

TELLING OUR STORIES, FINDING OUR ROOTS ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW SUMMARY FORM

Date of interview	29th September 2020
Location of interview	Remote
Name of interviewee	Emily Hamilton
Name of interviewer	Rose Young French
Length of interview	01:03:00
File format, storage format	-

Tags:

Vietnam ; First Generation Story ; Language ; Language Learning ; Identity ; Family ; Community ; Bideford

Interviewee's wishes regarding use of interview

None.

Interviewer's notes / any issues on recording

The audio for Emily's interview is of poor quality and is therefore not hosted in the SoundCloud playlist

Linked objects/photographs.

Emily begins the interview by describing her ao dai, a traditional tunic worn mainly for Vietnamese New Year

Key themes and topics covered in the interview

Theme / topic	Timecode on recording
Ao Dai	[00:00:45 - 00:03:27]
Birth Name	[00:03:39 - 00:04:35]
Moving from Vietnam to the UK	[00:04:35 - 00:10:34]
Initial Response to Devon	[00:10:44 - 0:13:58]
Life in Bideford	[00:13:58 - 00:26:58], [00:47:01 - 00:49:58]
Language	[00:26:58 - 00:33:26]
Identity	[00:33:26 - 00:40:54]
Family and Community	[00:40:54 - 00:47:01]
Changes in Bideford	[00:49:58 - 00:53:13]
Message to Listeners and Hope for the Future	[00:53:23 - 01:00:01]

Interview highlights

"I think is quite important for show up my son to know Asian culture."

"Yeah, I cannot move anywhere. My husband said, like, Oh, in the future can we move to Exeter? Or or or Newbury? I said no. I got enough moving. I love here now; I got friend, I got job. I don't want to move anywhere. I love here." [00:49:36 - 00:49:58].

Interview summary

Emily moved from Hanoi, Vietnam to Bideford around six and a half years prior to her interview. She currently works in the beauty industry in Barnstaple.

Emily begins the interview by describing her ao dai, a traditional tunic worn mainly for Vietnamese New Year, or Get [00:00:45 - 00:03:27]. She then talks briefly about her birth name, which means water, and the circumstances behind its changing [00:03:39 - 00:04:35].

Next, Emily discusses her family's decision to move to the UK to care for her mother-in-law, and describes her initial fears when she arrived, finally noting: "I'm scared and I just said with myself what I am doing here?" [00:04:51 - 00:08:58]. However, she asserts quickly that "It only take me six months, only take me six months. And and it's definitely I love Devon now. I don't want to move anywhere else." [00:08:48 - 00:08:58]. She also describes her journey from Vietnam with her son, and the struggle she faced at an airport checkpoint upon arrival in the UK [00:09:07 - 00:10:34].

Following this, Emily begins to discuss her initial feelings upon arriving in Devon, and to relate the difficulties she initially had in finding a job there [00:10:44 - 0:13:58]. This leads her to talk about what she likes about living in Bideford ("We've got so many beach around in the summer we can do a lot of things. And then people are lovely") [00:15:06 - 00:18:09], and to contrast this to her experience of life in Hanoi [00:17:09 - 00:18:09]. She talks briefly of things she misses from Vietnam, such as "for first year I miss food because, because I don't know where they sell the Asian food." [00:18:28 - 00:18:59]. Though she does note that she gets to travel back there regularly [00:19:14 - 00:19:50].

Emily moves on to talk about the community in Bideford [00:20:13 - 23:44], and particularly an Asian heritage group, with whom she meets regularly, noting that "We got the party, we start to chat, talking about life, about what going on. And sometimes we invite our friends in in Asian group to to the house to cook different, more different types of food." [00:22:27 - 00:26:58]. Within this, she states particularly that "I think is quite important for show up my son to know Asian culture."

Next, Emily begins to discuss languages, and to consider the importance to her of speaking Vietnamese as well as English [00:26:58 - 00:28:29]. She then talks about Vietnamese traditions that she has upheld in her life in the UK; primarily the close family contact ("For the Vietnamese, the family is really really important.") [00:29:14 - 00:33:26]. Within this, she also recalls a part of Vietnamese tradition surrounding the anniversary and remembrance of a loved one's death.

Emily then describes what she considers to be her personal identity: "So my when I were young, my family quite poor, so I had to live far away of family, and I I only be strong. I can - everyone can put me anywhere, on the road, everywhere, I can live. Because I know who I am. Only one thing with me, I am scared. But no one can know I'm scared. I am strong, more strong than who who am - I am. Yeah. And nothing can scare me." [00:34:51 - 00:37:28]. She describes also her response to racism, "Well, I never say anything when people be horrible to me. I always walk away with smile and things and say thank you." [00:37:28 - 00:40:54].

Emily returns to discussing the importance of her family to her life, talking particularly about the daily phone calls that she has with her mother [00:42:05 - 00:44:54]. She then returns to discussing gatherings that she has with the local Asian community briefly [00:45:53 - 00:47:01] before turning to her hobbies, which include her work, art and walking [00:47:01 - 00:49:27]. Emily then reiterates how much she enjoys living in Bideford: "Yeah, I cannot move anywhere. My husband said, like, Oh, in the future can we move to Exeter? Or or or Newbury? I said no. I got enough moving. I love here now; I got friend, I got job. I don't want to move anywhere. I love here." [00:49:36 - 00:49:58].

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