

Dr. Martin Huddart visits Rejoice



View of Shan State, Myanmar from Kae Noi

I became a Trustee of Rejoice Foundation UK ten years ago, at the request of a friend, who, at that time was also a Trustee. I had been to Thailand the previous two years and had fallen in love with the country and its people. My thinking was that, in addition to the altruism, it was also an excuse to keep visiting the region, of which I had grown so fond. With my background of front line family medicine in the East End of London over nearly thirty years, in addition to the philanthropy and governance of Rejoice Thailand, I could also advise on the clinical work, to ensure that their work was evidence based.

Over the years, I developed a close working relationship with Steve Hallam, one of the founders, Alan Wheeler, an ex-pat living in Chiang Mai and Gee Jaiglar, the health care worker, pivotal to the day-to-day work of the organization. After Steve's death in 2010, I feared that Rejoice Thailand would cease to exist, but how wrong I was. With the support of donors across the World, especially SDL Foundation, championed by Winston in Bangkok, and friends in Singapore, corralled by

Wight, the Charity has gone from strength to strength.

I visited Rejoice in Chiang Mai after an

I was stunned by the remarkable progress the Charity had made over that period. By linking in with volunteer HIV health workers ...

absence of two years, as Alan and I went to visit donors in Singapore last year. I was stunned by the remarkable progress the Charity had made over that period.

By linking in with volunteer HIV health workers from Chiang Dao Hospital, Mae Ai and San Kamphaeng clinics, Rejoice has effectively increased their outreach workforce from one to seven health care workers, with minimal staff costs. This has expanded the catchment area significantly and Rejoice is now visiting villages as close to the Burmese border as it is possible to travel by road and reaching communities, whom have no access to health care locally.

During my visit, I joined Gee, his assistant Arm and Kanda, an HIV worker from Chiang Dao Hospital on an eleven hour round trip to Ban Kae Noi, a Lahu village in the foothills of the Burmese border. There we saw a 50 year old mother with AIDS, being cared for by her 12 year old daughter, the wife of a patient, with HIV and drug resistant TB, who was suffering from diarrhoea and another mother with AIDS, who was reminded that she had a hospital appointment at 8am that Friday at the local hospital. This was a three hour journey away by motor bike, on dirt roads, in searing heat. For this reason, many patients fail to attend outpatient appoint-



Dr. Martin, Gee and Kanda with mother and daughter near Kae Noi



Students at San Kamphaeng School during an “HIV Education and Prevention” meeting.

ments, and without the work of Rejoice, would not receive any health care at all. In addition to checking on their clinical condition, Arm distributed much needed warm clothing and nutritious food.

Rejoice was very fortunate to receive a significant anonymous donation two years ago, which enabled it to replace the aging transport with a new truck, so vital for the outreach work. Gee, Arm, Wi and the HIV workers have now started to stay overnight in Fang on their long trips to the border areas, thereby reducing the travelling time and fuel costs.

In addition to the outreach work, Rejoice has been moving “upstream” and has initiated an educational programme for schools and local communities, to teach

on the risks of HIV, modes of transmission, safer sex techniques and reducing the stigma of the disease. I observed such a teaching session with 13 to 14 year olds at a school in San Kamphaeng and the ability of Gee and the HIV workers to engage, inform and stimulate a group of 39 students over a three hour workshop was most impressive.

In the January 2014 newsletter, there was an article from Russ, a volunteer from SDL Foundation on the work of Rejoice. This was a point in time observation. Alan, whom visits the Charity weekly, has not perceived such a dramatic change, but, having not visited for two years, I was amazed and most impressed by the development of Rejoice over that time. This has been made possible by the generous donations we have

received and the hard work and compassion of Gee, Arm, Wi and the HIV volunteers, ably supported by Alan, who produces monthly accounts, newsletters and annual reports and maintains the website.

I retire from my GP role this year and hope to spend more time in Chiang Mai province in the future. With the relaxing of border controls and the regime in Burma, Rejoice may be able to expand yet deeper into the hills and extend its influence. There may also be the possibility of introducing near-patient HIV screening and blood monitoring, in liaison with Chiang Dao Hospital, to reduce the need for sick patients to travel long distances in difficult conditions.

Thank you to all at Rejoice for welcoming me into your lives and making the past ten years so enjoyable and satisfying. Onwards and upwards for the next decade.

Dr Martin Huddart.
Trustee,
Rejoice Foundation UK.



Headmaster, Gee, Arm, Kasemsri and healthcare workers

Over the past decade BCTFN has been a major sponsor of Rejoice Foundation and their support of communities living with HIV

Follow the link below to read more about BCTFN;

[British Community in Thailand Foundation for the Needy](#)

History of BCTFN and the Ploenchit Fair

A couple of months ago, Ian Bushell, a committee member for the British



Community in Thailand Foundation for the Needy (BCTFN) asked Rejoice if we had any suitable article we could put forward for possible publication in the British Chamber of Commerce Thailand (BCC) magazine "The Link". As luck would have it Dr. Martin Huddart, a trustee of Rejoice Foundation UK, had just written a brief report covering his recent annual visit to Chiang Mai which was accepted for publication in "The Link" (page 56).

BCTFN is a major contributor to Rejoice and has been for over a decade. Below is a brief history of BCTFN and the Ploenchit Fair again taken from the same edition of "The Link" (pages 54-55).

The British Community Foundation for the Needy has been assisting the underprivileged in Thailand since 1941. Originally called The United Kingdom Committee for Thai Charities (1956) it was accorded Foundation status by the Thai Government in 1998 and became known by what it is today BCTFN.

Contributions to the Thai needy, through many charities, initially by members of the British Community and more recently by the international community, reach back over 65 years and now amount to many millions of baht. More than THB 90 million has been raised since year 2000.

Fund raising activities began in the early 1940's at the British Club when monthly activities including morning markets selling homemade cakes and other items, run by the British ladies, together with the production of several plays, were organised.

The British efforts were combined with the YWCA in 1951 when they held their first International Bazaar, but, in 1957 the British Community, led by the wife of the then Ambassador, realised the potential for an annual charity fair and the need for a dedicated committee. The Ploenchit Fair was born.

The Fair is the main source of revenue for BCTFN, whose members administer the money raised at monthly committee meetings. Committee members are entirely voluntary and with the experience they have gained over the years, they advise and assist the recipient charities where necessary and monitor the work they are and have been doing over the decades on an ongoing permanent basis.

In recent years priority has been given to self-help projects that benefit and enable a community to become self-sustaining and in the provision of basic necessities, equipment to improve healthcare, nutrition, education and agricultural projects and the disabled throughout Thailand.

BCTFN finances have been organised by the Standard Chartered Bank and placed on deposit until disbursement is needed for approved projects. All payments are by cheque against estimates or invoices for all works undertaken. Annual accounts are audited and sent for inspection to the Revenue Department before publishing.

The first Ploenchit Fair as we now know it was held in 1956 and raised 78,000 Baht for Thai charities. It was, and still

is, unique in that all the revenues raised by the Fair are administered direct to the various charities through experienced honorary advisors.

The Ploenchit Fair is proud to be the biggest annual event on the Bangkok International Calendar and as success has led to success, the Ploenchit Fair revenues have continued to increase. Today the Fair has become more of an international community event with representation from almost every country and culture—all with the common goal of raising money to help improve the lives of the poor and underprivileged throughout Thailand.

Charities

The BCTFN welcomes requests from all Thai charities under the guidance of our Foundation's Constitution. These requests are considered from organisations under the following objectives:

- To support and assist the underprivileged to help themselves
- To provide educational assistance to schools to help underprivileged children
- To provide assistance to disabled persons
- To provide pharmaceuticals and medical equipment for the sick
- To support and help the basic needed projects for self-reliance

With these objectives in mind BCTFN supports over 20 charities annually and help is also given to new projects throughout the year depending on our monetary reserves.

BCTFN has supported well over 100 different Thai charities throughout Thailand over the years.

Wendy Sponsors Twin Girls Fah and Fon



Wendy responded to our appeal for the support of the twin babies. Sasipim (Fon) and Sirapasson (Fa) are twin girls born on 13th February 2014 to HIV+ve mother, Saengduen. Saengduen's former husband died as a result of AIDS. Her new husband and father of the twins is free of the virus.

The babies will be given formula milk and receive regular hospital check-ups. Mother and father live in a small, rented house situated in a lamyai (longan) orchard owned by the landlord.



Wendy's Craft Work

Wendy is a member of "Friends of Rejoice Singapore" (FRS) and has been supporting Rejoice for quite a few years now. She raises funds by craft work - making models from beads which she sells to her friends and donates the proceeds to Rejoice. The photo sequence shows some examples of her work.



HIV Orphans



Little Boy Lost?

Dao was born in Shan State, Myanmar in 2003. The family moved to Thailand a few years later to escape the hardship of living in a civil war zone in Myanmar. They moved to a small village near Chiang Dao where Dao's grandmother and other relatives lived. Dao's father worked in the fields and orchards nearby.

The family returned to Myanmar and Dao's mum and dad became very ill and eventually died. Dao, by this time about 7 years old, was brought back to the village near Chiang Dao to live with his grandmother again.

When Dao became ill and developed sores on his body, his grandmother took him to see a doctor who referred him to Chiang Dao hospital. A blood test revealed that Dao was HIV positive and that the virus must have been transmitted via his mother at birth or by breast feeding.

By this time Dao was settled in the local school, albeit at a lower grade due to his lack of Thai language, but there were also other Shan migrant children at the school which made integration easier. Dao's grandmother however became extremely stressed at Dao having HIV and she was afraid to dress his sores. She knew that HIV leads to Aids

and then you died - she knew of many people who had died because of Aids.

Dao's grandmother contacted the HIV health care workers at Chiang Dao hospital and told them she couldn't care for Dao and could he not go to a children's home. Persuasion and explanations about HIV were of no

avail.

Together with the health care workers, Rejoice visited a Shan orphanage run by monks at a temple in Arunotai on the Myanmar border. The orphanage was well known and well run, the children attended the local school in Arunotai and also received extra Shan language lessons after school. The Abbot of the temple, however, was concerned about the HIV virus and the welfare of the other children and declined to admit Dao into the orphanage.

Dao was eventually sent to "The Home for Boys" a Government run home in Chiang Mai. The Boys Home were concerned about Dao's special medical needs and contacted an Orphanage near Chiang Mai which specialised in taking care of children with HIV, Agape Home where Dao is living today.

Approximately 8 months after being admitted to the orphanage, Dao's grandmother contacted the Health Care workers at Chiang Dao hospital en-

quiring about Dao and could she visit him. The Healthcare workers contacted Rejoice to ask if we could assist.

One Sunday in March Gee met Dao's Grandmother at Chiang Mai bus station and took her to visit Dao.

Dao was very happy to see his grandmother and Gee. He looked very well and healthy and said he was happy to be at Agape Home. Dao is taken to a local hospital for regular check-ups. Dao is certainly being well taken care of at Agape Home. He has had a very difficult life up until now, let's hope that he will have a better and happier future.



Poy Sang Long Festival



Every year at the end of March and the beginning of April the Poy Sang Long Ceremony takes place in many Shan temples throughout northern Thailand. It is the Shan Buddhist rite of passage ceremony celebrated by the Shan people, undertaken by boys usually between the age of 7 and 14 years of age.

It consists of taking novice monastic vows and participating in monastery life for a period of time that can vary from a week to many months or more. The ceremony goes on for three days, as the boys (dressed up like princes in imitation of the Lord Buddha, who was himself a prince before setting out on the religious path) spend the entire time being carried around on the shoulders of their older male relatives. On the third day they are ordained and enter the monastery for a period of at least one week, and sometimes many years. The boys are beautifully made up with rouge and lipstick and dressed in fine silks making the festival very colourful.

Wi, a member of Rejoices full-time staff, is ethnic Tai Yai (Shan). This year, on the three days March 29th-31st, Wi and his family celebrated the Poy Sang Long for a nephew

at Wat Ku Tao, one of the Shan Temples in Chiang Mai.

The following article is taken from a back issue of "Welcome to Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai" magazine.

The Shans, ancestrally known as Thai Yai, are close cousins of the Thai people, which is not surprising as country boundaries were extremely fluid in former times. The festival of Poy Sang Long is essentially Thai Yai (as are the words in proper Thai it is called Buad Loog Gaew) and means "ordaining the beloved sons". The Thai Yai, like their full-Thai cousins, are devout Buddhists who annually present young sons (ages ranging from 7 - 14 years) to be ordained as novices. The boys, and their parents, earn merit from this act of devotion while the boys also learn the tenets of Buddhist teaching and the self-discipline required of a monk.

Also, throughout the neighbouring towns, whether it be the towns of Mae Sariang, Mae Lanoy, Khun Yuam or the provincial city of Mae Hong Sorn, young boys will participate in the traditional ceremonials which are bright with colour and Thai Yai culture. Not only are the boy's proud parents and relatives involved in the excitement but visitors flock from other parts of Thailand to see and photograph the spectacle.

The end of March and the beginning of April is the time of the 3-day festival of Poy Sang Long when, in the city of Chiangmai, pre-teen boys are inducted into the Buddhist novice hood. The first day of the 3-day festival, the young participants are the focus of family feasting and gift giving before the boys are escorted to the temple to have their eyebrows and heads shaved and be ritually cleansed and anointed by bathing in sacred water. The parade to the temple is accompanied by the shrill of flutes, the beat of drums and the clash of cymbals as local musicians give their support and respect to the boys.

On the second day, now shorn of his head of fine black hair, the young boy wears a snow-white turban and is again the centre of family feasting and dancing. Once more he will pa-

rade to the temple, with his dancing and drumming entourage, to offer gifts to Lord Buddha and the resident monks. A horse is sometimes featured in this parade as it symbolises the vehicle on which rides the community Inthakin Pillar (fertility totem). Around 09.00 hrs., the parade will flow slowly from Thapae Gate through the road up to Chiangmai Gate, Manee Nopparat Road, and arrive at the temple. During the evening, prayers for guidance and blessings from the "spirits" will be intoned and recitations, reminding the boys of the following day's full ordination, will be said. Celebration will also take place that includes musical performance of dancing, singing, and merriment.

Early morning of the final day, the day of ordination, each boy will be transformed into a "Jewelled Prince" ("Loog Gaew" in Thai). His face will have a cosmetic makeover with powder, rouge and lipstick and then he will be dressed in glistening, sequined finery of every hue. On his head will be the white turban halloed with fresh flower blossoms. Today, the boy is carried aloft on his own personal throne to the temple, surrounded by his family and well wishers with his ears ringing from the strident clash of Shan music. Although he is only a young boy, he will handle the parade with all the panache, aloofness and dignity of a "Jewelled Prince". It is magical to see this young figure, composed in expression but bright with colour and glitter, as he progresses to the temple.

Once inside the temple, each boy will ask the Abbott for permission to be ordained. With permission granted, the boy will take vows and then divest himself of his colourful finery in exchange for the humble saffron robes of a Buddhist novice. And here, in the temple, the boy novice will remain for at least one month. During this time he will follow the routines of temple life, learning from and watching his elders as he absorbs the essential foundations for a responsible and rewarding adulthood.



Wi with family members at Wat Ku Tao during the 2014 Shan Poy Sang Long Festival in Chiang Mai

SDL Renew 12 Education Sponsorships



SDL Language Services have been supporting Rejoice for over 5 years. Without the help and advice of Winston Wong, SDL's Thailand country manager, Rejoice probably would not exist today. SDL's support and encouragement following Steve Hallam's death was instrumental in the revival of Rejoice.

Still continuing today, SDL has renewed sponsorships for 12 needy students who otherwise may not have been able to attend school. Also, SDL continues contributing to the medicine and formula milk programmes as well the general running costs of Rejoice.

The photo shows Gee with five of the scholarship children from Chiang Dao district some 80km (48 miles) north of Chiang Mai. The children each receive 6,000 baht which helps to cover the costs of uniforms and shoes, writing materials, a daily lunch and travel expenses for one year.

Some of the children are HIV/Aids orphans being looked after by grandparents or other relatives. Some are also HIV+ and receive free anti-retroviral drugs from the small hospital in Chiang Dao town.



SDL Language services are based in Maidenhead, England, a picturesque town on the river Thames west of London. Each year SDL allocates a portion of its profit to needy communities worldwide.

On behalf of the Rejoice and all the recipients in Chiang Mai province - **THANK YOU SDL!**

For information about SDL and the services they offer, visit their website at:

www.sdl.com

Education Sponsorship....

Rejoice currently directly assist over 500 HIV+ve patients and their families regularly on a weekly basis. The children of these patients and HIV/Aids orphans are eligible for educational scholarships. Currently 66 children have scholarships through Rejoice.

All, in one way or another, are affected by the virus and their extended families are finding it extremely difficult to make ends meet. They have become much poorer and many are finding it difficult to come to terms with the additional hardship and responsibility of living with HIV. Many extended families cannot cope with the increased costs of caring for an additional child (or children) and have no option but to put the child into an orphanage.

Others, with the help of sponsorship can afford to send the child to school which often frees-up sufficient funds to allow

the family to stay together. Ostensibly, the sponsorship is in the form of an "educational scholarship" but in reality it is much more, it will;

- allow the child to attend school
- allow the child to grow-up in his/her community with their extended family
- allow the child to learn to speak the language and follow the religion of their community
- make it easier for the family to accept financial help – the money is received on behalf of the child
- prevent the child becoming institutionalised in an orphanage
- be a significant factor in deciding whether the child continues his/her education to high school, college or university.

....Education Scholarships



Sponsor a Child's Education

There are many families affected by HIV/Aids. It could be that grandparents, relatives or one parent have taken on the responsibility of raising children affected by HIV. The child may be also be infected or orphaned by the virus. The hardships and difficulties of bringing up children in such circumstances can be quite substantial. Often without a regular income the household can be in danger of falling into abject poverty.

A wonderful way to help such families is to sponsor a child's education for one year. For either 5,000 baht or 7,000 baht can ensure that the expense of attending school can be met. The higher figure of 7,000 baht is for high school or college students reflecting the higher cost of transportation and fees etc. The images show some of the children being sponsored through Rejoice.

There are many more children who could greatly benefit from your sponsorship. Please link to ["Ways to Help"](#) page on the website.

Please go to the [DONATE](#) page to sponsor a child and to make a donation.

Please also send an email to;
contact@rejoicecharity.com so that we can thank you.



Testimonials

I was stunned by the remarkable progress the Charity had made over that period. By linking in with volunteer HIV health workers from Chiang Dao Hospital, Mae Ai and San Kamphaeng clinics, Rejoice has effectively increased their outreach workforce from one to seven health care workers, with minimal staff costs. This has expanded the catchment area significantly and Rejoice is now visiting villages as close to the Burmese border as it is possible to travel by road and reaching communities, whom have no access to health care locally.



Dr. Martin Huddart (Trustee
Rejoice Foundation)

However, the most impactful part was being able to use my time to give back in a meaningful way to those in need. It's clear the patients require the check in, medical support, and supplies the outreach team provides, but I think just as crucial is the emotional support – knowing they can count on an experienced team who cares being there for them on a consistent basis. At every clinic and home we visited, the patients faces lit up when they saw the truck and the guys coming to spend time with them. Knowing the Rejoice team does this week on week, year on year, my efforts were really just a small drop in the bucket compared to the work they do. I have so much respect and admiration for Alan, Gee, Wi, and Arm, and I'm so grateful to them for facilitating this experience for me.



Russ Taufa (SDL Vietnam)

Coming in for just a week, or two or three won't make it far even if you knew the language. Even if you would possess skills and education that are directly linked to the charity's field of work. You need months to get to know the culture, the system and most important of all the people and gain their trust.

Money is easy to give. PayPal, credit cards, money transfer, you name it. Problem is finding a charity that puts the money to good use. For the benefit of the people. A good indicator for a charity like this can be found from what Rejoice does. A real grassroots charity run by locals, that employs locals, empowerment is done by locals and thus they gain the trust of the people they work so hard (and with so little!) for.



Viljami Hätönen
(research student, and
paramedic, Finland)

Please Support Rejoice....

- **By direct bank transfer;**

Donations can be made either direct to the local (Thai baht) account in Chiang Mai, Thailand or, alternatively to London, UK (GB pounds). or Maastricht, Netherlands (Euro). Account details are shown in the tables below.

Account	Alan Wheeler (Rejoice Charity)	Account:	Rejoice Foundation UK	Account:	Alan Wheeler
Bank name:	Bangkok Bank PLC	Bank Name:	HSBC Ltd	Bank Name:	ABN AMRO Bank
Address:	Thapae Road	Address:	Canary Wharf, London E14	Address:	Maastricht,
	Chiang Mai 50100	Account No:	41466879		Netherlands
	Thailand	Sort Code:	40-02-44	Account No:	Acct no: 41.28.64.495
Account No.	251-4-767678	Swift Code:	MIDLGB22	BIC code:	ABNANL2A
Swift Code:	BKKBTHBK	IBAN	GB89MIDL40024441466879	IBAN:	NL85ABNA0412864495

- **By Credit Card via PayPal**

If you want to make a donation via PayPal, [go to Rejoice website and click on the "Donate Today"](#) button in the top right corner.

- **Create a Standing Order**

If you would like to make a regular contribution /donation, of whatever size, please print out and complete this standing order form with your bank details and amount pledged, then return it to Rejoice Foundation UK (not your bank) at the address below;

Nigel Haunch, Chair, Rejoice Foundation UK, 119 Dundee Wharf, Three Colt Street, London E14 8AY

- **Gift Aid**

If you are a UK taxpayer, Rejoice can reclaim tax on your donation from the Inland Revenue at no extra cost or inconvenience to you. This currently makes your donation (at basic rate) worth an extra 25p for each £1 given.

If you pay tax at the higher rate, you can claim further tax relief in your Self Assessment return.

For us to benefit in this way when you donate, you can download and print this [PDF form](#), sign it and send to the address below OR, alternatively, you could email your home address to contact@rejoicecharity.com and we will post the Gift Aid form to you to sign and return to;

Nigel Haunch, Chair, Rejoice Foundation UK, 119 Dundee Wharf, Three Colt Street, London E14 8AY

- **Send a Cheque**

If the banks are still accepting cheques and you wish to make a one-off or intermittent donation to Rejoice, please make your cheques payable to 'Rejoice Foundation UK' and send them to;

Nigel Haunch, Chair, Rejoice Foundation UK, 119 Dundee Wharf, Three Colt Street, London E14 8AY

Notes for Donors

Please let us know about your donation by sending a short email to; contact@rejoicecharity.com. So that we may contact you and thank you directly.

If you would like part of your donation to go towards sponsoring a child's education (5,000 baht) please let us know whether we should select a child on your behalf or you would prefer to select a child yourself, in which case we will send the Excel file 'Children Seeking Sponsorship' to help you decide.

Thank you all for your generous support.

Please visit our website; www.rejoicecharity.com and let your friends and relatives hear about us by forwarding this newsletter or better still printing it and use it as a discussion topic.

Your help and constructive criticism will be gratefully received so please send all your comments to;

contact@rejoicecharity.com

Rejoice Foundation UK Trustees

The international fundraising arm of Rejoice based in the UK was started by Nigel Haunch who, after living and working in Asia for some years, returned to London to run his own media consultancy business. Having learned about the work of Rejoice on the internet, Nigel made a visit and was moved by the scale of the HIV/AIDS crisis in northern Thailand. At the same time, he was impressed by the extraordinary achievements of Rejoice in helping those infected and affected by the epidemic, particularly in outlying rural communities.

The Trustees of Rejoice Foundation UK are as follows;

Chairperson Nigel Haunch

Vice Chair Dr Darrall Higson—a Consultant in Pharmaceutical Medicine and formerly a medical director of GlaxoSmithKline
RFUK honorary Secretary Prof Philip Evans, Director of Research for the University of Westminster,

Dr Martin Huddart is a General Practitioner in East London and also a tutor at the UK's Royal Free and University College Medical Schools

Alan Wheeler, a retired petroleum petrophysical engineer who now lives in Chiang Mai



Alan Wheeler
July 2014

