

June 2014

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



We cordially invite you to the
**SA Friends of Vellore
Annual Dinner 2014**

Saturday, 23rd August, 2014
6:30pm for 7:00pm
Fogolar Furlan Hall, 69 Briar Rd, Felixstow



Guest Speaker: **Tim Nicholls, Director of "Home of a Healing God"**

Come along and enjoy a wonderful evening with a delicious
Indian meal, dazzling entertainment, and lots more!

Easily purchase and print your tickets at www.trybooking.com/87156

See the enclosed flyer for more details!

A fund raising event in support of the Christian Medical College and Hospital Vellore, India

SA FOV
Annual Dinner!

From the SA
FOV President

Welcome to the June 2014 Edition of *Vellore News*.

Those who attended the Vellore Presentations Evening last month would agree with me that we had a great evening. We were glad to see what two of the current faculty members from Vellore are achieving during their advanced training in Adelaide – Dr Vinoi David, Registrar in Nephrology at Royal Adelaide Hospital and Dr Sujith Chacko, Registrar in Cardiology at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Vinoi and Sujith gave us a fair idea of the phenomenal work in their Departments at CMC. We were excited to know that their Adelaide experience will also be of great use to the patients at Vellore upon their return after Study Leave.

At the Vellore Presentations Evening, we were also touched by the experiences of one of the alumni from CMC – Dr Benjamin D'Souza, Paediatric Emergency Physician at the Women and Children's Hospital. Benji gave us a touching account of the real challenges involved in Disaster Response – having been a part of the team that visited the Philippines and Pakistan in response to natural disasters in recent times. The work is certainly an illustration of alumni working in line with CMC's motto: *Not to be ministered unto, but to minister.*

Our eagerly awaited Annual Dinner is just around the corner – on Saturday the 23rd of August. The Guest Speaker at this year's Dinner is Tim Nicholls, film maker of Currawong Productions, the architect of a number of films. Tim loves to tell stories from a unique perspective and was indeed moved by what he saw at Vellore. The resulting film – *Home of a Healing God* – has been shown around the world. For Tim the experience of telling the story of the people who share the spirit of CMC through their work was one of the most satisfying and inspirational adventures of his career. He is certain to bring us the message of CMC by sharing some of his experiences in the making of the film, from the perspective of a person who was first exposed to CMC only in the last decade.

I eagerly look forward to seeing you once again at the Dinner this year. It is certain to be another fantastic night, a reminder of the wonderful work at the Christian Medical College, Vellore.

Dr Anil Roy, *President, SA FOV*

If you wish to receive this newsletter by email and no longer require the paper form, please email:

safriendsofvellore@gmail.com

Upcoming Events At A Glance

Sat, 23rd August, 2014

SA FOV Annual Dinner
Fogolar Furlan, Felixstow

Keep an eye out for upcoming details for the AGM later in the year.

South Australian Friends of Vellore Committee

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Graham Mackley Nicholls 1929 – 2014
Anand Rose

Reverend Graham Nicholls was a close friend of CMC & Hospital Vellore, in more than one way. Those who attended the Friends of Vellore annual dinner would recall him opening the event few years ago.

Having grown up in country South Australia, and schooled in the Prince Alfred College, he went on to have an interesting and varied career. He worked in the farm, played Australian rules football (for the Norwood Football Club), sang in the opera, was a minister in the uniting church and served as chaplain at the Christian Medical College & Hospital (CMC & H) Vellore. Graham was a very popular figure in the footy world in South Australia in the 1950's as he was ruckman for the Norwood Football Club. He won the club's best and fairest award on two occasions. He went on to pursue opera singing in the Sadler's Wells opera in London. On his return to Australia he went to Bible College and worked as a minister in the uniting church. He had numerous contacts with faculty from CMC & H, Vellore, at Woodville Uniting Church where he ministered. Graham and his loving wife Barbara (a singer herself) were blessed with 5 children. He lost his loving wife to a malignancy over 10 years ago and was devastated.

Following his retirement Graham took up a challenge offered by Dr. George Chandy to visit CMC & H and do an external review of the chaplaincy department of the institution. However following his first visit – he decided that he would rather serve the patients in the Haematology department as chaplain. He believed chaplaincy was a 24 hour profession. He formed a personal bond with many of his patients. He was intimately involved with their personal journey through their illness. If a patient were to deteriorate, Graham would be by their side even at midnight. The sight of the 198 cm Redlegs ruckman striding into CMC & H at midnight was not missed. On occasions he would travel with his patients to their hometown as they returned home, drop them at their residence and return (2nd class Indian Railway!). Religion, culture and creed were no barriers for Graham. What was meant to be a 6 month trip stretched to a few years as Graham would return to South Australia and then return to Vellore for more.

In the sunset of his life Graham, was sharp and decisive. Despite having a lethal malignancy – Graham was clear and confident of his Maker. He was a witness and inspiration to every specialist he met at Flinders Medical Centre, and of course had a word about CMC & H to every one he met. His loving family surrounded him during the twilight of his life.

Graham reflected what Christian Medical College & Hospital, Vellore stood for – *Not to be ministered unto but to minister*. Graham showed Christ's love to those he came in contact with. It was with the same intensity and passion with which he played his footy and lived his life. His was a race well run.

JONATHAN

The little boy lay flat on the examination trolley in the crowded paediatric casualty room. His big brown eyes, filled with fear, searched the doctor's face. His parents stood by, anxiously waiting for answers. The toddler's scarred, disfigured left leg was glaring obvious. A thin towel was hastily thrown over to dissuade curious onlookers. They had already been through 3 hospitals in the past 2 months and a fairly major operation and he was terrified of needles. With the severe infection and pus from his thigh his already abnormal leg looked grotesque. His mother was 8 months pregnant and it was obvious that she found it hard to hold this worried child and dodge the bustling crowd of the paediatric emergency room. He needed to be admitted to hospital and was quickly transferred to the children's ward.

Jonathan was just one year old. His parents come from a village about 100km (60 miles) south of Vellore, close to a large nuclear installation. Both his parents have only elementary education. His father was a fisherman by profession, but since the nuclear plant was built he no longer works as a fisherman, accepting any odd jobs he gets, including driving, or manual labour, to make ends meet. His wife also does manual work for daily wages, when she can with. With luck between them they can earn £20-£30 per month. They live in a small rented house, for which they pay £20 per month. "Jonathan", which means "Gift of God" was the youngest of their children. The mother was expecting the next. From birth there was clearly something wrong with the baby's left leg. It looked swollen in comparison with the right leg and the malformation only got worse as the infant grew. He could not wear normal clothes and the left leg looked unsightly. They took him to a private hospital locally where he was diagnosed with a lymphatic- venous malformation. With this condition the flow of blood through the blood vessels is restricted. The affected area gets repeated infections. The doctors at his first medical center carried out radical surgery to excise and reduce the swelling in the lower part of Jonathan's left leg. They felt the entire malformation was too large to deal with at once. Later the leg became infected again and was treated with antibiotics. The family was told that the toddler needed further surgery on the left thigh. But they had exhausted their resources on the little boy's treatment thus far. They

were advised to bring the child to CMC where their case would surely be sympathetically received. Leaving their other children with relatives, Jonathan and his parents made the long journey to Vellore over bumpy roads in the rattling old bus.

This time the paediatric surgeons operated on the little boy's left upper leg to excise the swelling after treating the initial infection with intravenous antibiotics. The condition of Jonathan's leg has greatly improved. There will always be some malformation and there remains some disfiguration of his left leg, but he is able to wear trousers normally. His parents, and the child himself later on, will always have to watch regularly for any sign of infections. Jonathan should be a

normal, lively little boy, taking his place in the family and community. His mother has since delivered a beautiful baby girl, and they are thrilled that she is perfect. Jonathan is proud of his new little sister.



The cost of this expert surgical care came to Jonathan and his parents with their new baby daughter £460.00, a sum well beyond the limited means of such a poor family. They were unable to make any contribution towards the hospital bill. We took care of Jonathan in the hope that some kind donor would finance his care and £50.00 was allotted through the Person to Person Scheme, through your generous donation. The remaining amount was settled by the concerned unit and the institution. We join the grateful family in thanking you for this timely help.

AUSTRALIAN BOARD OF FRIENDS OF VELLORE CMCH INC.

Annual Dinner 2014

Friends of Vellore, South Australia

A fundraising event supporting
the Christian Medical College, Vellore, India

Saturday 23 August 2014

6:30 for a 7pm start

At Fogolar Furlan Hall

69 Briar Rd, Felixstow



Guest Speaker:

Tim Nicholls

Film-maker, Currawong Productions

Director of "Home of a Healing God"

& other productions

Cost per ticket: \$60

Join us for a fabulous night of
Indian food and entertainment



For Tickets: please visit <http://www.trybooking.com/87156>
(closing date 17 Aug; it would help us if you could register as soon as possible)

OR
Cut out and mail to:

Dr Ian Roberts-Thomson, 8 William Street, Hawthorn SA 5062
(Make cheques payable to: 'Friends of Vellore')

Name:

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Please sit me with:

Number of Vegetarian Meals: Other Dietary Requirements:

Dr. Ian Roberts-Thomson
8 William St
Hawthorn, SA, 5062

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

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