

MUSLIM ASSOCIATION OF CANTERBURY INFORMS US

Prince of Qatar Hajj Reward

The Association received 5 Hajj trips from His highness Prince of Qatar **Sheik Hammed Bin Khalifa Al Thani**. The MAC delegation left for Hajj on the 10 January 2005 and returned on the beginning of February 2005. The Hajj trip was coordinated by the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs – Qatar and it was a great opportunity for the MAC delegation to meet officials from the Ministry. At the conclusion of the Hajj trip MAC'S Secretary visited Qatar for 10 days to express the Association's appreciation and to discuss future Dawah activities with Qatar.

Invitations

In the last six months the Muslim Association Canterbury received several invitations and participated in most of them.

1. **Saudi National Day:** Khalifa Hasi, MAC's President attended the National day of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, held in Canberra, Australia. While in Australia the President also touch base with the officials of the the following embassies Egypt, United Arab Emirates and Kuwait and invited them to visit our centre. As a result His Excellency, The Ambassador of Egypt, Mr. Mohammed Tawfik, visited the Association at the end of January 2005.
2. **Kuwait National Day:** MAC's Secretary attended the Kuwait National day held in Canberra, Australia and conveyed the Association's congratulations and also expressed the Management's appreciation for the continued support from the embassy of Kuwait.
3. **Christchurch Police:** The association received an invitation from the Christchurch Police Central Station to attend a meeting on the new initiative, the Ethnic Website on the Police website www.police.govt.nz that will be launched this year;. The meeting was attended by MAC's Secretary. As a result of this meeting on 09 Dec 2004 at 2:00pm the Association sent a delegation, a brother and sister to meet with the Hornby Police Station Area Manager on how the ethnic groups can work best with the police. The meeting was very useful and the initial feedback from the MAC delegate was very positive. In this regard the Management would like to express its appreciation to the Hornby Police station Area Manager and to the Asian Peoples Community Relations Officer Constable Rakesh Naidoo for his work and support of the Association. Constable Rakesh Naidoo visited the Mosque and met with the MAC Board of Directors to inform the Board of his role as Community Relations Officer.
4. **Halal Slaughtermen's Union:** In December 2004 MAC received an invitation from the newly formed Halal Union to participate in meetings with government officials centred on employments and future training for the Halal Slaughtermen. The first meeting was a great success and was followed by two more meetings. The Halal Union developed an NZQA approved training program to supply the Halal Industry with well trained and equipped Halal Slaughtermen. MAC welcomes the initiative of the Union and offers its full support.
5. **City Council:** The Association was invited to attend the launch of the new Christchurch City Council chamber and to take part in a Special Citizenship Ceremony for the 50 Tampa boys from the Afghani Community. In support of the event the Association gifted each new citizen a Quran that was received from Malaysia.

Mosque Visitors: The Christchurch Al Noor Mosque has been welcoming visitors from the Canterbury region. The centre was visited by a group of South Canterbury Rangers, Marian College and Riccarton High School and on Thursday 19 May 2005 at 1.45-200pm is going to welcome visitors from the Bishopdale Combined Probus Club.

Dawaa Activities

Month of Ramadan 1425: The Government of Egypt sponsored two scholars to visit our centre and they spent the whole month of Ramadan with the Christchurch Muslim Community. During the last ten days and Eid a scholar from Saudi Arabia visited our centre along with his family, and he led the Eid prayer at Hagley Park.

SECOND MAC CAMP for MUSLIMAHs: Al Hamdulillah the camp was a huge success. The sleep-over was a big highlight for the girls (although not much sleeping took place) Almost every single

participant stated that over the course of the camp she learned heaps more about her religion, had lots of fun and made new friends. All these things are important in the life of a Muslim and the girls all send a big **JAZAKUM ALLAHU KHAIRAN** to our mosque community for supporting them in this activity. Special thanks also to the parents for allowing their daughters to participate and paying the registration fee. Ma sha'allah the girls were really cooperative and the attitude and help from the teenagers was particularly commendable. We had a lively team of great cooks. They put in a lot of hours in the kitchen at the expense of participating in other activities. We enjoyed the participation of all our day-visitors and we appreciate their effort in traveling to the camp to spend a few hours with us. The venue was perfect and we all enjoyed the flying fox and swimming pool and generally the big outdoor space. Overall the 40 youth and group of 8 adults that participated had a great time and we are all looking forward to another camp in sha'allah in the future.

Muslimah Youth Group: Following the success of the Second MAC CAMP for MUSLIMAHS we are trying to establish a muslimah youth group. The first gathering was on Friday 25th March 2005 at the Masjid. Ma sha'allah, it was fantastic to have close to 40 girls attend. Barak Allahu Feekum to all who attended and brought food. The next gathering is planned for **Saturday 23 April 6 – 8 pm** at the Masjid.

Quran Competition: MAC held a one day Quran competition for the boys and girls. All children who participated received a small financial reward ranging from \$10 to \$20. We have children who have memorised up to Surah An-Nisa' so far.

Future Dawaa Activities

Inaugural MAC Camp for Boys: Last year MAC fully sponsored the inaugural MAC Girls' camp. Now it is time to give our boys aged from 8 to 15 the opportunity to participate in the first boys' camp. The camp will be held from 26 -27 April 2005 at Blue Skies camp site, 15 minutes drive from Christchurch. The ambition of the management is to have the girls and the boys running their future camps independently of MAC management.

Inaugural New Zealand Islamic Sisterhood Assembly (NISA'): MAC intends to host a gathering for Muslim sisters over the weekend of 23-24 July 2005. We have arranged for Sister Yvonne Ridley, the British journalist captured in Afghanistan by the Taliban and who subsequently embraced Islam following her release, to participate as a key note speaker.

Second National Islamic Converts Conference (2 NICC): Last year the inaugural NICC was a great success and it received local and international media coverage. This year inshallah MAC is going to hold the 2nd NICC at Zayed College, Auckland. MAC officials met with the officials of the Islamic Education and Dawah Trust in Auckland in preparation for the next conference. For more information on the conference development please visit the MAC website at www.mac.net.nz

Volunteers: MAC management invites all brothers and sisters interested in joining the organizing team of volunteers to please contact MAC: email info@mac.net.nz or PO Box 8272, Riccarton, Christchurch or fax (03) 348 3933.

Islamic Art Exhibition: MAC has also agreed with the Aotearoa Islamic Impressions art team in Auckland to hold an Islamic Art Exhibition during the 2 NICC. MAC was the sponsor of the first Islamic Art Exhibition held in Auckland last year