

SUMMER '67

VIETNAM TODAY



VIETNAM TODAY

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VIETNAM FIELD

CHRISTIAN AND MISSIONARY ALLIANCE

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Confident

WHAT confidence is this wherein thou trustest?" II Kings 18:19.

When the church in Vietnam is viewed against the background of escalated military activity, determined communist propaganda, soaring economic inflation, and well-organized and entrenched religious groups, one might well question the source of our confidence wherein we trust. How is it that we can boldly acclaim that greater opportunities than ever before are open to us? Are we visionaries to believe that tremendous advances will be realized in the months and years ahead?

Hezekiah, Judah's good king, was besieged by a vastly superior foe. With taunting words the enemy questioned the wisdom of his further defending the city. How could he hope for survival? Where had he placed his confidence? In what was he trusting? It was said of Hezekiah that "He trusted in the Lord God; He clave unto the Lord and departed not from following Him; and, the Lord was with him and he prospered whithersoever he went." Herein lies our confidence! As He is with us, surely our way will be prospered! Surely great victories will be realized!

Tremendous happenings have continued to be the order of the day throughout Vietnam. It seems almost incredible that the social structures of the people could withstand the upheavals and tensions which have persisted. We marvel at the

capacity of the population to carry on the normal pursuits of life despite the confusion of political uncertainty and the heartache and suffering caused by war. In this land where war has become the controlling factor in every home and hamlet, no family has escaped the tragedy of some relative being killed.

God's faithfulness in prospering his people individually and the church as a whole has been marvelously real. Stories of His protection and deliverance of His people in the midst of great danger come from every part of the country. He has proven abundantly able again and again.

Our prayer is that the Christians will not only exemplify a faith that endures hardship and difficulty, even suffering, but that also they will be imbued with a spirit of love, a spirit of zeal and sacrifice, so that the message of His grace may be effectively given to every individual throughout the land. The opportunities are unbounded. Everywhere are open doors with no restrictions. The only limitations imposed upon us are those of our own making. God is able! With Him all things are possible! We pray that this may be the greatest year of victory that the church has ever known and may simply be a stepping stone toward an ever more rapidly-expanding church and witness for Christ throughout the length and breadth of this land, if He shall tarry.



*Written by
Reverend Gordon Cathey who,
pictured with his wife and a
military friend, pastors the
International Church in Saigon, Vietnam.*

the third man

Clarence looked different from all the rest. We do not see many men in Navy uniform in Saigon, but it wasn't the uniform that made the difference. It was the look in his face of having at long last reached "home"; of finding Christians in Saigon who could talk his language and share his joy.

Clarence had been saved only a few months before he shipped out from the West Coast on a Navy cargo ship, destination unknown. To his great disappointment he could not find one man on board who was interested in Jesus Christ. It was fair to say that their world, other than manning a United States naval ship, was wine, women and song. To a young man newly delivered from this sort of life it was a depressing six weeks being confined to a small ship where language was profane, conversation was sprinkled with lustful tales of conquest, and no one seemed to have respect for anyone else. By the time the ship had reached Subic Bay, Clarence had poured out his lament to God, "Please take me off this ship. I'm not doing them any good and they certainly aren't doing me any good."

The Philippines offered a brief respite to Clarence as he discovered fellowship and companionship in a servicemen's center in Subic Bay.

But the day soon arrived, inevitable in the life of a sailor, when the gangplank was pulled aboard and this young Christian found himself the prisoner once again of an ungodly world. When would the Lord hear his prayer and see that he was reassigned to a ship that had at least one Christian on it?

This is the story Clarence told the Catheys on that hot, humid day in January, 1966. When the ship had reached the Saigon harbour, the crew, all except Clarence, had scattered in search of bitter pleasures that strangely satisfy unregenerate men. But Clarence, as luck would have it — or as wise men know — directed by God's Spirit, found an invitation to visit the International Church in the tract rack at the U.S.O. With little thought for food he hopped a taxi and within ten minutes was standing at the parsonage door, face beaming, hand outstretched, "home" at last.

The fellowship that followed was indescribably sweet. It was in a Tuesday Bible study and subsequent conversations that Clarence began to realize that God had not forgotten him. Perhaps he was the missionary, the witness God had assigned to that cargo ship. Hadn't Jesus prayed so long ago, "Father, I pray Thee not to take them out

of the world, but to keep them from the evil one . . . As Thou hast sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world." With a renewed commission, a handful of gospel tracts, and several copies of "Hymns of the Christian Life", Clarence waved farewell and went back to his "world".

Almost three months slipped by. Saigon was literally sweltering in heat as Gene McGee began evangelistic meetings in the International Church. The first man to walk forward and accept Christ was a tall, handsome Negro dressed in civilian clothes. After prayer and counsel he was introduced to the pastor. When asked, "How long have you been in Saigon?", he replied, "Just since yesterday when my ship arrived."

"Your ship," I asked. "What ship?" I didn't need to ask — almost intuitively I knew. It was Clarence's ship, that floating Sodom and Gomorrah. Where was Clarence? He was on duty, but he had seen to it that the one man who had become interested and inquisitive about the gospel was present for this evangelistic service. Glowing with the joy of forgiveness, the young man went back to ship that night, but not before he said with enthusiastic fervor, "Clarence and I are working on the third man!"

evidence of *Life*

WHEN a young church accepts the challenge of missions, it is a good indication of strong faith in her leaders and her pastors. However, when the program for missions, once begun, is seen to take root, grow and prosper, this is an evidence of similar faith at the "grass-roots" level. For the success of any missions program lies as much in the hearts of the men, women, young people, and children of the congregations as it does in the Spirit-filled leadership of the church.

When the Evangelical Church of Viet Nam (C&MÁ) voted to establish a committee to promote home and foreign missions, it was feared by some that this new burden of responsibility might cause financial hardship to the still struggling local churches. However, the majority stood on the side of the young pastor who had led in inviting a missions representative to speak at his church. Afterwards he said with assurance, "I was not worried; and when I invited you to raise financial support for missions in my church, our local treasury increased. Just as our well which

was formerly used by only five families now supplies 25 families, so I was confident there would be no lack when we began our missions program."

From Ca Mau in the south to Hue in the north, Christians are organizing missionary prayer bands. Pastor's wives and the women of the churches are raising funds as well as praying for missions. Children's groups have sent offerings from raising chickens or selling fruit to help support a missionary. The young people attending the Nhatrang Bible College have rallied to the challenge and have a missionary society of their own, giving in addition to prayer support, monthly offerings from their own meager resources.

The national church is at present supporting four full-time missionaries working within the country amongst the tribespeople, and one couple working in Laos. This is yet only a beginning, but an encouraging one — an evidence that God is working in the Church of Viet Nam, for around the world a missionary-minded church is known to be a living church.

by Bobbie Reed

LIFE more abundant" in large Chinese characters caught my eye as I entered the dining room. One hundred excited Chinese young people were enjoying their evening meal. Away from bustling Saigon at the lunar New Year season, it was refreshing to be at Vung Tau by the ocean. Many young people faced severe parental opposition for attending the conference at an all-important worship season.

Out of a deep knowledge of the Word, Mr. Woo-Yan-Tak of Hong Kong gave heart-searching messages well sprinkled with practical illustrations.

Being counselor to ten young people was a new experience for me. Imagine my surprise to learn this included leading my group each morning in studying Romans chapters 1-8! This meant I had to forfeit the afternoon recreation period in order to prepare the next day's lesson in Chinese.

For six days, from the rising hour at six when the strains of "Make Me a Blessing" filled the air, until "lights out" at ten-thirty, every minute was full. Private devotions, group prayers, a deeper-life message, Bible study, and discussion on problems met in the Christian life, were scheduled throughout the morning. The afternoon was given over to rest hour (strictly enforced!) and organized recreation — swimming, hiking or playing games. Problems and conference needs were discussed at the gathering of group leaders and counselors just before the supper hour. A lecture on Church History preceded the evening message and opportunity was given in the evening prayer groups to share with others the Lord's blessings.

Problems were at a minimum, food was delicious, cooperation was remarkable — all adding up to the best conference Mr. and Mrs. Paul Contento (OMF missionaries) have directed. Their years of experience in this type of work were of tremendous value in the preparation and smooth running of the conference.

The young people are now back in their old familiar surroundings. May the "life more abundant" in Christ be their daily experience enabling them to be true overcomers!



Searching the Scriptures

Chinese youth camp

by Betty Arnold

Everyone washed his own cup, bowl and chopsticks



DELTA

DELTA

DELTA

DELTA

THE lace cloth was pushed back on the dining table as the two men sat hunched in concentration over something of obvious interest. Your first impression was that a close chess match must be in progress. However, a second glance showed the objects of interest to be several small pieces of rather rumpled paper on which the men were making notations.

Just back to Saigon after a 1,500 kilometer survey trip through Vietnam's southern Delta, missionaries Paul Ellison, formerly of Cambodia, and Dave Douglas, of Vinh Long, were full of excitement and enthusiasm at what they'd seen. They were eager to list all the statistics they had gained, the opportunities they had found, and all the miracles of split-second timing the Lord had performed for them as they spent a week travelling through what is often mistakenly felt to be one of the closed areas of the country.


In the article, "Barriers are Down" in the October 1966 issue of *VIETNAM TODAY*, the challenge of the Cambodian-speaking population of the Delta was presented. It was stated that the gospel had never been taken to these four to six hundred thousand descendents of Cambodia who had been conquered by the Vietnamese over 200 years ago. With these facts in mind Mr.

Douglas and Mr. Ellison had headed south to gain the information needed before missionaries could be assigned to meet this need.

Everywhere, from Rach Gia on the west to Soc Trang on the east and up to the very edge of Cambodia, the two were received cordially by district officials who gave them every encouragement to come and work with the Cambodians of the districts. An American military advisor expressed his realization of the need and importance of this strategically located minority group when he said, "Anyone who will come to help the Cambodians here is a friend of ours!"

It seemed evident that both Vietnamese and American officials were in favour of the mission plan. But the most important indication was that God had placed His stamp of approval time and time again as meetings and contacts were made in miraculous ways.

According to the survey the unreached Cambodian population of the Delta numbers not 600,000 but closer to one million. God has provided a Cambodian-speaking missionary couple with a desire to go to them, and by July they hope to be settled among these Cambodians in the Delta.



fresh graves

by Bobbie Reed

FOR months illness had plagued the villages of the Cheo Reo basin. Almost nightly the beat of the gongs rang through the darkness to mark the passing of another victim of the mysterious fever.

In one house several children lay feverish and restless. Beside them their mother slept fitfully. The beat of the gongs still throbbed in her ears and perhaps the question haunted her, "Will they beat next for *my* children?"

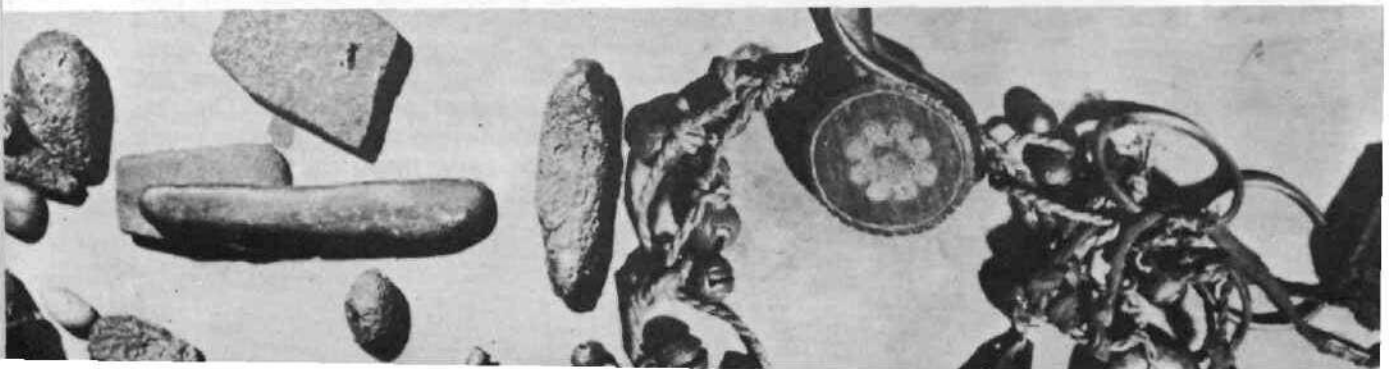
As she dozed "the spirits" came to her in a dream naming the cause of her children's illness . . . their souls had been eaten by the members of a certain household in the same village. The six members of the accused household were revealed in the dream as being "rohung", humans whose soul leaves them during sleep and eats the souls of others causing sickness and death. A rohung, by tribal custom, must die.

Going stealthily to others whose families had been attacked by the strange illness, the distraught mother told her dream. No one questioned the "spirit-given" revelation and a plan was agreed upon.

A few mornings later the sun rose to reveal six fresh graves among the trees outside the village —graves hastily dug to bury the brutally slashed and stabbed bodies of an old grandparent, a mother and father, and their three children.

Back in the village the women pounded rice for the morning meal. Men prepared for the day's work. No one seemed greatly upset . . . for after all, that whole family was rohung, the dream had proved it, and rohungs must die.

Is there nothing to break the death-hold of the spirits? Is there no power that can change the terrible sentence of such a spirit revelation? Only a higher revelation, the revelation that One has already died that all others may live. Only as the revelation of life in Christ is brought to these people can they ever be free from the inexorable sentence of death.





Bending Bamboo

by Tom Stebbins

The urgency of winning and training youth for Christ has been most graphically illustrated by Vietnamese poet Nguyen-Trai in his few lines of verse which in English might read,

"The bamboo shoots will bend with ease,
Impossible when grown to trees."

In the ancient capital of Hue, more than anywhere else in Vietnam, the gospel encounters strong resistance. With an unbending adherence to the traditional ways of the past, her older generations turn deaf ears to the good news of Christ's transforming power. Hue's student population, on the other hand, is revolting against much of the past, rising in protest even against some of the progress of the present, and is reaching out for something new, real, and satisfying. Greatly hampered by their elders, they are nevertheless quite receptive to the regenerating message of the Cross.

It was with a vision to reach these pliable and responsive youth that the Evangelical Youth Center was launched six years ago in a large French villa in the heart of the educational section of the city. From the start promising young men with great potential turned to Christ and united with other de-

icated Christian young people to witness to friends and fellow students. Many young people have found Christ, grown in grace, and moved on to other areas of witness and leadership in their church and nation.

Today the French villa has been completely remodelled into an attractive, modern center for youth evangelism and education with auditorium, bookstore, three classrooms, missionary apartment and student hostel. And a team consisting of pastor, missionary, and eight Christian students is working together to carry out the same original principles of Christian witness and training.

First we endeavor to attract non-Christian youth through carefully organized English classes, reaching by this means over 500 youth every week. We then seek to win them to Christ through informal English-Vietnamese gospel services on Saturday evenings in the youth auditorium. Many of these English students remain after the service, or some return later to enquire further about the gospel or to receive Christ as their Saviour.

Next we train the youth in Bible study, prayer and witnessing. Through our weekly Bible class we strive to relate their young lives and everyday problems to practical

scriptural principles. The youth themselves have initiated a prayer and Bible reading service which meets every morning at 5:30. An amazing spirit of harmony marks each day born together in prayer; unusual blessing and unexplainable miracles attend the ministry of the youth center as a direct answer to the simple faith of these youth. Training in witnessing is not limited to the classroom, or youth auditorium. Regularly the youth accompany us for evangelistic thrusts into the university, prison, military hospital, military camps, city parks and refugee camps. The youth participate in all of these endeavors — painting banners, passing out tracts, setting up equipment, teaching children, singing, ushering, testifying and counselling.

Through "work scholarships" the youth center is maintained in good repair, the students carrying the entire load of painting, gardening, mowing and cleaning. In a culture where the white-collared student holds a pencil and the black-clad laborer carries the hoe, this is quite an innovation.

Finally, we aim in everything to prepare these youth for leadership in their church and society. Some have already developed into promising "bamboo pillars." One is now pastoring a new church. Several others are studying for the ministry in schools here in Vietnam or abroad. Some have been elected to their local church Board of Deacons, while others are serving their nation as officers or soldiers in the Vietnamese armed forces.

But many more "pillars" are needed in Vietnam. For today, as never before, it is the young people who are rising to prominent positions of leadership. If Christianity is to have a place in building this young emerging Republic, we must win and train more of her youth. One day these "shoots" will have grown to "towering trees." We must shape them now, while they can still be bent.

THE MNONG



A WEALTHY Muong man, through fear of angered spirits following the death of a loved one, burned his house and all his possessions and fled to the jungle. For years he lived as a fugitive, frequently burning his little bamboo shelter and moving on in an attempt to elude the pursuing spirits and find peace. In desperation he at last returned to the edge of his old village and set up a whole series of spirit altars hoping that this might bring him the freedom he was seeking. Shortly after, he heard of Christ and His finished work. He believed and found the protection and peace he sought in the power of Christ's shed blood.

There are no telephones in Muong country but news of God's working travels fast. Families, and in some cases whole villages, are turning to the Lord, largely as a result of the individual witness of the enthusiastic Christians.

by Merle Douglas



Where Bob Henry writes the course



Svea Henry types an endless number of stencils

Language School

*by Bob Henry
pictures Ed Thompson*

Small classes — quick progress



"It's amazing what I can say," exclaimed one of the students, "and I've only been studying for fourteen days!"

Yes, fourteen packed days of intensive Vietnamese language study, with many more days, weeks, and months ahead. Many hours are spent in constant drilling complete with two hours per day in our ten-booth Tandberg language laboratory where the students are monitored and given individual correction.

What a contrast to years gone by! Our missionaries used to struggle with their language study through the medium of old French dictionaries, digging out the terms they needed and often forced to use teachers of an unacceptable dialect area.

A few "tips" from Mr. Mieng, National Church President





Class 2 with the teacher

A major break-through in our approach to Vietnamese language study came when Dr. William Smalley, along with the assistance of Mr. Nguyen-van-Van, produced an organized course of study which the missionaries have used over the last ten years. With more new missionaries expected during the next five year period, another "great leap forward" was called for. This advance has come in the form of a language school which utilizes all of the latest methods and techniques of language teaching. It is our conviction that the mission should take full advantage of the latest developments and discoveries emerging from the fields of



In the language laboratory

linguistic science and behavioral psychology. Special materials are being written to meet the specific needs of the total language learning program. Eight teachers have been trained to use these techniques and to write materials of their own as well. To date we have seventeen students. Five classes are held simultaneously representing five different levels of study progress.

May the Lord continuously impress upon the hearts of one and all the dynamic motivation of reaching the lost with the message of Christ's love and soon thrust them forth into the whitened harvest field as sharp, reaping instruments in the Master's Hand.

Time out for refreshment . . .



and a breath of fresh Dalat air



ON THE WARFRONT

by Helen Mae Douglas

In the early hours of the morning, we were suddenly awakened by the whine of bullets ripping through our house. Two armed bands had opened up on each other — one group was surrounding our house and the other was on the road directly across the canal from us. My wife and I and six of our children dived for the trench and miraculously made it unharmed. Almost immediately we realized our two youngest children were still in their bed. By now the air was full of flying lead. Somehow I crawled out of the trench, passed the front door, scooped up the two howling babies and plunged back into the shelter unscathed. In the midst of this horror we sat and waited for the battle to end.

Finally both sides retreated. I looked around at my family. Not one was scratched! Praise God! When morning came the government soldiers called to us, "Is anyone still alive?" Our house had been riddled. Ten chickens were dead, the sow had been hit three times, an unfortunate frog squatting in the corner of the house was shot through the middle. The door by which I had had to pass three times had fourteen bullet holes scattered evenly from top to bottom, and the bed from which I had snatched the infants was gouged with bullet scars. The officer in charge, after examining the house, looked at us wonderingly and mumbled, "You people must live right."

Last Sunday my whole family and I were in church. You know how we usually leave one or two at home to watch the house because there are no locks. Well, last Sunday I took everyone! God was prompting me although I didn't realize it. When we got home from church there

was our house, squashed flatter than a pressed rice cake. A bomb had hit it squarely in the center. Everything I owned was ruined, but praise God, every member of my family is here today unhurt.

a little old grandmother testified in church saying, "Last week I was anxiously eyeing the helicopters swarming overhead. I knew that soon the bombs might begin to fall. Then, just as I expected, the first shell dropped and exploded. I dived for the trench in my house, barely making it, when another shell exploded right next to it. The heat of it made me clamber out and crawl to the river, just as another shell fell and blasted the trench I had just left. Yes, God led me right out of the path of those shells and hid me safely."

We've had a whipping from the Lord for our coldness," cried a man. He had been cutting the grass in his rice field, preparing it for seeding. Suddenly — "Whooooom!" — he found himself on his back! He had whacked a live grenade lost among the weeds. He picked himself up and to his astonishment was not even scratched. Then he went to look for his short-handled sickle. The blade was partly gone and what was left was absolutely riddled by the shrapnel. The blade looked like a saw!

With much feeling he exclaimed, "It is by God's hand that we are here tonight at prayer meeting!"

IT was past time for the air strike, but still the pilot of the little "bird dog" held off the bombers. "I wish those people would hurry up and get out," he said to himself. Pamphlets had already been dropped informing the villagers that they must leave or be bombed into oblivion along with the Viet Cong who had made their village a center of guerilla activity . . . "Can't wait much longer" . . . The pilot felt his responsibility deeply. He was a tall, quiet man. He knew that unless they elected to leave immediately he was powerless to prevent their destruction. "I'll go down and have one more look . . ."

The south section of the village appeared deserted so he radioed the waiting jets and in moments they began swooping down on their bombing runs. As he skimmed low over the north section he noticed people coming out of their homes carrying little bundles.

On the ground Anh Bo was hurrying his friends.

The settlers of Khue Ngoc Dien were people who had been uprooted from their crowded coastal homes and sent up to the highlands to make a new life for themselves. They had seen hard years, but the land was fertile. Crops were good and their cattle fat. Then the communists came, and life changed from one of promise to one of discouragement. Their once peaceful village became the battle-front between government and communist forces. Life had become intolerable. The pamphlets had been picked up, read and discussed. A few were reluctant to go and meet the unknown once again, but the majority decided to attempt to leave.

Anh Bo knew it was past eight o'clock, the time set for the air strike, but it was difficult to gather together so many people at once. Just before the first wave of bombs began to drop a group of about 300 people started out on the road towards freedom, only to be met by the communist forces blocking their way. However, instead of turning back they faced their captors and informed them they were leaving even if they had to fight their way out with their bare hands. The communists fell back and let them through. By now the jets were systematically reducing the village to rubble. Just then the "dragonfly" plane — the name the Vietnamese have given the L-19—came down over their heads for a closer look. Anh Bo hastily grabbed a piece of white cloth and waved it at the pilot. He in turn radioed another L-19 and the two little planes flew escort for the band of refugees as they slowly followed the river towards the nearest government post.

As our landrover pulled off the main

by Doris Irwin

Dragonfly Escort

highway and over to the houses clustered together along the edge of the road, people came flocking out to meet us. This camp housed about twelve hundred refugees. The sudden influx of the group from Khue Ngoc Dien added to the number of people, but not to the number of houses. However, homes were opened to them and they crowded in. It wasn't difficult to spot those who had just arrived. They had that peculiar grayish cast to their skin which comes from months of inadequate food and no medicine — and they were smiling! Here they were, no homes, only the ragged clothing on their backs, sleeping on the bare ground with no blankets or mats, many of them ill — but they were smiling! There was almost a gaiety about them, for they had their freedom! It had been over two years since we had last been able to visit their village and the reunion was a happy one. After visiting for awhile we discovered that many were very ill. A number had already died, most of them children.

The leprosarium generously supplied blankets and clothing and offered their facilities for any emergency treatment to the seriously ill. One of the U.S. doctors took over their care.

The next day a young girl, already unconscious, was carried into the leprosarium clinic. The doctor and the nurses did everything they could to save her life, but the months of hardship had taken their toll and she slipped quietly away. Once again as the landrover returned to the village the people crowded around while the parents told of the loving care their daughter had received. Later that day the Christian men of the village took turns digging the grave, but because of weakness they would have to constantly stop and rest. When the pastor saw this he himself took a shovel and dug most of the grave. After the funeral service a man sought out the pastor and said that he had been listening and watching. He had heard how the Christians had cared for the little girl and he had seen the pastor help dig the grave. He and his family would like to belong to the religion that showed such love to people. Out of the death of one of God's "little ones" came life — a new life in Christ for those who had witnessed Christianity in action.

Thanksgiving noon we sat around the table chatting over our pie and coffee. Among our guests were the American doctor and the leprosarium nurses. There was also a tall, soft-spoken Colonel. Franklin related the story told him by Anh Bo about the pilot of the "dragonfly" plane who had escorted their little band to safety. "That's very interesting to me," quietly commented the Colonel. "You see, I was the pilot of that plane."

NEWS IN BRIEF

HUNDREDS ATTENDED — December 4th Jerai and Vietnamese Christians, American chaplains, GI's, and missionaries gathered to witness the dedication of the new Jerai church in Pleiku. The spacious masonry and tile building was the result of five years of combined giving by Jerai Christians, mission and American military personnel.

FIRST GRADE WISDOM — After having prayed many times, "Lord, help the devil to give up and love Jesus too," first-grader Jeffrey Stebbins asked his teacher: "Miss Forbes, when do you think the devil will give up and start loving Jesus like we do?" Before the teacher could recover from her surprise Robin Cash suggested, "Oh, we'll know about that when the next version of the New Testament comes out!" Still chuckling inwardly, Miss Forbes proceeded to tell the small scholars how Satan's doom was described in the Book of Revelation.

FIRST GRADERS OF 1973 — Born on November 18, Tara Suzanne joined the James H. Livingston family. The C. G. Ingrams welcomed little Daniel Bert on March 14, and the Merle Douglas family announced the arrival of their new son, Robert, on March the 8th. Congratulations, one and all.

DR. BILLY GRAHAM VISITS VIETNAM — A longstanding desire of many Vietnamese pastors and Christians was finally realized when Dr. Billy Graham paid a brief visit to Vietnam just before Christmas. They were thrilled to both meet and hear Dr. Graham. We missionaries, too, counted it a real privilege to meet this servant of God.

WOODY & CHARLOTTE STEMPLE WRITE — A few years ago there was a mighty moving of the Spirit of God in many coastal villages in Quang Ngai province. Then the Vietcong moved back into the area and it seemed as though these young congregations would be completely obliterated in the ensuing warfare that swept through the countryside. But God has not forgotten Quang Ngai. An eight day tent crusade resulted in many immediate conversions. Moreover it also set off a chain reaction which is still in motion and which is resulting in hundreds turning to Christ.

NEW MISSIONARIES — Hard at work on language study are our heartily-welcomed and much-needed new missionaries: Carrol & Fred Henry, Keith Kayser, Jim & Marylan Lewis, Reg & Donna Reimer. Miss Virginia Craddock has joined the teaching staff of the Dalat School for missionaries' children. We are grateful to the Lord for these new recruits.

THE WIZENED LITTLE MAN, grinning broadly, squatted in front of the loadspeaker through which the strains of "Silent Night" were coming. The children's choir had gone home. The angel had departed, leaving her shimmering robe in a heap. The shepherds had long since put down their crooks. "Jewelled crowns" and "caskets of gold and frankincense" identified a pile of multicolored satins as the finery so recently laid aside by three small wise men. A brilliant moon shone down on row upon row of empty benches, marking the area beside the little thatch chapel where only a short time before several hundred people had gathered to watch the Christmas pageant at the Jerai church in Cheo Reo.

Still smiling, the little man finally got up, pulling his ragged jacket around him in the chill night air. As he came over to the tired but happy group taking down stage props and folding costumes, he said earnestly, "Grandmother, this has been so happy! Why don't we have Christmas twice a year?"



Nancy Mack

Betty Lou Hartson



Needed . . . two medals

MIST still lay thick in the narrow mountain valleys when the first aircraft began making its descent to the newly completed airstrip. For three days the air was never free from the roar of landing planes and the choking grit thrown up by their propellers.

An ungainly sky crane throbbed its improbable way over the mountains and deposited a brigade headquarters building intact at the end of the airstrip. Out of nowhere forklifts complete with operators appeared, shuttling crates and barrels. Trucks began to rumble. Tents sprang up. A field kitchen took shape among the trees. From dawn till dark men in sweat-blackened fatigues worked in the blistering sun.

Who were they? And what was their mission? These were the support groups of the 101st Airborne Division. Their mission was to prepare for and back up thousands

of combat troops who would be arriving to stage an operation. For behind every combat unit on the front line, there is a support group whose efficient functioning is essential to every operation.

This principle is no less true in God's army where for every group of men and women engaged in what is often referred to as "front line missionary work" there must be an efficient, dedicated support group. Members of this group carry on their work behind the lines. They're not often in the limelight. However, just as the combat soldier depends on his support groups, so an entire mission depends on its office staff for the smooth operation of mission affairs.

To the bookkeeper falls the task not only of keeping books and making out payrolls, but of seeing to it that monthly funds reach

stations all over the country. This can be a time-consuming and frustrating task in a country where travel and communications are interrupted and unreliable. When no other way can be found, she has been known to get on a plane and make the delivery in person.

In addition to a full schedule of office duties, the secretary becomes the friendly face of the mission to the many who drop in for information about the mission, the national church, or to ask about some project in which they can share. Through her eyes strangers are given a glimpse of what God is doing throughout the country.

Though not likely to qualify for the purple heart or for awards for bravery in battle, we heartily recommend that when medals for devotion to duty are given out, the mission office staff be in the front row.

Carolyn Cathey, eleventh grade student,
Dalat School, won the Essay Contest
offered by VIETNAM TODAY

Rough to be an MK?

MY first real encounter with a "missionary kid" was about eight years ago. You see, I haven't been an M.K. all my life and I never really knew too many of them. This one girl was typical of what the average, stay-at-home American imagines a missionary to be like. She wore old-fashioned dresses, glasses half-way down her nose, curly, permanented hair, and was unreasonably shy. Right then I classified all missionary kids as being underprivileged and poverty-stricken. I simply couldn't imagine them living anything close to a normal life "over there." I was really a sad case going about feeling sorry for the ignorant little beings missing out on all the comforts and fun of life.

I was perfectly satisfied being a preacher's kid and my mind rarely wandered across the seas to try and picture what life was really like there. People would ask me if I thought it was rough to be a P.K. and I always felt rather insulted. It was a wonderful life, not without difficulties or trials, but it was an exciting adventure and I wouldn't have traded places with anyone.

Well, that's the way things stood until approximately two and a half years ago when my father announced some news to us at the dinner table. The Lord had led my parents to accept the pastorate of the International Church in Saigon and we would have the privileges, requirements, and salary of the regular missionaries. The only difference would be that our term would be for one year at a time. I burst into tears. Being a pastor's daughter in the United States was great, and now to become a missionary kid in a foreign country? As I cried myself to sleep that night a new light was beginning to dawn on me, and my spirit for adventure was at last in motion.

After that first awful night my eyes began to

open and I wanted more than anything to go to Saigon. The newspapers made the war sound awful and several times we wondered if we might not ever reach Vietnam. I'm so thankful for the encouragement that missionaries on furlough gave us. We really expected life to be completely different and we kept saying, "Well, let's enjoy this food, it's probably the last American meal we'll have for a year," or "What will we do without a T.V.?"

I must admit that I was rather scared, too. Saigon would be so dangerous and we'd have to stay in the house all the time. At least that's what I thought. And, the first Sunday we were in Saigon a coup took place and there were tanks and soldiers in the streets. The Lord gave me a real peace, though, and my whole outlook on life was broadened. I realized how much I had missed by not knowing about the cultures of other peoples, and I also realized that there were probably a lot more adventures awaiting me in the future.

Being an M.K. is living in a world of continuing knowledge and blessing. Things have turned out reasonably normal and we even have television in Saigon. But that's not the important thing. The greatest thing is that God has been with me as I've gone through all the many experiences. He has given me *happiness* as a missionary kid. We have been called to a very extraordinary and wonderful service for Him!

A missionary kid faces hardships just like other Christian teenagers, but it is part of God's training. He is taking "rough" pieces of material, molding, smoothing them, and making them into fruitful vessels for Him.

Now do *you* think it's *rough* to be a missionary kid? I think it's wonderful!



*A leather-skinned
tribesman dressed
for church*

No Peril too Costly

by Betty White

E. Evans

Out in the dense jungle fifty miles from the city of Dalat live 4,000 Koho-speaking tribespeople, accessible only by a two-day journey over a treacherous mountain footpath or by small military aircraft. Among these 4,000 people are 900 Christians who wanted to build a church for God's glory. When they were ready for the roofing the pastor walked into Dalat and asked the missionaries if they could request the military to fly the roofing out for them. The answer was, "No, we can't ask the military for something like that. A matter of life or death — yes; but to haul roofing — no." The pastor replied, "Thank you. We want you to know we aren't begging, just inquiring." He returned to the village and informed the Christians that no help was available. If they wanted aluminum roofing, they would have to walk to Dalat and carry it back.

One morning a few days later in a pouring, chilling rain, a band of seventy Christians left their village of Dam Ron and started the steep climb up the mountain that stood between them and Dalat. The journey *straight up* to the top of the mountain takes four hours on horseback, but these dedicated Christians made it in three hours and hurried on to the place where the footpath reaches the main highway at Dalat. There the mission landrover met them with 140 sheets of roofing. Our hearts were moved to find that the Christians who had come were not all strapping young men but mostly old men and women, young boys and girls, and only a few healthy young men. The old men and women loaded three sheets of metal on their backs, the children two, and the stronger ones five. They started their return trip immediately and reached the foot of the moun-

tain by nightfall. The next morning the journey was resumed in the cold, drenching rain, and as this ant-like procession made its way, American spotter planes buzzed low overhead trying to decide whether or not these were the Viet Cong on the move again. Every time the planes flew low their hearts stopped for they knew well what would happen if they were mistaken for the V.C. But God saw and protected!

Their church was completed in time for Christmas and was dedicated on December 27th. In God's sight, however, a dedication ceremony was not necessary — for the church had already been dedicated by those who had presented their bodies a living sacrifice, not counting the dangers of war and jungle, in order to have a worthy building for God's glory.

*Proud of his
bamboo aircraft*



D. Frazier

Bahnar respond

by Gail Fleming

The greatest thrill a missionary can have is being involved with a people in their conversion from paganism to Christ.

For years we have witnessed to the Bahnar people between Pleiku and An Khe. In most of the villages we received a friendly welcome, in many there seemed to be genuine interest, but there was no real response until the people in the village of Dolol began to turn to the Lord in 1963.

Thirty-nine people, who had fled from the communist dominated hills to the roadside, lived in this village. Several of them were afflicted with leprosy and as Dave Frazier began treating them and preaching the gospel to them, they soon decided as a group to become Christians. Their relatives, as well as former villagers, have been leaving the hills and joining them. Now, in Dolol, there are 130 believers, 45 of whom have been baptized.

Refugees have also come out to other villages along the road. Some of those who went to Dak Ja were related to people in Dolol. This resulted in an invitation to come and preach the gospel in Dak Ja. We had attempted to preach there many times but often they shut themselves in their houses and refused to come out. Now we hold regular weekly meetings and 37 have put their faith in Christ. In addition, eight people from the village of Kon Brung have turned to the Lord. Kon Brung is not yet accessible to us because it is in an insecure area, but interested people walk out and attend the meetings in Dak Ja. The

Lord is working and we trust that He will raise up a church in Kon Brung soon.

Farther down the road from Dolol is the village of Kon Chrah. Several years ago, Poh, a young man from this village, went to the leprosarium at Banmethuot and was saved. He is now in his second year at the Banmethuot Bible School preparing to come back and minister to his own people. In recent months there has been a turning to the Lord in this village and now there are 30 believers there, eight of whom have been baptized.

These three groups of Christians in the villages of Kon Chrah, Dolol and Dak Ja take an offering each week in their meetings and send a portion of it to Poh in Bible school. When he returns to pastor these groups we believe they will be ready to support him.

Other Bahnar are leaving the hills and settling in the villages along the highway. Several have told us that they too want to become Christians, but they are not yet ready. We pray that as these people are once again accessible they too will put their faith in Christ.

Last year was the best yet for the Bahnar Church. The number of believers grew from 77 to 230 and the number of baptized Christians from 3 to 58. Jesus said that the Kingdom of Heaven is like yeast. Years ago the people of this area began to hear the Gospel. The terrible experiences of the past few years have kneaded the dough and now it is beginning to rise. We look forward one day to singing eternal praise to God along with thousands of Bahnar Christians.

LEPROSARIUM HOLDS CLASSES FOR OUTPATIENTS

Held captive for two years by the VC, H'Kro and her husband had been ordered to stop believing the gospel. They answered with simple logic, "How can one stop believing what he already believes?"

While living safely at the treatment village of Bang Bhok, H'Kro and her husband faithfully attended services at the village chapel and prayed that they might grow in their faith. When word came that the leprosarium was going to hold two weeks of Bible School in Banmethuot for outpatients, they were thrilled at the opportunity to study God's Word.

The first week was for the men, and ten bicycled twenty kilometers to attend Bible studies, catechism and reading classes, and to memorize Scripture portions.

The second week ten women, including H'Kro, learned the message of the wordless book along with their other Bible studies. For "handwork" some learned to knit and were excited at the prospect of being able to make warm sweaters for their children. Others, whose hands were too crippled to manipulate the knitting needles, sewed quilt blocks. It was at this that H'Kro proved to be an especially apt student. In spite of her 60 years and her maimed hands, she was the quickest at sewing the blocks together in an orderly, attractive pattern.

The Bible School proved to be such a success that the leprosarium staff has made plans for similar sessions to be held monthly. The goal is that hundreds of patients will have the same opportunity to come and receive the blessing that H'Kro did, and that having received, they will spread that blessing to others.

**Raday Christians watch as a
new believer follows the Lord
in baptism**

by Dawn Deets

A MISSIONARY'S PRAYER

by Mary Forbes

Oh, Father Above, as the years fly past,
Help me keep the vision to behold
Life's loveliness, the joy that will always last.
Help me at dawn see the morning star,
At noonday watch the brilliant autumn leaves,
And at the quiet eventide
Fall before Thee prostrate on my knees.

Oh, Father Above, cause me see the smile
On loved ones' lips, and walk unflinchingly
Even though separated mile on mile
From their warm cheer and laughter.
Keep my vision, Lord, so clear,
I see only Thee, Who art invisible
And climb onward without fear.

Oh, Father Above, cause me see Thy face
In my adopted spiritual kin
Representative of another culture and race.
Keep before me the vision of souls' lostness;
Help me communicate to them Thy Word
In love, conduct, and selflessness
So they will see Thy image unblurred.

*Written by the First Grade teacher at
Dalat School in Malaysia*

