

60th ANNIVERSARY OF THE AGENT ORANGE DISASTER

August 10th 2021 marked the 60th anniversary of the beginning of the Agent Orange disaster in Vietnam. Noting the occasion, the Trustees of MSAVLC were honoured to receive a letter of gratitude from Ambassador Nguyen Phuong Nga, President of the Vietnam Union of Friendship Organizations (VUFO) and Permanent Representative of Vietnam to the United Nations.

Coincidentally, we have also recently received a large number of photographs from VAVA, the Vietnam Association for Victims of Agent Orange, which show some of

the grateful recipients of the 500 wheelchairs sent to Vietnam this summer by MSAVLC.

Both the text of the President of VUFO's letter, and the names and photographs of some of the victims, are published below;

THE VIETNAM UNION OF FRIENDSHIP ORGANIZATIONS

Ha Noi August 10th 2021

**To: Medical and Scientific Aid for
Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia**

Dear friends,

*Warmest greetings from
Ha Noi!*

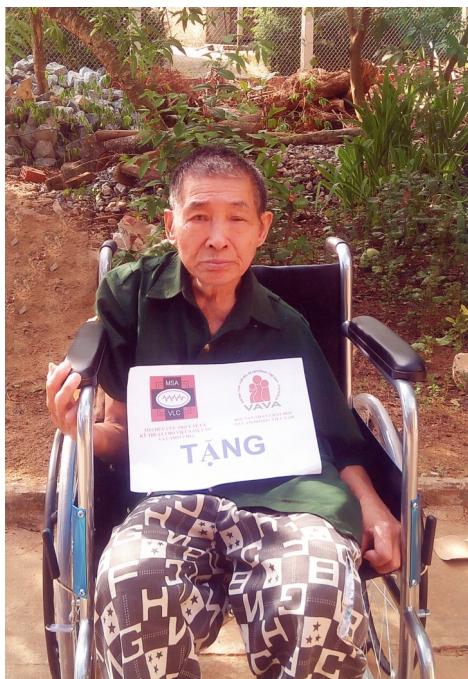
Today marks the 60th anniversary of the Agent Orange disaster (August 10th, 1961 - August 10th, 2021) and the Day for Agent Orange Victims.

On this special occasion, on behalf of the Vietnam Union of Friendship Organizations and Vietnamese Agent Orange/Dioxin victims, I would like to express my profound gratitude to each and every one of you for long companionship, sharing and invaluable support over the past decades.

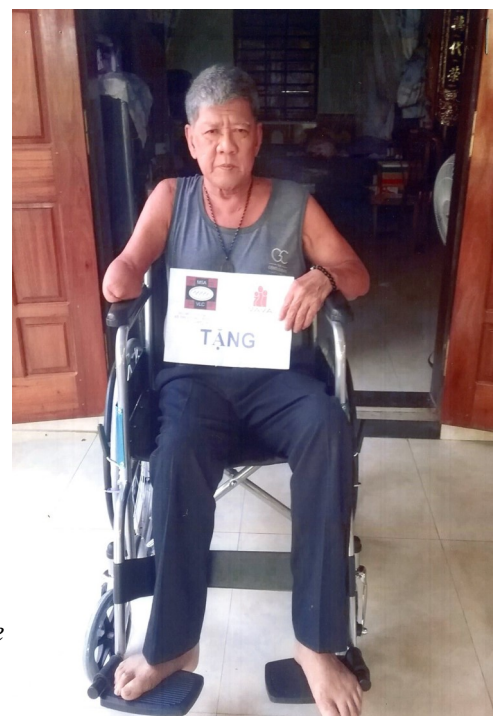
The war in Vietnam has ended for decades, but its serious consequences have still lingered. Nowadays, many war-time Vietnamese soldiers, people living throughout Vietnam and their descendants, continue to suffer from the sequela of war and Agent Orange/Dioxin.

The Government and the people of Vietnam have been trying their best to overcome the legacies of the war, providing medical care and treatment and assistance to the victims or Agent Orange/Dioxin and their families.

Alongside Vietnam's efforts in dealing with the consequences of Agent Orange/Dioxin, the Vietnamese people have been receiving precious support from friends all over the world, including you and your organization. You have done incredible works during and after the war to help Vietnam.



Nguyen Van Liem of Bac Dinh Village, Quang Binh Province



Duong Quang Viet of Le Linh Town, Quang Binh Province

The Vietnamese people appreciate and cherish each and every one of your efforts, whether to clean up dioxin-contaminated lands, or provide treatment, health care and rehabilitation for those exposed to Agent Orange/Dioxin and their progeny affected by this toxic act, or support to the legal fight for justice and the legitimate rights of Vietnamese victims of Agent Orange/Dioxin. Your compassion, your meaningful activities and your great support have relieved the pains of the Agent Orange/Dioxin victims and become an important source of encouragement and strength for the victims and their families.

Once again, we would like to



*Ms. Thi Cham of Binh An Commune,
Kien Giang Province*

*Bach Quang Nhi of Dai An
Commune, Nam Dinh Province*



thank you for all that you and your colleagues and friends have done for Viet Nam and the Agent Orange/Dioxin victims. We look forward to your further cooperation and strong support to our joint efforts to assist the victims, to seek justice for them, to close the past of war in Viet Nam and inside each Agent Orange victim.

May I wish you and your loved ones good health, happiness and success.

With my warmest regards and deep appreciation,

**AMBASSADOR
NGUYEN PHUONG NGA
VUFO PRESIDENT**

The Trustees of MSAVLC are most appreciative of the fact that our charity has been recognised by VUFO's President for the support which we have given to Agent Orange victims over the past 60 years.

We are also most grateful to the Vietnamese Association for the Victims of Agent Orange for their help in supplying the wheelchairs, and to the victims themselves for allowing us to use their photographs.

With your support MSAVLC will continue to help these most deserving victims and their families.

*Peter Lidgard
(Editor)*



*Ms. Vo Thi Be of Hoa Loi Commune,
Kien Giang Province*

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The belated Annual General Meeting for 2020 was held at the Charlton Kings Social Club in Cheltenham on Saturday 21st October 2021.

In her Annual Report, Honorary Secretary, Mary Lidgard noted that despite the pandemic, the Trustees had continued with their work, and had maintained frequent contact with one another. Although the Trustees could not visit S.E. Asia themselves, they had been able to keep in regular contact with our six current project leaders in Vietnam and Cambodia. Reports of progress and activities were received regularly and circulated to all the Trustees.



Honorary Treasurer, John Firth reported that donations had held up well during the pandemic, but that 60% of our income now came from investments. He also noted that only 1% of MSAVLC's expenditure had

been spent on administration.

Chairman of the Trustees, Peter Lidgard thanked Nic Hewlett for examining the accounts, and he thanked the Trustees for their efforts during a difficult year.

DAUGHTERS OF CAMBODIA

Daughters of Cambodia, which rescues women and girls from the sex trade, has faced many more challenges in the past year, due to the Covid-19 situation.

In Cambodia the pandemic has had a devastating impact on the livelihoods of many people, there is no Government support available for people in economic need, and no furlough payments.

At Daughters, their client population and their children live in poor slum communities where hygiene and health conditions are challenging. Many of them live over an open sewage river that runs through the community, because the rooms are cheap in that location, and sadly health is not their highest priority.

Covid-19 cases have risen steadily during the last 12 months. In February, after restrictions were eased a little, Covid cases in Cambodia spiked, and increasingly restrictive measures were taken by the Government to stop the spread. Movement around the city was curtailed and even halted at times. The restrictions on movement, along with the shutting down of the tourist industry, put much financial pressure on Daughters, and they had to cut back their activities to a bare minimum, along with reducing their staff and client numbers. During this cycle, they had had to suspend activity in their workshops several times.

In April, as cases of infections steadily rose, the government ordered a complete citywide lockdown of all workplaces and NGOs, including Daughters. Some areas were designated as 'red zones' (infection hotspots) in which residents were not allowed out of their houses to work or to buy food and all deliveries were also banned from entering the area. This put a lot of pressure on people in those zones, without the means to either earn their daily wage or access food. Most of Daughters clients lived in the red zone, and were in great difficulty because of this situation, without food or basic supplies. Several groups of volunteers pooled their efforts to provide food for these residents and partnered with Daughters to distribute food parcels. Thanks to



the team effort, large quantities of fresh vegetables, meat, nuts and eggs were purchased, and they managed to pass these to the clients across the barricades each week for a few weeks. The girls from Daughters received food packages along with emergency rent payments, and transportation for them to be able to return to work when the lockdown ended. They reported:

"On behalf of everyone at Daughters who was fed as part of this life-saving initiative, we are so very thankful and blessed beyond words for the funds provided by MSAVLC, at this very desperate time."

Cutbacks to some of their activities continue to be made during the Covid-19 outbreak. However, because of MSAVLC support, they have been able to continue their crucial medical, social work and counselling activities throughout, and they are so very thankful for this. Their social work team has been extremely active during this cycle, playing a crucial role in the health and wellbeing of their clients and their emergency fund disbursement has been an important part of the social work team's activities. They have had many clients in crisis, ranging from lack of food during lockdown, dangerous predatory attacks on children, rape cases, emergency housing needs, losses due to theft, and

emergency medical situations. Thanks to the funds provided by MSAVLC, they have been able to intervene to support their clients in these cases, with crisis counselling, emergency re-housing, distributing food parcels to those clients without food or essential supplies, emergency rent payments, and emergency medical interventions.

The Trustees of MSAVLC recently agreed to continue funding Daughters' Health and Wellness Project for another year, and we are very grateful to all our supporters and donors who have made this possible.



NEW HOPE FARM PROJECT

Following on from our front page story in the August Bulletin, we have had further news and pictures from Cheng Rostitus, Director of New Hope Children's Home.

Rostitus aims to make the Children's Home self-sufficient, so that they do not need to rely solely upon sponsorship from individuals and organisations such as MSAVLC.

Despite the fact that it is now the rainy season in Cambodia, Rostitus

and some of the senior children have made a great start on building a giant greenhouse in New Hope's extensive grounds. They hope to grow a variety of vegetables to feed the children, and sell the surplus in the local market.

In providing the initial funding to purchase the greenhouse, seeds, and a chicken house, the Trustees are encouraging a sustainable future, both for the Home and for the children who live there.



Above: Building the giant greenhouse.

Below: The new chicken shed.



OUR PATRONS

It was pointed out at the Annual General Meeting that some of our supporters may not be aware of the people who generously allow their names to be associated with the charity.

Dame Judy Dench DBE has been our President for many years; Sir George Howarth, MP for Knowsley in Liverpool, is a Vice-President, along with Lord Richard Balfe and renowned author John Pilger.

The Trustees are most grateful to all four of our patrons for their support, and for continuing to allow us to associate their names with MSAVLC.

AN IDEAL CHRISTMAS PRESENT

Just two copies of the hard-backed book "Hanoi After the War", generously donated by author John Ramsden, are still available.

To order a copy of this unique, fascinating and absorbing book, please make out a cheque to "MSAVLC" and send it to;

Peter Lidgard,
Chairman MSAVLC
3, Horsefair Street, Charlton Kings,
CHELTENHAM, Glos. GL53 8JF.

The cover price of the book is £30.00, but you can donate more if you would like to. We will bear the cost of postage and packing.

DATA PROTECTION

MSAVLC is committed to making sure that our communications with you are secure, considered and welcomed. We promise to respect any personal data that you share with us, we will keep it safe, and we will not share it with third parties.

If you no longer want to receive the Bulletin and want to be removed from our mailing list, please contact:

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NEWQUAY
Cornwall TR7 2AJ.

Or email:
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