

KYRLE Probus Club members were transported back to the Far East at last week's meeting as member Keith Glover presented the second part of his illustrated talk on the visit he and his wife Brenda, made to Vietnam, the Mekong Delta and Cambodia.



A wonderful selection of slides and occasional video footage, accompanied by Keith's excellent commentary, truly captured the experience of the tour, from Hanoi down the fine coastline of Vietnam, taking in Danang, before entering Saigon, also known as Ho Chi Minh City, after the Communist leader.

Here they visited Reunification Hall, formerly the presidential palace. Still to be seen in the grounds is the North Vietnamese Russian-made tank which crashed through the main gates of the palace in April 1975, thus ending the Vietnam War.

The former palace is one of a number of fine buildings to be seen in the city. Among others are the Notre Dame Cathedral, showing the French colonial influence and the Post Office building.

Just out of the city, they visited the Cu Chi tunnels set in a jungle and which is now a museum. The network of underground tunnels were used by the Viet Cong as a base in the resistance against American forces during the Vietnam war.

Camouflaged trap doors led down into the tunnels and there were also booby traps with deadly spikes to catch the unwary American forces. In contrast the visitors also went to a theatre to watch an enthralling water puppet show

It was then off to the Mekong Delta also known to the Vietnamese as the Nine Dragons delta, named after the nine tributaries of the Mekong River. One of the main towns on the Delta is Can Tho, which is best known for its floating markets and some of the best restaurants.

From there it was into Cambodia and its capital Phnom Pen. Here they visited Prison 21, where Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge forces detained and tortured the people. It is now a museum giving testimony to the despotic period of Pol Pot's regime which ruined the country until he was driven out by the Vietnamese in 1979.

As an antidote to that they went on to Siem Reap, gateway to the world heritage site of the Angkor region with its wonderful art, history and numerous temples at Angkor Thom and Angkor Wat.