



THE OLD HILARIANS ASSOCIATION

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

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2008-2009

Fellow Hilarians:

This report provides a review of the period April 2008- 2009. This was the first year in office for the new Executive that was elected following last year's joint Annual General Meeting held on April 17 2008.

The first major undertaking was the hosting of the Annual Luncheon which was held on July 5th at the School's Hall. The theme was 'Celebrating T&T'; a conscious effort to balance the negativity that is so pervasive in our society. Accordingly, the menu provided local fare and the tables were adorned with local sweets and plants. The meal was catered by Berment's and feedback was largely positive. Honourees were Marguerite Moore the immediate former President and Rosemary Mathurin. The school's scholarship winners also attended and they were applauded for their achievement; among them was Open Scholarship winner Jamelia Harris. Hilarian Elizabeth Mannette showcased her hand-made jewellery and also donated pieces as door prizes; Jennifer Rouse stirringly shared her vision for a Hilarian retirement community; and all were invited to the launch of the book by Susan Craig-James.

It is well known in the Hilarian community that net proceeds from Fete 2008 were significantly less than in previous years. The primary lesson from this experience was the risk of relying on one (1) major event as the fund-raiser for the Association. The mitigation of this risk birthed 'Food &

Music', the Association's second major undertaking for the year in review. The concept behind this event was to provide culinary fare, and, entertainment by music and/or live performances that were directly aligned to the food provided. The planning committee comprised Hilarians from the Fete Committee who had the time and energy to help us with another undertaking, as well as members of the new Executive who wished to assist.

Food & Music was held on November 04 at the school. Being a first-time event, patronage was just over 200 people. Patronage could have been greater were it not for extenuating circumstances in the planning phase, which had an adverse effect on the timeliness of the availability of tickets. Again, being a first-time event, the first 'Food & Music' did not break even and further crippled the already depleted coffers. However, the event had to be hosted given that signs of a contracting economy had started to manifest by that time. This again underscored the risk of relying on one event as the fund-raiser for the Association. Patrons gave positive reviews and there is no doubt that Food & Music will increase in popularity on the event calendar over time. Special thanks are extended to the organising committee for Food & Music for their dedication, commitment and tenacity.

Planning for Food & Music 2009 which is carded for October 3rd has already started.

In December the Executive engaged in a session to review the strategic direction of the Association. The aims and objectives of the Association were reviewed for relevance within the context of its current and future operating environments. The protocol for governance was also reviewed and initiatives treating with membership, communication and disbursements were also discussed.

In the midst of planning for Fete 2009 and the President's recuperation from surgery (October), the Association received news that Mr. Hade the school's caretaker required surgery for a kidney ailment. It was agreed that various stakeholders would each contribute \$10,000 toward the cost of the surgery, but when it was grimly realised that the condition was terminal, no surgery was performed and the Association's contribution was returned. Sadly, Mr. Hade died in early January. The school made a contribution to his funeral, half of which was offset by the Association. A donation was also made to Mrs. Hade. Mr. Hade provided yeoman assistance to the Association's activities involving the use of the school. Indeed, his willingness and contribution are legendary and his memory will live on in the echelons of Hilarian history.

Fete 2009 was held on January 24. This year it was again a resounding success and the Herculean efforts of the Fete Committee must be acknowledged. Thank you Gem and the rest of the team. It is expected that net proceeds from this year's fete should be more favourable than last year's. This final financial position should be determined by the end of May when all receipts and disbursements should have been received or effected.

The fete was well attended, as evidenced by the footage aired on Synergy TV. Regrettably, there were a few patrons who opted to access the Hilarian Fete experience via dishonest means. Two cheques totalling \$9700 were fraudulently issued and tendered

as payment for tickets. A report has been made to the police and the company that handles security for the Fete has also graciously offered to assist with recovery of the funds.

A raffle was organised jointly between the Association and the parents of the organising committee of Graduation 2007, in an effort to reduce their debt to the Association. The raffle netted \$6000.

The Association continued its contribution to the school's Award Ceremony via the donation of bursaries and prizes.

A fund raising committee under the umbrella of the Association has been formed with the aim of engaging in more sustained fund raising over the year. The committee comprises Hilarians with Fete Committee experience as well as representatives of the Association.

For the new Executive, the past year presented opportunities for several learning experiences. It was indeed a challenge managing with depleted coffers, and, balancing the demands of volunteerism with hectic jobs. The first year in office was indeed an amazing experience, and for the second year there will be continued focus on working in tandem with all, in the best interest of the school.

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Original signed by:

Wanda Bernard
President
April 29, 2009