



ISB NETWORK NEWS

Volume 22

June, 1996

My Turn

by Patsy Foisie Schiff '73

We arrived there in August, 1966, not long after my eleventh birthday. It was our first move away from home. For the rest of my life, my time would be divided into "before 1966" and "after 1966". I was a home loving child, and this change in my life, for good and bad, has been a major factor in who I have become. I passionately resented the move but I could not express my anger about it. All that anger got directed at Bangkok.

I have always remembered the rats, the snakes, the tokays, constant wolf whistles from men in the streets, the ubiquitous prostitutes, watching the falangs in the immigration jail as we applied for new visas... I remember traffic, heat, and pollution. On a trip away from Bangkok once, I was struck by the sight of the pathetic Kodiak bear up to its neck in the water in the sun of the Saigon zoo; there was a living metaphor if I ever saw one.

It is only in recent years that I have started to enjoy the good memories again. I remember the special things that made my life in Bangkok unique. I loved the lotus blossoms in the klongs, the noise and freedom of the samlars (especially when crossing over railroad tracks). I loved the sights of the Sunday Market, where one could buy gems or honey bears, an African gray parrot or dozens of tiny wild birds with red throats. How could I have forgotten the smells of jasmine, durian and nam pla, or the taste of mango, kao phut, or coconut milk curry at the Oriental? The Buddha collection at the Art Institute of Chicago is nothing compared to what we saw as we stepped over door jams in temples (so as not to let the evil spirits in) and saw Buddhas through the haze of joss sticks, protected from the blinding sun, with flowers everywhere. Julie Fluker convinced me to eat klong potato showered with sugar that looked like kosher salt, which we bought from the vendor in front of the school who had a big smile and no fingernails. I loved Jim Thompson's silk store back when he was still alive. I loved going to Chinatown to search for the man who made riding boots so I could ride at the Polo Club. We had a few sources of sanity in that insane city: the Two Vikings Restaurant, to which we frequently fled after car accidents; the Erawan Hotel for ice cold nam manao and ice cold air conditioning; the German doctor who was an old China hand and could diagnose every kind of jungle rot that the climate visited upon us. I loved my friends who came to Bangkok and then left after two years, taking half my world away every year, as we stayed on and on.

The experience of Bangkok was intensified for many of us by the experiences of adolescence. So many of my memories of those years

are of boyfriends and new dresses, Valentine's Day dances at hotel ballrooms, a Halloween dance dressed as an angel. Everyone's song seemed to be either "Leaving on a Jet Plane" or "The Letter". We had a lot of parties saying good-bye to people at Don Muang. I was too young to go to the old Teen Club by Lumpini Park, where James Garner once visited during a U.S.O. tour, but I spent plenty of time at the newer Teen Club (Have any of the Pettigrews become professional entertainers?). One of the best parties of my life was the night the steel band played, I think in 1971.

Everyone travelled, and we saw friends all over the world, often by accident. We saw Cort L. Anderson in Teheran, Wendy Michael in London and in Vientienne, Annette Papazian in Cairo, Tony Grady in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the Doggetts in Penang, Mike McMurdo in Honolulu, Sue Richmond and Barbie Watson in Virginia. I still look for ISB classmates in airports when I travel. The question is, would I still recognize them? Would they recognize me?

For years, I would never even go to a Thai restaurant. I didn't want to "go back" there in any way. Now I'm finally ready to share with my children stories of Bangkok, of Loy Krathong and the green light of the sky before the rain, and of water skiing in Pattaya as the sun set. And I'm finally ready to go to an ISB reunion.

Patsy Foisie Schiff attended ISB from 1966 through 1971 (6th through 10th grades). Patsy's picture above is from the 1970 Erawan. Patsy currently lives near Chicago, is married, is a lawyer, but is presently being a full time mom to her three children Annie (10), Louie (8) and Becky (5). For a recent photo of Patsy, turn the page.

Patsy, thanks so much for writing down your memories of life overseas (Bangkok in particular) and sending them in to be published. Anyone wishing to contribute to the ISB Network News can submit an article to me at the address listed on page 2. Please try to send along a current photograph and an Erawan photograph (if possible).

Keith Hatton, '70 - editor.

IN THIS ISSUE

- ◆ *My Turn* Page 1
- ◆ *Dancing*Page2
- ◆ *Sore Kids* Page 2
- ◆ *For Sale* Page 2
- ◆ *Reunion News* .. Page 3
- ◆ *Reunion Music* .. Page 4

DANCIN' IN THE HEAT

Every day, thousands of cars, trucks, motorcycles and samlors jam Bangkok's streets ... a deafening din ... a brown haze that seems to stick to everything - created by black exhaust fumes ... the stifling heat ... the sweat ... the ANGER!

Enter the "Dream Team", a team of five Thai policemen who position themselves every day at the Rama II intersection through which passes the traffic headed for southern Thailand. The "Dream Team" moves traffic along with improvised hand/body signals that blend Western-style dancing (such as disco) along with classical Thai dance. Their goal is to make the best of a bad situation, for them and the motorists who have to endure arguably the worst traffic nightmare in the world ... and it's working!

As the team dances and spins to move the traffic along, they sign the word "LOVE" to the passing motorists who in turn smile and wave. When everything grinds to a halt, the motorists get out of their cars, and urge the policemen on. The children gather at the corners of the intersection to watch. One of the teams members was invited to perform at an international cultural festival in Germany.

LIGHTEN UP!

Thai students need to lighten up. Literally. The education ministry is imposing weight limits on their book bags. The ministry is concerned that primary school students, almost half of whom were found to be carrying bags weighing more than six pounds, were risking spinal damage.

Under a ministry order issued Monday (June 10, 1996), kindergarten students would not be allowed to carry more than 2.2 pounds - the equivalent of two hardcover children's books. Elementary students are limited to 4.4 pounds, and high school students are allowed to lug up to 6.6 pounds - the equivalent of the Manhattan yellow pages, a world almanac and a magazine.

(both articles reprinted/condensed from AP news stories)



"My Turn" contributor Patsy Foisie Schiff '73 with her daughter Annie and her dog Lollie

ISB HISTORICAL VIDEO PERSPECTIVES (REFLECTIONS)

This 28 minute video on the history of ISB is available for a \$10.00 donation payable to ISB Network, Inc., P.O. Box 3429, Annapolis, MD 21403. Many scenes of the new campus are included as well as interviews with graduates and teachers. Don't miss this well-produced documentary.

1994 ISB REUNION VIDEO

The 90 minute video contains clips of the 1994 Reunion in Clearwater, Florida. All of the major events are covered including the banquet/dance proceedings on Saturday night. To order this video, send a check in amount of \$24.95 payable to:

Creative Video Services, Inc.
1507-C Kaliste Saloom Road
Lafayette, Louisiana 70508
(318) 989-9310

Include your name, address, phone number(s), and the number of ISB 1994 Reunion Videos desired.

ISB NETWORK INC.
P.O. Box 3429
Annapolis, MD 21403
(410) 280-2421

Email: ISBNETWORK@aol.com

Purpose: ISB Network Inc. is a not-for-profit organization, dedicated to bringing Alumni of the International School of Bangkok together to support, maintain and create contacts between people who shared similar experiences in Thailand.

Rates: \$40.00 for 2 years. \$35.00 if paid before January 31 of the year of enrollment. Enrollment includes three (3) newsletters a year, a membership/address list with updates, access to voice mail (see below) and updates about reunions. Extra copies of the newsletter are available at \$2.50 each and membership lists at \$15.00 each. Membership lists are available to Network members only and are not to be used for commercial mailings. Call for advertising rates.

Access: Submit dues, by check, made out to ISB Network, to:

ISB Network, Inc.
P.O. Box 3429
Annapolis, MD 21403

Problems, questions, answers and/or general interest, contact the ISB Network Voice Mail at (410) 280-2421

Please mail, email, or fax newsletter articles to:

Keith Hatton
8201 Mapleville Road
Mount Airy, MD 21771
Phone: (301) 829-1344
Fax: (301) 829-0161
Email: Khatton@aol.com

ISB Network Officers

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Jim Hanlon '73
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Jed Davis '70
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THE ABSENTEE AMERICAN

by Carolyn Doggett Smith

This unique volume describes the impact of overseas living on Americans who spent at least some of their formative years abroad. Overseas life and reentry into the United States are described. The book provides a comprehensive view of the experiences and attitudes of repatriates. **If you lived overseas as a child, this book is about you!**

Write for more information, or, to order your copy, send \$12.95 plus \$2.50 for shipping and handling (worldwide, surface) to:

Aletheia Publications
38-15 Corporal Kennedy Street
Bayside, NY 11361

(New York State residents, please add sales tax)

REUNION 1996 UPDATE

It is six short weeks until the 1996 ISB Network Reunion in Dallas, Texas. The reunion will be held at the Harvey Hotel Addison (see the map on this page for the location of the hotel) July 25 through 28. Informal registration will be available for early arrivals on Thursday, July 25 beginning at noon in the Dogwood Room.

It is extremely important for everyone planning on attending to make their room reservations with the hotel by July 3. After this date, the hotel will release the block of rooms being reserved for the reunion to the general public. If you try to reserve a room after this date, you may either not get a room at all, or miss out on our special reunion rates of \$78/night for a single/double room or \$109/night for an executive or corporate suite.

The reunion registration fee must be paid in full by June 28. If you haven't already done so, please send your check payable to *Reunion Consultants* to:

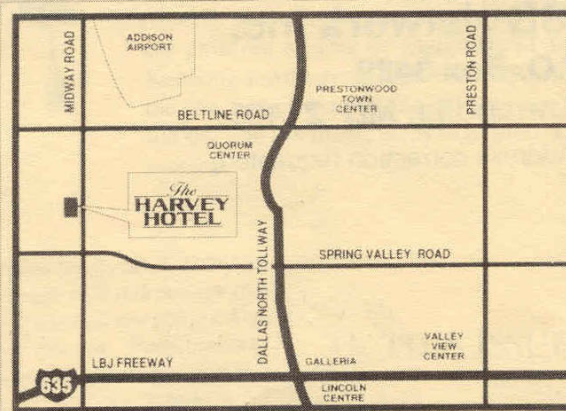
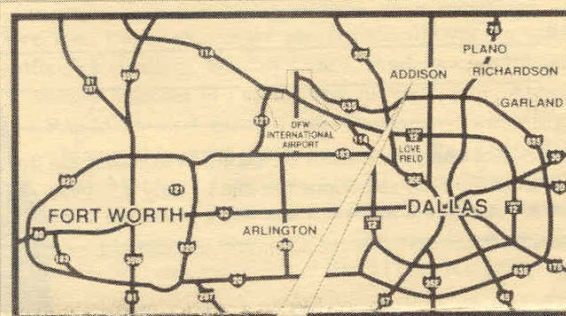
Reunion Consultants
P.O. Box 835308
Richardson, TX 75083-5308

If you have not received a reunion packet, contact Gila Montfort of Reunion Consultants immediately at (214) 479-1965.

The schedule of events is as follows:

- July 25 (Thursday) - Dinner at a Thai restaurant
- July 26 (Friday) - Golf tournament
 - group function with hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar (a great time to hang out with your friends)
 - Friday night out on the town
- July 27 (Saturday) - House Games
 - Lunch
 - Evening dinner and dancing with live music provided by the "Still Remains" - comprised of musicians who used to play in bands at the Bangkok Teen Club.
- July 28 (Sunday) - Breakfast buffet

For travel arrangements at special discount prices, please contact Dee Medlin James of Up, Up, & Away Travel at (800) 234-0841.



Location

Conveniently located on Midway Road, between LBJ Freeway (I-635) and Belt Line Road, The Harvey Hotel•Addison is perfectly situated for conducting business in North Dallas. In the heart of retail and entertainment districts, The Harvey Hotel is ideal for a weekend getaway.

Don't forget to fill out the music request sheet on the next page. SEE YOU IN DALLAS!!

MUSIC PROGRAMMING ASSISTANCE

We need your help with reunion music programming and/or reunion music play lists. This year, like the last reunion, we have decided to lease a sound system and program our own music. This music programming will be used in addition to the live music already slated. The more responses we get from you, the better the overall musical experience will be. Please take the time to cut out or duplicate this form, then list, in order, your ten favorite music selections.

Please Note: The "Still Remains", who performed at the last reunion, will be playing again this year. They have prepared four sets of music, but they will gladly give up playing time if other former teen club bands would like to perform. If you are interested, you must contact Dave Wilkerson by the end of June at (615) 242-2925 to make the appropriate arrangements.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Send the completed form to: David Wilkerson, c/o Techstar Services, 750 Cowan Street, Nashville, TN 37207, or fax it to (615) 242-9528. Your selections are due by July 15, 1996.

ISB Network Inc.**P.O. Box 3429****Annapolis, MD 21403**

(Address correction requested)

