

## From Dr. Cahn Vasudevan

Dear Mr Jacque Vellut

It is with the greatest sadness that I read your email of the passing of Dr Clare Vellut. I come from the village of Mambakkam, 8 kms from Pollambakkam. Dr Vellut was my inspiration to study medicine myself in the late 60's. I recall vividly, as a young boy, seeing 'a white lady on a bicycle' often on the road to Pollambakkam. I was so fascinated that I wanted to know about her, to meet her, to speak with her. But I had not the courage to do so. And nobody in my village knew exactly what she did or more probably, on reflection, wished to encourage me to find out about the reason for her being there. I learnt, some years later, that she was infact a doctor helping poor people with the dreaded disease, leprosy. Such was the power of stigma.

My life long fascination, and admiration, of Dr Vellut drew me back to Pollambakkam Hospital & Anandapuram many, many times over the ensuing years. I have since not only had the pleasure, of my younger day's dreams, of meeting her, speaking with her and knowing her but also the immense privilege and honour of becoming one of her friends in later years. Dr Claire's home was always 'open' and had a steady stream of people dropping by - villagers, visitors, clergy, patients, nurses, doctors, officials & passersby !

Mr Vedadri and I, and also the old residents & staff of Anandapuram, have never, nor will we ever, tire of speaking & remembering about the great Doctor 'Amma' ('mother') ! , I am in the UK at the moment and it was only last month when I met Mr Vedadri at his Pollambakkam home that he gave me your address, so I could arrange a date and time with you, for me to travel to Brussels in October, to visit Dr Claire ! This was not meant to be and the loss is all mine...

A kindly soul & a leading light has gently gone but the brightness of her legend remains to guide people on. My thoughts and prayers, and of all those of my friends who knew Dr Claire, will be with her, your goodself, all members of your family and the congregation of dear friends at 10.30hrs on Thursday 26th September, 2013.

With kindest regards and most sincere condolences to you and all members of Dr Clare Vellut's family.

Cahn Vasudevan (Dr)