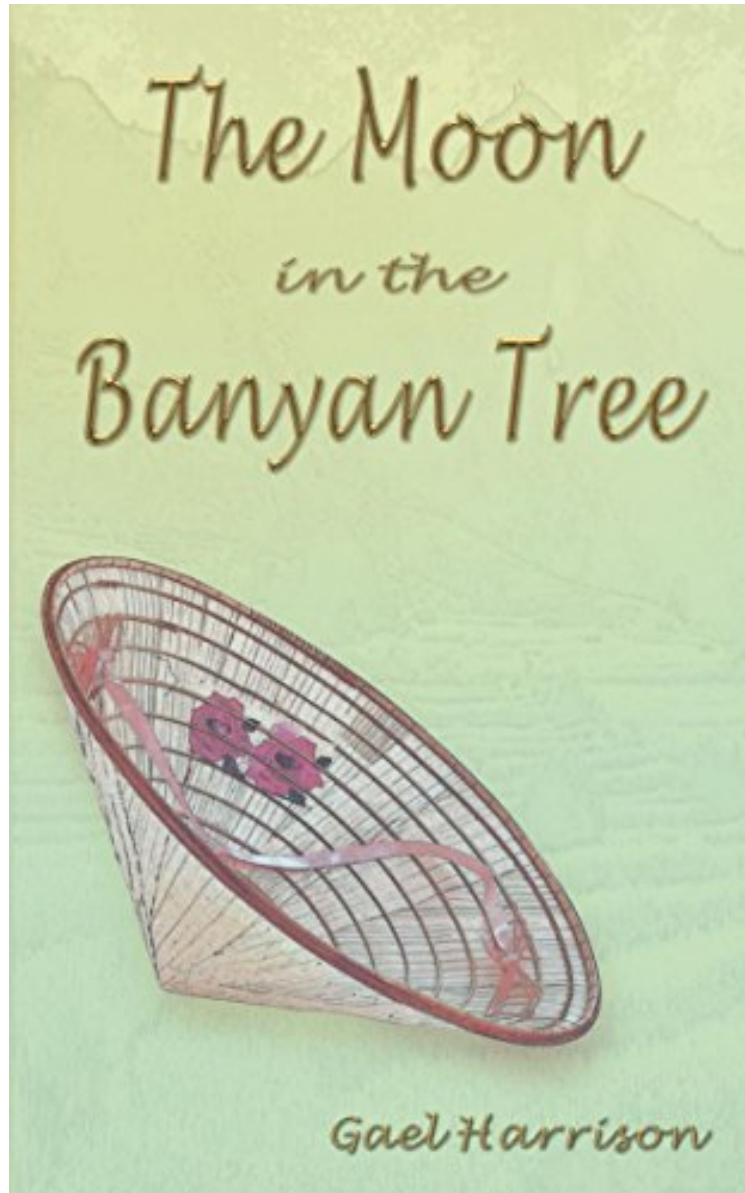


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## The Moon in the Banyan Tree

*Gael Harrison*

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**Gael Harrison : The Moon in the Banyan Tree** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Moon in the Banyan Tree:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The Moon in the Banyan Tree'By Jack Sullivan`The Moon in the Banyan Tree' grabbed my attention because I have travelled to a few Asian countries, and was interested to learn about Vietnam. I was a teenager when the Vietnam War raged, and counted myself lucky to live in the UK and therefore not involved in that appalling war. So I was fascinated by Gael's descriptions of modern-day Vietnam, and am impressed

with her fortitude in taking the leap to work as a volunteer in a remote part of that country. She relates her experiences in a delightful way; she sees things that I probably wouldn't even have noticed, and then proceeds to describe them rather beautifully. An absorbing and thought-provoking book!

I have walked through these streets at night, when all is silent and only the moonlight casts shadows over the clean and deserted pavements. The architecture retakes centre stage, and the classic French style of the building designs once again becomes apparent. As you walk, your eyes are drawn to the beautiful carved doorways and ornate shutters. Above, the ghostly modern additions to the already complicated rooftops mingle with the silhouettes of mature trees and vibrant bougainvillea that have taken on the black hues of midnight. It could all be a pen and ink sketch for, here in the heart of the city by moonlight, the streets take on a beauty they do not possess in the afternoon sun. Gael Harrison's life has almost come full circle, from her birth and schooling as a British rubber planter's daughter in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, to her newly found life in Vietnam. In 2001 Volunteer Services Overseas assigned Gael to a Save the Children Fund project in the remote Vietnamese highlands where only ethnic dialects were spoken. The daunting task of existing and working in these areas, in spite of speaking neither Vietnamese nor the local dialects, reveals the qualities that allow Gael to tell her story of the seldom-seen world of the volunteer in a difficult and alien environment through very human eyes. Gael is now remarried and continues to live and work in Hanoi.

Jack Sullivan reviewed *The Moon in the Banyan Tree*