



FRIENDS OF VELLORE QUEENSLAND BRANCH NEWSLETTER MAY 2023

I hope this letter finds you all in the best of health and peace after an unprecedented past few years. We continue to have our branch meetings every three months in Nazareth Lutheran Church premises in Woolloongabba and are always looking to engage young blood to join our endeavours and ways to promote FOV Qld. We encourage anyone who is interested in our cause or wants more information about CMC and FOV Qld (or any other state branches) to get in touch with us.

We hosted the Australian Vellore Board Annual General Meeting in person in October 2022, with multiple local and interstate delegates in attendance. Numbers were limited by ongoing Covid restrictions and flood warnings on the day, but we had a full house for the meeting and fundraising dinner thereafter. Dr Mahiban Thomas, trauma surgeon from Darwin, and CMC Vellore alumnus, was our guest speaker for the fund-raising dinner; his talk was very engaging.

CMC News

Dr Vikram Mathews, consultant Haematologist, has been appointed the new Director of CMCH. He is an alumnus of CMC Vellore. We look forward to working with him to promote our mutual cause.



The most exciting news from CMC has been the inauguration of the fully functional speciality Trauma Care Facility located at the Ranipet campus. It houses numerous theatres and ICU beds. Buses run frequently between this campus and the main hospital campus for patients and staff. The campus includes on-site accommodation for staff and students. It aims to harness the most available renewable energy source that Vellore has to offer, the sun with a large solar plant, and conserve what Vellore most lacks, water, with rainwater harvesting systems and recycling plants.

It is strategically located along the highway, catering to trauma patients. Trauma is now the leading cause of death and disability in India, and Tamil Nadu is the state with the highest number of road traffic accidents.

FOV Qld and the Australia Vellore Board are pleased that we were able to contribute financially to various aspects in the establishment of this campus.

Our patrons that need mention:

The **Eagle State Junction State School** has been a FOV patron for years. Their connection to FOV Qld through Dr Felix Arden has continued throughout Principal and staff rotations. A Talent Quest Day is held once a year with a gold coin donation. The proceeds have been generously donated to the Person to Person fund in CMC Vellore, via FOV Qld. We acknowledge their ongoing support and enthusiasm in supporting us.

Dr Frank Garlick

FOV Qld was very sad to lose one of our long term and much-loved members, Dr Frank Garlick, in mid-January 2023. The Garlicks were a pivotal link between CMC Vellore and FOV Qld. Indeed, the famed, now ceased, street stalls of FOV Qld had their birth through the efforts of Dr Frank Garlick's mother; she started the stalls to raise money to sponsor the purchase of a motor vehicle for use in CMC Vellore. Please read more about Dr Garlick in this BlogSpot.

<https://waymarksonajourney.blogspot.com/2023/01/dr-frank-garlick-pilgrim-journeys-on.html>

Mrs Rachel George

FOV Qld lost another of its long-term supporters when Mrs Rachel George passed away in November 2022. She developed a love for CMC Vellore as a young girl, when her older sister went to CMC Vellore to study medicine, in the early days of the medical school. She was a member of FOV Qld from the 1970's. Although never on the committee, she attended the AGM regularly as also the Indian dinners and was always ready to help. After her retirement from teaching, she was a regular helper on the Toowong Street Stall and was always remembered for her quick calculations.

Inside CMC - one of thousands of stories:



Baby Vishal (name changed), pictured here (with permission), is the joy of his parents. The family migrated for employment from their village in Tamil Nadu to a city near Mumbai.

During the covid pandemic, baby Vishal fell sick with fever, diarrhea, and vomiting. A local clinic could not help him, so, they went to a larger hospital in Mumbai where doctors gave them shocking news – he had blood cancer.

“I was shattered, our little innocent child has cancer”, wept his father.

Mumbai's number of covid patients was rising, and they had no income. So, the family decided to travel home to Tamil Nadu for Vishal's treatment. However, with the lockdown,

there were no trains or buses.

“We did not have money for an ambulance. So, we travelled by motorbike. We didn't care if we died on the way, we wanted the best treatment for our child” said his mother holding back her tears.

The three of them set out on the long journey. At night the family slept alongside the highway. And they survived on soaked rice and salt. They were exhausted when they reached their home in Tamil Nadu but were advised to go straight to CMC Vellore.

CMC's care for Vishal: The Paediatric Oncology team was on hand to welcome Vishal. An immediate grant of Rs.1 lakh [2000 AUD\$] from [CMC's Emergency Fund](#) was given to the family so they could begin [chemotherapy](#). His treatment over the next three years will cost about ₹7 lakhs [14000 AUD\$].

The Emergency Fund has been set up to help needy and marginalised patients get treatment as quickly as possible. Many travel great distances for their loved ones to get better. They spend all their life savings, and more, on travel and accommodation leaving little for treatment. The Emergency Fund relies purely on donations from generous well-wishers. Kind friends, we invite you to help us to do far more than is possible from our own funds; help us to "Bridge the Gap". This link will take you to a donation page for the **Emergency Fund** <http://65.2.20.131/emergency-fund/>

FOV Queensland Fund Raising Indian Dinner:

We are pleased to announce our fund-raising dinner for 2023 is to be held on Sep 2 at **Living Faith Uniting Church**, 330 Pine Mountain Rd, Carina QLD 4152, arrival at 6 pm for a 6.30 pm start. Dinner, an inspiring talk, and entertainment are yours to look forward to! Tickets, priced \$60.00 for adults, \$50.00 for pensioners and \$40.00 for children under 12 years, are available by texting Vasanth on 0416224812, or emailing him on vasanthajith@hotmail.com or presidentfovq@gmail.com
We hope you can join us. Please consider giving the men and fathers in your life a unique Father's Day experience!

If you would like to contribute to the ongoing work of CMC Vellore, we have a few options:

Donate by bank transfer:

Account Name: Friends of Vellore Christian Medical College & Hospital Queensland Group Support Fund

BSB: 633 000

Account no.: 131 073 413

Reference: Surname and suburb

Please email the Treasurer at cmcvellore@optusnet.com.au so a receipt can be sent to you.

Donate by Cheque:

Cheque payable to 'Friends of Vellore Support Fund'

Post to: PO Box 374

Northgate Qld 4013

Thank you all for your time, interest, and support of all that CMC stands for.

Neeta Wilfred

Honorary Publicity Officer, FOV Qld