Vietnamese American Oral History Project, UC Irvine

Narrator: Quynh-Trang Nguyen

Interviewer: Brandon Nguyen

Date: February 21, 2012

Location: San Diego, California

Sub-Collection: Vietnamese American Experience Winter 2012

Length of Interview: 01:21:31

Time Log

00:00:20 Introduction. Quynh-Trang Nguyen states her name and where she was born.

00:00:35 She talks about her parents.

00:00:53 She talks about where she grew up and her best childhood memory.

00:01:55 She was raised in Western culture and influenced by the French. She did not know much about Vietnamese traditional music.

00:02:23 She talks about story-telling in her family.

00:02:48 She came to the U.S. in 1975 and stayed at Camp Pendleton. She talks about her experience in Camp Pendleton.

00:04:33 She talks about how her family became sponsored and who their sponsors were.

00:05:49 She states that her father worked for the American Consulate Office in Nha Trang.
She lived in Orange County after she got married and then moved to New Jersey.

Her family and her lived in Linda Vista after moving out of their sponsor’s home.

She talks about what it was like growing up in the U.S. and the racism she encountered throughout her life.

She went to San Diego State and studied linguistics and French. She tried to get a teaching credential, but decided it was not for her. She then went to Coleman College. She got a degree in Computer Information Science and got a job as a programmer.

She moved to Orange County after getting married and started Little Saigon T.V. and Radio. Then she moved to New Jersey, but moved back after her father passed away.

After she got her citizenship, she has participated in every U.S. election but one.

She talks about her trip back to Vietnam and the relatives she has over there.

She talks about the traditions in her family and how she was raised to respect her elders.

She practices Catholicism and belongs to a parish. She is a part of St. Therese of Carmel’s choir.

She talks about being a Vietnamese American and how she is proud to be Vietnamese.
She talks about the Vietnamese community and how it has grown so much.

She talks about the Tet Festival and Tet traditions.

Her family and her celebrate Tet and keep some of the traditions.

She talks about what she thinks will become of Vietnamese culture and what younger generations should remember.

She talks about her and her father’s involvement in the Vietnamese American community.

She talks about the history of her family’s last name.

She speaks Vietnamese, French, and English.

She shares the story about her grandfather stealing money from her great grandfather to go to Laos.

She talks about her father’s occupations and how he went to prison. Her mom found ways to support the family while her father was in prison.

Her father almost finished his Ph.D. Her mother went to elementary school, but had to quit school to work. Some of her great aunts and uncles finished high school and went to college.

Her father was involved in a political movement, so he never got to finish his Ph.D.

She talks about family gatherings.

She explains one of her favorite sayings that her father used to tell her.

She talks about special food traditions in her family.

She talks about her family heirlooms and mementos.
She talks about her last days in Vietnam and how the war affected her family in Vietnam.

She describes how she felt as she was leaving Vietnam and flying to America.

Her brother got left behind, but was able to make his way over later. He was one of the first boat people.

She discusses her view on U.S. policy during the war.

She talks about how her father was able to support the family when they came to the U.S.

She talks about the difference between her old and new community.

She received death threats for broadcasting a communist on the radio.

She lists the awards she has earned.

She talks about how lucky she is to be able to live in the U.S.

She enjoys playing the piano, listening to music, reading, playing tennis, and hanging out with family and friends in her free time.

She describes some of her favorite childhood memories of Vietnam. Her and her siblings did a lot of fun activities while they lived in Vietnam, but when she came over to the U.S., she had to work to earn some money for the family.

She describes some of the jobs she had during her younger years.

She is a business consultant. She talks about her job.