

No. 13

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# VIET NAM TODAY

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## Contents

1. Nhatrang . . . Center for Christian Service
6. Concepts Concerning Disease
8. The Mekong Delta
9. Impressions
10. Refugees . . . One Year Later
12. Dalat Conference Center

Back Cover: A Legend of the Jarai



*Recent Pastors' Conference held at Dalat*

Front cover: On the road to Dalat

## NEWS MAGAZINE OF THE VIET NAM FIELD

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## SUMMER 1973 NUMBER 13

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*6, 7* — Bob Greene

*8* — USIS

*9* — Pham-van-Nam

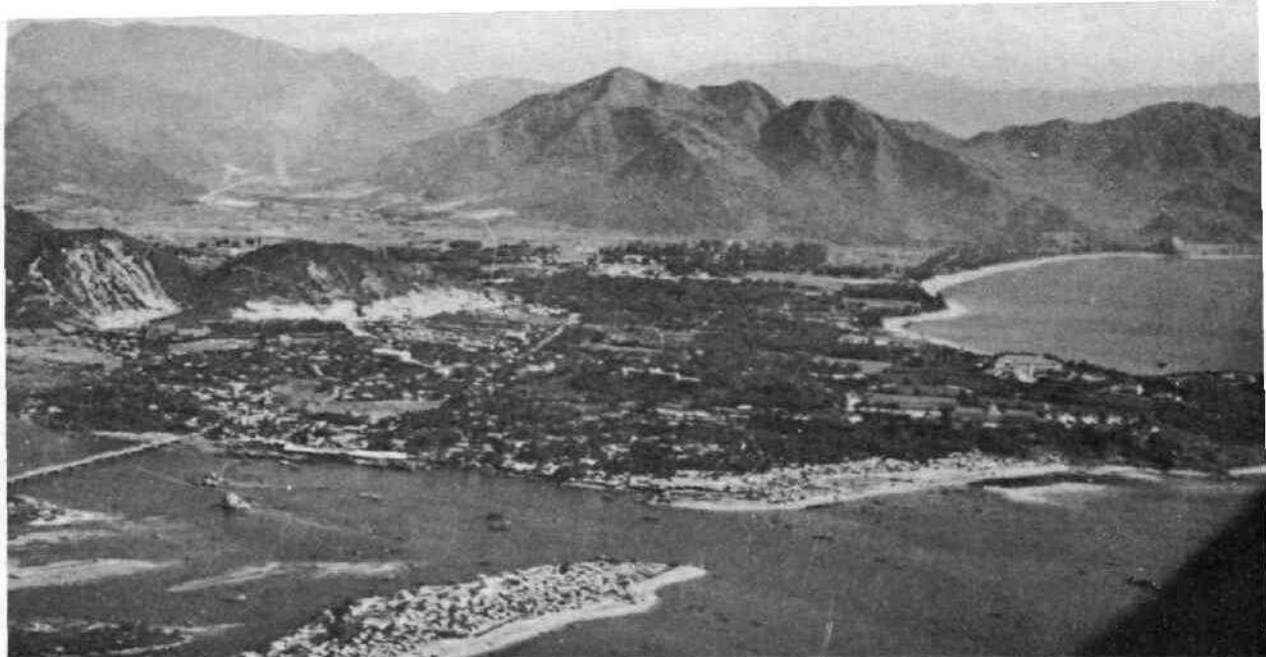
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*12, 13* — Ross Duncan

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In tại Nhà in Giồng-Tốt  
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VIETNAM TODAY



# NHATRANG... CENTER FOR CHRISTIAN SERVICE

## ... At The Military Hospital

Two weeks, three weeks, a month; no letter, no word! How his leg pained in that heavy cast! Everywhere he looked around him were wounded soldiers. Most had relatives to feed and bathe them. Here he had been a month in the hospital; he had no one. His hair was long, hot and sticky. The weather was hot and sultry.

But what was this?! Here came a group of little girls with pails, soap and water! A soft-spoken little lady seemed to be directing them. Now they came to his bed. Would he like his head washed, his hair cut, or perhaps a letter written? As the little girls washed his hair, the older ladies with them told him of Jesus who loved him. He had died for him.

Many soldiers have found Christ during the year as the Ladies Fellowship of the Nhatrang area, children from the Evangelical Church Orphanage and the young pastor on loan to World Vision serve together in the large military hospital for Two-Corp District.

Thay Mai, the pastor, personally visits the contacts made by the girls and ladies. He also conducts weekly evangelistic meetings. Dave Douglas and the students from the Bible School work with Pastor Mai, going from bed to bed witnessing. The patients comment, "Those Gospel people really show love." The answer, "God loves you even more than we do."

## ... Local Prison

Come with us to a weekly meeting. The buzzer sounds; the inmates jostle each other for a seat. Despite cramped quarters and obligatory attendance the mood seems rather light-hearted. Some light up their cigarettes; others joke around. No doubt the weekly Gospel meeting is a respite to the monotony of the prison routine. As the Bible School students sing and testify, look at the expressions on the faces in the audience. Some are bored; some assume indifference; a few are hostile; but many show deep interest. "Does God really love us; is it true?" Those first three rows are prostitutes. On the other side are petty thieves; some are dope pushers. Most are young people. After a brief service we mingle among them for personal witness. Decisions are made for Christ each week.





One day the man in charge asked Dave to step into an inner room. Dave went in, stopped, started — an American! The young man looked up and broke into a grin — God had answered prayer! He had been in prison three months; the only American there. He knew he had been arrested for changing money illegally; but how long had he to stay? What was his sentence? How could he get out? He couldn't find the answers. No one there spoke English; he didn't know Vietnamese.

With only the local food to eat, with none of the extras that other prisoners received from their families, his health was poor. In his despair he had turned to God. He had come from a God-fearing family but he had wandered far away. Dear God, forgive me, help me out of this mess, I'll follow You."

Previously he had found an English New Testament thrown away on the garbage heap. Then came the American missionary. One month later he was released and on his way home — a different man!

### ... Local Churches

The Spirit of the Lord has been moving in the My Ca area near Cam Ranh Bay. Last year revival came to the church resulting in people coming to the church to pray early in the morning. The lives of the Christians have been changed radically and people are being saved each week. Last February twenty-five new Christians were baptized. Many people are requesting the young pastor to visit and pray with them.

North of Nhatrang in the Tuy Hoa area there is a real interest in the FEBC radio broadcast from Manila. A recent broadcast invited the listeners to meet for special services at the local church. One hundred inquirers came! Every week many pray for salvation. Never has the church in that area seen such a reception to the Gospel. Many are from the upper class of society; many are students. The pastor said that church members absent from services two successive weeks upon their return felt quite lost among the many new faces in attendance.

Another student pastor from the same area reported that a Vietnamese soldier had read a christian booklet. Its message was just what he had been searching for. He found the pastor and asked to be saved. The young soldier went back to his post, told his buddies, who in turn also accepted Christ. These young soldiers then led their families to the Lord. That pastor's church is also beginning to grow.

### ... Child Evangelism Classes

Every week some 500 — 700 children hear the Gospel as 36 child evangelism classes are held throughout Nhatrang city in homes, schools, empty lots and on the seashore. Directing and supporting these classes is the Child Evangelism Committee of the Bible Institute. Elected by the student body, this committee composed of seven students coordinates the teaching programs in the local churches, appointing the teachers, preparing the teaching materials, and demonstrating the lessons. A real job, a deep responsibility, a lot of hard work! Does it pay off?

"You bet it does", says Bui Phung, (second from left, back row, top right hand picture), the Secretary of the Committee. "Keep teaching those children and you'll have results". Phung knows what he says to be true. His own life illustrates the worth of children's meetings. As a young boy he was attracted



to the Gospel when he heard other children singing. Then when the speaker talked about God, an impression was made on him he never forgot. Some years later he drifted to Nhatrang, shined shoes and picked pockets for a living. Then disgusted with that life, he worked at being a barber, then a baker. Finally one day, after losing his job and wandering aimlessly in the streets of Nhatrang, he heard children singing in the Gospel Church. He recalled that earlier children's meeting years ago where he had heard of God. He stepped inside and there found Christ. At present he is enrolled in his second year of the ThB program of study at the Bible Institute.

"Don't give up", Phung admonishes his classmates. "Teaching children pays off!"

### ... Evangelical Clinic

Continuing our Lord's ministry of opening the eyes of the blind, the Evangelical Clinic of Nhatrang, under the direction of the National Church, offers eye surgery in an area where eye diseases are very common. Trachoma, cataracts, and glaucoma are the most serious problems encountered. Since there are very few eye surgeons in Vietnam, surgery is beyond the means of most people. Therefore this clinic meets a very vital need and has an outstanding reputation throughout Central Vietnam.

Founded thirteen years ago by the Mennonite Central Committee, the initial clinic buildings were built with funds from churches in West Germany. Located next to the beach between the Nhatrang Bible Institute and the Evangelical Orphanage of Nhatrang, the facilities include a 60-bed tuberculosis unit, a 44-bed general medical ward, a 19-bed eye ward and a busy general medical clinic. The spiritual ministry of the clinic includes daily preaching services for waiting patients and bedside visits by the Christians in the community. For the last five years the clinic has also operated a nursing school, graduating an average of ten nurses each year.

### ... Evangelical Orphanage

The Evangelical orphanage was opened in 1957 under the sponsorship of Christian Children's Fund of Richmond, Va. It is under the direction of the National Church. Today there are 340 children receiving care and schooling. In addition to regular classes which extend through Junior High School, the children receive vocational training so that when they leave the orphanage they will be equipped to support themselves. Trades taught are printing, radio repair, auto and Honda repair, sewing, typing and carpentry.

A number of the teachers in Bethlehem School which serves both the orphanage and the surrounding community are themselves former members of the orphanage family. Three others are now attending the Biblical and Theological Institute. Some are already in the ministry. Another, the son of a deceased pastor, is engaged in graduate studies in the United States.

### ... The Nhatrang Biblical and Theological Institute

PARADISE POINT! How would you like to study "Romans" or "Church History" to the rhythmic sound of the sea waves a half block away? Or during the early morning chapel period feel the cool mountain breezes? Or at mid-day look out over the South China Sea under the tropical sun?





The Nhatrang Biblical and Theological Institute has beautiful buildings as well as twenty acres of excellent property. For the present the three-story administration and classroom building has adequate accommodations. The two long two-story dormitories house the student body.

Enrollment is on the upward trend. This year 160 students fill the classrooms. Another 100 students are involved in their required two-year student ministry program. These two figures bring the total enrollment to the largest in the school's fifty-three year history. With the new peace agreement, the school is anticipating many more applications.

Very few schools anywhere in the world can match the weekly evangelism outreach. Teams go to some thirty child-evangelism centers. Another twenty teams of students witness and preach at the Evangelical Clinic, in the military hospital, rehabilitation center, prison and camps. Each week decisions for Christ are made. The prayerful desire of the students as they visit is that they will be instrumental in establishing a new church.

The spiritual emphasis at the school is unique. There are 21 individual courses related directly to the Bible, of which sixteen courses are on individual books of the Bible. Likewise, the daily organized prayer meetings, the special spiritual retreats at the beginning and ending of the school year, the monthly day of prayer all indicate the intense desire that the school will not only provide academic training, but encourage a deep spiritual walk. Since the beginning of the school year a group of young men has been meeting at 5:00 each morning pleading with God for another heaven-sent revival to touch the lives of the entire school. At present this group has reorganized into prayer cells and increased to thirty groups that pray daily for revival.

Various committees (patterned after the local church organization) are chosen by the entire student body. They are responsible for school activities. The Missionary Prayer Committee promotes missions among the students. Other committees are Witnessing, Christian Education, Sunday School, Youth, and finally a Security and Hygiene Committee. This latter committee's concern is to safeguard the health and sanitary conditions of the school.

The curriculum is divided into different programs: the certificate five-year program of which two years are in practical "on-the-job" training; the ThB four-year residence program; and a two-year program of religious education which is designed to train leaders for the nearly 100 church-affiliated primary and secondary schools.

Recently two representatives for the Association of Theological Schools in South East Asia visited the school. They commended the school in the areas listed above and made suggestions for improving future programs.

An essential, continual need of any Bible Institute is the academic upgrading of its faculty. This need was partially met when Dr. Le-hoang-Phu returned to the faculty after receiving his doctorate in Church







History with highest honors at New York University. He has assumed the position of Academic Dean. At present Mr. Pham-xuan-Tin is receiving additional training. Because more trained Vietnamese teachers are needed, there needs to be a program where all the present staff can receive additional schooling.

An enlarged library to house the 10,000 books as well as to provide adequate study room in a well-lighted atmosphere is a priority need. It is a problem particularly for the students enrolled in the ThB course of study. In addition to regular required term papers, each student in his final year of residence study must submit a thesis for faculty approval. This means research requiring books and study space.

Recreational facilities are quite limited. The dirt basketball court which the students now use for soccer needs to be moved to another location, cemented and enclosed. A tennis court could also be a long-dreamed-of addition.

Although great strides have been made toward the goal of self-support for the school, inflation continues at a galloping pace. In the past two months prices on basic staples have doubled. Students are responsible for their board and partial tuition costs. The maintenance costs are supplied by the National Church, the Mission and interested friends.

The above needs point to future opportunities. They are excellent. For over 50 years since its inception the purpose of the school has been to train believers, church officers and preachers in the Word and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. With revival fires burning in many churches, there will be a far greater need for trained personnel to develop newly-born churches. With new methods of extension education being introduced and possibly many military personnel being released from active service, the school anticipates an even wider ministry in the near future.

### ...In The Future

Nhatrang is truly a center for Christian service. People are open as never before to receive the Gospel message. There is work to be done, but not nearly enough hands to do it: in military camps, the hospitals, the prisons, the ordinary people along the street, children on every corner. The hardest part of our task here is seeing the work to be done and lacking the time, and strength to do it. "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth laborers into the harvest".

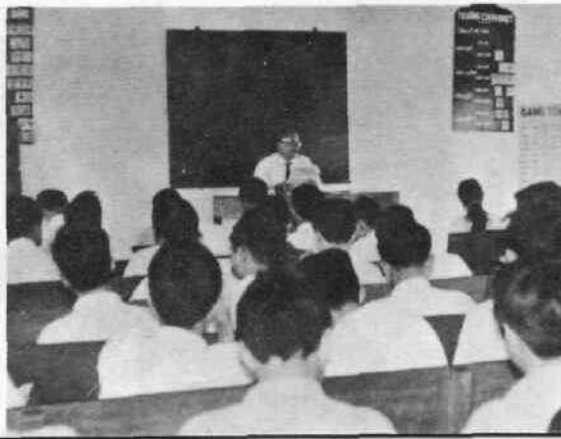
By the Nhatrang missionaries:

Dave and Helen Douglas

Bob and Elaine Greene

Royce and Betty Rexilius

Spence and Barb Sutherland



# Concepts Concerning Disease

Concepts concerning the cause and significance of illness in Vietnamese culture are changing rapidly. Although a modern understanding of disease is more prevalent today, some ancient concepts still survive primarily in rural areas.

As is true in many societies, illness is quite commonly considered a punishment for sin of either the individual or his family. For example, if a child is injured by a fall from a tree or has a seizure or mumps this is thought to be a punishment by the spirits. Perhaps the child had been disobedient, lied, or harmed a bird's nest. A goiter is sometimes thought to be due to sin in a previous life, and if corrected the individual's life will be shortened.

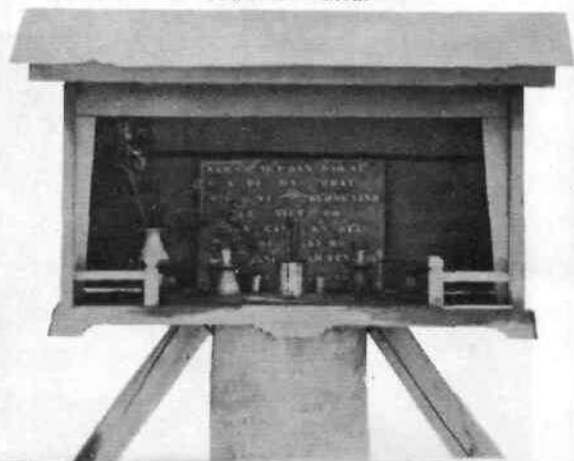
Tuberculosis and leprosy, probably the most feared diseases, are thought to be brought about by serious sins. In the case of leprosy, if the hands or feet are affected, this is thought to be due to a sin committed by the extremities involved. For this reason alone, it is understandable why people are often extremely reluctant to have these diseases diagnosed, not to mention treated, and often go to great lengths to hide the symptoms.

When a baby is born with a congenital deformity two conclusions are often reached. First, the deformity is the result of sin by the parents. For example, cleft lip is often thought to be due to adultery on the part of one of the parents. Or perhaps a person was unkind to a child with a deformity and so was punished by having a baby of his own with the same deformity. Secondly, in larger families a deformed child is thought to be a scapegoat on behalf of the rest of the family. It is felt that all of the bad luck of the family is concentrated in this individual, so that the other children will be successful and rich. If the deformity is corrected, this bad luck will be released and the other children will have problems and be failures. Therefore it is sometimes difficult to obtain the parent's consent for surgical correction of birth defects.



*practitioner of Chinese medicine*

*roadside altar*



Illness is also sometimes attributed to the spirits of dead persons. If someone suddenly becomes quite seriously ill this often raises suspicions that the spirit of a dead enemy is at work. One way of coping with this is to make a food offering on the family altar. If the graves and tombstones of the departed family members are not cared for properly, this also can be a cause of illness and trouble for the family. At least once a year family graves are repainted, and paper clothing, paper food, and paper money are





*modern medical clinic*



burned \* there as a gift to the deceased for use in the afterlife. If someone dies in an accident, a shrine is often placed beside the road at that site to shelter and placate the released spirit. Food and incense are offered there regularly by the family, and once a year the shrine is redecorated. Charms or amulets can be purchased as general preventive measures, and mirrors are often hung on the front of houses so that when evil spirits approach they will be frightened away by their own reflection.

Bad winds are considered to be a common cause of colds, flu, backache and headache. A popular form of treatment for aches and pains is pinching. This form of treatment can be performed by anyone by repeatedly pinching the skin and pulling back sharply over the painful area until the skin turns a deep red color.

Chinese medicine is still very popular in all classes of society. Using techniques passed on from father to son, the practitioner makes the diagnosis by feeling the patient's pulse and then uses various plant and animal products imported from Hong Kong to treat the disease. Some practitioners

specialize in broken bones and wrap special paper around the fracture site, using a gummy substance to keep it in place for a few weeks. Open wounds are usually sutured and the patient is given oral medication and salves or powders to promote healing.

When a young child is very sickly a strange procedure is sometimes followed. The parents place the child beside a road and watch. When he is found the parents follow the child to the home of the "Good Samaritan" and offer to buy him back. Sometimes the parents leave him with the strangers for a few days hoping that this will somehow interrupt his chronic illness.

Almost every religion in Vietnam has its own approach to healing diseases, and along with folk medicine, Chinese medicine, western medicine, and independent practitioners the Vietnamese patient of today is faced with a confusing spectrum of treatment techniques. His choice will depend on his religious background, financial means, education and past experiences.


Robert Greene, M.D.



*blind beggar*

*hunchback*





There is a Vietnamese proverb that the map of Viet Nam resembles a horizontal carrying pole with a rice basket at either end; the "rice basket" at the northern end being the fertile Red River Delta of North Viet Nam, the other "rice basket" the triangular shaped piece at the southern end and known as the ...

# MEKONG DELTA

It is picturesque country — neat rectangular rice paddies with their many shades of green, small thatch houses set among clusters of coconut palms and fruit trees, 3,000 miles of rivers and canals that crisscross the area, plied by boats of every description, carrying commerce to the nearly roadless Delta.

The area has tremendous potential of all kinds. Authorities say that if the Delta is developed along lines now proposed, a decade from now South Viet Nam may be feeding millions of people beyond its borders. With the exception of certain regions, the Delta has not felt the impact of war as have other areas of Viet Nam and life is comparatively easy and comfortable. But there is potential for trouble too; certain areas have been communist strongholds for years and in others security is tenuous at best.

Of particular interest is the potential of the Evangelical Church of Viet Nam in this Southwestern District. Fourteen new churches have been opened here in the past two years, bringing the total to 78. The goal of the District is seven more for the coming year. Though we are glad for progress being made, the ratio of these churches to a population of seven million speaks for itself: 1 church for 90,000 people.

There is potential for evangelism. A District team in cooperation with local pastors holds evangelistic meetings in churches and does intensive market evangelism. A new Desoto Microbus, the gift of Presbyterian Christians in New Zealand makes adequate transportation possible for the team and their equipment. There are plans for boat evangelism when peace comes. Many of the churches have their own Witnessing Bands and the new Evangelism Deep and Wide materials are beginning to be used to train these people for more effective witnessing. In markets, schools, hospitals, pastors and laymen are witnessing about the love and power of Christ.

Young people being trained in the yearly Short Term Bible School at Vinh Long constitute another great potential for this District. Last summer's school had 216 students. Many of these will later go on to the Nhatrang Bible School. This year the Southwestern District had 57 students at Nhatrang.

Perhaps the most important potential that exists now is the potential for revival. Last summer Rev. Sau A and Rev. Ha-Kar whom God has used in the revival in the Dalat area, ministered in the District with much blessing and a hunger was created for revival. In January of this year, Mytho, one of the largest and most influential churches in the District, began to experience true revival with genuine repentance and restitution that has transformed the church and spread to the Church Orphanage and Elementary School. Many earnest prayers are being offered that it will spread throughout the District.

Yes, the Mekong Delta is rich with potential — the potential of the 1,671 decisions for Christ made in the last year needing follow-up help and instruction; the potential of Cantho, its largest city, a university town with a population of 170,000 and only three churches; the potential for evangelism and training of the 9,738 pupils in the 38 church-operated elementary schools. For all this potential there is but Christ's age-old answer — God called, God motivated, God empowered workers. He says He will send them out to harvest the potential of the Mekong Delta if you pray.

# Impressions

**B**efore leaving Australia for Viet Nam many voices came to us uttering dismal, political prophecies on the future of Viet Nam — "How foolish to send missionaries to a land that is already doomed," "I'll give Viet Nam another few months, and then..." The voices did not cease when we came to Viet Nam. In fact they were more numerous. Voices of discouragement, pessimism and hopelessness for the future. Twenty months have now passed. Viet Nam still exists, Christians meet to worship, many have been born into the Kingdom of God, and revival has been experienced in many areas.

It is not too difficult to accumulate facts and envision a dismal future for this land. But if we do, our faith will be chained to a future predicated by man's finite reasoning. It is true that as Christians we must live realistically and in the present. But if we allow human speculation alone to dominate our future Christian service, how can we ever expect to be an encouragement and spiritual inspiration to the people of Viet Nam? God does work logically, and humanly speaking we can state that His ways are reasonable. But sometimes it seems as if He chooses otherwise, and we ask, "What are You doing Lord, what are Your purposes in allowing this to happen?" Though we do not understand we must accept it as His will.

At times during the past year I have felt disheartened when I speculated on the future of this land. This naturally does not help with language study when the going is tough, or when the Mission is going through a difficult phase. Many times the Lord has encouraged me from Psalm 76:10, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee, and the remainder of wrath shalt Thou constrain." As I dwell on this verse I am reminded that the Lord has absolute control over every situation. The future is not dominated by man, but by the will of God. There are many things that I cannot understand but the Lord is in control.

It is interesting to note the varying impressions of new missionaries concerning the land, the people and the future of Viet Nam. I have often been asked, "How do you feel about Viet Nam? Do you like living here? What has impressed you most since coming here?" In Romans 5:19 we read, "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners," and Paul reminds the Corinthian Christians that "in Adam all men die!" In Viet Nam, as elsewhere, the universality of sin within the human race is very evident. No nation is spared from the consequences of Adam's sin. In Viet Nam it has been possible to witness the results of man's sinful nature released in all its fury. These people share with my people the inherited problems of Adam's sinful nature. I have been surprised at just how much we Westerners have in common with the Vietnamese. If a list were compiled of that which is good in mankind, and that which is evil, we would find the same traits in people living in Australia, New Zealand, the United States and Canada. I have also been impressed by the common graces of God's Spirit. The same Spirit of God Who has formed so many lovely Christ-like Christians in my country, has also performed the identical work in the lives of many people here in Viet Nam.

Tom Stafford, a veteran of the Gemini 6 and 9 and Apollo 10 space flights said as he looked down upon the earth from the space ship, "You do not look down at the world as an American but as a human being."

I find that I have a long way to go in my understanding of the Vietnamese people and the Montagnards. There are many areas within their cultures that are difficult to accept. But how much easier it is to love these people and accept them when we see ourselves not as Australians, New Zealanders, Americans or Canadians, but as fellow human beings in Adam, sharing a common problem, all in need of a common salvation.

Even though a "cease fire" has now been signed there are many difficult and precarious days ahead for South Viet Nam. Please pray for the people of Viet Nam and for all who serve here. Our faith must rest in what God is, not in human logic and speculation. Pray that all of God's people in this land might reflect His greatness to a needy people.

Bruce Downes



# Refugees... one year

This year has proven Dieu Huynh correct when he said he believed that God brought the Stieng people out of An Loc in order to have another opportunity to hear the Gospel.

Today in the An Loi refugee camp there are 527 Christian families and the number of believers has increased from 1,000 to 2,300. Their church building consists of two large army tents. Because of the lack of space only a certain percentage of Christians are able to worship together on Sunday, but during the week most of the Christians are meeting regularly in prayer cells located throughout the camp.

Last year, Dieu Huynh requested the Evangelism Deep and Wide office to assist him in reaching the 10,000 people of his tribe with the gospel.

The first step was to hold a short term Bible School at the camp. Sixty-five attended the classes which were taught by leaders of the EDW program.

At the conclusion of the school, prayer cells were organized and Dieu Huynh chose sixteen prayer cell leaders. He immediately began training them, using EDW materials. One evening a week he would teach a lesson to his lay leaders. The following evening they would re-teach the same lesson to their prayer cells. This program has continued ever since. Although some material has been mimeographed for those who can read, flash cards, developed from the training materials, have proven most effective in teaching the many illiterates. During the first six months through individual witness and the prayer cell ministry, 450 people made decisions and were absorbed into the life of the prayer cells.

In November a second training session was held primarily for prayer cell leaders. This time a course in leadership was included and applied directly to the prayer cell leader. It was surprising how these lay leaders, many with little or no education were

able to grasp principles of Christian leadership and teaching methods. Lay leaders were encouraged to further develop their cells, using methods given them in the course. Training in personal witness and follow-up was emphasized. The prayer cells were to set individual group goals, to make them stronger outreach centers. Each cell was set up as a miniature church in a way that would make these people familiar with basic church organization. They were taught how to keep simple records to make it easier for Dieu Huynh when they return to their former homes. There were 15 different villages represented at the training session, providing potential leadership for as many new congregations.

In December a week of special meetings was held. During that time there were 578 decisions for Christ. These new believers are receiving teaching through the prayer cells. Since then many more have prayed through the witness of prayer cell members and there are now Christians from over thirty villages. The number of prayer cells has grown to forty. Future short term schools are planned to provide further training before the camp is disbanded. Also, because of the active prayer cell leaders at An Loi, Dieu Huynh has been able to open preaching points in two other camps where he is following the same training program.

In contrast to An Loi (near Saigon) are the results from the Easter Offensive in the Northern provinces. For sheer numbers the people of the Quang Tri refugee camps cannot be equalled. Out-numbering the Stieng by a ratio of almost 60 to 1, they have been settled in more than thirty camps in the three main areas of Chu Lai, Danang and Hue (Phu Bai).

Although the ratio of new believers to the refugee population is much smaller here than that of the Stieng, there are now congregations in half of the camps. Area pastors have taken responsibility for

*Dieu Huynh*



*Stieng congregation*



# later

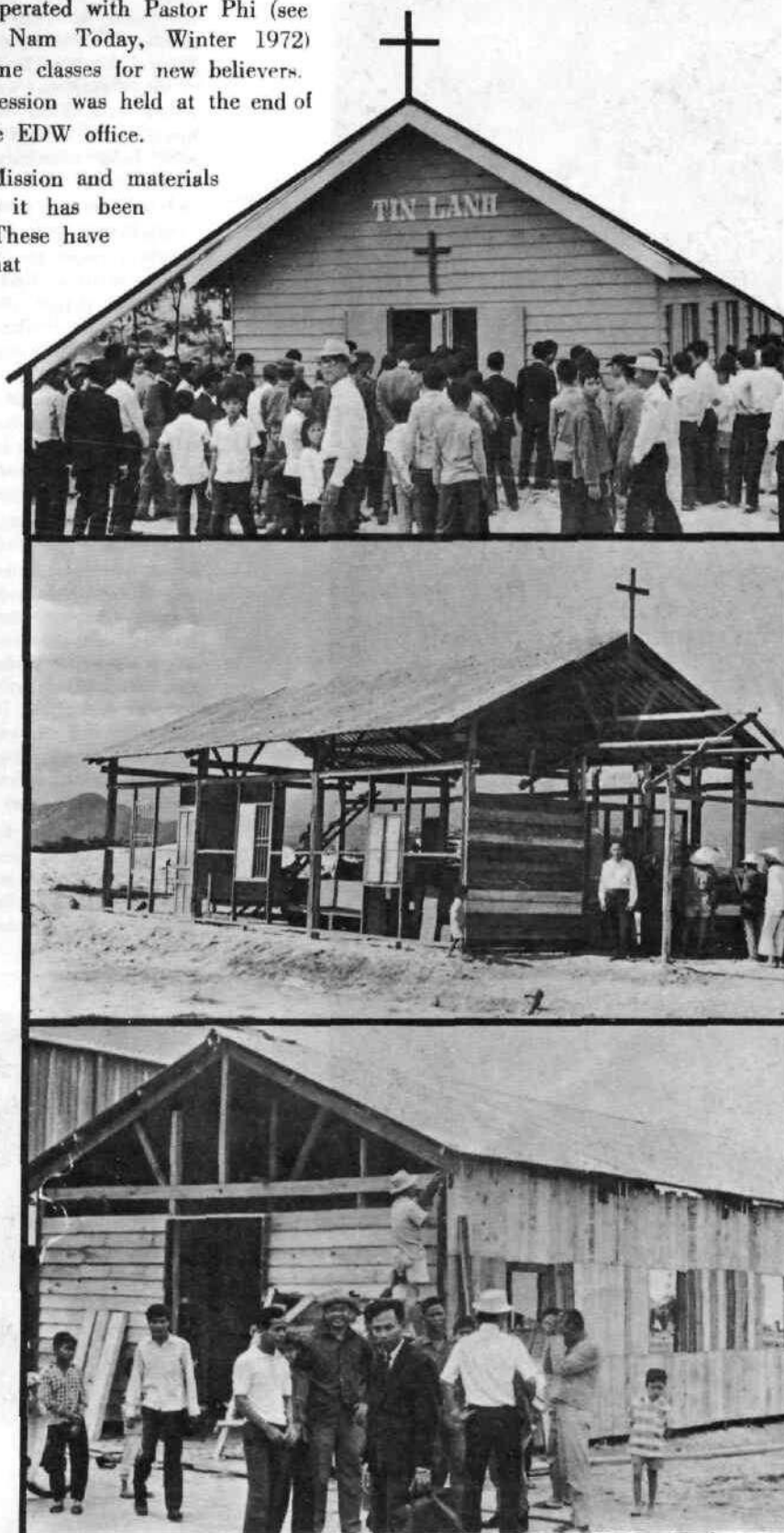
these new groups. They have cooperated with Pastor Phi (see "Flight from Quang Tri" Viet Nam Today, Winter 1972) in evangelistic outreach and some classes for new believers. The first lay leadership training session was held at the end of February with assistance from the EDW office.

With financial help from the Mission and materials donated by U.S. military forces it has been possible to build fifteen chapels. These have been constructed in such a way that when the congregations return to their own villages they will be able to dismantle and take them along.

Before the Easter offensive there were but two small Vietnamese congregations in the province of Quang Tri and one among the Bru tribespeople. During the past year over 2,000 of the Quang Tri refugees have prayed for salvation and today there are fourteen groups of Vietnamese believers and three of Bru. One of the Bru congregations is in the Danang area, another is in a resettlement camp near Baumethuot while the third remained in Thua Thien province.

As we review the events of the past year we continue to see God's sovereign presence in the affairs of Viet Nam. The refugee camps have provided a unique opportunity to present God's love to a disrupted people. Perhaps in no other way could so many have a chance to hear and accept the Gospel. At the same time it has been possible to establish the new believers in their faith and train lay leaders to share the responsibility of leading them, first in the camps and then in the future when they return to their homes or are re-settled in new areas.

Doris Irwin





# Dalat Conference Center

by Dave Hartzfeld



Just as war has affected many mission programs in the past thirty years, it has also influenced the property at Dalat known as the "Villa Alliance." The land was purchased in 1928 to be developed into a school for missionary children from Indochina. Rev. and Mrs. Herbert Jackson (soon to be known as Uncle and Auntie Jackson to many children) were assigned to open the school. The school opened in 1929 with three students in a rented house, while a large two-story house and servants' quarters were being constructed. The school grew eventually to twelve grades with many teachers and more "uncles" and "aunties" serving missionary children from South East Asia.

While caring for the missionary children the Jacksons caught a vision for the many tribesmen they saw in Dalat as they went to market. However, the French government would not permit the Jacksons to go out to the villages to preach to "these *moi*," meaning savages. But the tribesmen could come to the Villa! So a Bible School was opened in the servants' quarters for the tribesmen. The Jacksons taught during the noon rest hour training a number of leaders and sending them out into the villages to start churches. In the early 1930's when the Jacksons were finally permitted to visit the villages, many churches were already in existence.

During the Second World War the French Vichy government placed the missionaries at the Villa under house arrest for three months. Then late in 1943 they were transferred to an internment camp at Mytho. The French agreed to rent the Villa but never paid anything. Soon the Japanese took over and used the property for a garrison of soldiers building underground tunnels (which still exist). One day a Japanese officer came to missionary-internee Mr. E. F. Irwin in Mytho to pay the rent on the Villa for the French. Mr. Irwin asked when the Japanese were going to pay for their use of it. The Japanese officer grumbled but returned a few days later with Japan's share.

After the war the school reconvened at the Villa providing once again a home and school for "M.K.s". But in 1965, due to increased war activity, the children and teachers were airlifted to Thailand for "safer" studies. But the Villa Alliance remained in Dalat.





Then in September 1966 the Villa became a Vietnamese language school for new missionaries. The dormitories became "apartments" and the former music and science rooms were filled with the strange sounds of a tonal language. Two former missionaries to Cambodia, Ruth and Ed Thompson, attended the language school. They later gave their lives at Banmethuot. At Tet 1968 Viet Cong roamed the property while 34 language students huddled in a small, obscure back room. After five or six days all were safely evacuated and the language school fell nearly silent with only the echo of gunfire stirring the cool, crisp air.

When Dalat returned to "normal" a few missionaries returned to live in the Villa. All of them worked among the tribes including a niece of the Jacksons. Some of the dormitory rooms were used for a hostel for tribal girls. Bible studies were started for tribal youth who would become the core of the revival among the tribal churches (see *Viet Nam Today* Winter 1972, p. 8).

1972 brought yet another change to the Villa. It was to become a conference center. The Ross Duncans were assigned the task of renovation and completed the work in record time. Two classrooms now serve as a large chapel while another classroom can accommodate a large discussion group. The dining room and dormitories can easily serve 150 people. There also is a large gymnasium, tennis court, and ball field.

During the first nine months of operation, the Dalat Conference Center hosted fourteen conferences — Inter-Varsity youth, Church Growth specialists, Chinese Sunday School teachers, the Southern Baptist missionaries, Wycliffe translators and the National Pastors' Conference. At the latter conference 400 pastors crowded the Villa and the adjacent Tribes Center to hear messages by Rev. Sabodh Sahu (India) and Rev. Pak Octavianus (Indonesia). It was from this conference that the revival fires were carried to My Tho where that church is experiencing God's unusual blessing.

Thus the "Villa" continues its unusual ministry serving the peoples of Asia. On your next visit to the East plan to spend a few days at the old "Villa."



## A LEGEND OF THE

# JARAI

Long ago in the dawn of time, there lived a very beautiful princess whose name was H'Bia. Many suitors tried to win her hand but her father would not give his consent for her to marry. The king wanted his daughter to have a husband who was worthy of her, and a man who would be an asset to the king's household.

Luar, whose name means the deceiver, was in love with the princess and one day devised a plan to please the king and thereby win H'Bia for his bride. One night Luar went to the home of a man he knew who had two pet birds. Luar stole the birds, took them home, lined them up and neatly put one arrow through them both. The next day he very proudly presented the two birds on the one arrow as a gift to H'Bia. When the king saw this gift he exclaimed that the princess must marry Luar at once because he had proved his ability to care for H'Bia and a family through his skill with the bow.

Not many days later, the wedding was planned and Luar proudly claimed the beautiful princess for his wife. Shortly afterwards the villagers came to the king for help because the wild boar were eating the rice in the fields. If Luar was such a great hunter, then he should go to the fields, to kill the wild boar for the villagers and save their crops. So, at the king's request, Luar and H'Bia went to the field that evening to await the wild boar. When night fell Luar was very much disturbed and afraid, because he knew that he was no hunter. In order to avoid facing the problem Luar promptly went to sleep. Later when H'Bia heard the boar coming through the fields she was frightened and tried frantically to awaken Luar, but he snored on. When their grunting came so close that H'Bia feared for her life, she took up the bow and mustering all of her strength, killed the wild boar herself.

The next morning Luar proudly carried the boar into town, muttering to himself, "Luar, Luar, Luar!" He was hailed a hero and feted as a true prince of the people.

A couple of months later the villagers came to ask for Luar's assistance once again. This time the elephants were plundering the fields. Now, if Luar, knowing his true skill with the bow, was frightened of the boar, he was terrified of facing an elephant. Still, in order to maintain his public image he took his wife and went to the fields. As he had done the time previously, when night fell he went to sleep. And as before, when H'Bia heard the elephants approaching she tried to rouse Luar. But he would not wake up. H'Bia, gaining courage from her previous success, took the bow and put two arrows through the elephant, killing it. After H'Bia had drifted off to sleep, Luar awoke, went into the field and tied up the elephant's feet. When the villagers came out to the fields in the morning to see what had happened, they found Luar in a fit of rage, angrily cursing his wife for killing the elephant that he had so skillfully captured alive and bound so that it could not escape. The villagers scorned H'Bia's impulsive action and praised Luar all the more for his skill and bravery.

... BUT H'Bia knew.

