



# ISB NETWORK NEWS

Volume 45

July 2005



## Back to Bangkok – After 47 Years

***By Tom McGlasson '61 (tmmatt@bloomington.in.us)***



I spent my freshman year in high school in Bangkok, Thailand in 1957-58. I attended the International School Bangkok, and the significance and importance of that one year has multiplied many times over the years. I developed lasting friendships; I received an education and had experiences which gave me a different and broadened perspective on the world and the people in it; and, I have acquired many new friendships through the ISB Alumni Network with whom I have an immediate bond because of that experience. For 46 years, I said, "I will go back to Bangkok." And I told my wife for 40 years that I would take her to Bangkok. When the first notice of the 2005 trip from Maile Lindley was distributed among the ISB Alumni Network members, I felt it was a must. It took us a few months to make the decision, but, along with Susie, I did go back to Bangkok in January 2005, where we

connected and interacted and enjoyed the experiences of the wonderful country of Thailand, got to know still more ISB Alumni who share the strong feelings that I have, and developed an even deeper appreciation for what the Thai and ISB experience means.

I've been asked to share my thoughts on the trip, and to say "Why I will go back to Bangkok" as many times as possible in the future.

### **I. Bangkok and ISB in the 1950s vs. Today**

We lived in Bangkok because my father was part of an Indiana University contract to help develop the teacher education program in the country. He worked at Chulalongkorn University, and the College of Education at Soi Prasanmit (now Soi 23). Other IU faculty also worked at Thammasat University. All three institutions are still there. There are more buildings, which are much larger than those that were there in the 50s. I was, however, able to find the two-story building where my dad had his principal office at the College of Education.

Bangkok was basically 2-lane roads and klongs in the 50s, something that was almost impossible to find this last January. There are only a few klongs left. What were 2-lane main roads in the 50s are now 6- and 8-lane thoroughfares. The smaller sois still exist, but are more crowded than ever. Most structures today appeared to have air-conditioning, something that I recalled very few buildings having in the 1950s.

Today, downtown Bangkok is in many respects like any other city. Traffic is awful and the smog/air pollution was worse. Nonetheless, the city still exudes the uniqueness and charm that I remember from years ago. The Wats, the Grand Palace and grounds, the monuments, and, most importantly, the Royal Bangkok Sports Club are basically the same.

### **II. Indiana University Connections**

As I mentioned, my father was in Bangkok as part of an Indiana University contract which extended into the early 60s. After our return to Bloomington, Indiana, numerous Thai students came to Indiana University for their education, principally post-graduate. Thus, there are a substantial number of Indiana University alumni in Thailand. Following my own graduation from IU and the IU School of Law, I stayed in Bloomington throughout my professional career and have remained close to the university. I was aware of an Indiana University Alumni function that was going to take place while we were in Bangkok and I was able to reconnect with one of my father's former students. When she realized who I was,



tears came to her eyes, and it became an emotional moment for both of us. Sucharit Pienchob was the epitome of the kind, gracious, and caring Thai people that I remembered. We had a wonderful visit, and she could not do enough for us during our stay.

### **III. ISB – 2005**

I attended ISB when it was located on the grounds of what I understand was originally a Japanese officers' club off Ratchadamri Road on ground which I believe is still part of the U.S. Embassy grounds. There was one room for each grade, 7 through 12 (there were only 32 freshmen). Thus there was not a lot of selection of classes, but we did receive what, in my opinion, was a wonderful education. Our teachers were generally spouses of diplomats and other professionals who were in the country for various reasons. For example, my algebra teacher was Indian; my French teacher was French (even though she was married to a gentleman in the Russian embassy); my geography teacher was from Australia, and so on. Having that perspective in the classroom has meant a great deal more to me over the years than it did at that time.

Today, ISB is located on a campus north of Bangkok, between Bangkok and Don Muang Airport. There are 600 students in the high school, and 2,000 students grades K through 12. It is a modern, well equipped and progressive institution. I have to say that after some of the stunts that were pulled, and some of the things that happened when I was there in the 50s, I am truly amazed that the school has survived. But survive it has, and it has done it well.

The classrooms are very well equipped; perhaps better equipped than many classrooms in the states. The course offerings are as broad if not broader than most high schools in this country. The instructors are all highly qualified and trained professionals. And the athletic facilities are top notch as well. I think those of us who were there years ago can be very proud of what we helped start.

Through Maile's efforts, our group was invited to attend an assembly of the high school students on the day we visited the school. This was the first day back from Christmas break, and followed the unfortunate Tsunami disaster. We were astounded by how well behaved the students were and how attentive and courteous they were to all speakers both faculty and students. What a difference from years ago.

The students were wearing uniforms, or at least partial uniforms in that all had the same tee-shirt. The Headmaster explained to us later that the high school wears one color, the middle school wears a different color, and the elementary school wears yet a third color. Since they are all on the same campus, this makes it easy to tell them apart.

One other difference that we noticed: The school now admits Thai students (the Headmaster said that up to 20% of the student body may be Thai). In the 50s, the school was open to all nationalities except Thai.

As we toured the campus, we went through the counseling offices and I noticed on the wall a list of colleges that the students from the Class of 2004 attended. Among those colleges listed was Indiana University. Upon my return to Bloomington, I contacted that student, who happens to be Thai, and he has acquainted me with two other ISB Alumni at Indiana University. I have assured them that the ISB Alumni Network will keep them in touch with their contemporaries and others as it has for me.

### **IV. Touring Bangkok**

We were able to see many of the traditional tourist attractions, which are the same today as they were 47 years ago. The Grand Palace and grounds, the various Buddhist temples, the river, and the parks. The colleges and universities that I remember from the 50s have grown tremendously, and today there are significantly more higher education institutions in and around the Bangkok area, an indication of how strongly the Thais feel about education.

There are some other old haunts that are still there in name, but have changed tremendously. The Erawan hotel is a primary example. It sits on the same site, but is now the Grand Hyatt Erawan. The Spirit House at that location I believe is still the same. Some of the old streets in the shopping district appear to be as I remember them, although the shops are different and the wares are different. We did not find Thai bronzeware in Bangkok. Nor did we find the "Neeloware" jewelry in abundance as it was in the 50s. I recall my mother painstakingly doing temple rubbings (charcoal over rice paper, bringing out some of the carvings on certain of the temple buildings). My understanding is that this is no longer permitted.

---



The temple rubbings are available, but they are done through some sort of lithograph process and not originals. It made me even more proud of my mother's five framed temple rubbings that we still have in our home.

One great disappointment was our inability to find the house where we lived. We lived on Paknam Road, which is now Sukhumvit. It's hard to believe, but in the 50s this major thoroughfare was a 2-lane road with a klong beside it. Our house was on the other side of the klong. Sukhumvit is now 6 lanes with high rises on either side. 101A Paknam Road simply does not exist.

Maile arranged some wonderful excursions for us to see such things as Jim Thompson's house. This also was not there in the 50s, although Jim Thompson was, and he was still alive. I believe my parents attended some functions where he was present. I never recall meeting the gentleman, but his name was well known because of the Thai silk industry.

Through Maile's efforts, we had some wonderful meals and wonderful entertainment and experienced today's Thai restaurants.



*Tom and his wife Susie having dinner in Bangkok*

## **V. Royal Bangkok Sports Club**

The Royal Bangkok Sports Club deserves special mention. It is one of the few things in Bangkok that has changed very little. It is in many respects an oasis tucked in amid all the high-rise buildings, and it is basically the same as I remember – the race track, the golf course, the tennis courts, the wonderful swimming pool, the billiard room that we could never go in because we weren't 21, and the other facilities and amenities. In the year I was in Bangkok, the RBSC was my second home and that was where I played the very first round of golf in my life. We went there after school practically every day. I vividly remember sending one or two people out to Ratchadamri Road to flag down a taxi and bargain the price, and then six or eight of us would cram into the tiny vehicle to go to the sports club. Once there, we commandeered one corner of the pool which was “ours.” I'm sure many of the other members stayed away from that area simply because of our youthful antics and the fact that we were having such a good time. I have great memories from The Royal Bangkok Sports Club – too numerous and some inappropriate to mention here. Maile arranged for us to have dinner at the sports club. We ate outdoors on the apron of the track, and it was wonderful. So many memories flashed through my head as I sat there. I'm sure many other people at the dinner thought my mind was a thousand miles away.

The group also discovered that The Royal Bangkok Sports Club had merchandise for sale, both in the pro shop and in the main office. I'm sure they were most happy to have us there because we bought everything in sight, including the ornaments for the grille of your automobile that identified you as a member of The Royal Bangkok Sports Club. I'm certain I'm the only one in Bloomington, Indiana with one of those on the grille of my car.





## VI. Golf

I've mentioned before the Indiana University connections in Thailand. One of my undergraduate classmates at IU is married to a Thai woman, and he now practices law with an international law firm in Bangkok. He took me to play golf at Thai Country Club, and what an experience it was. The same service attitude that pervades the country and the people is doubly present at Thai Country Club. They take care of every need, both in the clubhouse and on the course. I told them I needed to take a cart, and I was told that's fine, but you must also take a caddie. When I arrived where the carts were, my clubs were on a cart by themselves, and I was informed that the caddie drove the cart. I was not permitted to drive the cart on the course. When the caddies arrived, they were all young Thai women. They were extremely knowledgeable: knew yardages; read putts very well; and even picked up your tee after you hit the tee shot. It was a tremendously enjoyable round of golf. Who cared what the score was? I encourage all who are golfers to try to play at least one round of golf while on a return trip to Thailand.

## VII. Ayutthaya and Chiang Mai

My wife and I spent a day in Ayutthaya because I remembered those ruins from years ago. Today, this is a major tourist attraction. The ruins have been restored to a certain extent and are much better maintained today than I remember from years ago. Of course, it is much more commercial with souvenir stands, restaurants, and other such amenities that I don't remember from the 50s. Another difference today is that in the intervening period of time, there has been a tremendous amount of archeological work at Ayutthaya. We visited two museums with some well-preserved artifacts illustrating some amazing things about the Thai civilization when Ayutthaya was the capital.

We also spent three days in Chiang Mai which were tremendously enjoyable. That city is much more like Bangkok was in the 50s than Bangkok itself. We shopped at a bronzeware factory, a Thai silk factory, a gemstone factory, and the night bazaar. We saw an elephant show which was truly amazing. I highly recommend these trips to any who are returning to Thailand.

## VIII. Things I Missed

I have mentioned a few things that were not quite the same or were not as prevalent as I remembered them from the 50s. Some other things that I have very vivid memories about which I did not see in Thailand in 2005 include:

- A. **Water Buffalo** – They were everywhere in the 50s: in open fields, walking the streets, in the residential areas of Bangkok, and of course in the rice fields. We did not see water buffalo on our trip.
- B. **Samlors** – These 3-wheel bicycle taxis were a major mode of transportation in the 50s, for both Thais and us. They were also challenges for us to try to ride. Sometimes with the permission of the owner, sometimes not. We did see samlors as we traveled from the present-day ISB to the river for a boat trip back downtown. My understanding is that samlors do exist in some of the suburban communities, but they are not allowed in downtown Bangkok.
- C. **Chinchooks** – Chinchooks were all over the walls and ceilings years ago. I even occasionally had them in my bed. Today they seem to be very rare, both in Bangkok and in other areas. I understand that some chemical spraying affected them a few years ago, and they may be making a come back. We did see a few outside, but my guess is that since most facilities today are air conditioned, they will never be inside as they were years ago.
- D. **Open Air Buses** – A typical sight in 1957 was an open-air bus with people hanging out the windows, hanging on the doors, and some even sitting on top. It was the cheapest mode of transportation around (you could go anywhere for less than 1 baht) and they were very popular. Today, the buses are all air conditioned and fully enclosed. Even today's buses are being partially overtaken by the new Sky Train transportation system. I certainly remember the few times the open-air buses had accidents and overturned into the klong in front of our house. It was a mess, but typical with the Thai people, it was “mai pen rai” or never mind.
- E. **Snakes** – I remember seeing snakes (including cobras) frequently around our house, at the side of the sois, and in vacant lots. We were told never to go out at night without a flashlight because of snakes. Bangkok is so built up today that there were no snakes, except at the Snake Farm, which my wife did not want to visit.



F. **The Smell** – I recall Bangkok having a particular odor. It's not clear exactly what it was, or how to characterize the smell, but it was there. I'm sure it was a combination of any number of things – the klongs, the animals, the lack of windows on many structures, and so on. Today, except for the air pollution (largely vehicle exhaust fumes), there was not the peculiar smell that I remembered from years ago. Perhaps that's a good thing.

## **IX. An Unforgettable Experience**

I am so glad that we took the trip to Thailand. I had a good time reminiscing and seeing the country and the city as it exists today. I am so thankful that my wife has had the opportunity to observe the wonderful Thai culture; the kind, caring, and gracious Thai people; and the unique things that the country offers. I'm sure I join with the other ISB Alumni and their family and friends in thanking Maile for putting this trip together. I understand she is planning to do this frequently in the future. I'm looking forward to doing it again, and I encourage all ISB Alumni to take advantage of the opportunity.

Sawadee  
Tom McGlasson



## **Newest Apprentice is Daughter of ISB Grad**



*Donald Trump with his new Apprentice, Kendra Todd, daughter of Cheryl Johnson Todd '71*

By now you've probably heard that the latest person "The Donald" has selected to be his apprentice is Kendra Todd. But what you may not know is that Kendra is the daughter of Cheryl Johnson Todd '71. Thanks to Anita Posey Glickert '71 for letting us know.

Stay tuned for the next issue of the ISBN Newsletter for an article on Cheryl and Kendra. For now, several links about Kendra are below.

<http://apprentice.tv.yahoo.com/03/candidates/kendra.html>

<http://www.tvsquad.com/2005/05/28/tv-squad-interview-kendra-todd/>

<http://www.theapprenticerules.com/candidates/profile-kendra-todd.html>

<http://www.kendratodd.net/>





**Tsunami Project Update:****ISB TSUNAMI RELIEF NETWORK MEETS ITS INITIAL GOAL!****NEW SCHOOL BUILDINGS ARE GOING UP!**

**<http://www.isb.ac.th/Content/Detail.asp?ID=1641>**

Barely five months after the tsunami waters receded, thanks to the generosity of friends and partners worldwide, the ISB Tsunami Relief Network has met its initial goal of raising US\$ 800,000 for a classroom building at the site of the former Bang Sak School in Khao Lak, entirely destroyed by the giant waves. A team from ISB and Cendant Cares met recently with the Chairman of the Rajaprajanugroh Foundation, Khun Khwankeo Vajarodaya, to present checks to the Foundation for the classroom building the Network is building.

Construction of the new school is underway on a site overlooking the sea. The construction site is now humming with activity, with students studying in temporary classrooms, while buildings are going up nearby. In addition to our classroom building – an 80-meter long, three-story building containing 16 classrooms – there are three dormitories, a second classroom building, a computer center, a raised auditorium with room for open-air dining below, a kitchen, a nursing station, and a water tower. Construction on the dormitories began first so that the orphaned children would have permanent homes (now they are being cared for in the community by members of the teaching staff and other people). It is hoped that the school will be ready for inauguration by December 5, 2005, the King's Birthday. All buildings should be finished early in 2006.

The new school now has a name – Rajaprajanugroh 35 – making it one of 38 special schools the King's Foundation has founded throughout Thailand to help children in especially difficult circumstances. Rajaprajanugroh means mutual help and support (anugroh) between the King (Raja) and the people (Praja). The Rajaprajanugroh Foundation has, for the past 42 years, provided spontaneous emergency relief and support to the needy victims of natural disasters and epidemics, including fires, floods, cyclones, typhoons, and polio, cholera, and AIDS. The fundamental principle of the foundation is to assist the victims of disasters and give them assurance that they can rebuild a better life after a tragedy. This name recognizes partnership between the King and the people and should bring comfort to the children who will study at Rajaprajanugroh 35 School.

Khun Khwankeo writes: "When the father was lost, the mother must survive and live well. The children, who are now orphaned, must have proper education befitting their potential to sustain themselves and their families. Rajaprajanugroh Schools, most of which are boarding schools, become 'A Home and a School' offering kindergarten, primary, and secondary education, free of charge...The victims and the orphans have hope and peace of mind. Their futures are secured."

Students at the Rajaprajanugroh Schools are expected to uphold high standards in all ways: "Rajaprajanugroh students are taught by His Majesty the King to be morally upright, compassionate, and kind-hearted to their friends and fellowmen, ready to repay the act of kindness with gratitude, disciplined, responsible, and reliable, able to work and live with others in harmony, self-sufficient, self-reliant, able to fend for themselves and their families... and to be mindful and responsible members of society." These students will also have the opportunity to earn King's scholarships to university, even up to the PhD level.

Already 716 students have enrolled in the new school – 363 boys and 353 girls – including 181 tsunami orphans. The eventual total enrollment of the school will be 1,000. There are 339 students in the temporary classrooms, while other students have been placed in other schools in the area for the time being. Seven full-time teachers already fill positions funded by the Ministry of Education, while ten additional teachers, two custodians, and two cooks are working provisionally with salaries funded privately by a Member of Parliament. Ongoing support for their salaries is needed, pending approval by the Ministry of Education.



Principal Ajarn Prasit Sathaphonchaturawit came to ISB for final assemblies on June 7. Addressing the students of Elementary, Middle, and High School, he thanked them for the support the Network has given to the students of the former Bang Sak School. He said "Because of your help, the children will have a school to study in, teachers to teach them, and lunches to eat. The contribution of students, teachers, and parents will live in our memory and in the history of Rajaprajanugroh 35 School."

Each of us can feel proud of helping to make the children's dream come true.

Donations from generous individuals, schools, and community groups are still coming into the ISB Tsunami Relief Network, along with cards and letters from children in schools elsewhere, which are sent directly to the school. Additional funds will be used for equipment, supplies, and other forms of special support for the school, according to plans still being formulated.

If you wish to donate to this worthy cause, please click on our ISBN donation link. All donations are tax-deductible.

[http://www.isbnetwork.com/tsunami\\_donations.php](http://www.isbnetwork.com/tsunami_donations.php)

## **A few words from Vilasinee (Anne) Batra – Winner of ISB Network Alumni Scholarship 2005**

The ISB Network Cares Scholarship is much more than just some extra cash or pocket money for me when I go to college. It means so much more to me at the end of 11 years at ISB which was not my second, but first home, the memories of which will never fade away from my mind. This scholarship makes my family, friends, teachers, mentors, and most importantly me extremely proud of the fact that hard work and determination to succeed is well appreciated at ISB. The recognition that I got from this scholarship will provide me with great amount of confidence and motivation for my future endeavors and I hope that it keeps providing such incentives to hardworking and active students.

Thank you,  
Anne Batra

The **ISB Network Alumni Scholarship** (formerly titled ISB Network Cares Scholarship) is awarded each year to a deserving Thai student at ISB as selected by a committee of ISB faculty and administrators. The \$1,000 award is funded through your participation in the free room raffle at our reunions and a portion of your tax-deductible membership dues. We would like to extend this award to as many Thai students as possible, so we welcome and encourage additional financial support. For all of you interested in "giving back" to the people who so enriched our lives, please forward your tax-deductible donations to:

**ISB Network Foundation  
PO Box 7454  
Alexandria, VA 22307**

Please specify that your contribution is for the Scholarship program. Thank you for your generosity and support.





# Star Spangled Coalition Independence Day Celebration

## Thousands are Entertained at the Annual Independence Day Picnic and Celebration

***By Byron Bales, 2005 Coordinator ([www.idaybkk.com](http://www.idaybkk.com))***

In the early 70s, American businessman Charlie Kirkwood and his wife, Ginny, began holding annual celebrations at what was then the Polo Club on Wireless Road. Over the years, these parties grew in popularity.

When the Kirkwoods returned to the United States, the annual celebrations ceased, but after a brief interval, the American Chamber of Commerce stepped in to continue the tradition. In 1997, the event was not held, and for two years, there was no public celebration of the American Independence Day in Bangkok. In 1999, a small group of concerned Americans, led by Alex Mavro, met to restore the celebration. The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) provided immediate support and the Joint US Thai Military Assistance Group (JUSTMAG) and the American Women's Club (AWC) responded similarly. The American Embassy, and in 2000, the American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) joined the coalition.

Every July, picnic-goers enjoy authentic all-beef American hot dogs, mouth-watering ribs basted in the Marines' special barbecue sauce, charcoal grilled burgers, cheese-burgers with all the fixings, chili, apple pie and....American beer. Plus, there are many free snacks, soft drinks, and ice cream.

And all afternoon, the venue rocks to some of the best sounds by well-known Bangkok bands while parents and children participate in traditional field games like the egg toss, watermelon eating contest, three-legged races, the dunk tank and tug o' war. Face-painting, clowns, magicians, and bingo will keep picnic-goers of all ages entertained.

And if you are feeling lucky, participating in our raffle could win you some fantastic prizes, including tickets on international and domestic airline flights, as well as free accommodations at 5-star hotels and resorts, plus much, much more. The evening is highlighted by the U.S. Marines color guard and one of the longest and most spectacular fireworks display seen in Bangkok.

**Where:** The New International School of Thailand (NIST). NIST is located at the end of Sukhumvit Soi 15 (where ISB used to be located prior to 1991). Free shuttle transportation will be found at the mouth of Soi 19 (near the Asoke BTS station. This is also the Sukhumvit Underground station). **Parking is NOT available.**

**When:** Saturday, July 2, 2005, 2 PM 'til 8 PM

Admission for adults is 100 Baht. Children under 12 years of age are free.

### Games for Everyone!

Tug of War  
Sack Races  
Egg Throw Contests  
Watermelon Eating  
Dunk Tanks  
Face Painting

### Eat American Food!

Hot Dogs  
Hamburgers  
Babecue  
Ice Cream  
Watermelon  
American Beers



## American Women's Club Celebrates 50 years

<http://www.awcthailand.org/index.htm>

The AWC was founded in 1955 to give the growing number of American women support and the opportunity to socialize while living overseas. Over the years, the AWC grew to a peak of more than 2000 members during the 1970s. Today there is a membership of approximately 350 women.

AWC welcomes American women to join as Regular Members. Associate Membership is also available to all non-American women; currently 30% of the AWC's members are from other countries. The yearly membership donation entitles members access to all AWC planned programs, the monthly *AWC News*, and the quarterly cultural magazine, *Sawaddi*.

The AWC gives members the opportunity to get involved in different activities, meet new people, learn about Thailand, and visit other fascinating countries.

The AWC has been donating to charitable activities since its beginning. As the philanthropic arm of the AWC, the Welfare Committee reviews and acts upon requests from various organizations and individuals in Thailand. Millions of baht have been contributed to children's homes and orphanages, HIV/AIDS organizations, self-help projects and emergency disaster relief. The AWC's primary targets are needy women and children.



*Verna Volz, founding AWC member, was recognized at the November 2004 luncheon.*





## **Polo Club Mini Reunion with Miss Verna**

To all friends of the Polo Club:

Miss Verna will be on home leave in the fall and will be in the Boston area. I would like to have a little reunion, get together, to talk old times and share memories of the Polo Club.

She is available on Saturday, October 1, 2005. I am interested in knowing how many people would be interested in attending before I proceed. I was thinking of an afternoon event, so anyone who is in driving distance can come for the day.

Please let me know if you are interested.

Sandy McCoskrie Blanchette '72  
617.287.5534  
sandy.blanchette@umb.edu

(For a recent photo of Miss Verna, please note her recognition as a founding member of the American Women's Club on page 9.)





# A Sad Farewell to the Siam Intercontinental Hotel

***By Kate Johnson 76 (lsbkate@yahoo.com)***

I have such fond memories of the Siam Intercontinental Hotel. It was my first home when I moved to Bangkok in 1970. My family lived there for 7 weeks while we awaited the arrival of our furniture from South America. We stayed there again in 1974 just before we left the country. For various reasons I never stayed there again when I went to visit Bangkok, but I always made a point of stopping by for lunch or to wander the grounds.

On my last trip to Bangkok in January 2005 as part of Maile McCoskrie Lindley's group, my husband and I stayed a few days at the Pathumwan Princess Hotel near the MBK shopping mall. Our room overlooked Siam Square and I was eager to see the view of the Siam Intercontinental from above. I was absolutely heart-broken when I discovered it was no longer there. It has been completely torn down and a new office complex/hotel/shopping mall is going up in its place.



*View of Siam Square from my hotel window at the Pathumwan Princess Hotel.*



*Closer view of the construction from under the Sky Train at Siam Square.*



Fortunately, I have pictures from my previous visits.



View from the Siam Square Sky Train Station, January 2002



Main entrance and pool, December 1991.



In 2002, peacocks were allowed to freely wander the grounds.



The lobby at Christmastime 1991.

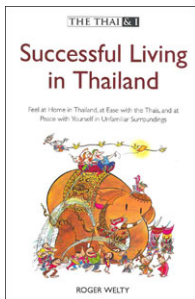


# Looking for a Little Summer Reading?

***By Kate Johnson 76 (lsbkate@yahoo.com)***

If you'd like to kick back this summer and read a good book about Thailand, or try to solve a mystery that takes place in Bangkok, I've compiled the following list of books. Thanks to Dave Elder, Todd Lockhart, Maureen Lockhart Salahshoor, and Tim Lockhart for their recommendations.

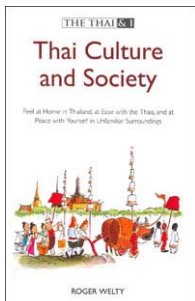
Available at [www.asiabook.com](http://www.asiabook.com):



## ***The Thai and I: Successful Living in Thailand***

By Roger Welty

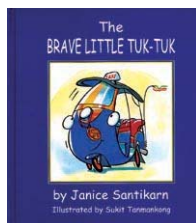
This guide to the practicalities of living and working in Thailand will help transform readers from 'outsiders' to 'insiders.' In his own inimitable style, Roger Welty explains how to make a success of your day-to-day life in Thailand, providing a unique resource not only for first-time expats and visitors, but also for long-term foreign residents of the country.



## ***The Thai and I: Thai Culture and Society***

By Roger Welty

This insight into the historical and social development of Thailand will help transform readers from 'outsiders' to 'insiders.' In his own inimitable style, Roger Welty explains the relevance of there cultural dynamics in contemporary Thai society, providing a unique perspective not only for first-time expats and visitors, but also for long-term foreign residents of the country.



## ***The Brave Little Tuk-Tuk***

By Janice Santikarn

The little blue tuk-tuk wasn't brave like other tuk-tuks. He couldn't bear the hot sun and the dusty air, or the heavy loads he had to pull. So when he found himself working in a souvenir shop in Bangkok, he was happy. Inside, the air was clean and cool and his young friend, Joh, took good care of him.

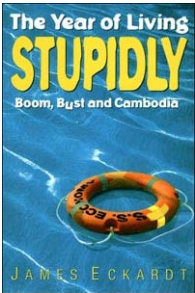
Janice Santikarn held a competition to find a name for the "Little Blue Tuk-Tuk" the main character in both *The Little Blue Tuk-Tuk* and *The Brave Little Tuk-Tuk*. ISB students Adele Pinvises (5th grade) and Amy Ralph (Kindergarten) shared in the honor of having their entry chosen as the winning one. A total of three students from Bangkok's international schools submitted "Sanuk" meaning 'fun' in Thai, as the name for the Little Blue Tuk-tuk. Sanuk will be the name of the tuk-tuk in Mrs. Santikarn's next installment of the adventures of a tuk-tuk in Thailand. The three children's names will be included in an acknowledgement in the published work. Congratulations Adele and Amy!

To read more about Janice Santikarn, click on:

<http://www.bangkokpost.net/education/site2004/cvdc2104.htm>



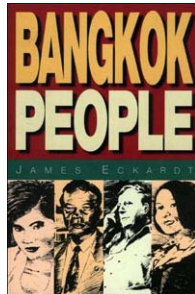
Available at [www.Amazon.com](http://www.Amazon.com):



### *The Year of Living Stupidly: Boom, Bust, and Cambodia*

By James Eckardt

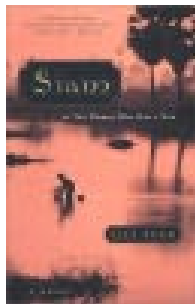
This is the meandering, schizophrenic, rollercoaster journal of James Eckardt, a Bangkok journalist. Boom! the good old days of Thailand's boom, it was all freebies, junkets, and jaunts with the gliterati. Bust – suddenly the Crash of '97. And you're just another unemployed bum on the street. And Cambodia! James headed east to Phnom Penh Post to cover the Cambodian election of 1998. Follow the rise, fall, and rise of James Eckardt (and a bit more) – a high-wire act that sees him through high times, low times, crazy times, and the tears and laughter in between.



### *Bangkok People*

By James Eckardt

A collection of profiles about people who live and work in Bangkok, both Thai and foreign, from all walks of life, and from all levels of society. It provides a fascinating look into the life of the city and the people that make it tick. Each story is accompanied by vivid photos. Accessible, enlightening, and entertaining, it will appeal to anyone interested in Bangkok – tourists, expats, and Thais alike.



### *Siam or the Woman Who Shot a Man*

By Lily Tuck

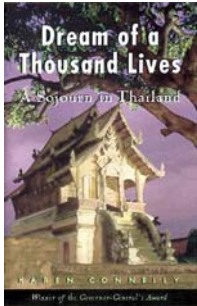
Editorial Review by Sheila Bright at Amazon.com:

In Lily Tuck's *Siam*, the year is 1967 and 25-year-old Claire has come to Bangkok with her brand-new husband, a military advisor. When they first met, James had described Thailand as "not a bad place to live. Everyone's so friendly, everyone's always smiling. And you should see my house – hot and cold running servants, a pool, a garden..." But upon arrival in this exotic locale – which her guidebook, too, extols as the "Venice of the East" – Claire discovers dead dogs floating in the canals, green slime growing on the surface of the pool, and the natives polite but distant. The one person she feels an instant bond with is Jim Thompson, an American silk entrepreneur she encounters at a party. But immediately afterward, Thompson disappears during a trip to the Cameron Highlands, and Claire becomes obsessed with discovering what happened to him.

*Siam* is a work of fiction. Jim Thompson, however, was an actual person whose disappearance in Thailand has never been solved. Tuck uses this real-life mystery to illuminate her fictional characters' relationships and motivations. It's clear from the first chapter that Claire is a young woman without a solid sense of self. She is swept quite literally off her feet and into bed within hours of first meeting James, and a good deal of what happens to her from that point on seems to occur without her active participation or consent.

Though she tries hard to be a "good guest" in Thailand, attempting to learn the language and history of her new home, she is never truly at ease among the people. Claire's fixation on the fate of a man she met only once grows in direct proportion to her feelings of loneliness and alienation. Meanwhile, America's escalating role in the Vietnam War parallels her increasing suspicion of everyone around her, even her husband – and soon the conditions are ripe for tragedy. Tuck weaves this intricate web of fact and fiction, reality and delusion, with an assured hand and prose that seems simpler than it actually is. She captures to perfection the disorientation of strangers in a strange land, the insularity of expatriate communities, and the gulf that yawns between privileged foreigners and the people they live among. *Siam*, then, is both a compelling drama and a profound meditation on the political and the personal.



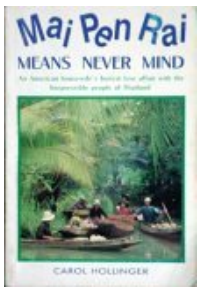


### ***Dream of a Thousand Lives: A Sojourn in Thailand***

By Karen Connelly

Karen Connelly was only a young woman when she left Canada to live in Denchai, a small farming community in northern Thailand for one year. Connelly left armed with nothing but a battery of stereotypes and a keen sense of adventure. She returned genuinely and forever altered by her experience, which she captures in this lyrical portrait of the real Thailand, a land shaped by Buddhist “nothingness” and formal Thai decorum, washed with torrential rains and flattened by steamy heat, fed by birds-eye chilies and chicken feet.

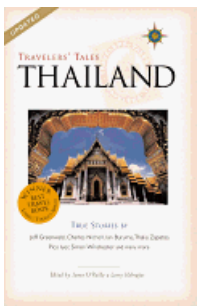
Through a carefully crafted narrative of journal entries, Connelly demonstrates rare awareness and consideration of Thai culture, while painting through gorgeous prose a country infinitely more complex, frustrating, and intriguing than mere stereotypes could ever capture. *Dream of a Thousand Lives* is sure to incite a legion of curious travelers to pack up for Southeast Asia, an exotic region made more tangible in the telling, and enchant legions more simply by the sheer beauty and grace of Connelly’s writing.



### ***Mai Pen Rai Means Never Mind***

By Carol Hollinger

A housewife, mother, and teacher, Carol Hollinger gives a hilarious account of her experiences in all those roles during her stay in Thailand in the 1960s. A brilliant observer of customs, manners, and cultural differences, she writes frankly and unsparingly of herself and her fellow Americans, and relates both the fun and frustrations of communicating with the Thai people – without being coy or condescending.



### ***Travelers' Tales: THAILAND***

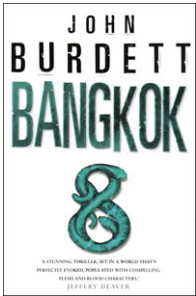
***True Stories by Jeff Greenwalk, Charles Nicholl, Ian Buruma, Thalia Zepatos, Pico Iyer, Simon Winchester, and many more.***

Edited by James O'Reilly and Larry Habegger

Discover Thailand. What's it like to be there? *Travelers' Tales* gives you the best possible answer through the true stories of other travelers. Delightful, funny, cautionary, or inspiring, there's no better road map that the experiences of others for deepening and enriching your travels.

- Learn the real story of Anna and the King of Siam with William Warren in Bangkok.
- Laugh with Susan Fulop Kepner as she learns to speak Thai with an intimidating taskmaster.
- Walk the opium trail with Charles Nicholl.
- Get trapped by a rare 600-pound tapir in the rainforest with Alan Rabinowitz.
- Taste Thai cuisine with Kemp Miles Minifie as she navigates a Thai cooking school.
- Join Jane Hamilton-Merritt, a Western novice, as she finds her way in the male world of Buddhist monks.
- And much more





### ***Bangkok 8***

By John Burdett

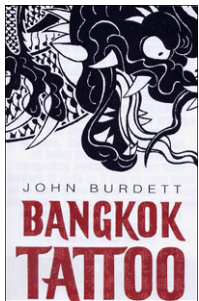
Electrifying, darkly comic, razor-edged—a thriller unlike any other.

Under a Bangkok bridge, inside a bolted-shut Mercedes: a murder by snake – a charismatic African-American Marine sergeant killed by a methamphetamine-stoked python and a swarm of stoned cobras.

Two cops – the only two in the city not on the take – arrive too late. Minutes later, only one is alive: Sonchai Jitpleecheep – a devout Buddhist, equally versed in the sacred and the profane – son of a long-gone Vietnam War G.I. and a Thai bar girl whose subsequent international clientele contributed richly to Sonchai's sophistication.

Now, his partner dead, Sonchai is doubly compelled to find the murderer, to maneuver through the world he knows all too well – illicit drugs, prostitution, infinite corruption – and into a realm he has never before encountered: the moneyed underbelly of the city, where desire rules and the human body is no less custom-designable than a raw hunk of jade. And where Sonchai tracks the killer – and a predator of an even more sinister variety.

Thick with the authentic – and hallucinogenic – atmosphere of Bangkok, crowded with astonishing characters, uniquely smart and skeptical, literary and wildly readable, *Bangkok 8* is one of a kind.



### ***Bangkok Tattoo***

By John Burdett

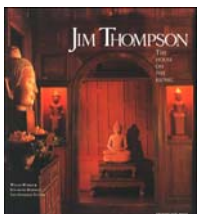
From the author of the best seller *Bangkok 8*, a head-spinning new novel that puts us back in the company of the inimitable Royal Thai Police detective Sonchai Jitpleecheep.

We return to District 8—the underbelly of Bangkok's underworld—where a dramatically mutilated dead body is found. It's bad: he was CIA. It gets worse: the murderer appears to be Chanya—a tough, sweet working girl who's the highest earner at The Old Man's Club, jointly owned by Sonchai's mother and his boss, Police Colonel Vikorn.

Alerted by Sonchai, Vikorn quickly concocts a cover-up that involves Al Qaeda and Thailand's porous southern border where, since 9/11, the CIA has been an obviously covert presence. But the truth will be harder to come by, and it will require Sonchai to find an ever-more-delicate balance between his ambition and his Buddhism, while running the gamut of Bangkok's drug dealers, prostitutes, bad cops, worse military, and the pitfalls of his own melting heart (Chanya!)—most of which he can handle. But even Sonchai is not prepared for what he discovers at the end of his investigation.

Piercingly smart and funny, densely atmospheric, and—as we already know to expect from John Burdett—packing a surprise at every turn, *Bangkok Tattoo* is sensational.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/05/12/AR2005051201461.html>



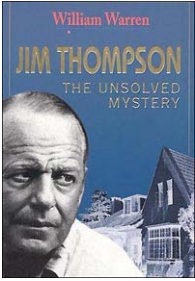
### ***Jim Thompson: The House on the Klong***

by William Warren, Jean-Michel Beurdeley, Luca Invernizzi Tettoni (photographer)

Reviews in general the early years when Thompson was building his business and looking for a location for his new house; the reader is then given a guided tour of the house and garden; and finally the individual art objects in the Jim Thompson collection are described in more detail.

If you've ever taken a tour of the Jim Thompson house, this book is a great reminder of your visit since you're not allowed to take pictures while inside the house.





### *Jim Thompson The Unsolved Mystery*

by William Warren

On Easter Day, 1967, American businessmen and founder of the modern Thai silk industry James H.W. Thompson disappeared while supposedly on a stroll in the jungle-clad Cameron Highlands in Central Malaysia. Neither Jim Thompson nor his remains has ever been found.

Some 20 years earlier Jim Thompson had abandoned his former life to embark on an exotic business career in Southeast Asia. After establishing the Thai Silk Company, Thompson built a house and an art collection which are among Bangkok's top tourist attractions today. After vanishing, he became the subject of a massive search and investigation, and a mystery that has never been solved. This definitive account of the life of Jim Thompson, written by a man who knew him well, gives the reader a first-hand glance into his private affairs and his alleged role as an agent for the CIA.

This true-life mystery will keep you turning the pages to the final chapter.

## **A Few Interesting Links**

Chiang Mai, a Hippie Hideaway, Goes Upscale

<http://travel2.nytimes.com/2005/06/19/travel/19chiang.html?ex=1120363200&en=96a6dd861a8198bb&ei=5070&emc=eta1>

Ever thought of moving to Thailand to work or even to retire?

<http://www.thaiembdc.org/index.htm> This link provides information about how to retire in Thailand. Scroll all the way down to the bottom of the page and click on the link for "How to apply for permanent residence permit in Thailand in case of foreign retired persons"

<http://www.escapeartist.com/Thailand/Thailand.html>

<http://www.transitionsabroad.com/publications/magazine/0201/feature.shtml>

<http://www.transitionsabroad.com/publications/magazine/0301/bangkok.shtml>

<http://www.transitionsabroad.com/listings/work/esl/thailand.shtml>

Does Pattaya still beckon to you? Here's your chance to buy property there.

<http://www.siam-royal-view.com/>

Shopper's paradise! Pictures of Chatuchak Weekend Market in Bangkok:

<http://www.asiatraveltips.com/PicturesofChatuchakMarket.shtml>

Can't make it to Chatuchak this weekend? Then go to ebay.com, type in Thailand, and select All Categories. Clothes, books, knick-knacks, bronzeware, and a thousand other items are available at a click of the mouse. Dave Wilkerson found a fascinating tuk-tuk make out of a Singha beer can and Maureen Lockhart Salahshoor found a book about the life of Jim Thompson. <http://www.ebay.com>



Recognize this location? It's the corner of Soi Asoke (21) and Sukhumvit.

