More Flood Relief Carried Out  
As Donations Approach Two Million US Dollars

By the end of November, Amity had spent US$740,000 in cash for relief projects, US$25,000 more than they had received at that time. The following table summarizes expenditure for all projects in both provinces supported by cash donations at the end of November. Figures given are approximate amounts in US dollars.

- 228,000 Construction of 2,400 temporary winter shelters and 270 permanent houses.
- 174,000 Repair and rebuilding of 18 primary schools, two secondary schools and four kindergartens.
- 117,000 Construction of 11 homes for the aged.
- 93,000 Donation to the China Christian Council for the repair and reconstruction of church buildings.
- 47,000 Rebuilding of the home for mentally handicapped children at the Wuxi Social Welfare Institute.
- 39,000 Reconstruction and repair of four irrigation projects.
- 35,000 Repair and rebuilding of 12 township hospitals and village clinics.
- 6,000 Support for a damaged social welfare factory.
- 1,000 Support for a damaged Buddhist nunnery.

The donations in kind included the distribution of the following items:

A family with newly received quilts in front of their winter shelter

After the devastating summer floods in East China, quick and generous support from all over the world enabled the Amity Foundation to make a significant contribution to relief and reconstruction. In mid-December, funds received by Amity had reached US$1,870,000. This sum comprises US$885,000 in cash and US$985,000 in kind.

As already reported in the last Amity Newsletter, relief efforts were restricted to the poorest counties in Anhui and Jiangsu, the two worst hit provinces, and concentrated on providing temporary housing and securing the continuity of basic schooling and health care. In all projects, support was channelled to those in greatest need, including totally impoverished families, elderly farmers without children, and handicapped people. A significant amount was also given to the China Christian Council for the repair and reconstruction of damaged church buildings.
The ordering and distribution of tens of thousands of quilts and overcoats became a logistical masterpiece, carried out by Amity's chief administrator Yan Jiabao. Upon receipt of the money from New York, he negotiated with numerous companies, checking their products' quality and comparing prices. The 25,000 overcoats were then ordered from two army factories in Nanjing, while the 15,000 quilts were produced by six welfare factories in Nanjing and Baoying County.

On 16 November, forty days after the orders were placed, the companies involved delivered their products to the Nanjing School for Trade and Management, whose stadium Yan Jiabao had hired beforehand. The quilts and coats became a huge mountain of cotton and down, guarded around the clock by students of the school. Two days later, 72 trucks, sent by the local governments of over 20 counties in Anhui and Jiangsu provinces, lined up at the stadium for collection. Each truck had been assigned a number that matched a list showing how many coats and quilts each county received. Volunteers loaded all the trucks within one morning. After a brief ceremony, the trucks left, carrying their warming freight to the multitude of people who were braving the already intensifying autumn chill in countless camps and makeshift houses.

As the official Chinese news agency Xinhua reported in January, all ten million flood victims moved into temporary winter shelters or houses before winter and were safe from famine and pestilence.

Gotthard Oblau

Rev. Deng Fucun, the newly appointed Amity Liaison for Zhejiang Province, visited the Eshan Reservoir project in December (Amity Project 91.1.1), together with Rev. Philip Wickeri, Overseas Coordinator. With the winter harvest over, the 2,400 local villagers were all at work on the project. The dam, which will be 24 meters high after completion, had already reached 10.5 meters at the time of their visit. It is expected that the project will be finalized by early 1993.

Gu Renfa, Associate General Secretary and coordinator of Amity's rural development projects, returned to Nanjing from a three month international development study program at Selly Oaks College in Birmingham, Great Britain. The Amity Newsletter will report on the course in a future issue.

Xu Xunfeng, the former director of the Medical and Health Division, has left the Amity Foundation to pursue his academic career with linguistic studies in Great Britain. As the Amity Foundation says farewell, we are grateful for everything Xu contributed to Amity's development between 1987 and 1990.

On 6 December, 1991, Yangzhen Middle School in Longquan (Zhejiang Province), the only church-run middle school in China, moved into its newly built premises. The four storey 1,400 square meter building, comprised of 12 classrooms plus several function rooms, was erected with the financial support of the Amity Foundation (see Amity Newsletter No. 18).
Shouxian County In The Aftermath Of The Floods

Amity staff have made several trips to Anhui Province in recent months in order to assess and evaluate ongoing efforts in flood relief. The following report is filed by Philip Wickeri who accompanied Yan Jiabao and two representatives of the Hong Kong Salvation Army on a recent visit to Shouxian County.

Shouxian, in the province of Anhui, is one of the poorest counties in eastern China. Farmers have had a difficult time here for generations, for the soil is poor, and the area is without natural resources. Population pressures and poor education have added to Shouxian's difficulties. Moreover, this area of Anhui is well off the beaten track, and far away from the richer coastal regions and larger cities along the eastern seaboard.

Shouxian was among the counties worst hit by the floods, and much of the television footage we saw last summer was from this county. Shouxian has been a focus of Amity's relief and rehabilitation efforts, and US$97,000 have been contributed towards this purpose.

An important part of this work has been the reconstruction of housing for rural communities. With an annual per capita income of 350 yuan (US$65), and a population of more than 12,500, Taodian Township is typical of the county. Income will go down drastically this year as the floods destroyed most of the rice harvest.

Amity has contributed funds towards the rebuilding of 400 housing units in several villages of this township. Each family is given a 20 square meter room, and the buildings, which are constructed by the farmers themselves, have eight rooms each. Throughout the county, Amity has helped construct housing for 830 families, with a total contribution of US$86,000. The new brick buildings are quite a change from the mud and bamboo structures in which the people lived before the floods.

The township's elementary school is also being rebuilt with US$11,000 provided by the Amity Foundation. An increasing number of local people have become convinced that education is essential to break the cycle of poverty, and they are contributing their own time and energy into rebuilding the school.

Amity has also provided coats and blankets to the people of Shouxian, as well as "warm packages" for the winter. The warm packages, each containing a quilt, clothing for children and adults, as well as canned foods, were distributed in early December. The distribution of coats, blankets and warm packages was made possible by donations received from Protestant and Catholic churches and Christian organizations in Taiwan, Hong Kong and the United States. Altogether 2,000 overcoats, 1,000 cotton quilts and 1,000 "warm packages" were distributed in this county.

In the allocation of these items, priority was given to individuals and families most affected by the floods: those whose homes, belongings and crops had been completely destroyed. Regulations approved this past summer also stipulate that the families of local government officials would not be eligible for such assistance.

Amity has enjoyed close cooperation with local officials in
relief and rehabilitation efforts in Shouxian. The local officials are all from the area, and they know it better than anyone. When I quoted the population figure given to me in the provincial capital, the County Secretary said, "It's actually 12,551. I have family members in most of these villages, and they provide me with up-to-date figures." According to the Chinese ideal, officials should move among the people as fish in the water, and that seems to be true, at least in some parts of Anhui.

The people themselves are helping to rebuild Shouxian County, with the cooperation of the Amity Foundation, the local government and the generous support of Christians from around the world. Judging from what we saw there, they have made a good start.

**Surgery And Exercises Enhance Self-Reliance**

*Foreign Experts Give Courses On Rehabilitation*

When fifteen year old Duyên arrived at the People's Hospital in Huái'ýin, he was in a wheelchair. One of twins, a long difficult birth left him severely disabled with cerebral palsy. Walking was very difficult because of a severe criss-crossing of his legs that virtually tripped him with each step. In addition his right thumb was stuck rigidly into the palm of his hand making it dysfunctional. To relax the unnaturally tensed muscles of his legs and hand Duyên needed an operation. His anxiety was mixed with pride at being treated by a foreign surgeon who had come all the way from the United States to this hospital to hold a four week seminar on the rehabilitation of disabled children.

The visiting expert was Dr. Marcy Ditmanson from Minnesota, USA. He and his wife Joyce are retired medical missionaries and, after decades of experience in treating disabled children in Taiwan, fluent speakers of Chinese. Before they came to Huái'ýin in northern Jiangsu Province in the spring of 1991, they had given similar courses in Nanjing, Changsha and Wuhan. All these short-term assignments were part of a program which had evolved through the joint efforts of the Amity Foundation, the Wheatridge Foundation of Chicago and local medical centers in China. In Huái'ýin, the Ditmanson were accompanied by physical therapist Margaret Klein, occupational therapist Patricia Shiltgen and her husband Tom.

The therapists began exercising with Duyên only a few days after his surgery, with his mother eagerly watching and learning. It was a great day in the ward when Duyên walked. With a therapist on either side he firmly planted one foot in front of the other. The whole ward cheered.

Duyên still has to cope with the effects of his disability but his daily life is now enhanced by the ability to walk and the improved use of his hands. His father, a distinguished judge, carefully recorded all the instructions for his exercises and, together with
Duyen's mother, promised that they would be diligently practiced.

Duyen was one of the patients on whom Dr. Ditmanson performed demonstration operations in order to teach local medical personnel how to treat children with severe residual deformities from polio or cerebral palsy. Thirty-eight students, made up of physicians, nurses and therapists from the city and the surrounding area, attended the course and participated actively in the clinical sessions. Ward rounds were made and patients were treated by the visiting therapists. Daily lectures on physical therapy, occupational therapy and orthopedic aspects of rehabilitation were also attended by staff doctors, administrative personnel and family members. The course also included instruction to families on home care and exercises for their children.

Patricia and Margaret, the two therapists on the team, put great effort into teaching the young patients’ mothers the exercises which would strengthen weak muscles and ways to stimulate both mental and physical response. The parents were most cooperative as they were only too eager to help their beloved children. They also enjoyed meeting and sharing experiences with other parents who had similar problems. The children visibly livened up when they played with the educational equipment brought by the team and with the forty balls of various sizes sent by a Sunday School class in America. Unable to go to school, they delighted in playing together with other disabled children while waiting for treatment. The visiting team encouraged the beginnings of a small support group where parents can meet weekly for mutual support as the children play with their peers and gain valuable social skills.

One little boy, disabled in body but bright in mind and spirit, was especially enjoying his days in the therapy room. Always the first to arrive with an enthusiastic “Hello! Hello!”, he never wanted to leave at the end of the day. When Patricia would say “Good-bye” at the end of the session, he would shake his head obstinately and say "Hello!" with tears running down his face.

The local TV and newspapers gave coverage to the project, thereby attracting more and more parents to the People’s Hospital to seek help for their disabled children. After a chaotic day during which scores of new patients had arrived, Margaret lay on her bed exhausted. "I wish this program could go on forever," she said, "this is the most meaningful work I have ever done!" When it was time to leave, all of the visiting team felt like the little boy who would not say good-bye.

Residents of the Huai’yin region are more severely plagued by physical disabilities than those of nearly every other place in East China. According to a community survey conducted in 1989, the estimated number of polio victims alone among the 10 million people living in the prefecture was 22,000. This incidence of 1.7 cases per 1,000 is twice as high as the national average. The reasons for such a high rate include the disturbance of immunization programs during the Cultural Revolution, as well as the general poverty of the region. One fifth of the rural population in the area is poor by government definition, as their family income is less than 400 yuan (US$75) per year. About 80% of these poor families have one or more handicapped members.

Public awareness and concern on the part of the government for the needs of disabled children have developed only recently. The provincial capital Nanjing, for instance, built its first rehabilitation center for children only five years ago. According to Dr. Ditmanson, responses to his courses from both the administration and the medical personnel have always been very eager and welcoming.

"However," he said, "in China there is no such profession of therapy. Doctors and nurses naturally focus their interest on surgery, while it has taken us great pains to help them realize the necessity of follow-up therapy. For most of these disabled children, surgery without therapy would have no great effect."

It is on this front line that Amity will have to fight more battles in the future.

Gotthard Oblau
Grandmotherly Love For The Unwanted
Christian Nurses Volunteer In Nanjing's Orphanage

Little Junjun feels neglected. His grandmother, though retired, is busier than ever. Every morning she leaves home around seven, spends one hour or more on Nanjing’s public buses to reach the orphanage at the other end of the city, and doesn’t return until supper. "Why don't you have more time for me like other grandmothers do for their grandchildren?" he complains. The boy is one of the many "little emperors," who are so typical of children his age in China today: single children who live together with parents and grandparents, being spoiled by an over-abundance of attention.

Zhang Shuyi, the grandmother, takes her grandson on her lap. "Look," she explains to him, "you are such a lucky boy. You have a mummy and a daddy, you have a grandpa and a grandma, but the babies I go to see every morning have nobody, not even a mother. They need someone to care for them, to feed and cuddle them. If you miss me, it's because you have to share me with those poor babies."

Women retire early in China. At 57, former children's nurse Zhang Shuyi, though retired, still has energy enough to commit herself to a full-time assignment. Together with two other retired nurses and one doctor who has taken a long-term leave of absence to work for the church, Zhang Shuyi volunteers as a temporary staff member and consultant in the babies' ward at Nanjing's orphanage. All four women are active members of the local church.

At the orphanage, they join the regular nurses, sharing in the daily routine of feeding, washing and nappy changing. This takes some of the load off the staff's shoulders so that the babies receive more individual attention. The presence of these "Christian grandmothers" boosts the staff's morale, and through their experience and advice they help improve the standard of care. At the same time, this arrangement gives retired Christians a chance to share their love and expertise in a place where it is most needed.

This is a new kind of personnel-oriented small scale project, a concept developed by the Amity Foundation after it had maintained contacts with the orphanage for several years. Tan Liying, head of Amity's Social Welfare Division, acted as matchmaker by suggesting the plan to both the orphanage and a pastor from the church who then recruited suitable volunteers. To cover local transportation and other expenses, Amity pays each of the volunteers a monthly allowance of 120 yuan (US$22).

When they commenced their work, the volunteers were assigned to the youngest babies, all below three months of age. Cot beside cot, there were 26 baby girls and two baby boys, many with handicaps, such as harelips, heart conditions, brain damage, and other problems. Most of them had been found abandoned in public places.

"Compared with the hospitals we are from," Dr. Hong explained, "we found hygienic standards very low. When we first came, many babies suffered from diarrhea. Sore bottoms and eye inflammations were endemic. After regular application of medicine, most of them recovered quickly. We introduced a lot of minor changes to lower the risk of infection. At least twice a week, the orphanage takes in another baby from the street. Most of these are sick, and they infect half of the others in no time, if we are not careful enough."

"Actually, the nurses cannot be blamed for it," adds Ms. Zhang. "They do what they can. The problem lies deeper. The orphanage is terribly understaffed and badly equipped, and the staff is poorly trained. Also, there are no detailed regulations for baby care, and hardly any supervision."

Indeed, orphans have no advocate in China. In a society striving for economic growth and prestige, abandoned babies are overlooked and forgotten. Unwanted by their parents, they are only half-hear-
Amity Continues Training Of Health Workers

Village Doctors Speak About Their Work

There are great discrepancies in China's medical system. While urban dwellers enjoy the care of one doctor per 425 people, one doctor has to be shared by 1,700 in the countryside. These figures stand for the urban/rural national averages; the situation is substantially worse in the more remote and poorer areas. Furthermore, the training of village doctors is usually sketchy and inadequate. Medical workers with university degrees are practically non-existent below the county level.

Throughout the eighties, the Chinese government emphasized the development of central hospitals with prestigious high-tech projects. Only recently has an official re-orientation toward the improvement of the long-neglected medical care in the countryside begun to have an impact.

For years, the Amity Foundation has emphasized the importance of basic health care at the grassroots level and sponsored one-year training courses for village health workers in selected areas of Jiangsu Province. In the 1990/1991 school year, Amity sponsored courses in Dafeng and Dongtai counties with 45,000 yuan (US$9,500 at the 1990 exchange rate), and two courses in Jiangning County in the eastern suburbs of Nanjing with 34,400 yuan (US$6,400). For courses in Jiangning County (a one-year and a six-month course) during the 1991/92 academic year, Amity has spent 169,400 yuan (US$32,000).

Gotthard Oblau visited the training courses in Dafeng and Dongtai, collecting views from participants. Selections are printed below.

Zhu Jibo (male, 22): "I am from a village here in Dafeng County. I became a doctor because I saw a lot of backwardness around me and so many untreated illnesses. Health care in the countryside is far from adequate. After middle school I received six months of medical training. Since then I have been working at our village health station. Altogether there are three doctors, two men and one woman. When patients..."
In our little clinic, we can treat ordinary illnesses like the common cold, flu, pneumonia, and stomach problems. I always feel a little proud when a patient gets better through my treatment.

"In this training course I am concentrating on diagnosis. In my village, I am sometimes confronted with a case I cannot handle. The earlier I realize it, the better for the patient. I will never forget a woman who saw me because she had a stomach ache. I gave her the usual medicines, but after three days her pain had become much worse. Only then did I refer her to the county hospital, where they diagnosed an ectopic pregnancy, a pregnancy outside the womb. I am usually the first contact person for my patients. This responsibility is a bit frightening, isn't it? The greater my knowledge about possible diseases and their symptoms, the smaller the risk that I muddle things up."

Yang Caixiang (female, 24): "My medical education consists of six months on-the-job-training in the gynecological department of a township clinic close to the village I am from. After this training, I was assigned to my village, where I have served as a health worker for two years.

"I am mostly involved with gynecological prevention. I examine women during pregnancy. Each woman must undergo ten check-ups before delivery. If just once I find something abnormal, I refer the patient to the township clinic. But if all check-ups show normal results, they do in about eighty percent of the cases, we expect a delivery without complications. In those cases mothers give birth at home, and I go to assist them.

"If everything goes well, I know exactly what to do. But my medical knowledge is very limited. I need to understand the theories behind what I am doing. The Amity training course helps me improve my medical background."

The Amity Foundation was created at the initiative of Chinese Christians for the purpose of promoting health, education and welfare in the People’s Republic of China. It is an independent Chinese voluntary organization in which people from all walks of life may participate. Amity represents a new form of Chinese Christian involvement in society, through which Chinese Christians are joining hands with friends from around the world to serve the needs of China’s modernization.

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