

Friends of Vellore, Victoria

A division of Australian Board of Vellore Christian Medical College & Hospital Support Fund ABN 65 125 097 974



SEPTEMBER 2016 NEWSLETTER

From the President David Runia

Greetings to all the friends of Vellore in Victoria from the Master's Office at Queen's College. It has been an exciting and successful time for our group since the last newsletter was published. The fund-raising dinner held here at Queen's on May 21 was greatly enjoyed by all who attended. Our guests of honour Prof Craig Jeffrey and Dr Jane Dyson spoke to us about their research on the lives and aspirations of young people in India today.

The dinner raised over \$4000 for the College and the Hospital.

A new initiative has been the establishment of an Annual Giving Programme, which will enable donors to donate funds to targeted projects in Vellore, each of which will support the poorest patients and students. I urge you to study the details of this programme and give it your financial support. Every gift is welcome, no matter how large or how small. Every gift will contribute to making a real difference.

Let us give thanks for the wonderful work that is done in Vellore and express our gratitude through the support we give it.

David Runia

Keep this date free for our annual meeting – Saturday 15th of October, 3.15pm

Our AGM will be held in the Stafford Room, Queen's College, The University of Melbourne (Go under the arch, walk to the Eakins Hall entrance and up the lift or stairs to the glassed first floor area). Our guest speaker will be Dr Nathan Grills. The topic of his talk is 'Under access or over access to medicines: Which one kills more people in India? A collaborative study between CMC Vellore and the University of Melbourne'. Refreshments will be provided.

The Annual Giving Appeal

This year at the annual dinner the Friends of Vellore Victoria inaugurated a new way of raising funds for the Hospital and Medical College at Vellore. It is a method that has been used with great success in the education and health areas in recent years. Supporters of these institutions are invited to make an annual donation to their cause. Generally, a number of options are presented, out of which the supporters can choose. The appeal is sent out in about May, so that donations can be given before the end of the financial year. Of course such donations are in most cases fully tax-deductible. The FOVV canvassed various possible projects that the appeal could support and selected three, all of which support the very poor at Vellore.

The first program pays for immediate medical care for the poorest of the poor who are unable to meet the cost of their treatment. The second program supports renovation of the Chatram (Inn) that houses very poor patients and their families during long-term outpatient care such as chemotherapy. The third program provides scholarships to very poor students for education in allied health services. A brochure was compiled and sent out to all the friends on our mailing list. So far quite a few donations have been received. I would like to express my warmest thanks to those who have made donations so far.

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An important part of the method is to remind people of the opportunity to participate. This is often done another two times. See the brochure which accompanies this newsletter. Details for how to donate are also given on the last page of the newsletter. Please note two things. Firstly, every dollar that is raised goes to the projects in Vellore. There are not many charities who can make this claim. Secondly, if you don't ask, in most cases you won't receive. By asking you to consider making donations, we are doing our job as Friends of Vellore. PLEASE BE GENEROUS IN SUPPORTING THE WONDERFUL WORK BEING DONE IN THE LORD'S NAME IN SOUTHERN INDIA.

David Runia

VELLORE DINNER 21 MAY 2016

Report by Dr Nancy Nicholas

Queen's College at the University of Melbourne was the venue for the annual fund-raising dinner held on Saturday 21st May 2016. The guest speakers were Professor Craig Jeffrey and his wife Dr Jane Dyson. They have both trained in the UK in geography. A riveting question and answer session followed their talks and the viewing of the short film.



*Above: Dr Jan Dyson and Professor Craig Jeffrey at the podium, Professor David Runia on the left
Right: View across tables at the dinner*



Craig is the director of the Australia-India Institute. He has spent years conducting anthropological fieldwork in western Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. His interests include Indian democracy, educational transformation, globalization, and the politics of youth, especially educated unemployed youth. Many young people think of education as a way to improve their work prospects, but have found the number of people applying for a limited number of jobs leaves them unemployed in spite of the fact that they are qualified for the type of work. They have nothing to do but to continue studying. He has written a book on this subject - *Timepass: Youth, Class and the Politics of Waiting in India* (Stanford University Press, 2010).

Jane is a Lecturer in the School of Geography at the University of Melbourne. She showed us a film titled "Lifelines" which she made about her research in a small village, which she calls "Bemni", in the state of Uttarakhand in the Himalayan mountains. She has spent time living in

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this village over the last 13 years and was able to share the lives of the young people as they were busy with the hard agricultural labour necessary to sustain life there. The fields are ploughed with oxen and the crops harvested by hand and hauled on their backs up and down the mountain slopes. They herd cattle and collect leaves and lichen and other forest products. The film illustrates this harsh environment and tells of a man named Makar Singh who sees the advantage of an education, and studies at night after the usual work during the day. The children now attend school, and a road has made it easier to transport products to market. Electricity and mobile phone access has changed the society, and basic hygiene has improved. The film is available to view and download without charge at www.lifelinesfilm.com Jane published a book about her work in 2014, titled *Working Childhoods: Youth, Agency and the Environment in India*.

During the evening people were encouraged to bid for items on the stage in a silent auction, and also to purchase raffle tickets which were on each table. A cookery book titled “Indian Table Talk” was available for sale, and also biographies of Drs Edward and Edna Gault. Following dessert, Evelyn Lehmann and Frances Bhathal showed photographs of their visit to Vellore last December and gave a commentary on their experiences. Professor David Runia launched the Friends of Vellore Victoria Annual Giving Program. Brochures were available on each table with information about three programs which the committee had selected.

All too soon, the evening drew to a close.

A Report from Dr Bella George, President FOV Australia

Dr. Bella George, the President of the Australian Vellore Board attended the CMC Council Meeting at Vellore in January 2016. Her report on the AVB website tells of the **Jawadhi Hills Project** in southern India. Several villages of tribal people have been quite isolated by the difficult terrain. For about 50 years the Don Bosco fathers have helped these tribes, and 40 years ago CMC became involved in helping control leprosy and tuberculosis in the area. About 15 years ago a grant from Denmark funded the Dan-mission project for development in this area. A hospital was built, education provided for the children, and some income generating projects begun.

Since 2013 the Danish funding ceased, and CMC supports all the medical work.

It takes the staff 2 hours to travel from Vellore to Jawadhi, so there is a great need for staff accommodation on site. This is an expensive project. Some mobile clinics to outlying villages are accessible by road, but some need supplies to be carried by staff travelling by foot.

Australian FOV last year paid for the Jawadhi Hills Hospital to get an Ultrasound scanner which the staff greatly appreciated.

There is no ongoing funding for education. One government-run school which was visited, had children up to Grade 8 with just 3 teachers. The medical staff from CHAD (CMC Community Health Department) and the Don Bosco fathers are committed to improving the education levels of these children and feel the summer camps are a good way of achieving this. It costs \$20.00 per child to run these camps and with 1000 children attending; they are always looking for financial support for this. During the camps they are taught life skills, cultural dances, English and Maths, and are given a health check. Scholarship programs help CMC give extra coaching to students interested in medical science so they can access tertiary courses.

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For donations to work at Christian Medical College and Hospital, Vellore:

Post Cheque or money order to: Treasurer Friends of Vellore, Victoria PO Box 81N Armadale North VIC 3143	Direct transfer or deposit to: Friends of Vellore Victoria Bendigo Bank BSB: 633000 Account: 139185151 Please email details of any deposits to FOVVTreasurer@gmail.com
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For the Annual Giving Campaign, please select the program/s you wish to fund:

- Development Department Emergency Fund (People)
- Renovation of the Chatram (Buildings)
- Endowment Fund for Allied Health Scholarships (Education)