

# HELLO FROM VIETNAM!



April 2014

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## The week at Bo De



Last week started off quite cold on Monday and then it got colder and colder as the week went on. My amount of layers had tripled by Friday and I had to buy gloves so my hands didn't fall off from being frozen. A lot of new volunteers have been arriving from different parts of Europe and to them this is not freezing cold weather. They laughed at me wearing gloves and we are constantly reminding them that Australian winter is considered super cold if it gets below 15 degrees. So 10 degrees is freezing to me!

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# VOLUNTEER UPDATES

## April Departures

1. Holly Smith, UK, IDP, 3 months
2. Brian Musgrove, UK, Teaching, 4 weeks
3. Rosemary Musgrove, UK, Teaching, 4 weeks
4. Astrid De Champs, France, Nursing, 11 weeks
5. Kathryn Ponomareva, Canada, Care & IDP, 8.75 months
6. Madelief Heesterbeek, Netherlands, Care, 6 weeks
7. Bas van der Spiegel, Netherlands, Teaching, 5 weeks
8. Louise Stougaard, Denmark, Care, 8 weeks
9. Kirsten Skov Vang, Denmark, Care, 8 weeks
10. Kristian Samuelsen, Denmark, Care, 8 weeks
11. William Bell, UK, Teaching, 6 weeks
12. Sylvie Allain, France, IDP, 3 months
13. Carla Kassab, Australia, Care, 2 weeks
14. Anna Katharina Vokinger, Switzerland, Care, 8 weeks

## VOLUNTEER UPDATES

### **April New Arrivals**

1. Max Balke, Germany
2. Alexander Thierschmidt, Germany
3. Martina Marxer, Liechtenstein
4. Julia van Steenhoven, Netherlands
5. Thuy-Mai Nguyen, USA
6. Demi Giammichele, Australia
7. Nicholas Watson, Australia
8. Maria Moriana, Australia
9. Arvid Andresen, Germany
10. Bronwyn de Mare, South Africa

### **May New Arrivals**

1. Henriette Gesbert, France
2. Caitlin Eddy, UK
3. Kathleen Kendler, Australia
4. Léa Hinnekint, France
5. Chiaki Jin, Japan
6. Carlijn Stokvis, Netherlands
7. Sandra Emery, Switzerland
8. Maéva Carreira, Canada
9. Kimberly Pham, USA
10. Tuva Rolfsen, Norway
11. Renae Grundy, Australia
12. Haley Ravndal, USA
13. Julius Winter, Netherlands
14. Heidi Floyd, USA
15. Robert Donaldson, UK
16. Suzanne Theurer, UK
17. Josephine Schena, France

## The week at Bo De

*(continued from page 1)*

And you definitely know it is cold when you go to the orphanage and each child has four jumpers and the cutest little beanies on. It really was a week of trying our best to keep the children warm in the cold weather.



With the cold weather, the Nannies of the disabled children were quite difficult and did not want the children walking the 40m to the kindergarten to protect them from getting sick. So myself, Emma and Halldor the new physio volunteer brought all the activities into the room of the disabled children and they loved it! Happy Boy has become so fond of us taking him out of his cot every morning and afternoon to do exercises that he now cries when we put him back which means we literally sprint out of the room before the Nannies start yelling at us in Vietnamese, which has happened to me quite a few times, except I have no idea what they are telling me. In the little bit of not so cold weather, I was able to take my favourite little girl, Happy, for a play on the playground. Happy is completely blind and is constantly saying "happy, happy". I really want to bring her home with me. We often go on long walks around the orphanage and pagoda to increase her awareness of the surroundings. First we tried the playground and did it the same way about 20 times. Up the stairs, through the tunnel, over the bridge, up the steps and sitting down on my lap for the slide and then walking back around to the stairs.



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## The week at Bo De

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At first she was very hesitant and would not let go of my hand but after we repeated the same process so many times she was able to use her hands and feet to do it by herself while saying “happy”. I was so proud and I find it really interesting to work with the blind. She is so clever and such a happy little girl. She’s the highlight of my day and always manages to make me smile.

in the kindergarten not only am I the morning dance teacher but I am now the hair stylist. It started when Monkey Boy (I can’t pronounce his real name) found an elastic and wanted me to put it in his hair. He looked so adorable. Walking through the Old Quater at lunch I saw a packet of colourful elastics and thought the children would love it, and that they did. As soon as I showed them after lunch, the girls and Monkey started queuing up for me to do their hair. Not only did it allow me to identify the girls who were the nit carriers but I also really enjoyed putting about 20 spiky pony tails in each girls hair. They looked super cute! It was quite the effort though but I had a little helper Lan Ahn handing me the elastics and making sure I was doing it right. Her hair unfortunately, was shaven off by mistake and is not long enough at all. Now every day at least one of the girls will point towards the packet of elastics in my pocket and want their hair done. It’s quite cute. So anyone that wants a funky hairstyle when I get back just let me know, it’s the new fashion!!



## The week at Bo De

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Emma is in love with a baby approximately 11 months old named Bridget. She is blind and has a bad skin condition but she is adorable. Emma has been taking her out of her room every day and into the kindy, but on Wednesday the Nannies allowed her to come to lunch with us. So with her trillion layers on, a beanie, gloves, a bottle in a heated bag and three nappies in Emma's backpack we took Bridget to our local cafe and into the Old Quarter with mum Emma on duty. The Nannies were super excited for us to be taking her. After lunch six volunteers and a baby went exploring the Old Quarter. The amount of weird looks we got was hilarious. They must have thought that we had stolen her. The next two days Bridget was once again allowed to come exploring and now every time Emma walks into the baby room the Nannies think she is taking her out.



On Friday afternoon, the weather had warmed up just enough for us to be able to take the kids down to the river. The orphanage is part of a



pagoda that is on the river. There are huge stairs that lead down to the jetty and then a grass trail along the water. So the seven of us each took a child from the kindy and went walking down to the river. We spent about 20 minutes walking along, looking at the boats and the cars across the bridge and playing in the dirt. We then walked back and got another child each and did the same thing. The children had such a great time and so did we. They rarely leave the orphanage so it was great for them to be able to get some exercise and fresh air. We had time to spare so we took some disabled children and a toddler for a walk. Happy was my little partner and she was so good. She made it up and down all the stairs by using her feet to feel the way, I'm so proud. Can I please adopt her?! She's just too cute for her own good. It was such a rewarding afternoon and a perfect end to another week at Bo De.

***Eliza Bell and Emma Virtue, Australia,  
Physiotherapy volunteers***



## The week at Bo De



## INSIDE OUT

### 20 ways for a Projects Abroad volunteer to have an interesting weekend in Hanoi

For the ones who work hard the whole week, weekends are always treasured. Most of the time, Projects Abroad volunteers love travelling together to a number of famous destinations in Vietnam like Hue, Hoi An, Ninh Binh, Ho Chi Minh City, and Da Nang. Yet, we and our volunteer crew also believe that a weekend in town can be equally interesting. Hanoi – a vibrant and cultural city – always has a lot to offer. Here is a list of 20 ways to enrich your Hanoi weekend experience!

1. **Write a letter home:** Take a nice pen, sit at your favourite coffee shop in Hanoi and compose a letter telling volunteering and travelling stories to send to your family and friends back home. Emails, Skype or other smartphone applications are convenient; but the classic way of sending a handwritten letter using stamps and the post office is undeniably lovely. The local central post office is situated just opposite Hoan Kiem Lake in the Old Quarter of Hanoi, which is very easy to find!
2. **Visit museums:** Hanoi is a city of museums. They are open on most days. You always have choices of where to visit: the Museum of Ethnology with its cultural activities (like the water puppet show) specially organized on the weekends, the Vietnamese Women's museum (36 Ly Thuong Kiet St.), Hoa Lo prison - Maison Centrale (Hoa Lo St.), and the Fine Arts Museum (66 Nguyen Thai Hoc st.) are our recommendations.



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## 20 ways for a Projects Abroad volunteer to have an interesting weekend in Hanoi

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3. **Take a bike ride around Westlake:** Westlake (Ho Tay) is the biggest and one of the nicest lakes in Hanoi. The beautiful and peaceful route around the lake is just perfect for a cycle in the morning or afternoon. You can always rent a good bicycle at a reasonable price at one of the shops offering the renting service, such as The Hanoi Bicycle Collective (44/31 Xuan Dieu, Tay Ho district), 70 Hang Bac (Old Quarter).



4. **Join a gig:** The weekend music scene of Hanoi is getting more and more appealing. International bands, expat bands, and singers have added a cool international vibe into the local entertainment settings. Stay tuned with the famous online forums [www.newhanoian.com](http://www.newhanoian.com) or [www.hanoigrapevine.com](http://www.hanoigrapevine.com) for the updated lists of events in town!



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## 20 ways for a Projects Abroad volunteer to have an interesting weekend in Hanoi

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5. **Meander and take a photo tour around Old Quarter:** Old Quarter of Hanoi has never failed to surprise travellers or even local people with its interesting ongoing daily activities happening right on the street sides. The old balconies, tucked-away alleys and quirky little corners of this aged district keep inspiring any photographers (both amateur and professional ones).



6. **Discover a new coffee shop:** We can't recommend it enough – the good strong original coffee in this city. Yet, it is just a part of the whole coffee experience. The other important part is the space in which coffee is served and sold: always stylish, quirky, local, and simply, amazing. Take some time to browse through [tripadvisor.com](https://www.tripadvisor.com) or [newhanoian.com](https://www.newhanoian.com) to go through the list of the recommended coffee shops before deciding on one or two of your personal taste or just drop in randomly at a nice one which catches your eyes when you are strolling down the streets! Our own suggestions are *Hanoi Social Club* (6 Hoi Vu st.), *La Place* (6 Au Trieu st.), *Joma Bakery Café* (22 Ly Quoc Su st.), *The chain of Cong Café* (152D Trieu Viet Vuong/101 Van Phuc/32 Dien Bien Phu), *Café Duy Tri* (43 Yen Phu) and *Puku* (16/18 Tong Duy Tan st.)

## 20 ways for a Projects Abroad volunteer to have an interesting weekend in Hanoi

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- 7. Join a cooking course:** You've tried Vietnamese food and you are totally in love with it? So, very possibly you will be interested in having a local cooking experience too! Cooking courses are offered by several good centres in Hanoi and the price is acceptable. Check out these addresses: Hanoi Cooking Centre (44 Chau Long st.), Orchid cooking class (25 Hang Bac), Hidden Hanoi (147 Nghi Tam st.) and Blue Butterfly (61 Hang Buom st.)



- 8. Visit Silk village or Ceramic village:** A lovely half day can be well spent there at these two villages. For ceramic village where you can see hundreds of traditional ceramic products and you can even be shown and instructed how to make a vase or bowl on your own; you can reach this village by public bus or taxi (it might take 45 minutes by bus or 30 minutes by taxi from the Old Quarter). Silk village is the perfect place to go shopping for silk products, scarf, pants, shirts, pyjamas, dresses, skirts and other accessories like wallets, purses, etc. and this little town is colourful and nice enough for a walk and sightseeing.



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## 20 ways for a Projects Abroad volunteer to have an interesting weekend in Hanoi

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9. **Climb up Flag Tower (inside Army Museum):** Flag Tower is located on the grounds of the Hanoi Military Museum (Le Hong Phong – Dien Bien Phu st.). It is an interesting historical site – one of the rare monuments of Hanoi which was not destroyed in the French war. Climb up the tower during a cool day and have a view of the whole area around from the top of the tower. It is a lovely experience after spending some time exploring the outdoor and indoor space of the Military Museum.



10. **Engage in small acts of kindness:** How about a volunteering weekend but in a different way, of course? J. A suggestion could be joining a local volunteer group to help collect garbage at the Hoan Kiem Lake. The group meets at up at 3pm every Sunday at Hoa Phong tower – opposite the central post.

*To be continued in May newsletter, stay tuned, friends! :)*

**Duong Pham, Information manager**

## PROJECT UPDATE

### Hygiene lesson for children with disabilities— Care Management Plan 2014

As an important part of our worldwide mission of year 2014 (Care management plan), raising awareness and educating children at our care placements about keeping their own hygiene to avoid sickness and diseases has been greatly favoured by our dedicated volunteers. Today at Hope Center - a care and education center for children with disabilities, care volunteer Madelief (Netherlands) with the support of the local caregivers and Projects Abroad Vietnam, organize a teeth brushing session for 12 children aged from 3 to 5. This is the first session launched in this placement and we hope that it will be maintained in the later time for these kids to know how to take care of their dental health. Let's have a look at the below photos taken during the lesson to know more about Madelief's great work:



## What's On: May 2014

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
		30 Public Holiday	1 Henriette arrives Public Holiday	2 Public Holiday	3 Public Holiday	4 Caitlin arrives Public Holiday
5 Chiaki and Kathleen arrive	6 Léa arrives Medical Work- shop	7 Nicholas's birthday	8 Carlijn arrives	9 Sandra arrives Pottery Village trip	10 Maéva arrives	11
12 First-aid workshop	13	14	15	16 Care workshop	17	18
19 Tuva arrives	20 Kimberly arrives	21	22	23 Carlijn's birth- day Summer Camp for Bo De kids	24	25
26 Renaë arrives	27	28 Haley arrives	29 Julius and Heidi arrive	30	31 Robert, Suz- anne and Jo- sephine arrive	

**May 6—Medical workshop:** To give our medical volunteers a better insight into the medical system of Vietnam and then draw the differences between medical systems in different countries.

**May 9— Pottery Village trip:** A good chance to discover the interesting and traditional pottery making work! Also, make your own ceramic bowl/pot to bring home!

Meet at: Bo De placement    Time: 08:30PM    Bus ticket: 7,000VND/person/one way

**May 12 - First-aid workshop:** led by 2 medical volunteers Julia and Martina!

**May 16– Care Workshop at Bo De placement:** as a part of Care management plan 2014!

**May 23 - Summer Camp for Bo De orphans:** More information to come!





**Nursing volunteer Martina feels happy to have the opportunity to work with and learn from the local doctor and nurses.**



**A tender farewell moment of care volunteer Anna Katharina with a lovely child on her last volunteer day at her orphanage placement.**



**The local social workers delivered an introduction presentation to let Arvid—our nursing volunteer - get an insight about the placement.**



**At Projects Abroad, we organize workshops and discussions to listen to volunteers' reflections and suggestions!**



**Our memorable outreach event of April takes place successfully with the support of our volunteer team in delivering free milk boxes to sick children at a local hospital.**

## Contact Us

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*Projects Abroad is the leading global organizer of overseas voluntary work placements. Our wide range of projects, including Teaching, Care, Conservation & Environment, Medicine & Healthcare, Sports, Culture & Community projects and Journalism, are designed specifically for the needs of the communities in which we work, whilst giving our volunteers the very best experience of volunteering abroad.*

*Based in Hanoi, Vietnam, volunteers can work on a variety of projects, including care work with disabled and orphaned children, physical therapy at local hospitals, and teaching either English or French in both primary and secondary schools. The latest projects to be opened is Nursing and Medical—Surgery projects. If you are interested in volunteering in Vietnam with Projects Abroad then please log on to [www.projects-abroad.net](http://www.projects-abroad.net) for more information.*

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Milk Day for children—Outreach event of April