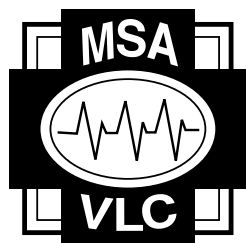


VIETNAM LAOS CAMBODIA



MEDICAL & SCIENTIFIC AID NEWS BULLETIN

www.msavlc.co.uk

No. 171 – May 2012

50p

THANH XUAN PEACE VILLAGE

Thanh Xuan Peace Village is not a village as we normally understand the term. It is a group of ugly, grey, concrete buildings which surround a children's playground situated in the outskirts of Hanoi.

The village was built in 1991 with the help of a German charity and its purpose was to "Relieve the pain and sorrow of the victims of war". Between 1991 and 2000 their main source of funding had been from national and international donors, and MSAVLC supplied them with much-needed medical equipment. Since 2000 the Vietnamese government has stepped in to help fund the village, providing them with about 200 million dong (about £6,000) per year. It appears insufficient for all of their needs. There are 130 children based in the village at present and most of them are resident there, except for about 20 children who live nearby and travel daily.

The children's ages range between two and eighteen and all have physical or learning difficulties, the majority due to the effects of dioxin poisoning.

There are a number of treatment rooms on the ground floor. The rooms and equipment are owned by the Peace Village and they are used by the children for physiotherapy and acupuncture in the mornings. They are



A young resident at the Peace Village

also used by local adults in the afternoons, and this is a small but vital source of funding for the village.

The main school building is in quite a dilapidated condition. The corridors are cold and damp, the concrete walls are crumbling and have obviously not been painted for years.

In each of the classrooms are youngsters of a variety of ages and abilities. There are a few pieces of educational play equipment but not

enough to go round, a few posters and some children's drawings on the tired and peeling walls, chairs and tables and a few half-empty cupboards. It is a depressing environment and yet the children are being well cared for by dedicated staff. Obviously, scarce resources are spent on the children, not on the buildings.

We were told during our visit, last year, that the status of the village had been upgraded to that of a Hospital for Rehabilitation. Unfortunately the increased responsibilities that have come as a consequence of this new status have not attracted a commensurate increase in funding so our help is needed even more.



*Sheila Lacy
Trustee*

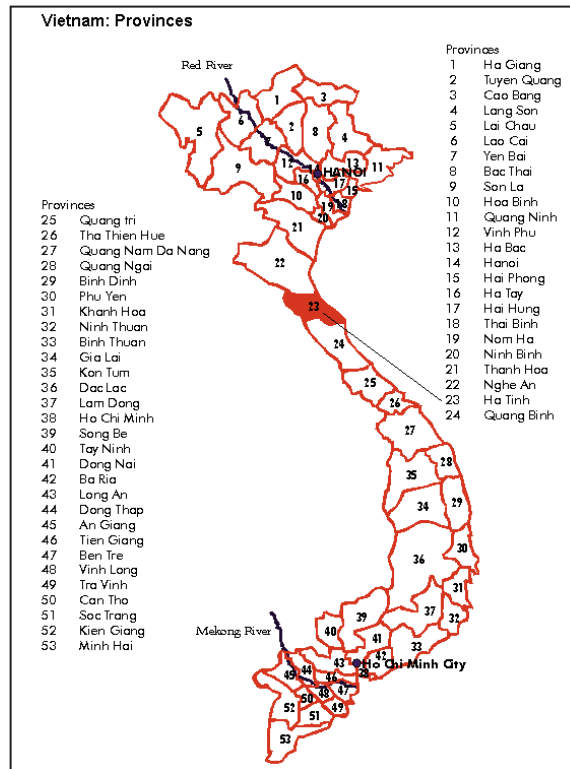
HA TINH GENERAL HOSPITAL

Ha Tinh General Hospital serves the city of Ha Tinh and is the provincial referral hospital for Ha Tinh Province.

Ha Tinh province is located in the northern part of central Vietnam, about 340 km south of Hanoi.

Hà Tĩnh is among the poorest provinces of Vietnam with 2008 GDP 420 USD/person/year. The poverty can be attributed to the harsh natural conditions with severe coldness in winter and extreme heat in summer, floods and storms every autumn, unfavourable soil conditions and limited natural resources.

Agriculture, forestry and fishery takes up 35.5 percent of total GDP and the province's



dismay of former nurse and Assistant Secretary, Mary Lidgard.

In discussions with the Director and his senior staff members we were told of the need to upgrade their audiology diagnostic equipment. We also mentioned the need for further Light Therapy units in the special Baby Care unit for the treatment of jaundiced babies.

The trustees have agreed to the funding of these items of equipment and we hope to have a report on their use from the students who will travel to Vietnam to do their electives.

Our relationship with Ha Tinh shows, once again, the value of the assistance we are able to provide coupled with the



GDP accounts for 0.7 percent of Vietnam's GDP.

A sign of the province's economic growth is the investment being made in new buildings for the hospital. The drab concrete blocks of the original hospital are being replaced by modern buildings with tiled floors and walls and much more light.

In recent years we have provided much needed equipment into the hospital and provided medical books for the new Hospital Library.

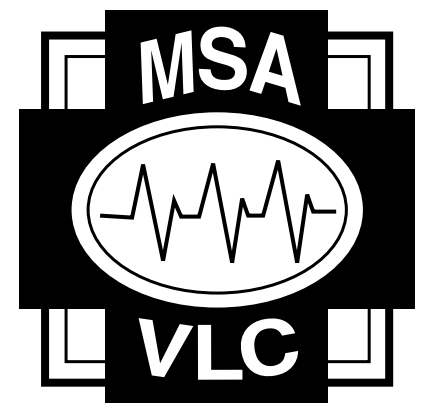
The provision of incubators and a respirator for the paediatric

department has meant that many babies with intensive care requirements have received a better start to life. On our visit to the hospital in March 2011 we saw the equipment in use, invariably with two infants per incubator.

On that visit we were also able to see the value of the ophthalmic diagnostic and surgical equipment in use in the new hospital buildings.

We were offered the opportunity to "robe up" and witness an eye operation in the theatre. The offer was respectfully declined, much to the

investment in infrastructure by the provincial and national governments.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

6pm Tuesday July 10th. 2012

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

MEDICAL ELECTIVES

Over many years we have encouraged Medical Students to choose to do their electives in hospitals in Vietnam.

Many of the students have sent us reports for insertion in our bulletins and all have made compelling reading giving an insight into the day to day running of the medical service.

Later this year a group of students from the Sheffield University Post Graduate Medical School will be spending time in Ha Noi and Ha Tinh.

We are grateful for the assistance of the Ambassador and his staff at the Embassy here in

London and to our friends at PACCOM and Ha Tinh General Hospital for their help in Vietnam. Without that help it would be very difficult for the students to know who to contact to arrange their electives.

Their experiences in Vietnam will be very different from the work they have been involved with in their placement hospitals in South Yorkshire and we are sure that there will be mutual benefits for both them and their hosts.

We wish them all well and look forward to being able to publish their reports of their visit.

*Dr Madeleine Sharp
Joint President*

HEDO VISIT TO COVENTRY

During his recent visit to the UK Professor Trinh Noc Trinh, Director of the Highland Education Development Organisation, paid a visit to Coventry to see MSAVLC Joint President, Dr. Madeleine Sharp.

Professor Trinh brought with him the report of the latest Traditional Midwife Training Project and copies of an article from Vietnam News outlining the support given by MSAVLC, to the ethnic minority peoples of the northern mountainous provinces of Vietnam.

The article will be reproduced in the next issue of the bulletin.

ELECTRONIC MAIL

With ever increasing postage costs we now find that we are spending in excess of £1,200 in postage each year just to send out this bulletin.

I am sure you will agree that the money could be better spent supporting projects in South East Asia.

If you have an E-mail address you can do your bit to help cut costs and increase grants by opting to receive your copy of the Bulletin electronically.

Please contact the editor at h.p.lacy@gmail.com if you would like to help.

CAMBODIA

During his recent visit, to S.E.Asia, trustee Brian Stenson took time out to do some project visits on behalf of MSAVLC.

Whilst sitting in on a committee meeting, at Helping Hands-Cambodia, Brian was able to identify the key issue of initial screening and treatment at the Village Health Centre. It is clear to Brian that a higher standard of training of the village health workers would be physically and economically beneficial.

Whilst at the Prasat Char village school Brian saw the new long breakfast table in use, a marked improvement to the previous arrangements.

It is some years since Brian last

visited Prasat Char and he commented on the obvious signs of the improved health of the children attending the school. Their future prospects have also been improved by the standard of English spoken by the older children, a testament to the vision and application of the founder of Helping Hands, Deborah Groves, and her local staff in Cambodia..

Brian was also able to meet up with Phen Samnang, the Director of DDSP. For a few years now we have been supporting DDSP's Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Rehabilitation Programme in and around Pursat.

Samnang told Brian of their plans for a Handicraft centre where disabled people could be taught skills which they could use to bring them an

income.

Brian also met up with Somsith, from Pakse in Laos. They met in Bangkok where Somsith was leading a delegation of Lao physiotherapists on a three week skills update course.

They were able to discuss the stalled Audiology project that MSAVLC sponsored in Pakse.

Whilst the need for audiology work in Laos is quite evident our ability to provide support from a distance has proven to be very difficult, if not impossible, in the past. The Trustees will need to look long and hard at the way any future work can be administered if the project were to be resumed.



Breakfast March 2009



Breakfast March 2012

Dr. Nguyen Dinh Lan



We were saddened to hear, in March, of the death of our old friend Dr. Nguyen Dinh Lan.

As a former Director of the British Friendship Hospital in Ky Anh Dr Lan's relationship with MSAVLC goes back decades. His tireless work with Joan McMichael, Ted Shellard and Madeleine Sharp made him as much a part of MSAVLC as any of the trustees and supporters back in the UK. For those of us who have known him for a relatively short time his presence has been synonymous with Vietnam and Ky Anh.

Following his retirement Dr. Lan maintained close links with the hospital he had helped develop. He acted as MSAVLC's liaison and translator enabling us to communicate more effectively with the hospital's administrators.

The Ky Anh District has many things to thank Dr. Lan for apart from his work at the hospital. It

was through Dr. Lan that we came to hear of the Ky Anh Blind Association and their work with the blind and partially sighted people of the district. Dr. Lan was also instrumental in the setting up of the Ky Anh Association for the Elderly, an organisation which promotes health awareness amongst the elderly population. Thanks to Dr. Lan both associations have benefitted from the support of MSAVLC.

It will be strange to visit Ky Anh in the future and not to be greeted on the outskirts of the town by Dr. Lan's beaming and infectious smile. Our heartfelt condolences go out to everyone touched by the presence of Lan, especially to his family, friends and colleagues in the Ky Anh District.

The trustees of the charity have agreed to endow a bed at the British Friendship Hospital as a lasting tribute to the work of Dr. Lan.



Dr. Lan with Dr. Madeleine Sharp by the tree they, together with Professor Ted Shellard, planted in the grounds of the British Friendship Hospital in Ky Anh.

The tree symbolises the strength of the bond between MSAVLC and the hospital in Ky Anh.

PROJECTS SUPPORTED DURING 2011

<p>Ky Anh General Hospital (British Friendship Hospital) <i>Sponsorship of three beds in the names of Mr G Hardy, Professor Ted Shellard and Dr. Lan</i></p> <p><i>Joan McMichael Prize (two years)</i></p>	<p>£3,000.00</p> <p>£400.00</p>
<p>New Hope Children's Home <i>First Aid Training and supplies</i></p>	<p>£2,546</p>
<p>Ky Anh Elderly Association <i>Health Education</i></p>	<p>£2,305.00</p>
<p>Helping Hands, Cambodia <i>Breakfast Hygiene and Healthcare Projects (2011 & 2012)</i></p>	<p>£12,716.00</p>
<p>Highland Education Development Organisation <i>Midwife Training</i></p>	<p>£11,890.00</p>
<p>Ha Tinh General Hospital <i>Various Audiology Equipment</i></p>	<p>£27,848.00</p>



WHY WE CARE

A young victim of Agent Orange, Hoa Binh Peace Village, Hanoi

Published by:
Medical & Scientific Aid for Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia,
Anchor Cottage, 3 Horsefair Street, Charlton Kings
Cheltenham GL53 8JF
 Registered Charity No. 252906

**VIETNAM, LAOS & CAMBODIA MEDICAL &
 SCIENTIFIC AID NEWS BULLETIN**

Editor: Peter Lacy
404 Tile Hill lane, Coventry, CV4 9DJ
Telephone: 024 7646 2259
Email: h.p.lacy@gmail.com