



VELLORE NEWSLETTER

OLD FRIENDS OF VELLORE CHRISTIAN MEDICAL COLLEGE & HOSPITAL

PRINT POST PUBLICATION NUMBER 100003849

Vol.48 No.1 April 2013. Subscription to newsletter \$5 p.a.

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

Dear Friends,

Continuing growth in India's economy is often reported in Australia. From a CMC Vellore source: "The burgeoning and upwardly mobile 'middle classes' have more and more resources at their disposal making health care more 'affordable'. But there is another side to this story. We cannot forget that there are vast millions in India whom the medical revolution has bypassed, people for whom even the right to basic health care is still a dream, where one major illness in the family pushes them over the brink into destitution."

CMC Vellore remains committed to world renowned quality medical training with very low fees for students, top of the range research and always the best of health care in its hospitals and outreach programs at low and often subsidised cost.

We invite you and your friends to:

THE 2013 VELLORE DINNER Saturday 25 May (6 for 6.30pm}

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

Speakers: *Mrs Cathy Chandani, Mr Peter Williams and Dr Merrilyn Williams. (see further on p2)

Entertainment: Dancers from Eswaralaya Kalaikoodam School of Indian dancing.

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 addresses in or near Brisbane. Do get your tickets early to avoid disappointment because numbers are limited.

SPEAKERS AT THIS YEAR'S VELLORE DINNER



***Cathy Chandani** was an Occupational Therapist at CMC. She married the late Ashok Chandani, also an OT at CMC who later became a doctor in Brisbane; Cathy now chairs the Qld Committee and recently visited Vellore.



* **Peter Williams** is a retired Guidance Officer and is a Psychologist.



* **Merrilyn Williams** is a GP with long experience in a country town practice and more recently in Aboriginal communities. Peter and Merrilyn returned in March from voluntary work and travel in India which included time at CMC Vellore.

AND THE DANCERS –

They are from the Eswaralaya Kalaikoodam (School of Dance) which teaches Bharathanatyam dancing in the Kalakshetra style which is regarded as one of Asia's oldest and most respected. This School started in Sri Lanka and was established in Brisbane in 2003.

FROM THE QLD FRIENDS OF VELLORE ANNUAL MEETING

We were privileged to have Professor Shantidani Minz, who just happened to be visiting nearby, as guest speaker at the Qld Friends of Vellore annual meeting in November. Her work as a lecturer in CMC's Community Health Department takes her to remote tribal villages such as those in the Jawadhi Hills (see the article on the next page). As a recipient of a Senior Training Fellowship grant, she was experiencing remote medical care based in Kalgoorlie, W.A. Funds for this Fellowship are provided annually by Friends of Vellore in USA, UK and Australia.

The office bearers were re-elected for a further year of service.

The Treasurer, Richard Caitens, presented the financial report for 2011-12. Donations (including Person-to-Person) were \$61,766; net returns from Street Stalls, other sales and dinners were \$22,385; and bank interest was \$2,696 – a total of \$86,847. Postage, stationery and newsletter costs were \$1,998. The Australian Vellore Board received \$80,000 from Qld for forwarding to CMC Vellore.

TRIBAL PEOPLE IN THE JAWADHI HILLS

Professor Shantidani Minz, the guest speaker at our Annual Meeting in November, reminded us of the work of CMC that reaches far beyond the boundaries of Vellore city.

South of Vellore, the Jawadhi Hills rise to about 1000m, homelands for several tribal groups. In the 1970s Dr C K Job, a CMC graduate and staff member along with his wife made the arduous journey every week to visit some of the villages there.



Leprosy was a priority for CHAD in the 80s so when funding became available they developed a leprosy treatment and control program in these hill areas among about 20,000 people served by one Government Public Health Centre. When this funding ended, a monthly clinic from CHAD was continued. In 2008, with funds from a Danish organisation which had supported CHAD for some years. CHAD undertook a program for general community health work for the tribal villagers. As well as weekly mobile clinics there are now socio-economic programs involving interaction with self-help, farmers', young women's and children's groups reaching 160 villages with a total population of about 30,000.

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SOME CMC STATISTICS

Statistics for 2011-12 recently released show something of the size of this great institution we help to support. In the Main Hospitals and related centres nearly 2 million outpatients (an average of over 6000 a day) were seen and 124,000 were admitted to hospital beds.

While most, just over 48,000, came from CMC's home State Tamil Nadu, nearly 40,000 came from the other Indian States and Territories and 3860 from other countries.

To meet the daily running expenses of *AU\$287,000, 98% comes from patients' fees, 1.47% from Churches and other organisations in India and overseas and .72% from the heavily subsidised student fees.

Out of the income, *AU\$17 million provides subsidised health care and *AU\$8 million goes to educational subsidies.

(*approximate figures at the current exchange rate around Rs 50 to AU\$1)

DEATH OF ONE OF THE GREATS



The death on 5 December of a former Director, 85 year old Dr Laurence Barnabas Maduram Joseph (better known as Dr LBM) was like the turning over of a significant page of CMC's history.

After graduating in medicine at the Madras Medical College he worked at the Lutheran Mission Hospital, Renigunta A P and joined CMC Vellore in 1953, gaining a post-graduate degree in General Surgery in 1959. In 1962, in Melbourne on a Norman Fellowship, he received specialised training

in surgical oncology under two eminent Australians, Sir Edward Hughes and Edward ("Weary") Dunlop.

Back at CMC his surgical skills and sensitive concern for his patients were well known and widely appreciated. He was also an excellent teacher, passing on to his many students both the art and science of surgery.

In 1970 he was appointed Vice-Principal, Acting Medical Superintendent 1971-73 then Director from June 1974 till March 1987.

In all these positions he brought his courage, conviction, impeccable integrity and abiding faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Early in his term as Director he had to lead the institution through turbulent times when labour unrest, agitations and evidence of corruption threatened to erode CMC's reputation. His astute leadership, his principled willingness to support honesty and his courage to stand against indiscipline and violence, often at much personal cost and risk, provided the inspiration for CMC to emerge from those dark days with a renewed sense of commitment and dedication.

After his superannuation, he joined CMC Ludhiana as Professor of Surgery and was Director there from March 1993 to December 1994 then was appointed consultant to the Board of Health Services of the Church of North India for three years

I came to know him only in his retirement. He was a big built man with a big built personality so you knew immediately when he came into the room. His open friendliness and his ready humour I will never forget. He was indeed "one of the greats".

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY GOLDEN JUBILEE

Fifty years ago Occupational Therapy was seen by many in Australia as just an “optional extra”. In Brisbane many O T students, because handcrafts were part of the course and almost all students were young women, were teasingly and insultingly called Crafty Birds, not to be taken seriously by the regular health workers.

Monica Hopkins with O T patient



Yet 50 years ago CMC Vellore began its Occupational Therapy Unit seeing already then the value of this branch of the therapies. Ms Chandra Manuel was the first therapist and was joined in 1966 by Ms Monica Hopkins from UK, who worked and taught as an OT at CMC for 27 years. The late Ms Jean Bald from South Africa started the OT course in 1969.

At the Jubilee celebrations Dr Suranjan Bhattacharji, Professor of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, spoke of the beginning of OT in CMC and also of the pioneering role played by Dr Paul Brand especially in hand therapy. He spoke too of the use of low cost materials in innovative ways by early CMC Occupational Therapists.

HIGH PRAISE FOR CMC VELLORE

The 10th annual survey of India's Colleges by “India Today”, one of India's English language periodicals, listed Delhi's All India Institute of Medical Science (well funded by the Central Government) and CMC Vellore as the two top Medical Colleges. In reporting the results the magazine article continued:

“If AIIMS faces any competition, it comes from the Christian Medical College in Vellore. CMC has gained immensely from the synergy of a well-reputed hospital, established consciously away from any major city and run with tremendous commitment. Among its alumni are several public health specialists who have broken away from the traditional mould. They include the civil rights activist, Binayak Sen, who worked for years among the tribal people in Chhattisgarh, and the Magsaysay Award winner, Rojnikani Arole, who, along with his wife Mabelle, developed a comprehensive healthcare system at Jamkhed, Maharashtra.

In this mercenary age, CMC still produces medical professionals ready to offer unflinching public service to the nation.”

A LONG WAY TO GO TO BE HEALED – SUDIPTA'S STORY

Sudipta's home in West Bengal is more than 1500kms from Vellore but when their local doctor said only medical specialists could hope to deal with the serious tumour developing in the leg of this 12 year old boy, his parents decided to take him to CMC to consult the doctors there.



At CMC they were directed to the Paediatric Orthopaedic Surgery Department where it was found that the 10cm long tumour in his leg was spreading from knee to mid-leg. Bone cancers are the second most common bone malignancies in children and often develop very quickly.

That was the bad news for Sudipta and his family. The good news was that this CMC Department has for a few years been developing innovative surgery for such conditions, aided by a special microscope donated by UK Friends of Vellore, and has found this procedure to be very effective.

Sudipta was given chemotherapy before and after surgery to aid in the two months of healing time. Back home three months later, he is able to cycle 10km to school and a further 5km beyond that for coaching classes. His aim is to study and become a doctor! Many of CMC's patients treated in this way have returned to normal life and have been followed up now for at least five years.

For Sudipta's operations no charge was made for the micro-vascular surgery because the microscope had been a gift, but the rest of the surgery cost Rs 70,000 (the equivalent of seven years of his father's salary). Travel from and to West Bengal, medicines and accommodation for family members during the treatment time were additional costs. They count it well worthwhile knowing that their son is well and active again with a promising future.

2012 PAUL HARRISON AWARD

This significant award is presented to CMC alumni for “significant, steadfast and selfless service in the broad field of health, in situations of need or neglect.”

The 2012 Award was given to Dr Mary Ramasamy. A daughter of Rev A C Oommen, long time chaplain at CMC, Dr Mary inherited and developed a profound religious conviction, courageous and selfless practice of that faith in action and solicitude for those in need. On graduation in 1979 she asked to do her service commitment in a tribal health centre in the Kalrayan Hills of Tamil Nadu, a remote hilly region where Dr Paul Brand's parents spent their working lives. She was the only doctor there for those two years, providing primary health care at the clinic and in the scattered villages. She returned to CMC to gain an MD in Obstetrics and Gynaecology.

With that qualification, wherever she worked, first as a single person, then with her UK trained doctor husband, she has been involved in work with tribal and remote community people. It is said of her that “the person she is and what she does embodies the rare values of simplicity, integrity, humility and endurance undergirded by a deep, quiet and all-encompassing trust in God, values that resonate with the heritage and aspiration of CMC. She has consistently lived out these values through the 33 years since her graduation and in all the contexts and situations that life has led her to.”

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.

Centenary Building**St John's Church****CHAD****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. In recent months up to \$1500 a month has come just from these two stalls.

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).

For much of the material in these Newsletters I am again indebted to CMC's weekly "Newslink" and to Mrs Ann Witchalls' great stories about people whose lives are changed by what happens at CMC Vellore.

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 Gwenda Spencer, 22 Elgata St, The Gap 4061 (3300 1542)

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)

Publicity Officer &

Newsletter Editor: Rev Brian Lee, 19 Glencloy Street, Ferny Grove 4055 (3351 3272)