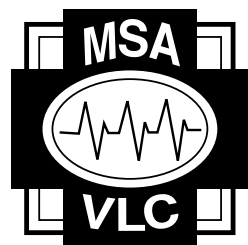


VIETNAM LAOS CAMBODIA



MEDICAL & SCIENTIFIC AID NEWS BULLETIN

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VIETNAM WOMEN'S UNION

During their recent visit to south east Asia, Peter and Mary Lidgard made the opportunity to visit the Vietnam Women's Union in Hanoi.

The Vietnam Women's Union is a formidable force in Vietnamese political life. With a membership of 15 million, 70% of whom live in rural areas, the union is perfectly placed to ensure that women's voices are heard in the highest echelons of the Vietnamese Government.

In March 2012 the union held an international conference at which a five year plan was introduced which included the following main tasks.

- To provide communication, education and mobilization of women to implement laws and policies, to uphold fine virtues and to enhance their capacity and awareness.
- To assist women in nurturing happy and sustainable families.
- To assist women in economic development.
- Promoting gender equality.
- Building a stronger VWU organisation.
- To strengthen international relations and cooperation.

Our contacts with the VWU were forged many years ago by the then Secretary and now Joint President Dr. Madeleine Sharp Who recognised the roll that women play in the provision of primary care.

Madeleine has been concerned for



some while about the lack of information available to women in rural areas on the subject of self awareness and self examination for the early signs of Breast Cancer.

Following a trustees meeting we contacted to VWU seeking their views on the practicalities of an education programme to reach out to women in the more remote areas of Vietnam.

In a very positive reply the VWU welcomed our interest in a topic they had identified as being of high importance. They produced a funding proposal for a project to reach out through their network to Vietnamese women, particularly those in rural villages. Unfortunately the funding requirements were way above our capabilities and we were faced with the difficult situation of having

identified a need and then not being able to do anything about it.

Our disappointment turned to joy when, during Peter and Mary's visit, they were told that the project had been taken on by a Japanese society called People's Hope Japan and supported by the Yokogawa Corporation of Japan.

The project will first be implemented in five Northern Provinces with the highest rates of Breast Cancer. The programme is to run over a three year period and aims to reduce the mortality and morbidity of Breast Cancer among women aged 30 to 70.

To accomplish this goal, the project will provide necessary information to raise awareness of breast cancer, and women will be taught and guided how to perform breast self-examination correctly. One hundred VWU staff at district level, in the selected provinces, will be taught how to do breast examinations, and they will then be able to train others in turn. Women who find abnormal lumps in their breasts will be referred to a hospital for appropriate treatment and followed up. Monthly training and discussions will be held in the community, on breast cancer, breast cancer awareness, and breast self-examination.

It is good to see that the concerns raised by Madeleine are being approached in such a positive manner.

*Mary Lidgard
Assistant Hon Secretary*

Dear President Obama

My name is Tran Hoan. I am 23 years old and was born in Duc Linh District, Binh Thuan Province, Viet Nam with no legs and without a left hand. I am second generation victim of Agent Orange. My parents were exposed to this deadly chemical, left over from the Vietnam War, while farming our land. Agent Orange has not only killed people living during the war, but has been killing several generations of their children, among whom I am one. It damages my country and other nations beyond imagination. I am writing to ask for your help in providing assistance to the more than 3 million victims of Agent Orange like me in Vietnam and for the children of U.S. veterans suffering from Agent Orange in the U.S.

I have read your letter to your beloved daughters, in which you put it like this: "These are the things I want for you – to grow up in a world with no limits on your dreams and no achievements beyond your reach, and to grow into compassionate, committed women who will help build that world. And I want every child to have the same chances to learn and dream and grow and thrive that you girls have. That's why I've taken our family on this great adventure". I was deeply moved by the love you have for your daughters and the dreams you have for children of other countries, and I believe that you could have included children in Vietnam in your words. I dream that you were including innocent children slowly killed by dioxin, and their suffering. I dream you had in mind what to do to help



every child to have the same chances to learn and to dream and grow and thrive like your daughters.

A few words about myself. When I was born, my parents were consumed with grief when they saw me. When I was in junior high school, I studied hard to become a doctor to help people in my hometown because they were so poor. But this dream was taken away from me. When I entered college, I was advised not to study medicine because I had no legs and only one hand. I was told not to dream about raising a family for fear that my children would be born deformed like me or even worse. From my personal story – just one among three million victims of Agent Orange – you may guess how our parents suffer.

You are a father of two beautiful daughters, and you know how parents love their children. U.S. Vietnam veterans, sick from Agent Orange, have gotten some compensation for their illnesses, but their children have not. How do their children live a decent life the way your daughters do?

In the case of my poor country,

Vietnamese veterans of the U.S. war and their children and grandchildren have not received any justice from the U.S. courts: they refused to hear our case against the U.S. chemical companies. I know because I was one of the plaintiffs, representing millions of Agent Orange victims, in a lawsuit against 37 U.S. chemical manufacturers in U.S. Federal Court, the two richest of which are Dow and Monsanto.

This denial of justice may have rendered void your dream for every child to have the same chances to learn and dream and grow and thrive. When I visited U.S. cities last October, I found the American people were deeply concerned about the problem of Agent Orange. Yet we are now faced with the lack of many things – sufficient medical care, vocational and physical rehabilitation, long term care, home care. The land like my family's, which contains dioxin in the soil, has yet to be cleaned up.

I understand that you are very busy with the urgent matters that face your country. I hope that you will consider the damage that the poison Agent Orange does to the lives of its victims with as much urgency because every life is important to the future of humanity. I hope that you, a symbol of hope not only for the United States, but also for the world, a father who loves his children dearly, and a man of humanity, will spare a little time to resolve this forgotten problem.

Thank you!

Tran Thi Hoan

March 19, 2009

Ho Chi Minh City

**MEDICAL AND SCIENTIFIC AID
to
VIETNAM, LAOS AND CAMBODIA**

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

6-30pm Tuesday June 11th 2013

at the

VIETNAMESE EMBASSY

12 Victoria Road

London W8 5RD

Everyone welcome

Agenda and Annual Report will be published online,
paper copies will be available at the meeting

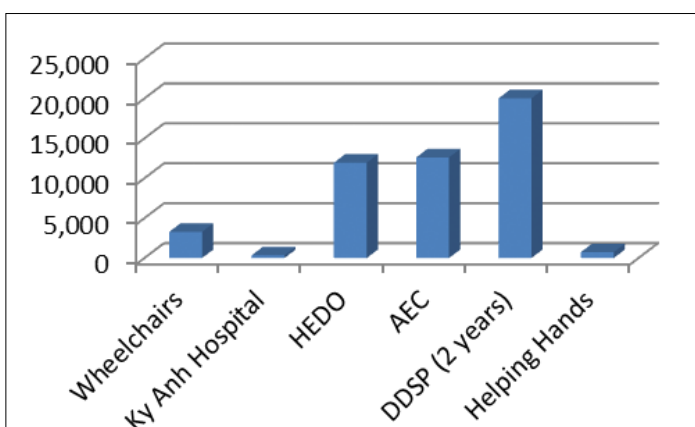
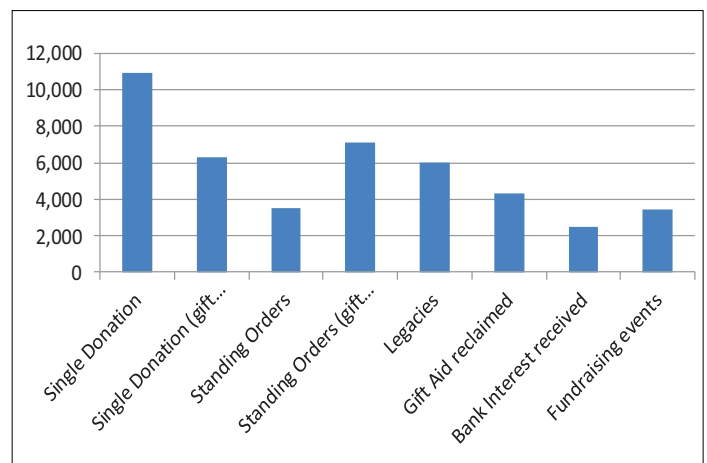
Peter Lidgard, Honorary Secretary

thelidgards@hotmail.co.uk

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW OF 2012

Where our funds came from

Single donations	10,903
Single donations (gift aided)	6,324
Standing orders	3,536
Standing orders (gift aided)	7,102
Legacies	6,000
Gift Aid reclaimed	4,349
Interest received	2,481
Fundraising events	3,470
Total income	44,165



Where the money was spent

Wheelchairs for AO victims	3,277
Ky Anh Hospital	330
HEDO	11,936
AEC	12,605
DDSP	20,003
Helping Hands	728
Total Grants	48,582

ALL EARS CAMBODIA AUDIOLOGY CLINIC-SIEM REAP

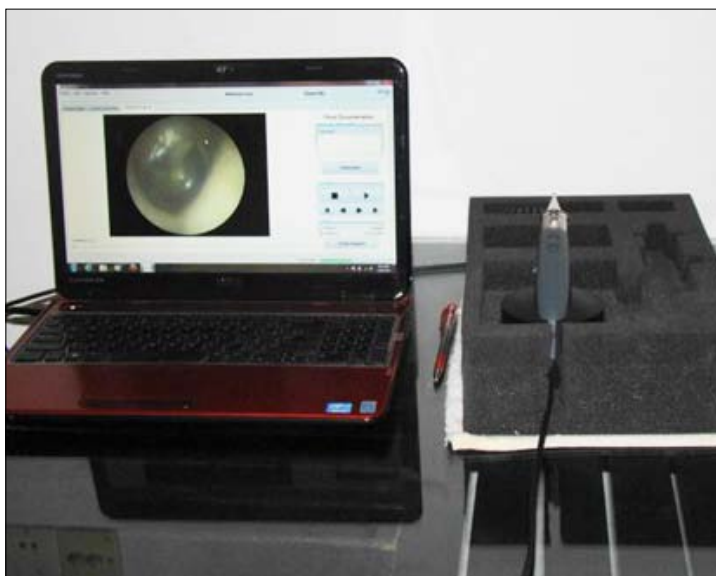
While we were in Cambodia in February we took a tuk-tuk to visit the Audiology Clinic in Siem Reap, run by All Ears Cambodia. We arrived at the clinic about 9 o'clock and were met by the two Audiologists who run it, Pao Nara (Lo) and Dy Sopheak. They apologised that the clinic had not had electricity since 5 o'clock that morning. Despite our early arrival the clinic was already very hot and there were half a dozen patients waiting.

Sopheak and Lo explained to us that they were both trained audiologists but that Sopheak did most of the primary health care and Lo made the ear moulds and did fittings and hearing tests. They could, however, swap roles if necessary. They told us about their work. Last week two students from the Phnom Penh Clinic had been with them for training. They had a patient list of 2,909 since they had opened, over two years ago. Patients came to them from Siem Reap Province and the five provinces around, some travelling up to 100 kilometres for treatment, and paying up to \$15 USD for their travel. However, treatment at the clinic was free. Some of the patients walked in, some were returns and some were new



referrals from the hospital and NGO's.

As well as primary health care, treatment and education, they have



removed a variety of objects from ears including cockroaches, flies, ants, caterpillars, seeds, beans and rice!

Patients are all given an appointment card with their clinic

number on, and a good filing system was in operation. Since the last visit by Trustees in 2011, MSAVLC had purchased three pieces of equipment for the clinic, these were checked and all were of good quality and had been well used. The Binocular Head Mounted Light was made in the U.K. and they told us it was the best available. It is operated by rechargeable batteries and we were able to see it in use.

However, although the Xian Video Otoscope was working correctly, the lap top computer that was needed with it only functioned intermittently. They thought it was due to software problems. (The computer has since been replaced). They were pleased with the Japanese Ontology Microscope and it was well used, but unfortunately, they were unable to use it that day, due to the power cut. We found out later that this was due to an accident on the main road where a lorry had knocked down the power line and most of Siem Reap itself was without electricity for several days!

We saw three patients being treated. We were very impressed by the clinic and the professionalism and kindness of the two clinicians.

*Mary Lidgard
Trustee*

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