

# Kookaburra Chatter



The bulletin of Vietnamese graduates from Australia

Issue No. 6, August 2004



Vietnamese Graduates from Australia Club

What is Kookaburra?

A Kookaburra is a bird and is related to the Kingfisher. It has a small body but powerful beak and neck. More interestingly, it can laugh. Naming our bulletin after this Australian native bird symbolises a dynamic, fun and special group. Articles contributed by alumni are particularly welcome!

»» **Charity Programs**

»» **VGAC Website**

»» **Alumni Activities**

»» **Membership Card Program**





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# Hello again to you all!



**T**his year has been another big one for the VGAC throughout Vietnam. Organising Committees have been active everywhere to promote the strong links we have between Australia and Vietnam and successful Galas have been run in Hanoi, Danang and HCMC. Membership has strongly increased due to your "new look" website and initiatives such as the VGAC membership

card makes it even more attractive to become a member of the most successful club in Vietnam. Still unfortunately, the success of the VGAC comes down to only a few dedicated members who put their time to make everything happen. So why don't more of you come forward to making the VGAC even more successful over the next 12 months? Remember the VGAC is for you and for also the people less fortunate in life who cannot help themselves. So come forward, give your time and money and enjoy the friendship which comes from the VGAC. Best wishes and good luck over the next twelve months.

Richard Martin  
Counsellor, Education Science and Training

# Message from VGAC Chairman

Dear friends!

**O**ur Kookaburra Chatter has reached issue No. 6 now and it has become a regular and popular bulletin among the alumni, universities and companies connected with Australian education. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those alumni and sponsors who have been supporting and making this bulletin as well as many other events happened.

**T**he number of official VGAC members has been growing every year especially this year when we introduced our new website that allows alumni to register directly on line. If you have yet registered your name please try to do it on line through: [www.vgac.net](http://www.vgac.net). The total number of registered alumni through out the country so far has reached to 3,500, mainly in Hanoi, Hochiminh City, Hue, Danang and Can Tho. This number reflects the huge potential for our networking and it's also a great challenge for each Chapter Committee and the National Committee.

**T**here were several events and activities happened during this year. The Gala



An interview about charity activities at Hanoi Gala, 2004

Dinner in Hanoi was held on March 17 and it was a great success. Five poor and disadvantaged pupils received our charity money raised during this Gala event. Binh Chau Hot Spring trip was also an excellent outdoor activity that HCMC Chapter organised in early April. It was a two-day trip with full of fun and team building activities. Another event was held in HCMC on May 29, it's called "VGAC Open" Tennis Tournament. Lots of alumni-tennis players signed up for the friendly competition and it was so successful that we want to do it again next year.

We also raised some charity fund during this tournament to donate to Orange Agent Victims. On the same day, Can Tho Chapter organised a show quiz with the theme "Explore Australia" that attracted many students of Can Tho University.

**F**or the coming events, we will have 3 Gala Dinners by the end of the year: one in HCMC in August, Hue/Danang in September and Can Tho in December. I'm sure that these coming events will provide an excellent opportunity for all of us - Vietnamese graduates from Australian universities - to catch

up each other and to share our good memories. But please remember, the mentioned events and all other VGAC activities will not be successful without your support. And if you wish to be involved in organising those events please come forward to join the steering committees. We always need fresh members.

**T**he contact names, numbers and addresses for each chapter are available later on. Cheers!

Dr. Ly Qui Trung  
VGAC National Chairman

# Member of IEAust, Why Not?

**M**y name is Do Thanh Vu, an ex AusAID post-graduate student from the University of Queensland. Through this letter, I wish to reach as many graduates with engineering background as possible. If you are not from engineering area, please do a favour to pass this information to your friends or to whom that may be interested in.

You may have heard about IEAust. IEAust or Engineers of Australia, formerly named Institute of Engineers Australia, is a famous association of engineers. The IEAust engineer members are not only working in Australia and but also in many other countries. You can visit the website at [www.ieaust.org.au](http://www.ieaust.org.au) for more information.

Being a member of this association, I have found lots of benefits essential for my career development and advancement. So if you wish to be a member of this association, I would be happy to introduce you (without introduction of an IEAust member, you can not get the boarding pass! Am I important?!).

In Vietnam, IEAust previously had a tight connection with Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Associations (Lien Hiep cac Hoi Khoa Hoc & Ky Thuat Vietnam - VUSTA) through several IEAust-sponsored development programs. Mr. Le Duc Nhuan, Director of International Relations Department in Hanoi is a key person, who has actively promoted cooperation between VUSTA and IEAust.

Our idea here is to build up a Vietnam's group of engineering graduates from Australia under IEAust guideline and VUSTA's support. However, at the moment, this is just a pure idea, therefore, your support is very important to make it come into reality. While I am the contact person for HCMC, Mr. Nhuan will be the one for Ha Noi. We highly appreciate if you could provide us your valuable advice and contributions.

Please contact with us through email addresses:  
Do Thanh Vu: [dothanhv@yaho.com](mailto:dothanhv@yaho.com);  
Le Duc Nhuan: [nhuanld@yahoo.com](mailto:nhuanld@yahoo.com)

# Alumni Activities in the Old Capital City

**A**lthough the number of alumni of Hue Chapter is not so large, they still have many activities such as gatherings, quiz on Australian education and establishing a music band (Hue citizens in general are extremely fond of music), and especially Alumni Gala.

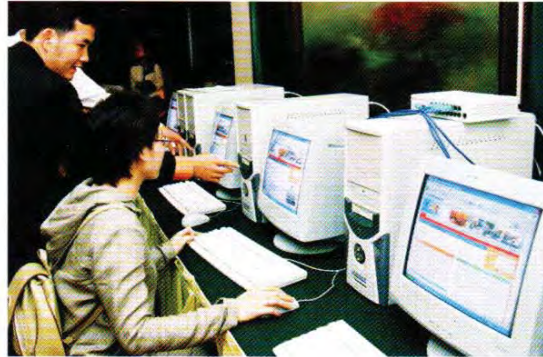
Busy with the preparation of Hue Festival during Jun 04, Hue Alumni Gala has been

postponed until September 2004. Even though, we look forward a successful Gala and let's dream of a mysterious Hue night near the Huong River with music, friends and cheers.

## The plan of activities in 2003-2004 includes

1. Christmas and New Year's Meeting (Dec. 2003)
2. Quizzes on Australian Education
3. Establishing Hue chapter's music band
4. Sponsoring "English Conversations for Children"

## VGAC Website



During Mar 04, VGAC's new website <http://www.vgac.net> has been officially launched. Enhanced with more useful functions, the new website helps the networking ever better.

● **News & Activities:** VGAC and Australia-related news are frequently updated here. Every VGAC activity is also reported here.

● **Members:** Up to now, VGAC has more than 3,500 registered members in 5 chapters: Hanoi, Hue, Da Nang, Ho Chi Minh City and Can Tho. The new website has an improved

function: on-line registration. Choose your chapter and then register. Fill in the form and submit. You can also edit or update your registered profile.

● **Career support:** VGAC, in association with SHD, provides executive recruitment, and consultancy services. VGAC members are welcome to post resume, search jobs. Meanwhile, those members can register as recruiters, to look for potential employees among other VGAC members.

● **Charity & donation:** The club appeals donations from its members and outsiders for this kind of activity.

● **Forum:** Many chat-rooms have been created for members to share, exchange information and experience such as: business opportunities, scholarships, jokes, sports, music, etc.

If you are an alumnus from Australia, you are all warmly welcome to join in VGAC membership.

Nguyen Phi Dzung, Chairman, VGAC HCMC.

## VGAC Membership Card Program



of those supporting outlets or venues will be listed in VGAC website.

### The card design:

- Non-magnetic 2-side card made from plastic.
- 4 colours printed.
- Embossed card number, name of card holder and validity date.
- Logo of VGAC and card sponsor.

Up to now, we have received confirmation of discount offers from various alumni-owned companies as well as employer-companies of alumni. You do probably understand that the more offers we receive, the more valuable our membership cards are. Let's do something for your Club, a way to make it stronger and more well-known.

Thank you

## Team building trip Binh Chau resort



**T**hrow away anxiety, relax and enjoy great weekends!

The trip took place on 3-4 April 04. Climate was good, moderately windy - ideal for travelling. Trip goers were from VGAC, NutriFort, RMIT Vietnam, Metro, AC Nielsen, etc.

Upon arrival, we are awakened by the fresh air and cool wind of Binh Chau. A promise of enjoyable weekends!

At Binh Chau, there were plenty of choices for relaxing: foot-soaking basins; hot water swimming pool, mud-bathing (white teeth and extremely dark skin), fishing (crocodile), playing tennis, karaoke, etc. and we tried all. And karaoke was a great time. Lam Truong or Trio

666 would stay quiet if they could hear top singers Phi Dzung, Qui Trung, Hai Van... and others singing and dancing. And yes, of course, there were also high scores for over loud voice. After a barbecue dinner, we played games and enjoyed great fun and laughter.

Our main activity of the trip was a 5K race. "Running is very good for health" but after a few steps the legs were so weary. And as we did not expect such a big challenge in a 5K race, some of us (sorry) had to cut it short and... accepted no prizes. For your information: Mr. Trung, our VGAC National Chairman won a prize. He deserved our elder. Try hard, brother Trung, for a stronger VGAC!

By VGAC National Coordinator

## EXPLORE AUSTRALIA May 29, 2004



## "Explore Australia" Contest Can Tho University

**R**esponding to the appeal of Can Tho University's management board for diversifying English speaking activities and meanwhile helping students to get more knowledge about the culture, geography, country and people of Australia and other English-speaking countries, the English Department of the Pedagogy Faculty, in collaboration with Vietnamese Graduates from Australia Club (VGAC) organised the "Explore Australia" contest on 29 May 04.

Five teams participating in the contest were from the English Department. They had to go through several challenges: knowledge test, mini play, contest of eloquence in English. Finally, the team of Class 27 won the first prize. Nearly 1,000 students watched and cheered at the contest, which was organised the first time at Can Tho University and sponsored by VGAC. With the support of VGAC, Can Tho University plans to make this contest an annual event.

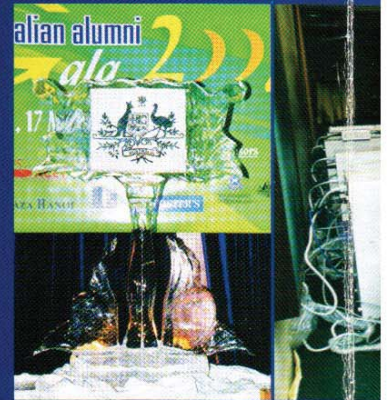
Report from VGAC Can Tho

# Hanoi Alumni « Music and C

**T**hat night, the venue was warmed up in a really festive atmosphere. The Gala was well attended by nearly 500 alumni and guests. Representatives from various institutions, companies, as well as senior officials from the Australian Embassy and Vietnamese government came to this special event. The Gala was widely reported on televisions, namely VTV and Hanoi TV, and some major newspapers and e-newspapers.

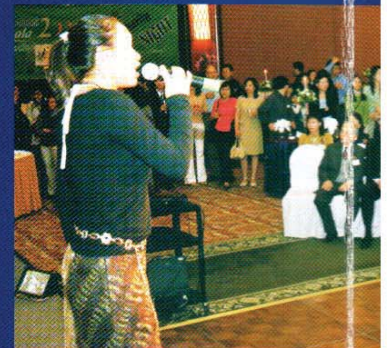


**T**he Gala created an opportunity for alumni in Hanoi to get together, enjoy a wonderful and meaningful night of musical entertainment and charity, where VGAC Hanoi charity program has been officially initiated. During the Gala, VGAC Hanoi chapter made contribution to the "Fund for the Poor" of the Fatherland Front and presented scholarships to five poor and disadvantaged children with good academic records.

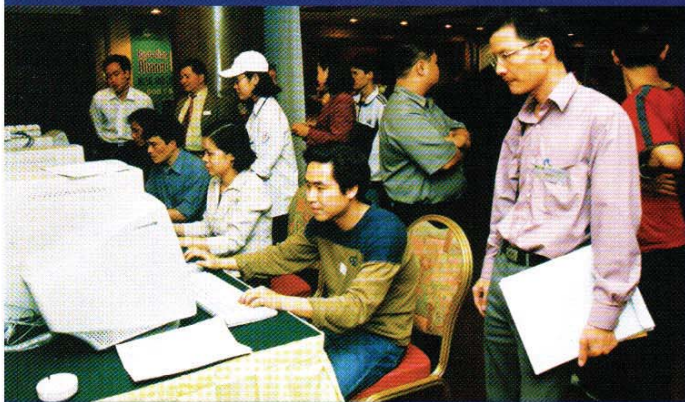


**A**s Chairman of VGAC Hanoi Chapter, I am very happy that the Gala was a great success. It is thankful to the enthusiastic contribution of the Hanoi Committee members, who were just appointed a few weeks before the Gala and VGAC Hanoi Coordinator.

Nguyen Huy Quang  
Chairman, VGAC Hanoi Chapter



# Hanoi Alumni Gala Dinner Charity Night



Alumni excitedly enjoy Hanoi Gala

## Alumni and Friends Have Fun with Tennis

Vietnam - Australia Friendship Tennis Tournament "VGAC Open" was jointly organised by VGAC (Vietnamese Graduates from Australia Club) and Vietnam - Australia Friendship Association (VAFA) on 29 May 04 at Van Thanh Tourist Park in HCMC's Binh Thanh District.

Attending in the tournament were more than 50 amateur tennis players, who are the club's members, Australian expatriates, overseas Vietnamese together with their families and friends, who came to give them their big hands over their competition.

Players competed in two levels: standard level (for those

with less than two years playing) and advanced level (with over two years playing). Mr. Pham Van Phuoc and Mr. Nguyen Duc Cuong won the advanced level and Mrs. Nguyen Kim Thu and Mr. Nguyen Van Hanh won the standard level.

Although it was the first time VGAC HCMC Chapter and VAFA organised such sport event, the Tennis Tournament was highly appreciated by competitors for its success. VGAC HCMC Chapter plans to make Tennis Tournament an annual event. We hope to welcome more competitors in VGAC games 2005. See you.

By Bui Thuy Nga



## VGAC Charity Programs



In Aug 03, VGAC HCMC established a Charity Fund and since then, charity activities have been done throughout VGAC chapters.

VND 50 million are the largest amount VGAC HCMC has collected since the Charity Fund was established. Mr. Nguyen Phi Dzung and Mr. Trinh Quang Bao, HCMC Charity Fund Manager visited Phu Yen province to donate VND 35 million to Phu Yen Ophthalmology Centre for cataract operations of poor patients in Son Hoa district. The remained VND 15 million was donated to a centre for handicapped children. The sum was contributed by many VGAC members, their friends and families as well as Vietnamese expats from Australia.

This was then followed by "Music and Charity Night" Gala Dinner in Hanoi on 17 Mar 04.

The Gala was very meaningful and greatly appreciated by relevant authorities for charity contribution of VND 10 million to the "Fund for The Poor" and direct donation of VND one million each for 5 disadvantaged students in Hanoi. During the Gala, VGAC members and non-members donated around VND 4 million to the VGAC Charity Fund. Mr. Nguyen Huu Quang, Chairman, VGAC Hanoi as well as other committee members also contributed their money and lots of time and effort for the success of this charity night.

On 15 Aug 04, VGAC HCMC will organise an Alumni Gala Dinner, in which belongings of popular people will be auctioned to support victims of Agent Orange.

With a range of charity activities since Aug 03, VGAC has showed high responsibility to the society and the disadvantaged people and demonstrated the dynamics of its members. The work is on-going and more charity programs will be organised in a near future.

By Nguyen Phi Dzung

# Face of the Year: Australia Asia Award Winner



VGAC - AEI meeting on the occasion of Ms. F. Buffinton's visit

**O**n 10 June 2004, Ms. Fiona Buffinton, AEI Chief Executive Officer and Mr. Richard Martin, AEI Counsellor in Vietnam presented the Award to Dr. Ly Qui Trung, VGAC National Chairman and General-Secretary of Vietnam-Australia Friendship Association VAFA in HCMC. Dr. Trung has worked tirelessly to promote cooperation and friendship between Vietnam and Australia, especially in the education and training field. The Award was a fully funded study tour to Western Australia from 12 to 19 June 2004, which focused on studying management and operations of hospitality and tourism training facilities at Australian universities and VET colleges in Perth.

**T**he Australian Asian Executive Awards are fully funded by the

Australian Government through the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) and are administered in Vietnam by Australian Education International (AEI), the international representative of DEST. The objectives of the Awards are to promote linkages and to build relationships between senior education administrators, academics and researchers in the region and the Australian education sector. Recipients of these prestigious Awards will benefit from access to high quality training, and/or the opportunity to develop professional networks with Australian academics and education experts.

**U**pon returning from Perth, Dr. Trung commented that the study tour was very

intensive and productive although he did not have much time for sight-seeing in that beautiful city! As an experienced and well-regarded man in the industry, he was very impressed with the Australian hospitality and tourism training facilities, especially very practical training programs and he would work with VAFA HCMC and interested organisations to explore the possibility of establishing a hospitality training centre in HCMC, based on the Australian model. "The hospitality and tourism industry is one of the fastest growing industries in Vietnam and the challenge for the industry is not the quantity of service providers but their service quality. One of the keys to sustainable growth is to focus on training high quality manpower and the proposed centre would equip young people with practical skills which are on high demand by employers", Dr. Trung said.

Nguyen Nhu Chuong



## The study visit to Perth

**T**he study visit to Perth - Western Australia - was a one week program that lasted 7 days from 12-19 June, 2004.

The organisations that I visited were quite diverse ranging from universities, TAFE colleges, high schools and government bodies.

I visited Edith Cowan Uni, Notre Dame Uni, Curtin Uni, West Coast College, Bentley

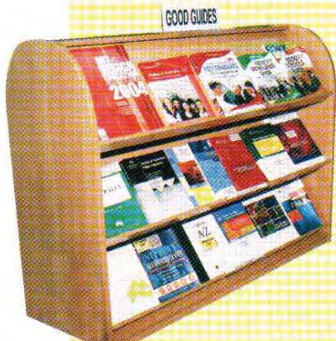
Hospitality Institute, Alexander Hotel & Tourism School, Beldridge Senior High School, Western Australian Tourism Commission and Hospitality & Tourism Industry Training Council. The major topics of all the meetings

were focused on how the teaching and learning programs were designed as well as how the courses and the faculties were operated and managed.

I was particularly excited by the TAFE college system in Perth or Australia in general. It is so effective and popular. I think Vietnam should have colleges like TAFE to cater for such a huge untrained labor market. The business and operation method of TAFE are so practical and productive. I've learnt a lot about this model and wish to apply as many concepts as possible when business opportunity for opening a vocational school in HCMC is mature.

The visiting trip to Perth was really good for me, both in knowledge and building useful contacts. It was the best opportunity for me to understand very well about the Australian educational system that has so many things and aspects to learn.

Ly Qui Trung, VGAC National Chairman



## Alumnus profile



Nguyen Nhu Chuong, Manager, Student Services, RMIT International University Vietnam

**I**n late 1999, Chuong graduated from UTS with a Bachelor of Laws degree and after 2 months searching for jobs, Chuong started his career with Lever Vietnam as Legal Assistant Manager. Interpersonal, communication, and problem-solving skills which Chuong accumulated through many group discussion sessions and presentations during his study in Australia have been his great help for his career since then.

When asked about his education experience in Australia, Chuong enthusiastically says "having an Australian education is an excellent guarantee for a good career prospect for an individual and it is equally good for the country". Having realised this benefit himself, Chuong has worked hard for the past 4 years to bring opportunities to study in Australia to many Vietnamese students. Chuong worked for AEI for over three and half years and his last position was Deputy Director (Business Development). AEI has successfully promoted many cooperative programs in education and training between Australia and Vietnam and Chuong is proud to be part of the wonderful AEI team.

Chuong has recently joined RMIT International University Vietnam and his new job, together with RMIT Vietnam colleagues is to create an Australian education experience for students right here in Vietnam.

Chuong is an active member of VGAC HCMC. He enjoys talking to people and strongly believe VGAC is an excellent venue for business networking, meeting old mates, and making new friends.

# Types of job interviews

You are invited for an interview with recruiters through head-hunting service or self application and not sure what the recruiters want to know about you, what information you are going to talk?

**A**nticipate the situation and with good preparation will help you have more advantages than other candidates. There are many forms of interview which has different purpose. The following are typical interview forms which may guide you how to deal with job interviews. The below information not always applied correctly for all cases, you sometimes should adapt the interview flexibly accordingly to interview topics, situation, etc.

## 1. Screening interview

A member of the personnel department usually conducts the screening interview, which is meant to weed out unqualified candidates. Providing facts about your skills is more important than establishing rapport. Interviewers will work from an outline of points they want to cover, looking for inconsistencies in your resume,

and challenging your qualifications. Provide answers to their questions, and never volunteer any additional information. That information could work against you.

## 2. One-On-One interview

In one-on-one interviews, it has been established that you have the skills and education necessary for the position. The interviewer wants to see if you will fit in with the company, and how your skills will complement the rest of the department. Your goal in a one-on-one interview is to establish rapport with the interviewer and show him or her that your qualifications will benefit the company.

## 3. Stress interview

Stress interviews usually are a deliberate attempt to see how you handle yourself. The interviewer may be sarcastic or argumentative, or may keep you waiting. Expect this to

happen, and when it does, don't take it personally. Calmly answer each question as it comes. Ask for clarification if you need it, and never rush into an answer. The interviewer also may lapse into silence at some point during the questioning. Recognize this as an attempt to unnerve you. Sit silently until the interviewer resumes the questions. If a minute goes by, ask if he needs clarification of your last comments.

## 4. Lunch interview

The same rules apply in lunch interviews as in those held at the office. The setting may be more casual, but remember it is a business lunch and you are being watched carefully. Use the lunch interview to develop common ground with your interviewer. Follow his or her lead in both selection of food and in etiquette.

## 5. Committee interview

Committee interviews are a common practice. You will face several members of the company who have a say in whether you are hired. When answering questions from several people, speak directly to the person asking the


question. It is not necessary to answer to the group. In some committee interviews, you may be asked to demonstrate your problem-solving skills. The committee will outline a situation and ask you to formulate a plan that deals with the problem. You don't have to come up with the ultimate solution. The interviewers are looking for how you apply your knowledge and skills to a real-life situation.

## 6. Group interview


A group interview is usually designed to uncover the leadership potential of prospective managers and employees who will be dealing with the public. The front-runner candidates are gathered together in an informal, discussion-type interview. A subject is introduced and the interviewer will start off the discussion. The goal of the group interview is to see how you interact with others and how you use your knowledge and reasoning powers to win others over. If you do well in the group interview, you can expect to be asked back for a more extensive interview.

By Nguyen Phi Dzung,  
SHD Company Ltd.





 The car dealer who was responding to a question on the effectiveness of advertising commented: "Yes, it brings in very quick results. Once we ran an advertisement that our watchdog was missing and offered a reward for the finder."

"Did you get the watchdog back?"  
"No, but that very night three cars were stolen."

 After many years of teaching, the respected professor retired. He was naturally honoured when he was invited to deliver the annual endowment lecture normally delivered by Ministers. As he was nervous waiting to deliver this address, a young graduate student approached him, handed him a piece of paper and said "I know how important this evening is for you. Please read this note just before you give your speech".

Hoping for the encouragement and the inspiration, the Professor, just before the speech, opened the note. It simply stated "Keep it short. The football game is at 8.30".

 Patron: "What watch do you have?"  
Waiter: "I don't have a watch anymore. I bought one that was waterproof, dust proof and shockproof."  
Patron: "Well, where is it?"  
Waiter: "It caught fire."

 **Selling skills:**  
The customer was surprised to find table salt on every shelf in the mini market and commented to the mini market owner: "you should be selling a lot of salt."  
The mini market owner responded: "I don't but the guy who sells salt does sell me a lot of salt."



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