

SPECIAL CASES

In addition, St. Stephen's Chapel supports individuals with specific medical needs.

Hong Jiao was born with spina bifida. By 2006 she was suffering from increasing paralysis and her health was deteriorating fast. With the help of the project, she was able to have complex spinal surgery at Matilda International Hospital in Hong Kong. She is now back home in her leprosy village and St Stephen's Chapel supports her on-going physio programme.



Axi Shiha lives in Xide and has cerebral palsy. Your contributions enable him to receive medical treatment. His greatest wish was to be able to join his friends at the school. Thanks to the support of the project, he has now been accepted into the village school.



Luo Qingqun, an elderly leprosy sufferer, required an amputation for her deformed foot.

She is now receiving rehabilitation therapy and learning to walk again with her prosthetic leg.



WHAT ARE WE DOING ?

St Stephen's Chapel is active in supporting the Leprosy Project by

- * An annual donation of \$35,000
- * Collection of unused airline socks
- * Donation of 10 Medical Backpacks and a medical autoclave from members of the congregation
- * Donation of 4 warm sleeping bags from the sale of photo DVD's
- * Regular visits to the leprosy villages
- * Support for the Embroidery Co-operative and community projects
- * Friendship with the school



"Before you people came, I couldn't walk and I couldn't see. Now that you have helped me, I can both see and walk. You have given me back my life"

THERE IS MUCH MORE TO DO

Sock collection continues and fundraising activities are being planned. If you would like to help or would like information on future visits, please contact :

- * *Liz or Jenya at leprosyproject@ststephen.org.hk*
- * *Call the Chapel Office at 2813 0408*
- * *Visit the Chapel website at www.ststephen.org.hk*

THE LIANGSHAN LEPROSY PROJECT

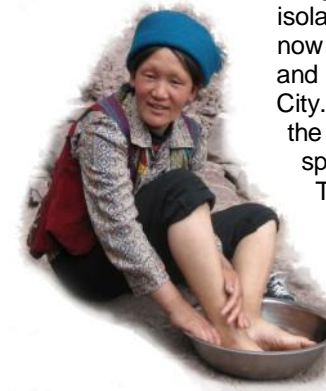
Xichan City, Sichuan, China



High up in the remote mountains of South West Sichuan, China there is a forgotten story. Hundreds, possibly several thousand people live in poverty and distress. They are PALS (people who have been afflicted by leprosy) and their families who, for years, have been forced to live out their lives in the primitive and often squalid conditions of the isolated 'leprosy villages'. Some are blind, some are lame; many have deformities of their hands and feet.

Several years ago, members of Rotary Club Hong Kong South became aware of these villages and decided to take action. The Liangshan Leprosy Project was formed and since 2001 St. Stephen's Chapel in Stanley, has supported this project.

The project, which is run jointly by RCHKS and Handa, a Guangzhou-based leprosy NGO, has far reaching aims to bring help and development to the isolated leprosy villages. There is now a permanently staffed medical and administrative centre in Xichang City. From here, medical teams visit the villages to provide and promote specialist preventative health care. There are on-going building programmes to supply health centres, fresh water supplies and solar energy to the rural areas. Community support is at the heart of the project.



"The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, and the lepers are cleansed" *Matthew 11:5*

St. Stephen's Chapel, Stanley



LEPROSY

The disease, caused by a bacteria similar to TB, results in progressive nerve damage to the hands, feet and eyes. If left untreated this frequently causes the gross deformities so often associated with leprosy. Lack of feeling, in the feet in particular, leads to skin damage. The small wounds become dirty and infected. Without care, cuts and abrasions can become large, disabling ulcers.

The disease may also result in severe nerve damage around the eye resulting in corneal ulcers and cataracts; these, in turn, cause blindness.

In the past, the disease also carried a social stigma. Through fear and misunderstanding many leprosy patients were rejected or removed from their communities. Thus the isolated 'leprosy villages' were formed.

The good news is that leprosy is a totally curable disease and, contrary to popular belief, is not highly contagious. The Pals that remain in these villages do not have an active infection; most are suffering from the results of residual nerve damage. There is much that can be done to alleviate the effects of this nerve damage. This is one major focus of the Liangshan Leprosy project.



Liz from St. Stephen's Chapel greets an old friend.

FOOT CARE

Following specialist training from Handa, the project medical team regularly visit the villages to give advice and treatment on foot ulcers and related problems.



Lama Wapo following the self-care programme

Pals are encouraged to follow a well-established daily routine. They are taught how to care for their own feet by soaking them and removing callous using special home made files. This helps prevent further damage.

Specially designed shoes are fitted to help alleviate the pressure caused by the deformed limbs. This allows the ulcers to heal.



The team are active in assessing and monitoring the progress of the self-care programme.

Shama Wuge has severely deformed hands and feet. As she can only walk on her knees and wrists she has developed deep ulcers on her knees. Despite her disabilities, she tends her fields daily.



COMMUNITY CARE



The villagers are benefiting from your support. This includes the development of an Embroidery Co-operative and other community projects.



The children are proud of the mural they painted on the wall of their school in Xide

EYECARE



In partnership with Handa, the project conducts annual eye surgery at the Centre in Xichang.

PALS are operated on to alleviate the symptoms of nerve damage and to remove cataracts, thus restoring their sight.