

THE OLD HILARIANS' ASSOCIATION

Bishop Anstey High School.
145 Abercromby Street.
Port of Spain.
Trinidad, W.I.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2007-2008

Fellow Hilarians,

I present this report to you for the year in review 2007-2008. This past year was an especially difficult one for members of the Executive. We were plagued with illnesses, surgeries and the passing of our loved ones; despite this we still tried to continue to do the work of the Association, even though we were unsuccessful in hosting any activities. Our first order of business was to assist in the First Annual Walkathon which was championed by a Hilarian parent, Charmion Thompson. It was quite successful and a good time was had by all.

Events for the school choir's trip to Wales were going apace, even though the Executive were not directly involved in any of these activities we were asked once more to assist Hilarians' Jennifer and Lenore Joseph and Hilarian parent Wendy Rocke in the hosting of a Mother's Day Brunch fundraiser. This was held on the Netball court; catering was done by Berment's and entertainment was provided by the choir and dance group. It was a truly wonderful family occasion and some of the attendees asked if it could be held annually.

This year, for the first time, members of the Executive were invited to the Fifth Form Graduation Dinner and Dance. Members of the Graduation Committee had come up with the unique idea of presenting each graduating student with a statuette (designed by Hilarian, Gillian Bishop) which embodied all the qualities of a Hilarian. "The Hilarian" was launched via a power point presentation at the Graduation Dinner. The statuette comes in different sizes and it was thought that this would be a fitting way of honouring Hilarians in the future. Madam Justice Monica Barnes, was the first recipient of this award. Presentations were also made to the Principal and to Ms. Lorraine Granderson for their dedicated work and commitment to the school.

The Annual Luncheon which was held on Saturday 7th July was given the theme "Mardi Gras" the Hall was decorated accordingly in the colours of purple, green and gold; all attendees were 'beaded and masked' as they entered. We had surprisingly found great difficulty in finding a suitable caterer to give us the kind of menu that we really wanted; even though we had gone so far as to source

menus and recipes which were given to some of the top caterers. Needless to say, we were quite disappointed in the meal which we eventually received and have vowed not to use this caterer again. Honourees were Esla Molineux and Sybil Cumberbatch and eight scholarship winners were in attendance. Hilarian Hyacinth Bovell used this opportunity, not only to connect and reunite with friends, but also to present her book "Memories, Messages and Musings" to the community. Nicola Armstrong also had items of her original jewellery on sale; two of these pieces were given as door prizes.

Sale of memorabilia continued during the year, with a constant flow of students through the Hilarian office. Executive member, Jill Padmore was able to give of her time at least three days a week in some instances and we are very grateful to her for this. Mrs. Judy Chang, Chairman of the Board had provided me with an alumni database which she had in her possession, it had data for students up to 1988. I had hoped that during my vacation I would be able to complete the data entry and updating for the years 1989-2003, but I have been unable to do so. The data entry is 90% complete, and will be finished by the end of this month. Thank you to the Principal for allowing me to access the school's files.

The Old Hilarians' Association is now a duly registered non-profit organization, thanks to the assistance of Petal Furlonge-Walker. We have not yet registered the logo or become VAT registered, but these will come in time. The Association was audited by the National Insurance Board, during this period. We were not given any notice of this and they wanted us to provide five (5) years of documentation within two days, or they threatened to fine us.

As usual we participated in the Annual Bazaar which took place on the second Sunday in November and not the usual first Sunday, because of General Elections. We did not have our traditional bottle stall this year, and replaced it with "Cat in Bag". We had also been hoping to have a grand Christmas raffle in conjunction with the Parent Support Group, but this event did not take place.

Plans for Fete 2008 had been continuing since June, especially as this year it would be really early (January 12th). Construction of four (4) temporary classrooms on the court, meant that the committee had to find a suitable new venue to hold this fundraiser. After much debate and consideration, it was decided that the National Stadium would be the venue and plans were set in place accordingly. In the third week of December, we were informed by the Stadium that there were three other events planned for the venue for that day (one of which was a public fete) and that we needed to have discussions with them; even though we had paid them in full since October. After many long discussions, emails, telephone calls, sleepless nights, anxiety attacks and checking other venues, we eventually gained approval from the QRC Board on January 8th for use of their grounds.


Fete 2008, was great, wonderful, magical; people loved the venue, it was like a wonderland, but the cost (not only financial, but also in mental and physical energy) of producing it was phenomenal. In fact it was so good that even the President didn't want to leave; he stayed liming while the cleaning crew was doing their duties and the musicians were packing up. Even though committee members swore that 2008 would be the last, planning for Fete 2009 has already begun, and we are once more looking for a venue, because the temporary classrooms are completed and will be there for at least three (3) years. Words cannot express the kudos due to these committed Hilarians' who do this selflessly every year. Thanks, and thanks, and thanks again.

The Association continues to provide annual grants and bursaries to students selected by the staff for presentation at Speech Day function. We also assisted four (4) students who were selected to attend the Global Young Leaders Conference, each student was given \$2,500.00. The benefits of this conference to the school body and Hilarian community need to be assessed, especially as the students attend after they have completed their Upper VI year. Awardees are urged that on their return they must give back in some way, but this has so far not been evident.

The year in review, was definitely not a positive one financially for this executive, in addition to which the choir's trip to Wales took precedence over all other fundraising events. Our achievements are in the registration of the association and the 90% completion of the membership database. The 90th anniversary of Bishop Anstey High School looms in the next three years, we need to start planning for this major event.

I would like to thank all members of the Executive, SHIP and Fete Committees, Principal and staff of BAHS for their unstinting support during the past year, especially during the deaths of my parents. It has been an honour to once more serve you.

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Marguerite-Anne Moore
President
April 17, 2008