



ISB NETWORK NEWS

Volume 24

September, 1997

The History of ISB

(We have had many requests to print the history of ISB. The historical information provided with the "Reflections" video is included below in its entirety.)

By the end of World War II, Bangkok held a small but growing foreign community. The wife of the pastor of Christ Church played a key role, along with a group of parents, in founding a school for children up to 10 years of age. A large part of the influx was composed of American diplomatic, commercial and military families. They needed good elementary schooling for their children. On October 27, 1950, the first of many meetings was held to discuss plans to establish a formal school providing both primary and secondary education for English-speaking children in Bangkok.

The United States Embassy offered the use of a building located on embassy grounds off Rajadamri Road. It was earlier used by the Japanese occupation forces as an officers club. With facilities for handling about 70 students, this school, known as the International Childrens Center (ICC), opened in May of 1951. ICC steadily grew with the foreign community. By 1953 there were over 200 students. The tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades were soon added. In 1957 six seniors received their diplomas. This was the first graduating class.

That same year, ICC changed its name to the International School Bangkok when an International School Association was formed to receive legal recognition from the Thai Government. The school wanted to further promote scholastic achievement and encourage extracurricular activities. By the close of the 1957-58 school year, ISB had more than 500 students. Despite the school's stunning growth and legal recognition, for nearly a decade the students attended classes in barely adequate wood framed buildings, now aging and decaying swiftly in the tropical climate. The library and half the classrooms were transformed into wading ponds during Bangkok's downpours. School assemblies, ceremonial events, and athletic competitions had stretched the grounds to its limits.

Although adjacent to the American Embassy, the school was considered quite a distance from the newly developing residential areas in Bangkapi and Bangsue. Clearly the need for a new school location was pressing. The Wattana Wittaya Academy, a girls' boarding school, offered to lease a corner of its property to ISB. That land was located between Sois 15 and 19 off Sukumvit Road. The offer was accepted and new construction was financed

by income accumulated from ISB's own excess operating expenses. The new campus cost nearly 3 million baht. It included two buildings - a classroom building and a gym. The architects for the new school were from the Ministry of Education of Thailand.

On a drizzly Bangkok morning, September 1, 1960, the International School Bangkok officially began classes at its new location on Soi 15. With over 550 students representing 25 nations, ISB was a truly international school. Its board membership drew from government, religious and private industry leaders. But student population and curriculum took on a distinctly American flavor. With such influence, ISB became fully accredited with the American Secondary Board of Education, with the Middle States School Association and became a member of the National Honor Society and the International Quill and Scroll Society.

Incredibly, before the first year was over at the new location, the increasing student body had once more outgrown the facilities. In 1962 and again in 1963, the U.S. Government donated funds to construct additional classroom buildings which were both completed by 1964 when student population exceeded 1,200.

In early 1965, the Vietnam War accelerated and many American government dependents were evacuated to Bangkok. And the escalating American forces in Vietnam boosted the number of families coming to Bangkok - and their children to ISB. A fourth multi-story classroom building was completed by the end of that year. Enrollment soared to 3,500 at the end of 1967 and a second campus for grades four through eight was soon opened in Bangsue. The largest enrollment in the school's history occurred in 1969 with 3,650 students.

Family-related activities were important to the foreign community and much civic and social life in Bangkok revolved around ISB. A school-supported Christmas charity drive, dubbed Operation Santa Claus, collected food, clothing and toys for the less fortunate children in the Chiang Mai area and every year the U.S. Air Force transported the toys and some ISB students to Chiang Mai for the event. Fashion shows featuring clothing designs of the local Thai silk and cotton companies abounded using ISB students on the fashion runways. Theme dances - Sadie Hawkins in the beginning of the year to break the ice, the Homecoming dance later, and

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Reunion '98 Update

AS MENTIONED IN THE PREVIOUS NEWSLETTER, THE ISB NETWORK BOARD VOTED TO HOLD THE 1998 REUNION AT A WEST COAST LOCATION. THE MOST PROBABLE SITE FOR THIS REUNION IS IN THE AREA OF LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA, BUT OTHER SITES IN CALIFORNIA, ARIZONA AND NEVADA ARE STILL BEING CONSIDERED. STAY TUNED FOR FURTHER UPDATES AS THEY BECOME AVAILABLE.

Dijaja (Hawk) Effendi '75 In Memorium

Our sympathy and love is extended to the family of Hawk Effendi '75. Dodie died in January after fighting cancer for six years. He will be missed by all who knew him, especially his classmates.

OSB "Gathering" Update

The 1997 Overseas Brats Gathering will be held at the Quality Hotel Riverview in Covington, Kentucky from Thursday, October 23 through breakfast on Sunday, October 26.

The cost for a hotel room is \$80/night and the registration fee for the "gathering" is \$145/person or \$220/couple. The registration fee includes: Friday and Saturday continental breakfast in the hospitality suite, full participation in all activities, "gathering guide", name badge, and a copy of the memory publication published about the "gathering". It does not include Thursday night dinner or lunch on Friday. The activities include a Friday night dinner/dance/cruise, a Saturday night dinner and dance, and all meals other than the exceptions noted above.

The registration fee can be:

1. Paid by check made payable to OVERSEAS BRATS, P.O. Box 29805, San Antonio, TX 78229-0805.
2. Paid by VISA, Master Card, Discover or American Express by sending the following information to the above address:

- a) Card Type (VISA, MC, etc)
- b) Name on the card
- c) Card Number & Expiration Date
- d) Dollar amount authorized
- e) The words "I authorize the amount charged" and PRINT your name.

Hotel reservations must be made by October 10, 1997. Call 1-800-292-2079 and mention that the reservation is for the "OVERSEAS BRATS Northern Kentucky Gathering".

Washington D.C. Benefit Dinner for AOSHS

The first annual Washington D.C. area dinner and dance to benefit the American Overseas School's Historical Society (AOSHS) will be held Saturday night, November 1, 1997 at the Hyatt Hotel at the Key Bridge in Arlington, Virginia.

This promises to be a fun social event where people can meet others who attended schools in other parts of the globe and share stories about their experiences. Everyone will also learn more about AOSHS which is a non-profit organization working hard to preserve and protect overseas school memorabilia and perform related historical research. All proceeds from this event will directly support AOSHS and the American Overseas Schools' Archives (AOSA), which is maintained by AOSHS.

If you wish to attend this benefit dinner/dance or want further information about the event, please email tastiger@visuallink.com or call 1-540-888-3072 between 9PM and 10:30PM Eastern Time and ask for Steve.

Bands Wanted

If you are an ISB alumnus, currently in a band, or can get one together, and wish to provide the live music for the Saturday evening Dinner/Dance at a future ISB reunion, please contact Dave Wilkerson '71 at (615) 242-2925. Live music was provided by ISB alumni at the past two reunions with great results.

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

email: ISBNETWORK@aol.com
Web: <http://members.aol.com/ISBNETWORK/isbn.html>

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:

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Phone: (301) 829-1344
Email: hatton@uu.net
or: Khatton@aol.com

ISB Network Officers

President:
David Wilkerson '71

Board of Directors:
Mimi Drake Parks '73
Jim Hanlon '73
Babette Trout Dammon '72
Jed Davis '70
Robert Bridges '70
John Dammon '69
Sarah Lynn Barringer '68

(The History of ISB - continued from the front page)

the Junior/Senior prom at year's end became bigger and bigger events. Many of these events quickly moved from the gymnasium at ISB to the many deluxe hotels that were sprouting up around Bangkok.

Also into the picture came a sleepy little fishing village in Chonburi Province called Pattaya which for many years had been a retreat for wealthy Bangkok people. Weekends saw families loaded into their vehicles for the four hour expedition to escape the heat of the city. Several new hotels sprouted up and many private bungalows were full almost every weekend. Families enjoyed the relaxing break from Bangkok, the serene atmosphere of the bay and offshore islands and fabulous fresh seafood at many local restaurants.

The Teen Club, a facility supported by the U.S. Government, was straining to capacity in its facility on Wireless Road a few blocks from the American Embassy. The Friday night movies and Saturday night dances brought in so many people they overflowed into the parking lot. Soon a new club was built on Soi Asoke (21) within walking distance of ISB. It featured a swimming pool and huge dining, dance and movie hall facilities. At times there were as many as four bands playing in rotation at the Teen Club.

The school also took on a new look during these boom years. The former open air sala was enclosed to make way for the art, music and industrial arts departments. Its original snack bar overwhelmed, the Foremost Company constructed a new facility with all the latest technology. Later, the gym and many of the classrooms were air conditioned. Larger student orchestra groups could be assembled and the music department grew rapidly.

The massive athletic field of ISB was a constant headache. Many a morning would find the indomitable patriarch of sports at ISB, Mr. P.E. Rajendra, walking its length checking for snakes before the first period of gym. Every year the track would be built up with sand and ash only to see it settle again after the monsoon season. It was a constant battle with the elements that was not won until the 1980's when the entire area was backfilled and lights for evening events were installed. Intramural sports competition was an important aspect of school life in these days. Owing to the lack of local competition within the students age groups, the school was divided into four teams or "houses" each with a name, flag and color. But the crowning athletic event of the school year was the Singapore Games in which ISB athletes challenged the teams from the Singapore American School (later the Singapore International School).

With the ebb of American military involvement in Southeast Asia and the fall of Saigon in 1975, the number of American families living in Bangkok declined. In 1976, the Bangsue campus was sold and the Intermediate School was moved to the Bangkok Soi 15 campus. For more than 10 years ISB's enrollment hovered around 1,200 students until the boom years of the late 1980's. Thailand then began to emerge as a newly industrialized nation bursting with development and foreign investment. With that came foreign

nationals from all over the world to live and work in Bangkok.

Enrollment began increasing once again. By 1988, the school's board of directors decided to move to a new campus in the northern sector of Bangkok, four times the size of the Soi 15 campus. In January, 1992, the 1,900 students representing 52 nationalities moved to this new campus. It is fitting that ISB made its new home on Soi Samakee ("samakee" in Thai means "togetherness"). For more than four decades, ISB has seen many nations, many races, many religions and many cultures coming together to learn. So many people have brought success to ISB - the board members, the administrators, the teachers and most of all, the students.

The Soi 15 campus is now a school operated by the United Nations, the Shack has been torn down and the site of the Soi 21 Teen Club is now a high rise condo.

Excerpts from the Journal of Joe Condrill

The Great ISB Demonstration On the Dress Code

January 11, 1971 - MONDAY - At school, I notice Mr. Gelband was waiting for any girl wearing pants. I heard that there were about 40 girls in pants that morning. In English Class for the most part, we discussed the current demonstration going on outside. At break that morning, Dave Keenan, the new Senior Class president told his fellow demonstrators to help him. As a result, my guess is that about 300 people went out. While walking home, I counted 12 Thai police in helmets (and riot gear) and a good crowd at the gate.

Sadie Hawkins Dance

November 19, 1971 - FRIDAY - Mr. Chin (our family driver) again drove me to school after supper, and we found no one there, so we went home to get the apple cider, then took off for the Polo Club for the Annual Sadie Hawkins Dance. When I arrived, it was just four of us - Rhicke Jennings, Becky Davis, and a friend of theirs. My job tonight was to sell and take tickets. For awhile Tina Chesna and Annette Papazian were also handy. Only one incident of real importance happened. Some guy took a taxi driver's cap and caused a hassle. The guy, a freshman, was apprehended by Mr. Wright. I saw all sorts of people but I danced only a couple of times tonight. When the announcement time came, people were voted into their respective Daisy Mae and Li'l Abner categories. The Daisy Mae's of the following classes were: Freshmen - Carol Howard; Sophomore - Kim Groscost; Junior - Pam Monroe; Senior - Pam Jenkins. As for the Li'l Abners, all I recall is Junior Tony Grady and Senior Gerry Hubbard. I announced the races and I talked with members of the band. The band tonight was "The Flesh and Blood". I helped to clean up and helped Rhicke Jennings count some of the money. I think on the whole, the Junior Class made 6000 baht (\$300.00).....More next newsletter

THE SHACK MERCANTILE

An ISB Network store has been established named "The Shack Mercantile". Below you will find a price list on items from The Shack. If you would like to order items, please send your check payable to The ISB Network, Inc. to David Wilkerson C/O Techstar Services, 750 Cowan St. # 9, Nashville, TN. 37207 (615) 242-2925. All proceeds go to the ISB Network.

Store Item	Price
Black T-Shirt with Gold ISB Logo	\$14.00
Grey T Shirt with "I Survived Youth In Asia" Dallas 96 Limited edition	\$11.00
Black Track Shirt (tank top) with Gold Panther and ISB lettering	\$17.00
Black Track Shorts with Gold Panther and ISB lettering	\$17.00
Black or Gold Sweat Shirt with ISB Logo (please specify color)	\$20.00
White Golf Shirt with ISB Logo	\$16.00
Black or White Baseball hat with ISB Logo (please specify color)	\$ 6.00
White Golf towel with ISB Logo	\$ 6.00
Black Bicycle Shorts with ISB Logo	\$22.00
White (button up) Baseball Shirt with ISB Logo	\$18.00

Add \$2.00 for each T-Shirt and \$3.00 for each Sweat Shirt when ordering XXL.

Add \$3.00 S&H for U.S.Postal Service or \$5.00 for UPS. If ordering from overseas, please contact Dave Wilkerson by letter, e-mail or phone first to determine the shipping, handling and duty amounts (where applicable) to add to the order.

A current "Shack" item and price list is always available by visiting the ISB Network home page at <http://members.aol.com/ISBNETWORK/isbn.html>.

ISB Network Inc.

P.O. Box 3429

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(Address correction requested)

