who supported us financially to make all our programs a success.

We thank all the members whose relentless support made the past year a success story for Samajam and present this report for the approval of this AGM.

For Hamilton Kerala Samajam Executive Committee

**Sd/-
Thomas Philip
President**

**Sd/-
Sony Stephen
Secretary**

Dated: 4th April 2009