

## Out and About in Ba Ria with Kathryn Gow

This photo news article has been prepared quickly to meet publication deadlines; I remember the early days when I produced 30 page reports on the Needs Analyses of Ba Ria, Ben Suc and Nui Dat.

### Can You Help Rebuild This House?



The photos above are of a house that was destroyed in the recent Wet Season (Mua Mua) in Phuoc Hung. I did not promise to do anything about this as I do not have the contacts or resources and am hesitant about making any ongoing commitments along this line. However that's not to stop a couple of you enterprising lads from reconstructing it, as long as you are clear about it being a "once off" restoration. The owner is a single parent on a very low income. If you can help please contact the AVVRG President and I will give him the contact details.

### Poor Family Needs Support



The photo is of the children from Long Toan - a different direction from Phuoc Hung. One of these beautiful children (the boy who has his hand to his head) was supported by the AVVRG members in 1995 - His family lives in dire poverty. I was not in any position to do anything about this as I have spent months every year raising funds for these poor people and I have run out of friends and colleagues and indeed grant sources. But if you know anyone who

is able to give some money to this very poor family, can you please let the AVVRG President (Paul) or me know.

### Friends in Ba Ria

The next part of the pictograph refers to the town of Ba Ria and the hotel and restaurant next door when I stay when I go to Ba Ria. Here is the new square

outside the new markets (more new buildings going up), the first person that Barb Campbell and I made friends with in Ba Ria (see English language story) watchmaker Dai Loc and wife and son who now have a shop inside the market building.



Then there is the view from Nha Tro (otherwise known to us as the Bach Dang Hotel); it used to be a miserable view of dirt, shanty type shops and open smelly gutters. Here is a picture of the Restaurant next to Nha Tro and the friendly people who run the establishment and who manage to give us good food. I have included a photo of an old lady in the hope that you will buy tickets from her if you go to Ba Ria as there are no social services for old people and if she does not sell enough tickets she does not eat.



Next is a photo of the Hotel (below) and another of its manageress who is ever helpful and kind to us foreigners and forgives me for not learning Vietnamese after all these years I have stayed there. She did however try to warn me that if I kept drinking Red Bull that Madame would expand even more.



## **Molisa and Long Dat Vocational Education**

Much of the work I do in Vietnam revolves around education and training in some way. The three people sitting at the Bach Dang lounge table are from left Mr Tra,

Director of Long Dat, Mrs Hong Xinh, Director of MOLISA and Mr Cao, Vice-Director of Long Dat. You can track the details of our last daylong seminar via a conference paper I delivered at the University of Queensland last year (see website listed elsewhere this edition). The next photo is of our new member Jill Manuel who delivered part of a seminar and dealt with Health and Safety, which was very well received. Then another day when John McDonnell (young man on the left at the teaching board is Mr Long who has been our best training interpreter and always makes himself available to help us) and I were teaching about the Internet, I followed up with a discussion on how to facilitate scholarships and staff exchanges in Australia and United States.



## Tan Thanh: Rehabilitation and Welfare Centre

Not sure how I ended up here but was really pleased to be able to help out in this area. I have two seminars on small business to the women in the rehab centre and here you see me with them on the last day as they designed their shop fronts for future business ideas. Then I went next door and presented a maths teacher who spoke excellent English with some maths books, so he could teach the street kids in the centre, and handed over 30 pair of glasses to the Person in charge so that some of the street kids could see without straining their eyes as they made false eye lashes for a Korean company. Maybe I should have put in an order for myself. I have spoken with Paul Murphy (AVVRG President) about the urgent need here for sewing machines for the women in the rehab centre and



for medical supplies and some equipment that they could utilise like beds and walkers for the elderly.

**Kathryn Gow**  
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