



The Latest News On The Ban Xai Project

24 March 2012



No toilets and dung everywhere - sanitation and water issues

— NEWS & EVENTS —



Liaising With The Government

Picture: Left to Right Andrew, Peder, Yang and Naiban Dang (the village chief) at the Naibans home

Sandy MacGregor enlisted the assistance of his son Andrew (who lives in Thailand, speaks Lao and has a business in Lao) in dealing with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The meeting was successful and submissions were made. The main concession (verbal) was that MiVAC can

continue to spend money in Ban Xai to assist the locals prior to formal approval to become an INGO in Lao.

Meet MiVAC's New Project Manager

Picture: An Elder(left) the Naiban at Ban Xai and Yang (right) standing at the centre of the 1 Ha project at Hinmou Pueng.



Yang Zang (call me Yang far right) is a Hmong who speaks, reads and writes, Lao, Hmong and English. His parents worked with the CIA at Long Tien (the main base and HQ in Lao) and then moved to Phonsavan where Yang went to school (an extremely lucky guy). He takes care of an extended family of 9 by owning a tourist business which now has a manager. Yang was introduced to and has become familiar with the aims of the project, has met the Naibans of Ban Xai and Hinmou Pueng, knows about all the tasks and has familiarised himself with all the local supplies that MiVAC will be needing.



A New Water Supply Point

Picture This is the main Storage tank at the Eastern end of the Ban Xai.

The Western end of the village needs water. The Naiban, Sandy, Andrew, Yang and Peder walked to a potential new source about 3 Kilometres North of Ban Xai. Sandy and Yang subsequently went back there and upstream (gaining about 10 metres in height) and have declared that this source which was still running in the dry has sufficient head (it is 33 metres higher) to run through a pipe that the villagers can dig in to the concrete tank already located at the Western end of the village. Incidentally Peder Petersen is the CEO of the major donor – The Charitable Foundation – and was inspecting progress at Ban Xai.

Meet John Phillipson

Picture John Phillipson is the second from the right

John is resident in Lao having met and married Vanh. Vanh did her degree at Newcastle University and then worked for Ausaid in Lao and now United Nations in Lao. John and Vanh are well known to Steve and Doreen Carroll (who have now



arrived in Lao to be at the project for 14 weeks) and John has agreed to be the MiVAC Representative in Lao. He met up with Sandy, Andrew, Yang and Peder and has a good understanding of the project – thank you John for joining us.

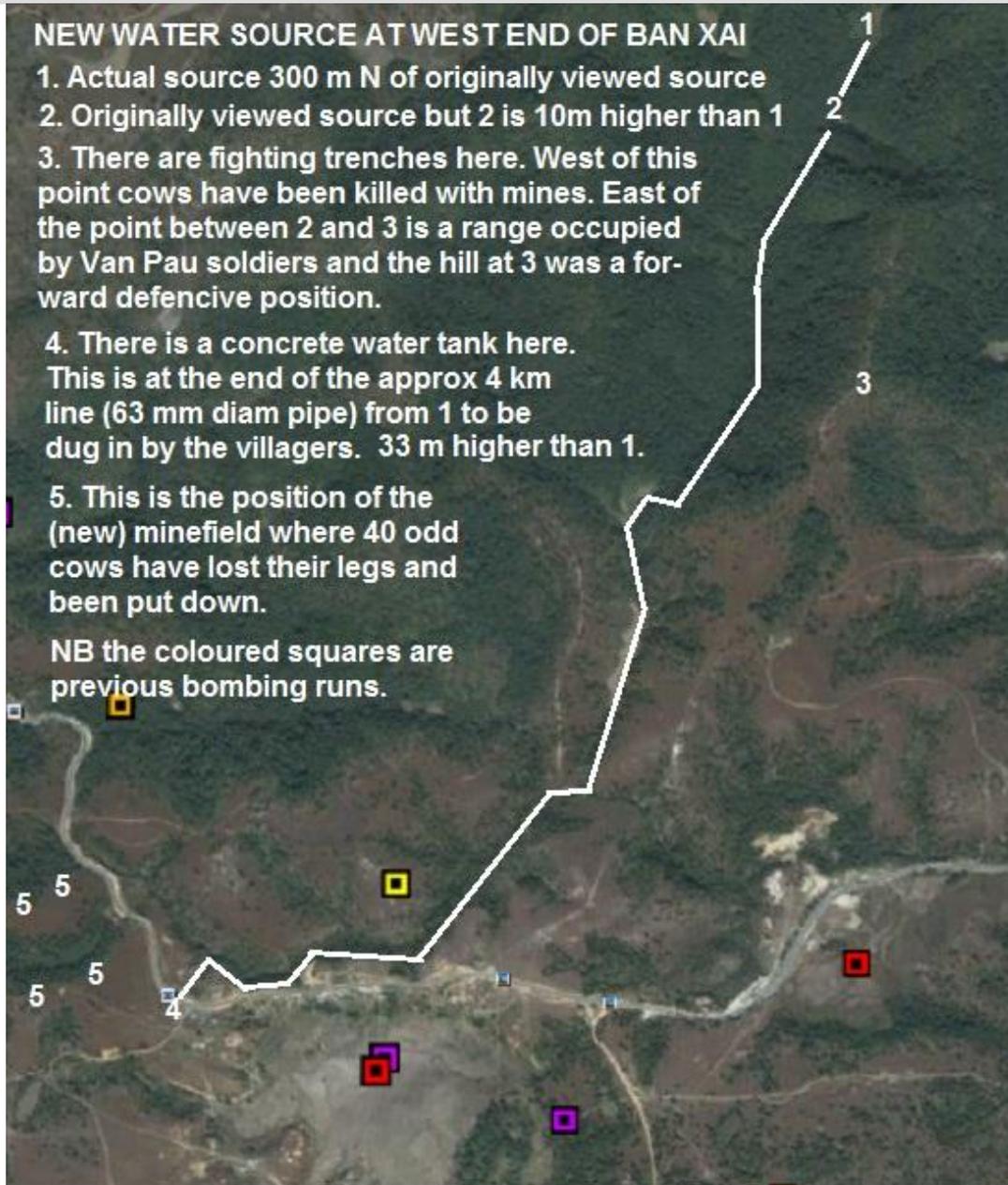
A New Minefield

The villagers have told us about 40 cows have lost their legs and had to be put down because of M14 mines (which can be seen sticking out of the ground) on a hill only 60 metres from the Western End of the village. PCL have done a Level 1 Survey of this site and have indicated that there is an area of approximately 28 Ha is subject to minefield (this is in addition to two more minefields already known about and 2 that have been cleared by MiVAC using PCL). In addition there was 20 Ha of ground only 300 metres from the “new” minefield that was cleared of just under 600 UXO (mainly bombies) by UXO Lao several years ago. The village has asked MiVAC to clear another 15 Ha adjacent to this 20 Ha site.

NEW WATER SOURCE AT WEST END OF BAN XAI

1. Actual source 300 m N of originally viewed source
2. Originally viewed source but 2 is 10m higher than 1
3. There are fighting trenches here. West of this point cows have been killed with mines. East of the point between 2 and 3 is a range occupied by Van Pau soldiers and the hill at 3 was a forward defensive position.
4. There is a concrete water tank here. This is at the end of the approx 4 km line (63 mm diam pipe) from 1 to be dug in by the villagers. 33 m higher than 1.
5. This is the position of the (new) minefield where 40 odd cows have lost their legs and been put down.

NB the coloured squares are previous bombing runs.



Volunteers

The first wave of volunteers leave shortly to join Steve and Dorene at BanXai, they are;

Mervyn Haines- Owner Kokoda Track Experience, former soldier and accountant.

Robert Heeb- former soldier, butcher and retiree.

David Turner- ex fireman, ex RAAF.

Shaun Turner- David's son, secondary school student.

Robert Loxton- Vietnam Vet, former 1 Fd Sqn Tunnel Rat.

Jim Weston- Vietnam Vet, former 1 Fd Sqn Tunnel Rat.

I'm sure they will have a diverse range of skills and knowledge to get the job done.

If there are people interested in becoming a volunteer please contact us.



These are some of the kids we will helping, the top shot is a 10 year old with her young brother. The other is a group of Hmong kids at BanXai

Thats about it for this my first newsletter, thanks to Sandy for his help and also to my daughter Courtney for her assistance. Please forward this News letter to others and encourage them to join MiVAC at <http://www.mivactrust.org>

Take action, we can all assist!

From Jim and all the BanXai team.