

# Crossroads Foundation, Tuen Mun and a walk to Sui Lam Saturday 2 February 2013

A group of about 10 members and friends met at Crossroads Foundation in Tuen Mun in the early afternoon. Quoting the Crossroads website, the Foundation is "a Hong Kong based non-profit organisation serving global need. We believe that, in a broken world that sees too much suffering, we should do all we can to link those who are in need with those who can provide help. We, therefore, provide an intersection, literally a crossroads, to bring both together." This well-established charity is a fascinating place to visit.



First of all, we enjoyed coffee and cake at the Fair Trade coffee shop there and were given a short talk from Gwen, one of the Crossroads volunteers who is now an expert barista, (*note from Secy: as is your modest Outing Organiser Frank B.*)

Gwen, from Cameroon, explained why she was at Crossroads and what her role entailed. Listeners were very surprised to learn that many volunteers working at Crossroads come from overseas specifically to do this job. Most are not wealthy themselves and live very simply on the site, and are dependent on donations themselves for support. Typical living costs are \$1140 per week to help cover rent, utilities and food, plus a little extra to cover personal costs such as travel to town on Sundays. (Anyone wishing to help Gwen or any other volunteer in this way can contact Crossroads directly at [enquiries@crossroads.org.hk](mailto:enquiries@crossroads.org.hk).)



We were then taken on a short tour by Stephanie who showed us the well-kept gardens and explained some of the things that happen at Crossroads on a daily basis, such as container packing for overseas consignments to help in areas of distress and to support a range of aid projects, sorting of donated goods, operation of the gift shop and many other things too numerous to mention. Everything was supremely well-organised. The Crossroads Foundation uses the old site of the army barracks for the Gurkhas. Within the site near the Rivendell building is a sacred tree that marks the place of a temple, still visited by those who have a past connection with the site. There were many very old trees that had survived the Japanese occupation of this army camp during WWII (unlike a lot of other trees in HK at that

time). They are well looked after by an enthusiastic group of volunteers who work hard to maintain and protect them. Our group was warmly welcomed and invited back to participate in one of the awareness-raising activities in the Global Village.

Taking our leave, we then began a walk that was a small part of the MacLehose trail to Sui Lam. The walk was very enjoyable and we spotted a Red Necked Keelback snake in the drain and many pitcher plants growing on the side of the hill. We ended the day with a Chinese meal in a local restaurant.

