

Archive No. 131

Orange Action

Orange Action was set up by three women who, when they visited Vietnam at the end of 1986, became aware that the war in Vietnam had severely affected women's health and continued to do so, particularly as far as reproduction was concerned with an increased incidence of birth deformities and a rare form of uterine cancer, amongst other health related matters.

A letter dated 11 December, 1986, from the Women's Union of Ho Cho Minh City (which Orange Action reprinted in their information leaflet) clearly stated that the Women's Union wanted to set up a centre for the care and protection of mothers and their children against the after effects of chemical warfare. They also listed the things they needed to purchase and how much they cost from an ambulance (\$5,000 US) to an electric generator (\$300 US)

The first meeting of Orange Action – Health Action for Women in Vietnam was held on 11 April 1987 at Haywire. The members of Orange Action undertook to publicise the situation in Vietnam, particularly to inform Australians about the plight of the women and to fundraise money to help pay for a Gynaecological Research Centre which had been requested by the Women's Union of Ho Cho Minh City.

To those ends Orange Action organised an information evening with slides and speakers; and hosted an afternoon seminar with speakers, discussions and displays at the Collingwood Community Health Centre on 14 November, 1987, where was information about the historical background to the Vietnam War and Vietnam Today, the effects of chemical warfare and the politics of developmental aid.

Several fundraising ideas were followed up including a film night and a women only '60s Dance at the Burnley Tavern on 29 April, 1988, with a women's band, Mogadonnas, playing. The group finally folded towards the end of 1988 due to lack of interest.