



VELLORE NEWSLETTER

FRIENDS OF VELLORE CHRISTIAN MEDICAL COLLEGE & HOSPITAL (QLD)

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(Qld FOV is a branch of the Australian Board of the Vellore Christian Medical College and Hospital)

Dear Friends,

While I was in North India in February and March I was often asked if I'd ever been to South India. Whenever I mentioned CMC Vellore, the invariable response was: "I know about that place – the best hospital in India". In a town near Darjeeling in the north-east Himalayas, I spoke with the Principal of a large Christian school. He had already had some surgical treatment at Vellore and was planning the following week to return for further treatment. It entails a very long journey but clearly people from this area believe it is worth taking that trouble.

The spread of Indian languages among CMC Vellore's Chaplains includes languages from India's far north eastern States from which hundreds of patients come each year. The Senior Chaplain is from that area. He told me once that he could handle eight of the languages from that part of India!

We invite you and your friends to:

THE 2014 VELLORE DINNER Saturday 24 May (6 for 6.30pm)

Again at the Emmanuel Uniting Church Hall, 249 South Pine Road, Enoggera. Good parking in Laurel St, behind the Church.

Speaker: Dr Bruce Hayes (see details p.2)

Entertainment: Indian Classical Dance and Music

The program includes a quality Indian meal.

Tickets (adults \$45, concession \$35) available from Ian Kerr 33725970 or Brian Lee 33513272. An application form is included for email readers and for addresses in or near Brisbane. Do get your tickets early to avoid disappointment because numbers are limited.

DR BRUCE HAYES

Bruce is a Brisbane doctor who has worked for the past 21 years in Nepal, as a clinical doctor in a rural mission hospital for 6 years and since 2000 as a clinical medical teacher in Patan Hospital, Kathmandu, coordinating postgraduate GP training. More recently he has been involved in ethics and undergraduate teaching in a new medical school in Kathmandu – The Patan Academy of Health Sciences. He has also been a consultant with the Nick Simons Institute in Kathmandu which supports and trains rural healthcare workers.



Since 2009 Bruce has been a visiting consultant for the CMC Vellore Distance Family Medicine program doing 10 day workshops in Kolkata, West Bengal, and Kolenchery, near Cochin in Kerala.

Bruce and his wife, Libby, are now on study leave in Brisbane where Bruce is studying for a Master of Divinity degree at the Brisbane School of Theology and Libby, a teacher, is studying for a Graduate Diploma in Divinity. The Hayes have 4 children two of whom are married.

The Dinner program will include a classical Indian dance by Dr Vaishnavi Nath and Miss Therese Murphy's piano music.

THE ANNUAL VELLORE INDIAN DINNERS

While there is some doubt about the date of the first Indian Dinner, there was certainly one in 1983 and from 1985 there are records of a Dinner every year.

At a couple of the early dinners, guests watched videos (no DVDs then) produced in and about CMC Vellore.

A great variety of people, all with interesting stories to tell, have been the invited speakers over these 30 years. The speakers have included a CMC Director, the President of the Australian Board for CMC, Elective students and Volunteer workers at Vellore, Visitors to the Hospital and Present and Former CMC staff (Australian and Indian).

At many of the dinners Indian dancers have displayed different ways Indian culture is shared with the world.

This Newsletter is part of your invitation to come with your friends to this year's Annual Vellore Indian Dinner.

MANY THANKS, GWENDA

The Vellore Newsletter of March, 2000, shows Gwenda Spencer as Secretary of the Qld Friends of Vellore Committee. At the Annual Meeting in November last year she asked to be allowed to retire from that position. Mrs Ruby Chari, a Vellore OT graduate, is the new Secretary.

Gwenda (née Rodda) has links with Vellore that go back to her student days when Dr Ted Gault, an Australian pathologist at CMC, spoke at a Student Christian Movement meeting in Melbourne. Her willingness to work in a third world country took her not to India but to newly independent Indonesia to work as a young Australian science graduate, an Indonesian government employee on the same wage as local workers, living with them in hostels and getting to know Indonesians as their equal. With some breaks, Gwenda later worked for 4 years in Indonesia and Singapore.

In 1957 Gwenda came to work in the Queensland Institute of Medical Research but because of what seems a strange rule now she had to resign when she and Mervyn Spencer were married in 1964. It was then she began to help the redoubtable Hope Rickwood with the Vellore stalls. When her children were older, after getting the appropriate degrees at the Queensland University, she taught for 10 years then in 1984 became an evening shift worker for 12 years in the Royal Brisbane Hospital Microbiology laboratory. To quote her words: "This allowed me to work on the stalls again". In her years of retirement refugee welfare has become a major interest in her life. Gwenda was a worthy recipient of an Order of Australia Medal last year.

To quote her words again: "It was rewarding to visit India and especially the Vellore Hospital in 2000. When people say 'religion is a negative force in this modern world', tell them about Vellore and relate that 'the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear'".

Would you rather get this Newsletter by email? To join those already on the email list:

Please email fovqld@hotmail.com

giving your surname and current address so our mailing lists can be adjusted for the next Newsletter,

FROM THE LOW COST EFFECTIVE CARE UNIT (LCECU) –

PADMAPRIYA'S STORY

Domestic violence within impoverished families is only too familiar to those who become involved in caring for the victims. Padmapriya, now only 28, has had a hard life. After finishing high school she was married to an auto-rickshaw driver. By the time they had two children he was irregular at work and began drinking heavily. He went into debt and had to sell his auto. His heavy drinking made him violent and abusive towards his wife until one night in a drunken fit he poured kerosene over her and set her alight. She received preliminary treatment in the Government Hospital and after her discharge she attended the Plastic Surgery Outpatients at the CMC Hospital.

Here even subsidised initial treatment would cost A\$600, far beyond her means.

She was advised to talk with the Low Cost Effective Care Unit (LCECU) which from the beginning has been for the benefit of Vellore people least able to afford good treatment. They were able to arrange for the necessary surgery on her left elbow to be done in February last year. The Occupational Therapist from LCEUC followed this up with home based exercises and the OT, the Social Worker and the Nurse met her regularly to help her overcome her understandable emotional instability.

In June a second surgery was done, with Padmapriya paying for the medicines and LCECU meeting the cost of the surgery from its patient support fund. Though more surgery is still needed, her carers find she is bright and cheerful and they say, "When you see her smile, you would never imagine the trauma she has been through". To top it all, she has recently started working as a daily wage earner in the same shop she was employed in before all this trouble happened.



CMC'S OUTREACH:

- TO LOCAL SCHOOLS

Faced with the daunting task of uniting young and old in a fight against the spread of endemic diabetes in India, CMC's Department of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism organised a Dance Competition in March for school and college students from Vellore and nearby places. The chief guest was the Principal, Dr Alfred Job Daniel, who advised the many children there to understand and exercise control on what to eat, when to eat and how to eat and emphasised the importance of physical activity and healthy food habits. With a word not often used in Australian reporting these days, CMC Newsline reported that, "Among the schools, the first prize was bagged by St Mary's Higher Secondary School."



- TO THE PRISONERS:

Visitors to the College go past another kind of training institution – for prison staff – and both the Central Prison and the Special Prison for Women are not far from the College Campus. Some people who became leaders of independent India spent time in Vellore's Central Prison. Each year at Christmas time this festival is observed in the prisons with activities organised by the Vellore Jail Ministry. The chief guest this Christmas was Professor Sundari Edwin, CMC's Deputy Director and former Nursing Superintendent. There have always been contributions and personal support from CMC staff for these celebrations. Children from different educational institutions presented a cultural program, musical instruments were the gifts to those in prison and of course there was a special meal of mutton biryani.

• FIRST AID TRAINING FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

As part of the School Education Program the Low Cost Effective Care Unit and the Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Departments, in collaboration with a branch of the Indian Red Cross Society, organised a two day First Aid Training Program for school teachers and students of Vellore Town. A total of 10 teachers and 35 students along with four health workers from the LCECU outreach team took part.

NEW FACILITIES FOR 2014

The presence of CMC Council members at the January meeting is always an opportunity to involve the visitors in the ceremonies to welcome new facilities.

This year on the Hospital Campus a mobile Blood Bank donated by the State Bank of India was inaugurated and dedicated.

Also on the busy Hospital Campus, to benefit the residents there, for the adults the Gymnasium has been renovated and for the children the new Children's Park provides a safe play area and a green oasis in the residential zone of that Campus.



AN IDA SCUDDER STORY (FROM THE CMC NEWSLINE)

Not long after medical work had started in Ranipet (near where Vellore is now), the doctor stationed there was attending to his young wife. In the 10 years of their marriage they had been blessed with five little boys. Now in December 1870, the sixth baby announced its arrival into this family of pioneering missionaries. *'Fida, I don't believe it! It's a girl!* the doctor is reported to have said.



Welcomed into a loving family, nourished by optimism, faith, fun and games, a strong little spirit grew. The little girl never lacked courage or energy to keep up with anything her older brothers attempted.

This same confidence and optimism would lead her later to hold her own in a world of professional men and to help women who had not received the freedom and encouragement she had had. When John and Sophia Scudder delightfully received their new born daughter they had no way of knowing that the most famous medical Scudder of them all would be the baby they chose to name Ida Sophia Scudder, the Founder and long-time Director of CMC Vellore.

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QUEENSLAND FRIENDS OF VELLORE FINANCES

Two of the aims of the Friends of Vellore groups in Australia, and in other countries, are to make widely known the great work being done through the Christian Medical College and its Hospitals and also to share with the staff there in prayer for this work of healing.

Another aim is to raise funds to continue to make possible the very low fees charged the students and to provide available resources for free or subsidised treatment for poor patients.

It is a privilege for us here in Queensland to share in meeting these aims. Reports presented at the Qld Friends of Vellore Annual Meeting in November showed that:

- **Direct donations** (including \$2700 from the Eagle Junction State School children for the Person-to-Person program) totalled \$44, 215. The Treasurer pointed out that 100% of funds received by way of cash donations are forwarded to CMC Vellore.
- The **Street Stalls** continue to raise a great deal – Tank St Stall \$13,126 from 12 stalls and Toowong \$8,797 from 11 stalls.
- The **Indian Dinner** in May 2013 raised a net \$3,398 as well as enabling many people to hear first hand stories from visitors to the College and Hospital.
- As promised to the Annual Meeting of the Australian Board in 2012, the Queensland Friends' contribution to 30 June, 2013 was \$60,000.
- As always costs are kept to the minimum – Stall expenses were just \$729 and this Newsletter (printing and postage x 3) \$1,439.

TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS BY BANK TRANSFER

People wishing to donate to CMC Vellore may find it more convenient to pay by Bank transfer rather than by cheque. Our Treasurer, Richard Caitens, has provided the following information:

Full Name of Account: Friends of Vellore Christian Medical College & Hospital Queensland Group Support Fund. (You can enter just: Friends of Vellore Support Fund)

BSB no.: 633000 **Account no.:** 131073413

Reference: Your surname and suburb (or as much as space allows)

After making the transfer, please send an email regarding your deposit to the Treasurer at this email address: cmcvellore@optusnet.com.au so a receipt can be sent to you.

THE DVD “HOME OF A HEALING GOD”

Copies are available from Brian Lee (ph. 3351 3272 or jblee19@bigpond.net.au) for \$10 (including postage). It is a great resource to use to tell your friends about CMC Vellore, its people, its work and something of what makes it the great place it is. Copies will be available at the Annual Dinner on 24 May.

WEB SITES

www.australianfov.net.au

Vellore and USA sites: www.cmch-vellore.edu & www.vellorecmc.org

STREET STALL NEWS

Many thanks to those wonderful people who continue their many years of stall work and to those who have joined them recently.

Each of the Toowong and Tank Street stalls happen once a month. New helpers are always welcome. Continuing needs include:

- Suitable items for sale, especially cakes and biscuits
- Help with transporting the goods
- Workers at the stalls
 - regularly or now and again as you are able.

If you, or someone you know, can help in this, kindly contact Mrs Claire Mainstone (3371 1332).

Again thanks to “Vellore Newline” and Mrs Ann Witchalls for some of the material in this Newsletter.

Regards, Brian
(Newsletter Editor).

QLD FRIENDS OF VELLORE OFFICE BEARERS

Chairman: Mrs Cathy Chandani, 24 Mathews St, Bethania 4205 (0412391353)
 Vice Chairman: Rev John Hooper, 74 Meynell St, Salisbury 4107 (3701 0017)
 Hon. Secretary: Mrs Ruby Chari ph. 0431 943 557 or rubbycmc@yahoo.com
 Hon. Treasurer: Mr Richard Caitens, 107 Northgate Rd, Northgate 4013 (3266 1962)
 Stalls Co-ordinator: Mrs Claire Mainstone, 37 Fifth Av, St Lucia, 4067 (3371 1332)
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