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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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Operation "babylift": U.S. troops evacuate children from Saigon just before it fell in April 1975. Few of the more than 2,000 children would see their parents again.



Long journey home: Heidi Bub, fifth from right, with her extended family in Vietnam. "I feel like I'm on another planet," she marveled on her arrival.

vicemen left Vietnam, he left Kim four months pregnant.

As the end of the war approached, rumors flew that the biracial children would be drenched with gasoline and set afire. Terrified, Kim sent her daughter on the airlift. "I told her, 'One day you must come look for me. You must never forget.'"

Bub was one of 2,204 kids who left the country, most on U.S. government cargo planes, in April 1975. President Ford said he ordered the babylift for humanitarian reasons, and American families quickly adopted the youngsters.

Bub grew up in Pulaski, Tenn., the birthplace of the Ku Klux Klan and a place where her adoptive mother apparently worried how the little girl would be received. She asked Bub to tell nobody she was from Vietnam.

It was a cold upbringing, Bub says, though filled with an abundance of material things.

Ann Neville, her mother, "hardly ever told me she loved me, hardly ever hugged me," says Bub in a soft Southern accent.

We never get to hear Neville's point of view because she wouldn't participate in the film, Dolgin says.

"I used to ask her for my mother. I would cry and cry and cry," Bub recalls about their early days together.

The girl became estranged from her adoptive mother in college and started searching for her biological mom. Kim, too, had been searching for her daughter. Through the Internet and intermediaries, they made contact in late 1996.

When Dolgin heard about the coming reunion from a friend with relatives in Vietnam, she saw it as a compelling film. So Dolgin and co-director Franco accompanied Bub in March 1997 to meet the mother she had not seen for 22 years.

None was prepared for what happened.

"I feel like I'm on another planet," Bub marvels shortly after arriving.

She's a college graduate; her two half-sisters never finished sixth grade. Their

that in the future. The film follows the family for a few years. "I have closed the door on them, but I didn't lock the door," says Bub, who still appears unsure of her relationship with Kim.

Most babylift adoptions went considerably better than Bub's, say many U.S. adoption experts and adoptive parents with wide contacts among their peers. The serious problems tend to befall older children who arrived with strong memories of another family.

The outcomes of reunions with birth parents vary widely, says psychiatric social worker Elinor Rosenberg, a University of Michigan professor and author of *The Adoption Life Cycle*.

Bub's quest might have been doomed from the start. Adults who dislike their adoptive parents tend to fare poorly with reunions, Rosenberg says. "They often seek substitute parents. They want to be parented again, this time by their fantasy birth parent." But in most cases, "birth parents have gone on with their own lives and aren't interested in trying to raise a child again." It's often difficult to reunite across vastly different cultures, she adds.

Daughter From Danang doesn't have any more of a happy ending than the Vietnam War did. It is a reminder that war leaves living casualties in its wake. "Wars don't end when the bombs stop dropping," co-director Franco says. "What wars leave behind is suffering and trauma that can't be erased by signing peace treaties."

For more information

These books tell more about Operation Babylift and Amerasian children left behind in Vietnam after the war:

- ▶ *The War Cradle: Vietnam's Children of War* by Shirley Peck-Barnes (The Vintage Pressworks)
- ▶ *After Sorrow Comes Joy* by Cherie Clark (Lawrence and Thomas Publishing Co.)
- ▶ *The Unwanted* by Kien Nguyen (Little Brown)

Identify possible deadly SARS virus

ed to fatal lung infections. ding remains preliminary, virologist Wolfgang Preimann's J.W. Goethe University location of one of the ies. The second lab is at University in Hong Kong. ases jumped from 167 to sday, according to the ealth Organization. Most w cases were reported in g and Vietnam. from 14 to 9 Tuesday, e confirmed, says infec-

tious-disease expert James Hughes of the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

WHO reports confirmed cases in nine countries, with an additional 350 cases and five deaths in China not definitively confirmed.

Cases overwhelmingly appear to spread via face-to-face contact between patients and relatives or health providers, not by casual contact. The CDC advises postponement of all "non-essential" travel to Hanoi, Hong Kong and China's Guangdong Province.

'Global problems require global solutions'

As their colleagues fight outbreaks of a deadly disease, Institute of Medicine scientists called Tuesday for increased political and financial investment in the global public health system.

The *Microbial Threats to Health: Emergence, Detection and Response* report comes amid the spread of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

But that's not their only concern. HIV continues to kill millions, alongside diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis, making the developing world a breeding ground for lethal ailments.

Today, international travel, antibiotic-resistant diseases and the threat of bioterrorism make out-

breaks more likely, according to the institute panel, which operates under the National Academy of Sciences.

"We must recognize these are global problems that require global solutions," says panel co-chair Margaret Hamburg of the Nuclear Threat Initiative in Washington, D.C.

The SARS outbreaks point to many of the shortfalls in the global health system, Hamburg says. The November outbreak in China initially went undiagnosed, and labs worldwide were given only tissue samples to identify the suspect microbe in recent weeks.

Recommendations include:
▶ Increase global and domestic

surveillance of new diseases.

▶ Develop new vaccines and antibiotics and stop feeding human antibiotics to livestock, which spurs antibiotic resistance in microbes that appear in both human and animal diseases.

▶ Train health workers to recognize and report outbreaks.

▶ Strengthen lab facilities to identify diseases more quickly.

"We see this report as a call to action," says infectious-disease expert James Hughes of the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "We will be moving forward to develop an updated CDC infectious-disease strategy based on the recommendations in this report."

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 now, at 88, he's inviting them back — but this time as a friend.

Dressed in an olive military uniform with four gold stars on each shoulder, the somewhat reclusive Giap succumbed Saturday to a barrage of media requests seeking his reflections on the Vietnam War, which ended 25 years ago this month with the communist victory that reunited the country.

Americans are not only welcome back, said the white-haired general, but they have an obligation to return and rebuild the impoverished southeast Asian nation where more than 58,000 Americans and an estimated 3 million Vietnamese died in the conflict.

"We can put the past behind, but we cannot completely forget it," Giap said. "As we help in finding missing U.S. soldiers, the United States should also help Vietnam overcome the extremely enormous consequences of the war."

The United States has refused to talk about war reparations, although Americans are negotiating to share research on the effects of Agent Orange and other toxic defoliants that U.S. planes sprayed to strip away cover for their enemy.

The two countries re-established diplomatic relations five years ago, a limited number of U.S. firms have invested money, and American pop culture is rapidly seeping into the fabric of traditional Vietnamese society.

Still, relations can be awkward, with the U.S. seeking more help in determining the fate of missing soldiers, and the Vietnamese looking for additional money and technology to develop an economy where the average person makes roughly a dollar a day.

Giap seldom appears in public or grants interviews, though he is the most prominent Vietnamese figure still living from the war era. His only battle now, he said, is "to win the difficult war against poverty and backwardness."

The former general shows signs

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.

In recent years, Giap has also met with his former American rivals, who asked Giap the secrets of his guerrilla warfare. He told Robert McNamara, the U.S. defense secretary for much of the war: "You saw only our backward weapons. You left out the most important factor, the strength of the Vietnamese people."



The Associated Press / Richard Vogel
Retired Vietnamese Gen. Vo Nguyen Giap talks to the media Saturday in Hanoi on the eve of the 25th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War.

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**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.

Ed Daly, who, for the record, flew around for years in a lime green Convair 44 dubbed "Jolly Green Giant", a plane graced with a leprechaun on its nose and a shamrock on its tail, laughed out loud (as did most of America) when the U.S. Department of Immigration and Naturalization (INS) attempted to slap a \$218,000 fine on World for illegally transporting 218 refugees into America.

On April 2 President Gerald Ford enacted Operation Babylift, which sanctioned the movement of large groups of Vietnamese refugee children aboard U.S. Air Force C5A Galaxy and other aircraft.

In total, more than 2,500 children were brought to America. The last flight was made on April 26, 1975, just prior to the fall of Saigon.

In commemoration of that harrowing time and the airlines' great and stirring history, World Airways has arranged a special flight – "Operation Babylift - Homeward Bound" – that will leave Atlanta on June 12, 2005. The flight will leave from Oakland, California and fly to HoChi Minh City, returning June 17.

We can all salute men of action Ed Daly and World Airways chief pilot Ken Healey.

Both flew during a time when the most they could expect for their efforts was a reprimand and a medal – a slap and a kiss at the same time.

Now, in the cold light of history, there can be no doubt that President Ford's order to enact Operation Babylift was due in no small part to the shock waves of public opinion that World Airways had raised with its selfless concern and bravery.

On June 12, 2005, we should pause for a moment both here in the U.S., abroad in Vietnam, and across the world to celebrate the humanitarian efforts of those World Airways people who lifted us all.

(Geoffrey@aircargonews.com)

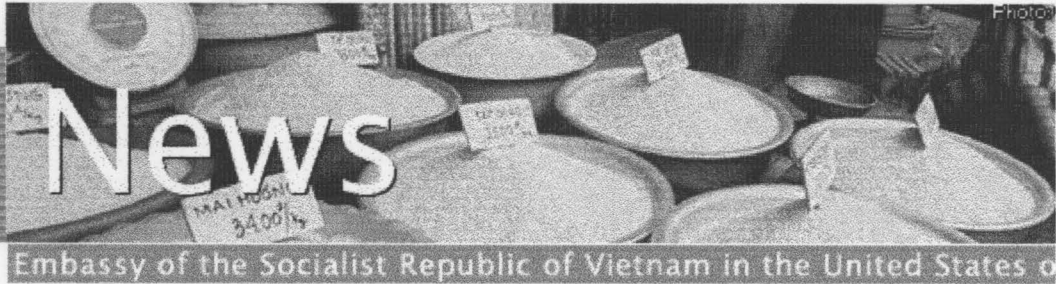
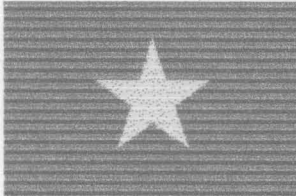
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November 2, 2005



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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 Chrc 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.

Thirty flights were planned to evacuate the babies and children, and, eventually all Vietnamese children were flown out.

Numbers vary, but it appears that at least 2,000 children were flown to the US and approximately 1,300 children were flown to Canada, Europe and Australia.

Tragically, one of the first official flights of Operation Babylift was struck down by disaster. The Galaxy plane, at that time the largest airplane in the world, departed with more than 300 and accompanying adults.

An explosion blew off the rear doors of the giant craft 40 miles out of Sai Gon and 23,000. Decompression filled the plane with fog and a whirlwind of debris.

Few could get to oxygen masks as the overcrowded aircraft had been prepared for 100 rather than the 300 passengers who had ultimately boarded.

Adoption agreement

An agreement was initiated yesterday between the governments of Viet Nam and the United States regarding adoption of children, paving the way for a formal signing next week in Washington, DC.

Embassy of Vietnam

In the agreement, the two countries agree to facilitate the adoption of orphaned children on humanitarian grounds and for the purposes of child protection.

The agreement also will provide that appropriate measures be taken under the laws of both nations to prevent and deal with instances of abuse involving exploitation of children and infringements on a child's lawful rights and interests.

Mutual recognition of each country's laws regarding licensing and oversight of adoption providers will also be addressed by the agreement.

The agreement reflects both countries' commitment to the welfare and well-being of children and their parents, as well as to a transparent and effective adoption system.

Vu Duc Long, head of Department for International Adoptions in the Ministry of Justice, said the agreement will be officially signed during the upcoming visit to the US of Prime Minister Phan Van Khai.

Viet Nam News, June 16, 2005

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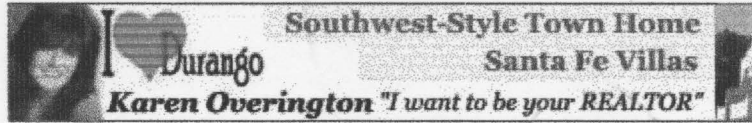
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Return to Vietnam

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.

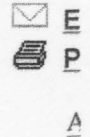
But in the dark days of April 1975, their future was likewise dark.

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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airmanship of Bud Traynor made a skidding, Saigon River-hopping, rice-paddy landing possible. In Bud's words: "What more can I say? Great people (his crew) in tragic times; 138 people died that day, but 176 survived to live the American dream." Bud received the Air Force Cross, second only to the Medal of Honor, for his courage that day.)

What was Operation Babylift 30 years ago became "Homeward Bound" last June 12-17.

Durango's own Ron Fogleman, retired Air Force general and former Air Force chief of staff (which, to my civilian readers means he was the top general for that service), led the delegation. Fogleman is chairman of the board of World Airways. Ron's wife of 42 years, Miss Jane Fogleman, co-led the adventure.

Retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Ken Petersen, retired Air Force Col. Bud Traynor, retired Army Col. Roger McElroy, retired Air Force Maj. Kelly Irving and their wives also were guests of the Foglemans. My wife, Shari, was invited but declined. Her brother Mike was an Army infantryman in Vietnam. He died at age 42 of an Agent Orange-related illness. "I don't hate the people," Shari said, "I just hate the whole concept." Broken hearts.

That first DC-8 pilot, Bill Keating, now nearly 90, made the trip as did a few of the original flight attendants and World ground support crew. Two of Bud Traynor's crew also were on board the huge World Airways MD-11. The plane had been repainted in the 1975 color scheme for this historic flight.

...

I flew from Durango to San Francisco on Sunday, June 12, and met the Foglemans, who flew in from World's Atlanta base. The next morning we were bused to Oakland, World's original base and the destination of the first Babylift flight.

The CEO of World, Randy Martinez (an Air Force Academy graduate and C-130 pilot) made the opening remarks as cameras recorded the event.

"Today we are completing the Operation Babylift story with the return of some of these special people to their homeland. For some it will be the first time that they have returned to the land of their birth. ...

"Why are we doing this? Look at Jeff Gahr and the other adoptees here today. These individuals are the reason for the trip. We want to share the heritage we have, and bring attention to the heroic efforts that helped so many lives, and so many families."

...

The adoptees' post-trip comments validated Martinez's hopes:

- "The unanswered question of, 'Have you ever been back to Vietnam?' can now be answered. The feeling of knowing that I can tell my story with a complete circle is one that I am greatly

looking forward to."

- "I was deeply moved by my visit to the orphanage. Being in the orphanage caused me to stop and ponder about what I may have been like when I was a baby."

- "Thank you for this chance to re-connect to my past, to provide a sense of closure, and yet to open a door to a whole new universe waiting to be explored."

...

The Oakland ceremonies concluded, we boarded the 300-seat flying machine and were airborne on a great circle route along southern Alaska, past Japan and down into Taipei, Taiwan, for an overnight.

Taipei is as bustling as I remembered it when Shari and I had a two-year tour of duty there in 1972-74. Our youngest son, Matt, was born there.

Off again the next morning, and through broken clouds, patches of jungle and fragments of villages appeared. All so peaceful. We settled on Vietnam tarmac. I was back after 33 years.

As we 100 spread ourselves out among five buses, it occurred to me something was missing: the pungent aroma of, well, let's just say it was pungent in my memory. And there wasn't the oily smoky air from belching motor bikes. And the buses didn't have wire mesh screens on the windows to keep out unfriendly hand grenades.

As we were taken to the center of town in air-conditioned comfort, streets were filled with a river of motor bikes: a fluid substance passing around obstacles.

The thousand small shops along the way took me back to the first of three tours in Vietnam 1963-64. Back then my job brought me to Saigon once or twice a month. I was an adviser, spending most of my time sailing armed junks to interdict supplies from the North in the South China Sea and in the Mekong Delta. My third tour also brought me into Saigon every month or so. This was 1971-72. By then millions of American servicemen and women had answered our country's call. We were all tired, including Saigon; she was exhausted, a garish shadow of the French colonial "Paris of the East." Now in 2005 the girlie bars were gone.

Also gone were the convoys, or much of any military presence. Interspersed, naturally, was a Starbucks and KFC. Capitalism trumps ideology.

We were greeted at a shiny new 28-story Sheraton by a noisy teenaged drum and bugle corps outfitted in red scarves and white shirts.

On our own, I set out with fellow Vietnam vet Dick Tanner, a retired Marine. Only a half block from the hotel a colonial remnant beckoned: the Tu Do Bar. This period piece was virtually unchanged from 1963. We ordered a couple of



COURTESY JANE AND RON FOGLEMAN

Former Vietnam orphans, with Durangoan and former Air Force Chief of Staff Ron Fogleman, right, line up under the World Airways plane that took them to Vietnam for the 30-year anniversary of "Operation Babylift." Many of the Vietnamese orphans are sons and daughters of American servicemen flown out of Vietnam in 1975.



Some key dates and events in U.S.- Vietnam history, 1975-present:

April 30, 1975: A U.S. trade embargo, already in effect against North Vietnam since 1964, is extended to the whole of Vietnam.

Aug. 1, 1987: Special envoy of President Reagan, Gen. John Vetsy, visits Vietnam to discuss humanitarian issues of mutual interest.

Nov. 11, 1991: The U.S. government officially allows American tourists, veterans, journalists, businessmen to visit Vietnam.

Dec. 14, 1992: President Bush allows U.S. companies to open representative offices in Vietnam and to sign contracts once the U.S. trade embargo is lifted.

April 25, 1993: The first U.S. company, Vatico (consultancy), opens an office in Vietnam.

Feb. 3, 1994: President Clinton announces the lifting of the trade embargo against Vietnam, a week after it is approved by the U.S. Senate.

July 11, 1995: Clinton and Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet announce the establishment of diplomatic relations.

libations, and struck up a conversation at the bar with what could only be described as two refugees from a Graham Greene novel: a dissipated Dane and a chain-smoking German. They were in some business (scheme) having to do with breaking up old ships for parts. Colorful.

The next day we took a tour of the city, including an orphanage that caused one of the adoptees to break into sobs of remembrance. Like the other adoptees, she had her adoptive mother with her. They embraced and the accompanying media recorded the moment. Many of the children in the orphanage were disabled. The Catholic sisters there are saints. World Airways presented them a check for \$5,000 and the hat was passed among us all. A very moving event.

There was a definite unsmiling police presence and the flags are different, but I didn't sense a grinding communist presence. But then I don't live there, and my former Vietnamese linguistic ability has faded, so I didn't talk with the man in the street. People seemed to be going about the business of life.

Given that, I did notice some indicators of the reality there:

- No noticeable restrictions on cell phones.
- No noticeable restrictions on satellite TV.
- No noticeable restrictions on travel.
- "The National English Language Daily Newspaper" talks up governmental projects and success. One of the projects is "The Government has approved a list of 253 ... companies to be listed in the Ha Noi and HCM City securities trading centres this year, as part of a drive to boost the Vietnamese stock market." This tells me that the government that giveth, reserves the right to taketh away.

Which is interesting. But my main focus of the trip was to see, no, feel that I can come back and visit the old places - the hill of Con Thien in particular. There, on my second tour, I was "Chinstrap Charlie 6": the call sign of commanding officer of Battery C, 1st Battalion, 11th Marines, and where 4½ years later on April 1, 1972, one of my Marines, Cpl. Jimmy Worth, was lost, missing in action in the midst of the North's invasion over the so-called Demilitarized Zone.

I promised Worth's family a couple years ago that if there was any way possible I'd go back to Con Thien and bless the ground where he fell. Now I need to get it done.

Jim Dyer, a retired U.S. Marine and state legislator, lives in Durango.

May 1997: The two countries exchange ambassadors.

June 19, 2000 : The U.S. pledges \$1.7 million for humanitarian aid inside and outside Vietnam to detect and destroy mines and unexploded ordnance.

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July 13, 2000: The two sides sign a landmark trade agreement a quarter of a century after the end of the Vietnam War.

July 2-6, 2001: Vietnam and the U.S. agree to conduct two research projects on Agent Orange.

Oct. 8, 2001: U.S. Senate approves the Bilateral Trade Agreement between the U.S. and Vietnam.

Dec. 9, 2004: United Airlines launches the first direct service between the U.S. and Vietnam.

Source: Vietnam Embassy Web site

boston.com

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.

"I am so overwhelmed and none of us ever thought it would be like this," said Wendy Greene, who was just 3 weeks old when "Operation Babylift" caught the world's imagination in the dying days of the Vietnam War.

It flew nearly 3,000 orphans out of Saigon and on Wednesday, Greene was among 21 of them back in the city now called Ho Chi Minh City and awash with budding entrepreneurs, not panicked people looking for safety in the middle of war.

"This warm welcome is a great, great memory that I will hold for a very very long time," she said as government officials and folk dancers welcomed the group at a red carpet ceremony.

Greene was one of 57 orphans rushed onto a cargo plane of Atlanta-based World Airways during the night of April 2, 1975 and later adopted and brought up in the United States.

Ken Healy, who flew that plane and returned with the group, said he took off from an unlit runway to avoid gunfire from advancing North Vietnamese troops.

"Our effort at the time was on getting out and we didn't think beyond that," he told Reuters Television at Tan Son Nhat Airport.

"We never thought they would be coming back here."

Operation Babylift took an additional 2,547 children out of South Vietnam — 602 to other countries and 1,945 to the United States. More than 91 percent of these children were under 8.

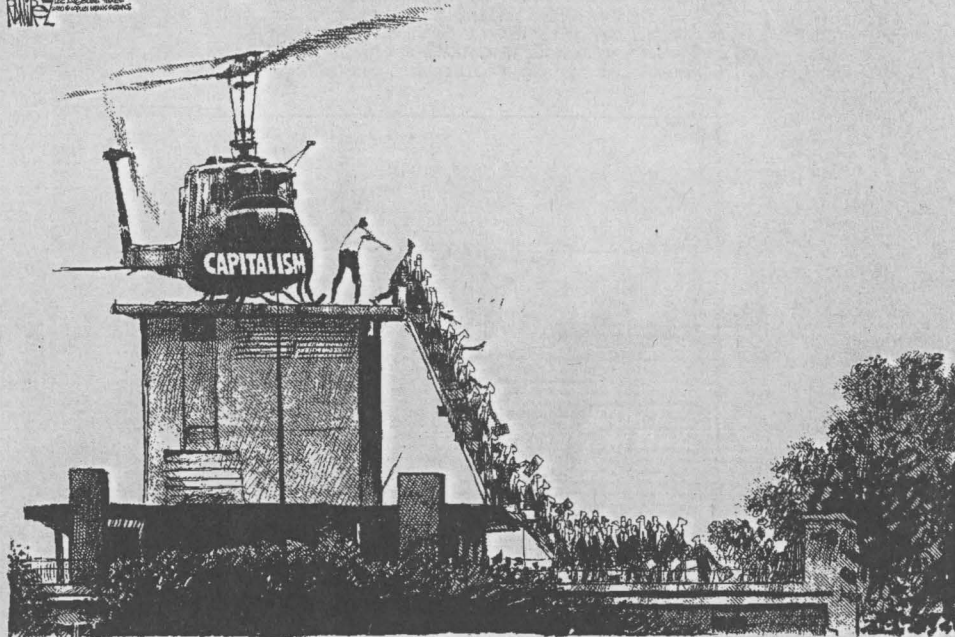
While many came back to look for their Vietnamese parents and relatives or simply to come to terms with their past, some said they were looking for business opportunities.

"I hope to return and even open a IT business here," said 35-year-old computer scientist Jonathan Groth from Buffalo, New York.

"Our leaders will always create every favorable condition for you to do business here to the benefit of both sides," Lam Van Ba, deputy chief of staff of the Ho Chi Minh City People's Committee told the group. ■

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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 Vietnamese Army and, if they want, they can go out into the countryside to see the tunnels where the Viet Cong once lived and, for \$1, fire a round from an AK-47. This is the way the Vietnam War has finally ended, not as tragedy and not as farce, but as kitsch.

It has been 25 years since the fall of this city, then Saigon, and even longer since I met a one-armed Vietnam vet at a massive anti-war demonstration in Washington. He took me to the amputee ward of Walter Reed Army Hospital. He knew the men there — the ones with no arms or no legs and the one I will never forget. He opened his bathrobe to show me what had happened to him. His groin was gone.

The waste, the sheer waste of human lives in a war that made no sense, that still makes no sense, has come back to me in force here. I did not fight and I did not see men die, but I remember that hospital ward and I think of those men to this day. Some of them are probably still hospitalized. How can anyone laughingly wear the red cap with the yellow star?

The Vietnamese must have similar thoughts. The communists won the war, uniting their country and making it independent — and that is no slight achievement. But the domino that Vietnam was supposed to be, the one that would topple all the other dominoes of Southeast Asia, now stands alone and



RICHARD COHEN

but the glorious victory is tarnishing in the soggy heat. Their children want to learn English, live in the States, surf the Web. Even the son of a great war hero has left the country. He is said to live deep in the heart of Texas.

Is the story true? Who knows? It was related by a former army general, an important man, and the fact that he believed it, laughed at it, sort of approved of it, was all you have to know about what has happened to this country. Four million dead, men still on the streets with plastic peg legs, and the kids not only know little about the war, but want to emulate the very people their fathers and mothers defeated.

Saigon — it's still Saigon. The communist government can't even make the new name stick. The city is reverting back to its hedonistic, bustling self. It is thick with motor scooters and signs in English, new hotels and well-stocked stores whose customers, according to the official statistics, are too poor to afford what's in them. The ethos of communism has mutated.

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

This is a government by a clique of musty old men. They fought so hard for so long — against the Japanese, the French and the United States —

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 holding the paper up to the light.) When asked if he pays bribes, a hotel manager reacts as if he's been asked if the pope is Catholic: Yes, of course. Trouble is, too often a bribe buys nothing. The lack of all sorts of rules — legal and otherwise — has taken a toll. Foreign investment is flat. The economy is stalled. The country is impoverished. Vietnam is wandering a desert of its own making, waiting for a generation of old communists to die out.

Out at the Fulbright Center, Marshall Carter, a combat veteran and now CEO of State Street Bank, is lecturing Vietnamese on the basics of investment. "Let me talk about the shift from bank finance to capital market finance," Carter says. A translator renders his remarks in Vietnamese. Familiar words pop out of the soup of strange sounds: "IPO," "Internet."

Here is the paradox of Vietnam in a nutshell. The loser has returned to instruct the winner. A quarter of a century after the end of the war, mostly everyone wants the same thing: American-style prosperity. Never mind that the red of the cap symbolizes blood and the yellow is the skin of the people. Tourists don't know that. Red? Yellow? Who cares anymore? The only color that really matters is dollar green.

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

Vietnam the setting for healing mission

VIETNAM from Page 2A

Twenty-five years ago to the day, a giant C-5A cargo jet — the largest plane in the world at the time — sped down the runway of Saigon's Tan Son Nhut Airport carrying more than 300 children and their caretakers.

Shortly after takeoff, an explosion blew out the rear doors. The pilots were able to turn the aircraft around and crash-landed 2 miles from the airport.

Skidding 1,000 feet, the aircraft bounced up again before hitting a dike and shattering on impact. Virtually everyone in the bottom cargo compartment was killed — the majority children age 2 and under.

Jeffery Shakow, born Luu Khiet Minh, survived, but his twin sister did not.

After Jeffery's arrival, the Shakows discovered from his birth certificate that he had a twin sister, Luu Le Quyen. Shakow spent the next 20 years trying to find her.

He finally discovered the two children had been separated at the orphanage but had ended up on the same disastrous flight. Luu Le Quyen, he learned from an orphanage official, was listed as one of the children "who did not return."



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. There are pamphlets from the Berkeley Free Speech Movement and photos of campus tumult as well as the polka-dot sundress of an Orange County housewife who held coffees for Barry Goldwater ("A choice not an echo" says a seat cushion promoting his campaign). The conservative Republican lost the 1964 presidential race to Johnson, but in 1966 California's energized conservatives put Reagan into the governor's office, ending the liberal reign of Edmund G. "Pat" Brown. "Why not an actor?" asks a Reagan bumper sticker. "Had a clown for 8 years!"

In 1965, Johnson escalated the war by officially dispatching U.S. combat troops to Vietnam. There are sections of wall from the Oakland Army Base with antiwar graffiti as well as the peace sign necklace one soldier wore during his entire tour of duty. News clips capture the president predicting victory. Combat photos show the toll the conflict took on both sides. Bob Hope's golf club and military fatigues from a USO tour fill one display case. Draft cards and induction notices fill another.

One gallery features a section of a DC-8 in which visitors can sit and listen to oral histories of troops who flew east in such planes and refugees who flew west a decade later. The Oakland-based World Airways was one of the biggest charter operators hired by the Pentagon to fly troops across the Pacific. In 1975, when the war ended, the airline

[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 all over the country passed through in just a three-year period. Many of them inscribed graffiti on the base buildings that greeted Eymann two decades later, like the fossil record of some distant era.

Today the words are as haunting as ever.

"If a man dies for his country," one soldier wrote, "he is paying for something he will never collect."

"I came to the Golden State with many stereotypes already implanted in my mind," Eymann writes in the show's catalog, "What's Going On?" (UC Press). "Now that image of a state filled with hippies and antiwar protesters, with endless beaches and everything Hollywood, was being replaced by a new image, of scared and sometimes angry young men on their way to war. . . . Their writings were the beginning of my journey in understanding a complex piece of California history, and the momentous role the state had played in the events of the 1960s and 1970s."

The show opens with a gallery devoted to the Cold War in the 1950s ("Nation on Edge," the gallery is labeled). The U.S. seemed locked into a potentially endless contest with the Soviet Union. It was an age of bomb shelters and duck-and-cover drills in school, and stopping the spread of communism was America's overriding geostrategic priority — even in a remote corner of Southeast Asia called Vietnam. One photo in the exhibition shows a family in El Monte packing up the trunk of their car. Only the person in the hard hat with an official seal gives a clue that it was a civil defense evacuation practice, not a vacation trip.



MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ Associated Press

ON THE MOVE: Loc Vu, left, and Tao Nguyen look at a photomural of an American soldier ushering Vietnamese refugees.

flew the last flight out of Vietnam as well as Operation Babylift, a photo of which provides one of the exhibition's most memorable images: row upon row of war orphans nestled in cardboard boxes belted into seats.

Echoes of the era

Although the war ended in 1975, the aftereffects continued. California became home to the largest population of refugees from Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia in the United States. Today Orange County has more Vietnamese than any other place outside Vietnam. A locker from Hamilton Air Force Base, where refugees were processed, is covered with messages left for loved ones who might someday arrive. "Your father has been waiting for you forever," one man wrote.

A vitrine documents the long journeys taken by Vietnamese who fought on the losing side. Nguyen Tan Duoc, for example, spent nine years in a Vietnamese reeducation camp before finding his way to Thai and Philippine refugee camps and, ultimately, to California. The clothes he arrived with are on display, including a T-shirt that says "Refugee processing center."

Hollywood, which avoided the war while it was going on, scripted and rescripted the American experience in Vietnam. Movie posters depict both the heroism and the tragedy of the conflict. Rambo action figures let children refigure the war and change the ending. An MIA-POW trivia game reminds players of those who didn't return.

But while the war's aftermath changed the face of many communities in Southern California, the political movement nurtured in Orange County eventually changed the face of American politics, with Reagan winning the White House in 1980. The president's smiling face beams from an oversized campaign button on a cowboy hat worn to the GOP convention that year.

As big and as inclusive as the exhibition seems, curator Eymann says the war's impact on California was so profound that no single show could start to capture its totality.

"This isn't the finite version of the war," Eymann says. "We hope it provokes more scholarship. In 7,000 square feet we're trying to tell the story of a state. It's a multilevel story. There are thousands of stories left untold."



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

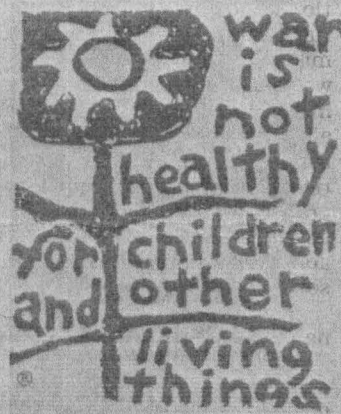
that the subject of a full-blown presentation.

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 the frightening days of the Cold War to the unsettled present — although the focus is on the decade from President Lyndon B. Johnson's escalation of the war in 1965 to its end in 1975. Featuring more than 500 artifacts — photographs, letters, film clips, music, oral histories, clothing — the show charts the influence of a faraway conflict on everything from politics to children's toys.

"The impact of the Vietnam War on California was huge, and in turn what happened to the rest of the country was huge," says Dennis M. Power, executive director of the Oakland Museum. "People don't know that."

The war reshaped California in ways both large and small. One of every four dollars spent on defense went to the state, where the military-industrial complex was a pillar of the economy. Most troops headed to Vietnam departed from California, and a decade later refugees from the war arrived here to build new lives. Northern California was a hotbed of antiwar politics and counterculture,



Oakland Tribune Collection, Oakland Museum of California

RALLYING CRY: A 1967 poster expressed the sentiment of the antiwar movement.

while Southern California provided the suburban foot soldiers for the New Right who helped propel Ronald Reagan to the governor's office — and eventually the White House. Military contracts spurred Silicon Valley innovation, and the war provided themes for Hollywood movies as different as "Coming Home" and "Rambo."

None of this was obvious to Eymann when she moved to California from the Midwest in 1990 to become a curator at the museum. She visited the Oakland Army Base, where the

[See Oakland, Page E27]



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

SIT-IN FOR PEACE: Protesters block entry to the Oakland induction center during Stop the Draft Week in October 1967.

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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 hand 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

WORLD IN BRIEF

U.S. plane carrying 9 crashes

A U.S. military airplane crashed in central Albania while on a training mission Thursday and nine American personnel aboard were believed to have been killed, the Albanian Defense Ministry said. The Pentagon said a C-130 crashed in a remote area 50 miles southeast of the capital, Tirana, and a search was under way. The plane was taking part in joint exercises with the Albanian military.

Sudan war crime resolution approved

The U.N. Security Council approved a resolution to prosecute Sudanese war crimes suspects at the International Criminal Court, after the United States agreed not to veto the document in return for guarantees that Americans working in Sudan would not be handed over to either the ICC or any other nation's courts if they commit crimes in Sudan.

Iraq car bomb kills Muslim pilgrims

A suicide car bomber blew himself up near an Islamic shrine in northern Iraq, killing 17 Iraqis in the latest attack on Shiite Muslim pilgrims marking a major religious holiday. Three U.S. soldiers were killed in separate clashes. Interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi extended a state of emergency until the end of April. Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko said his country's troops will leave Iraq by year's end. In Washington, defense officials said U.S. forces in Iraq were holding a major operative of terrorist leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi who holds joint American-Iraqi citizenship.

Report: U.S. blocks oil-for-food probe

The United States and other U.N. members have refused to fully cooperate with investigators looking into corruption in the oil-for-food program in Iraq, blocking access to information about politi-



T. LEVETTE BAGWELL / Staff

Tanya Bakal plays with her daughter Samantha, 3, at home in Alpharetta. She is seeking her birth mother in Vietnam.

Orphan: Early life now a blur

► Continued from A1

don't have that link to my past. I want to see what it's like, and I especially want to see the orphanages."

World Airways footed the bill for the April 2, 1975, babylift as the last U.S. troops pulled out and South Vietnam fell to the Communists. The flight wasn't sanctioned by the U.S. government, and the pilots and crew risked their lives and their careers.

World Airways' president at the time, the late Ed Daly, had been urged by his daughter to do something to help Vietnamese orphans and children fathered by American soldiers. The carrier operated in the region flying rice and military supplies to Cambodia for the U.S. government.

When Daly told pilot Ken Healy he "wanted to fly orphans out, I said, 'Sure, let's go,'" said Healy, now 89 and living in San Leandro, Calif.

They laid mattress-covered pallets on the floor of the DC-8, and "it was like a big

And faced with the same situation, I'd do it again," Healy said. He kept his license.

Daly and Healy would have taken more than 57 children, but some orphanages were scared off by U.S. officials who declared the plane unsafe because it didn't have seats. That still chafes Healy, who notes that the first government-sanctioned babylift two days later crashed, killing 144 people, mostly Vietnamese children.

Over the next several weeks, Operation Babylift brought more than 3,300 children out of Vietnam. Many were true orphans, but others had been given up by families who believed their children would be better off in America.

Bakal was adopted by Reed and Laura Dilbeck in Marietta. Her adoptive father, now retired, was a flight engineer and pilot for other carri-



T. LEVETTE BAGWELL / Staff

This April 4, 1975, story details the tragic end of the "orphan flight" on which Tanya Bakal was first scheduled to leave.

doesn't know what the note said, and orphanage records were destroyed. In her pierced ears were expensive ruby earrings, a rare adornment for a baby and a sign of good luck.

"A lot of parents would do something special when they gave their children to the orphanages," she said. "Then hopefully they would be able to find them again."

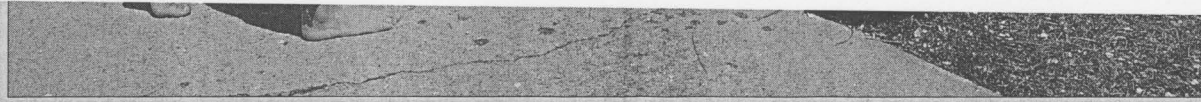
Bakal often thinks about her birth parents. She imagines — and hopes — they

would ever notice I was different. Looking out with my two pair of eyes, I always thought I was the same," she explained.

Bakal began looking for her birth mother in 2003. She scours the Internet, using photos from her orphanage as a starting point. A possible breakthrough came in February, when a Vietnamese charity arranged for Bakal's baby picture to be

broadcast on TV in Vietnam. Two women came forward, and one agreed to give a DNA sample. No testing has been done, but Bakal is excitedly thinking about a possible reunion.

"I know my biological mother must have gone through a lot," she said. "That's a big decision, to give up your child. . . . To me, I think she had to have loved me and must have cared for me to actually write a note and go to the trouble of find-



T. LEVETTE BAGWELL / Staff

Tanya Bakal plays with her daughter Samantha, 3, at home in Alpharetta. She is seeking her birth mother in Vietnam.

Orphan: Early life now a blur

► Continued from A1

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They laid mattress-covered pallets on the floor of the DC-8, and "it was like a big playpen for the kids," Healy recalled. Doctors and other volunteers were on board to take care of the children, he said.

'Wasn't about to stop'

As the plane was about ready to take off from Tan Son Nhut airport, Healy said, men in the control tower started yelling that Viet Cong fighters were nearby and that they were evacuating the tower.

"I was about halfway down the runway and the tower became active again," Healy recalled. "They started yelling at us, saying we weren't cleared for takeoff. I wasn't about to stop."

The Federal Aviation Administration later sent Healy a letter threatening to take away his pilot's license.

"The only thing I could

And faced with the same situation, I'd do it again," Healy said. He kept his license.

Daly and Healy would have taken more than 57 children, but some orphanages were scared off by U.S. officials who declared the plane unsafe because it didn't have seats. That still chafes Healy, who notes that the first government-sanctioned babylift two days later crashed, killing 144 people, mostly Vietnamese children.

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Bakal was adopted by Reed and Laura Dilbeck in Marietta. Her adoptive father, now retired, was a flight engineer and pilot for other carriers, including FedEx.

When Bakal was a child, her hair was tinged with red and she had — and still has — a few freckles. She believes her biological father was probably an American. Her mother may have been from a Chinese-speaking province in Vietnam.

During her first months in America, Bakal chattered away in Chinese, preferred to sleep in a cardboard box and hid food in her dresser drawers.

She was terrified of thunder. To this day, she feels uneasy when helicopters are overhead.

Good-luck earrings

Bakal was a newborn when she was left on the steps of a Catholic orphanage in a town called Vinh Long. There was a note in Chinese



T. LEVETTE BAGWELL / Staff

This April 4, 1975, story details the tragic end of the "orphan flight" on which Tanya Bakal was first scheduled to leave.

doesn't know what the note said, and orphanage records were destroyed. In her pierced ears were expensive ruby earrings, a rare adornment for a baby and a sign of good luck.

"A lot of parents would do something special when they gave their children to the orphanages," she said. "Then hopefully they would be able to find them again."

Bakal often thinks about her birth parents. She imagines — and hopes — they loved each other.

She isn't sure what to expect from the trip to Vietnam, scheduled for June. She envisions modern cities, but at the same time "places that are obviously very rural and very poor."

She hopes to add rich visual detail to the stories she has heard about Vietnam and the war. Her husband will join her.

"I share these stories with my children as they were told to me, with no pictures, just words," she wrote in a letter to the organizers of the trip. Bakal no longer knows any Chinese words and doesn't speak Vietnamese. Growing up, she never thought of herself as Vietnamese or even Asian, despite occasional taunts at school.

"When I looked in the

would ever notice I was different. Looking out with my two pair of eyes, I always thought I was the same," she explained.

Bakal began looking for her birth mother in 2003. She scours the Internet, using photos from her orphanage as a starting point. A possible breakthrough came in February, when a Vietnamese charity arranged for Bakal's baby picture to be

broadcast on TV in Vietnam. Two women came forward, and one agreed to give a DNA sample. No testing has been done, but Bakal is excitedly thinking about a possible reunion.

"I know my biological mother must have gone through a lot," she said. "That's a big decision, to give up your child. . . . To me, I think she had to have loved me and must have cared for me to actually write a note and go to the trouble of finding the safest place she could possibly find."

The idea of a return flight by World Airways originally came from a Colorado woman, Shirley Peck-Barnes, who wrote "The War Cradle" about the babylifts.

She had kept in touch with some of the adoptees as well as executives at World Airways. The company doesn't yet know how many people will be on the flight, which will leave Atlanta on June 12, stopping in Oakland, Calif., on the way to Ho Chi Minh City.

For World Airways, the trip is a chance for some good publicity and to "re-mind people we have a 57-year heritage and that we're a global company," said spokesman Steve Forsyth. "It's also extremely engaging for our own employees."

hospital in Uige. At the time the hospital had 56 patients with unexplained fever, vomiting and bleeding.

A CDC lab confirmed the Marburg virus last week. The case count now stands at 11, with more cases likely, said WHO spokesman Dr. David Thompson. "We believe it has been going on since October," he said.

The outbreak has alarmed international health authorities not just because it is the largest on record — the 1995 outbreak, in Congo, killed 123 people between 1998 and 2000 — but because it has unusual features.

Marburg usually kills one-fourth to one-half of the people who contract it; this outbreak's mortality rate is 100 percent. And Marburg's usual victims are adults, but in this outbreak, three out of five victims are children younger than 5.

The death rate and other cases are "significant, and not what has been seen before, but the information may be clouded by this being an early stage of the investigation," said Dr. Thon Ksiazek, chief of the CDC Special Pathogens unit and leader of the Angola deployment. "We may just have scratched the surface."

The CDC team, whose members begin leaving tomorrow and expect to be gone in a month, will split their time between Uige and Luanda. Along with lab scientists and disease detectives, the group will include specialists in transmission of infections within hospitals, because Marburg — which is spread by contact with bodily fluids — is a particular risk for health care workers.

Already, seven Angolan nurses and two volunteer doctors from Vietnam and Italy who worked in Uige have died, according to the Angolan Ministry of Health.

Because there is no vaccine against Marburg and treatment other than supportive care, controlling the outbreak depends on identifying and isolating those who are infected.

That is particularly challenging, Thompson said, because the first symptoms can be as unremarkable as fever and headache, resulting in victims' exposing others before they even know they are infected.

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-

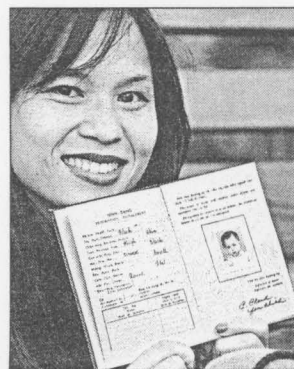
tion about her birth mother.

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



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— Shirley Peck-Barnes,
author of *The War Cradle*

The Vietnam flight next month was arranged by World Airways of Atlanta for 20 of the orphans on the first flight.

Bakal almost didn't make that flight. She had been set to board a C-5A cargo plane that crashed a few days later, killing almost half the 330 adults and children on board. Instead, she was among those hastily boarded on the World Airways flight.

Until recently, Vietnam was just a birthplace for Bakal, her journey out of Saigon simply a footnote in her life, not a defining moment.

She was adopted by an American couple, Reed and Laura Dilbeck, a flight engineer and a hypnotherapist, and grew up in the then mostly white Atlanta suburb of Marietta, where she tried to blend in and wanted a face to match her Southern twang. As a teenage cashier at a grocery store, she was called a "gook" by a war veteran. She spent years wishing her eyes were wider, rounder, more Caucasian.

"All my life, I never wanted to find them," she says of her Chinese mother, who lived in Vietnam, and father, whom she believes was an American soldier.

It was a feeling shared by many of the Vietnamese adoptees growing up, Peck-Barnes says.

"A lot of the kids still feel a great loss of their culture. Many have Americanized and don't want to go back," she says.

Vietnam War adoptee Wendy Greene, who will be on the flight with Bakal next month, has been to Vietnam before and is making the trip with her adopted mother, Cheryl. She says she's not searching for



*Hey, have you lost weight
or some*



Nation

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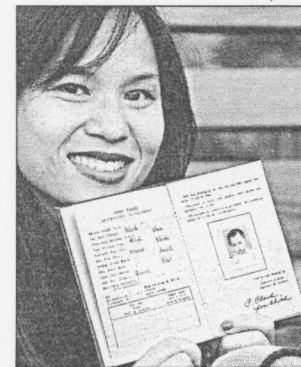
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NBA playoffs

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



Teen spirit

Youth organize volunteer effort for United Way

Local & State B1

Plus

Cloudy

Chances about 76%; chance of rain

See A2

WORKweek



Brody School of Medicine names Price nurse of the year

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

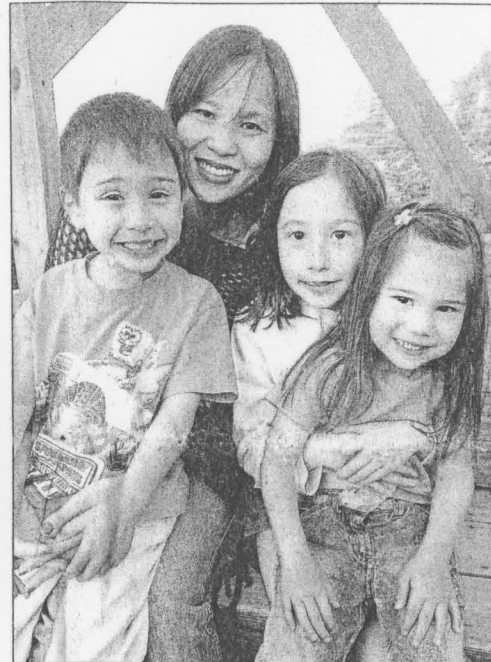
1975



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.

2005



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.

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.

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.

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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.

See **BABIES**, A7

County wants to bring

ALSO ON AGENDA

The Daily Reflector
5/16/05
Greenville, NC

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and 38 bodies dumped in less than 24 hours

s to the head, according
her AP journalist at the

trucks riddled with bul-
s stood nearby. Identity
ents and keys found on
the bodies identified
s the owners of the truck
ong 11 truck drivers kid-
in the area last month,
l.

next day, the bullet-
bodies of a judge, an
ion Ministry official and
guard were discovered
e same farm and taken
rby Iskandariyah Gen-
spital, an official there
fourth body viewed at
pital was found dumped
ajor road, with a bullet
in the head, he said. The
asked not to be named.

bodies of 10 Iraqi sol-
were found Saturday in
tleground city of Rama-
ules west of Baghdad, an
r Ministry statement
e men were shot, but no
details were provided.

s Sunni Arab-driven
ncy regularly targets
ecurity forces, govern-
officials and others
to be collaborating with
forces in the country.

are kidnapped and
me killed to extort
e ransoms from their
s.

there also have been a
of retaliatory attacks
1 armed Sunni and Shi-
ips. Recently, they have
ed deadly bombings
gly targeting civilians
ie Shiite majority who
te Iraq's first democrati-
ected government.

ding Shiite cleric, Sheik
al-Gharawi, and his
were killed in a driv-
ing in eastern Baghdad
day, police said. Across
unmen in two cars shot
lled Industry Ministry
Col. Jassam Mohammed
i and his driver.

more people, two of
arrying identification
om local media outlets,
ot and killed in their
the road to Latifiyah,
Mohsin, an official at
Mahmoudiyah General
l said. Soldiers brought

Rashid Hamid al-Mullah Jawad
escaped unharmed, but three of
his guards were injured. Min-
utes later, a suicide bomber
dressed as a police lieutenant
blew himself up at a court
building just 500 yards away,
killing four policemen, police
Brig. Gen. Adil Mollan said.
Hospital officials said 37 people
were injured in the two attacks.

About 20 minutes later, at
least seven mortar rounds
slammed into a residential
neighborhood of the city, badly
damaging five homes and injur-
ing three men and one woman,
police said.

Rice acknowledged the secu-
rity problems Sunday, but said
Iraq's new government realizes
it must move quickly to write a
constitution that reflects the
full spectrum of ethnic and reli-
gious groups in Iraq and hold
fresh elections by year's end.

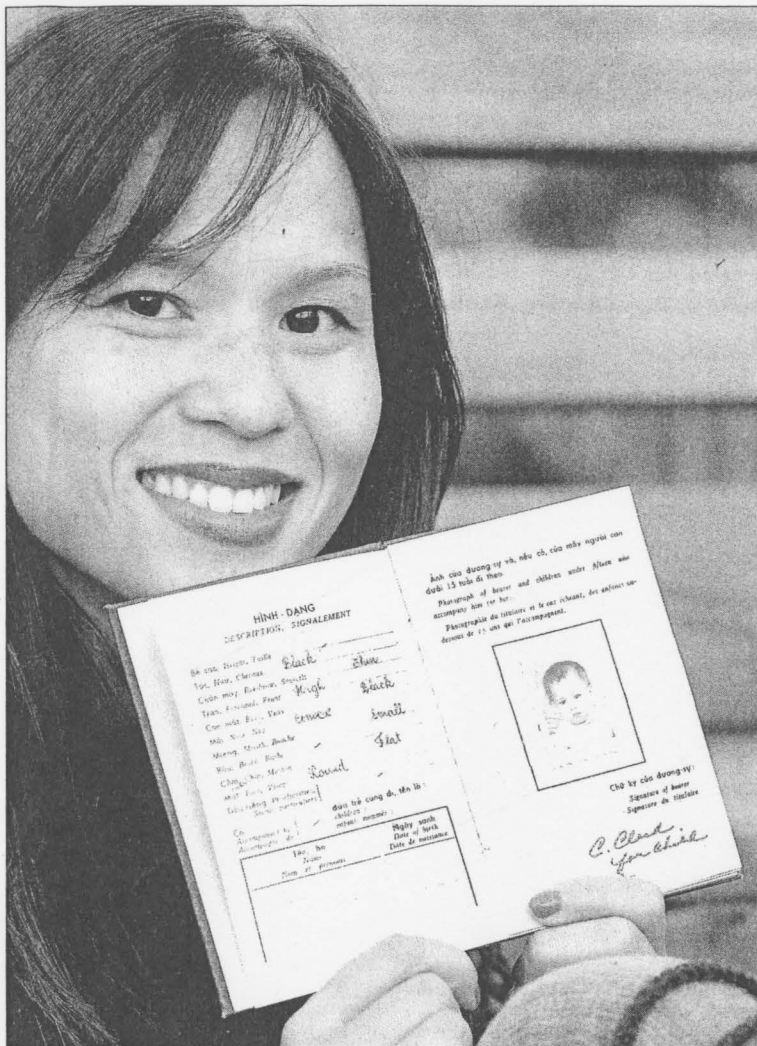
Al-Jaafari confirmed his
commitment to increasing the
participation of Iraq's disap-
affected Sunni Arab minority in
the new political dispensation.

"We assert that our new
political system is a system that
respects people's faiths and
respects pluralism," al-Jaafari
told reporters. "It is a regime
that respects the rights of citi-
zens and respects their role in
the new institutions."

Sunnis dominated under Sad-
dam Hussein's brutal regime,
but most stayed away from
landmark parliamentary elec-
tions in January and they are
underrepresented in al-
Jaafari's government.

It was Rice's first trip to Iraq
as the top U.S. diplomat. When
Rice was President Bush's
national security adviser, she
was a chief architect of the war
in Iraq.

In other developments:
■ Australia's top Islamic
leader said kidnappers holding
the Australian engineer Dou-
glas Wood hostage have indefi-
nitely extended their deadline
for the country's forces to start
withdrawing from Iraq. The
Australian government has
refused to meet the demand.
Sheik Taj El Din al-Hilaly flew
to Baghdad last week to try to
negotiate the release of Wood, a
California resident captured



TANYA BAKAL
poses with her
original Vietnam
passport showing
her baby picture
during an inter-
view at a park in
Alpharetta, Ga.,
on April 27.
Bakal was one of
the original 57
Vietnamese
orphans on a
World Airways
Operation Baby-
lift April 2, 1975,
flight just before
the fall of Saig-
on. She is sched-
uled to return to
Vietnam for the
first time in June
when World Air-
ways brings
some of the
orphans back on
a flight dubbed
Operation Baby-
lift — Home-
wood Bound.

The Associated Press

BABIES

Continued From A1

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"They were saving children."

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Instead, she was among those
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Until recently, Vietnam was
just a birthplace for Bakal, her



is making the trip with her
adopted mother, Cheryl.

She says she's not searching
for her biological roots.

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That's what's most important to
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For weeks, she has run an ad
in a Vietnamese newspaper
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her biological mother would
recognize it and come forward.

Manmoudiyar General
tal, said. Soldiers brought
bodies to the hospital, he

suicide attackers struck
five minutes in a busy
own street in Baqouba, 35
northeast of Baghdad.

first, a car bomber, tar-
the provincial governor's
y, police said. Gov. Raed

negotiate the release of Wood, a
California resident captured
more than a week ago.

■ The Sunni militant Ansar
al-Sunnah Army released a
video it said shows the after-
math of the ambush that led to
the capture of a Japanese secu-
rity contractor. The video did
not give any indication of Aki-
hito Saito's fate.

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The Associated Press

BAKAL plays with her son
Ethan, 5, at a park in Alpharetta,
Ga., on April 27.

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On the Net:

World Airways:
<http://www.worldair.com>



The Associated Press

SECRETARY OF STATE Condoleezza Rice speaks at a news con-
ference held with Kurdish Democratic Party leader Massoud Barzani,
during a surprise visit to Irbil in Kurdish northern Iraq on Sun-

to have to intensify their
to demonstrate that in
the political process is the
for the Iraqi people."

More than two years after
Iraq's fall, 85 percent of Iraqis
cannot explain of frequent power
shifts, only 54 percent have
access to clean water and
one-quarter of Iraqi children
suffer from chronic mal-
nutrition, according to a U.N.
Iraqi survey released last

U.S. reconstruction
also has drawn criticism.
Analysts recently said U.S.
authorities cannot
act properly for nearly
10 million promised for some
projects.

Rice said the United States
and the European Union will
hold a conference next
week to attract additional
international aid for Iraq. The
conference could go beyond
financial pledges and include
discussions with the constitution and
other issues, Rice said.

The constitution, due Aug.
2005, is the first critical test for
the new government. It is not clear

whether the document will
emphasize secular rule or have
an Islamist bent, or how big a
role the Sunni Arab minority
will have in writing it.

Also uncertain is the degree
of independence the document
will grant Iraq's powerful Kurd-
ish minority.

In stops in the Kurdish
region and in Baghdad, Rice
tried to nudge Iraq's factions to
work together. She urged
patience while the new govern-
ment takes over.

"Things do not happen over-
night," Rice said after meetings
with al-Jafaari and the defense
and interior ministers. She also
saw Ahmed Chalabi, the former
Bush administration favorite
who fell out with Washington
but now holds an important
post in the transitional
government.

"We talked about the impor-
tance of the political process,
which should be inclusive," al-
Jafaari said. "The constitu-
tional process needs to be
inclusive."

Rice also met with President
Jalal Talabani.

Fibromyalgia?

"Free Report Reveals The Shocking Truth About the 'secret' Treatment Your Doctor Probably Doesn't Know...And Likely Hopes You Never Learn..."

GREENVILLE, NC A new, free report has recently been released that reveals the "untold story" behind fibromyalgia pain. Fibromyalgia misdiagnosis and mistreatment is rampant and leads to countless years of unnecessary suffering. This free report reveals a natural procedure that is giving fibromyalgia sufferers their "lives back" - with "miraculous" results for many. If you suffer from fibromyalgia you need this, no "gimmicks" free report that is giving hope to fibromyalgia sufferers everywhere. For your free copy, call toll-free 1-800-203-8904, 24 hr. recorded message.

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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

...reaches
...bid for
...le Crown.

SPORTS

work

...can be
...sometimes
...medicine.

BUSINESS

Fox is
'Lost'

BOOK

COM

Best

...L.A. clubs
...tonight:
...Sundays

EX

...this day...17
...crossword...18

REAT

Adopted Vietnamese to

LIFT / From Page 1

Next month, she and 19 other adoptees will return to Vietnam on a trip sponsored by the airline that conducted the first airlift. For Goodson, the journey is both a chance to connect with her roots and to thank those who changed the path of her life.

"I'm just grateful fate brought me where I was," she said. "I'm just really thankful it that (Operation Baby Lift) happened."

Steven Forsyth, spokesman for the Atlanta-based World Airways, said the airline plans to re-create the route of that April 2, 1975, trip. The commemorative flight leaves Atlanta on June 12 and also will include a number of the pilots and crew members, now long retired, who took part in the airlifts.

For the orphans, Forsyth said, "It will give them a chance to go back and see their homeland and celebrate what they've become."

The history of Operation Baby Lift began with Ed Daly, then the president of World Airways. Troubled by the suffering of Vietnamese orphans, Daly was frustrated by the U.S. government, which refused to greenlight a rescue mission.

"He felt terrible that he couldn't get these children out when he had a perfectly good airplane," Forsyth said.

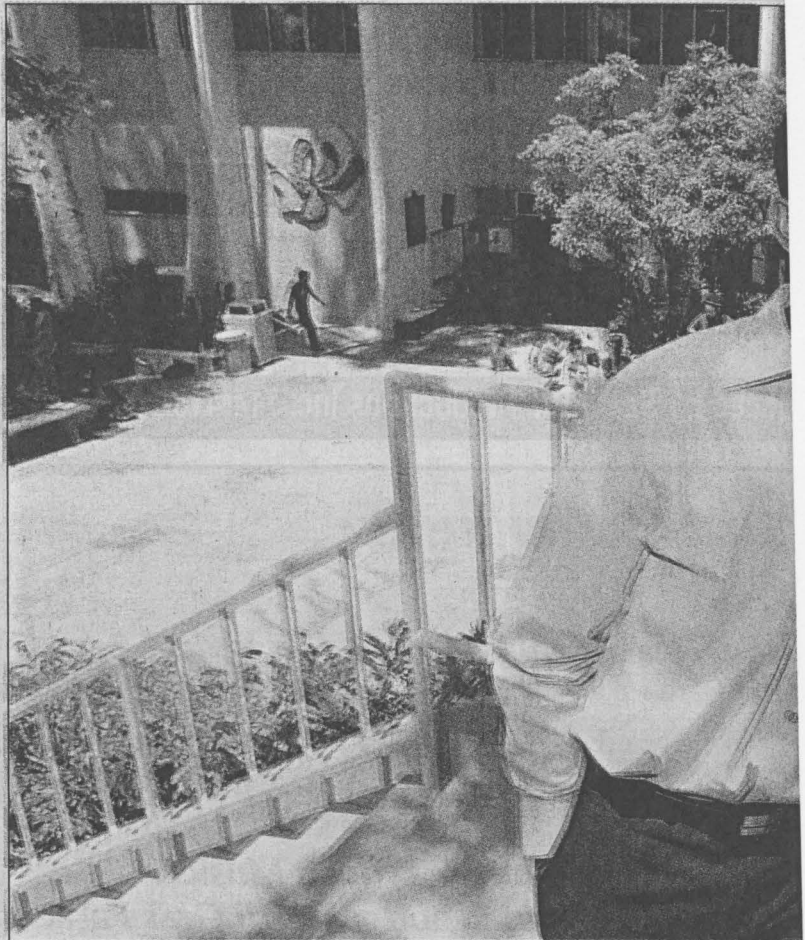
He went ahead anyway, leaving Saigon for Oakland with 57 children, mostly babies, on a harrowing flight from a pitch-black runway. Soon after that first unauthorized flight, President Gerald Ford launched the U.S. mission that became Operation Baby Lift.

Reaction to the mission was mixed. Critics debated the pros and cons of adopting children out of their culture.

Shirley Peck-Barnes, author of "The War Cradle," which chronicles the story of Operation Baby Lift and who still keeps in touch with many of the adoptees, said the mission was a moral necessity for the U.S.

"Ninety percent of the people in this country knew we had to do something to save these children," Barnes said.

Canh Oxelson, 31, who was adopted and came to the U.S. just before the official start of Operation Baby Lift, and now is the upper school dean at the Harvard-Westlake



School in North Hollywood, said he knows firsthand the difficulties of being a Vietnamese kid with Caucasian parents, particularly in Fresno, where he grew up.

But, as the son of a Vietnamese woman and a black U.S. serviceman, Oxelson also noted that "mixed kids like me would have had a hard time (in Vietnam) as well."

Children like him, he said, "were reminders of the war, and not good reminders."

Oxelson, like Goodson, ignored his history for much of his childhood in favor of a "normal" American life. About seven years ago, though, he made a trip to Vietnam with his parents and actually found his orphanage and the very nuns who helped place him.

"I was able to tell them all their hopes and dreams were answered," he said.

This trip, Oxelson said, he will share with his girlfriend.

"Every time I'm exposed to Vietnamese culture, I learn a little bit more about myself," he said.

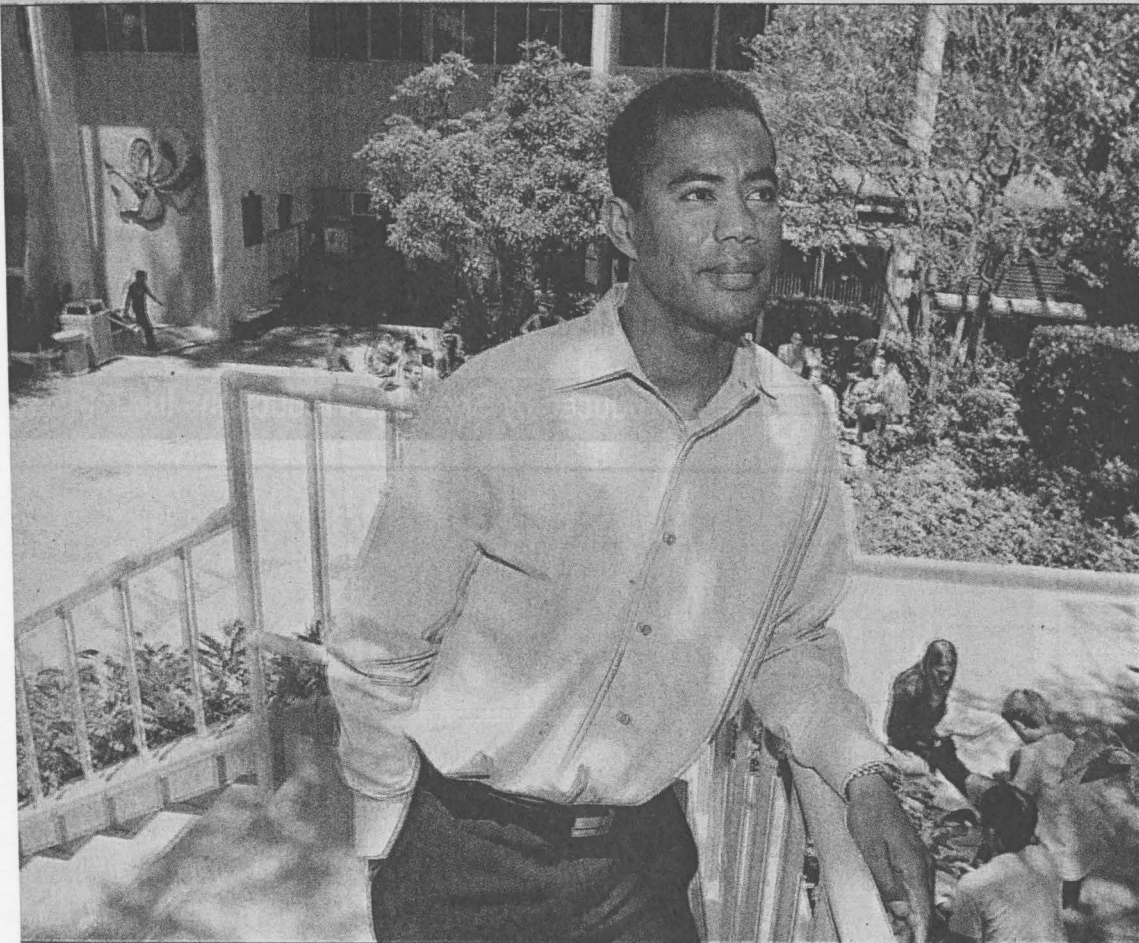
Goodson, who was raised in Illinois, said she looks back with appreciation on Operation Baby Lift, calling it "a desperate measure to save a bunch of lives."

"People feared the kids would be massacred by Communists," she said. "They saw a need and stepped in."

Born out of wedlock, Goodson said her birth mother's family insisted on giving her up for adoption. Meanwhile, in the U.S., Pam Lipe and her then-husband were considering a

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Vietnamese to visit homeland



The child of a Vietnamese woman and a black U.S. serviceman, Canh Oxelson, now the upper school dean at the Harvard-Westlake School, also came to the States on Operation Baby Lift.

David Sprague
Staff Photographer

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Born out of wedlock, Goodson said her birth mother's family insisted on giving her up for adoption.

Meanwhile, in the U.S., Pam Lipe and her then-husband were considering a

foreign adoption after giving birth to a son.

With the end of the war, Lipe said, adopting a Vietnamese orphan seemed the best route. She said she still remembers sitting with other "expecting" mothers in a VIP waiting room at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport.

"We're all in there waiting for our new babies, and we've all got pictures and we're all showing each other the pictures," she said. "I'll never forget that moment of seeing her come down the walkway with the stewardess."

As a child, Lipe said, Tiffany never tired of hearing the story of her arrival. But as a teen and young adult, Goodson said she felt little urgency to learn about her history.

"Even now, as she prepares to return

to Vietnam, Goodson said, she has no plans to track down her birth family. Someday, maybe. But for now, she said, she wants to focus on what she considers her real family — the woman who raised her.

She has asked her mother to be her guest on the trip.

Lipe said the trip "feels like a closure of some sort." She said she's ready to help her daughter learn more whenever she's ready.

"If it's meant to be that she should find her family, then she will," Lipe said. "I always have this romantic notion that I meet Tiffany's mother. I'd just regale her with stories about how great her daughter is."

Lisa Friedman, (202) 662-8731
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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.

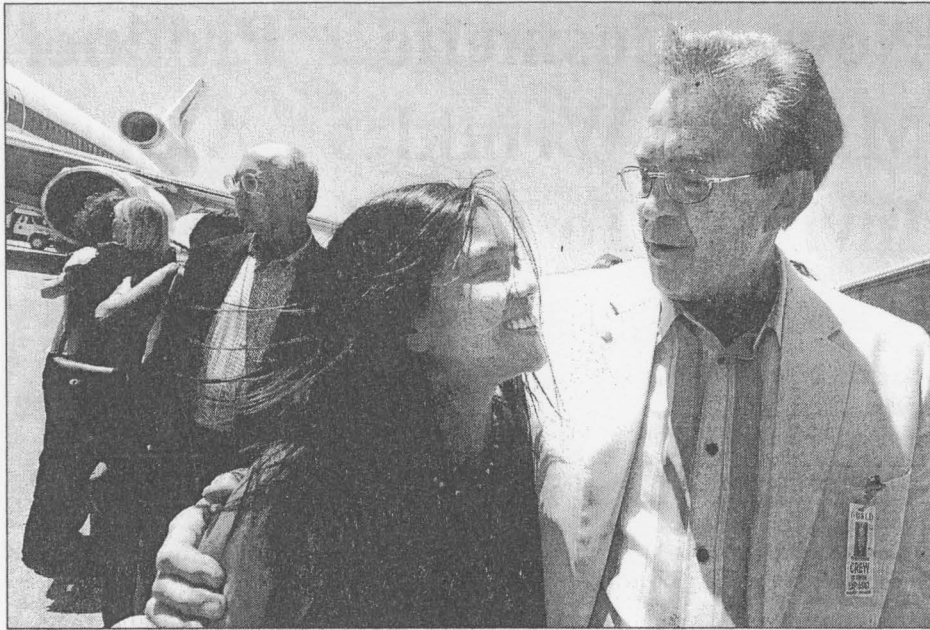
Three adoptees from the Atlanta area arrived Sunday, smiling as they descended a mobile staircase

► **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.



Photos by BRANT WARD / The Chronicle

Ron Honeycutt, a former World Airways "Babylift" steward, traveled to Oakland with Wendy Green.

An 'unbelievable' reunion and return

► BABYLIFT From Page A1

onto the tarmac, hugging and laughing at the small crowd gathered to meet them.

"We met for the first time two months ago, and now we are like giggling sisters," said Wendy Green, 30, who was 3 weeks old when she came to the United States. "This is unbelievable."

The three women and 18 West Coast adoptees who joined them Sunday will head to Taipei this morning. They expect to arrive in Ho Chi Minh City, known as Saigon when they left Vietnam, on Wednesday. The 30th anniversary trip is sponsored by World Airways, which was based in Oakland from 1956 to 1987 and hauled soldiers and weapons to Vietnam as a charter airline during the war.

World grew into a major low-fare passenger carrier before it nearly went under in the mid-1980s. It now flies cargo and passengers around the world for commercial and military clients, according to the company's Web



A World Airways plane gets signaled into Oakland International Airport, the first stop for "Babylift" orphans returning to Vietnam.

site, which also says World is the largest commercial carrier of U.S. military personnel.

Daly, who died in 1984, sponsored three unauthorized airlifts in the spring of 1975. The airline briefly faced sanctions for his defiance of U.S. officials. But the American public demanded that their government follow World Airways'

lead, and it eventually flew out about 4,000 Vietnamese children.

Pilots Ken Healy and Bill Keating, who led the first Babylift flight, are joining the adoptees today on World Airways Flight 101.

The group will tour Ho Chi Minh City, visit an orphanage and attend a dinner where they will meet some of the people who

helped get them out of Vietnam.

It will be Tanya Bakal's first time back.

"I want to meet all the people who saved our lives," the 31-year-old said Sunday. "It means so much to see the people who worked so hard to give us a second chance."

Tiana Mykkeltvedt, 30, who returned to Vietnam in 1997 to study in the capital city of Hanoi, said this trip will be much more meaningful.

"This time, I get to share it with the other adoptees and all the people who made it possible for me to be here."

Ron Honeycutt, a flight attendant on the first Babylift flight, came with the women to Oakland and said their first meeting has been emotional.

"There have been lots of big hugs and thank-yous," he said.

World Airways spokesperson Steve Forsyth said every adoptee contacted for the reunion was enthusiastic about participating.

At the age of 12, Jeff Gahr was the oldest child on the first Babylift. With his two brothers, he had been orphaned eight years earlier when their father, a South Vietnamese soldier, died in battle and their mother died in a car crash. As the boys waited anxiously minutes before takeoff, South Vietnamese officials came on board and dragged the eldest, now known as Jason Trieu, off the plane.

The officials said the 14-year-old was old enough to carry a rifle and must join their army. Gahr and his younger brother, Jeremy Scott, now 42, made the 25-hour flight from Saigon's Tan Son Nhut Air Base to Oakland without Trieu.

"The flight was already kind of scary, but it became worse when they took my brother away," Gahr, now 43 and an electrical engineer in Lynnwood, Wash., said in a telephone interview last week. "He had taken over the parental role and took care of us. They took away my security."

About three weeks after being pulled from the plane, Trieu, now 44, was reunited with his brothers in Wisconsin by a U.S. government airlift.

After knowing only the ravages of war, the brothers became care-free kids for the first time. Gahr remembers being fascinated by a soda vending machine.

"Buying Coke and then getting exact change was amazing," he said. "We spent days playing with that machine."

They bounced around foster

homes for two years before being adopted by three separate families in McMinnville, Ore., a farming community of about 12,000 people.

Gahr, Trieu and their wives will join the 30th anniversary flight when it departs Oakland today. Scott was unable to clear his schedule.

Not everyone participating in the reunion was part of the Baby-lifts. Canh Oxelson, 33, was adopted from a Danang orphanage by a Caucasian family from Minnesota in 1972 when he was 10 months old.

Now dean of students at Harvard-Westlake High School in Los Angeles, he is involved with organizations that bring Vietnamese adoptees together. Oxelson, who found out about the reunion through one of the organizations,

said he hopes this visit brings others the sense of belonging he felt when he first visited Vietnam in 1998.

"I had no memories of the place, but I had a strange sense that I was at home," Oxelson said by phone. "It's hard to describe, but it's a good feeling."

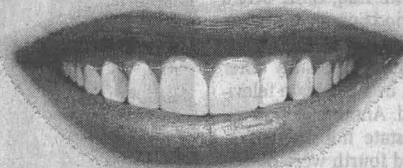
Oxelson convinced his friend Tiffany Goodson, 30, who was 5 months old when she arrived on the government airlift, to return with him for her first visit. Goodson, a Santa Barbara resident raised in Minnesota and Illinois, expects to be transformed.

"I anticipate it'll bring out a lot of buried emotions," she said.

E-mail the writers at cestrella@sfchronicle.com and lfulbright@sfchronicle.com.

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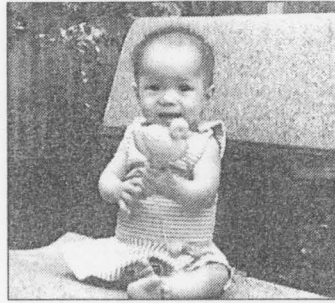
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Rocky Mountain News



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."

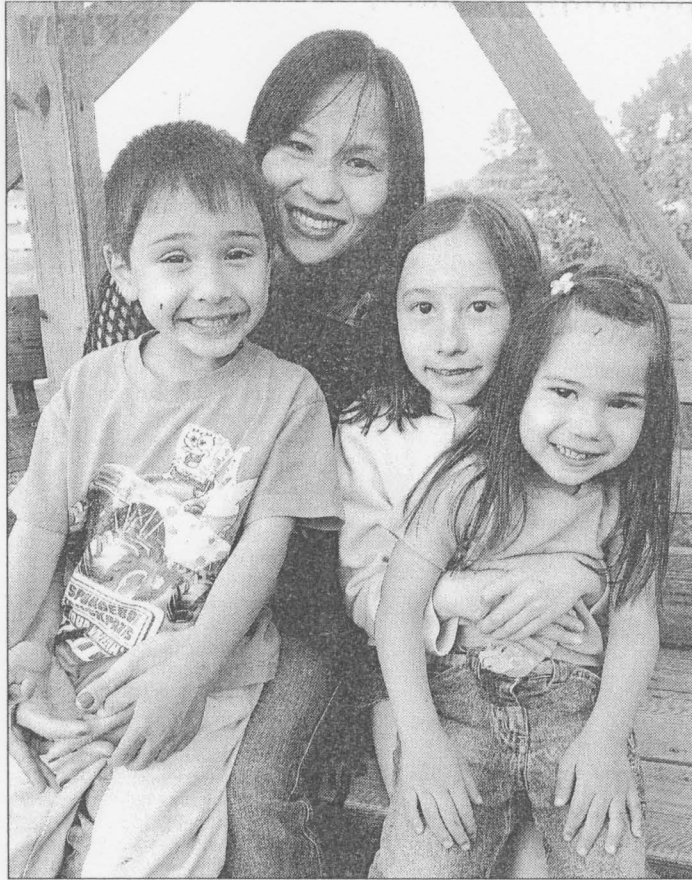
Next month, she hopes to find them all.

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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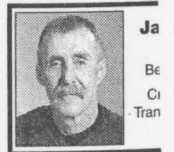
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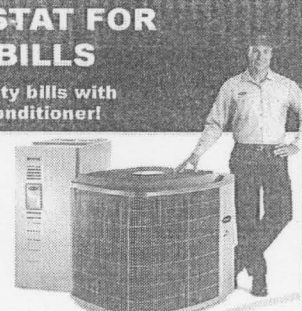
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Turn to the Experts

Return: Adoptees seek Vietnam roots, history

Continued from 31A

The Vietnam flight next month was arranged by Atlanta-based World Airways for 20 of the orphans on the first flight.

Bakal almost didn't make that trip. She had been set to board a C5-A cargo plane that crashed a few days later, killing almost half the 330 adults and children on board. Instead, she was among those hastily boarded on the World Airways flight.

Until recently, Vietnam was just a birthplace for Bakal, her journey out of Saigon simply a footnote in her life, not a defining moment.

She was adopted by a white couple, Reed and Laura Dilbeck, a flight engineer and a hypnotherapist, and grew up in the then mostly white Atlanta suburb of Marietta, trying to

Wartime legacy

■ **"Operation Babylift":** More than 3,000 Vietnamese children — either orphaned or given up by their parents — were airlifted out of Vietnam during the war and brought to the United States, where they were adopted by American families.

■ **The tragedy:** Some children never made it — a C5-A cargo plane from Vietnam crashed on takeoff 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.

and father, whom she believes was a U.S. soldier.

It was a feeling shared by many of the Vietnamese adoptees growing up, Peck-Barnes said.

"A lot of the kids still feel a great loss of their culture. Many have Americanized and don't want to go back," she said.

Vietnam War adoptee Wendy Greene, who will be on the flight with Bakal next month, has been to Vietnam before and is making the trip with her adopted mother, Cheryl. She says she's not searching for her biological roots.

"I never really needed to go down that road," said Greene, 30. "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 information 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.

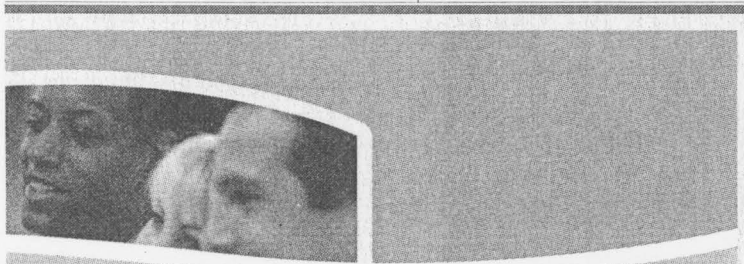
For weeks, she has run an ad in a Vietnamese newspaper with her baby picture, hoping her biological mother would recognize it and come forward. Bakal is hopeful that her return will also mean a reunion, or at least answers to questions she is now ready to ask.

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

blend in, wanting a face to match her Southern twang.

As a teenage cashier working at a grocery store, she was called a "gook" by a war veteran. She spent years wishing her eyes were wider, rounder, more Caucasian.

"All my life, I never wanted to find them," she said, referring to her Chinese mother, who lived in Vietnam,



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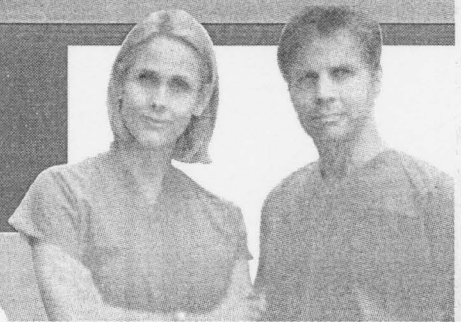
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Of the remaining 38, he said, 23 have been released.

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 Vietnam.

On Wednesday, they returned as 21 grown men and women, visiting their now-peaceful homeland to commemorate the first of the "Operation Babylift" flights that eventually brought 3,000 Vietnamese children to the United States.

"It's coming home," said

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 forces, and the children, many of mixed Vietnamese-American parentage, were seen as especially vulnerable to the privations expected to follow.

Mostly babies, and all of them orphaned or given up by their parents, they grew up as part of U.S. families.

The adoptees arrived at the

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. Former flight attendant Janice Wollett still has pictures from that night, faded images of babies strapped into nylon webbing or playing on the floor of the plane with smiling airline employees.

"The world is too small not for all of us to care for each," Wollett said. "There was so

much pain here."

Not all the children survived the trips. One C-5A 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 questions aren't ever answered completely.

"Each time you come, you find answers to questions you didn't even think of, or you experience some kind of emotion, or you see something that triggers something down here that all of a sudden you have no control over," said Bakal, 31.

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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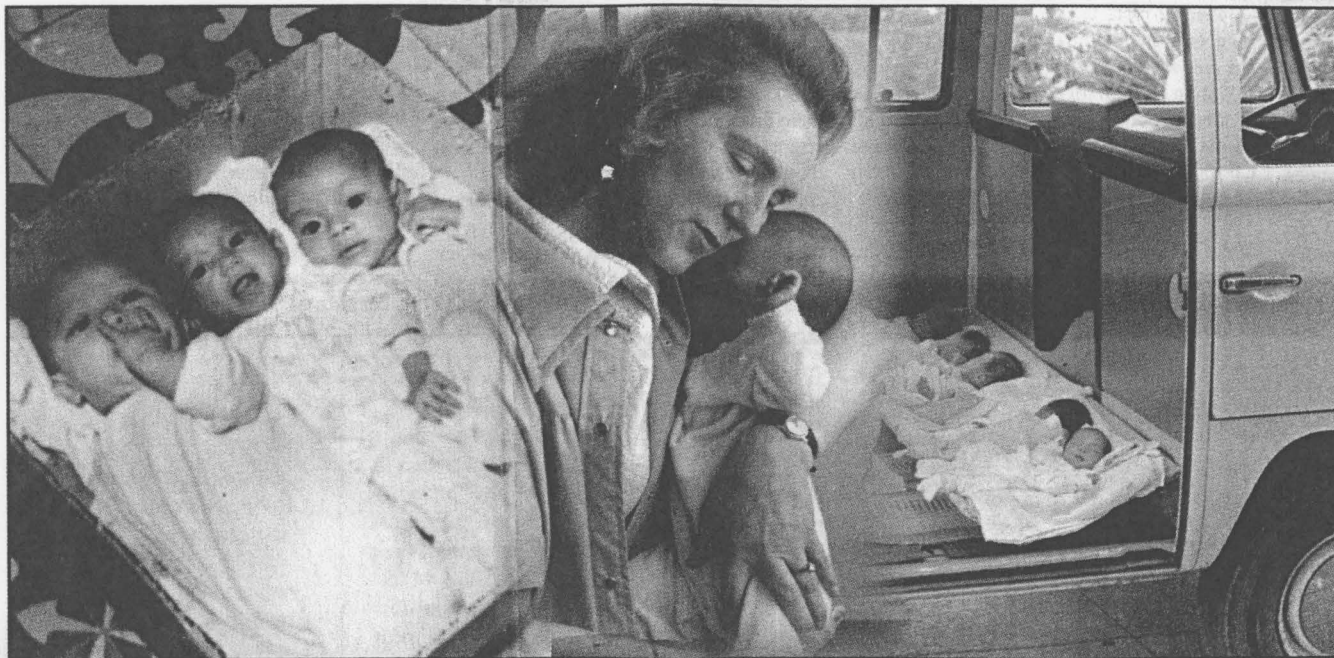
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business page 06



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

Saigon Tex News
June 2005



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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 thức là ngày nào.

Các em sẽ khởi hành từ Oakland qua Taiwan, rồi đến Sài Gòn để dự tiệc tại dinh tổng thống.

Mãi tới hôm nay, Việt Nam chỉ là nơi sanh đẻ của các trẻ em lai Mỹ giống như em Garret, chẳng nhớ rõ ngày đi khỏi Sài Gòn mà chỉ nghe mọi người kể lại mà thôi.

Chương trình Operation Babylift đem hơn 3,000 trẻ em - mồ côi hoặc bỏ rơi bởi cha mẹ - qua Mỹ, nơi các em được nuôi dưỡng gia đình Mỹ nhận nuôi.

Ed Daly, cựu giám đốc của

của Ed Daly chỉ còn là một phần nhỏ tối om mà không dám mở đèn vì sợ quân lính sẽ nổ súng bắn theo. Khi máy bay này gặp nạn, khoảng nửa số 350 người vừa người lớn và trẻ em đã thiệt mạng.

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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 tranh Đại Hàn, bà ta làm việc tại Okinawa, khi bà chứng kiến cảnh "những trẻ em đau khổ vì chiến tranh."

Trong những ngày cuối tháng Ba 1975, bà ta nghe tin trên đài radio loan báo về các trẻ em bị bỏ rơi sau chiến tranh; bà rất buồn và đã bật khóc.

Có một nhà thương tại Denver mà đã bị bỏ phế khá lâu và nay đã được bà Barnes tu bổ lại. Bà đã chứa được tới 600 trẻ em Việt

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 where they will participate in a banquet at the president's palace.

Until recently, Vietnam was just a birthplace for Vietnamese-Americans like Garret, whose journey out of Saigon is simply something she has been told about but can not remember.

Altogether Operation Babylift brought more than 3,000 Vietnamese children - either orphaned or given up by their parents - out by airlift to the United States, where they were

planned to be airlifted to Saigon 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 infants. During the Korean War she served as an Air Force civilian secretary on Okinawa, where she saw "children of war in distress."

During one of the last days of March 1975, on a snowy Denver evening, she heard on the car radio about the children of Vietnam that were left behind. The story brought her to tears.

Barnes was administrator of a health care facility that had previously served as a children's hospital in Denver, but had since

Please See Memorial page 02

Đọc Memorial trang 02

Free Blood Testing This Sunday For the Vietnamese Community at The VN TeamWork Center

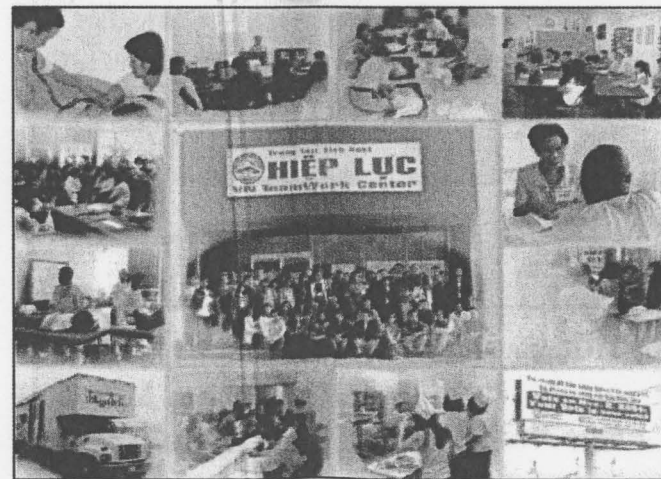
By Henry Bui
Saigon Tex News

Free blood testing is available this Sunday, June 12, at the VN TeamWork Center (VNTW), 11210 Bellaire Blvd, Suite 118, from 9 am to 12 pm. The Harris County Area Agency on Agency is sponsoring these tests along with Cathy Home Care, including blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar test.

Low-income families can also apply for children's health insurance.

If you intend to receive either the cholesterol or blood sugar test, please be aware that you must fast in the morning before the test.

High blood sugar levels may indicate the possibility of diabetes which, if not treated quickly with medication and proper nutrition,



may lead to further complications, including blindness or even death.

High cholesterol can also lead to other serious health problems, including heart disease. If you

think you may have any these problems, the Center encourages you to come to the health screenings. The sooner the problem is diagnosed and treated, the more effective the treatment

will be.

In addition to the testing, low-income families with children up to 18 years of age can apply for children's health insurance through the AmeriGroup Corporation. The insurance rates will depend on the number of family members, the income level, and family expenses. For qualified families, the fees will not be over \$18 per month. Parents who are interested in applying can come to VNTW at the same date and time as above.

Other free health services are available every Sunday from 9 a.m. until noon. For further information, please come to the VN TeamWork Center located at 11210 Bellaire Blvd, Suite 118 at Boone, in Fountain Square, across Hong Kong City Mall or please call 281-827-8019 from 10:00 AM to 7:00 PM.

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

THỜI THEO TRANG 1

mồ côi, và đã thu nhận được rất nhiều thực phẩm cung cấp từ McDonald.

Bà cảm thấy nơi cần tu bổ này là một nhiệm vụ thiêng liêng của mình để cứu giúp các trẻ em nạn nhân của chiến tranh. Bà nghĩ rằng buổi chiều đầy tuyết rơi định mệnh đó đã xui khiến bà rời văn phòng sớm hơn mọi khi; để rồi nghe được tin về các trẻ em của ViệtNam cần sự trợ giúp.

Bà nói trong cuốn sách "The War Cradle," "Tôi là bà mẹ có bốn đứa con, kể cả hai đứa sinh đôi và một đứa con nuôi. Tôi không chịu nổi khi thấy trẻ con bị dày đọa đau khổ, dù là Việt Nam hay bất cứ sắc dân nào. Tôi không nghĩ rằng mọi sự trên đời này tự nhiên nó xảy ra; ngược lại, chúng xảy ra do một sự sắp đặt huyền bí nào đó." Theo bà, chương trình Operation Babylift là một việc từ bi vĩ đại nhất của thế kỷ vừa qua.

"Đây là một việc thiện đối với các trẻ em đã khiến cho người Mỹ nhẹ nhõm phần nào trong vấn đề chiến tranh ViệtNam," bà nói.

Bà Barnes nói là rất nhiều đứa trẻ, nay đã ngoài 30 tuổi, cảm thấy rằng thua thiệt rất nhiều vì chẳng biết gì nhiều về phong tục và văn hoá của nước Việt Nam. "Rất nhiều em đã bị Mỹ hóa và không muốn trở về Việt Nam. Các em này không có cha mẹ và không còn gì luyến tiếc mảnh đất đó; nhưng nhiều em khác rất hờn hờ tham gia chuyến đi này."

Bà đã dùng các mảnh vải quần áo của các em mặc để may lại thành một tấm lưu niệm với tất cả chữ ký của các em. Một tấm được tặng cho tổng thống Ford để tỏ lòng

biết ơn. Còn một tấm nữa bà sẽ mang theo qua ViệtNam trong chương trình Operation Homeward Bound.

Cô Laura Garrett là một trong những trẻ em rời Sài Gòn hơn ba thập niên trước. Cô rời bỏ cha mẹ và quê hương xứ sở khi cô mới được chín tháng.

"Đi về ViệtNam khiến tôi cảm thấy rất hãnh diện với nguồn gốc Việt của tôi. Tôi cũng rất hãnh diện là người Mỹ hiện nay. Ai cũng có một sự bắt đầu mới. Tôi khởi đầu từ là ViệtNam, và bây giờ là người Mỹ." cô Garrett tâm sự rằng cô nghĩ cha mẹ cô đều là người ViệtNam.

Trong số các em được cứu vớt trong chương trình Operation Babylift có khoảng phân nửa là trong số 40,000 con của lính Mỹ để lại sau chiến tranh.

Cô Garrett đến St. Louis vào tháng Tư 1974. Một gia đình bác sĩ Mỹ, với ba gái và hai trai, đã nhận cô làm con nuôi. Họ đưa cô qua sống tại Columbia, Missouri, nơi cô lớn lên. Nay đã 31 tuổi, cô đã dạy nhạc trong chín năm qua tại ba trường mẫu giáo tại Texas.

"Hồi đó khi tôi còn là trẻ mồ côi từ ViệtNam tôi bị thiếu dinh dưỡng và đầu óc chi chít mụn lở. Nếu không được gia đình Mỹ nhận nuôi thì tôi có lẽ đã chết rồi. Và có lẽ tôi sẽ không được sự tự do sống, học hỏi và san sẻ như ngày hôm nay," cô Garrett nói. Cô tới Texas vì cô được học bổng tại trường Texas Tech.

Bà Barnes, sinh nhật hôm June 2 là bà đúng 78 tuổi, sẽ tham gia chuyến đi ViệtNam để hết lòng đóng góp trong phần xoa dịu nỗi đau chiến tranh Việt Nam.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

fell into disuse. She arranged for the building to house eventually 600 Vietnamese orphans, and for McDonald's to donate thousands of meals.

She saw this site, a haven for children in distress twice within a century, as a visible act of destiny. She has often reflected that had she left her office earlier, as planned, she would not have heard the newscast and would have missed her moment in history.

"I was the mother of four children, including twins and an adopted child. I couldn't hear of the suffering of children, Vietnamese or others, and not be torn apart by it. I do not believe things happen by accident, I am more inclined to believe they happen by design," said Barnes, who wrote her story in "The War Cradle." She calls Operation Babylift the greatest humanitarian gesture of the last century.

"This is the one thing about the Vietnam War that made Americans feel relief because it was about the children," she said.

Barnes said a lot of the children, now in their 30s, still feel a great loss for their culture they never knew. "Many have Americanized and don't want to go back. They have no parents there that they know of and don't want to be reminded of it but this trip will mean much to those that are going on it," she said.

She has made quilts from the remnants of clothes the children wore and had many of the children sign the quilt. One quilt went to President Ford out of gratitude. She will bring one with her to Vietnam on Operation

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Laura Garrett is one more than three decades biological parents as when she was nine n

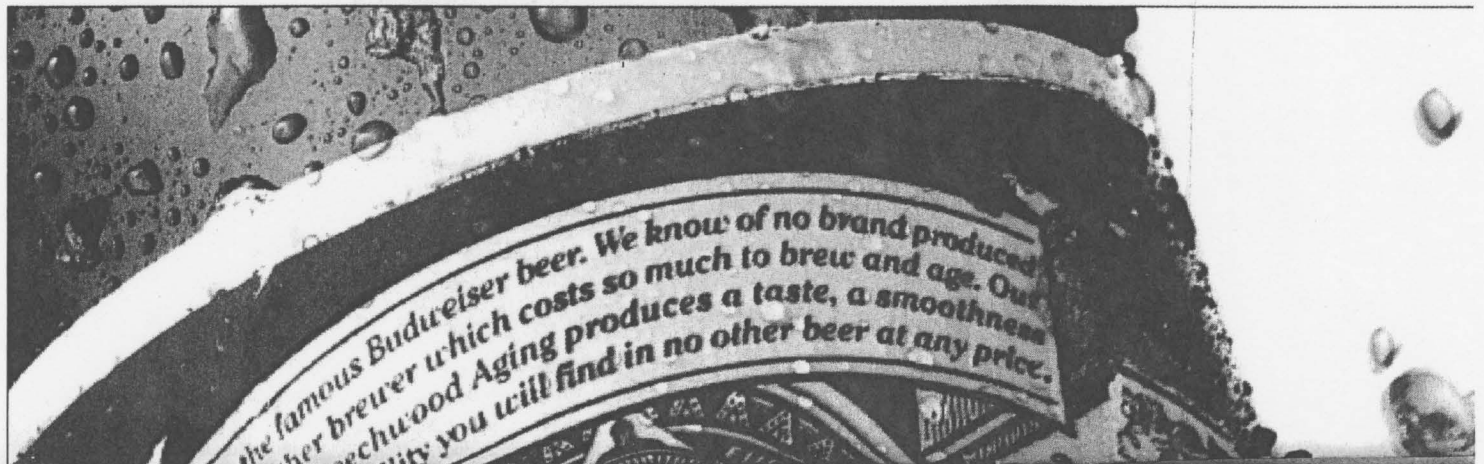
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Garett arrived in : A Caucasian physica sisters and two brot took her to Columb grew up. Now 31, fo an orchestra teacher students at three T schools.

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Barnes, who turne the country reporting relief after the Vietna



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

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Homeward Bound.

Laura Garrett is one of those who left Saigon more than three decades ago. Garret left her biological parents and the country of her birth when she was nine months old.

"Traveling to Vietnam makes me proud of my Vietnamese heritage because I learn about my Vietnamese heritage, but it really makes me proud to be American. Everyone has a beginning. I began as a Vietnamese but I am an American," said Garret. She believes both her parents were Vietnamese.

At least half the babies flown in Operation Babylift were some of the 40,000 babies left behind by American military fathers during the war.

Garrett arrived in St. Louis in April 1974. A Caucasian physician's family, with three sisters and two brothers, adopted her. They took her to Columbia, Missouri where she grew up. Now 31, for nine years she has been an orchestra teacher to fifth and sixth grade students at three Texas public elementary schools.

"As an orphan in Vietnam I know I was malnourished and arrived here with boils on my head. I might have died had I stayed there and not been adopted by the physician that assimilated me into his family. I never would've had freedom to live, learn and love there the way I have here," said Garrett. She came to Texas after earning a music education scholarship at Texas Tech.

Barnes, who turned 78 on June 2, travels the country reporting on her efforts to bring relief after the Vietnam War.

SAIGON TEX NEWS

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 Barry Warner

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Biên Tập-Việt-Nam
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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-

ment team and their guests.

Then of course, there were the special 21 orphans that were the focus of Operation Babylift. A modest press contingent accompanied the group to cover what for many would be an emotional experience. For a journalist such as myself, this was a great opportunity to meet the faces behind the headlines. It was exceptional to be able to travel back to actual locations where history was made and be able to relive history through the eyes and minds of those that made history!

For those on board, the trip would answer many personal questions; for some it would fulfill a solemn promise made a long time ago. Many new friendships would be forged. Everyone, without exception, felt this would be the trip of a lifetime.

Following the press conference, the passengers boarded the World Airways MD-11. Sitting on the ramp at Oakland, the jet airliner was stunning in its newly applied retro paint scheme. In fact, it looked so good that when CEO Martinez first saw the airplane, when it was being painted by Delta, he commented, "We're in trouble. When the employees see it, they'll want us to paint them all." Inside, the aircraft was configured for 291 passengers, made up of 24 first class seats and 267 coach seats. The flight crew consisted of four pilots and 12 flight attendants, who provided an exceptional business class food service.

Right on schedule, at 10:45 a.m., we were racing down the runway at Oakland. Captain Franklin dipped the left wing as we passed near San Francisco, heading out toward the Pacific. Once off the California coast, the aircraft was established on a heading that would take us close to Adak, Alaska, where we would then pick up Airway NP220, the most northern standard route to Asia. Next stop Taipei.



Courtesy Jan Wolfert

World Airways flight attendants Carol Shabata (standing) and Valerie Witherspoon (kneeling) play with the Vietnamese orphans on the historic evacuation flight on April 2, 1975.

After a story-filled 13-hour flight to Taipei, Taiwan, we landed at Chiang Kai Shek International Airport where the aircraft was ground handled by Eva Air, one of World's customers. The stop would

you prefer, Saigon.

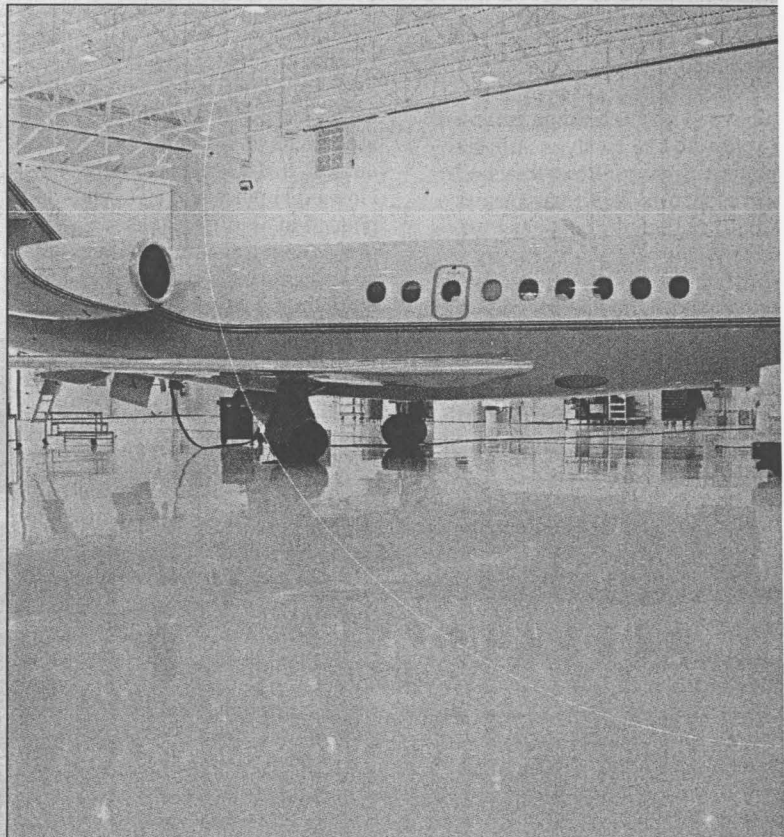
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Courtesy J. Birch



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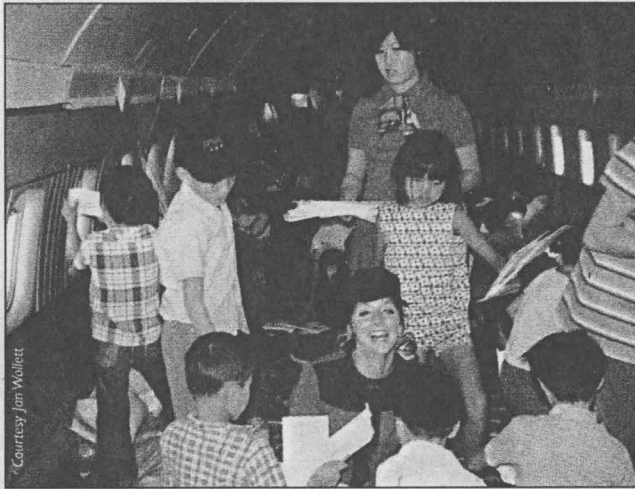


Tennant coatings: clearly leading the

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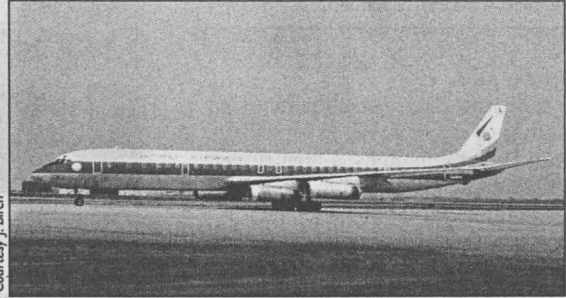
Courtesy Jon Wolcott

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Courtesy J. Birch

Ship 805 was the World Airways DC-8 used on the original Operation Babylift flight.

be overnight, making it an opportunity to rest up for the next day's visit to Ho Chi Minh City, or if

the city, were in attendance. After breezing through immigration, the group boarded modern tour buses and headed downtown to a brand new Sheraton Hotel. Less than two years old, it was perhaps the finest hotel in the city, with service standards comparable to any Sheraton in their worldwide system. The hotel is characteristic of the economic boom that Vietnam is now enjoying as a result of the U.S. lift-

World Airways continued on page 12-B



Tennant coatings: clearly leading the way in aviation.



World Airways continued...

ing what remained of its trade embargo in 1994.

The next day's schedule included a tour of the city and an orphanage run by catholic nuns, a boat ride on the Saigon River, and the finale, a gala dinner at the Presidential Palace, which is now the Reunification Palace. During the evening event, Shirley Peck-Barnes, author of the book, "The War Cradle," which documents Operation Babylift and its legacy, presented a quilt she made to our Vietnamese hosts. It was a special quilt in that it was made from the baby clothing worn by the orphans when they left Vietnam in 1975. Additionally, it was signed by the passengers traveling on the World Airways commemorative flight.

Today, the palace is a museum and is used for receptions and special events. For me, it still remains a symbol of the end of the war. I'm sure we all remember the picture of a North Vietnamese tank smashing through the fence and entering the grounds of the palace.

The next morning, motor coaches transported the group back to Tan Son Nhat Airport for the 14-hour, non-stop flight to San Francisco. It was another opportunity to hear more war stories and learn of the adoptees' impressions of the country of their birth.



By Bob Shane

Operation Babylift pilots Ken Healy (left) and Bill Keating (right) on the flight deck of the MD-11 that made the commemorative trip back to Vietnam.

The first Babylift flight

Pilots Bill Keating and Ken Healy flew the original Operation Babylift flight from Saigon on April 2, 1975, and were honored guests on the commemorative flight. Their accounts of that historic flight and other flights they made during the final weeks of the war read like a Hollywood script. Keating is now 90 years old and Healy is only six months his junior. While they both had major roles in shaping historic events, the central protagonist was Ed Daly.

Daly was the colorful non-conventional president and owner of World

Airways. It was rumored that when he acquired the airline in 1950, he paid for it with \$50,000 in poker winnings. Often characterized as a combative, hard drinking, pistol-packing Irishman, he also had a generous side. Operating in a war zone, the tough-talking Daly wore a safari suit with a green beret or a bush-styled hat and always carried a 38 caliber pistol. He enjoyed flying around the world in his two private aircraft, a B-23 once owned by Howard Hughes and a Convair 440 painted in 14 different shades of green, with a shamrock on the tail and a leprechaun painted next to the entry door. Daly called his Convair



Colonel Dennis "Bud" Traynor (USAF ret.) was the aircraft commander on the C-5A babylift flight that crashed on April 4, 1975.

the "Jolly Green Giant."

Of the tens of thousands of Asian refugees that immigrated to the United States following the end of the Vietnam War, the most dramatic evacuations involved orphaned babies and abandoned children. During the final weeks of the war, humanitarian organizations were asking the U.S. government to formulate a program for the evacuation of Vietnamese orphans. Despite these pleas for help, nothing seemed to be happening. The process was completely entangled in a sea of bureaucratic red tape. Something significant needed to happen to break the stalemate.

On April 2, 1975, the 52-year-old Daly made the extreme decision to use one of his DC-8s to airlift orphaned children out of Saigon.

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World had been using their DC-8s on the rice lift, flying rice from Saigon to Phnom Penh in Cambodia. The pilots wore helmets and flack jackets because the field at Phnom Penh was always under fire.

Normally, the ground time was 11 minutes to unload 100,000 pounds of rice; the crew always kept the number three engine running. During one trip Keating made into Phnom Penh on March 5, 1975, the aircraft was hit by a 105-mm round while it was unloading rice. Thinking the aircraft was disabled, the USAF ground officer informed Keating that the aircraft would have to be moved out of the way and be destroyed.

"I have a little bit of a problem with that," Keating stated. "Mr. Daly wouldn't like that!"

Keating inspected the aircraft. While the hydraulic system was damaged, the fuel system was OK, so Keating decided the aircraft was flyable and flew the DC-8 back to Saigon with the landing gear down. The aircraft was later repaired.

Keating would be the captain on the first leg of Operation Babylift from Saigon to Yokota Air Base in Japan. Captain Ken Healy would fly the Tokyo to Oakland leg. As the day progressed, it didn't appear any progress was being made. Neither the South Vietnamese nor U.S. governments sanctioned Daly's flight. For one thing, the DC-8 was configured for cargo and it had no seats. They were telling the various organizations wanting to evacuate children that the plane was unsafe.

Ross Meador, the 20-year-old co-director of overseas operations for the Friends of Children of Vietnam, came out to the airport to meet with Daly. Meador hoped to get some of the orphans in his care on the flight to Oakland. Daly offered to take the children, but the main concern was whether the South Vietnamese government would let them leave.



Michelle Meador (left) and Ross Meador (right) visiting the Phu My Orphanage in Ho Chi Minh City. Meador was the co-manager of the orphanage that put 57 orphans on the first babylift flight from Saigon to Oakland.

Meador had taught them in route to the airport, "California here I come."

The floor of the DC-8 cabin, covered with blankets, pillows and cardboard, would soon be a giant playpen in the sky. South Vietnamese soldiers came aboard the DC-8 and took off two of the orphans who appeared to be at least 14 years old and consequently eligible for service in the Army. Daly tried to buy the children with a hundred dollar bill, but the soldier wouldn't take it. Jeff Gahr was one of the orphans on the flight; it was his brother Jason that the soldiers removed.

"I didn't know if I would ever see my brother again," he stated.

Daly tore the bill and gave Jason half as a souvenir. He did make it to the U.S. on one of the subsequent evacuation flights. All these years, he kept the souvenir. He had it low

flight out of his own pocket.

Jan Wollett, one of the flight attendants on the original flight, seems to remember it as if it were yesterday.

"As we approached San Francisco, it was a perfectly clear night," she said. "It seemed like every light was turned on."

As some of the orphans looking through the aircraft windows shouted, "America, America," Wollett

began to cry.

After landing in Oakland, the Red Cross came on board to take the children.

"Thank God we did it," Wollett then said. "Thank God Mr. Daly had us do it!"

The next day, April 3, President Gerald Ford declared Operation Babylift a national initiative. Using mostly military aircraft, 30 flights were planned to evacuate orphaned babies and children. On April 4, the first authorized flight was attempted from Saigon using a C-5A Galaxy.

Twelve minutes into the flight, disaster struck. The aircraft was climbing through 23,000 feet when it experienced explosive rapid decompression. The rear ramp and pressure door blew out, severing all of the elevator control cables to the tail and disabling two of the aircraft's four hydraulic systems. While trying to return to Saigon, the aircraft crashed in a rice paddy. Of those on board, 138 perished and 176 survived. Subsequent military flights were flown using the C-141 Starlifter.

The last flight From Da Nang

During the final weeks of the Vietnam War, thousands of refugees tried to escape from Vietnam and the advancing communist troops coming from the north. In Saigon,

World Airways continued on page 14-B

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It was early evening and there were rumors that the Viet Cong might attack the airport. Daly had Meador contacted, advising him that he was going and Meador needed to get the children out to the airplane. The orphans arrived at the DC-8 singing a new song that

orphans who appeared to be at least 14 years old and consequently eligible for service in the Army. Daly tried to buy the children with a hundred dollar bill, but the soldier wouldn't take it. Jeff Gahr was one of the orphans on the flight; it was his brother Jason that the soldiers removed.

"I didn't know if I would ever see my brother again," he stated.

Daly tore the bill and gave Jason half as a souvenir. He did make it to the U.S. on one of the subsequent evacuation flights. All these years, he kept the souvenir. He had it laminated, and brought it with him on the commemorative flight.

The first Operation Babylift flight took off from Saigon in darkness; the airport had turned the runway lights off. The DC-8 departed without a formal clearance to take off or a flight plan filed. Daly paid for the

turned on. As some of the orphans looking through the aircraft windows shouted, "America, America," Wollett

the advancing communist troops coming from the north. In Saigon,

World Airways continued on page 14-B

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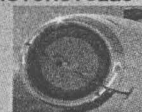
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World Airways continued...

Daly heard that there were refugees roaming around the airport in Da Nang. He told World Airways pilot Ken Healy that he was thinking of sending a couple of Boeing 727 passenger planes up to Da Nang, to evacuate refugees.

So, on March 29, 1975, Healy and Daly departed Saigon for Da Nang. Healy talked to the tower before landing and was advised that the airport was peaceful. However, once on the ground and taxiing to the ramp, the aircraft was mobbed, mostly by deserting South Vietnamese soldiers who were dressed in civilian clothing. The officers had fled, leaving the young enlisted men to fend for themselves. Healy kept all three engines running as Daly blocked the rear entry stairs, trying to stop the soldiers and pick up women and children. Men driving trucks, cars, jeeps and motorbikes chased the 727, desper-



Jennifer Noone (left) was on the last Operation Babylift flight from Saigon. Noone and her adoptive mother Lana stand near the memorial site where a ceremony was held in Ho Chi Minh City for her first adopted Vietnamese daughter, Heather, who died after arriving in the U.S.

ate to get on the aircraft.

Overhead, an Air America helicopter pilot advised Healy over the radio that the runway was blocked with vehicles and he needed to take off on the taxiway, which was 7,000 feet long. A newsman that had gotten off the 727 had to be left behind because the crowd pushed him out of reach of the plane. Healy asked the Air America pilot if he could pick him up later.

A grenade went off, damaging the left wing, and the plane had to dodge bullets as angry men left behind fired at the plane. As the airliner started its takeoff roll on the taxi-

way, soldiers climbed into the luggage compartments, leaving the doors open. The rear stairs were damaged and couldn't be raised all the way. Fuel lines had been hit and the aircraft was leaking fuel. As Healy continued his takeoff roll, he realized that he would have to go around a vehicle that was parked on the taxiway in front of him. A quick detour through the grass and he was back up on the taxiway with everything fire-walled for the balance of the takeoff. He pulled back on the control column, but the nose wouldn't come up.

"I waited until there was no pavement under me then gave the controls one last pull," he said.

The stick shaker went off as the plane finally rotated and started a slow climb. Several men clinging to the open stairs fell to their death. At least one person was crushed in the wheel well doors. The flight to Saigon was flown at low altitude. Captain Healy, not knowing the conditions of the landing gear, carefully put the 727 down on the runway.

The plane, which normally carries 125 passengers, had a total of 268 in the main cabin. Additionally, the cargo compartments were full of stowaways. It's estimated that the last flight from Da Nang carried over 330 people—undoubtedly, the world record for the number of passengers ever carried on a Boeing 727.

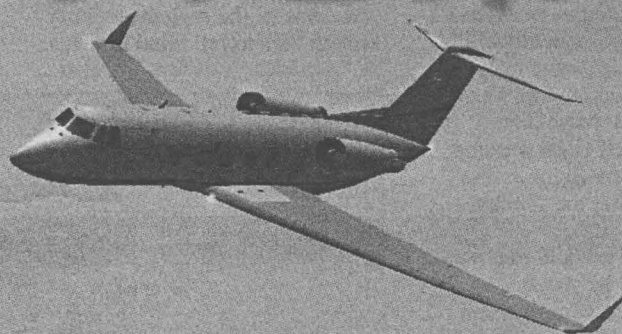
Subsequent to the commemorative flight World made in June 2005, I met Wayne Lannin, a helicopter pilot for HTS Helicopters. During our discussion, I discovered he flew helicopters for Air America in Vietnam from 1970 to 1975. Amazingly, he was the pilot Healy talked to on the radio during his ordeal, while on the ground at Da Nang.

On that day, he was operating a Bell 204.

"We had been working on getting

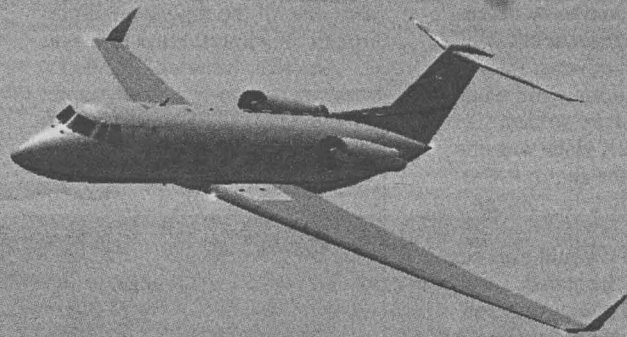
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On that day, he was operating a Bell 204.

"We had been working on getting embassy people out of Da Nang," he said.

Orbiting over the airport, Lannin had a unique vantage point. He watched the World 727 land and head for the ramp.

"What happened next was like a bad movie," Lannin said.

He saw the aircraft being mobbed and people being blown away by the jet blast as they tried to stop the plane.

"I told the pilot, 'Don't go to the runway; they've got you blocked. Go to the taxiway,'" he recalled.

He watched as Healy started his takeoff down the taxiway, went around the vehicle, and then went off the end of the taxiway into the red laterite dirt, sending up a huge cloud of dust.

"I thought he was history, when all of a sudden I saw him rising up out of this cloud of dirt," he said.

"My last radio transmission to the 727 was 'Nice job, World!' It went unanswered."

When Healy and Lannin got

together recently to discuss events of that historic day, Healy thanked Lannin for the assistance he rendered and for going back and rescuing the newsman left behind. It wasn't until now that Healy knew that the newsman had been rescued.

An opportunity to say thank you

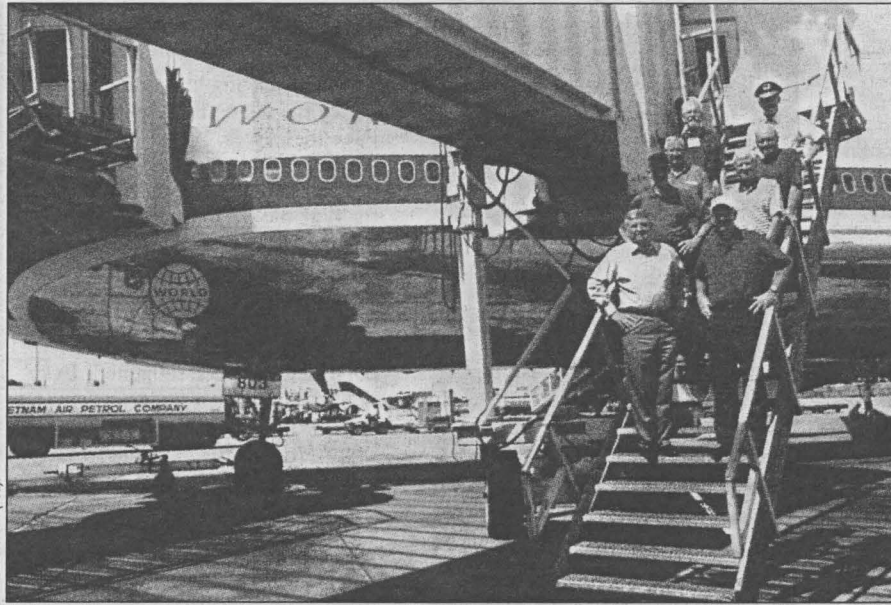
Seven members of the original crew were on board the World Airways Operation Babylift commemorative flight. Of the 21 orphans that made the journey back to Vietnam, five were on the first babylift flight. Many of the orphans took the opportunity to say thank you to the people that evacuated them from Vietnam.

Jeff Gahr, who spoke on behalf of the orphans at the press conferences and other formal gatherings, personally thanked the Americans for the love and care shown him 30 years ago.

"You opened up a world of opportunities for me that I never dreamed were possible," said Gahr, who was adopted by an Oregon family and now works for Boeing as an electrical engineer in Seattle.

Flight attendant Atsuko, who crewed the original flight, always wondered if Jeff ever got together again with his brother Jason, after the soldiers had taken Jason off the flight. She was happy to find out that they were reunited.

Jennie Noone, who was evacuated



Ken Peterson (ret.)

A group of Vietnam vets pose for a picture next to the World Airways commemorative MD-11 at Tan Son Nhat Airport. From the top down, L to R: Collin Bakse, Capt. Bob Franklin, Lt. Col. R.T. Tanner (ret.), Maj. Kelly Irving (ret.), Col. Roger McElroy (ret.), Lt. Col. Jim Dyer (ret.), Gen. Ronald Fogleman (ret.) and Brig. Gen. Ken Peterson (ret.).

on the last flight, sent a letter to President Ford in which she said, "Thank you for giving me a chance at life and for uniting me with a beautiful family."

Jared Rehberg composed and recorded a CD that included "Waking up American," which he dedicated to the birth parents he never met. Rehberg performed his song at the Reunification Palace.

Lana Noone's first adopted Vietnamese child, Heather, died

shortly after arriving in the United States. When she arrived at JFK Airport on April 23, 1975, she was very ill. She had been hospitalized a number of times and never weighed more than six pounds.

Noone made a promise to Heather that she would never be forgotten and that she would have a memorial service for her in the country of her birth. The commemorative flight enabled her to keep that promise.

Unanswered questions resolved

For a long time, Ross Meador, who put the 57 orphans in his care on the World Airways babylift flight 30 years ago, wondered if he had made a mistake.

"Maybe they would have been better off staying in their own country," he said.

The commemorative flight has reinforced the feeling that his action probably saved their lives.

Vietnam vets return

Also returning to Vietnam—almost all of them for the first time—were a distinguished group of Vietnam Vets. On board the special flight was General Ronald Fogleman (USAF ret.), who flew 315 combat

missions and is currently the chairman of World Airways. He put in two tours, the first in 1968 flying F-100s with the 3rd Tactical Fighter Wing, the "Buzzards of Bin Hoa," and a subsequent tour flying F-4s. He was rescued after being shot down on Sept. 12, 1968, in an F-100.

Colonel Dennis "Bud" Traynor (USAF ret.) was the young Air Force captain and aircraft com-

World Airways continued on page 16-B

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World Airways continued...

mander of the ill-fated C-5A that crashed on April 4, 1975, during the first military flight of Operation Babylift.

Lt. Col. James Dyer (USMC ret.) put in three voluntary tours of duty, one with the Navy, and two as an artillery officer with the Marines. Dyer also served in the Colorado State Legislature as both a senator and a representative. After departing Saigon, Dyer experienced a stream of tears, which he says was "a culmination of emotion from the whole trip."

Capt. Bob Franklin, the command pilot of the MD-11 commemorative flight, was a Marine fighter pilot in Vietnam during the period of August 1969 to August 1970. He flew 275 combat missions in F-4s, while based at Chu Lai. For Franklin, visiting Vietnam was an opportunity to visit a country in transition.

"As we turned south on airway W15 from directly overhead Da Nang, I had a flood of memories flash from 35 years earlier," he said. "The 'popcorn' cumulous clouds reminded me of the FAC's (forward air controller's) white phosphorous smoke marking targets. This was my combat area. To the west I could make out several landmarks in Laos, where we lost aircraft."

He said his squadron alone lost



Ex-Air America pilot Wayne Lannin, who helped World Airways pilot Ron Healy during his harrowing "last flight from Da Nang."

nine airplanes during his year in combat.

"Below and to my left I saw the enormous Hoi An river valley where hundreds of missions were flown," he said. "To my far left I could make out Chi Lai and the twin runways of the fighter base. My best thought was seeing a country at peace—wishing that if only the 40,000 people named on that

granite wall in Washington, D.C. could see this nation, finally, after 30 years starting to embrace a number of the ideals for which they gave their lives."

It would appear that time does heal all wounds, and in the aftermath of the Vietnam War, the healing process has taken hold. The current Vietnamese prime minister has vowed to continue working on finding the remains of U.S. servicemen, and adoption between our two countries has been reopened. Even Nguyen Cao Ky, the flamboyant and colorful commander of the South Vietnamese Air Force, a prime minister and vice president, who spent his life in exile in California after the war, has returned to Vietnam, where he wants to live the remainder of his days.

A history of humanitarianism

Going all the way back to the airline's inception, World Airways has a history of performing humanitarian missions. In 1956, its DC-4 aircraft airlifted Hungarian refugees to the U.S. More recently, it has flown relief flights in Bosnia and Somalia. Its philanthropic propensity has earned it a reputation as the "small airline with a big heart."

Wherever there are trouble spots throughout the world, you will find World Airways on the front lines.

It's the largest carrier of U.S. troops. With a fleet of only 17 airplanes, it has managed to capture the lion's share of the Defense Department's business.

Following the U.S. invasion of Iraq, World was the first to operate a commercial flight into Baghdad. When the airport in Kabul, Afghanistan is secure enough, the airline will launch air service connecting Kabul with Washington, D.C. Humanitarian organizations like the Red Cross and the U.N. turn to airlines like World to transport personnel and supplies to the real hot spots where most other airlines won't go.

Ed Daly may have passed away in 1984, but his "can do" spirit lives on at World Airways. The idea to do an Operation Babylift commemorative flight on its 30th anniversary mostly came from CEO Randy Martinez. It reportedly took two years of planning to make the flight happen; by the way, both the U.S. and the Vietnamese governments authorized it.

The management at World Airways is to be commended for having the resources and inclination to pay homage to their airline's heritage, particularly being in an industry where survival is the full-time focus. It was a great flight and I'm sure that all 112 passengers will forever regard it as the trip of a lifetime.

Thank you World Airways!

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