



# SACIM News

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Society for Aid to Children Inoperable in Mauritius

SACIM(Australia) Inc.

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## President's Message



### Message from the president.

Dear members and supporters of SACIM. It is with great pleasure that we bring to you our first newsletter for 2014. This year we will have to

have some debates regarding the future direction of SACIM. We will need to look at how best we can serve the unfortunate sick children of Mauritius and we will also need to look at ways that we can better invest our funds to improve returns on our investment. As you are all aware with interest rates being at its lowest for decades, the conventional fixed term bank deposit may no longer be the best method of investing our funds.

Over the next few months the committee will be debating our future direction with any proposal to be put to our Annual General Meeting, which will be held in August, for discussion and approval. I sincerely hope to see as many financial members as possible attending our AGM. It is an open forum where you can ask questions and where important decisions are made. So, please try your best to attend. In due course our members will be advised of the date, time and venue of the AGM.

### MEDICAL:-

For a few months now Dr Balakumar, Dr Rajkomar and a team from the Royal Children Hospital have been debating on the merits or otherwise of operating on Victoria Mercier Rouillon, a 15 year old girl who suffers from dorso lumbar scoliosis. Three weeks ago we have been advised that surgical intervention will go ahead. We are awaiting further details, timeline and costs, from the doctors and details about formalities from SACIM Mauritius. We are hoping to see this young girl in Melbourne in June

or July.

We are also in negotiation with SACIM Mauritius regarding the funding of some five children who will be sent to India for cochlear implant. At this stage the committee has agreed to fund some or all the cases depending on costs. We are awaiting more details from SACIM Mauritius.

We are also in talks with our counterparts in Perth who may need some financial assistance from us.

### FUND RAISING:

Our annual dinner dance will be held at the Malvern Town Hall on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> July. Once again we will be entertained by Ben Sandapa and his group and we will be spoiled with delicious Mauritian food from Jacques La Catering. As the number of tickets will be limited to 300 we would like you to book as early as possible to avoid disappointment.

Very soon we will be sending out raffle books to our members and supporters. We need to sell the 5,000 tickets that will be on sale. Please try your very best to sell as many tickets as you possibly can. We will have some fantastic prizes on offer but above all people will buy tickets because they want to help make a difference in the lives of unfortunate sick children.

Again I would like to acknowledge the contribution made by our sponsors. For quite a few years now Air Mauritius has been our major sponsor. We need to support them so that they can continue to sponsor our major raffles. So please if you are planning a trip overseas why not check with Air Mauritius first. You can also register on line to subscribe to their frequent flyer programme, Kestrelflyer, and benefit from the enormous privileges of being a member.

Seapoint Bungalows and Mrs Akaloo have also been one of our major sponsors for many years now. They have been offering free accommodation at their luxurious bungalows in Pointe Aux Piments. . . . /4

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SACIM's dinner dance flier

Although we try our best to publish two newsletters every year, we have up to date websites and a facebook page, nevertheless some people are not well informed about the on-going good work of SACIM in Australia.

In the past we have had a regular supply of children coming from Mauritius through the SACIM organisation in Mauritius. Of late, with advancement in health science and improved health service delivery in Mauritius, and with other options such as India being cheaper than Australia, we have had difficulty to get children through this channel.

We are in a changing world and as such SACIM is no exception. Twelve years ago, Professor Paddy Dewan, a urology specialist expressed the desire to travel to Mauritius in order, not only, to operate on the children but also to set up and train doctors and others associated in this field. Obviously this attempt was to benefit SACIM financially, but at the same time more children would be able to benefit from this project. Financially this project was not easy to start with.

SACIM Australia eventually provided a sum of money for suture materials and a diathermic machine. Every year SACIM Australia make it a point to invite Paddy Dewan to its annual fund raising dinner dance, so that he is able to tell the Mauritian community of the good work that he does in Mauritius. On this occasion Paddy is presented with a substantial donation in support of his work with the Mauritian children.

On his many visits over the last 11 years Paddy has performed surgical operations on nearly 800 children in Mauritius and more importantly he has established training for a team of local specialists to take over from him and continue his work in the future.

Recently Dr Paulo Selber, a specialist in the orthopaedic field from the Royal Children Hospital has expressed the desire to go to Mauritius in order to share his knowledge and procedures with his counter parts in Mauritius, and if possible to operate on more difficult cases there.

At its meeting held on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> March, the committee of SACIM, after deliberating on a motion presented to it agreed to give full moral

support to Dr Selber and support his endeavours for the benefit of Mauritian children.

***Fritz Herry***

### **Gen X, Gen Y and SACIM**

It is easy to assume that the younger generations do not want to get involved with organisations such as SACIM. But for those of us who have grown up with it, or are connected with it through our culture, friends or family, we cannot deny how important SACIM's work is in helping children or that supporting SACIM's cause is a necessary part of being active in a community.

SACIM can easily be perceived as something for our parents to look after since for most of us growing up, that has always been the case. However, to reach a younger generation and get them involved, a few changes to the already established fundraising techniques could be made. It would be important to look at what kind of events interest young people, from music to attire! One thing that doesn't have to change at all is the delicious Mauritian and Rodriguan food – especially for those who have moved out of the family home, the promise of a good “rougaille” or “mine frire” is very enticing!

SACIM could also look at mirroring what some of the more modern charity organisations are doing to raise money (such as fun themed nights, morning teas, movie nights or even fun runs!), and also look at boosting their social media presence to increase awareness in the community.

Encouraging the younger members to bring along new friends to events such as Dinner Dances would be the best way to start the ball rolling. Focusing on making the events fun for both young as well as the not so young (and anyone in between!), would be a great first step.

***By Sophie Rochecouste, whose grandfather was a co-founder of SACIM and father was president for many years.***

### Extract from the report of Professor Dewan's latest visit to Mauritius

During the 15<sup>th</sup> visit for the Kind Cuts for Kids program in Mauritius, a project that started in 2001, 160 children were reviewed, 39 had surgery under 40 anaesthetics. This brings the number of clinical episodes in the 14 years to 2479 and the number of surgical treatment events to 799.



A significant difference to previous Kind cuts for Kids visits was the number of surgeries and consultations that were conducted by the Mauritian Surgeon and the 2<sup>nd</sup> member of the visiting team, Dr John Lazarus, a Paediatric Urologist from the Red Cross Children's Hospital in Cape Town. Of the 61 operations, for 22, Professor Dewan was the primary surgeon, Dr Teeroovengadam was the primary surgeon for 24 of the procedures and the remaining 15, Dr Lazarus was the principle surgeon; several operations involved Dr Lazarus assisting Dr Teeoengardum, while Professor Dewan attended to other aspects of the visit.

Included in the teaching were lectures given on three different occasions;

Common Paediatric Urology – Professor John Lazarus

Lessons from Mauritius – perineal body reconstruction – Professor Paddy Dewan.

Legal argument and Medical Ethics – Professor Dewan

Mauritian Paediatric Surgery 2001 to 2013 – Professor Paddy Dewan

Each of the lectures was well attended, with well over 250 people being present between each of the three occasions at which the lectures were given. The newly developed continuing medical education program has obviously improved the participation and subsequent patient benefits of

the education sessions. However, the majority of the teaching was during the operations, clinics and ward rounds.

As usual, the achievements for the individual patients are not insignificant, but the most important outcome for this visit was the announcement of the undertaking of the reconstruction of a ward at the Neru Hospital for the accommodation of the Paediatric Surgical Unit.

### Future Direction

Mauritius is now poised to have a sustainable world class Paediatric Surgical service, the future of which depends on developing the infrastructure, supporting of the staff now in place, and the promotion of the specialisation of Paediatrics,

Radiology and Anaesthesia. Service to the community will require three surgeons, but in order for the standard of care for complex cases to be maintained, the surgeons should be involved in outreach to communities with large populations, which could come about by the Mauritian surgeons being enabled (and expected) to assist the work of Kind cuts for Kids.

It is essential that any manpower decisions for Paediatric Surgery are considered in light of that which is already in place, and itinerant, *ad hoc* arrangements by private hospitals in Mauritius and with Surgeons from multiple countries, without due consideration to longer term goals, will put achievements thus far obtained at risk. And, it is vital that there is a designated hospital, ward and support for a Paediatric Surgery Unit that is then underpinned by collaborative, thoughtful planning into the future.



From page 1/ . . . Again, if you are planning a holiday in Mauritius why not check their very competitive rates. CDC Homes from Keilor joined us as a sponsor last year and again this year will donate the second prize of our raffle, a hotel voucher valued at \$800. If you are thinking of building, no matter where, it would pay you to seek some advice from Sam, Charlie and the team at CDC homes.

Jacqueline Devienne and Chefs Toolbox have also been outstanding supporters of ours. They have organised fund raising initiatives on our behalf and like previous years they will donate something of value to our raffle. This year we will receive a block of knives with five knives that will be the third prize of the raffle.

Just last week La Caze Mama has joined us and the owner Mr Giddish Ramjuttun would like to build a strong relationship with us by becoming a sponsor. They will donate a hamper that will be the fourth prize of the raffle.

With his \$200 gift voucher for fifth prize, we welcome onboard Clency Coutet. We may have more than the official five prizes or more door prizes. Richard Lemiere, another committee member has, as in previous years donated some garden tools. Thanks Richard.

**FINALLY:**

Please keep in touch with us by visiting our website or by joining us on facebook. We hope to see as many of you as possible at our dinner dance and at our AGM.

Until next time, all the very best to you and your loved ones. Keep safe and well.

**SACIM COMMITTEE 2013 - 2014**

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Guy Cyril Tuyau (0414 806 073)

**Vice President**

Gilbert Clark (0414 935 454)

**Ass Secretary & membership Co-ordinator**

Chantal Felix (0425 781 030)

**Web Co-ordinator**

Sophie Rochecouste

**Secretary**

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**Members:-**

Henrico Gontran

May Herry

Fritz Herry

Richard Le Miere

**Medical Advisors:**

Dr Amrish Rajkomar

Dr Padma Rao

Mr Devan Gaya

Prof Paddy Dewan

*Please send articles and/or photographs you would like included in the next issue of the SACIM (Aust) Inc. Newsletter. Mail your contribution to SACIM (Aust) Inc. at the address on the back page or email to: [info@sacim.org.au](mailto:info@sacim.org.au) Thanks you.*



**SACIM (Aust) Inc.**

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**About SACIM (Australia) Inc.** SACIM (Aust) Inc. is a volunteer charitable organization that started in Australia in 1973 to provide critical operations in Australian Hospitals to children inoperable in Mauritius. The organization is affiliated to SACIM in Mauritius who identifies the cases and prepares the children to be sent to several countries. In Australia the role of SACIM is to establish contact with hospitals and professional medical personnel, welcome the children, provide foster parenting during their stays, admit them to hospital, visit and comfort them during their stressful time here and care for them until they can go back home. This assistance is all provided by volunteers.

Some of the medical and professional services are voluntarily provided but there are some costs that cannot be waived. Depending on the case, the costs can vary between \$10,000 and \$50,000. Those costs are paid by funds raised by SACIM supporters throughout Australia. Over the past 40 years SACIM has cared for 287 children from Mauritius in Australia.

More recently SACIM in Australia has been able to sponsor Specialist Doctors from Australia to travel to Mauritius to perform operations locally there; an effective service delivery to more children when this has been appropriate.

To find more about SACIM, to join the organization or to become a volunteer, please call the Secretary on **03-9561-1953** or discuss with any Committee Member. A membership application form is included at the bottom of this page.

*Your donation is welcome, please use the form at the bottom of this page . Thank you.*



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SACIM Australia is the proud recipient of the 2005 Victoria Award for excellence in Multicultural Affairs.

**SOCIETY FOR AID TO CHILDREN INOPERABLE IN MAURITIUS - Membership Application & Donation Form**

I /We would like to renew my/our membership, or apply to become a member(s) of SACIM (Aust) Inc., ABN 23 058 026 816,  
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Signature (2) \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership runs from 1<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> June financial year.**

**Please send completed form to: The SACIM Secretary, 222 Brandon Park Drive, Wheelers Hill, VIC 3150.**

*A receipt will be sent for all membership fees and donations. Thank You.*