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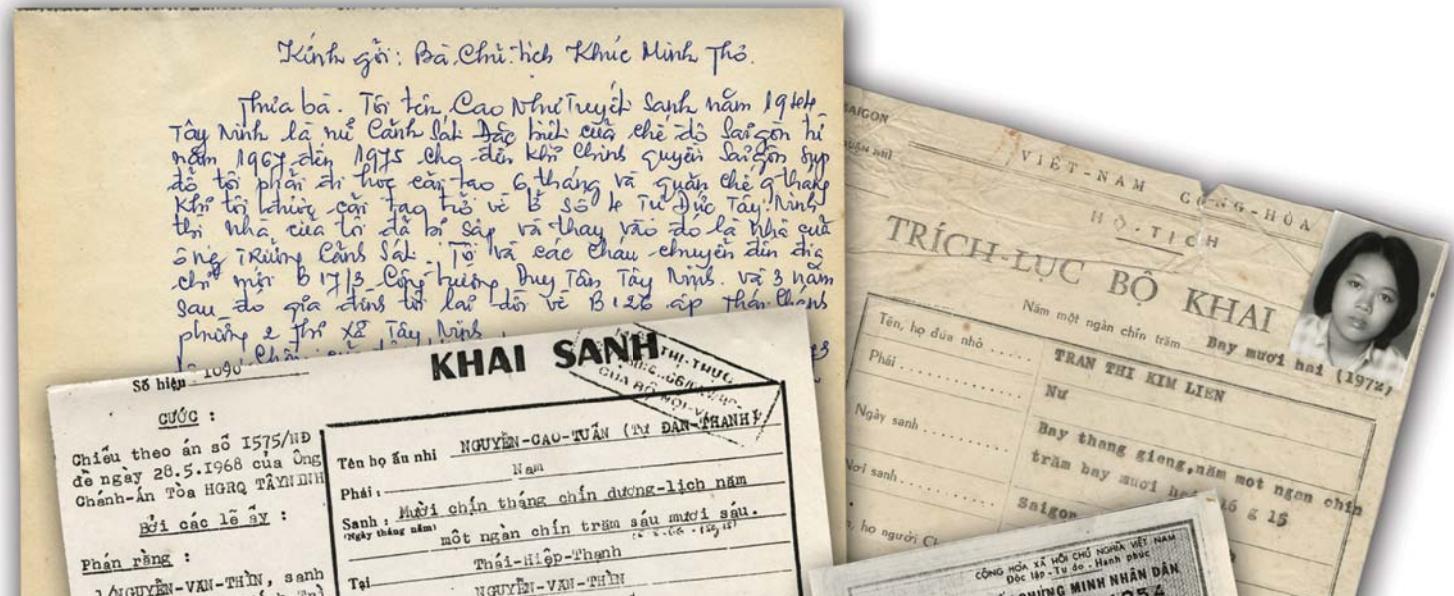
Vietnam Center and Archive™

# FRIENDS OF THE VIETNAM CENTER



Winter 2012 Vol. 19 No. 1

## Digitizing Vietnamese Immigration Applications



The Orderly Departure Program Application Files series of the Families of Vietnamese Political Prisoners Association Collection contains records for over 12,000 Vietnamese who applied to immigrate to the United States between 1979-'94. The Archive has received a \$144,120 grant to digitize and provide access to these files.

### **Kathleen Williams and Mary Saffell**

NHPRC and Associate Director, VNCA

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35(1) - Society of Southwest Archivists

As a part of its highly competitive "Digitizing Historical Records" grants program, the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) recently awarded a \$144,120 Digitizing Historical Records grant to the Vietnam Center and Archive (VNCA) and Texas Tech University. The award will support a three-year project to digitize approximately 250,000 pages of Orderly Departure Program (ODP) application files of the Families of Vietnamese Political Prisoners Association (FVPPA) collection documenting the immigration experience of thousands of Vietnamese

who migrated to the United States following the end of the Vietnam War.

A key component of the Archive's holdings, the FVPPA Collection contains 157 linear feet of material documenting the FVPPA's 1977-1999 campaign to advocate the release of Vietnamese political prisoners from re-education camps in Vietnam. In an attempt to provide means for safe and legal emigration from Vietnam, the United Nations created the Orderly Departure Program in 1979. Through this program the United States accepted over 500,000 Vietnamese refugees before it ended in 1994.

In addition to these refugees, thousands more U.S. allies, employees and dissidents were imprisoned in relocation camps. The FVPPA assisted former Vietnamese political prisoners and their

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### **What's Inside...**



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# Honoring Texas Veterans

**Stephen F. Maxner, Ph.D.**

Director

The Vietnam Center and Archive

For the past twenty-three years, the Vietnam Center and Archive has collected and preserved the history of the Vietnam War and, though a number of programs, promotes a better understanding of those historical events. We accomplish much of this through close collaboration with different partners throughout the country to include military veterans, civilian participants, and their families, scholars and researchers, students and teachers, state and federal government, and the interested public. Because of the success of those partnerships, we have been able to collect approximately 25 million pages of documents and materials to include more than 100,000 photographs, thousands of audio

and video recordings, oral history interviews, artifacts, and more. In addition, we have the support that allows us to sponsor many events and activities every year that promote studying and understanding that complex period of United States history.

What is at the core of our program is a deep appreciation for the service and sacrifice of our nation's military veterans, civilian participants, and their families. As we spend the next decade looking back on the 50th anniversary of many of the events that changed the lives of millions of Americans and their families, we



Texas flag from Khe Sanh, March 1968. Donated by Art Ramirez and signed by members of his unit.

believe the best way to honor them with the dignity and respect they deserve is to preserve their history, to seek a fuller understanding of the war in which they fought, and to never forget the lessons of those experiences. Another important aspect of this must be the development of programs and activities that inspire generations today and into the future to remember and to want to learn about the Vietnam War. We need to continue our work as an archive to successfully accomplish this but we also need to develop a museum that can display the artifacts and provide a rich and immersive learning environment where children and adults can be transported back in time and learn about the Vietnam War. We hope to have such a museum here at Texas Tech University and we will be writing more about that project in future newsletters.

For now, I want to focus on another important aspect of honoring veterans and their families. The Vietnam Center and Archive is proud to be a part of Texas Tech University and to be in a state with such a long and proud history and tradition of military service. The State of Texas has been exceptionally generous in supporting our project and we do all we can to make sure our programs and activities support Texas Vietnam Veterans as well as education at all levels throughout the State of Texas. As part of that commitment, we are also very proud to be assisting a group of Texas Vietnam Veterans and countless supporters throughout the state and nation who are dedicated to creating a Texas Vietnam Veterans Monument on the grounds at the Texas State Capitol. While laudable and significant in itself, what we find

very important about the current program is that the Monument is complimented by a concerted outreach program to Texas Vietnam Veterans, online educational programs and materials, and the creation of what we think will become a living virtual Texas Vietnam Veterans memorial that will inspire visitors to learn and understand more about the role of



Texas Veterans in the Vietnam War. Leading this initiative is Mr. Robert Floyd of Hance, Scarborough, LLP in Austin, Texas. Other important partners include Patrick and Cheryl Fries of Arrowhead Films, also of Austin, Texas, and producers of the excellent Vietnam War documentary film, In the Shadow of the Blade.

The role of the Vietnam Center and Archive includes helping to raise awareness with Texas Vietnam Veterans so they may participate more fully in the various programs, to include providing information about their service in Vietnam. Anyone interested in learning more about the Monument and related projects can visit their website, which introduces the Monument project and provides information on how veterans and others can participate more fully in preserving the history of our Texas Vietnam Veterans. In addition, the Vietnam Center and Archive will serve as the home for the long-term preservation of the materials and information submitted to the Monument project and will provide long-term access to the historical and educational materials and programming that will help keep the Texas Vietnam Veterans Monument a living memorial for many generations to come. You can visit the Texas Vietnam Veterans Monument website at [www.buildthemonument.org](http://www.buildthemonument.org). \*

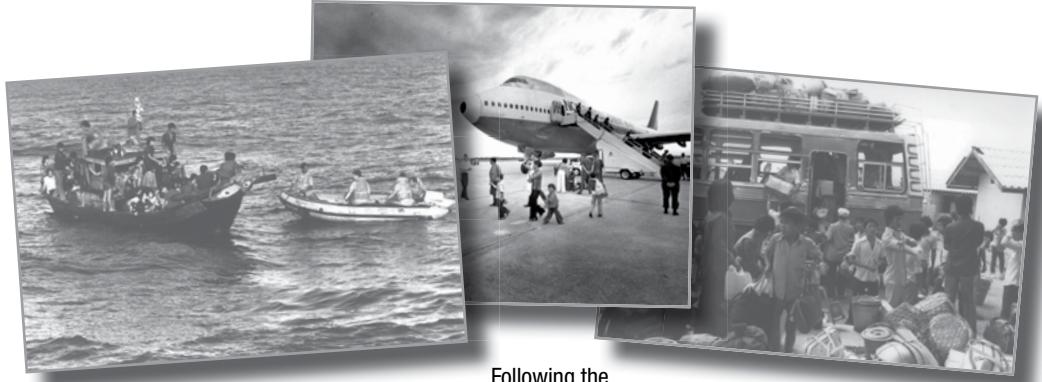
Continued from page one

families in applying through the Orderly Departure Program by completing forms and ensuring they possessed all necessary documentation. The FVPPA also raised public and political awareness of the plight of Vietnamese political prisoners.

Over 157 linear feet of records document the work of the organization. These records provide primary sources on the lasting effects of the Vietnam War on the United States' former Vietnamese allies and employees, the horrific conditions of reeducation camps, and their impact on Vietnamese and Vietnamese-American families. The Vietnam Center and Archive works closely with the Vietnamese American Heritage Foundation (VAHF) to collect and preserve the record of the Vietnamese immigration experience.

After receiving the FVPPA Collection in 2005, the VNCA utilized NHPHC grant funding to hire staff to process and perform preservation treatment on the collection, which was opened to researchers in May 2008. Researchers from across the United States and around the world have accessed the collection, and the majority of patrons are Vietnamese Americans, overseas Vietnamese, or Vietnamese looking for their own or a loved one's ODP application. U.S. veterans searching for their Vietnamese counterpart or friend's ODP application

comprise the second larg-



Following the end of the war, hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese fled the country, and thousands more were imprisoned in reeducation camps. Over 500,000 Vietnamese immigrated to the United States through the ODP program, many of who were assisted by the FVPPA.

est group of patrons using the collection. Other researchers include students from Texas Tech and other universities, journalists, and lawyers working on refugee and asylum cases.

While materials from the collection have been featured in special exhibitions and news stories, its most profound value

tion at the University's home in Lubbock, the VNCA established the Virtual Vietnam Archive in 2001 to place all of its non-copyrighted materials online. Currently, the online archive includes over 500,000 items, consisting of more than 3.3 million pages.

The ODP series contains personal information about Vietnamese applying to immigrate to the United States, but the VNCA advertised heavily in the Vietnamese American community asking people to notify the Archives if their name appears in the files and they want access to their materials restricted. Though the VNCA received no requests for restrictions, this policy remains in effect and digital materials will be restricted upon the request of the applicant or their family.

Since the Virtual Vietnam Archive first became available to the public, over 10 million searches have been conducted. Usage is currently averaging approximately 300,000 searches and 80,000 downloads per month, continuing an upward trend in use.

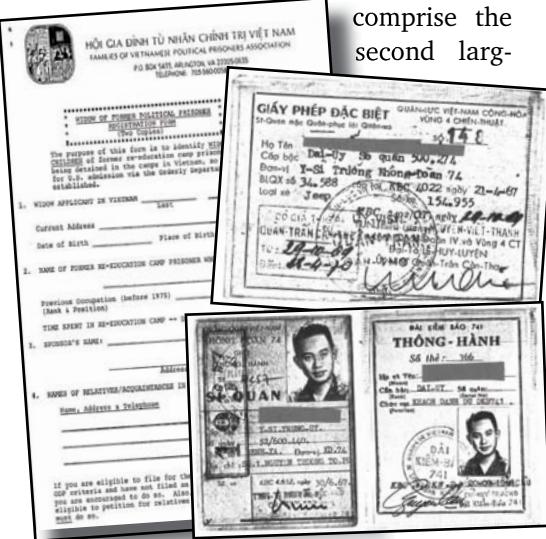
Work on the digitization of the ODP files started on February 1st with the hiring of five students. To keep up with news on the digitization project, or to view newly digitized records, visit:

[www.vietnam.ttu.edu/vahp/digitization.php](http://www.vietnam.ttu.edu/vahp/digitization.php)

# NHPRC

DOCUMENTING DEMOCRACY

National Historical Publications and Records Commission  
This is the second grant the Archive has received from the NHPHC to help provide access to the FVPPA collection.



The ODP files contain a wide variety of types of records, including applications, passports, birth certificates, and more.

may well have been demonstrated when it helped reunite two friends separated by events of the Vietnam War in 1968.

After 42 years of searching, Professor Tuyen Nguyen of Toronto, Canada was finally able to find clues in the ODP applications as to the whereabouts of his friend and former classmate in Saigon, Mr. Pham Quang Minh. The collection's documents have also proved pivotal in political asylum cases. Using the collection's records, Captain Tran Van Sang, a former Vietnamese reeducation camp prisoner, was able to obtain political asylum in the United States.

By digitizing this collection, the VNCA will be able to extend access to these important records through the Internet. In addition to its onsite collec-

# 2011 Vietnam Archive Donors

The Vietnam Center and Archive would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for their collection contributions in 2011. For more information about the contents of any of the collections listed here visit:

[www.vietnam.ttu.edu/virtualarchive](http://www.vietnam.ttu.edu/virtualarchive)

24th Evacuation Hospital  
 35th Infantry Regiment Association  
 Air America Association  
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   Alfred Alvarez  
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   Michael Cook  
 A Troop, 4/12th Cavalry (Vietnam Era) Association  
   Jimmy Dale Miller

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An Engine Order Telegraph off of the SS Pioneer Commander is an example of the hundreds of items the Vietnam Center and Archive receives each year.

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 Thomas E. Nelson  
 Binh Q. Nguyen  
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Westlake High School Vietnam Veterans Memorial Project  
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★

## Audio/Visual Digitization

### ***Kevin Sailsbury***

Archival Specialist

Among the diverse holdings of the Vietnam Archive are over 3000 moving image records and more than 2500 audio records. All of these, unless protected by copyright, will eventually be placed online in the Virtual Vietnam Archive.

In addition, the Archive videos all panels and addresses during our annual conferences and symposia, special events such as the 2005 visit by the family of Dr. Dang Thuy Tram, and our Guest Lecture Series

These videos are also digitized and made available online.

Digitization of film and audiotape is therefore a significant part of the Virtual Vietnam Archive's operations, requiring specialized equipment, computers, and software. For digitizing audio tapes, we use an Otari DAS-ADC Digital Audio System with an Otari DAS-4C cassette recorder and an Otari MTR-15-DAS2 reel-to-reel recorder.

In the past, we have digitized our films using an Elmo TRV-16H digitizing scanner for 16mm film, an Elmo TRV-R8 for our 8mm film, and a TransVideo S8 for our Super-8mm film. We are currently upgrading, however, to a Sniper-16 HD and a DV8 Sniper HD in order to digitize film in High Definition.



The Archive's new 16mm film scanner will allow digitization of archival footage in HD.

When films are digitized, the resulting file is in AVI format. AVI files are too large for internet use, so multiple files in different resolutions, to accommodate different connectivity, are created.

The next step in the process of placing these files on line is the most time consuming of all: abstraction. Abstracting a record involves watching (or listening to) it and noting particulars which can then be used by researchers as search terms to determine its relevance to their needs.

There are currently 763 moving images and 1,584 audio records available online. Having so many recordings from which to choose is only a virtue when there is some way of differentiating between them. Types of aircraft and other vehicles, military unit identification, place names and the names of individuals - all of these can be used as search terms. Search terms derived from abstracting can also be broad subject terms such as sociology, anthropology, ethnology, order of battle, race relations, culture, health care, education, politics, government - the list is almost endless.

From audio letters home to "home movies" shot on the battlefield or in the skies, the audio-visual holdings available on the Virtual Vietnam Archive are a rich potential source for researchers and veterans alike. ★

# Techsans in the Vietnam War

**Amy K. Mondt, CA**

Assistant Archivist, Collection Development

The Vietnam Center and Archive

The Vietnam Center and Archive's online exhibit and program called "Techsans in the Vietnam War" is a way for us to honor both Texas Tech graduates, who are often referred to as Techsans, and Vietnam veterans. This program came about when a patron contacted us asking if we had any information about Lieutenant Louis K. Breuer, IV a helicopter pilot who was killed in An Loc on June 20, 1972. Breuer was also a graduate of Texas Tech University and played on the football team as the Red Raider's starting tight end from 1966 through 1968. The researcher requested information and a photo that he could use for Breuer's online Vietnam Memorial page.

After some research in both the Vietnam Archive and Southwest Collection's materials, the archive staff found extensive information and several photos of Breuer. We also found the name of another TTU grad that played on the football team and was killed in Vietnam, Major Samuel B. Cornelius. In addition to these discoveries, we noticed that the Archive has received several collections from TTU graduates who had served in Vietnam. As a matter of fact, for many years we have had a scholarship endowment dedicated to another TTU

## Techsans in the Vietnam War



### Lieutenant Lee Roy Herron

8 June 1945 - 22 February 1969  
TTU: 1963-'67  
Class of '67



Lee Roy Herron was born on June 8, 1945, and grew up in Lubbock, Texas. He graduated from Lubbock High School in 1963 and from Texas Tech University in 1967, earning numerous academic awards during his educational career. While he attended TTU he was a member of the Platoon Leaders Class and spent his summers training at Quantico, Virginia. After college he attended the Vietnamese Language School at the Presidio in California. He arrived in Vietnam on December 30, 1968, and was the executive officer of Company A, 1st Battalion, 9th Marines. On February 22, 1969, his company came under intense enemy fire while on patrol north of the Ashau Valley. They were quickly pinned down by machine gun, mortar, and rocket fire. During the battle, Herron charged a bunker and killed the North Vietnamese inside; he was assaulting a second bunker when he was killed by an enemy sniper. For his actions, he was posthumously awarded the Navy Cross, a Purple Heart, the National Defense Medal, the Vietnamese Service Medal with one star, and the Vietnamese Campaign Medal. He is survived by his wife Danelle, his mother, and sister.

### Related Materials

[Items from the Virtual Vietnam Archive - Lee Roy Herron Collection](#)

[Lee Roy Herron Memorial Scholarship Program \[Virtual Vietnam Archive\]](#)

[Lee Roy Herron high school portrait \[Virtual Vietnam Archive\]](#)

[Lee Roy Herron swearing in ceremony](#)

[Tony Romero Oral History audio \[Virtual Vietnam Archive\]](#)

[Andy Vaart Oral History audio file \[Virtual Vietnam Archive\]](#)



*Moments of peace—Infantrymen of the Ninth Marines and artillerymen of Twelfth Marines take time to attend church services at Fire Support Base Razor. The Chaplain was Lieutenant S. Rubino, United States*

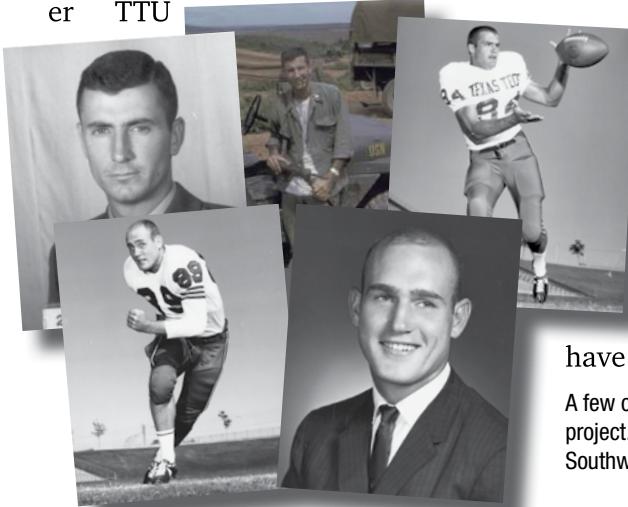


grad that was killed in Vietnam, Lieutenant Lee Roy Herron. After reading these men's stories, the staff decided to create a program that would honor our TTU graduates who had served in the Vietnam War.

The new program consists of an online exhibit that features pages dedicated to individual Techsans. These pages include: a brief biography, which talks about the veteran's TTU and military career, photos, and documents, like newspaper clippings, letters or award certificates from the Techsan's life. In order to become a Techsan, a person had to have served in the Vietnam War and graduated from Texas Tech University, either before or after their service, and they have to fill out a submission form.

A few of the images of participants in the Techsans project. Top Right and Bottom images courtesy Southwest Collection.

Anyone can fill out a form, either for themselves or for a family member or friend. The information on the form is then used to create the biography that is featured on the individual Techsan page. We also ask that participants send in photos and documents to be used in the exhibit. The program was launched on Memorial Day 2011, and so far we have forty-seven Techsans in our program. We hope that this program continues to grow over the years. It is a wonderful opportunity for us to continue preserving the history of the participants in the Vietnam War, to reach out to the community of our parent institution Texas Tech University, and to honor and memorialize Vietnam veterans by telling their stories and giving them a face online. If you are interested in participating in the program, please visit our "Techsans in the Vietnam War" page at [www.vietnam.ttu.edu/exhibits/TTU/](http://www.vietnam.ttu.edu/exhibits/TTU/).



## The Website Beyond the Virtual Archive

The Virtual Vietnam Archive (VVA) brings thousands of users to the Vietnam Center and Archive's (VNCA) website each day, but this is not the only way to access our digitized materials. The resources of the VVA are integrated throughout the website in a variety of ways, from images on the pages of the site, to pages that let users browse the available materials. Here are just a few of the alternatives to the VVA search page:

### Browse Pages

Many users of our website are visiting for the first time and are interested in seeing what is available. For these visitors, the VVA search page may not be of much use. Therefore we have created a number of "browse" pages that let users look through the digitized materials without going having to conduct a search. There are pages for specific media types, like Oral Histories, audio records, and moving images (film and video). Additionally there is a collection browse page with access to over 2000 collection finding aids, which are descriptions and inventories of the contents of the collections.

### Subject Guides

Subject guides are listings of resources that relate to a specific topic. There are a number of guides available on our website covering a variety of subjects, including Agent Orange, the Tet Offensive, Dustoff/Medevac, and more. The guides are organized by media type and contain links to relevant digital items.

### Search Site Box

Near the top of every page of the VNCA website is a "Search Site" box. Utilizing a combination of the Google search engine and our Cuadra Star database, short searches using this box will find items in both the VVA as well as the contents of the VNCA website itself. This is a quick way to find anything on our website.

Check back in future issues for more resources on our website.

## Faculty Changes at the Archive

### **Mary Saffell, CA**

Associate Director, Archivist

The Vietnam Center and Archive

As many of our friends know, our longtime associate archivist, Ty Lovelady, has relocated to the Dallas area and is now employed at UT Dallas. With his departure have come some changes in responsibilities for our faculty.

Amy Mondt, C.A. is now our assistant archivist for collection development.

Amy is handling all collection donations, deeds of gift, collection development policies, and will manage the archive's storage areas. Amy has been with the archive since 2008 and previously worked as our reference archivist. Amy is a graduate of Texas Tech's Museum Science program and was previously employed at the Petroleum Museum in Midland. She is also a Certified Archivist. During her time as reference archivist, Amy made a tremendous impact by streamlining our duplication policies and procedures, creating subject guides to help patrons get a start on their research, and creating online exhibits that highlight our unique collections.

In addition to her duties as Vietnamese American Heritage Archivist, Ann Mallett, C.A., will be taking on a



more active role in archival processing. She recently completed processing the final accession of Douglas Pike's Indochina Archive, and will soon complete the processing of the Voices in Vi-

tal America Collection. Ann supervises one student processor and works closely with student scanners digitizing the FVPPA (VAHF) collection. Ann is a graduate of Central Washington University and Eastern Washington University. She became a certified archivist in 2009. Prior to her career in archives, Ann worked as a primary school teacher in Taipei, Taiwan.

Sheon Montgomery is now our assistant archivist for reference. Sheon has been with the archive since 2009 and previously served as an archival specialist supervising the Virtual Vietnam Archive. In her new role as reference archivist, Sheon will assist patrons with research in our reading room, over the telephone, and through email, and fulfill duplication requests. Sheon holds a bachelor's degree in history from Cornell College in Mt. Vernon, Iowa, and a Master of Science in Information with a specialization in Archives and Records Management from the University of Michigan.



Prior to coming to Texas Tech, Sheon worked as a book and paper conservator at the Bentley Library at the University of Michigan. She has frequently put this experience to use here at the Vietnam Center and Archive, making recommendations for treatment and repair of damaged items.

The last 18 months have brought about many staff and faculty changes to the Vietnam Center and Archive. With the support of our friends and the hard work of our faculty and staff we have been able to weather these changes and continue to fulfill our mission to collect, preserve, and make accessible the history of this crucial time period. \*

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### Listserv

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