Vietnamese American Oral History Project, UC Irvine

Narrator: STEVEN BUI
Interviewer: Kevin Bui
Date: February 9, 2014
Location: Garden Grove, California
Length of Interview: 01:14:51

Time Log

0:00:18  Steven Bui quickly tells his name, date of birth and where he was born.
0:00:34  He briefly talks about his parents by telling they names and spelling it out.
However he could not describe them other than that
0:01:10  He talks about where he grew up as a child and his live in Vietnam during the war. He also knows that he was living with his grandmother at the time until 1972.
0:03:13  He talks about the time he spend living with his grandma and his aunt before moving back to his parents.
0:04:20  He talks about how his aunt had a business selling merchandise from Phan Thiet to people in Saigon and how he would help everyday after school by making sure the merchandise was ready for shipping.
0:05:03  He talks about school life in Vietnam. He explains things that the Vietnamese schools have that US schools don’t have.
0:06:07  He talks about the main industry of his home town as well as give more information about his parents.
0:06:40  He talks about local events at his home town and Tet.
0:09:11  He talks more about what he did to help his aunt and tells us more about his aunt.
He tells us more about his grandfather from his mother side and his mom. He also talks about how he helped them during the summer.

He tells us how many siblings he has but wants to keep their name private. He notes that because he was the oldest, he had to take care of his siblings by watching over them, but we still had a good relationship with them.

He notes that he only spoke Vietnamese at the time.

He notes that he does not recall any memorable stories his family members told him in the past.

He talks more about his family members. His mother side was mainly farmers. His father only had a sister and brother, but the brother died during the war and his sister ran a business.

He notes that his parents are uneducated because they had to escape to the South to avoid the Communist in the North. He also notes that they had no money so they could not go to school and some went to the army.

He notes that his parents were originally from North Vietnam, in the city of Ha Tinh Nghe An, where Ho Chi Minh also came from.

He talks a little bit on how his parents yet, but does not know all the details because he was not there.

He notes that the only time he has gatherings with his family in Vietnam was during Tet, otherwise he has a lot more in America. During the gatherings his family just cooks and eat.

He states where he met his wife and that he had two kids. However, he does not tell his kids about the past because he thinks that the kids will not like it.
0:19:20 He talks about being Catholic and where he was baptized
0:19:42 He notes that he has an altar for ancestor at his parent’s home. He still has a tradition to go once a year and pray, something that has not change even coming to America
0:20:24 He talks about how his religious life was in Vietnam.
0:21:39 He notes that he does not have any special recipes or heirlooms from his family
0:22:17 He talks about how the war in Vietnam affected his community
0:24:20 He repeats where he lived during the war.
0:25:11 He talks about his family members involved in the war.
0:25:58 He talks about what he remembers most about the Vietnam War.
0:27:37 He talks about family members that were caught during the war
0:31:47 He notes that none of his family members had any disabilities due to the war
0:31:58 He talks about what remembers during the last days of the Vietnam War
0:36:03 Notes that he father was temporary a soldier but was discharged after his brother died.
0:37:25 He talks about life after the war
0:40:23 He shares his thoughts on leaving Vietnam
0:41:15 He talks about his thoughts on the foreigners during the war
0:42:44 He notes why he immigrated to the United States
0:43:03 He talks about how he escapes from Vietnam. He notes that he did not any possessions with him. He then talks about his refugee camp and his feelings of getting sponsored.
0:48:54 He talks about the USCC organization
His first impression was that America was cold because he lived previously in a tropical area.

He first arrived at New Orleans.

He explains why he moved to Southern California and what happened during that time.

He talks about what his parents worked as when they first came to the United States. He also notes what he did in New Orleans.

He talks about the financial aid he received in New Orleans.

He feels that his decision to move to the United States was one of the best decisions he ever made.

The first challenge he faced when first in the United States was English.

He notes that USCC helped his father and him to get jobs.

He explains the difference between New Orleans and Vietnam then New Orleans and Orange County.

He talks about the racism he experienced.

He talks about what he did in New Orleans.

He states that he still when to church in New Orleans and how the Vietnamese community made the church.

He talks about school life in New Orleans.

He talks about the transition from living in New Orleans to living in California by himself.

He states when he moved to Orange County. He then states when his other family members moved.
1:04:22 He talks about school in California
1:05:16 He talks about what he did after getting an education in California
1:05:40 He states his current occupation and how he like it
1:06:33 He talks about the race diversity between New Orleans and Orange County
1:07:16 He does not have any memorable moments of culture shock
1:07:19 He is a citizen of the United States. He votes in elections to vote for what he
thinks is right, but does not volunteer or donate to any political party
1:08:01 He gets his news from the internet and in English because it is available faster
than Vietnamese.
1:08:31 His only family still in Vietnam is his cousins and uncle. His siblings are all in
the United States. He does not keep in touch with his family in Vietnam
1:08:43 He has gone back to Vietnam to vacation in 1997. However he did not like it
because he felt the whole country was corrupt, wanting money only. He also
visited his aunt and uncle there
1:10:11 He notes some songs that remember him of Vietnam but he does not want to
remember them because the songs are all sad. The only tradition he preserves is
Tet
1:11:33 He does not know what will become of Vietnamese culture because he did not
really understand it because he was too young and quickly adapted to American
culture
1:12:14 He notes that the Vietnamese community has changed a lot the younger
community is more open minded. He also states that the difference between the
first and second generation is the second generation fights for themselves more
because they know English. However, he is not involved in the community because he has no time.

1:13:25 He watches TV for entertainment but does not have any hobbies.

1:13:43 Although he does not know what future Vietnamese American should do, he advises people to follow their own steps and not follow other people.