

Citation at the Presentation of Paul Harrison Award 1983

Dr. Victoria graduated from C.M.C. in the year 1959 and worked for about 5 years in India Evangelical Lutheran Church Hospital in Ambur from where she proceeded to the U.S.A. She had her postgraduate training in U.S.A. and England and worked as a Paediatrician in New York where her husband was also employed in the New York University. Though they were permanent residents of U.S.A. they had a strong desire to serve the rural India and after six years serving in the U.S.A. in 1970 the family with two children returned to India though they did not have any specific offer of appointment.

In 1971 they started work in the rural dispensary I.E.L.C. Malappuram in an old building with no basic amenities but with the support of three non medical aids. The economically backward and orthodox muslim community was a challenging area to work. The community oriented programme started under the supervision of her husband, a trained sociologist and medical administrator and the hard work put up by Victoria among the women and children had steady impact in the life of the people and in the growth of the Hospital. The community development programme Tbc and Leprosy clinics, teaching programme of Health Visitors and Village midwives have all been appreciated by the public, the government and many international agencies and the work has been assessed and praised several times by the C.M.A. I. The hospital which was started with two maternity beds had developed into 60 bedded hospital with 50 staff members including six doctors. The work has spread to 10 villages covering 30,000 population and the hospital has by now most of the basic amenities and specialities like Gynaecology, Surgery, Paediatrics, Medicine etc.

The dedicated work carried on with insight into the need of the area, the team work, the unostentatious living of the family, the selfless care given to the poor and needy and the impact of her services to the community have made the C.M.C. to recognise her work and the coveted Paul Harrison Prize of 1983 is awarded to Dr. V. Mathews.

This award has been given in the past to the following:

1. Dr. R.S. Arole
2. Dr. Ramabai Basu, Rao
3. Dr. P.P. George
4. Dr. K.V. Kurien
5. Dr. Colbert Silvera
6. Dr. D.W. Matagaonker
7. Dr. Rabindranath Baidya
8. Dr. and Dr.(Mrs.) A.C. Salins