



ILV NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2009

New ILV Committee

Thank You to all the outgoing Committee Members for all their hard work, and for providing us with such varied and enjoyable activities. Congratulations to the New Committee, your support shows ILV continues to grow

Outings... A Year in Review

Wow, what a great year for outings. We have made jewellery, learned how to wear make up, saw a free movie, seen a lacquer factory, travelled through rural Saigon and seen how they make those beautiful quilts and lets not forget shopping in Song Be a few times. Most importantly we have made lasting friendships and had loads of laughs.

Lets start are year in review with bead jewellery making with Catherine Farrago. Catherine is a talented jewellery maker and was kind enough to show a group of 20 ladies some of her skills. For some people they caught on quite quickly and made beautiful necklaces and bracelets. I'm not patient enough so I didn't even get one necklace finished but I sure had lots of fun trying. We finished the afternoon with a wonderful pot luck luncheon at my home in District 2. It was a great afternoon and loads of fun.

Our next great outing took us to the Ming Long factory in Song Be and lead to lunch at Jaspas after. Well, I have to say I think most of us left this fabulous shop with at least a few great dishes or mugs. I think me and Ella cleaned the factory out of beautifully craved white mugs. We all had a great time and for most of us continued the outing at Jaspas. Actually this trip became so popular that it was requested 2 more times that year. Love the Ming Long Factory!!

Wow!, One of the highlights trips and most meaningful was the Vietnam Quilts trip. It was a humbling experience travelling through rural communities, meeting the people and seeing how they live. It was a fantastic trip!

Another great trip of 2008 was the Nga Lacquer Factory tour. It was amazing to see how much work goes into the most popular Vietnam Craft, and we ended the trip with another yummy brunch at my house.

I have to say the best part of all these outings has been the friendships we have all formed. I have had a great year with you ladies and I am excited to take you all on some more fun and exciting trips in 2009. I'm very excited to start of the new year with a fun trip to Dai Nam amusement park. Like most of our outings it is fully booked. We are planning on visiting all these great places again and loads a new places as well. If you have ideas for outings and would like to help plan please feel free to contact me and we can work together.

Big hugs from your outings coordinator Angela Nicholson Do

ILV MAR'09

Volume 3

Inside this issue:

Evening ILV	2
Vietnamese Weddings	3
Book Club	6
Charity News	7
What's on this month	9
Monthly Calendar	10

ILV OUTING

We have an exciting outing planned this month. We are going to play like we did when we were young at Dai Nam Park. It is about one hour outside Ho Chi Minh City close to Song Be. We will take a bus from the Old Post Office, District 1, across from the church at 8 am SHARP and return between 1:30-2:00 depending on traffic. We are lucky to be getting an English tour guide(not a usual service) show us around three sections of the park. We will see a temple, a zoo area, a fun rides area and a water park. There is even a snow room. It will be great fun! Now I want to suggest a few things to bring with you; toilette paper, soap for bathrooms, socks for the temple, sun-screen for the hot sun and please bring a snack if you don't want to buy food there. We are all booked for this outing! Please remember there are no refunds for outings, thank you. Here are a few pictures of the Park:



* * * * *

Evening ILV

EILV for Wednesday 11th March 2009

7:30pm—9:30pm

Come along and have a glass of wine, a cup of coffee and meet some people. Take this opportunity to socialize, expand your network, and learn about all ILV has to offer.

11/9 Nguyen U Di Street, Thao Dien Ward, D2, An Phu

Contact: Rachael 0918730889

Admission: 100,000 VND Refreshments served



Contemporary Vietnamese Traditional Weddings

The pace of change

Modern traditional weddings in Vietnam differ significantly to those in the past. The most obvious change is the cost – the social pressure of 'face' leads some families to spend up to the equivalent of ten year's salary. Another obvious difference is the average age of the couple.



In the past, a groom of 20 with an 18-year-old bride would be considered an ideal couple. Today, education, a degree of female emancipation, and the need to pursue a career have raised the figures by five or even ten years for middle-class city dwellers. Working class couples tend to marry earlier.

Contemporary beliefs

The tradition of matchmaking has largely faded away, but most parents have firm views – were they to decide that the prospective spouse was unsuitable, most young people would accept the verdict and break off the relationship.

Some young people seek the services of an astrologer in advance to determine whether their future liaison will be successful. If the result were negative, most would withdraw.

Women a couple of years over 30 are considered to be past their sell-by date - for men, it's a about 35. The possibility of being left on the shelf is frightening, especially for women. As the deadline draws nearer, individuals' and families' criteria become looser – better an unsuitable partner than no partner!

Arranging the marriage

The first stage of marriage is usually when the young man's parents consult a fortune-teller to see whether the couple is destined to live together as husband and wife. If so, he will formally request the young woman's hand.

The actual request is made by a party comprising the young man's parents, or aunt and uncle if he is an orphan, and a go-between who go to meet the young woman's parents. The party takes gifts such as betel leaves and areca nuts, and asks what the family requires for their daughter's hand. The young woman's parents will usually ask for a sum of money to cover the costs of the marriage preparations.

The engagement

The next stage in the process is the engagement, which, once the consent has been given, usually follows several months after. However, in some circumstances such as university or one partner working abroad, it can be much longer.

Vietnamese people believe that some days are particularly auspicious, so choosing appropriate days for the engagement and the wedding is another task for the fortune-teller.

If the fiancée or her family breaks off the engagement for any reason, all of the gifts must be returned to the young man's family. If the fiancé backs out before the big day, her family keeps them.

The engagement is a solemn ceremony. On the day, the young man will travel with his family to

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

the young woman's house bearing gifts of betel nuts, cake, wine, cigarettes and so on. Young women wear red ao dais and a banquet is held after formal rituals are performed before the ancestral altar. The engagement ceremony is a chance for the young woman's family to meet their future son-in-law.

The wedding day

The final stage is the wedding day. Traditionally, the couple must stay apart on the day before to prevent bad luck. On the night before, the bride's mother will tend her daughter's hair with several combs. Every comb means something, but the most important is the third comb - at that time she will ask for luck and happiness her new home.

On the big day, the bride's family and invited guests assemble at her house to await the arrival of the bridegroom. Shortly before the groom's party is due, the bride slips away to don her wedding dress.

Gifts from the groom's family

The groom's parents and immediate relatives are preceded by an odd number of young men smartly dressed in shirt and tie, and dark trousers. They each carry a tray covered in a red cloth, or alternatively a large red and gold canister, containing gifts of betel leaves, areca nuts, wine, fruit, cakes, tea and so on.

In the past, they would have walked, but today most wedding parties opt for cars and change to cyclos for the last part of the journey.

Red is the dominant colour in a traditional Vietnamese wedding - it's considered a lucky colour and will lead to a rosy future.

Upon arrival the young men dismount and are met by the same number of young women dressed in red ao dais. The men hand the gifts to the women who take them inside.

Each young woman hands her male counterpart a small amount of money to designate that they are 'working' - there is a superstition that being an unpaid helper at a wedding will mean that you won't marry.

Accepting the gifts

The leading couple of the groom's party enters the bride's house carrying a tray of small cups of wine and invite the bride's parents to take a sip. By accepting the toast, the bride's parents symbolically agree to admit the groom's party. A few years ago, this would be accompanied by fire-crackers, but many accidents and a subsequent ban put an end to the tradition.

The groom's family introduce themselves and ask permission for their son to marry his bride. A Master of Ceremonies (usually a respected person chosen from the bride's relatives) instructs the bride's parents to present their daughter. The bride then enters. Traditionally, this will be a red ao dai. The groom will wear a dark suit or, more traditionally, a black ao dai.

(Continued on page 5)

Traditional Vietnamese Wedding *Continued*

(Continued from page 4)

The ceremony

The wedding ceremony begins in front of the altar. The bride and the groom kneel down and pray, asking their ancestors' permission to be married and their blessing on their family-to-be. The couple then turn around and bow to the bride's parents to thank them for raising and protecting her since birth.

They then bow their heads towards each other to show their gratitude and respect to their soon-to-be husband or wife. The Master of Ceremonies then advises the wedding couple on starting a new family and the two sets of parents take turns to share their experiences and give blessings.

The groom and the bride then exchange wedding rings, and the parents give the newly wedded couple gold bracelets, earrings and other valuable gifts.

The wedding banquet

After the marriage, both wedding parties leave to join guests that were not invited to the marriage ceremony at a large banquet. This is usually a large gathering, often in the hundreds and sometimes more. The groom, bride, and their family are once again introduced to the guests and everyone drinks a toast. Dinner or lunch is served at the table.

During the reception, the groom, bride, and their parents visit each table to thank their guests. In return, the guests give envelopes containing wedding cards, money gifts and a blessing to the newly wedded couple.

* * * * *

[New details from Song Be Golf](#)

gofpkg@songbegolf.com

Tel: 0650

3756660/1

Email: golf@hcm.vnn.vn



"Red is the dominant colour in a traditional Vietnamese wedding – it's considered a lucky colour and will lead to a rosy future."

March Book Club

For information regarding this month's Book Club contact Janet Beveridge....

jbeveridge2003@yahoo.co.uk



Member to Member

This is a new section created to allow members the opportunity to share information they feel may be of interest to other members.

CREATIVE PERSON WANTED: Paid opportunity for youth or adult living in An Phu area who would be interested in teaching an Arts & Craft course to children on Sat. Mornings. Pre-planned projects and materials supplied. Call Colleen on cell 090-221-4460 or email: cdee9@hotmail.com

Interesting facts

In the 1500s:

Houses had thatched roofs-thick straw-piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the cats and other small animals (mice, bugs) lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof. Hence the saying . It's raining cats and dogs. There was nothing to

stop things from falling into the house.. This posed a real problem in the bedroom where bugs and other droppings could mess up your nice clean bed. Hence, a bed with big posts and a sheet hung over the top afforded some protection. That's how canopy beds came into existence. The floor was dirt. Only the wealthy had something other than dirt. Hence the saying, Dirt

poor. The wealthy had slate floors that would get slippery in the winter when wet, so they spread thresh (straw) on floor to help keep their footing. As the winter wore on, they added more thresh until, when you opened the door, it would all start slipping outside. A piece of wood was placed in the entrance-way. Hence the saying a thresh hold.

Welcome New Members

Britain

Norma Wigglesworth
Alison McGhie

Canada

Ashley Marie Dickson

France

Cecile Kubik

Israel

Malka Shladov

Korea

Somin Kim

Mexico

Maria Eugenia Vargas de Lozano

USA

Lien Le
Robyn Schoenemann

Vietnam

Thuy Uyen Vu

* * * *

" A real Friend is hard to find, difficult to leave, and impossible to forget"

Charity News

Saigon Children's Charity will hold their ninth annual Saigon Cylco Challenge on Mar. 7 at the Taipei International School in Phu My Hung.



AusCham's "Big Day Out"

Looking for Volunteers

Saturday 4th April.....2:00pm onwards

This is a fantastic family day out with lots of activities for kids throughout the day in the Kid's Area; there will also be the Mini Olympic Area, the Charity Area with interactive activities and the Wet & Wild Pool.

There will also be lots of great live music during the event in the Outback Pub and on the Main Stage and there will be loads of delicious food & beverage stalls serving throughout the whole event. We are expecting about 2,000 guests again this year!!

The Big Day Out concept remains the same as the previous Australia Day event, where tickets are purchased and then everything in the park is all inclusive.

We are looking for people to assist with the planning of the event and also help out on the day. AusCham's events are only a success because of the support we receive from the community, we hope we can count on your participation to make this year's Big Day Out a truly fantastic experience!! If you would like to be involved please contact events@auschamvn.org or call 3911 0272.

All inclusive entertainment for the whole family
Fun and games, food and beverage, live music
and much more.....

Big Day Out

Saturday
4th April
From 2 PM onwards
Van Thanh Park,
48/10 Dien Bien Phu,
Binh Thanh District, HCMC

Ticket Price

	Pre-bought	On the Day
Family*	1,600,000 VND	1,800,000 VND
Adult	680,000 VND	760,000 VND
Non-alcohol	340,000 VND	420,000 VND
Child	170,000 VND	250,000 VND

*Family ticket includes: 2 Adults & children (max 4)/driver
For more information contact events@auschamvn.org

AusCham's management responsible for event enjoyment, our contractual obligations will extend to approved from the event. This organizers take full legal responsibility for accidents or loss or damage to personal items.

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GHD, RMIT, OPLUS, THACO

BRONZE CORPORATE SPONSORS
FOSTER'S, GSE, RMIT, SAIGON SHIPPING

To put your logo here please contact Anna Norriss at marketingmgr@auschamvn.org or call (08) 3911 0272

ILV REGULAR MONTHLY ACTIVITIES

Golf

Song Be Golf Club offers special rates for ILV members. Monday to Friday, 07:00 to 09:30am, USD\$40 per 18 holes inclusive of green and caddy fees. Tee times can be arranged by calling Song Be directly at 0650-755802/803 or email golf@songbegolf.com

Parent-Baby Groups

Babies born Sept 2006– Sept 2007 contact Lauren Scott laurencott2000@hotmail.com

District 7 baby group. For more info contact Aditi Kumar on 0913400760 or sk.aditi@gmail.com

Monday

Badminton

Mondays and Fridays at 8:30am. Contact Daisy on 0909608800 or 930020 #1613.

Duplicate Bridge

At Carmargue, 191 Hai Ba Trung, 6.30pm. Open to all: husbands, partners, visitors etc. A light supper is eaten half way through the evening. Contact Alexander Egert: 0903909111.

Bunco

Ladies Night once a month, Couples Night once a month. 7-10pm Contact Carol Stuart 01227140638 for details.

Tuesday

Mah-jong

10am-12pm, Norfolk Mansion, 2nd floor. All levels of player (including beginners) welcome. Improvers' Bridge

Improvers' bridge, 10am-12pm. If you would like to play, contact Sandrine on [san-drine.duc@hotmail.com](mailto:sandrine.duc@hotmail.com) or 0935125261.

Beginners' Bridge

1.30pm. Contact Juliana on 0906782990 to find out location as it varies from week to week.

Thursday

Duplicate Bridge
Players with experience, 1:15 pm, Cafe Evita, An Phu. Contact Loeke on 0902464643.

Friday

Line Dancing

10.30am at Vasco's in D1. Contact Keiko on 0903332081 for more details.

Swedish

Gin Rummy

1.30pm until approx 4.30pm, by the pool in Norfolk Mansion, 2nd floor. We collect VND 20,000 from each player and the winner receives a voucher worth VND 100,000 to spend locally. No experience necessary. Contact Doreen Stanbury on 090 944 3079.

Scrabble

1:30pm, Norfolk Mansion, 2nd floor, poolside. Numbers are increasing and the competition is hotting up.

THANK YOU TO THE OUTING

COMMITTEE

ILV

Committee 2008

Executive Committee

Chairperson

Sherry Groen

Vice Chair

Juliana Notman

Secretary

Hillary Reinsch

Treasurer

Audrey Swampillai

Vice Treasurer

Special Events Coordinator

Eileen Sonnack

Coordinators

Discounts Coordinators

Maria del Pilar Pollitzer

Library Coordinator

Maha Itum

Link Ladies Coordinator

Kerstin Hartmann

Newcomer's Coordinator

Esmira Hackenberg

Newsletter Editor

Gayle Brophy

Reception Coordinator

Susan Wilson

Outings Coordinator

Angela Nicholson Do

Website Editors

Cathy Taylor

Julie Tarne

Evening ILV Coordinator

Rachael Greig

Newcomers' Coffee Coordinator

Debbie Pearson

Lucky Draws Coordinator

Leonie Sands

Notice Board

Sue Corns

GENERAL MEMBERS

Maida Ahrens

Rayna Bone

What's on this Month

ILV EVENTS

Evening ILV

Will be held at Rachel's on Wednesday 11th March 7.30pm. Details, address and map can be found on the website.

OTHER EVENTS

AusCham HCMC

This year's **Big Day Out** event in **HCMC** will be held on Saturday 4th April at Van Thanh Park. This is a fantastic family day out with plenty of activities for children and adults, culminating in lots of great live music. If you are interested in being involved with the day or would like to volunteer to help please contact Anna Norriss at marketingmgr@auschamvn.org

Saigon Children's Charity

Saigon Cylco Challenge on Mar. 7 at the Taipei International School in Phu My Hung. www.saigonchildren.com for more information.

Some of the ILV OUTINGS



ILV LIBRARY INFORMATION

The Library, located on level 2 of the Parklands Country Club (formerly Saigon Country Club), An Phu, operates on an honour system.

Borrowers can take books from the shelves and re-shelve them on return. Questions, concerns or ideas can be addressed to Maha Itum: 0938 250289.

Contributions to books are welcome. No photocopied books please. Give books for donation to a staff member at the country club and they will place them in the library for you.

Map to Parklands



March '09 at a Glance

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat	Sun
						1
<p>2</p> <p>Badminton 8:30am</p> <p>Duplicate bridge 6:30pm</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Mah-jong 10:00am</p> <p>Improvers' bridge 10:00am</p> <p>Beginners' bridge 1:30pm</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Newcomers Coffee Morning 10:00am</p>	<p>5</p> <p>ILV coffee, Rex Hotel Tea 10:00am Room</p> <p>Experienced Bridge 1:15pm</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Badminton 8:30am</p> <p>Scrabble 1:30pm</p> <p>Swedish gin rummy 1:30pm</p> <p>Line dancing 10:30am</p> <p>Bunco 7-10pm</p>	7	8
<p>9</p> <p>Badminton 8.30am</p> <p>Duplicate bridge 6.30pm</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Mah-jong 10:00am</p> <p>Improvers' bridge 10:00am</p> <p>Beginners' bridge 1:30pm</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Evening ILV 7:30pm</p>	<p>12</p> <p>ILV coffee, Rex Hotel Tea Room 10:00am "Valentine's Day"</p> <p>Experienced Bridge 1:15pm</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Badminton 8:30am</p> <p>Scrabble 1:30pm</p> <p>Swedish gin rummy 1:30pm</p> <p>Line dancing 10:30am</p>	14	15
<p>16</p> <p>Badminton 8:30am</p> <p>Duplicate bridge 6:30pm</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Mah-jong 10:00am</p> <p>Improvers' bridge 10:00am</p> <p>Beginners' bridge 1:30pm</p>	18	<p>19</p> <p>ILV coffee, Rex Hotel Tea Room 10:00am</p> <p>Experienced Bridge 1:15pm</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Badminton 8:30am</p> <p>Scrabble 1:30pm</p> <p>Swedish gin rummy 1:30pm</p> <p>Line dancing 10:30am</p> <p>Bunco 7-10pm</p>	21	22
<p>23</p> <p>Badminton 8:30am</p> <p>Duplicate bridge 6:30pm</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Mah-jong 10:00am</p> <p>Improvers' bridge 10:00am</p> <p>Beginners' bridge 1:30pm</p>	25	<p>26</p> <p>ILV coffee, Rex Hotel Tea Room 10:00am AGM</p> <p>Experienced Bridge 1:15pm</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Badminton 8:30am</p> <p>Scrabble 1:30pm</p> <p>Swedish gin rummy 1:30pm</p> <p>Line dancing 10:30am</p>	28	