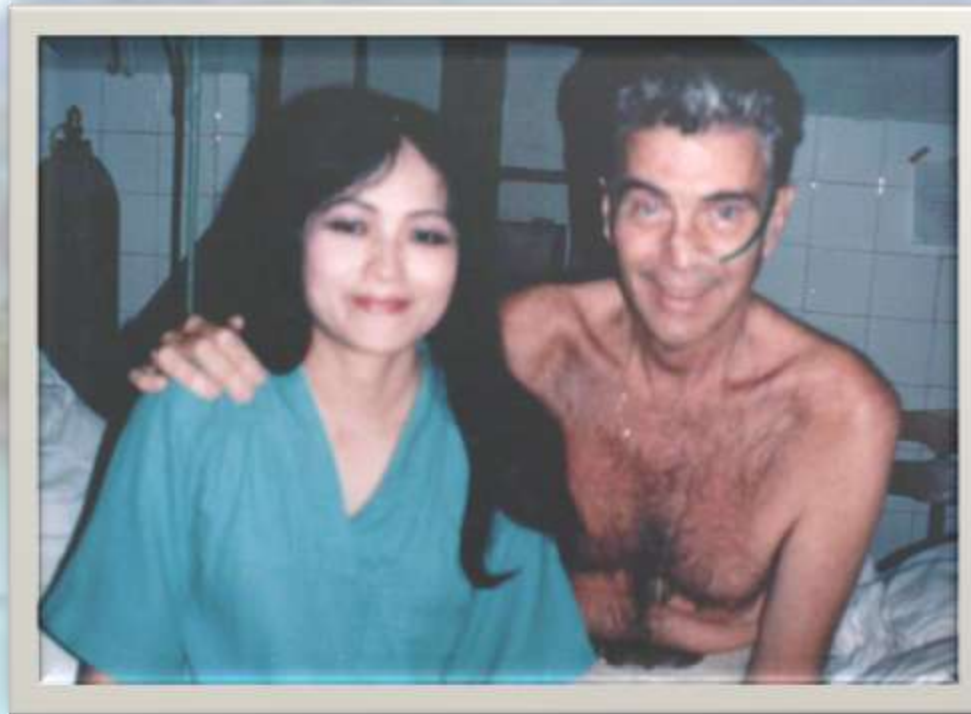




Recollections of our trip(s) to Hanoi, Vietnam July 1989 and July 1991



John Thomas Linkins III and Dr.Dao Anh Son...the first believer in Hanoi
This slide presentation is dedicated to my late husband JT who passed away June 15, 2001

Zabine Maryam (Linkins) Van Ness
January 2012

Meeting in Haifa in preparation for my first trip to Vietnam in 1989



Member of the Universal House of Justice Hugh
Chance and his lovely wife Margaret.



Member of the Universal House of Justice
Mr. Hushmand Fatheazam



Hand of the Cause Mr. Furutan



Universal House of Justice
member Mr. Hooper Dunbar



Universal House of Justice
member Dr. David Ruhe

It all started as a mission...1989



My government assigned translator and friend



My residence surrounded by a wall and barb-wire



Working with some orphanages



Hoh Chi Minh City, July 9th, 1989

Meeting with the friends to celebrate



Entrance to my compound and where Le Ha and I met for the first time.



**First visit:
Commemoration of the
Martyrdom of the Bab**



Meeting the friends filled with love and hope



Le Loc with his most dedicated wife and mother



Many of the friends at our gathering



Le Loc's mother and me

**Coming back for our second trip to Vietnam
July 1991..the first leg, meeting with the NSA and Friends in
Malaysia**



A gathering with the women



**National Baha'i Center in
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**



Meeting with the NSA in Malaysia



**Assisting with Children's and
Junior Youth Classes**



First of all our dignitary visits in Hoh Chi Minh City



Meeting with Orphanage Directors and staff.



Meeting with the Minister of Education and friends



Outside one of the Orphanages



Luncheon and welcome at one of the orphanages. Note TK Lee front left (NSA Malaysia) and Sherrie Clark.

Meeting with Counselors Zena Sorabjee and Olye along with NSA member T.K. Lee from Malaysia



Meeting finally with the Baha'is in Hoh Chi Minh City again



We are all so excited to make new and confirm old friendships



John T. Linkins and Le Loc



Consultation with both Counselors



Counselor Olye and Le Ha family

How can we forget?



Le Loc



JT and T.K.Lee



Counselors Sorabjee and Olye
with the women

DA NANG CITY - HAN RIVER



Meting with the friends in Da Nang



And now off to Hanoi...all by ourselves



Being tourists at first...but



JT is becoming ill

JT will collapse this night and is rushed into a "foreigners" hospital.

Behind the scenes the Baha'is in Hoh Chi Minh City arise to the rescue



Members of “The Baha'i Liaison Committee” receive my desperation call from Hanoi that JT is on the brink of passing away as per his doctors. No antibiotics available plus much needed medications. (See letters below.)



Le Ha is chosen to volunteer to bring up much needed medications which eventually will save JT's life. Due to the crisis, time was of relevance and so Le Ha gets on a plane without any travel papers and documentations needed at that time. We all considered **it a sheer miracle** that he was able to enter our hospital let alone meet with “foreigners”. History in Hanoi will reflect as time goes by on the power of the Holy Spirit send directly by Baha'u'llah that will usher in its first believer.

Let me state here the courage it took for Le Ha to take on this mission. He had been a pilot just like JT and there was a brotherly love between them instantly upon meeting earlier in Hoh Chi Minh City. He responded to an SOS call just like any brother would. Yet, he took his own personal life into his hands. He had become a Bahai in “Reeducation Camp” and knew the risk he took by walking a difficult line. It was truly a sacrifice that few of will have the courage to display.. Only the love of Baha'u'llah sustained him all along this amazing journey.



J.T. collapses, and arrives at Bach Mai Hospital and meets his most caring nurse Dr. Dao Anh Son



Dr. Dao Anh Son is assigned to take care of JT. She was most dedicated and loving and deeply caring. We could speak some German as she had been trained in East Germany some years earlier. She fed him and oversaw his well being. One of the issues was that one and the same needle was shared with all patients and therefore he contacted TB during this time. On his last night Anh Son came in and JT shared that "golden lights danced on her shoulders" for the longest time. Le Ha can attest to this miracle, but they waited for me until I arrived in the morning for her to declare. So all three of us could be together during this historic moment. She was aware that she was part of making Baha'i history. I had a Baha'i book on me and entered the date of July 27, 1991 to remember the exact day. She lovingly whispered in my ear "I will become a soldier for Baha'u'llah". Two new Baha'i sister became one for a split second in time. A moment never to be forgotten. A most memorable teaching team under the least of normal but destined circumstances.

Finally the time has come to leave and be grateful....farewells.



JT and his doctors and nurses. Note Dr. Doa Anh Son at the far right. He still had a raging fever and contacted TB, but anxious to get home. Note how J.T.'s bed is much too small and his legs are unable to stretch out. It was hard on him as he was very short of breath. He originally was at a "Foreigners hospital", but the oxygen tank had given out and he was turning blue. The decision was made to put him into a small van and rush him to Bach Mau Hospital, though the doctors told me his chances of survival was slim. Many government officials came to visit him as nobody wanted this to turn into an "Incident" during this sensitive time of diplomacy. It had been an Air Force pilot during the Korean War and all wanted this to end well. The power was off at night and Le Ha slept on the floor next to him and watch out over him. He also organized food for us as the hospital did not provide dinners.

The many "Thank You's"



Departure time...to Bangkok Hospital



It took a personal visit and plea with the Director of Thai Airline to grant permission for JT to be allowed on board. He gave it most reluctantly. JT was carried aboard the plane and Dao gave him one more shot to survive the flight. Then off to the Bangkok hospital. It took months for him to finally recover. He was on oxygen for weeks after our arrival in Honolulu. J.T. and I always felt our Viet-Nam visit was the high point of our lives.

Dr. Dao Anh Son, her husband, and their children.
The first family to become Baha'is in Hanoi!



THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

BAHÁ'Í WORLD CENTRE

Department of the Secretariat

15 September 1991

Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Linkins
Rainbow Families
32 Kainehe Street
Kailua, Hawaii 96734
U.S.A.

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

Your facsimile letter dated 12 August 1991 to Mr. Hugh Chance has been referred to the Universal House of Justice.

The House of Justice deeply appreciates your detailed report and the assistance you have given to the Bahá'í community in Vietnam, particularly by making contacts with influential persons. It was especially moved to learn of the circumstances surrounding the declaration of Dr. Dao Anh Son in Hanoi.

For your information, regarding official recognition of the Faith in Vietnam, the House of Justice has advised the Spiritual Assembly of Malaysia to inform the Bahá'ís in Vietnam to separate the issues of recognition and the return of confiscated Bahá'í property, and to concentrate for the time being on obtaining recognition.

We look forward to receiving reports of any future developments that may arise with your contacts in Vietnam. Kindly copy the Spiritual Assembly of Malaysia on any such reports. Rest assured that the House of Justice will supplicate in the Sacred Shrines that Bahá'u'lláh may guide and sustain you in your teaching efforts. We trust that Mr. Linkins has fully recovered from his illness.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

For Department of the Secretariat

cc: International Teaching Centre
Counsellors Lena Sorabjee and John Fozdar
Spiritual Assembly of the
Bahá'ís of Malaysia



Universal House of Justice member
Hugh Chance



Florence Avis with Zabine

September 10, 1991

J.T. Linkins
Rainbow Families,
32, Kainehe Street,
Kailua, Hawaii 96734
U.S.A

Dear Baha'i Friends,

Thank you very much for your detailed fax of August 12, 1991. It brought great joy to my heart to read it on my return from Switzerland where I was at the Landsegg Academy attending a Conference for the Deputies of Huququ'llah from all over the world.

First of all I must congratulate you that you were there at the time the first Baha'i of Hanoi accepted the Faith. Baha'u'llah must have made a J.T ill for this purpose but I do hope that he has fully recovered and is now back to his usual work.

I also got a letter from Le Ha and he gave me also some of the details. Every step of his coming to Hanoi and being there with you, was one miracle after another. He himself is really over-awed by all that took place and saw how Baha'u'llah was protecting him at every step of the way, as he was undertaking a journey which he had not done before and had no idea how he was going to be able to contact you. After seeing you Le Ha went to Hue which is his home-town and met friends who wanted to hear about the Baha'i Faith and he spoke to his mother Danang about the Cause of Baha'u'llah. From there he went to meet the Baha'is and they were also enthused seeing him. Let us hope that the Danang Baha'is will undertake to visit Hanoi regularly in order to meet the new Baha'i there and also to give the message to many others and form a large community soon.

Le Loc's daughter Ruhhiyih is very happy with her job. I got a letter from her as well. She is also looking forward to be able to go to Hanoi sometime in the near future for work. I am sure she will prove to be extremely useful to you in your work and I know that it will help the Faith in the kind of work that she has been assigned. Truly the Baha'is in Vietnam must be thankful to both of you for having taken so much trouble to help them in all their activities. They look forward to seeing you as often as possible. Especially when you are taking your bags full of so many goodies!

I would appreciate receiving a line from you to say that J.T. is in the best of health.

With loving Baha'i greetings,

Yours in His Service

Zena Sorabjee
Zena Sorabjee



JT and Dao Anh Son..the first believer in Hanoi



Counselor Zena Sorabjee and Zabine

25 June 1992

Dear Fabine,

I'm so happy that we had a chance to get together while you were here for the Commemoration. Enclosed are the calling cards which I copied for our files. Sorry it took me so long to get them back to you. An official letter is in "the works" to you acknowledging the video tapes. A copy of the one on Vietnam is being made for you.

It is so exciting that the friends in Ho Chi Minh can meet together - and that it is in writing!

I am off for a week tomorrow to visit my sister in Germany.

I'll look forward to your next visit - my treat for dinner next time.

Much love,
Florence



Handwritten Vietnamese Prayer Books...copy given to the Universal House of Justice



T.P HCM ngày 14-9-91

Allak O Akka.

Đạo hữu kính mến.
LINKINS

Xin cảm tạ Thượng Đế đã giúp ta
nhau biết nhau là anh em trong một
gia đình. Người ở HAWAI người ở
NAM mà gần bó thân thiết nhau như
ruột thịt.

Lúc khỏe của Đạo hữu là nỗi
lặng nhứt khi được tin Đh năm
trở lại Bệnh Viện Quốc tế HANOI. Tôi
tiếc không được kề cận bên giường để
sớm sóc cho Đh. Trong lúc bệnh hoàn
May thay ông trên đã đáp ứng những
câu nguyện cầu khẩn. Nay Đh đã
phục, thật là một niềm vui mừng
gia đình ta.

Trước đó, trong lúc chờ tin về
khỏe của Đh tôi tình cờ đã may mắn
đọc được một mẫu tin ở một tạp chí

sau đó Đh Lê Hà có bài Lai mới chi
trở như ngày ở HANOI.

Tôi rất kính phục Đh, tuy trong cơn
hoàn mà đã giúp cho nhiều người biết
đạo và có một người chấp nhận đạo tin
Baha'i. Có Đh Anh Sơn đã có thư cho
tôi với lời biết ơn Đh đã giúp đỡ được
trẻ nhỏ, ơn sự dạy của Thượng Đế.

Thỉnh chúc Đh. nhanh chóng bình phục.
Cầu xin ở trên ban nhiều ơn phúc đến
với Đh cùng bạn quyến.

Đh. Trương Ngọc Lương

Truong Ngoc Luong
249/126 Ky Thai To A10
Ho Chi Minh City
Sept 17. 1991

Allah-O Akha.

TO: Mrs & Mr LINKINS

881 AKUMU PLACE, KAILUA, HI 96734 USA

Dear Mrs & Mr LINKINS.

Give praise to God that helped us to recognize each other as brothers in one family, we Baha'i in Viet Nam and in Hawaii have embraced friendly as relatives.

When hearing that you were at Bach-Mai Hospital in HANOI, your health was our greatest anxiety. I regret that not to be with you to help you in your illness.

Fortunately, the Realm on High has responded our sincer prayers, you now are on the mend that is the greatest joy in our great family.

Before that while waiting for the news of your health, I had

luckily and incidently read your acknowledgment to the Hospital on a magazine that gave all of us a great sense of relief in our heart (here with the photocopy of that page of magazine)

Laterly, Mr. LE HA told me the details of your days in HANOI. I certainly respected and amired your courage, though in that serious condition, you have opened the faith to a lot of people and one enrolment Dr. DAO ANH SON has sent letters to us with a gratitude to you that you helped her to know the faith of GOD.

With the best wishes for your health.

I pray GOD bestow you and your family much blessing.

yours, sincerely



Ho Chi Minh City
September 9th 1992

Allah - U - Abha

Dear Mrs. Zabine Linkins

I found it difficult to write a letter in English. I tried many times and today this letter is complete. Please forgive my retardation.

We've heard that Mr. Linkins be back for work. We felt less worried.

On that very ^{afternoon} day we received the news from Mrs. Clark's daughter. I was very worried and decided to fly to Ha Noi the following morning. I rode my motorcycle to friends, informed the news and talked about my decision, but many friends suggested that if Mr. Ha went he could do it. It was completely proved.

We at home could do nothing but pray God for Mr. Linkins. All has passed but it was certainly an unforgettable experience mixed up with tears and smile. I can partly understand your feelings at that time.

I also heard about the good news. I really felt moved. Mr. Linkins could teach in such situation and succeeded. He had done great thing that we haven't been able to do for many years. I already wrote her letter (Mrs. Das Anh).

After your leaving, I tried to contact with Mrs. Clark. I phoned many times to ask for information and came to see her daughter and her son-in-law. They told me that she would not return until the last of August. I gave them the telephone number

and ask Mr. Thai to call my sister anytime
Mrs. Clark returned. I was busy the
whole last week of August with the exam
in school. When I came to that house
again early September I was informed that
Mr and Mrs Thai have gone to the United
States, Mrs Clark has gone to Thailand
and she would return to Hanoi, rent a
room and staying there for long.

If I go to Hanoi myself, it'll take me
3 days to go by train (from HCM → Hanoi).

If I go by plane, the journey will
cost at least 100 dollars. I don't
know what to do.

I wish very much to hear
from you and Mr. Linkins. Please
write to me.

We always remember you in our
prayer

With warmest Bahá'í love.

Sherrie Clark and Le Ha



Sherrie Clark in Vietnam. It was due to her medical mission with orphanages in Vietnam that Le Ha was able to bring up antibiotics and medical supplies that eventually saved JT's life.



Le Ha...we shall be eternally grateful to him

July 24, 1991

Allah. O. Abba

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Linkins,

We are all praying for Mr. Linkin's health, and wish that God will bless us with the good news of your safe return to Hawaii.

The brothers and sisters here asked ^{that} Mr. Ha should immediately go there to see if he can be of any help to you. At first we thought that our Rubiyqih should go, but Mr. Ha can go, so it is better.

We are praying and wishing that Mr. Ha will bring back good news very soon.

Nguyễn Văn Lợi, Lê Lộc,
Trần Thu, Cường Châu, Lê Hà, Trương Mạnh,
Trương Ngọc Sương and others are waiting for the good news concerning Mr. Linkin's health.

With warmest Bahá'í Love.



Twenty Years later... 1991-2011

Date: Tue, 27 Dec 2011 11:08:52 +0700



Dear beloved Mrs Zabine,

First of all, we wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and we'd like to express our deep sorrow to the passing of our beloved Mr J.T Linkins. He has come back to the Abha Kingdom but we have no information till now. Please understand our situation - the restriction from the government at that period of time.

The reason makes us missing both of you is that the next Ridvan (28-29 April 2012) we have a fifth National Convention that will be held in Hanoi, at the same time we will celebrate the 20 year the Baha'i Faith presenting in Hanoi - the capital city that Mr J.T Linkins and you have spent some golden time in serving the Cause of God. Both of you become the first Baha'is to help the Baha'i community in Hanoi of having the first Baha'i believer named Dao Anh Son in the history of the Baha'i Faith development in the North of Vietnam. Mrs Dao Anh Son is a nurse, who taking care Mr J.T Linkins during staying in Bach Mai hospital at that time. Later on her husband Mr Lam Duc Hung, a doctor, is also a Baha'i believer.

Please be informed that we have a restriction till 2007 when the Government grants the Baha'i Community of Vietnam a certificate of religious activities. One year later, in July 2008 we have a full recognition decision signed by the Government and now we can serve the Cause of God as normally.

We write to you this email and hoping that you will be in Ha Noi with us at the great joyful event will be held on 28-29 April 2012.

May God bless you all,

See you,

Nguyen Dinh Thoa
Secretary of NSA of Vietnam

