



Dr Johan Morreau,
Chair, NZ Vietnam Health Trust

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Kia Ora koutou

Greetings from the NZ Vietnam Health Trust. I am pleased to be able to let you know that we continue to actively progress all of our projects (we'll give you more specifics in the body of the newsletter) and have a small but stable membership support base.

Nguyen Phuoc our Vietnam based administrator continues to “oil the wheels” for us very effectively enabling us as an international volunteer Non Government Organisation to operate in Vietnam. The Trust is very grateful to Phuoc.

Increasingly we are having to self-fund our education work and would therefore be very grateful for sponsorship and growing our membership base. As a group of largely health professionals we are not particularly good at asking for funding. If you do identify potential support we would love to hear from you. Similarly if there are clinicians with an interest in contributing in a self funded and ongoing capacity it is worth a conversation with us as we may well know of needs and opportunities that have been indicated to us.

Importantly we have over the last two years with the initiative of Wendy Matthews Ambassador strengthened our links to the NZ Embassy in Hanoi and the Head of Mission Fund. We've been very grateful for her acknowledgement of our history, the quality of our relationships and the regard in which we're held in Binh Dinh province. This has facilitated application to support a much enhanced Neonatal program in 2019 and will achieve similar for our Haematology project in 2020.

Last but not least we were very grateful to our kaumatua David Morris and his wife Lien for their hosting, and Frances Bennington for her co-ordinating, of the successful fundraising dinner held in September.

My sincere thanks also go to our Board -David Morris, Anne de Bres, Frances Bennington, John Dunbar, Helen Hamer, our administrator Jo Scott for their ongoing wisdom, commitment and energy to work of the NZVNHT.

Our thanks also to all of our volunteers for their commitment and the extraordinary work they do in support of Vietnamese colleagues for whom this is the only significant ongoing education they receive. I hope that the project descriptions and photos included do you all justice.

I am looking forward to a productive and enjoyable 2020.

Nga mihi,
Dr Johan Morreau,
Paediatrician and NZVNHT Chairman

Anh Nguyen NZVNHT Young Ambassador



Anh Nguyen

It has been my great honour to be recently appointed the role of the New Zealand Vietnam Health Trust Young Ambassador since August 2019. In this role I have enjoyed meeting different people and agencies who are of partnership potential with the Trust in the future. For example, I accompanied Mr Dunbar to meet the New Zealand Ambassador to Vietnam in Hanoi during our recent orthopaedic trip.

The meeting was an opportunity for me to learn about the New Zealand's Aid activities in Binh Dinh in recent years, to explore the Ambassador's interest in our work and to meet and network with the Ambassador and Mr Anh Pham, the Aid Development Officer. During this time in Ha Noi, Mr Dunbar and I also visited the Dr Mohamed Ali, Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the Vinmec Health System, a large group of private hospitals in Vietnam. This meeting was generated based on my connection with Ms Lien Trinh, the Chief Operations Officer of this group. During the meeting we introduced the Trust and explored some venues in which a future partnership between the Trust and the Vinmec group may be formed.

Looking forward into the near future, firstly I aim to continue my role in ongoing publicity and promotion of the Trust activities whenever possible. Some orthopaedic surgeons I met in London and overseas have expressed interest in joining our orthopaedic trips in the future. I hope one of them will be able to join us during our 2020 trip. On 25 November 2019, I am hosting an event at St Georges University Hospital in London to promote gender equality in orthopaedic surgery. Amongst the speakers I have invited are some experienced orthopaedic surgeons in London and council members of the Royal College of Surgeons of England who also have interest in humanitarian/ medical aid work overseas. I aim to network with these surgeons and introduce the Trust activities to them.

During the rest of 2019 I am going to five national and international orthopaedic surgery conferences to present my recent research work. These are additional networking opportunities I will make use of to promote the interest of the Trust. Another objective I plan for the near future include to explore more funding options to set up a second orthopaedic library in a Binh Dinh hospital. Lastly, I aim to join the next orthopaedic trip in 2020 to continue building relationship with the community of Binh Dinh doctors and people.





Check out our WEBSITE

Please check out our NZVNHT Website:

<http://www.nzvnhealth.org>

The site contains a lot of information of interest about our work in Vietnam plus provides a history of health support in Vietnam and all our current projects and programmes.

SUBSCRIPTION AND MEMBERSHIP FORM

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR MEMBER ARE PAYABLE NOW

Annual Subscription is July 2020 to June 2021

- Student/retired/unemployed \$10 Individuals \$20
 Family \$30 Corporate \$100 \$ _____
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Donation to NZVNHT (Registration No. CC48667) \$ _____
(all donations of \$5 and over are eligible for a tax credit)

TOTAL \$ _____

Receipt required Yes No (tick one)

Please provide your details below so we can keep you informed on what we are doing.

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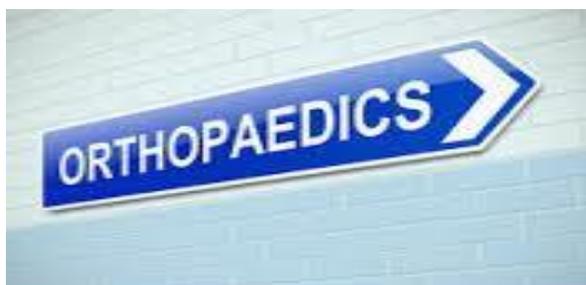
Address: _____ Postcode: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Please forward with payment to: Frances Bennington
Address: 55 Roseneath Terrace,
Roseneath, Wellington 6011

When paying via internet banking please email details to nzvnhealth@gmail.com

Alternatively donations and subscriptions can be made via internet banking to the account of NZ Viet Nam Health Trust: **ANZ 01 0797 0001245 02** (please clearly identify your name for membership details)



Orthopaedic Report for 2019

John Dunbar, Orthopaedic Team Lead

The orthopaedic visit to Binh Dinh occurred over two weeks this year. As with the previous year, the team was relatively large, comprising five consultants and two registrars. We were pleased to welcome Mr Perry Turner and Dr Anna Porter to the team, both making their first visits with the Health Trust. The other members of the team were Simon McMahon, Richard Lander, Kelly Macgroarty, John Dunbar and Anh Nguyen.

One benefit of greater numbers in the team is the facility for individuals to disperse and work in different hospitals at the same time. We are also able to match individual skill sets to particular problems more effectively and a large amount of work can be achieved in a short time.

Our work revolves around seeing patients in clinics with the local surgeons, then assisting with surgery. Much of the work remains trauma related, but there is an increasing amount of joint replacement surgery and arthroscopic surgery being carried out, and the local surgeons are keen for our assistance while they develop their skills.



Orthopaedic Team for 2019: (L-R) Richard Lander, Anna Porter, Kate McMahon, Perry Turner, Anh Nguyen, Simon McMahon, Kelly Macgroarty.

Bong Son Hospital will remain a big focus as well. The surgeons there are very receptive to our help and are progressively developing their trauma service and extending to some elective work.

We have developed links with City Hospital in Quy Nhon over the past two years and hope to assist the staff there to develop their trauma service. We are anxious to maintain our more long-standing relationships with Province Hospital, Quy Hoa and Rehabilitation Hospitals.

This year we held a practical workshop on Illizarov techniques. This method is a form of external fixation particularly useful for complex trauma, non-union s and bone infections. There is a big need for treatment of these conditions in Viet Nam and we will continue our teaching in this field.

The orthopaedic team places great value on the wonderful relationship we enjoy with our Vietnamese colleagues, and appreciate hugely the hospitality offered and the opportunities made available to us.

We plan to return to Quy Nhon and Bong Son in July 2020.



The late Jim Mann

JIM MANN - 1927 to 2019

As told by Colvin Campbell, Past President, NZIMLS
(abridged)

Jim was born in Lower Hutt in 1927 and passed away in Palmerston North in August 2019. Jim had trained at Waikato Hospital and moved to Palmerston North as charge microbiologist in 1957. It is easy now to forget how different lab work was a generation ago. In the 50s TB was still a major health problem. Concentration and culture of specimens for TB were carried out twice a week.

Throat and nasal swabs were still being cultured for diphtheria. Whooping cough was not unusual as this was before nationwide immunisation. Jim introduced staph phage typing which required technical competence and obsessive attention to detail. Jim had both of those attributes. He described the bulk of the work as routine microbiology. The monitoring of water, milk, cream and ice cream also contributed to the workload. One laboratory assistant was employed full-time on media preparation. Jim also had responsibility for the kitchen area where items like petri dishes were autoclaved, rewashed and recycled. Most laboratory material is now discarded after being decontaminated.

Before the age of dipstick, pregnancy testing using live frogs was a responsibility of microbiology. There were frenzied chases to catch the frogs when they escaped from time to time. Frogs are now almost an endangered species and frog collecting from the local pond would now not be an acceptable work activity. During Jim's reign, the microbiology department also had the distinction of isolating and identifying a case of cholera, the only time this has occurred in New Zealand (I think!).

In 1968 Jim joined the New Zealand surgical team at Quy Nhon Hospital in Vietnam. This had a profound effect on him. The possibility of getting malaria, plague, salmonella and working in a war zone was quite frightening. He kept in touch with some of the staff he trained there and at the conclusion of the war he sponsored two Vietnamese to come to New Zealand. He maintained contact with them up until his death. Over the decade the civilian surgical team was in Vietnam, nine different technologists served about a year each in the laboratory there. In the late 1960s when Jim was there a wider range of tests, including blood transfusion and public health screening, were introduced. Some years after the war several people who had been there before returned for a brief visit.

For some time, he was a member of the Palmerston North Operatic Society and participated in several productions. Jim described himself as a "loco looney", travelling extensively on trains around the world. He was very proud of his Danish heritage and had a Danish flag draped on his coffin. Though he never married he is survived by a number of nieces and nephews.

He was a gentle man and a gentleman



Dr Margaret Neave Paediatrician



Dr Margaret Neave

Looking after the very young was always part of the NZ commitment to Vietnam. In 1969 Margaret Neave joined the NZ Surgical Team in Qui Nhon, Binh Dinh and set up a baby clinic. She was joined by the formidably hardworking nurse, Bernadette O'Neill, and they became a wonderful team. Trai Mot (Ward 1) Provincial Hospital became a haven for babies and their mothers.

This work created the precedent for the ongoing NZ commitment to looking after the very young in Vietnam.

Margaret had previously worked in Samoa and knew all about gastroenteritis and pneumonia. In Qui Nhon she cared for large numbers of babies and children with typhoid, polio, diphtheria, malnutrition and the tragic impact of war on the innocents. She also cared for children in the nearby Holy Family City Hospital and Leprosarium both run by the Nuns. Later she became head paediatrician at the Save the Children Fund Hospital in Qui iNhon.

Margaret worked incessantly and everywhere. Every week she went up into the communist-occupied An Lao valley in north Binh Dinh Province. Each Tuesday the USAID security would phone to say that the roads were unsafe (The bridges up into An Lao were controlled by the Viet Cong). At midday Margaret would go. No one could pass, except Margaret in her NZ Trekka painted with a Kiwi on the door. At the hospital she carried out innumerable immunisations, cared for the mothers with their newborns and would bring the sickest babies and children back in her jeep to Qui Nhon.

We would hear Margaret drive into the Kiwi Village after the 6pm curfew. American security would have already phoned to ask where on earth she was. As surgeon on call I would always wait for Margaret's call - the infant with diphtheria could hardly breathe and needed an emergency tracheostomy!

I remember a small child with persistent vomiting, where without any diagnostic aids Margaret diagnosed pyloric stenosis, which was relatively rare and surgery was needed. Margaret was correct and the definitive operation was successfully done.

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There is an addendum to this story:- Twenty years later I returned to Qui Nhon. One of the NZ Volunteer Service Abroad (VSA) volunteers told me there was a young man who wanted to meet with one of the doctors from NZ who had saved his life. He was now a teacher in the Highlands visiting QN. He came to meet me with his wife and child and showed me his operation scar and his hospital notes. I saw Margaret's and my handwriting and he was the pyloric stenosis baby!

NZ Prime Minister Norman Kirk visited Qui Nhon in 1970 and so became aware of Margaret's work. A stand-alone NZ paediatric Ward was then financed and built, named the Walter Nash Ward and opened by our Ambassador with a suitable plaque placed on the wall.

Margaret was evacuated with the rest of the NZ Team in March 1975. After Vietnam Margaret went to Hong Kong and worked in the Refugee Centre with the Vietnamese boat people who had arrived primarily from North Vietnam.

In 1990 she returned to Qui Nhon with a NZ medical team - to scope the level of ongoing health based support needed. Of interest was that when the North Vietnamese arrived in Qui Nhon the brass Plaque was taken off the wall of the Children's ward and hidden by a staff member. In 1990 it was able to be represented to Margaret by the Chief of the Province Hospital, Dr Thi. New Zealand was then asked to come back to continue where we had left off 15 years earlier.

We will ask for the next stages of the history of the NZ Vietnam Health Trust Child Health initiative to be documented for future newsletters.

David Morris (former General Surgeon who volunteered in Viet nam 1972 and 1974).
NZVNHT Board member and Trust Kaumatua

Pictures courtesy of : 'Margaret Neave', URL: <https://vietnamwar.govt.nz/margaret-neave>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 29-Sep-2015



Photograph in City Hospital
neonatal nursing office –
Midwifery?
Date?

2019 NZVHT BOARD MEMBERS



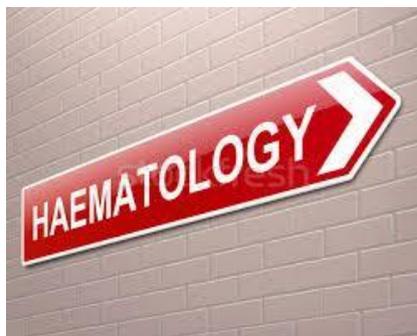
Left to Right: Frances Bennington, Treasurer; John Dunbar (head of Orthopaedic team), David Morris (Trust Kaumatua), Helen Hamer (head of Mental Health team), Johan Morreau (Chair and Paediatric team lead); Anne de Bres (Neonatal Nurse)

MEMBERSHIPS

As with any volunteer service, funding is always tight. We would welcome more financial members to assist us to carry on the vital and appreciated work in Vietnam. Individual subscriptions are only \$20 yet a few members at this level makes a huge difference in terms of being able to send nursing and equipment away with the project teams.

Please fill in the Subscription and Membership Form on page 3 of this newsletter or alternatively go to our new website – www.nzvnhealth.org and register your interest in becoming a member.

We value and appreciate your ongoing support to the NZ Vietnam Health Trust.



Revisiting Binh Dinh Province in 2019 to progress Haematology and Laboratory Services



NZ team of Elayne, Kit and Anne celebrating with a staff picnic at the end of two hard weeks

In February 2019 Kit Norrish (haematology scientist), Anne de Bres (project coordinator and key to the NZVNHT) and I returned to Binh Dinh to follow up a very successful visit in 2018. At the end of that first visit we left a substantial list of recommendations based on our observations and working alongside staff. Those specific recommendations were much appreciated by the senior medical staff.

We wondered how the year would have gone for them. On our return in February 2019 we observed many positives. Staff at Binh Dinh General Hospital had greatly improved stain quality using the commercial stain we had provided. This is so important as it is the first step in being able to interpret haematology results correctly. In addition, they had taken on board the need for regular good quality control for the analysers and had been able to purchase the appropriate internationally approved control samples. Previously these were used infrequently. Daily use is significant step towards best practice and demonstrates excellent progress. It was heartening to see that they were using only the two modern analysers as the old analysers had been retired as promised. The new analysers provide so much more information.

Since returning to New Zealand we have continued to maintain a close liaison with Doctor Loc and team in order to maintain their enthusiasm and focus by exchanging case studies and providing relevant guidelines and education resources.

The learning objectives for this 2019 visit were to consolidate the issue of correct results using information from the analysers and blood films. We also identified coagulation testing as a new focus area. Clinician engagement is very important and we hoped to involve them in the process of improving patient management by more awareness of how to interpret blood results.

It was wonderful to return to an enthusiastic team led by Dr Loc and Dr Dao. During the first week we facilitated a three-day morphology workshop at Province Hospital for doctors, laboratory scientists and technicians. They represented Binh Dinh General Hospital A & B, Medical College (DaNang University of Medical Technology and Pharmacy), City Hospital, Dermatology Hospital, Bong Son and Phu Phong Hospitals and Phu Yen Province. The second week was a two-day workshop for laboratory staff from the 11 District Hospitals. Participants' level of interest and attention was very high and they thoroughly embraced both the theory and practical teaching sessions.

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Haematology Report continued from page 10

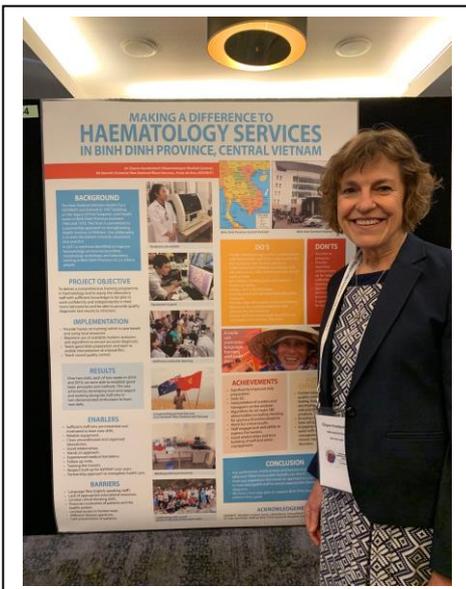
When we were not running workshops, we rolled up our sleeves and were ‘hands on’ in the laboratory to support the staff to apply practically what they had learned in the workshops. The number of seriously unwell patients was a concern and getting the staff to recognise and act upon the associated critical results was a high priority. The cases that we had illustrated in the workshops included similar cases and being able to apply these to their own patient population had obvious impact.

We also explored coagulation testing. It was surprising to find that they were routinely doing numerous tests on preoperative patients that have not been used elsewhere for many years and are no longer validated. Other useful tests were not being performed and so we gave them an introduction into appropriate testing on-site. We encouraged the staff to illustrate the techniques we had shown them, reinforcing our philosophy to train the trainer and encourage leadership. We also encouraged staff to collect and log interesting cases to share at the next workshop in 2020. This is very important to continue training and focus throughout the year.

We asked for the attendees to let us know what the barriers were to improving the quality of results in their laboratories and we felt they had become more confident to express these with us. Once again, we were very happy that our recommendations were well received. These were presented at our exit meeting with senior medical management and with Doctor Hung.



Photo Doctor Elayne and Kit working alongside staff in the laboratory



Doctor Elayne Knottenbelt standing beside the poster produced for the Indian Ocean Rim Conference

I had the opportunity to share our experience by presenting a poster at the Indian Ocean Rim conference and gave a presentation at the Australasian Haematology Annual Scientific meeting this year. There was significant interest in the project and the New Zealand Vietnam Health Trust.

Our appreciation extends to Department of Health and Province Hospital senior medical and administrators for their support for the haematology project and arranging for staff from the districts to attend the workshops. A special thank you to Doctors Loc and Dao and haematology staff for their commitment to the training programme to ensure an improved service for patients in Binh Dinh. Lastly a big thank you to our special friends and colleagues Mr Phuoc, Hien and Binh who continue to support our work with their excellent organisation and translation/interpretation services.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge the support of Medlab Central and Sonic Health who continue to generously support this project work.

BINH DINH DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH / HOMF NEONATAL RESUSCITATION PROJECT 2019 AND NEONATAL PAEDIATRIC VISIT – JUNE 2019

Our team of comprised of:

- Johan Morreau Paediatrician
- Anne de Bres Nurse Educator
- John Doran Paediatrician
- Jim Fowler Neonatal Nurse Specialist

again visited Binh Dinh on their annual education programme. It was an ambitious one based on conversations with Dr Hung Director General Department of Health, Binh Dinh Province which had also included Ms Wendy Matthews NZ Ambassador in Hanoi and her staff.



Dr Ngon, Anne de Bres, Ms Kieu (head nurse, Neonatal Unit), Hospital Personnel, Johan Morreau, Dr My, Jim Fowler and John Doran

The focus was on “ensuring that wherever there is planned delivery of a baby in Binh Dinh Province that there would also be skilled health professionals able and ready to provide newborn resuscitation if the baby needed it”. This was very consistent with a lot of the work we have been doing over a number of years and consistent with the relationships developed with the multiple hospital and community centre sites and their maternity, neonatal clinical staff etc.

With assistance from the New Zealand Embassy Head of Mission fund of a grant of \$22,850 NZ we were able to present to both Province and Bong Son Hospitals the needed simulation training baby mannequins, neonatal intubation heads, laryngoscopes for training as well as gifting all Binh Dinh sites that have planned newborn delivery at least 1-2 of the relevant ambu” bag and mask” neonatal resuscitation sets. We coordinated the purchase of these.

It was coordinated for relevant staff from the multiple hospital and community centre sites to attend our workshops which were held in the new Education Unit at Province Hospital, Quy Nhon, and at Bong Son hospital. These are the two referral units in Binh Dinh receiving newborn from their surrounding sites. We also visited the majority of the hospital and community centre sites to deliver equipment and highlight the goals of our visit.

In addition to training those directly providing care at birth we also had “train the trainer” sessions and identified for Dr Hung a range of staff with the skills and potential to provide ongoing support and supervision to each of the sites and centres.

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Planning session on arrival includes head nurse Huang, and translators Phuoc, Binh and Hien

All of those attending the workshops received memory sticks with English and Vietnamese translation of all the material presented and used (as well as a number of presentations used with previous visits) and they will ensure these are available to a small number of colleagues who were unable to attend. Importantly the subject matter included Neonatal Resuscitation, Ensuring a Good Start, Safe transfer.

NZ Embassy funding kindly supported Interpreter, translation, driver and some workshop costs.

Province Hospital

We also spent (as we usually do) a significant amount of time at Province Hospital Level 3 newborn unit. This is because it is the main referral and supporting centre for newborn intensive care throughout Binh Dinh. We have a very close working relationship with its Director, Dr B S Ngon who has with senior nursing progressively consolidated a quality focused family-centred approach to delivering care. We are keen to see this sustained as a model unit increasingly able to support developments across Binh Dinh province.

On this visit we were particularly pleased to see that:-

- Permanent medical staffing numbers are slowly increasing;
- Increased nursing numbers are being sustained;
- Nurse Kieu has been appointed as Head Nurse to the Newborn Unit;
- Doctors are increasing their confidence at stopping antibiotics when happy with the child's progress and with a normal CRP. This will help to reduce problems with Antibiotic Resistance;
- An education facility had been developed at the new partially private Province Hospital.



Vietnamese Midwifery colleagues teaching



Neonatal resuscitation equipment donated by Head of Mission Fund

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Of relevance is the table below highlighting improvements in newborn mortality relating to admissions to the Province Hospital Level 3 newborn unit over the time period of our visiting. Staff here have been well led by Dr Ngon and Head Nurse Thach in the first instance, now Nurse Kieu, well supported by a sequence of Province Hospital Medical Directors (but particularly Dr My) and Dr Hung. You can see that referral numbers to the unit have progressively increased to reflect the standing with which it is held in the province.

Provincial Hospital Neonatal Mortality Rates		
Year	% Mortality	Number of Deaths/Admissions
2005	13.42	100/745
2006	10.08	82/813
2007	9.98	92/921
2008	9.78	87/889
2009	7.89	83/1052
2010	6.63	64/965
2011	8.14	102/1253
2012	8.35	124/1485
2013	6.55	84/1282
2014	6.12	78/1275
2015	5.86	87/1484
2016	3.97	61/1535
2017	4.6	82/1782
2018	4.06	66/1627

Note: - Deaths include those who are discharged from hospital to die at home.

We really enjoyed the very busy two week visit which had an excellent level of engagement with staff and we look forward to considering progress when we return in 2020.



John Doran and Jim Fowler teaching



Dr Viet, Bong Son and Johan Morreau

Ms Wendy Matthews, New Zealand Ambassador, Hanoi, visits Province Hospital in 2019

