

WVP Australia



giving sight to change lives

Vietnam Vision Projects Australia NEWSLETTER

Issue No. 6 Jul-Dec 2011

VietNam Field Trip 2011

"Be PROUD that you can help another human being"

It was early morning, Saturday 23 July 2011 and around 50 volunteers from around Australia started gathering at Sydney and Melbourne International Airports. The two groups departed Australia simultaneously, while some volunteers were already in Vietnam.

The team consisted of medical, and for the first time dental, professionals, nurses, pharmacists, technical, administrative, logistics and support personnel.

The VVP 2011 field trip to Vietnam was underway.

Upon arrival in Saigon some challenges were encountered, however, these were overcome and the work of the Vietnam Vision Project (VVP) team was ready to begin.

Over the next seven days the team travelled to three different areas in the south of Vietnam:

Ben Tre and Tra Vinh Provinces and Saigon

In excess of 630 cataract operations were performed and over 500 dental procedures completed. Since the first field trip in 2003, over 4400 cataract examinations and operations have been provided which have changed the lives of poor and needy people in Vietnam (and Cambodia) who otherwise would not have access to the fundamental health care in particular the treatment provided by the VVP team.



Editor's words

In this edition we share with you our achievements since VVP Australia's inception in 2003, details of the Vietnam Field Trip 2011, a feasibility study trip to Lao, the humanitarian engagement to provide relief to the poor and needy, highlights of fund raising activities since June this year and a photo gallery of the Vietnam Field Trip 2011.

2012 will be our tenth anniversary and we are proud in expecting to reach 5000 cataract operations. There will be celebrations and re-union planned for this special and important occasion.

This milestone would not be possible without the commitment and generosity of the volunteers and the community in general, who have been very generous with financial donations, sponsorship and on-going support.

With the festive season fast approaching, the VVP Australia team would like to wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy New Year.

Happy reading,
Stephanie Wong

Recent statistics indicate there are over 500,000 people suffering from cataract blindness in Vietnam. 900,000 have blindness in one eye and cataract is the major cause of blindness in people over 50 years of age and usually affects both eyes. Since its inception in 2003, the team from the Vietnam Vision Project has worked in numerous provinces of South and Central Vietnam. The group has also travelled to Cambodia performing cataract operations.

In 2011, following considerable planning and organising, a dental team was included on the trip and achieved amazing results, providing much needed treatment for people suffering from serious dental conditions and for services to which they would not have access.

Working in conditions usually not experienced in Australia, the team achieved outstanding results and with record outcomes. In one day in Saigon, working with the Vietnamese team from the Saigon Eye Hospital, over 230 cataract operations were completed. Hardships were encountered, however, with the expertise and experience within the team, these were overcome one way or another and a solution was always found.



Areas of Operation

Year	Province/s	Operations
2003	Ben Tre, Vinh Long	327
2004	Binh Thuan, Ninh Thuan	517
2005	Dong Thap, An Giang, Tra Vinh, Phu Yen	850
2006	Quang Tri, Binh Phuoc	367
2007	Ca Mau, Hau Giang	316
2008	Sa Dec, Binh Duong, Thu Duc, Lam Dong and Phnom Penh (Cambodia) (428 Vietnam, 100 Cambodia)	528
2009	Thu Duc, Tay Ninh and Kampong Thom (Cambodia)	523
2010	Tay Hoa of Phu Yen	381
2011	Ben Tre, Tra Vinh	631

Note: The above figures include operations conducted in Ho Chi Minh City/Saigon.

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2012 will be the tenth anniversary of the work of Vietnam Vision Projects Australia. The group is proud of its achievements and expects to achieve 5000 cataract operations. This milestone would not be possible without the generosity and commitment of the volunteers and the community in general, who have been very generous with financial donations, support, sponsorship and contributions.

Ted Mlynarz

Vietnam Field Trip 2011 – Case Studies

Cataract Case 1:

Name: HVC (#17)

Age: 72+ years old male

Address: Giong Trom

Situation: Ex-South Vietnamese soldier. He lost his left leg when a bomb exploded during battle. He was saved by American soldiers. He lived in a psychiatric centre for a number of years after the war. He now lives with his wife who is also ill due to old age. He begs on the streets for a living.

Local doctors told him about VVP and advised him to register. On the day we noted that his crutches were a bit short for him. He told us that the crutches were donated to him by a hospital. He did not have any family members accompanying him that day.

Conditions:

Diabetic

Blind in the right eye due to cataract

Post-op examination (26/7/11):

The patient was very happy he could now see in his right eye. With the help of a kind stranger, he climbed down two flights of stairs. Clutching his crutches and a bag of medication, he hobbled away from the hospital grounds – alone.

Cataract Case 2:

Name: TND (#247)

Age: 13 years old boy

Address: approximately 40km away from Tra Vinh



Situation: His family of four people travelled approximately 40km by motorbike to the hospital in search of treatment. The trip had taken them more than one hour.

When he was 5 years old, he fell and hit the left side of his head. He slowly went blind in the left eye. The teachers in his school told him about the work of VVP and advised him to register.

Condition: Trauma induced cataract

Treatment: The cataract in his left eye was removed. He was able to regain some of his vision the next day and his vision would improve further as time went on.



Dental Case 1:

Name: LTV

Age: 40 year old male

Situation: The patient has cerebral palsy and epilepsy.

He laboriously climbed 2 flights of stairs to the cataract-surgery admission area at the end of the day only to find out that the eye team had packed up and gone home. Pointing to his tooth he signaled that he needed help.

He was promptly led over to the dental team who were still packing up. It took one look by the dental team leader and the decision was made to stop packing and assess to treat this patient straight away.

Treatment: Tooth extraction and post-operative care explained.



Dental Case 2:

Patients: The children from the Tra Vinh Centre for Children of Special Circumstance .

Address: Ly Tu Trong, District 1 Tra Vinh.

Situation: This centre houses approximately 200 poor or abandoned children who suffer from a range of disabilities. It provides free services to poor families whose children are deaf, blind and physically disabled.

Services provided include food, accommodation for the children and their carer, basic education and some physiotherapy treatments.



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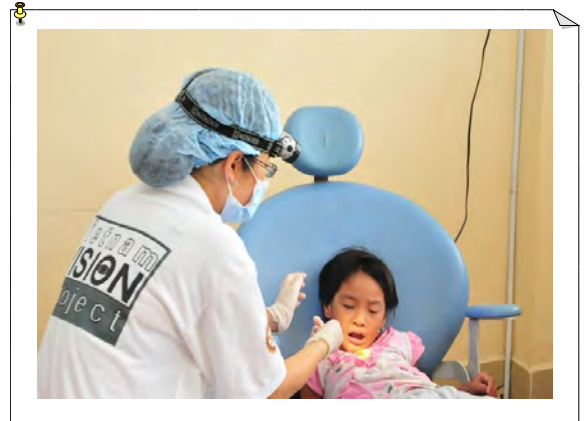
The ages of the children range from 1 year old to 16 years old. The older children are taught basic job training skills. The ratio of carer-to-child is usually 1:1 and the carer live-in with the child during the week. The carer can also be the mother of the child who would stay 5 days and goes home to care for the rest of her family on the weekends.

Crowded into every sleeping quarters were 6 or more bunk beds. Each bed was occupied by both the child and his/her carer. All personal belongings are either stored on top or underneath the bunk beds.

Treatment: On the day that VVP team carried out dental treatments at Tra Vinh hospital, 6 wheelchair-bound children arrived at the hospital. It was discovered that their carers had trekked and navigated these children in their wheelchair a distance of 3km from the centre to the hospital seeking dental treatments.

Once the children had received their treatments, it was decided that the bus belonging to VVP volunteer be used to transport these children, their wheelchairs and their carers back to the centre instead of having them walk the 3km distance home.

Tanya Anhtuan



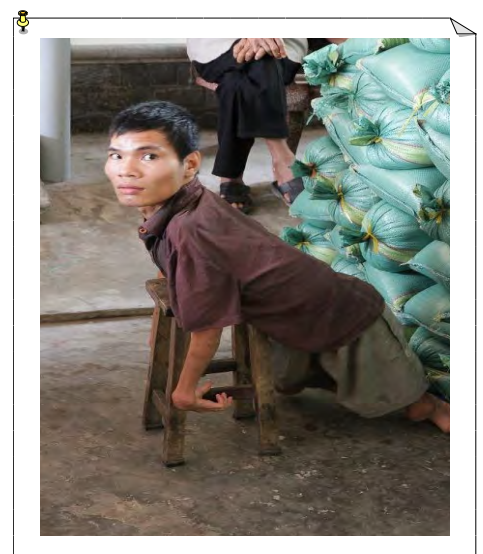
Humanitarian Deeds

The primary purpose of the 2011 Vietnam Field trip was the provision of cataract operations and dental procedures for the poor and needy mostly in the rural areas. However, it was evident that there would be some downtime when finishing operations in one area and preparing to move to the next. These preparations did not need all volunteers to be involved and those who had free time decided to engage in humanitarian deeds to provide further assistance and relief to the poor and needy.

Prior to departure to Vietnam, fundraising activities were conducted to enable the purchase of food parcels, pharmaceuticals and jackets for distribution through the resources and assistance of local temples and a psychiatric hospital.

When the call for donations for this purpose was released the response and generosity of the public, local community, business as well as VVP volunteers and the Rotary Club of Liverpool West, an amount of just under \$10,000 was raised in no time at all.

This enabled 400 food parcels to be distributed in each of the provinces visited – 200 in Ben Tre and 200 in Tra Vinh.



These food parcels consisted of Rice, noodles and an amount of cash.

During a visit to a psychiatric hospital (which caters for 1300 patients) in Binh Duong near Saigon, 100 wind jackets were distributed together with food parcels consisting of milk, sweet bread, rice noodles, instant noodles, rambutan (tropical fruit) and cold and flu tablets.

The efforts of Thuy Nguyen (a pharmacist from Sydney) with organising the humanitarian deeds events are acknowledged.



Ted Mlynarz

Rotary Contribution

The Rotary Club of Liverpool West has been a staunch supporter of the Vietnam Vision Project since 2005 and has provided extensive financial and personnel support over the years. In 2011 the Rotary Club contributed toward the purchase of a new microscope for cataract surgery which was urgently required to replace aging equipment.

The 2011 field trip included a record number of volunteers who were involved in many aspects of the work and assistance necessary to ensure a successful outcome. Thirteen

Rotarians travelled with team, and were involved with both the cataract and dental teams providing logistics and administrative support.

A highlight during this trip was the awarding of Rotary's highest achievement award, the Paul Harris Fellow, to members of the Vietnam Vision team. The Paul Harris Fellow is named after the founder of the Rotary organisation and was established in 1957 to express appreciation for contributions to humanitarian and educational programs which invigorate the lives of people around the world and enhance international friendship and understanding.

As the club president for 2011/12, it was a privilege to be able to present the awards to two outstanding VVP members, Dr Juliana Chong and Dr David Worsnop. Both have been tireless in their contributions and dedication toward the work of Vietnam Vision and are also involved in other charity work and organisations.



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MEMORABLE MOMENT

No matter how often one participates in these field trips there are always highlights and experiences which leave lifelong memories. An encounter with a young boy in the street in Tra Vinh will always stay with me:

On the last day of operations in the Tra Vinh area, after de-mobilising and packing all the equipment, it was an early return to the hotel for some well earned rest. Following the evening meal I decided to explore the township. Due to the early starts and usually late finishes these opportunities were rare. While waiting outside the hotel a young boy, aged around 12 years approached from across the street and asked if he could practise his English conversation skills as he was studying the subject at the local university. He politely introduced himself as Khanh and we began talking about a number of things. His English was quite good and the conversation was easy. Soon a couple of VVP members joined us and we continued to talk with Khanh. As the time to separate drew near, Khanh mentioned that his grandmother was to have a cataract operation the next day.



Without hesitation, Khanh shook my hand and began to thank me (and the group) with all sincerity for coming all the way from Australia to help his grandmother regain her sight when otherwise the family would not be able to afford the cost of an operation.

The memory of this short meeting will stay with me forever, and if ever I have an opportunity to visit the area again I would like to find Khanh and see how his grandmother and family are surviving.

I am sure that everybody on the field trips has experienced similar memorable situations. These will never be forgotten and I am sure that they encourage volunteers to return time after time. It is moments such as this that make the effort worthwhile.

The worldwide Rotary motto for 2011/2012 is:
"REACH WITHIN TO EMBRACE HUMANITY"
Vietnam Vision certainly achieves this!

Ted Mlynarz

It's Official ... Our name has changed

At the Annual General Meeting on the 13th November 2011, it has been decided that our charitable organisation will change the name from Vietnam Vision Project (VVP) to Vietnam Vision Projects Australia (VVP Australia or VVPA). The new name gives a clearer and better identity to the world of who we are as an Australian charitable organisation doing great humanitarian projects around Australia and South East Asia and maybe someday extending our help further to far reached corners around the world.

INC., PO BOX 313, CABRAMATTA, NSW 2166. Donations over \$2 Tax Deductible.

Cleft Palate Operation

During a trip to a temple near Ben Tre to distribute food parcels, a little girl was noticed in the crowd by some of the VVP volunteers. The child was suffering from a serious Cleft Palate condition. A few photos were taken and details obtained.

The girl's name is Nhu Binh NGUYEN, born 9 November 2007. Upon return to Australia discussions with the Mr Danny Low, a Rotarian from Sydney and a VVP Volunteer resulted in enquiries being undertaken with medical professionals in Vietnam in an effort to help the child with the prospect of corrective surgery.

Dr Viet Le from the OMF Hospital in Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) was contacted and offered to perform the operation at no cost. Rotarian Danny Low and friends undertook to sponsor the family's travel expenses, as well as food and accommodation costs in HCMC.

On 15 September 2011, the family travelled to HCMC. Unfortunately, the operation was not able to be performed as the child was not well, suffering from a high fever, the girl and family returned to Ben Tre.

Nhu Binh and her family have since returned to HCMC for pre-surgery tests and preparations. Again, the travel expenses were covered by Rotarians involved with the project.

Latest reports received confirm that the operation has taken place and has been a success. Even though Nhu Binh needs at least two more operations, she is well on the way to recovery and being able to enjoy a normal life.

The following people deserve our gratitude for the work and inspiration to undertake this cause and deserve any accolades which may come their way:

Mr Danny Low – Rotarian and VVP Volunteer

Rotary Friends of Mr Low

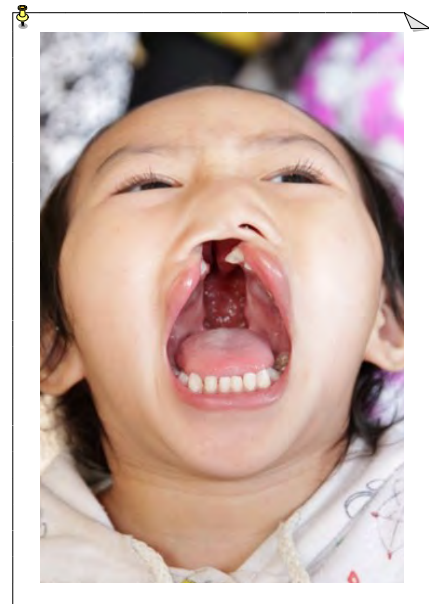
Dr Viet Le and his surgical team in Vietnam

Ho Chi Minh Maxillo & Stomatology Hospital, HCMC Vietnam

Dr Thu Dung Dang – VVP Volunteer

All those involved with organising facilities.

Ted Mlynarz



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Contribution of Books

ANH MINH SCHOOL FOR DEAF & MUTE CHILDREN - SAIGON

"The education of children ensures the future"

During a visit to the school by Rotary and VVP representatives in March 2011, Sister Mary, Nguyen Thi Ngoc Mai Spc (who operates the school) was asked if there was any assistance which could be provided. Her response indicated that books for the children would be the best way to help.

An amount of \$500.00 was contributed through Rotary and VVP volunteers and sent to Vietnam for the appropriate books to be obtained locally.

Following the completion of the operations a group from the team visited the school and of-

ficially presented the books to the students and the school. One of the rooms at the school had been converted into a library and the official opening had been delayed until our visit. The students had not been permitted to enter this new area and were both anxious and excited for our arrival so that they could use the new facilities.

The children at this school unfortunately have been afflicted with a disability. However, watching their excitement, affection and frolics during the visit showed no sign of their disabilities and the reaction to the gift of books was inspiring.

Further assistance will be considered, as the library shelves have not been filled.

Ted Mlynarz



Trip to Lao

Lao is a landlocked country in S/E Asia bordered by Burma, China, Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand with an estimated population of around 6.8 million people in 2009.

For some time Vietnam Vision Project (VVP) has been considering expanding its area of operation and has in the past conducted cataract operations in Cambodia. This year a trip to Lao took place as a feasibility study to determine if operations could be conducted to help the poor and needy.

Upon finalisation of operations in Vietnam, a team of volunteers, headed by Dr Phuoc Vo embarked on a fact finding trip to collect information and see firsthand if any work could be undertaken in the future.

Upon arrival at Pakse airport the team boarded a bus and began a two hour trip through the rural area to Saravane Provincial Hospital. Meetings were held with local dignitaries and hospital and health officials. The work of VVP was explained and information provided regarding public health issues in the area.

The Saravane Province, in the south of Lao, consists of 8 districts bordering Vietnam to the east and Thailand to the west. There are 622 villages with 59,123 households, 85% of the population of 366,400 people live in rural isolated areas. The life expectancy is around 60 years, 61 for females and 59 for males.

The major health issues are respiratory infection, acute diarrhoea, Dengue fever, malaria, maternal and child emergency. The hospital, built in 1980 has a total of 70 beds with a staff of 129.

During 2011, optical treatment at the hospital totalled 1251 cases, compared to 1000 during 2010. Continuing with the trip, the team travelled to Savannakhet Province and attended similar meetings and presentations regarding local health issues and cataract conditions.

Vientiane, the modern capital of Lao, was the next stop. A tour of the hospital was undertaken and meetings held with the director and hospital officials who provided an interesting and informative presentation of conditions in Lao as far as cataract problems are concerned.

Cataract is a serious problem in Lao, however, a major hurdle to be overcome is the transportation of patients for screening and later to the hospital for operations. Local flooding during the wet season causes extensive transport accessibility problems and the locals are reluctant to leave the village concerned that they may not be able to return quickly due to the flooding. The information gathered on this trip is being reviewed and community groups in Australia are being approached to determine if a field trip to Lao can be undertaken.

Ted Mlynarz



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Melbourne Get Together

On Sunday 6 November 2011, Dr Juliana Chong and Dr David Worsnop, Vietnam Vision Project (VVP) participants and field trip medical team organisers, arranged a social get-together for the Melbourne based volunteers to renew acquaintances and exchange stories of the VVP field trip undertaken in July/August 2011. The event provided an opportunity to meet in a social atmosphere without the pressures encountered on the field trips.

Ted Mlynarz, President of the Rotary Club of Liverpool West travelled to Melbourne to present a report on the field trip and update members on the latest news regarding upcoming activities planning being undertaken for the 2012 field trip.

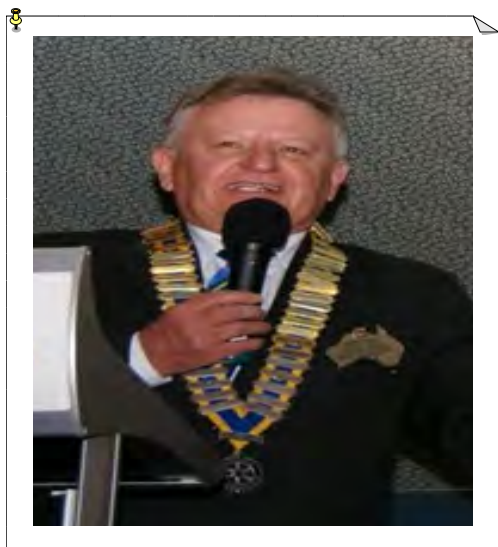
Apart from the VVP volunteers, family, partners and friends of the volunteers were encouraged to attend. The presentation offered them an insight into the work carried on the field trips and the amount of work that had been achieved and is yet to be achieved. The support and sacrifice of family and partners of volunteers is vital and is recognised as an important contribution toward the successful outcomes.

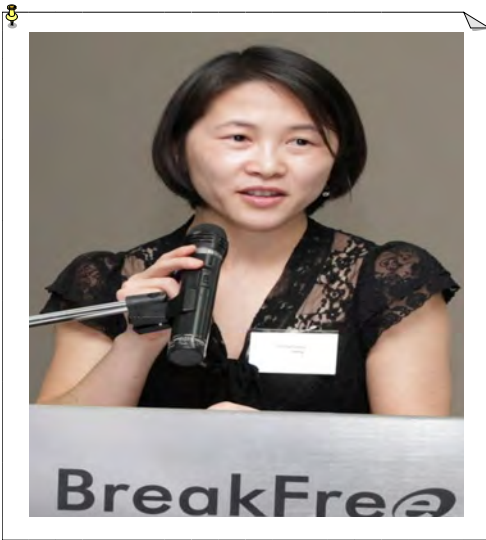
The afternoon was considered as a success in regard to the volunteers getting together socially and for friends and family to meet people they may have heard about but never had an opportunity to meet. Donations to support the work carried by VVP are an important factor towards successful outcomes and are used to enable the operations to continue. At this event, a total of \$2,760.00 was presented as a result of fundraising events conducted by Cheryl and Neville Young and Ms Hieu Tran. This was a successful event which was well supported and should take place more often.

Ted Mlynarz

Congratulations

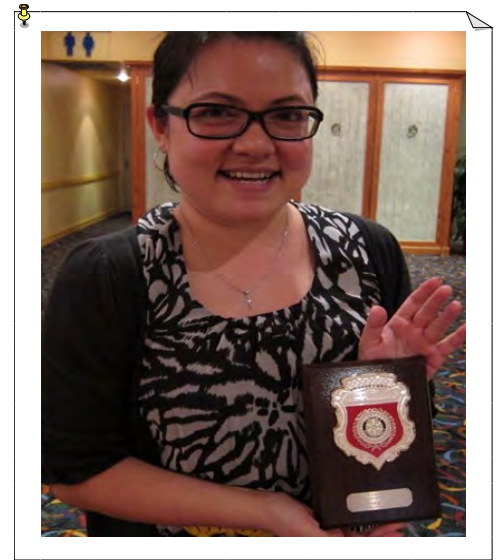
Mr Ted Mlynarz is the new Rotary Club president of Liverpool West for 2011/12. Ted is a VVPA volunteer and has been on the field trips twice to Vietnam. He is a very enthusiastic and tireless worker and has made invaluable contribution in the areas of administration work, fund raising activities, social events organising and a regular VVPA newsletter contributor. Ted's energy is boundless and has provided outstanding service to VVPA over the last few years. Ted is an active current member of the VVPA management committee.





Our GP volunteer Dr Thu Dang is the newly elected madam president for the Australian Vietnamese Health Professionals Association NSW (AVHPA-NSW). Dr Dang has been on the field trips to Vietnam the last two years and is a great supporter to VVPA. She is a passionate photographer and a nature lover. On several occasions she has generously donated her own pieces of photographic art work to raise fund for Vietnam Vision projects.

Rotarian and VVPA volunteer Trudy Ho was presented with the Rotary Pride of Workmanship Award in recognition of her work with VVPA on the 22nd of November 2011 at the Rotary Club of Liverpool West. Trudy has been a VVPA volunteer for several years and has provided exceptional service in areas of administration and as Secretary of the VVPA Board. She has been on several field trips to Vietnam. Her "bubbly" personality has become infectious and her organising skills have been of enormous assistance to the group both in Vietnam and Australia.



Twelve year old school boy William (Billy) Trinh was presented with one of the four social issues commendation on the 29th November 2011 at Redlands by the Independent Primary School Heads of Australia (IPSHA) to NSW students. Over the last few years William has been on the field trips to Vietnam and Cambodia and gaining first hand experience about charity work and helping others. Over the last few Christmas holidays William has been busy busking, trying to raise funds for VVPA, playing his violin around the CBD. William has raised over \$5000 himself with every cent of it donated to VVPA. He was not aware that his school had nominated him for this prestigious award.

Stephanie Wong

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Fund Raising Activities

The work carried out by the Vietnam Vision Project (VVP) team can only be carried by contributions from the community, business, sponsors and the generosity of the general public.

Several events are conducted throughout each year which raise much needed funds to enable operations to be provided free of charge to the poor and needy people of Vietnam. Without the work of VVP, these people will continue to suffer as they do not have access to the medical services provided.

The fundraising events are organised by VVP, the Rotary Club of Liverpool West and the Rotary Satellite Club at Cabramatta. Members and volunteers from these organisations provide their services and time to enable the events to take place.

Bi-monthly BBQ's are conducted at Freedom Plaza Cabramatta and have become a regular community fixture where food, community awareness, public education and musical entertainment are provided.

Cabramatta BBQ - 12 June 2011

On a wintery, rainy, windy and cold day a group of volunteers arrived to operate the BBQ and collect donations. It was evident early in the day that the crowd numbers would be well below expected level, however, those who did visit the stall were very generous and thankful for a serving of some hot bacon and egg rolls. Any donations were gratefully accepted and will enable the work to continue.

The volunteers who gave up a warm bed on a true Sydney winter Sunday performed extremely well and ensured the success of the day.



Charity Dinner - 17 June 2011

The major fundraising event conducted by the Vietnam Vision Project is a Charity Dinner held to express appreciation and gratitude for all the support received by donors, contributors and sponsors.

The dinner was held on the 17th June 2011 at the Crystal Palace Function Centre in Canley Heights. The show of support from the community was enormous and a huge crowd enjoyed a night of exceptional entertainment provided by an array of musicians, singers, dancers and actors.

The evening introduced many young Australian/Vietnamese talents such as Michelle and William (Billy) on violin, the Planet Dance young troupe, with duets from Dustin and Deanne plus solos from Annalise Vo and Jeremy Vo, to name a few. Another highlight was the dental act with Dr Hung Tran, Mrs Hang Tran, Dr Daniel Tran, Dr Andrew Duong and Dr Linda Duong. The VVP singing group was outstanding with an off-stage highlight, which did not go unnoticed by sponsors, seeing Ted Mlynarz (a Rotary/VVP Volunteer), wearing a traditional "Ao Dai".



The entire evening was well organised and proceedings were professionally conducted by the Masters of Ceremonies, Dr James Chau-Vo and Ms Loan Dang, who ensured continuity of the program and entertainment.

The generous donations and contributions from this event provide the necessary resources for VVP to carry out and continue its humanitarian and charity programs.

The auction attracted steady and competitive bidding and proved to be a success only due to the items made available by the generous donors, these included:

- an elegant pearl & gold Necklace from Dr David Minh Tang
- a framed scenic photo from Dr Quang Tran
- an elegant white pearl necklace from Huong Giang Jewellery
- a framed iconic photo and stamp by Mr Jack Tran - media photographer
- 2 golden Buddha statues (24k gold plated)



VVP wishes to thank the following corporations, associations and individuals for their generous support:

PLATINUM SPONSORS

- Alcon Lab Pty Ltd
- Bach Dang Restaurant
- Medlab Pathology
- Mrs Hue Ngoc Lam
- Rotary Club of Liverpool West

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GOLD SPONSORS

ABC Tissue Products Pty Ltd

Dr Lawrence Trieu

Hoang Do Western Airport Services

Paint a Rainbow Foundation

Sydney Bean Sprouts Ltd

There are more very generous supporters which are too many to list.
Thank you to these as well as the people and organisations who contributed raffle prizes.

Around \$6500.00 of prizes was donated for the raffle.

The success of the evening was as a result of the kindness received from all.

"Your generosity makes a difference and goes a long way with helping those in need"

Cabramatta Moon Festival ~ 4 September 2011

For the second year in a row, we participated in the Cabramatta Moon Festival. On Sunday 4 September 2011 the Festival was held in the streets of Cabramatta CBD. Vietnam Vision Project (VVP) together with the Rotary Club of Liverpool West and the Cabramatta Satellite Club organised a stall and took part in the festivities. The main purpose this year was to provide community awareness and public education of the work and activities of VVP and Rotary and the programs with which both organisations are involved. Fundraising was also undertaken and the volunteers who attended did an exceptional job with discussing matters, answering questions and obtaining financial support to enable the work and programs to continue.



Cabramatta BBQ – 16 October 2011

In contrast to the BBQ in June 2011, the day turned out to be a perfect spring Sydney Sunday. Warm pleasant sunshine ensured that the usual Cabramatta crowd was present. The waft of the bacon, eggs and sausages soon had the crowd lining up for the “masterchef” prepared rolls, which were hastily consumed and enjoyed.

The day proved to be one of the most successful held. With the assistance of singers and a band providing musical entertainment and attracting a good crowd, donations and taking on the day exceeded \$5000.00. A special mention is made of VVP Volunteer, dentist Dien Bích Tran, who took over the microphone and provided an exceptional rendition of songs which surprised and entertained everybody present.

Again, we thank the general public and local community for their generous donations.

The NAB and St George banks provided sponsorship on the day which contributed to its success.



Cabramatta BBQ – 27 November 2011

The final BBQ for 2011 was held on a “Beautiful Sunday”, with a week of heavy rain in Sydney, the skies cleared and a fine day awaited the volunteers and entertainers. Many new faces attended the stall, even an appearance by a young lady from Adelaide who helped with the distribution of balloons to excited children. Again, the generosity of the public and community was outstanding; the first donation was made before the stall was ready for operation. Another very successful



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day!

As the day progressed and the waft of the cooking food attracted crowds the entertainment began under the leadership of Hieu, who has been a very enthusiastic supporter of Vietnam Vision, particularly the Cabramatta BBQ's.

A special thank you to Hieu and his group of singers who provided a high level of non-stop entertainment and a happy and enthusiastic atmosphere among the crowd and volunteers.

VVP regular, William (Billy) Trinh also provided a few tunes on his violin. Not only can Vietnam Vision replace sight, creation of visions such as a special surprise appearance by "Michael Jackson" is now on the cards.

Sponsorship for the day was provided by the NAB through Long Hoang and Van Nguyen and a special mention of the New Good Luck Butchery at 6/45 Park Rd Cabramatta ph: 9728 1337, who has supported several BBQ's by donating the sausages.

Donations and taking on the day came to a total of \$4834.45. What a successful day, indeed.

The success of the BBQ's during 2011 is encouraging with Fairfield Council now recognising them as a regular Community Event and will be advertising the 2012 dates in the local paper. The next BBQ is on Sunday 12 February 2012

To all those who participated in 2011,
THANK YOU !!!

Ted Mlynarz



Vietnam Field



A young boy with cataract



Theatre staff working at full speed



Volunteers on a ferry to work



Dr Nguyen performing a dental procedure



Dental team getting ready to treat patients



A happy post operation patient with the medical staff



Anaesthetists busy at work



A post operation patient receiving medication, money and sunglasses



A girl on her way to the market

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Elder Trip 2011



Dr Narita performing a post operation eye check



Mr Punter giving eye drop to patients



Mrs Chong assisting an elderly patient



A happy patient with a big smile after operation



Helping our patient whichever way we can



We are ready to extend our hands



Theatre staff packing up after a hard day's work

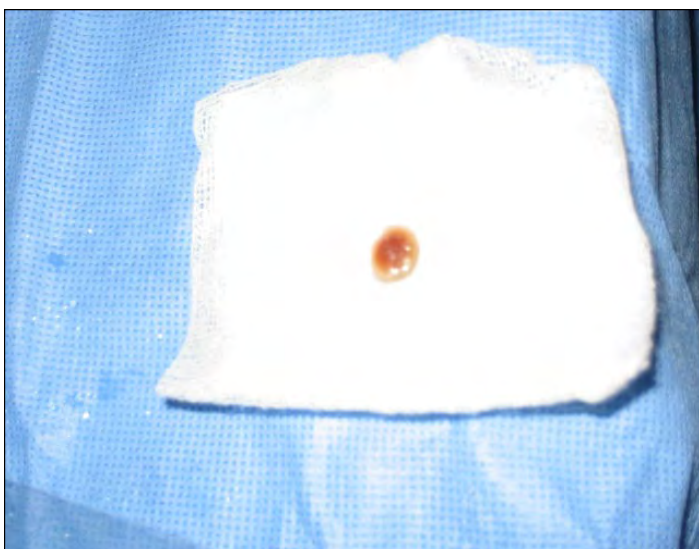
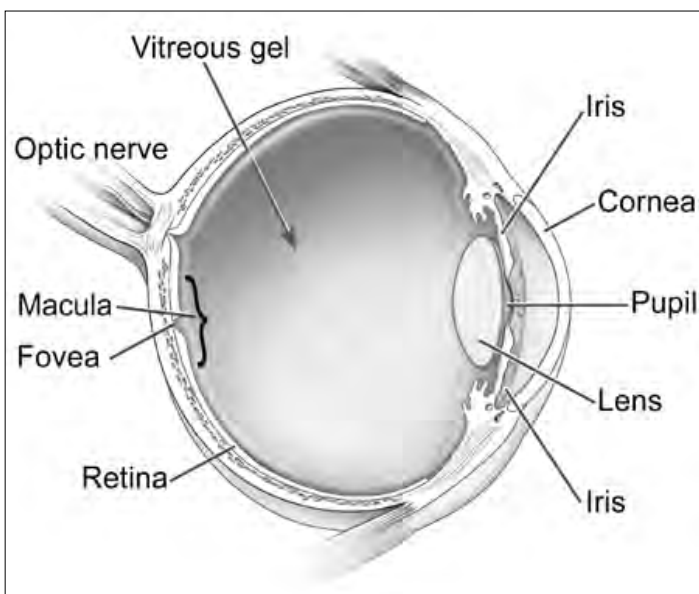


Trying out local drinks at a street cafe

What is Cataract ?



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The eye has a natural lens, just behind the pupil and iris (coloured part of the eye). The term Cataract means the lens has gone cloudy. This can range from a little cloudy and not affecting vision at all, through to black, leaving almost no vision.

The most common cause of cataract is age. Almost all adults have some cataract by the age of 70.

Other causes of cataract include diabetes, injuries, smoking, sun exposure, inflammation in the eye and long term use of cortisone medication.

Cataract surgery is needed when the cataract causes reduced vision enough to interfere with normal activities. In Vietnam our patients have more longstanding cataracts and are legally blind.

Surgery consists of removing the opaque lens and replacing it with an acrylic plastic one.

This is safe, very effective and done under local anaesthesia.

This is a picture of a cataract which has been removed whole. Modern methods involve dissolving the lens and washing it out, "emulsification," which is safer for the eye and allows faster recovery. After a short period, vision usually returns to normal.

Dr. David Worsnop