

Vellore News

CMCH Vellore Web site:
Australian FOV web site:
SA FOV email:

<http://www.cmch-vellore.edu>
<http://www.australianfov.net.au>
safriendsofvellore@gmail.com

VELLORE PRESENTATIONS EVENING

7:00pm, Fri 4th May, 2012
Rosefield Uniting Church
2 Carlton St, Highgate

Speakers:

- * Dr Ravish Sanghvi
Hepato-biliary surgeon from Vellore, currently Registrar in Upper GI Surgery at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital
- * Dr Daisy Mohanasundaram
Physiologist trained in Vellore, currently a Scientist at the Basil Hetzel & Hanson Institutes in the field of pancreatic islet cell transplantation for Diabetes
- * Dr Gopinath Gopal
Geriatrician from Vellore, currently Registrar in Geriatrics at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital

It promises to be a great evening, the speakers representing a variety of medical specialities - don't miss it!

You are **all welcome** for an enjoyable and informative evening. Supper is provided.

Meet the new SA FOV President: Dr Anil Roy

It is my pleasure to introduce myself to you as the President of the South Australian branch of Friends of Vellore (FOV). I am proud to say I'm an alumnus of Christian Medical College (CMC), Vellore; I had my undergraduate and postgraduate medical training from Vellore and also had the privilege of working there as a member of the faculty before coming over to Adelaide in 2003 along with my wife Smitha, daughter Sowmya and son Vineeth. I joined the Respiratory Medicine Unit at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital and after fulfilling Australian specialist training requirements, I'm currently a Respiratory Physician at The Queen Elizabeth and Lyell McEwin Hospitals.



Having served on the FOV Committee for a few years, I consider it an honour that the Committee has entrusted me with the role and responsibilities of the President of South Australian FOV. It is a great privilege and I thank the Committee for providing me with this opportunity to give back to CMC through FOV. I thank Dr Lawrie Palmer for his involvement with FOV over the years and particularly for his leadership as the President over the last three years. We have a group of highly committed individuals on the Committee and it is truly a pleasure to

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April 2012

Vellore
Presentations
Evening

Meet the new
SA FOV
President

Vellore
Patient Stories

Upcoming Events At A Glance

7:00pm Fri, 4th May, 2012

Vellore Presentations
Rosefield Uniting Church,
Highgate

Sat, 25th August, 2012

SA FOV Annual Dinner
Fogolar Furlan,
Felixstow

Sun, late Oct/early Nov 2012

SA FOV Annual General Meeting
Rosefield Uniting Church,
Highgate

South Australian Friends of Vellore Committee

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work with this group. I thank Dr Renjy Nelson for stepping up to the role of the Vice-President. I welcome our new members Dr Nigel Quadros and Dr Jacob Alexander into the Committee.

Since the last SA-FOV Newsletter, we had the Annual General Meeting (AGM) on the 23rd of October, 2011. We were fortunate to have Renal Transplant Surgeon Dr Mohan Rao delivering an inspirational address at the AGM. Dr Rao has been the stalwart of the Renal Transplantation Service in South Australia over a long period. I wish to thank Dr Rao for his address at the AGM and for his service to the people of Australia. We are proud that an alumnus of CMC, Vellore has achieved so much in serving the Australian community over the last few decades.

I believe CMC Vellore is one of the best places in the world, serving millions of sick people in India in true Christian spirit for the last 112 years. The ethos of the institution is reflected in the words of CMC's founder Aunt Ida Scudder in the early days: "What you are building is not a Medical School; it is the Kingdom of God".

I'm excited about the various FOV activities planned for this year. Next in line is the "Vellore presentations evening" on Friday the 4th of May when faculty members from Vellore currently in Adelaide will talk about the activities of their departments in Vellore, their training and experiences in Adelaide. Our Annual Dinner is to be held on Saturday the 25th of August. I look forward to the various events and request your steadfast support as we move forward in supporting CMC, Vellore through FOV.

Dr Anil Roy

VELUSWAMI

In a small village on the border of Tamilnadu and Andhra Pradesh, lives 16 year old Veluswami with his hard-working mother, alcoholic father and siblings. His mother, a daily wage labourer, worked to earn a living for the family and decent education for the children. But education was not the most important thing on Veluswami's mind. Unable to pass his 10th std board exams, he opted not to continue his school education. Instead he wanted to join a Industrial Training Institute (ITI) for a carpentry course. This would mean he could learn a trade and start earning as soon as possible. Although the idea seemed good, the family found it difficult to get an admission as they could not afford the fees. After repeated requests, the ITI agreed to give them a concession on the fees.

With great relief, Veluswami joined the ITI for his training. Unfortunately the relief did not last very long as on the third day after joining, Veluswami had a fall while climbing a tree. He suffered a spinal injury leaving him a paraplegic. He was rushed to CMC and was kept in the Intensive Care Unit. The burden of taking care of the family fell on his mother.

His mother, was determined to do anything it took to rehabilitate her son. With limited finances he was admitted in CMC, but the family's resources would not be enough for his entire treatment and Rehabilitation. He was thus supported by the "Patient to Patient" (PTP) scheme, which provided financial help for his admission for rehabilitation. His cheerful nature and the dedication of his mother captured the hearts of everybody at Rehab.

When the discussion about his future plans arose, the social worker at Rehab visited his ITI to see if there were any possibilities of continuing his training. After having his condition explained and all that he would be able to do and not to do, the faculty at the ITI felt it was not possible for him to continue his training, mainly due to all the practical difficulties and the travel to the Institute. The social worker, without giving up hope, visited his village and explored the other options that would be possible. Of the many options considered, tailoring seemed to have the highest marketing feasibility and tailoring training was available free of cost at the Mary Verghese Trust (a vocational rehabilitation project run by Rehab).

Back in the Rehab Institute, he was trained to walk with knee ankle foot calipers which were provided free of cost through ICRC (International Committee of Red Cross) fund. By borrowing money from friends and relatives his family managed to pay the cost of a pair of elbow crutches. All the training in Rehab, his positive and cheerful nature and the support from his family helped him become independent in



Dr. Sunil Thomas Chandy, Director of Cardiology, is appointed CMC Director-Designate and will take over as CMC Director on September 23, 2012.

Sunil and his wife Gigi are well known to the Friends of Vellore in South Australia as they spent quite a few years in Adelaide during their post graduate training.



his activities. He returned home, applied for his National Disability Identity Card, a tricycle (which would make mobility easier & faster) from the government and will come back for his tailoring training.

Veluswami and his family hope to start afresh all over again, hoping this time it would last a lifetime.

MEDAL (OAM) OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA - Peter Kirk

Peter Kirk, our highly esteemed Treasurer, received the Order of Australia in the recent Australia Day awards. Peter's award was in recognition for service to the community through a range of health and social welfare organisations.

These organisations include the Friends of Vellore, South Pacific School Aid, International World Service Committee of Adelaide Rotary, Board of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Board of Memorial Hospital, and accounting services for the International Council for Control of Iodine Deficiency Disorders.

From all your FOV locally and nationally... Congratulations Peter!



SELVI

Selvi comes from a hamlet located on a plateau 2,000 ft up in the Jawadhi Hills, a tribal area, which rises up to 3,000 ft high to the east of Vellore. Every home is a thatched mud hut - except for one partly constructed house, which is being built in granite. The nearest road accessible to vehicles is forty five minutes distance, after walking along narrow tracks, wading through two streams. From the village there is no other way to reach Vellore some fifty KM away. For a number of years, in parallel with the Government, CHAD has been running community health initiatives and is now involved with programmes covering up to 160 villages in the Jawadi Hills. As well as health clinics, this includes self-help, education, farmers, young women and children's groups, as well as vocational training and community mobilisation. Villagers are referred to CHAD hospital at Bagayam, on the outskirts of Vellore, and to the main CMC Hospital for medical treatment, if needed.

As is common, Selvi, aged 30, is part of a joint family, married to her cousin, Duraiswamy, aged 35. When she first married, the young couple lived with her parents. Although educated up to the age of 15, they are agricultural labourers, Duraiswamy and Selvi shared the work of cultivating the few acres of village land. Within a few weeks of marriage, Selvi became pregnant and in the fullness of time she had a healthy baby son. Things did not go as well during her second pregnancy. When she was seven months pregnant she developed fever and significant breathlessness, which frightened her. Leaving her 2 year old son with her mother, accompanied by her father, they made the long walk to catch the bus to go to CHAD.

Here the doctor reported that the young wife was suffering with empyema (pus in her lung), which would need draining. This would need more specialist care than could be given in CHAD. Selvi was referred to the medical department in CMC where a tube was

inserted to drain the pus and antibiotics were prescribed to counteract the infection and reduce the fever. Selvi had been gravely ill, so that it was 10 days before she was discharged and able to make the arduous trip back home. Sadly this was not the last of her troubles. A few weeks later her husband suddenly became ill and died before any help could be called. The young widow was left with a 2 year old son and another baby soon to be born. Before long, in labour, she was taking the long walk to the bus and to the government Primary Health Centre 25 KM away for the delivery of her second son.



Selvi and her 6 week old baby son

Now the community health nurse and the technician were making the long walk to check on Selvi and the health of her two little boys. She was given help with breast feeding and nutrition. The little ones were checked to see that they are healthy and meeting the correct milestones.

The hospital bill for Selvi's empyema treatment, came to more than Rs.16,845-00. The family are very poor, as are most of the people in the Jawadhi Hills. When he was alive Selvi's husband earned just Rs.40 per day. Now Selvi depends on her family for daily living. There is no way in which this family could meet the cost of her treatment. Selvi pawned her jewellery and paid Rs.2,210 towards the cost. However this did not deter the staff in CMC from offering the best medical treatment possible. Fortunately there is a fund (Person to Person - PTP) set up by well wishers around the globe on which the Hospital can call to meet the costs of just such patients as Selvi. Rs.4000 came from the PTP. The balance, Rs.10,500, was absorbed by the hospital itself.

Selvi and her family will always be grateful for the expert care, loving concern and financial help in her time of great need.

from UK FOV Newsletter, Autumn 2011



Mr. P.J. Kirk
9 Burnham Ave
Myrtle Bank, SA, 5064

Please accept the enclosed donation of \$..... to the work of the Christian Medical College and Hospital at Vellore, India.

Name.....

Address.....

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(Donations are tax-deductible if made to the Vellore Christian Medical College and Hospital Support Fund)
