

Kazoua Yang

Kazoua Yang and her family stayed in Laos ten years after General Vang Pao left.

Can you tell us about your children?

I have three sons and one daughter in Laos.

Do you have any children here?

Here? Yes. The sons... when we fell, my son of whom I talked about sponsor us to come and live in? He sponsored us to live there. We live like a year there. There is still the oldest and the middle son over there. We had come here for five years.

So you still have a son and a daughter in Laos?

Laos... yes a son and daughter. A son and daughter. One daughter.

Can you tell us about your favorite Hmong custom?

I don't know how to tell. Just too old and don't know how to.

Okay. Was there a favorite Hmong legend that you have or a Hmong legend that not a many people know?

Legend I don't know how to say. If you don't have any parents then no one tells you about it, so you can't listen and don't know.

Okay. What did you do when the fighting started and the Communist were after you?

In Vietnam? When we live in Laos if you don't know reading then you don't know about it or hear that they are fighting and killing. You don't know about it.

Do you have anything to say to young people today about being Hmong?

I don't know what to say. Say that we live in Laos and make a living and don't know about any legends, so don't know what to say. It's like you young teenage boy and girl have to learn at school and are smart and live here, then you know like you go to school and know what to do when you want to do it. That's all. We are old and we don't know about anything, don't know how to speak.

Is there anything that you remember and would like to tell us?

I don't what to say. Don't remember and too old and stay home then you don't hear anybody else talk then you don't know. Like you stay and you just don't remember. It's like if you know how to drive a car and you can go anywhere and you hear people say and do things so you know. When they are gone, they leave me home and baby-sit, then I don't hear they say anything, so you don't know.

Thank you for your time.

Come once and thanks. Come once and I don't even know what to say. Don't think anything. Too old and don't know like I said just stay home and don't go places and hear them talk about smart things and other things. I don't hear them, so I don't know what to talk. I'm just happy to see you and their land and just relax and don't do anything. The fathers went to go be a soldier and the children would go to the garden with the other kids. It was a poor life. We stayed there for ten years then the army came and killed our land and country. They took us to another country next to Laos. We saw Vang Pao there and then he fled to America. We still stayed there for another ten years. We sneaked out of there by a help of this guy. I stayed in this small country for about a month. We were really poor. When we were in Thailand we were poor, we always been poor. My son and I would run, but I couldn't run anymore. I was really tired. So I told my son to make a fire and I'll just stay behind. My son wouldn't let at all. When we got to Laos we were really poor too! We were also very afraid of the soldiers too. When we would go to the garden we would be so afraid to work. We traveled to Thailand to Laos to Vietnam. When we got to Vietnam they were just done eating their New Year. Then we went to Xieng Khouang. Xieng Khouang's people were just beginning to eat their New Year when we got there. We stayed there for only a year. Then we were really happy because we finally got to America! It was very good because we got to eat. We were really happy! That's all I have to say.

Can you tell us about your children?

My children?

Yes.

I have 3 sons and 1 daughter that live in Laos. The sons, I lost one son. My sons and I have been living here for five years.

How many sons and daughters do you have in Laos?

I have one daughter and one son.

Can you tell us about your favorite Hmong custom or tradition?

I don't know how to say it! I'm too old now.

Is there a favorite Hmong Legend that you have or a Hmong Legend that not many people know?

Legends? I don't know how to tell them at all. I didn't have a mother or father, so nobody could tell me about them. If no one tells you any then, how can you know of any?

What did you do when the fighting started and the Communists were after you?

The Communists? Well, we lived in Laos and they didn't know anything. If we had the chance to hit them, we would, and they wouldn't know what hit them.

Do you have a message for young people today about being Hmong?

The boys take care and get a good education. You boys are smart and live in this country of opportunity, then you know what's good for you. You are smart so stay in school. If you stay in school you can achieve what ever you want and do what ever you want. That's it. We are very old and we don't know what is going on and can't speak English so we need your help.

Is there anything else that you want to tell us or forgot to tell us?

No. I didn't forget to tell you anything. I am old and stay home, and so I don't know what else to say. Staying home and taking care of children all day just makes you ignore it all so you can't hear anything, so I don't know what else to say.