

August 2, 2024,

Dear Vietnam Veterans, Family Members, and Friends who are Non-veterans,

March 8, 2025 will be the 60th anniversary of the day U.S. Marines landed on Red Beach in Danang (1965). March 29 will be the 50th anniversary of when the last U.S. servicemen left Danang (1975). The U.S. War in Vietnam was the cause of much pain and loss for all of those who lived through it. I am intimately aware of the experience as a child and young woman of the war that I escaped in 1970. I have documented my life in war in my memoirs, *When Heaven and Earth Changed Places* and *Child of War, Woman of Peace*.

I first returned to Vietnam in 1986 in order to visit my 80-year-old mother. Vietnam was one of the poorest countries on earth. It was decimated. The people were on the brink of starvation after 100 years of war against the French, 20 years of conflict and war with the U.S., followed by 20 years of sanctions by the U.S. Government. Former President Bill Clinton finally lifted the trade embargo against Vietnam in February, 1994. In 1996, the U.S. normalized diplomatic relations with Vietnam.

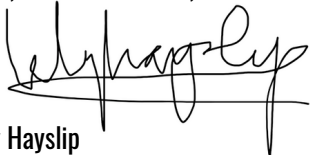
I began hosting pilgrimages to Vietnam starting by joined Vietnam Veterans of American in 1988 to heal the wounds of war. I have witnessed personal efforts to facilitate healing & forgiveness, and also the joy of reconciliation. I have spent many years crisscrossing both the U.S. and Vietnam in order to promote peace and forgiveness. I take great pride in having facilitated programs enabling U.S. Vietnam veterans to work alongside former VC, NVA, and general Vietnamese citizens to rebuild Vietnam after the war.

I am no longer young, but I still yearn to build the foundations of peace, understanding, and goodwill between our future populations. With this goal in mind, I have created a humanitarian travel program co-sponsored by Bright Light Volunteers and the San Diego World Affairs Council (SDWAC). I invite you to come with me on a journey to experience Vietnam today, after 50 years of peace. Experiencing Vietnam today will help to erase the old memories and images of war, and replace them with the new, vibrant and beautiful reality of my home country.

The trip will include ways to recognize the anniversary of the war's end. There will be a celebration with the children and others who had been children of the Village of Hope Orphanage in Danang that I founded in 1993; a memorial service at Red Beach to acknowledge those men and women who landed on the shores of Vietnam but did not return home; and a candlelight vigil service on the My Khe and Danang Beaches. Travelers will experience the beauty, breadth and resiliency of the Vietnamese people and culture.

Please share this opportunity with your friends & family and join us on this remarkable journey next year.

Peace, Love & Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Le Ly Hayslip', with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Le Ly Hayslip
Author / Peacemaker / Philanthropist

(P.S. Exciting news - I am working on a table photography book that will highlight my 40-year legacy of volunteer work in Vietnam (1986-2025). I could never have achieved without those I've worked with on both sides of the world- the US and Vietnam. During this project I have had to review thousands of old & new photos, love/hate letters, and review over 300 great service projects. For all of those whose photos are included in the book, please know that your names, faces, donations, gifts, and supplies from all the trips we took together have helped not only to rebuild our motherland, Vietnam, but to heal the wounds of war between two countries. Seeing these photos and reports from the early days are jumping out at me, and I want to write this letter to invite you to travel back with me to see Vietnam as it is today.)