



Visit to 4 Villages Project Khalte Nepal



Lady Swinfen, Arabella and Sharon on arrival to Nepal 10th November 2011

Pat Swinfen, with Arabella Mayo (Trustee) and Sharon Checksfield (Fundraising Manager) visited Nepal in November 2011.

Arriving in Kathmandu on 10th November we were welcomed at the Airport by Hon Lt. Chandra Bahadur Gurung, Capt. Deo Bahadur Gurung rtd. Brigade of Gurkhas and RSM Bikram Ghale (British Gurkhas Kathmandu) and a large group of Gurkha ladies who garlanded us in welcome.

Straight to the Hotel de L'Annapurna to a Reception followed by a banquet. At the hotel we were joined by Hugh and Lynda Bardell. Hugh (ex CO British Gurkhas Kathmandu) and his wife Lt. Col Lynda (a serving QARANC Nursing officer). Up early the following morning, we had a 30 minute flight to Pokhara, where on landing we were greeted by another Char Banjyang welcoming committee.

That evening a Dinner was given by Char Banjyang at which Lt. Col. John Fenn, Gurkha Welfare Trust was present. He has generously offered that the Gurkha Engineers will take an interest in the medical clinic to ensure that there will be sufficient water for both the clinic and the new school buildings to be erected nearby.

The following morning we were woken by an earthquake measuring 5 points only 68 miles from us, on the border with Tibet.

We visited Green Pastures Hospital (one of our tele-medical links since 2002) that morning, and presented the senior nursing sister with a new digital camera for the tele medicine link.

13th November, an early start with a long wheel-based Landrover and a Jeep with heavily laden roof racks, we drove out of Pokhara heading north-west. After the town of Sanjay we left the road and started on bumpy tracks. From then on the track wound round the heavily wooded mountain gradually climbing upwards. At Iron Mountain the skyline was filled with schoolchildren and their teachers, and from then on we were welcomed by village bands and local people, until we drove into the village of Khalte where we were accommodated in a lovely old house. We were treated with great kindness by everyone we met, and as we were able to eat all our meals outside the house at a long table, it gave us the opportunity to talk to the many people who came from the other three villages to meet us.



Lady Swinfen and Arabella with the children from Shree Phalamkhani Middle School, Iron Mountain



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14th November was the Big Day. The Buddhist and Hindu Ceremony of Dedication of the site of the Medical clinic to which Pat was carried in a ceremonial bridal chair. The site is dramatic, and would, we think make many people linger and drink in the sheer beauty of this remote, and peaceful place. It is good to think that it will become a place of medical help and healing. There were presentations made to those local ladies who had donated the land for the clinic and helicopter landing site.

The final two visits before returning to Pokhara were made to a tiny village clinic at Phalebas, and a district hospital at Kusma. The journey to Pokhara was very difficult as darkness



View from the new clinic

and a heavy fog had fallen. Chandra spent most of the journey on foot, guiding traffic on the winding mountain road, we owe our lives to him, and also to our excellent drivers.

The following morning we left Pokhara and flew back to Kathmandu.

The next day we visited Patan Hospital, to see our friend Macha Shakya, the librarian at Patan Hospital who runs our Telemedicine link. That evening there was a farewell dinner given by Capt. Deo Gurung, included were Dr and Mrs Ted McKinney (referring doctor) and Dr Oliver Ross (SCT Consultant). We returned home the next day.



The group with the ladies who donated land for the clinic and helicopter site.

Update on the Khalte project

At their January meeting the Trustees received a progress report in person from Hon Lt Chandra Gurung. This indicated good progress with the project being on time and within budget.

Much help has been provided by the local villagers in the area, cutting and hauling timber and breaking and moving stone for the buildings – a major, back-breaking undertaking in difficult terrain.

Additional land has been donated for the provision of a helicopter landing site and this is now being cleared and leveled.

KunDe Foundation

Health care in some of the remotest places.

KunDe Foundation's aim to help the most disadvantaged people access information and the resources needed to improve their lives, fits well with those of the Swinfen Charitable Trust. In such places, practical hands on training and supervision to health assistants and volunteers extends the arms of the local doctors. But being able to contact experts through the Trust for more difficult referred cases is a huge boon where good hospital care may be hours or days travel away. Or, for some, travel and treatment are too expensive to access. Recently we met a man who has begged for 25 years with a very rare skin disease, possibly brought to Asia with traders travelling the silk road some centuries ago. Though incurable we can assure him he is not infectious and he now knows how he might get improvement in his condition.

Another referral led to a more definitive diagnosis of hypoderma sinensis, the yak warble flies that travel around



the bodies of some Tibetan nomad children before exiting from sites on the face or back. One of these was possibly also the cause of recurrent attacks of sudden abdominal pain and an isolated episode of haematuria in a 10 year old girl until 2 weeks later when swelling in both calves moved up her legs and larvae exited from her back. The condition used to be known locally just as 'the children's disease'. As it can infect up to 90% of yak herds treatment in animals is well established, but less so for humans.

It is thanks to the Trust and the team of consultants that we can help extend the knowledge base in these communities to prevent and treat some of these diseases.



email: swinfencharitabletrust@btinternet.com

Dr Hugh Carpenter, OBE

It is with sadness that we record the death of Dr Hugh Carpenter, friend, great supporter of the Trust and consultant for many years.

Roger and Pat met Dr Hugh Carpenter and his wife Eleanor when he was the British High Commission doctor in Bangladesh, covering also Indonesia, and Malaysia as well as other smaller Asian countries.

Hugh's first posting had been at the Australian Embassy in Beijing where they witnessed the events that led to the Tiananmen Square massacre. Hugh's next posting was at the British Embassy, as Medical Officer in Moscow and during that time he had the largest GP practice by area in the world. His longest visit to a patient was to Kazakhstan, a Soviet satellite state at that time, over 2,000 miles.

In Bangladesh, Hugh played an important role in facilitating the deployment of Swinfen Telemedicine. In August 1998 he came with us to meet Professor Richard Wootton who flew in from Pakistan and accompanied us as we introduced the Professor to the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed, (CRP) at Savar, near Dhaka. Subsequently CRP established the first Swinfen Telemedicine Link, probably the first Store and Forward Telemedical link in the developing world.

On retiring Hugh and Eleanor made their home in Tasmania on the beautiful shore of King George Sound. Nevertheless Hugh continued to work, doing locum duties in remote areas of Australia, including Christmas Island.



Charity Dinner January 2012

Lord and Lady Swinfen together with his Excellency Dr Sureshchandra Chalise (The Ambassador of Nepal) attended an annual dinner in aid of the Char Bhanjyang Tamu Samaj UK development project in Nepal.



CBTS Dinner 2012



Lord Swinfen with the Ambassador of Nepal



Lord & Lady Swinfen, The Ambassador, Chandra and his wife Bimla



Also present were the Great South Run team seen here being thanked for their efforts in raising funds for the khalte medical clinic.



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Miss Florence Craven-Wilson

This is the story of how Miss Florence Craven-Wilson (Adelaide Nurse) started the Swinfen Telemedicine story.

Florence was a Staff Nurse (Red Belt) at the Adelaide Hospital in 1956 when Pat Swinfen (nee Blackmore) commenced her nursing training in May of that year.

In 1995, at the Annual Adelaide Nurses Luncheon of the London Branch, Florence suggested that a young Adelaide nurse who was sitting near her should speak to Pat about Telemedicine which Florence thought might be useful in our voluntary work in Bangladesh at the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed, near Dhaka.

How right she was!

The Adelaide nurse (name unknown) was working at the time in Parsons Green with a neurosurgeon (Adam Darkins) and they were using a Telemedicine system linking up with Professor Richard Wootton at Belfast City Hospital. Professor Wootton had the Chair of Telemedicine at Queen's University, Belfast. Adam Darkins came to meet us at Westminster and explained the term "Telemedicine" to us. He introduced us to Richard Wootton over a Telemedicine link between Moorfields Eye Hospital in London and Belfast City Hospital and we agreed to meet when Richard was next in London.

Richard came to London to give a talk on the BBC World Service and we met, mainly to explore our shared commitment to humanitarian concerns about health in

the developing world. We kept in touch and in November 1998 Prof. Wootton invited Roger to open the Telemedicine Conference at the Royal Society of Medicine in London.

At the conference Lt.Col. David Vassallo (RAMC) was introduced to us by Richard Wootton, and showed us his 'Store and Forward' system which he had set up earlier that year in Bosnia, working with Surgeon Cdr. Peter Buxton RN at the Royal Naval Hospital in Gosport, Hants. They generously offered us the system saying that we could trial it in a civilian hospital in the developing world. Subsequently in July 1999 the system was set up at the Centre for Rehabilitation of the Paralysed near Dhaka, Bangladesh, with the kind permission of Miss Valerie Taylor, OBE and her staff.

In the first year 27 cases in spinal surgery, orthopaedics, neurology, paediatrics, and cardiology were sent as Teleconsultations to appropriate specialists who offered their expert services to Swinfen free of charge. A Paper was written, at the suggestion of Professor Wootton, and accepted, and printed, by the Royal Society of Medicine.

During 1999 - 2000 (the first year) two other links were set up to Patan Hospital, Kathmandu, Nepal and Gizo Hospital, Solomon Islands.

To date there are 236 links in 68 countries being generously answered by 516 expert medical consultants.

Footnote. Miss Florence Craven – Wilson died on Sunday 19th February 2012

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**CONTACT
DETAILS**

The Swinfen Charitable Trust, Dene House, Wingham,
Canterbury CT3 1NU Tel: 01227 721024.
E-mail: swinfencharitabletrust@btinternet.com
www.swinfencharitabletrust.org





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A new year and many challenges to be met throughout the world.

Swinfen Telemedicine continues to grow, meeting its own challenges as it does so and can now boast links to 236 hospitals in 68 countries. The number of our marvellous volunteer consultants expands likewise with 516 consultants now on our books.

The use of the internet increases across the world and mobile phone technology plays an important part in ensuring our ability to access the more remote areas of the world.

We are delighted to report good progress on the 4 Villages Health Center in Khalte, Nepal and to record the tremendous welcome for Pat and her team and appreciation of the Trust and its work, demonstrated when she visited the project in November 2011.

We look forward to being able to report on the completion of the project in a future issue.

snippets

Directors, Pat and Roger Swinfen, Trustees, Jim Ryan and Charles Cox and other SCT consultants attended The Royal Society of Medicine Conference on Reproductive Health in Emergency Situations in December 2011

Karen Rheuban, MD, Senior Associate Dean for CME and External Affairs, Director of the University of Virginia Center for Telehealth and SCT Consultant, participated via video in the second Iranian E-Health and Telemedicine Conference, on 9th November 2011. The Conference, held in Tehran, was supported by the Ministry of Health and Sharif University, with a goal of advancing adoption of telehealth models of care.

A little gem

Remember our story about TuTu. Look at her now!



Congratulations to Sharon (SCT Fundraiser), Debbie, Alan, Charlie, Karen and Lynda (supporters of SCT) for completing the "Great South Run" which was held in Portsmouth on the 30th October 2011. This was a 10 mile race with the last 2 miles along the seafront straight, which was hard work given the head-on wind and rain! Funds were raised for the new and much needed medical clinic in Khalte, Nepal. A magnificent sum of £2400 was raised – many thanks to the participating team, pictured here after the run.



A team of 16 will be running the race again this year to raise funds and awareness for SCT - you can support the team by making a donation by post, via justgiving.com or by texting 'TSCT11' with your pledge to 70070. Thank you.

Verizon Foundation

A generous grant from the Verizon Foundation to support the development of a mobile phone application that will allow even greater access to Swinfen Telemedicine services. The application is being piloted and tested in Africa.

Systems Operators

Much needed support for the monitoring of our system and referral of calls carried out in UK is now in place in other parts of the world to cover all time zones.



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The Swinfen Model

We have Swinfen Model Systems in French, Spanish, Greek and Arabic under evaluation in many parts of the world including Bolivia, France, Spain, Switzerland and Tanzania.

MSF reports that the various systems we have provided are still under evaluation but things are looking positive. Many referrals from different developing countries were quickly addressed through the use of MSF consultants network demonstrating the far-reaching potential of the system in whatever language is needed. The Spanish Operational section of MSF launched in February, the Spanish MSF e-referral system creating the first new Spanish network of specialists.

International China Concern (ICC)

Karen Norman, in charge of the Medical Department

writes:..... ICC (whose motto is love, hope and opportunity for every disabled child) is a Christian development organization that changes lives by bringing love, hope and opportunity to China's abandoned and disabled. ICC has three projects in China, two in Hunan Province and one in Henan Province. Within these projects, ICC cares for approximately 300 children and young people who have disabilities or significant medical needs.

ICC is also working with families in the community who have children with disabilities, providing services and support that give options to abandonment thereby keeping families together.

In caring for the medical needs of the children, I have found that the medical system in China does not have a lot of hope to offer families who have children with disabilities. I recall being told one time by a doctor at a local hospital that the little boy I had taken to the hospital for a health check was going to die soon because he had Down's Syndrome. I was told that there was no hope for a child with a giant hemangioma and that we were wasting our time trying to help her.

ICC is very grateful for the Swinfen Charitable Trust, which has made a huge difference not only to the lives of

the children, but also for the staff working in the medical clinics. We no longer feel alone trying to work out how to care for these special needs children.

Yang Zheng was an 11 year old who had a tumour removed from her ovary. The tumour was sent to the laboratory and we were told that it was a yolk sac tumour. Four local doctors all told us that this type of tumour was benign, but a fifth doctor told us it was malignant but did not require further treatment. We connected with a specialist through the SCT who was able to advise us that the tumour was malignant and what further treatment was required. We were then able to take this advice back to the local hospital and discuss it with them and proceed with the necessary treatment. Today Yang Zheng is doing very well and is looking the healthiest we have ever seen her.

There are many stories I could tell of how the SCT and its many wonderful doctors who have brought life to the children in ICC's care. The orphanage leaders are now seeing that there is hope and there is a future for children born with congenital heart disease, spina bifida, Down's Syndrome and other conditions that were once considered hopeless.

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