

[Subscribe](#)[Share](#) ▼[Past Issues](#)[Transl](#)

AVFS Newsletter

[View this email in your browser](#)

Vietnam Today 
Newsletter of the Australia-Vietnam Friendship Society

Message from the President



2015 has begun with a great deal of activity, as well as growing interest in the Australia Vietnam Friendship Society (AVFS). The first big event of the year was of course TET, and I was fortunate enough to be in Hanoi on the eve of this important celebration. Furthermore I was privileged to spend the evening at the home of a local family in Hanoi to share in the celebrations. It was truly an honour to be accepted into their home. The Vietnamese generosity always astounds me!

There was also a visit to Australia by Mr Nguyen Tan Dung, Prime Minister of Vietnam, with whom Kim Pham and I met. This was followed closely by a visit from Vu Xuan Hong, the President of the Vietnam Union of Friendship Organisations. He is a long standing ally of the AVFS, a good friend, and I was fortunate enough to meet up with him at his son's home in Canberra.

In this Newsletter I also introduce a number of important organisations that have been striving to improve the life of the disabled and and the poor, and of others that are trying to improve the relationships between our 2 peoples - a core value of the AVFS. There is also the story a young man in Australia born to Vietnamese migrants, and trying to make something of his life.

Meeting with Nguyen Tan Dung, Viet Nam PM

[Subscribe](#)[Share ▾](#)[Past Issues](#)[Transl](#)

L- R: Kim Pham, Kim Sampson, Nguyen Tan Dung

The AVFS was invited to meet with Prime Minister Nguyen, to discuss the activities currently being undertaken by the AVFS. The meeting took place at 4.00pm, Wednesday 18 March 2015, at the Grand Hyatt in Canberra. Attending were Kim Sampson (AVFS President) and Kim Pham (AVFS national board member). Kim Sampson also attended a dinner that evening with Prime Minister Nguyen, and Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott, at the National Gallery in Canberra.

The meeting commenced with photographs, and Kim Pham handing a gift to Mr Nguyen from the Walter & Eliza Hall Research Institute.

With the aid of an interpreter, Kim Sampson was able to describe a number of activities currently underway, as well as areas of future interest. The topics included:

- International conference in Hanoi in June. Anticipated 200 guests. AVFS wishes to invite the Minister of Health to attend.
- Strengthening friendship ties with VAFA in Vietnam in January
- Western Australia Rotary initiative. 6,000 wheelchairs have been donated to Vietnam. To enable profession fitting services in Vietnam, a factory needs to be built. \$200,000 has been raised, and AVFS is lobbying the Australia government to match this amount
- Promoting Vietnam-Australia education through student exchange
- Strengthening existing ties with Hanoi Medical University, Vietnam universities and hospital to attract exchange of clinicians and students between Australia and Vietnam.

[Subscribe](#)[Share ▾](#)[Past Issues](#)[Transl](#)[Creating a sister city between Hanoi and Richmond \(Melbourne\).](#)

- Improving trade and commerce opportunities.

Prime Minister Nguyen responded with the following comments:

"Thank-you for visiting me today. I have met many important people in the past two days, the Governor of Australia, Primer Minister Tony Abbott, and we have all agreed to promote bilateral relations between Australia and Vietnam. We have issued a declaration with Australia to bring our relationship to the next level that will open many avenues - uplifting politics, people exchange, business and commerce."

He went on to say:

"We appreciate what you have done and hope that you can continue your efforts. I really like the wheelchair initiative, and the idea of building a factory in Vietnam. This is very good".

An invitation was also extended to both Kim Sampson and Kim Pham to attend the 2015 New Colombo Plan launch. The New Colombo Plan is run by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). It provides scholarships, internships and mentorship programs for short and long-term study in the Indo-Pacific region. (For more information: www.dfat.gov.au/mew-colombo-plan/). About 30-40 were in attendance, including advisory panels to the Minister of Education, DFAT, the Vietnam-Australia embassy, Telstra, South Australia University, RMIT University, the Vietnamese Business Association, and media.

Viet Nam-Australia to enhance Comprehensive Partnership



During Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung's official visit to Australia, a joint declaration was issued on strengthening the Viet Nam-Australia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, which was established on September 7, 2009.

The declaration is designed to build upon achievements, and expand the already strong relationship, and creates a framework for promoting cooperation between the two countries.

Bilateral cooperation:

Viet Nam and Australia recognise the importance of high-level political dialogue in order to promote bilateral cooperation. The two countries will continue to boost high-ranking delegation exchanges and working-level dialogues between the Vietnamese Communist

[Subscribe](#)[Share ▼](#)[Past Issues](#)[Transl](#)

Party, Government and National Assembly with Australia's key political parties, Government and Parliament. The two countries share joint interests in regional peace and security and pledge to continue dialogues and cooperation in defence, security, navigation and aviation safety in the region, law enforcement and the fight against trans-national crimes.

It also includes a commit to strengthening links between the two countries' people through promoting cooperation in culture, sports and tourism. They affirm to expand their cooperation in science, education, vocational training and laws and justice, as well as in environmental protection and climate change response, natural resources, finance, media, and consular issues.

Regional and international cooperation:

Viet Nam and Australia recognise that their security and prosperity are in close association with stability in the Indian and Pacific Oceans region. They affirm to cooperate at regional forums to continue developing an assistance structure for security, stability and cooperation while promoting measures to build trust and minimise risks of conflict in the region.

The two countries will cooperate on cementing regional structures, including the East Asian Summit and those in which the Association of the Southeast Asian Nations plays a central role, to promote peace, stability, and regional security. The two countries also commit to close cooperation at the United Nations (UN) in promoting issues of shared interests and improving the effectiveness of the UN institution.

Viet Nam and Australia affirm the importance of maintaining peace and stability in the region, ensuring navigation and aviation security, safety and freedom, the observance of international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in 1982 - to not use force nor threaten to use force. They call on parties to restrain and refrain from any action that can escalate tension in the region. The two countries also agree on the urgent need to create a Code of Conduct in the East Sea.

Economic growth, trade and industrial development:

The two countries will develop and promote bilateral trade and investment relations in key sectors, taking into account the complementary nature of their respective economies. They commit to boosting cooperation and to the early completion of negotiations relating to the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).

Development Assistance:

In the field of development cooperation, Australia recognises Viet Nam's remarkable

[Subscribe](#)[Share ▾](#)[Past Issues](#)[Transl](#)

achievements in poverty alleviation since the 1990s and its current development goals and will continue supporting Viet Nam in implementing its Socio-Economic Development Strategy (2011-2020).

Defence, law enforcement and security:

Viet Nam and Australia will continue cooperating on defence and security through existing multilateral and bilateral cooperation mechanisms, while going forward with joint activities in aviation and maritime security, peacekeeping, anti-terrorism and issues relating to war consequences. The two countries commit to boosting cooperation in fighting trans-national crime in the region, including human and drug trafficking, laundering, and high-tech crimes. They recognise other challenges such as food security, natural resources management, and disease and disaster risks, and intend to cooperate to solve these challenges within the bilateral framework and international forums.

[For more information](#)

The Amazing Dr Hai of Saigon

Michael Redding became a member of the AVFS in 2014, and was subsequently elected to the National Executive at the 2014 annual meeting. He is a regular visitor to Viet Nam. The amazing Dr Hai of Saigon is someone he met during his travels, who has left a lasting impression.

Dr. Hai (MD Nguyen Hong Hai) is 82 and an eminent, highly respected and much-loved doctor, who has had an amazing life and career. In this short article I would like to describe the things he has been doing over many years in trying to make the lives of poor and disabled people a little better and to give them some hope for the future.

When I was recently with him in July 2014 I assured him in that, after my return to Melbourne, I would try to get some more support for his humanitarian and charitable work. This article is my starting point.

What Dr Hai wants most of all is to get support for his two important missions:

1. To get more assistance for disabled children in Vietnam
2. To support his Lunch Kitchen which provides substantial meals on 3 days each week for about 500 very poor people each day.

Dr Hai started medical training in Hanoi, when Vietnam was part of French Indochina. He rose to be one of the leading doctors in the north. In 1954, after the French had been defeated, northern Vietnam became a communist state under the leadership of Ho Chi Minh. The following year Dr. Hai met and spoke with Ho Chi Minh who encouraged him to

Subscribe

Share ▼

Past Issues

Transl

keep improving his medical knowledge. He was extremely busy during the war years, especially with the heavy bombing on Hanoi by the USA.

As one of the foremost doctors in Vietnam, in 1979 he moved south to Saigon to take up a very senior medical position.

Dr Hai is both wealthy and a most compassionate person. With the death of his wife last year he is now the only family member living in his very large 5 level house.



He still practices as a Chinese medicine specialist for people with cancer. When I visited him previously in July 2013 he had a patient waiting to see him, and invited us to the consultation. This patient had been to hospitals for cancer treatment, but without success. His only hope now was to go to Dr Hai, who does not charge his patients for consultations or for the dispensing of Chinese medicines, and can give them a room in his house to stay at no charge, if they require it.

Supporting severely disabled people
Dr Hai's refuge from the city has been his 10,000 sq metre (1 ha) 'garden' farm, about one hour's drive southeast from

Saigon along the highway to Vung Tau. In addition to having his own 'holiday' house, he has also built a simple house on his farm for an impoverished family whose children suffer from severe physical disabilities. The parents are in their 60's and their 4 children are from mid-20's to early 30's.



The 3 sons are terribly crippled with deformed hips and legs – they cannot stand and shuffle about on their backsides. Their daughter needs to attend hospital often. Dr. Hai considers that 60% of the children's disabilities could be genetic from a parent while 40% could be the consequences of chemical bombing by the Americans during

the war affecting the mother. The family is also supported by donations from Dr. Hai's friends. The family was given a cow just 2 weeks before our visit, while many ducks, hens

[Subscribe](#)

[Share](#) ▼

[Past Issues](#)

[Transl](#)

and chickens plus animal feed have been donated. They have also received donations of building supplies to concrete the floors of the animal sheds. By providing them with a house and the means to earn an income, Dr Hai has given this family some hope for the future. One day they may have enough income to make a home elsewhere. If this were ever to happen, he would offer this house to another very needy family.

The 2000 Restaurant in Saigon

About 5 years ago Dr. Hai was able to establish a Lunch Kitchen in Saigon for very poor people, in a building provided by the local government authority. On 3 days of each week



a substantial lunch is served on stainless steel trays for up to 500 poor people, who each pay a nominal 2,000 dong (10 cents).

Dr. Hai's son, Anh (51) manages this huge operation. He obtains substantial donations from companies and individuals for all the rice, meat, vegetables and supplies required. When I visited there

were over 20 large sacks of rice that had been donated for future meals. This inspirational Lunch Kitchen operates entirely with volunteer labour and donations for all the food. Anh also organizes for at least 25 volunteers to assist with the delivery of each meal. He co-ordinates with teachers at the Saigon Universities for the 25 student volunteers to help with each meal. The volunteer cooks start at 5am, meal trays are prepared in the kitchen, and stacked for serving.



A squad of boys did the washing up. These very poor Saigon people queue quietly in turn, then sit at tables for their substantial meal – there was rice, soup, two vegetables, meat and a banana for this meal.

So where to from here?
Dr. Hai at age 82 is a pretty amazing person.

He has asked me to help him by seeing if I can find sponsors and supporters from Melbourne for his projects in Vietnam! I suspect that he realizes the years are catching up with him and he would like to try and secure some kind of ongoing support from people in Australian for some of the disabled children and the very poor in Vietnam.

1. Assisting Disabled Children

[Subscribe](#)[Share ▼](#)[Past Issues](#)[Transl](#)

Dr Hai has been an active member of the Vietnam Assistance Association for Handicapped Children

Children (also called the Vietnam Relief Association for Handicapped Children).

Their website is: <http://cuutrotreemtantat.com.vn/> (use Google Translate if necessary)

a) He is hoping to make contact with a professional person in Melbourne who works in the area of child disability. If they can speak Vietnamese also that would be a bonus!

Is there such a person who would like to volunteer some of their time to talk with Dr Hai?

b) The conversation could focus on what kinds of urgent and specific support the handicapped children in Vietnam might need. This might comprise some financial help, or particular items of equipment, or advice and information from professional people here.

c) When there is clear information about what specific assistance is required, then I am prepared to approach various organizations, service clubs, philanthropic trusts, government departments etc. to see what assistance might be available.

d) I see this as a pretty small scale support project initially. The key to getting it underway is to have a professional person volunteer some time to make contact with Dr Hai, to find out what he believes may be needed. I have prepared this article to encourage one or more professional people working in the area of children with disabilities to volunteer some of their time. The task is to find out in what ways Australians might be able to provide specific assistance to children with disabilities in Vietnam, by talking with Dr Hai and his associates in Saigon.

e) Dr Hai doesn't speak any English, and all my conversations with him have been through my very close English-speaking friend in Vietnam, Dung Nguyen (Nguyen Cuu Dung) who has been our translator. Dung and Dr Hai are close friends and know each other well. However, Dung lives in Hue, in central Vietnam. As this is far from Saigon they see each other only occasionally.



Here they are standing next to the shrine for his wife that Dr Hai has placed in his house.

In contrast, Dung's daughter Tra Mi (Nguyen Le Tra Mi) lives and works in Saigon. Tra Mi speaks English well, and is regarded with great affection and trust by Dr Hai. Tra Mi would be very pleased to help facilitate contact between a professional person in Australia and Dr

Hai. She says she would like to assist Dr Hai in any way possible.

2. Assisting very poor people

a) The Lunch Kitchen project has been a great success under the leadership and fantastic commitment of Dr Hai's son, Anh.

b) In talking with Anh and Dr Hai it should become clearer as to where they believe the

[Subscribe](#)[Share ▾](#)[Past Issues](#)[Transl](#)

program might go from here.

- Should it remain at 3 days a week?
- Could a second Lunch Kitchen be started up at another location or city?
- Could their Lunch Kitchen be increased from three days to more days each week?
- If so, could it be possible to achieve a big increase in food donations and the numbers of volunteers needed each week?
- Would donations of money from Australia assist the program?
- Are there any other ways that Australians might be able to help very poor people in Vietnam?

c) Viet Nam is still in economic transition. It has not been able to develop its social support structures to the extent that we in Australia now have. Dr Hai, with his Lunch Kitchen, has developed a very successful model for providing great support for very poor people, in a society where there is insufficient assistance available from government, religious and other agencies.

Article by Michael Redding, AVFS member (Victoria).

Wheelchairs for Kids

Wheelchairs for Kids (WFK) is a project of the Rotary Club of Scarborough in Western Australia, where retiree volunteers manufacture wheelchairs for disabled children in Asia. The endeavor is supported by donations from a variety of sources, with over 20,000 wheelchairs have been distributed. Of these, 6,000 have been shipped to Viet Nam for disabled children aged 4 to 14 years; there is still a huge unmet need for them.



This project was brought to the attention of the AVFS by one of our newest members, and now National Committee member, Michael Redding. Michael is a regular visitor to Vietnam, and a great supporter of the people there.

He has explained that the main concern of WFK is that many of the wheelchairs have just been given out to families, without being properly adjusted for the individual needs of each child. However these adjustments require an expertise that is not readily available in Vietnam.

[Subscribe](#)[Share ▼](#)[Past Issues](#)[Transl](#)

what is required is a facility in Vietnam that acts as both a storage and distribution centre, as well as a place where the chairs can be properly fitted.

Land has now been offered at no cost to WFK by Phan Thi Hanh, President of the Vietnamese Association of Midwives (VAM). Hanh's NGO has recently received a grant of US\$1m from the Japanese Government - \$400,000 for education and training programs for midwives and \$600,000 to purchase 4,000 sq metres of land in Hue and build a 3 level headquarters for VAM on it. Hanh is extremely supportive of the WFK project of Rotary and wants to do whatever she can to facilitate the distribution of wheelchairs in Vietnam. She is offering a portion of the land recently purchased to enable a suitable building to be erected on the site.

The idea of a building to expand this program is in the conceptual stages at the moment. A suitable building could cover 100 sq metres and be on 2 levels. The ground floor could have a large storage space for wheelchairs plus an open area for assembling and fitting the wheelchairs to disabled children. The upper level could have 3 to 4 single bedrooms and 1 or 2 bathroom to accommodate volunteer visiting professionals (physiotherapists and occupational therapists). These volunteers would ensure the wheelchairs were suitably adjusted for each child. (Apparently VN hospitals do not have physios or OTs). Volunteers could be sought from Australian Volunteers for International Development (Australian Govt), Australian Volunteers International, Australian Physiotherapy Association, Occupational Therapy Australia, etc.

A very approximate estimation of building costs for a structure with a total floor area of 200 sq metres might be \$200,000 (building costs in VN are obviously much lower than in Australia).

It is proposed that the AVFS support this project. Kim Sampson (AVFS President) and Kim Pham (AVFS National Committee member) met with the Prime Minister of Vietnam, Nguyen Tan Dung on 18th March to discuss activities being undertaken by the AVFS. Both the Prime Minister and Ambassador Nghi Luong Thanh felt that this was an excellent project, and one worthy of their support and admiration.

For more information: <http://www.wheelchairsforkids.org/home.php>

Hearts for Hue

The AVFS was recently contacted by Khanh Truong, Chairman of Hearts for Hue (H4H), who had heard about us, and who thought we might be interested in their activities. They do some very good work, and I am sure will be of great interest to our membership. Khanh

[Subscribe](#)

[Share](#) ▼

[Past Issues](#)

[Transl](#)

Truong has provided the following information.

Hearts for Hue (H4H) is a local NGO established in Hue city, Vietnam in 2007 with a mission to improve the lives of disadvantaged people through education, health care and livelihood support programs.



It manages several key programs such as providing low-income families with sustainable economic development opportunities, creating a better life for people living with a disability and improving the educational environment for children living in rural areas.

In 2014, at the inaugural [Vietnam NGO Awards 2014](#), Hearts For Hue was named the winner in its category (small NGO) for good practice in Transparency & Accountability and Resource Mobilization. The Vietnam NGO Awards 2014 was organized by the Research Centre for Management and Sustainable Development (MSD) in collaboration with Resource Alliance and sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation and Irish Aid.

History

In 2006, two Vietnamese professionals, Mr Truong Trong Khanh and Ms. Nguyen Thi Hoa, visited boat people at their resettlement areas in Phy Binh and Vy Da. During this visit Mr. Truong and Ms. Hoa saw the many difficulties that boat people face daily such as no access to clean water, a latrine system in very poor condition and many children dropping out of school due to lack of funds. Wishing to improve the quality of life for these people, Mr. Truong and Ms. Hoa established a recognized local non-government organization, Hearts For Hue. With the support and help of two American social activists Mr. Do Nguyen and Mr. Dodie Gaines, Hearts For Hue submitted a proposal to The D.O.V.E. Fund, an organization based in Ohio, for the funding of an early education and sanitation program.



Hearts For Hue’s program proposal was accepted and, in 2007, with funding from The D.O.V.E. Fund began the environmental protection and education program for local people in Phu Binh re-settlement area, followed by the Vy da re-settlement area in 2008.

In 2009 Hearts For Hue received funding from The D.O.V.E. Fund for the construction of Huong Xuan and Quang An kindergartens, allowing 500 children in

[Subscribe](#)[Share ▼](#)[Past Issues](#)[Transl](#)

these rural areas to attend school.

In 2010, Hearts For Hue again received funding from The D.O.V.E. Fund to begin a Microfinance program in Vy Da. One hundred and forty people living with a disability in Thia Thien Hue Province were the recipients of wheelchairs donated to Hearts For Hue and during 2012, a total of four hundred and forty eight wheelchairs were distributed by H4H to disabled people throughout Vietnam.

In 2013, Hearts For Hue with funding from HSBC, Unilever Viet nam, Veterans For Peace and Singapore Universities, carried out several humanitarian programs that benefited disadvantaged people in Thua Thien Hue province, Viet nam.

Mission

Hearts For Hue's mission is to "create a real and lasting positive change for poor residents in Thua Thien Hue in particular and in Vietnam in general, especially residents in resettlement areas and people living with a disability".

Vision

Hearts For Hue's vision is to "be a professional local NGO that provides assistance, support to poor/disadvantaged people enabling them to get access to quality education, health care services, equal economic development opportunities, and live in good environmental conditions".

Programs

Microfinance program

Hearts For Hue has carried out its Microfinance Program in Hue City since 2010. The program offers unsecured loans to groups of disadvantaged people who would otherwise lack access to banking and other financial services. Group members support each other as individual small businesses are established and developed. Loans are offered for a range of purposes including the breeding of livestock, cultivation of various crops, sale of consumer goods for any purpose that will improve their livelihoods. In some instances loans are also provided for house repairs or restoration. The size of a loan is dependent on each household's need but does not exceed 5 million VND (approximately US\$240) in the first year, 7 million VND (US\$336) in the second year and 10 million VND (US\$480) in the third.

Disability Support Program

It is estimated that more than 12 million people and families in Vietnam are affected by a disability. Beside the human cost of living with a disability there are also economic and social costs that influence standards of living and acceptance within their community. Hearts For Hue's Disability Support Program provides direct assistance to people living

Subscribe

Share ▼

Past Issues

Transl

with a disability, Agent Orange infection, and indirectly to their families, by offering livelihood support projects such as the creation of job opportunities, health care and rehabilitation activities with the goal of improving their living conditions while supporting their integration into society.

H4H's Disability Support Program has supported more than 1000 people living with a physical or mental disability in Thua Thien Hue province. Projects included the provision of funds for chicken raising activities aimed at increasing income and independence for disabled people living at home and improve the living conditions for the more than 450 mentally disabled patients at Thua Thien Social Center. The program also gave 448 people living with a disability the ability to be independently mobile when they were each presented with a wheelchair.



Community Service Program

With the support and collaboration of Singapore Management University, Singapore Institute of Technology, Ngee Ann Polytechnic, ASEAN Young Professionals Volunteers Corp (AYPVC), Hearts For Hue organises volunteer students groups to improve the educational environment for rural poor

kindergartens in Thua Thien Hue, Vietnam. The volunteer groups carry out activities such as fence building, English language classes, recreational activities for children and participate in cultural and skill exchange exercises with Hue students. Program goals include improving the infrastructure within kindergartens and orphanages in poor rural areas and the English language skills of the children while promoting a good relationship between Vietnamese and Asian students. Since 2013, Hearts For Hue has invited and organized the visit of of ten groups of student volunteers whose efforts and goodwill have improved the educational environment of kindergartens in Thua Thien Hue province, Vietnam.

Vietnam in Australia

[Subscribe](#)[Share](#) ▼[Past Issues](#)[Transl](#)

Vietnam in Australia is an initiative of students in the ACT working with the Vietnamese Embassy in Australia. In particular, Thanh Hai Do has been very active, and is building a strong following. They do not have a website, but use a Facebook page to communicate with their online community. Thanh Hai Do and AVFS President, Kim Sampson, met in Canberra on the 19th March 2015 to explore ways of working together in the future. For more information: [Vietnam in Australia](#)

International meeting in Hanoi (APACI)

The Asia Pacific Alliance for the Control of Influenza (APACI) is organising an international conference in Hanoi on 10-12 June 2015: the 2nd Asia-Pacific Influenza Summit. The meeting will be opened by the Minister for Health, and will draw around 200 medical and scientific experts from across the globe. This is a very important meeting which will add to the knowledge base that already exists there, and will contribute well over US\$50,000 to the local economy.

Influenza is a serious disease, not only to the human population, but also to animal stocks in Vietnam. One of the most lethal forms of H5N1 (Avian flu) exists within the bird population there. Pandemic planning is a critical aspect of any public health program, and Vietnam is taking the matter very seriously. There is a strong influenza vaccine manufacturing capacity being developed, and a growing interest in this type of respiratory illness by the medical community.

My Story from Vietnam

[Subscribe](#)[Share ▾](#)[Past Issues](#)[Transl](#)

In March 1996, I was in Vietnam at Lang Co, south of Hue. I was taking a photograph of the beach when I was approached by a 5-year-old girl gesturing to me that she would like my pen.



I gave her a piece of paper and my biro. She wrote her name and age for me and I did the same for her. I took a photo of her and gave her my biro to keep.

After I had the pictures developed, I sent her the photos. All I knew was her name and the village and province she lived in. I posted a letter and photos to her and wished her good luck, never actually knowing if she would get them!

Seven and a half years later, she wrote back! I had her letter translated into English and in the next few years, we exchanged letters and photographs. Once, I managed to telephone her, but our conversation didn't get very far given she couldn't speak a lot of English and I can't speak much Vietnamese!

It has been a while since we last wrote to one another, but she did say that if I ever came back to Vietnam, to try and get in contact with her. Of course she is an adult now and may live somewhere else, but who knows what and whom I might find on any future trip!

Stephen Harrison, AVFS Member (Victoria)

Hiep Do



My name is Hiep Do and I was born in Australia to Vietnamese migrants. I am 20 years young and have lived in the western suburbs of Melbourne for my whole life. Over the last couple of years, I have noticed that there haven't been many young Vietnamese leaders to become role models for young people who have grown up with a Vietnamese background. I hope to change this.

I have been selected to participate in the 29th YMCA Youth Parliament that will run at the end of June to early July this year. Whilst

[Subscribe](#)[Share](#) ▼[Past Issues](#)[Transl](#)

there, I hope to raise the public profile of young Vietnamese-Australians, and become a better role model for not only my brothers, but for the Vietnamese community here in Australia.

To do this, my team of young extraordinary people and myself will need to fundraise about \$4000 to be able to participate in the program. At the moment, this is the only thing that is stopping us from actually realising our dreams. This is quite a lot of money to us, hence why we are asking you and your organisation to help us out on our journey. Any donation will be greatly appreciated. If this is not possible, all I ask for is your support for myself on this program, and if you can help point us in the right direction for possible funding we would appreciate that too.

If you would like to know more about myself and my goals for the future, I have also recently been given the opportunity to put myself out on the internet. You can read more about my story at: <http://www.ymcakedstarter.org.au/projects/hiep>.

Thank you for your time, and any help is welcome and valued. My number is 0423 658 816 if you would like to discuss this further.

Kind Regards,
Hiep Do.

New Members

- Stephen Harrison (Victoria)
 - Jason Kelly (Victoria)
 - Penny Kelly (Victoria)
 - Tara Bland (Victoria)
 - Angie Stojisavlovich (South Australia)
-

Become a member of the Australia Vietnam Friendship Society

Australia Vietnam Friendship Society (AVFS)

[Download the Membership Application form here](#)



By becoming a member of the AVFS, you will be able to learn about, and participate in our activities, and vote at the annual national convention. Most importantly though, you will be helping us to achieve our goals, and to improve the relations between the people of

Subscribe

Share ▼

Past Issues

Transl

Australia and the people of Viet Nam.

Copyright © 2015 AVFS, All rights reserved.

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

