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"I wish I just could have kept the memories I had that were so happy. I wish this trip never happened."

— Heidi Bub

'Danang' reopens the hidden wounds of war

Documentary follows daughter's bittersweet return to Vietnam

By Marilyn Elias
USA TODAY

More than 2,000 children were flown out of Vietnam on the U.S. "babylift" just before Saigon fell in 1975, and only a handful would reunite with their biological parents.

Heidi Bub, 34, considered herself one of the fortunate few. "It's going to be so healing for both of us," Bub predicts on the way to meet her Vietnamese mother, Mai Thi Kim. "It's going to make all those memories go away and all those lost years not matter anymore."

Filmmakers Gail Dolgin and Vicente Franco discreetly follow Bub's 1997 "reunion" journey to its shocking emotional climax in their Academy Award-nominated documentary, *Daughter From Danang*.

The film, winner of the coveted Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival, is rated as a dark horse for an Oscar at the awards ceremony Sunday night.

The majority of airlifted children were babies or toddlers, either orphaned or abandoned by mothers too poor to feed them. But some, such as 6-year-old Mai Thi Hiep (renamed Heidi), were older children sent to the USA because they were biracial and would have been treated like pariahs in postwar Vietnam.

Bub's mother had three children when her husband suddenly left to fight for the Viet Cong. She managed to find a job at a U.S. air base. Kim said her American boss offered to provide plenty of food and clothing for her children in return for sex. When the ser-

"shower" is a bucket of water. Her mom, arthritic and unable to work at 61, clings tightly to Bub. Soon the young woman feels "like I was the parent, and the parent is the child."

To her siblings, she seems unimaginably wealthy, and they ask her to help them support their mother, a common custom in Vietnam.

Bub, the wife of a Navy officer and mother of two small children, has brought presents and offers cash. But the family's bold requests for more seem mercenary and insulting when she had expected unconditional love with no demands.

"She couldn't understand that their requesting money didn't in any way diminish their love for her," Dolgin says. "She wanted to be a little girl, taken care of by her mother," but the film reveals "she's going to be seen as the caretaker."

Viewers of the film eavesdrop on scenes of raw pain and misunderstanding. Bub sobs at the lethal betrayal she feels. "I wish I just could have kept the memories I had that were so happy. I wish this trip never happened."

Her brother, Do Trong Tinh, is mystified: "What's wrong? I was just asking her to help her family. . . . She sure cries easily."

Kim, Bub's mother, looks ashen with grief as she recognizes the cultural gulf separating her children and senses she could lose this daughter a second time. She tells the others to stop pleading for money.

"All I want is for you to be happy with your family," Kim tells her American daughter. "Seeing you is what matters."

But it's clear there won't be much of



2002 Daughter From Danang

Mother and daughter: Mai Thi Kim and Heidi Bub are reunited in 1997. The "healing" journey was bittersweet.



2002 Daughter From Danang

Filmmakers: Vicente Franco and Gail Dolgin's work is up for an Oscar Sunday night.

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Vietnam general reflects on war

U.S. urged to help fight nation's poverty

By Greg Myre
The Associated Press

HANOI, Vietnam — Gen. Vo Nguyen Giap masterminded the guerrilla war that drove the American military from Vietnam, and

of age — his right eye occasionally twitches, and he needs thick glasses to read. But speaking in a strong, clear voice, he reminisced for more than two hours Saturday with a group of journalists at the red-carpeted Government Guesthouse, and made clear that his revolutionary fire still burns strong.



**World Airways Cargo Back To Saigon Babylift****Date:** Saturday, April 02, 2005 @ 9:27 AM CEST**Topic:** Cargo

World Airways recalls a time, 30 years ago today Friday (April 1), when the Atlanta ACMI carrier was based in Oakland, California, serving military contracts and flying to various destinations, including Vietnam.

On April 1, 1975, World Airways moved 57 children out of war ravaged Saigon, Vietnam to safety in the United States. In an act of supreme passion and courage, the children traveled aboard an unauthorized flight, a move typical of take-charge World Airways owner, Ed Daly.

Ed Daly, a former golden gloves boxer, was also a pistol-packing character of the post World War II era. Wearing a green beret, he dreamed the impossible dream, slicing through red tape with the help of his DC8s and B727s.

Described as more of a swashbuckling "Man of La Mancha", millionaire businessman Ed Daly made headlines when he took it upon himself to evacuate people out of places like Danang and Saigon as the Vietnam War wound down.

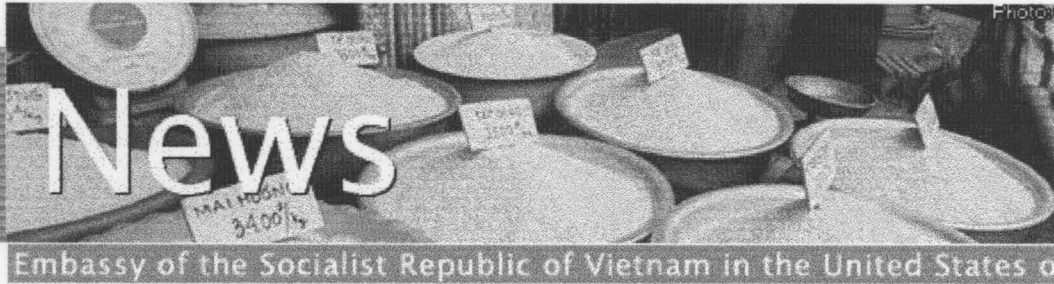
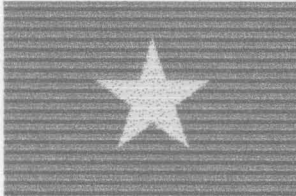
A camera aboard a World B727 captured one unforgettable moment as the aircraft rolled down the runway for takeoff, the aft aircraft tail ladder being drawn up just in time.

Terrifying images appeared on televisions around the world. Everyone watched as desperate people tried to run in pace with the jet, the successful few clinging to stairs and the wheel wells of plane.

The initial flight carried a total of 218 refugees, including 57 babies.

The flight landed safely in the United States to a welcoming committee of World Airways personnel. Children and adults alike were taken in by the airline staff and cared for as if they were family.

November 2, 2005



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Homecoming brings Babylift full circle

06/17/2005 - VN/US relations

HCM CITY — Twenty-one children who departed Viet Nam on the US's Operation Bab thirty years ago completed their long journeys yesterday when they returned to visit Viet

Yesterday afternoon at Tan Son Nhat Airport, Randy Martinez, present World Air Holdi said that his company was "completing the Operation Babylift story with the return special people to their homeland."

Calling this trip Operation Babylift – Homeward Bound, Martinez said that even tho children were raised in America, they were born in Viet Nam and this country "holds place in their hearts."

Thirty-year-old Tiana Mykkeltvedt, who previously returned to Viet Nam in 1997 to st Noi, said that this trip would be more meaningful.

"This time I get to share it with the other adoptees and all the people who made it possil to be here," she said.

Today, the group including some of the crewmembers who flew the Operation Babylift tour the city, visit the Christina Noble Foundation, which is supporting and s disadvantaged children, and the Phu My Orphanage. The group will depart again for t Friday.

In April 1975, before the impending fall of the Sai Gon Administration, World Airw executive officer and founder Edward Daly, who died in 1984, used his company's an planes, which had been used to haul soldiers and weapons to Viet Nam, to bring 57 Vi orphans from Tan Son Nhat Airport to America to be adopted.

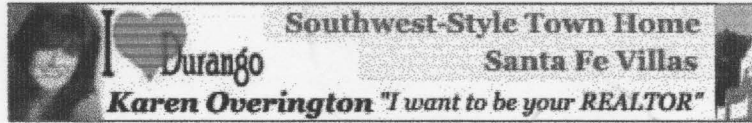
World Airways briefly faced sanctions, according to reports in the San Francisco Chr humanitarian groups working with orphans in Viet Nam were advocating that the government undertake an emergency evacuation.

Then-US President Gerald Ford announced on April 3, 1975, that Operation Babylift some of the estimated 70,000 orphans out of Viet Nam with US\$2 million from a spec aid children's fund.

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DurangoHerald.com

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Navigate Site

Travel

Keyword :

Return to Vietnam

October 16, 2005

By Jim Dyer | *Special to the Herald*

In late April 1975, the defenders of Saigon didn't.

A Soviet-built T-38 tank of the Socialist Republic of (North) Vietnam smashed through the front gate of the (then) Presidential Palace of the Republic of (South) Vietnam. (The shooting war there was over. It continues here, in many broken hearts and minds.)

Thirty years later, June 2005, a contingent of about 100 Americans rolled uncontested through that same portal in air-conditioned buses. The renamed Unification Palace in the renamed Ho Chi Minh City was host to a banquet honoring the return of 21 former Vietnamese orphans. These former orphans are now of course adults, and, as adoptees, are all proud, successful Americans.

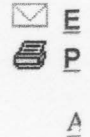
But in the dark days of April 1975, their future was likewise dark.

Enter World Airways.

World had been, among many chartered missions, hauling rice into Cambodia. At the urging of his daughter Charlotte, World President Ed Daly recognized the plight of the many GI-fathered children in harm's way and dispatched a DC-8 to Saigon's Tan Son Nhut Air Base. There awaited more than 200 orphans. Authorities turned them away. Daly was undeterred. And one orphanage bravely sent 57 children on the unauthorized flight.

According to the *Official World Airways Newsletter*: "World's Flight Attendants improvised to find milk, food and supplies for the trip. ... With courage and determination, Capt. Bill Keating accelerated down a dark runway. ... They arrived in Oakland, Calif., to welcoming throngs and overwhelming media coverage, which led President Gerald Ford to approve additional flights under 'Operation Babylift.'"

At its conclusion, Babylift brought about 3,000 children to the United States. (Tragically, an Air Force C-5A cargo sustained a catastrophic decompression at 23,000 feet while exiting the Vietnam coastline. Control lines were severed. Only the heroic



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THIS STORY HAS BEEN FORMATTED FOR EASY PRINTING

Vietnam Babylift adoptees welcomed home 30 years on

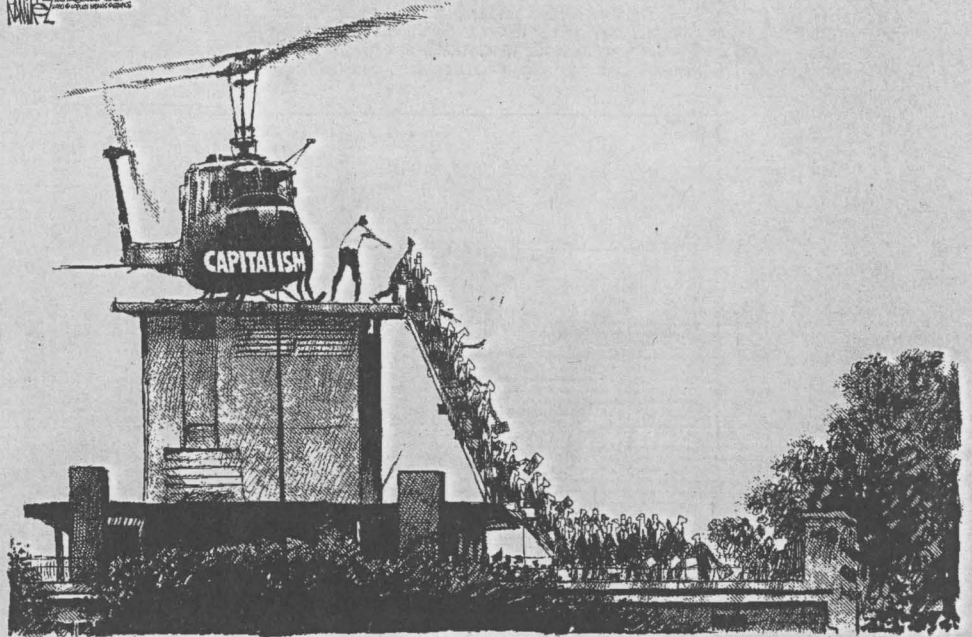
REUTERS 

June 15, 2005

HO CHI MINH CITY (Reuters) - Most of them left Vietnam when they were too young to grasp the significance of the flight across the Pacific Ocean in the dying days of the Vietnam War, but this trip they will remember forever.

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PHOTO BY AP/WIDEWORLD



VIETNAM 2000

Vietnam becomes a tourist trap

HO CHI MINH CITY, Vietnam — Americans and others here are buying blazing red Vietnamese caps, the ones with a bright yellow star on the crown. They can buy counterfeit U.S. Army dog tags and green pith helmets of the type once worn by the North Vietnam-



wobbly, a model for no other nation. The nearby dominoes have fallen, all right — but into the arms of Goldman Sachs.

Hands once raised in a clenched-fist salute are now extended for a bribe.

Corruption is so brazen, not to mention chaotic, that the official and industrious censor does not blacken out mention of corruption in the International Herald Tribune. (A reference to political intimidation, however, has to be read by

nam was supposed to be, the one that would topple all the other dominoes of Southeast Asia, now stands alone and

corning to the official statistics, are too poor to afford what's in them. The ethos of communism has mutated.

Richard Cohen (cohenr@washpost.com) is a columnist for The Washington Post.

DENVER POST - APRIL 4, 2000



Associated Press / Richard Vogel

Former Vietnamese orphans, including Kimberly Brinkei of Denver, center, and their adoptive families visit Vietnam on Monday, marking the 25th anniversary of Operation Babylift, when a cargo plane crashed, killing 144 people.

Pilgrimage to Vietnam's past

Denver nun leads tour for families, survivors of Operation Babylift

By Tini Tran

The Associated Press

HO CHI MINH CITY, Vietnam — David Shakow recalls the day 25 years ago when he heard the radio report: A cargo plane loaded with Vietnamese orphans had crashed in Saigon, killing 144 people.

His heart dropped. His adopted son Jeffery was on board.

For weeks, Shakow and his wife lived in agony as reports filtered in that their baby was among 76 infants killed in the April 4, 1975, crash 26 days before the end of the Vietnam War.

"We kept hearing that he was dead, then alive, then dead again," Shakow recalled. "That was a tough time."

But a month later, 13-month-old Jef-

fery arrived in the United States, his eyelashes burned off, his bangs singed and his cheek and back scarred.

On Monday, father and son returned to Vietnam for the first time as part of a memorial tour led by Sister Mary Nelle Gage of Denver, an organizer of the evacuation. In the final days of the war, more than 2,000 Vietnamese children were airlifted to safety from Saigon, now Ho Chi Minh City, as part of Operation Babylift.

Gage hopes the two-week tour will help the participants — including 15 former Vietnamese orphans now in their mid-20s to early 30s — come to terms with their past. Many were adopted by American families.

For Shakow, 57, of Saratoga Springs, N.Y., the trip brought back memories of the painful days following the crash when Jeffery's very existence was in doubt.

"He just disappeared for a while. There were rumors that he was in the hospital badly burned," Shakow said. "Then others swore that he was on the manifest of those killed. The world was falling apart there and we couldn't get any information."

Today, the group, including Jeffery Shakow, 26, and two other crash survivors, will hold a memorial service at the crash site.

Please see VIETNAM on 11A



Oakland Tribune Collection, Oakland Museum of California / Gift of ANG Newspapers
A LONG WAY FROM HOME: Pfc. Clairborne L. Shaw of Oakland at Chu Lai, Vietnam, June 4, 1966, in a photograph on display in "What's Going On? California and the Vietnam Era."

In Oakland, reverberations of a war that changed California

Political fallout

Then comes the birth of grassroots activism in the 1960s: both the famous radicalism of Northern California and the less remembered but equally momentous conservative movement in Southern California.

[Oakland, from Page E26]
 museum warehoused part of its collection, to survey the institution's holdings. The base, it turned out, had been the largest military port complex in the world during the Vietnam War; more than 222,000 soldiers from





Oakland Tribune Collection, Oakland Museum of California / Gift of ANG Newspapers

OPERATION BABYLIFT: In April 1975, Vietnamese children flew to the U.S. in cartons donated by an Oakland stationery store.

California's Vietnam War

By MICHAEL J. YBARRA
Special to The Times

OAKLAND — Several years ago the Oakland Museum of California was scheduled to host a traveling exhibition about photographers who died in Vietnam. So curator Marcia Eymann be-

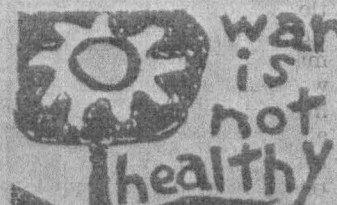
gan to work on a companion show about the war's effect on the state. The photography show never made it to Oakland.

But Eymann was so impressed by what she learned about the repercussions of the Vietnam War on California that the museum decided to make

that the subject of a full-blown presentation.

The result is "What's Going On? — California and the Vietnam Era," which opened Saturday and runs through Feb. 27.

The exhibition is a sprawling, 7,000-square-foot tour across decades of California life from



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Thirty years ago, a toddler was airlifted from a Saigon orphanage. Now, Tanya Bakal of Alpharetta will return to a . . . home she never knew

By KIRSTEN TAGAMI
ktagami@ajc.com

When you ask Tanya Bakal her age, she says, "31, I think." She doesn't know her birth date, nor the names and faces of her biological mother and father. She has no memory of the country of her birth.

Bakal was a chubby toddler, with pierced ears and parasites in her stomach, when she arrived at her adoptive home in Marietta in the spring of 1975, a refugee of war. She and 56 other orphans were spirited out of Saigon in a converted cargo plane in the chaotic final days of the Vietnam War.

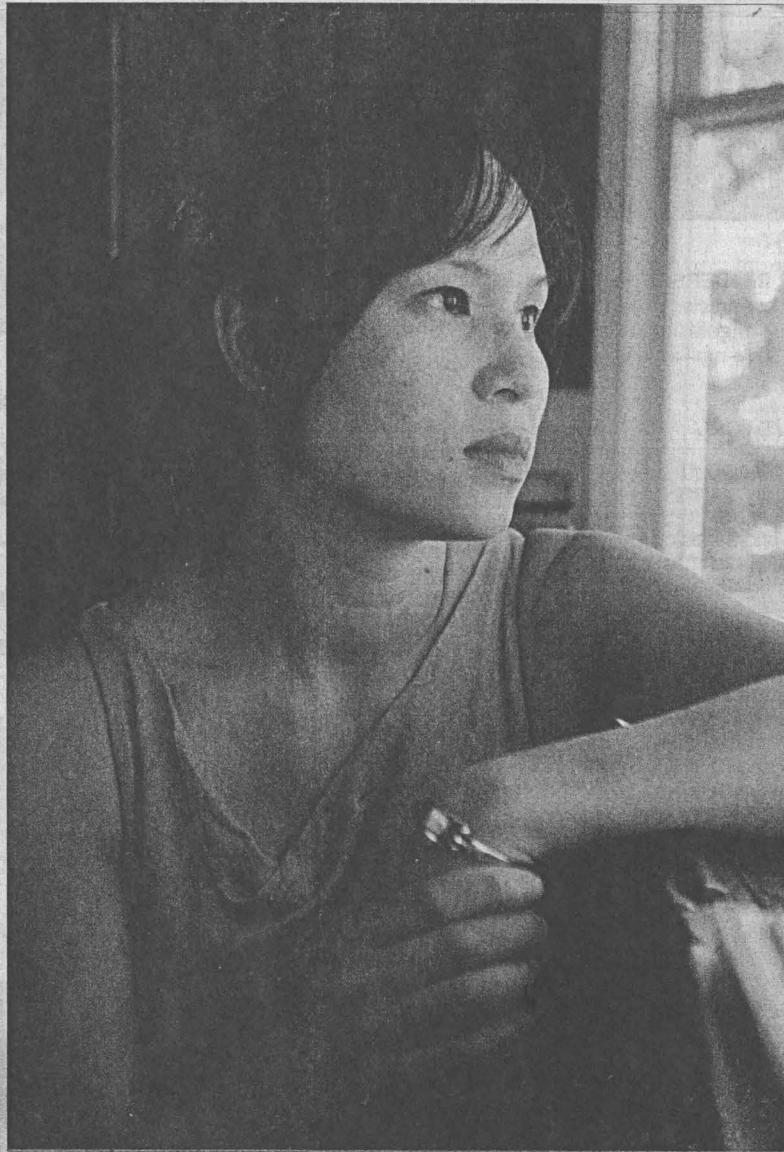
Now, on the 30th anniversary of that first, unauthorized "baby-lift," the charter airline that brought her to America plans to fly her and other orphans back for a tour of their homeland. World Airways, now based in Peachtree City, will announce the trip today in Atlanta.

"My family, my children, my husband, everyone knows where they came from," said Bakal, a mother of three in Alpharetta. "I

► Please see **ORPHAN, A3**

Tanya Bakal was a toddler on April 2, 1975, when she and 56 other children were flown out of Saigon just weeks before it fell to Communist troops. Operation Babylift (below) was a mission of mercy for World Airways.

Associated Press file photo (below)



T. LEVETTE BAGWELL / Staff



BELL

By MAYA BELL
Orlando Sentinel

Pinellas Park, Fla. Schindler Schiavo, unaware of the fire that the tranquil hospice for the last five years.

But her saga left a profound impression on the nation, sparking extraordinary attempts by politicians to keep her alive they fought her band over her fate.

Her story was a people who never wrote down, what they were sudden tragic situation.

"Thanks to Terri never had that cor it right now," said co-director of the University of Michigan legacy."

An overweight, an attractive young cal laugh, Terri Sch be anything other woman, a wife rounded by family Her sudden co

► Please see **SCHIA**

Pope fever infect

By FRANCES D'EMILIO
Associated Press

Vatican City — was responding to biotics and his co have stabilized after oped a high fever nary tract infect reported early today

The latest health year-old pontiff began receiving nasal feeding tube.

At the edge of hundreds of people today. A few knelt to pray, while others in blankets through the night.

"There's nothing We're all upset," said Minister Giovanni in the crowd.

The Italian new

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution
4/1/05

Nation

Orphans saved in 1975 'babylift' to return to Vietnam, lost pasts

The Associated Press

ALPHARETTA, Ga. — Tanya Bakal has spent much of her life running from Nguyen Thu Kim Phung.

Three decades ago, she left that name in Vietnam, along with her biological mother and her culture, when she was airlifted out as part of the wartime "Operation Babylift." Next month, she hopes to find them all.

Bakal's search will take her more than 9,200 miles away to Saigon, now named Ho Chi Minh City, with 19 other orphans from the first wave of the effort that eventually brought more than 3,000 Vietnamese children to the USA.

They don't speak the language, many of their names have changed and some — including Bakal — don't even know their real birthdays.

"Everyone has a beginning," says Bakal, who believes she is 31. "I want to find mine."

As a toddler, Bakal was among the 57 children — mostly babies, all orphaned or given up by their parents — on the April 2, 1975, flight made by Ed Daly, former president of World Airways. The plane took off from a pitch-black runway, and its lights were kept off in the air to keep the Vietnamese military from shooting it down.

News of the flight traveled quickly, and the next day, President Ford was deluged with telephone calls to do something to save the children of Vietnam. The government brought thousands more children out of Vietnam as Saigon was falling that April.

Shirley Peck-Barnes, author of *The War Cradle*, which documents the legacy of Operation Babylift, calls it the greatest humanitarian gesture of the last century.

"This is the one thing about the Vietnam War that made Americans feel relief," she says. "They were

her biological roots.

"I never really needed to go down that road," Greene, 30, says. "I want to thank all the heroes that got us over here. That's what's most important to me. We really are all miracle babies."

Long before talk of a return to Vietnam, Bakal, now a mother of three, began searching for informa-

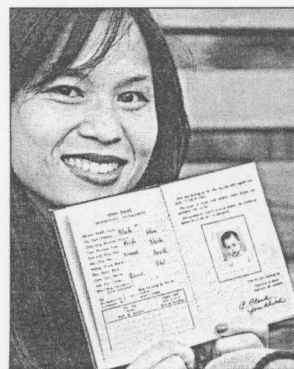
tion about her birth mother.

She has collected mementos from her past: her original passport from Vietnam, the picture of her as a smiling baby, newspaper clippings recounting her story.

For weeks, she has run an ad in a Vietnamese newspaper with her baby picture, hoping her biological mother would recognize it and

come forward. Bakal is hopeful that her return will also mean a reunion, or at least answers to questions she is now ready to ask.

"I took this for granted when I was growing up, but now I really feel like I'm a part of history," she says. "It would be so neat to be out there and actually meet my mother."



By Ric Feld, AP

Among original 57: Tanya Bakal shows her Vietnamese passport.

Babylift at a glance

Operation Babylift: More than 3,000 Vietnamese children orphaned or given up by their parents — were airlifted from Vietnam during the war. They were brought to the USA, where they were adopted by American families.

The tragedy: Some of the children never made it. A C-5A cargo plane from Vietnam crashed on April 2, 1975, killing almost half the adults and children on board.

The return: Next month, 200 of the 57 children on the first Babylift flight out of Saigon will return to Vietnam. Some hope to find their birth parents.

Source: The Associated Press



NBA playoffs

Pistons tie series with Pacers at 2-2

Sports C1

ECU sweeps

Pirate baseball wins third straight against UAB

Sports C1

Cancer drug

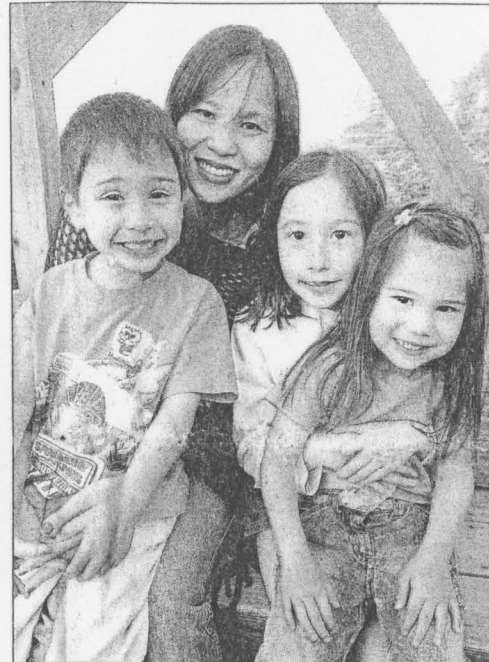
Drug for symptoms turns out to be surprising treatment

Nation A5



The Associated Press

TANYA DILBECK BAKAL is shown in a photo that was sent to her adoptive parents, Laura and Reed Dilbeck, in Marietta, Ga. from her Vietnam orphanage.



The Associated Press

TANYA BAKAL poses with her children, Ethan Bakal, 5, left, Casey Blevins, 10, center, and Samantha Bakal, 3, at a park in Alpharetta, Ga.

VIETNAM'S WAR ORPHANS TO RETURN

OPERATION BABYLIFT

More than 3,000 Vietnamese children were airlifted out of Vietnam during the war and brought to the United States, where they were adopted by American families.

THE TRAGEDY

Some of the children never made it — a C-5A cargo plane from Vietnam crashed on April 4, 1975, killing almost half the 330 adults and children on board.

THE RETURN

Next month, 20 of the 57 children on the first flight out of Saigon will return to Vietnam, some hoping to find their birth parents.

War orphans: 30 years later

1975



2005

Twenty from 'Operation Babylift' to return to Vietnam

By **Errin Haines**
The Associated Press

ALPHARETTA, Ga. — Tanya Bakal has spent much of her life running from Nguyen Thu Kim Phung.

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See **BABIES**, A7

County wants to bring

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AIR AMERICANS



Tiffany Goodson, showing a photo of herself at an adoption agency in Vietnam, is among 20 men and women Operation Baby Lift adoptees returning to Vietnam, their homeland, next month.

Andy Holzman
Staff Photographer

Daily News
5/22/05

Baby Lift adoptees plan return to Vietnam

By Lisa Friedman — Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON

All her life, friends asked Tiffany Goodson if she planned to locate her birth mother or learn more about her role in the mass airlifts of infants to America from the overflowing orphanages of Saigon during the Vietnam War.

"I don't care — maybe someday," came Goodson's usual reply.

Recently, that changed.

Goodson, 30, who lives in Santa Monica and works as an event planner at the Mann Theatres in Encino, started making inquiries about her childhood. She connected with other men and women of Vietnamese descent who, like her, were among the estimated 3,000 infants flown out of war-torn Vietnam in 1975 in an emergency humanitarian effort that became known as Operation Baby Lift.

Please see LIFT / Page 30

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SPORTS

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BUSINESS

Fox is
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REAT

San Francisco
Chronicle
6/13/05

'Babylift' orphans headed back to Vietnam

For some, the first return home in 30 years

By Cicero Estrella
and Leslie Fulbright
CHRONICLE STAFF WRITERS

A jet repainted with the stylized red and white globe that World Airways planes wore in 1975 touched down in Oakland on Sunday, the first stop in a journey retracing "Operation Babylift," which 30 years ago carried dozens of Vietnamese orphans to their new families in the United States.

On April 2, 1975, about two weeks before the fall of Saigon to the communists ended the Vietnam War, World Airways CEO Edward Daly defied U.S. and Vietnamese authorities to fly 57 Vietnamese orphans from Tan Son Nhut Air Base to America to be adopted.

Three adoptees from the Atlanta area arrived Sunday, smiling as they descended a mobile staircase

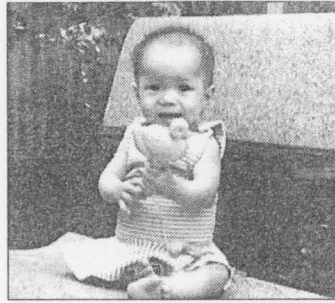
► **BABYLIFT:** Page A5



BRANT WARD / The Chronicle

Babies no more, Tiana Mykkeltvedt (from left), Tanya Bakal and Wendy Green arrive in Oakland on the way to Vietnam.

Rocky Mountain News



BAKAL FAMILY

Tanya Dilbeck Bakal as an infant in a photo sent to her adoptive parents in Marietta, Ga., from her orphanage in Vietnam.

Adoptees of Vietnam 'Babylift' to pay visit

By Errin Haines
ASSOCIATED PRESS

ALPHARETTA, Ga. — Tanya Bakal has spent much of her life running from Nguyen Thu Kim Phung.

Three decades ago, she left that name in Vietnam, along with her biological mother and her culture, when she was airlifted out as part of the wartime "Operation Babylift."

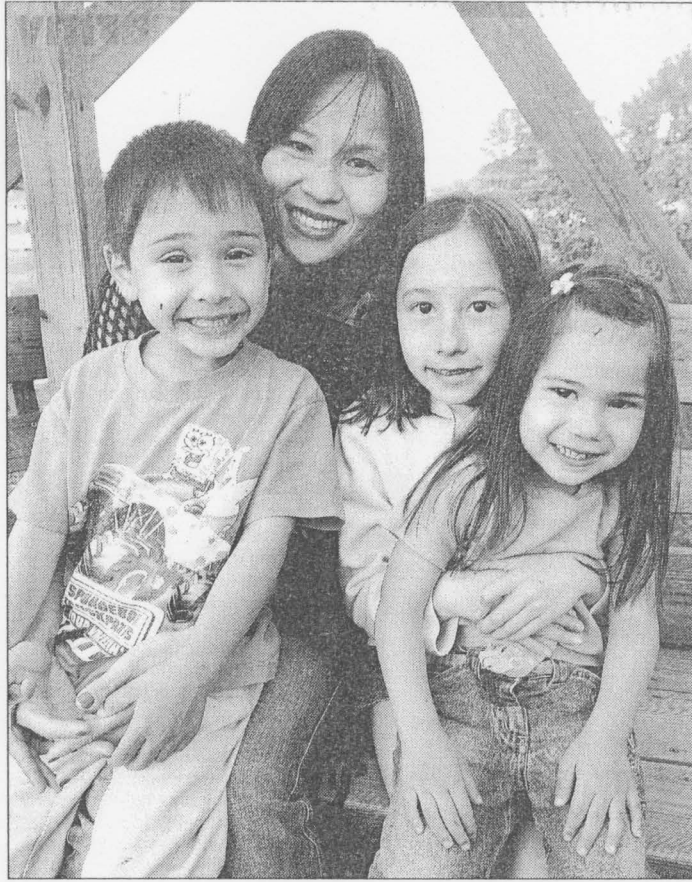
Next month, she hopes to find them all.

Bakal's search will take her more than 9,200 miles away to Saigon, renamed Ho Chi Minh City, with 19 other orphans from the first wave of the effort that eventually brought more than 3,000 Vietnamese children to the United States.

They don't speak the language, many of their names have changed, and some — including Bakal — don't even know their real birthdays.

"Everyone has a beginning," said Bakal, who believes she is 31. "I want to find mine."

As a toddler, Bakal was among the 57 children — mostly babies, all orphaned or given up by their parents — on the April 2, 1975, flight made by Ed Daly, former president of World Airways. The plane took off from a pitch-black runway, and its



RIC FELD/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tanya Dilbeck Bakal plays with her children, from left, Ethan Bakal, 5, Casey Blevins, 10, and Samantha Bakal, 3, in Alpharetta, Ga., recently. Bakal was one of the 57 Vietnamese orphans on Operation Babylift.

lights were kept off in the air to keep the Vietnamese military from shooting it down.

News of the flight traveled quickly, and the next day President Gerald Ford was deluged with telephone calls to do something to save the children of Vietnam. The government brought thousands more children out of Vietnam as Saigon was falling that April.

Shirley Peck-Barnes, author of *The War Cradle*, which documents the legacy of Operation Babylift, calls it the greatest humanitarian gesture of the last century.

"This is the one thing about the Vietnam War that made Americans feel relief," she said. "They were saving children."

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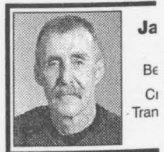
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Military and Justice Department witnesses said extraordinary steps were being taken to protect unspecified rights of prison-

my combatants.

Of the remaining 38, he said, 23 have been released.

ingway said: "I think we can hold them as long as the conflict endures."



Ric Feld | The Associated Press

Wendy Greene, right, who was an "Operation Babylift" orphan 30 years ago, and Atsuko Schlesinger, who was a flight attendant during the airlift, display their emotions Wednesday during a welcoming ceremony at the Ho Chi Minh City Airport in Vietnam. Of the 57 children originally airlifted, all were orphaned and ultimately grew up as part of U.S. families.

"Babylift" orphans revisit Vietnam

Having left their home country as children in a 1975 rescue, 21 men and women reunite to return to a more peaceful land.

By Christopher Bodeen
The Associated Press

Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam — Thirty years ago, they left as children aboard a desperate flight from war-torn Viet-

Canh Oxelson of Los Angeles, who was 10 months old when he left Vietnam. "Though most of us don't have a lot of memories of Vietnam, for some strange reason it feels very comfortable."

A total of 57 children were on board the hastily converted World Airways cargo DC-8 that took off at night April 2, 1975. Ho Chi Minh City, then called Saigon, was about to fall to North Vietnamese communist

Ho Chi Minh City Airport aboard a World Airways DC-11 painted with the airline's 1970s red and white markings.

During their two-day visit, they were to visit an orphanage and a center for disadvantaged children. Mostly busy professionals, they'll start making the long journey home Friday.

Bill Keating, a pilot on the original flight, recalled taking off without lights to foil North Vietnamese anti-aircraft fire.

much pain here."

Not all the children survived the trips. One C5-A cargo plane used in a later flight crashed, killing nearly half the 330 children and adults on board.

Those who made it became more curious about their past as they grew older, said Timothy Linh Holtan, of Wheaton, Md. Coming back to visit helps soothe those yearnings, he said.

Yet for Tanya Dilbeck Bakal of Alpharetta, Ga., the ques-

Houston's Bilingual Vietnamese Weekly

Chương Trình Operation Babylift Đưa Trẻ Em Mồ Côi Về Thăm Việt-Nam Operation Babylift Orphans Return To Vietnam



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Profile page 04



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business page 06



Tác Giả Cao Ngô Lạc
Saigon Tex News

Trong tuần này, khoảng 100 em "Operation Babylift" - Khi xưa được đưa qua Mỹ để tránh nạn đói khổ, bệnh hoạn hoặc bạo tàn - Nay đã khôn lớn và sẽ bay trở lại Sài Gòn để thăm viếng nơi sinh thành.

Chương trình Homeward Bound sẽ đưa các em này vượt hơn 9,200 miles đến Sài Gòn, mọi chi phí được lo toan bởi World Airways, cùng với các trẻ mồ côi khác trong dịp đi định cư tại Mỹ.

Các em này không còn nói được tiếng mẹ đẻ, đa số tên họ đã thay đổi và nhiều em - như em Laura Garrett ở St. Louis - còn không biết ngày sinh nhật chính thực là ngày nào.

Các em sẽ khởi hành từ Oakland qua Taiwan rồi đến

World Airways, là người có sáng kiến trong sự cứu trợ các em này từ thuở xa xưa, và sau đó mới ra đời chương trình Operation Babylift. Chuyến bay đầu tiên của Daly cất cánh từ một phi đạo tối om mà không dám mở đèn vì sợ quân lính sẽ nổ súng bắn theo. Khi máy bay nay gặp nạn, khoảng nửa số 350 người vừa người lớn và trẻ em đã thiệt mạng.

Tin tức về chuyến bay định mệnh của Daly loan ra rất nhanh. Tổng thống Ford rất bận rộn với nhiều cú điện thoại yêu cầu sự trợ giúp cho các trẻ em tại Việt Nam. Trong vòng năm sau, Mỹ đã đem mấy ngàn trẻ em ra khỏi Việt Nam trước khi Sài Gòn bị mất trong tháng Tư sau đó.

Shirley Peck-Barnes, bà là vợ của một đại tá U.S. Air Force, đã từng chăm sóc cho các trẻ em mồ côi này. Suốt thời kỳ chiến

By Cao Ngô Lạc
Saigon Tex News

This week about 100 "Operation Babylift" survivors - now-grown Vietnamese infants once airlifted to America to save them from death by starvation, illness or violence - will fly to Saigon to visit the land of their birth.

Operation Homeward Bound will take them more than 9,200 miles away to Saigon, all arrangements donated by World Airways, with other orphans from the first wave of the airlifts.

They do not speak the language, most of their names have changed and some - like Laura Garrett of Arlington, Texas - do not even know their real birthdays.

They will travel first from Oakland to Taiwan, then to Saigon

adopted by American families.

Ed Daly, former president of World Airways, inspired Operation Babylift with his own early efforts. Daly's initial plane took off from a pitch-black runway with lights off in the air to keep the Vietnamese military from shooting it down. When the plane crashed it killed almost half the 350 adults and children on board.

News of Daly's ill fated flight traveled quickly. President Ford was deluged the next day with telephone calls demanding he do something to save the children of Vietnam. Throughout the next year the U.S. brought thousands of children out of Vietnam before Saigon fell the following April.

Shirley Peck-Barnes, the wife of a U.S. Air Force officer, ended up overseeing the care of many of the

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June 2005

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Journal
Vol. 5 No. 7
Aug. 2005

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Airport Journals

August 2005

Courage Revisited— *World Airways Returns to Vietnam*

By Bob Shane

The Vietnam War ended on April 30, 1975, with the fall of Saigon. During the weeks leading up to this climactic event, humanitarian organizations were anxiously looking for ways to evacuate the thousands of orphaned Vietnamese children that the conflict had produced.

On April 2, 1975, Ed Daly, World Airway's maverick president and owner, in what most regard as a heroic act, departed Tan Son Nhut Air Base in Saigon aboard a DC-8 cargo aircraft carrying 57 orphans headed for Oakland, Calif. This flight was the first of a series of flights, which became known as "Operation Babylift."

In April of this year, World Airways announced that it would commemorate the historic airlift that the company made 30 years ago with a special flight that would return 21 of the former orphans for a visit to the country of their birth.

It was 1 p.m. on June 12, when a shiny World Airways MD-11, freshly re-painted in the same red and white company colors worn by the fleet in 1975, landed at Oakland and taxied to the KaiserAir ramp. World personnel immediately began the



By Bob Shane

"Operation Babylift" adoptees pose with former World Airways chairman of the board Hollis Harris (left), World Airways CEO Randy Martinez (second from left), and General Ronald Fogleman (USAF ret.), World Airways chairman of the board (right end), prior to boarding the commemorative flight in Oakland.

process of getting the aircraft ready for the start of "Operation Babylift—Homeward Bound 2005."

That evening, there was a reception held at Fisherman's Wharf in San Francisco. The invitees included everyone that would be departing on the special flight the next morn-

ing, World employees and retirees, and the media.

The next morning, just prior to departure, there was a press conference at KaiserAir across from Hangar 5, which was World Airways' original hangar when the company set up operations in

year-old newspaper headlines. Included were pilots, flight attendants and other World personnel that had risked their lives to save orphan children and refugees. There were decorated Vietnam veterans and distinguished members of World's board of directors, manage-

Oakland in the 1950s. Steve Grossman, director of aviation for the Port of Oakland, began his speech by welcoming World Airways home. Randy Martinez, the CEO of World Air Holdings stated, "We're here to honor our heritage and recognize the contribution of our employees."

The passenger manifest for World Airways Flight #001 contained 112 names, several right out of 30-