

defection benefit Phuc

had saved her life.

Her country's communist government had other plans for Phuc however. Journalists from outside the country wanted to know what became of "the girl in the picture." The government used Phuc's fame as a propaganda tool to discredit American involvement in the war.

"They took away my study," she said. "They wanted me to work for them, speak for interviews. I didn't want to. I said let me study, please, this is my dream.

"In this way, I became a victim again."

In 1986, the government sent Phuc to Cuba where she studied English and Spanish at Havana University. It was there that she met fellow student Toan

Phuc, the man who would later become her husband.

It was in 1989, when the couple was in Moscow on their honeymoon that Phuc hatched a plan to escape her country's grasp forever.

Enroute back to Cuba, the couple's plane had one stopover in Gander, Nfld. Phuc convinced her husband to defect and start a new life in Canada.

"He was scared. If we couldn't stay, we would be put in prison in Vietnam. If we could stay we would have nothing.

"We didn't know anything about Canada. I had to have freedom. I couldn't stand it any longer."

Now a Canadian citizen, Phuc and her husband live in Ajax, Ont. with their two children and Phuc's parents.

Phuc now travels the world as good-

will ambassador for UNESCO and chairs the Chicago-based Kim Foundation to help child victims of war.

A new book by Denise Chong, *The Girl in the Picture*, is bringing Phuc's story to an international audience.

Phuc recognizes her life would be very different if that famous picture had never been taken.

"The picture has changed my life forever," she said.

"Sharing my story with people, that is my mission. I want to let people everywhere know that war is terrible and we need peace and help each other to prevent the same thing from happening again."

Phuc speaks again tonight at the Westman Centennial Auditorium at 7 p.m. Admission is free.

Doing it right



BRUCE BUMSTEAD/BRANDON SUN

Andre Bolduc explains refurbishing techniques to a gathering of North American piano technicians as his son, Christian Bolduc, block planes a section of a soundboard from Brandon University's 1923 Steinway & Sons grand piano on Thursday. The refurbishing of the piano, including the re-capping of the bridges, will be completed on Friday. The process costs about one-fifth of what it would cost to replace the piano.

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