

Vietnamese American Oral History Project, UC Irvine

Narrator: KHOAN HUU LE

Interviewer: Michelle Le Pham

Date: September 1, 2012

Location: Garden Grove

Sub-Collection: The Grove Senior Apartments

Length: 02:18:54

FIELD NOTES

The interview was conducted at the home of the narrator, Khoan Huu Le at The Grove Senior Apartments in Garden Grove. I first met Mr. Le during a mixer sponsored by the Vietnamese American Oral History Project in part with EngAge. The mixer was held in order to help familiarize the senior residents with our project plan and possibly recruit possible participants. Mr. Le and I made polite conversation during the mixer and told me how excited he was to help out the project in any way he could.

It wasn't until a few months later that I was able to contact him and set up an interview date. Even though we had access to the common room as a possible facility to conduct the interview, Mr. Le insisted that the interview be in his apartment, according to him it would be easier for him to bring out photographs and other memorabilia when he tells his stories as to not interrupt the flow. He was dressed in khakis and polo, judging from his apparel I felt that he was expecting the interview to be casual with a hint of professionalism. It was evident in his manner of speech and behavior that he was an educated man; sure enough he was as he explained in detail during the interview.

Those that were present during the actual interview were myself, Mr. Khoan Huu Le, and Chris Truong, another research intern who was there to observe the interview process. The interview started off like any other with the exception of being served some exquisite jasmine tea. As the interview wore on, the narrator became more comfortable with the whole process. Initially he has his back against his chair, arms folded neatly in his lap, and leg crossed, by the time it was over he and I were both sitting crossed legged on the floor going through his photo album. Mr. Le then took Chris and I into his bedroom to show us his wall decorated with family photos and certificates and tokens of accomplishments. It was very clear during the interview and the tour that he was very proud father and grandfather. At the end of the interview I was lucky enough to walk away with a number of priceless photos to scan for the collection.

My overall experience with Mr. Khoan Huu Le was nothing short of amazing. Even though my narrator pool is still rather small, everything that he was willing to contribute was everything that I wanted in a narrator.