



A publication of the Samutprakarn International Ladies Club

Dec. 2014/Jan. 2015

December Events

Christmas Coffee/Lunch:

Tues. 9 December – Pg 6



Evening:

Fri. 12 December – Pg 8

January Events

Coffee Morning:

Thurs. 15 January – Pg 12



Tour:

Tues. 20 January – Pg 10



Lunch:

Fri. 23 & 30 January – Pg11



Evening:

Wed. 28 January – Pg 12

Wishing all SILC Ladies
and their families a
Merry Christmas and a
very Happy New Year.



Committee Members



<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Email</u>
Chairman	Katja Schraml	silcchair@gmail.com
Vice Chairman	Marit van den Oetelaar	silcvice@gmail.com
Secretary	Angelique Leijdekker	silcsecretary@gmail.com
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Advertising	Amanda Schranz	silcadverts@gmail.com
Bazaar	Njah Khan & Vani Sharma	silcbazaar@gmail.com
Mahjong	Betty Stewart	silctreasurer@gmail.com
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Craft Club	Jane Campton	silcthai@gmail.com
General Committee	Marianne Metzelaar, Dianne Darke, Rachel Mills & Sunita Kulisra,	



Link Ladies



<u>Area</u>	<u>Name</u>
Ladawan	Shirley Tan
Lakeside 1	Vani Sharma
Lakeside 2	Jane Wise
Nantawan	Amanda Schranz
Panya	Astrid Kuehner-Nehm
Thana City	Irene Gray
Bangkok Area	Chris Rajakarier



Chairman's Message



Dear Ladies,

Another exciting month has passed by and we are facing the upcoming, more cooler and wonderful days, weeks & month in Bangkok while Europe or the Western World prepares for the big snow (like in Germany) and very cold wintertime.

After I moved to Bangkok in October of last year, I was wondering in December time, why they displayed/sold winter clothes like scarves & gloves in the shops of "MegaBangna"! Due to the fact that the average 25 °C felt like summertime all year round to me. Now, after living here longer, I recognize, that I get cold too, if I step out in the mornings with ONLY 20 °C ☺

I was very lucky last month to be a part of our S.I.L.C. Bazaar volunteer team, I had the pleasure to welcome everybody at the entrance table and had a blast with all of you!

Once again, a very big **THANK YOU** goes to our **Bazaar Team**, Njah & Vani, our **Committee** as well as our **Craft Club** Ladies, especially Jane C. & Amanda, for their work, time and great ideas to make this Bazaar a big success! Due to the fact that we are in the first instance a social club but in the second have grown into a very successful welfare organization, I want to **THANK ALL** who gave their time to make this event a big fundraiser helping develop Thailand's underprivileged people!

Now, as we are getting prepared for the upcoming Christmas & New Year Parties & Celebrations, I would like to wish all of you who celebrate Christmas:

"FROHE WEIHNACHTEN / Merry Christmas / Feliz Navidad / Zalig Kerstfeest / Joyeux Noël / Hyvää Joulua / Kalá Christougenna / Nollaig Shona Dhuit / Buone Feste Natalizie / メリークリスマス - Merii Kurisumasu / 聖誕節同新年快樂 - Gun Tso Sun Tan'Gung Haw Sun / 크리스마스를 축하합니다 - keuriseimaseureul chukahamnida / Sretan Božić / 聖誕快樂 新年快樂 - Kung His Hsin Nien bing Chu Shen Tan / God Jul / Maligayan Pasko / Wesolych Świąt Bożego Narodzenia / Feliz Natal / Sarbatori vesele / Pozdrevlyayu s prazdnikom Rozhdestva is Novim Godom / God Jul / Prejeme Vam Vesele Vanoce a stastny Novy Rok / Noeliniz kutlu olsun / Kellemes karácsonyi ünnepekét kívánok nektek / Geseënde Kersfees / Gezur Krislinjden / Tchestita Koleda / Glædelig Jul !"

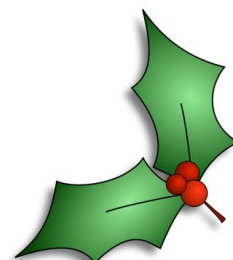
as well as to all of you, your family & friends:

„EIN GUTES NEUES JAHR! / Happy New Year! / Feliz Ano Novo! / Bonne année! / Swāsdī pī him / ¡Feliz año nuevo! / 新年快乐! / あけましておめでとうございます! / Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku! / Boldog új évet! / Gelukkig nieuwjaar! / nieuwjaar wordt in deze uitdrukking aan elkaar geschreven. / La Multî Ani! / iyi seneler / Yeni yılınız kutlu olsun / Mutlu Yıllar iyi seneler! / Yeni yılınız kutlu olsun! / Gott Nytt År! / Buon anno! / Onnellista uutta vuotta! / טובה שנה / Godt nytt år! / Štastný nový rok / Sretna Nova godina! / نيسد نيدج ماع / Štastný nový rok! / Godt nyttår! / Felīčan novjaron! / Bonan novjaron! / Srečno novo leto / Felīç Any Nou! / Gëzuar vitin e ri! / Srečna Nova Godina! / Bliain úr faoi shéan is faoi mhaise duit duit; Athbhliain faoi mhaise duit uut aastat! / وھ کرایم لاس لایند (naya sal mubarik hu) / Щастлива / Feliz Ano Novo! / Annum faustum! / Gleðilegt nýtt ár! / Gelukkige nuwe jaar / Gott nýggjár! / اكرایم وذل لاس / Sretna Nova godina! / Tezze iliniz yahsi olsun / Laimīgu Jauno Gadu! / Selamat Tahun Baru / 新年でおめでとうございます / Manigong bagong taon! / Bloavez mad! / Folle lok en seine!"

I hope everybody will have safe travels where ever your journey will take you and see you all back in **2015**.

Looking forward to a new, exciting, international & social S.I.L.C. Year 2015 !!!

Best wishes & warm regards,
Katja



Hosting? Need more chairs or spoons?

There are crockery & cutlery, folding chairs and some tables available for members to borrow when hosting a SILC event.

For details contact: Betty: silctreasurer@gmail.com

SILC News Copy Deadline

Wed 21 January 2015 is the deadline for any articles for the February Newsletter.

If you have any recipes, book reviews, recommendations for holidays or items for our bulletin board please forward them to the Newsletter Editor: silcmagazine@gmail.com



Aims & Policies



Organisation of the Club

SILC creates an opportunity for women of all nationalities living in the Samutprakarn area to meet socially and participate in a variety of activities. We invite members to join monthly meetings, tours and interest groups. Members pay an annual fee of 1000 Baht to cover costs and receive a newsletter and club directory.

Privacy

The Members Directory and addresses sourced from our legitimate club business such as Lunches or Coffee Mornings are for the sole use of members in a social setting and must not be used for commercial purposes.

Newsletter

The newsletter is published ten times a year with articles and information on club activities. Contributions are welcome and can be sent to the newsletter editor.

Committee Meetings

These are held once a month and are open to all members. Please inform the meeting hostess if you wish to attend.



Advertising



Advertisements for non-profit community events are welcome and are free of charge.

Personal Advertisements for SILC members are free of charge.

Email reminders for SILC events and non-profit community events will be sent out free of charge; other events must be advertised in our magazine.

Rates (per issue)

Full Page **1300 Baht**

Half Page **700 Baht**

Quarter Page **400 Baht**

Flyer Insert **700 Baht**

Discounts

Member **25%**

Annual Contract (10 adverts/year) **10%**

(Only one discount may be applied)

Advertising requests and payment **must** be received prior to the published deadline.

Further details on advertising contact: Amanda Schranz: silcadverts@gmail.com

Please send advertisement to: The Editor: Jan Briggs: silcmagazine@gmail.com

To arrange payment contact: The Treasurer: Betty Stewart

081 792 5367 / silctreasurer@gmail.com



Regular Events



SILC Mahjong Group

Takes place on Wednesdays

From approx 9.30am to 2.30pm

In members homes

Donations are appreciated towards our Welfare Charities.

Guests very welcome, 200b/session

Contact: Betty Stewart: 081 792 5367
silctreasurer@gmail.com



Golf in Samutprakarn

SILC has a number of keen golfers in its midst.

There are a couple of groups who play in the area at a variety of courses along the Bangna Trad.

Some of us are beginners and others have more experience so if you want a game at any level then please get in touch. Even if you are new to the game it's totally different playing on a course to the driving range, so give it a try.

Contact: Betty Stewart: 081 792 5367
silctreasurer@gmail.com



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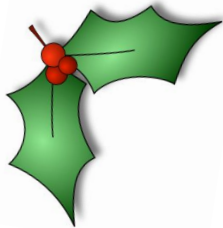
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Christmas Coffee & Lunch



NO IDEA GASTROPUB

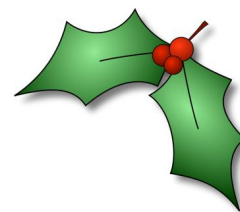
SUKUMVIT SOI 22

ON

TUESDAY DECEMBER 9TH 2014

FROM 10.30AM ONWARDS

Cost of this lunch 1000 Baht.



Christmas is almost upon us again ladies, so please come and celebrate the festive season with Jo and Kay at No Idea Gastropub on Sukumvit Soi 22.

There will be a 3 course traditional Christmas menu, tea and coffee and a complimentary glass of wine or two for our members courtesy of SILC, lots of festive cheer and the ever popular Christmas gift exchange! If you wish to participate in the gift exchange please bring along a wrapped gift to the value of no more than **500 baht**.

We will also be running a raffle with some wonderful prizes to be won and of course all proceeds to go to Thai charities of SILC's choice.

If you would like to join please **RSVP and state your menu choice** to

Jo Thomas at:

silclunch@gmail.com – please

note the deadline is **Tuesday**

2nd December – numbers are

to be confirmed with No Idea on

Wednesday 3rd. **No RSVP's will be accepted**

after this date and any cancellations after the 2nd will have to be paid for in full.

NB Any additional drinks will be at your own cost on your own bill. Monies for the lunch will be collected upon arrival.



CHRISTMAS LUNCH MENU

.....

STARTERS

Prawns with Avocado, Mango &

Coriander Salsa

OR

Cream of Pumpkin Soup

.....

MAIN COURSE

Traditional Christmas Turkey, Stuffing,
Seasonal Vegetables – Carrots, Broccoli,
Cauliflower, Roasted Cherry Tomatoes and
Roast Potatoes

OR

Vegetarian Pasta with Field Mushrooms, Snow
Peas and Cherry Tomatoes

.....

DESSERT

Traditional Christmas Pudding with Custard
and Brandy Sauce

.....

Tea or Coffee



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December Evening Event



Cooking with Poo Fundraiser

7.00pm-10.00pm, Friday 12th December 2014

What: An informal, fun evening of Thai cookery demonstrations/audience participation with Khun Poo & the Cooking with Poo team, live music & a delicious buffet

Who: SILC members plus partners/guests

Where: Munjai Cafe, Soi 78, Rama III Road, Klong Toey, Bangkok
(www.munjaicafe.org)

Cost: Tickets are 1,000 THB with approximately 700 THB of this going towards the rebuild. Food & entertainment is all included but BYO (bring your own) alcohol. Soft drinks will be available for sale.

Dress Code: Casual & ideally with some green as this is Khun Poo's favourite/lucky colour!

What next: To buy ticket/s or any questions please e-mail Dianne (dianne_darke@hotmail.com).



Please come and join your SILC friends for a very special evening to raise money for the rebuilding of the "Cooking with Poo" Cookery school & homes recently destroyed by fire in Klong Toey.

For many SILC members Khun Poo is an old friend so it's a great chance to come & say hello again and help support her to rebuild her cookery school. If you have yet to do one of Khun Poo's classes, this is a great chance to meet Khun Poo who has a very warm and fun-loving personality and will help teach us how to prepare a couple of classic Thai dishes. Her classes are always near the very top of TripAdvisor's 'Things to Do' in Bangkok and I'm sure many of us will be inspired to book into one of her classes after the event!

As part of the fundraising we will also be doing a raffle and auction. The raffle will offer a variety of great prizes and there will be a special auction as Khun Poo has offered to do an exclusive "Cook Your Own Dinner Party" where she will come round to your home with her team and cook a meal with you and your friends/family (for 8 people at an agreed time in the new year). If you would like to purchase raffle tickets and/or put in a bid for the DIY Dinner please contact Dianne.

Event schedule:

- 7.00pm start (nibbles available: chicken & lemongrass/vege spring rolls)
- 7.30pm Welcome/Khun Poo talking about cookery school & fire followed by first cookery demo with audience participation (Pad Thai)
- 7.45pm End of first demo & hot food/desert served (Massaman chicken curry, Pork Larb, Stir fried veg, plain rice. Mango & sticky rice for desert)
- 8.10pm second cookery demonstration by Khun Poo with audience participation (Green curry)
- 8.30/40pm Live music by Khun Chai Yo & band. Raffle/Auction.
- 9.30pm Band has to stop playing due to residential neighbourhood
- 10pm Event ends (again, have to end quite early due to cafe's neighbours). If people want to go on it's very near K-Village & A-square venues



SILC Book Club



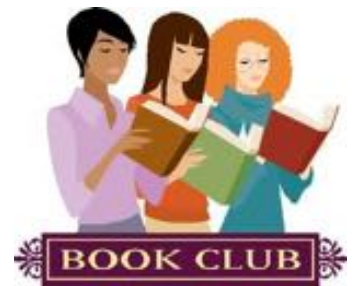
When: Thurs December 11th
Time: 12-2pm
Where: Marylou's Appt 2401 Prasanmitr Thani Tower 41, Soi Suk 23 (map to follow)
Books: The Goldfinch by Donna Trot and The Orphan Train by Christina Baker Kline

When: Thurs January 22nd
Time: 12-2pm
Where: Rachel's 35/258 soi 5/9 Moobaan Ladawan
Books: Tuesdays with Morrie by Mitch Olbum and Shanghai Girls by Lisa See

More Details: Contact Julie at jnjinjulie@gmail.com or 082 336 9200

Please come even if you haven't read the books. We will discuss books in general and future books.

Please bring some snacks to share. Hope to see you there!



January Coffee



Where: PAUL, at Central Embassy

When: Thursday 15th of January 2015

Time: 10.00am

Please come and join us at PAUL for our first coffee morning of the New Year. PAUL is a lovely French bistro and coffee shop situated on the 2nd floor of Central Embassy. Easiest way to get there is by BTS to Ploenchit and walk through the new skywalk and it's just inside the door on the right.

Look forward to seeing many of you there and having a catch up after the Christmas break!!

Please RSVP to Kay by January 9th to silccoffees@gmail.com





January Tour



A day to Koh Sichang

Koh Sichang (not to be confused with Koh Chang) is a small island, 1¼ hour driving + 45 min by ferry crossing away. On the island we will take a 'Sichang' tuk tuk, different than the ones we know in Bangkok. Besides its white sandy beaches, the beautiful island has a Thai Royal history. That's why it's so interesting to go there on a day trip!



Rama V Palace

In the 19th century, Sichang was a getaway for the Royal family. Three successive kings used to go there and Rama V built a summer palace. When the French came to occupy the island, he dismantled the almost finished mansion – the largest golden teak building in the world - and moved it to Bangkok (Vimanmek Mansion). On the island you can still see the original foundation. Several of the remaining structures have been restored and a walk through the gardens and up hill under old frangipani trees is delightful.

Wat Tham Yai Prik

Here is also an interesting cave. For master Thavaro this cave had a special meaning. After meditating here for a long time, he went to several places in India, important to Buddha. He brought back soil and water of all these places, mixed them together and kept the ball in the cave. In 2000 a monastery was established. Now it's a centre where monks and nuns live a simple, self-sufficient monastic lifestyle. Meditation is taught here and anybody can do.

We will enjoy lunch in a restaurant called 'Pan and David's', a Thai/Western couple, who set up a website for the island (<http://www.ko-sichang.com>) and they have a delicious restaurant.

Date: Tuesday 20th January

Time: 7:15/7:30 am at Patana School (True coffee) (we have to catch the ferry at 9:00 am)

Finish: around 4:30-5:00 pm

Costs: around 800 baht (depending on number of participants) – lunch at own expense

Minimum number: 6 participants

If you would like to join, please respond before Tuesday 13th January to: silctour@gmail.com

Jimmy & Carla





January Lunch



COOKING CLASS

AT OLIVE GREEK RESTAURANT

23RD & 30TH JANUARY 2015

SUKUMVIT SOI 63, EKAMAI SOI 12

FROM 9.30AM ONWARDS FOR A 10AM START

To kick off the first lunch of the New Year we will be at Olive Greek restaurant for a cooking class followed by lunch.

Olive can be found approximately half way down Ekamai Soi 12 on the right hand side in a lovely Thai house.

We shall start at 10am sharp with tea or coffee on arrival followed by the cooking class where we will learn how to cook and make Greek delights. Lunch, which will be what we have cooked, at approximately 12pm.

The cost of this class and lunch will be 1000 Baht, which includes tea or coffee, the recipes, an Olive apron plus the food.

As the kitchen is quite small the numbers are limited to 8 per class, therefore if you would like to join please specify which date you would prefer, they will be given on a first come first served basis.

Please RSVP to Jo Thomas at silclunch@gmail.com by Tuesday 20th January for both dates. RSVP's after this date will not be accepted.



Eat-In • Take Away • Delivery • Catering Service • Cooking Classes • Kids Parties



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GREEK - MEDITERRANEAN
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Olive locations
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Fifth Food Avenue, 5th Fl., MBK

Olive Take Home
Gourmet Market, Emporium (5/F), Sukhumvit 24
Food Hall, Central Chidlom (G/F), Ploenchit Road
Foodland - Sukhumvit Soi 16, Villa Market Sukhumvit 33,
Villa Market K Village, Villa Market Natchada Plaza

Our freshly made, all natural
Greek Yogurt
(2 sizes 250g and 400g)
is now available @ Olive Deli Corner,
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or can be delivered to you by Food By Phone



For more information call **02 713 1112, 02 713 1133** | [f /olivebangkok](https://www.facebook.com/olivebangkok) | www.olivebangkok.com



January Evening



TAPAS & DRINKS AT EL LUGAR

Please join me for a ladies night in town
for a chat, some drinks and delicious food!

Where: Bar & Tapas El Lugar, 120/11 Sukhumvit Soi 23

When: Wednesday 28 January 2015 from 7pm onwards



El Lugar offers a mouth-watering selection of soups, meats, seafood, vegetarian, paella and desserts. Wednesday night is Ladies night, free Martini drinks between 6-9pm. El Lugar has been voted Thailand Tatler Best Restaurant 2014.

Please feel free to have a look at their website www.ellugartapas.com

To join this evening please RSVP to Marit

Friday 23rd January at the latest, at silcvice@gmail.com





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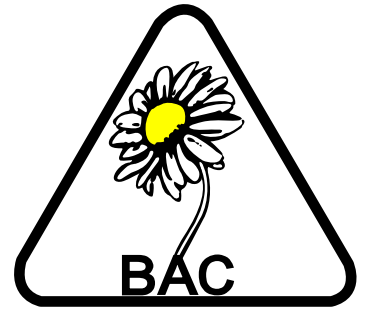
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SILC Bazaar



The 2014 SILC Bazaar was held once again at Bangkok Patana School and was a great success. We had more visitors this year and once again sold our cakes, bric-a-brac and crafts easily. We had several new vendors who along with a variety of charity stalls made for a very enjoyable shopping experience.

A big thank you to all who helped behind the scenes, on the stalls, baked cakes or donated items for our stalls. A big thank you to Njah and Vani our Bazaar Organisers this year and also to Bangkok Patana School for allowing us to use the conference rooms once again.

All profits from the bazaar will be put to good use over the next year enhancing the lives of some very disadvantaged people here in Bangkok.

(Figures shown below are not yet final but a good estimation of the profits made by our own stalls).



**Christmas trees
4,000THB**





Door
22,300THB

Drinks
8,800THB



Book/Bric-a-Brac
Sales 15,400THB



Cake Sales 9,600THB



Crafts
30,500THB



Raffles
17,000THB



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A Fond Farewell



Hello SILC Ladies

This is my 3rd and sad to say my final visit to Bangkok, my family will be leaving for Singapore in January, whilst I do like Singapore it is much more like England than Asia, and not quite as interesting or quirky as Bangkok, However it will not stop me from visiting Sadie and Jon, they won't get rid of me by just moving country!

I live in England (when I am home) in a very quaint Cornish fishing village, if you travel 9 miles south from my village you drop off the end of the UK. The most excitement we have is a dolphin or a basking shark that very occasionally visit our bay, apart from the Christmas lights which take the whole of November to install by a team of nearly all the resident men, average age 75, that is about it, oh and of course we do have a wonderful ice cream shop that is woefully bad for ones figure, those of you who have met me will know that I frequent this shop very regularly!

And so in September 2012 I arrived here for the first time and Wow! I was not prepared for the many amazing sights and colours of this wonderful city; I just loved the vibrancy of it.

After my very sedate life I was smacked between the eyes big style with BKK.

The driver Sadie had when I first arrived was amazing in a lunatic kind of way, I thought on that first journey that I was not going to make it to Lakeside let alone back to Cornwall. He was a manic depressive, he would weave in and out honking the horn and grunting and on one journey actually got out of the car to confront another motorist, at that point we made sure the car was locked and he was outside, his argument not ours!!! He argued with all the other drivers outside school and was generally a very hot-tempered maniac.

I digress, we are now 3 drivers on from him and this present one is a lovely kind man, who does his very best but I think if you put him on the M6 in Birmingham he would be dead from road rage by lunchtime.

I have loved everything about my time here, the Temples, the markets, the Budda's I would love to take one home if my suit case wasn't already stuffed full of fake handbags! I have brought a little sandstone Elephant and tucked him inside one of the bags to keep him safe.

Most of all the lovely Thai people, most gentle patient and considering their lot in life unbelievably welcoming and happy, (apart of course from aforementioned driver).

The purpose of my writing is to thank all the ladies in SILC for making me so welcome at the fundraising events I have been to and the birthday teas, gin and tonics etc etc.

I have seen the unbelievable poverty first hand and it is humbling, so I think the work done by SILC is really worthwhile and hopefully helps these people to better lives.

As I write this I am getting my finery ready for the Melbourne Cup day, I know it will be a fantastic day and that it will be enjoyed by all, as well as raising the much needed cash for ongoing projects.

I have been proud to join in with you all.

So thank you once again.

From a very sad to be leaving mom.

Pam Patten (Sadie Mills mom)



Nov. Tour Review



FORT, WARSHIP, TEMPLE, MUSEUM, LEANING STUPA and L.U.N.C.H.

This trip was again to an area where most wouldn't venture – the location being in the middle of an active navy base. What Farang would have the gall to drive through the security if you weren't in the know, or were with Jimmy! A very diverse trip, to view two extremes the war machinery and then a peaceful Buddhist temple – and of course have lunch!

The old warship is moored in the mouth of the Chao Praya river on the west bank, this is also the location of Pra Chulachomkla fort and a reputedly very good Thai fish restaurant! You knew food would be involved – a SILC event with no food – unheard of and an extremely rare event, if it has ever happened in the 22 years SILC has been around!

We saw the boat first and then the fort but it makes more sense to mention the older fort first – so I will! The fort, Pra Chulachomkla, was built in 1893 during the reign of Rama V (1868 – 1910) and named after him - *Chulachomkla* is the official title Thai's use for King Rama V (who is the son of King Mongkut from "*The King and I*"). It has 7 cannons – this confused me since I'd envisaged the old cannons and canon balls from the 11th and 12th century – but these are modern in comparison, in their day they were state of the art artillery usually hidden away and hauled up by the hydro-pneumatic system to aim and then lowered back into their hidey holes once they had been discharged. In English they are called "*Disappearing Carriage*" or "*Disappearing Guns*" and in Thai "*Puen Sua Mop*", meaning "*Crouching Tiger Guns*" - very apt. They were built to defend Thailand against the many European nations wanting to colonize her. In 1893, one month after they had been commissioned, they were put to the test alongside six Royal Thai Navy ships against two French ships ("*Inconstance*" and "*Comete*") that were trying to sail up the Chao Phraya River to join their gunship moored in Bangkok ("*Lutin*"). Unfortunately, they were outgunned by the superior military might of the French and compounded by darkness and poor visibility the outcome was that they lost territory to the French. The cannons were never officially fired again and were decommissioned in 1933. Luckily in 1991 they were restored and in 2003 they were fired to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the stature of King Chulalongkorn built alongside the fort.

We wandered around the gunsite but missed the museum – either it was shut or we didn't see it! There's always next time!

Going backwards in time, our first port of call – very apt expression – was to the boat. This is the *HTMS Mae Klong*, which is preserved as an open-air museum. If you like military or have kids who like to wander around war boats and explore everywhere then this boat is brilliant. You can get into the gun turrets, the cabins, the galley (kitchen), officers mess, below deck (take a torch). All very exciting. She was built in Japan and commissioned to the Thai Navy in 1937. In her 59 years she served during WW2; operated as a training ship for naval cadets; and was the Royal ship for King Rama VIII (*Ananada Mahidol 8th King of Thailand, 1935 – 1946, born 1925 died aged 20 in 1946*) and King Rama IX (*His Majesty King Bhumibol, the present king, 1946 – date, born 1927*). This info is taken from Wiki; on the boat we picked up a slightly different story, that the ship was built in the 1920's and served in both the 1st and 2nd WW, I'm pretty certain it wasn't one of the boats in the French blockade 20 years earlier, think we just got confused. Either way it is very well preserved and looked modernish (leastways it has radar, depth charges, missiles and torpedoes, all out of commission (so we were informed!)).

Then lunch – we always seem to dwell on this aspect of an event - the Chang beer was very good, got given a "Yai" by mistake, but only made a slight suggestion "Does anyone want to share?" I'm not stupid – the others had water what more could they ask for? The non-fish stuff I chose was very good and the others tucked into fishy things and seemed to relish it, so a very good lunch. The entertainment laid on was great too, little mud skippers rushing about in the mud below, fiddler crabs doing their fiddling and even a horseshoe crab having a trundle about in the lowering tide. Once you finish your meal (or before!) you can go for a walk along the boardwalk through the mangroves, about 1km. We didn't do it 'cos of time but beware of cheeky little monkeys who we understand hope you have food available – maybe best to leave your bag behind. I did a bit of the walk (no handbag) but picked up a stick just in case and they left me alone . . .



We also went to a Buddhist temple, which my driver knew about, Wat Sa Kah. Can't find anything about this place on Google, maybe I've recorded the name wrong either way this means you've only got my memories to go on! Lovely little temple, museum and a leaning stupa¹. This place was interesting because it used to get flooded, so 10 years ago they raised the whole thing 2 m higher. From what I understand they just lifted the whole structure up and put it on concrete blocks. When they raised it they found old Buddha statues (man sized) buried under the temple that are now on display. You can walk under the raised up temple, through an elephant head and view the paraphernalia they found; other rooms have many statues of the Hindu/Buddhist gods, including Hanuman - the monkey god - and Phra Mae Thorani - the lady who wrings out her hair to create a flood to drown the demon, Mara, who was sent to tempt Buddha as he meditated under the Bohdi (an enlightening/awakening) tree.

Upstairs there is the traditional temple with many lovely features such as wooden carvings on the window shutters all telling different stories mostly about the Prince Rama, Princess Sita and Hanuman, the hero of these stories. Basically the Thai story captured in the engravings on the shutters revolves the kidnapping of the princess and the Prince's efforts to free her from the giants with the help of the monkey warrior, Hanuman. During the story the Prince gets shot by a poisoned arrow and Hanuman goes to the mountaintop to gather healing herbs/flowers and so saves him. There are many battles with the giants but the rescue is successful in the end. I've cheated and got these snippets from the internet:

Hanuman climbs a mountain to obtain herbal medicine ingredients, also on murals at the Emerald Buddha Temple. A giant white Hanuman scales a mountain to find medicinal herbs for Laksman who has been shot by a poisoned arrow or speared (not sure which, either way it's not good). Hanuman's smaller monkey troops follow behind him, running on the ground and waving their swords. In the Ramayana story, when Hanuman tries to delay time by physically stopping the Sun, the Sun replies that is not possible. Instead, the Sun offers to rise the next morning covered by clouds so that Hanuman has enough time to collect the herbs needed to heal Laksman's poisoned spear wound before the deadline set for Laksman's death.

Hanuman rescues and carries the unconscious Rama. Again another mural image at the Emerald Buddha. Hanuman finds Rama lying unconscious within a black wire cage. Hanuman balances on his right leg as he uses his left leg and hands to pull the cage open. Hanuman carries away the released but still unconscious Rama, whose limp body is held up against Hanuman's powerful right shoulder. In the battles after Ravana is cursed by the gods at the end of his trial, Hanuman and Rama try to kill Ravana by many different methods, but Ravana seems invincible. Understanding that there must be a special secret to Ravana's invincibility, Rama follows Ravana underground to the demon world. There Ravana senses Rama's presence, attacks, and leaves Rama unconscious until Hanuman arrives to rescue him.

(I assume that in the end he finds the secret and kills him; internet research - looks like Ravana has a pool of nectar in his naval which give him immortality - Rama aims his arrows at this, destroys the nectar pool and then kills Ravana - good story eh?).



We then toddled to the museum which was very interesting and was a mixture of everything, in no particular order there were coke glasses, 1950's weighing scales, old wooden boat, buffalo skulls, stuffed snake, old pots, Buddha's, grinding stones, shells, dried fish, old electronic things, record player, and, the list goes on. No info in English but worth a potter.

Finally, we went to look at another Stupa, which typical for this area also floods! We thought we were looking at a leaning Stupa - it wasn't but the one at the other Wat was but we didn't take a photo of that one! So have a look at our leaning Stupa photo of the Prat Samut Jedi²! →



¹ A mound like structure containing Buddhist relics, such as ashes of Buddhist monks

² Jedi same as a Stupa



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Melbourne Cup 2014



Before I set foot in Bangkok 18 months ago, several friends were kind enough to put me in touch with their contacts that were either living in BKK or had lived here in the expat community. In amongst all the usual advice about where to live, schools, nearby holiday destinations, the upsides & downsides of life in Thailand, etc, was talk about making sure I attended the annual ANZWG (Australian-New Zealand Women's Group) Melbourne Cup Event.



So last year, three months after landing, I duly waved the kids off at 7am and then donned my best frock and fascinator and headed off with high expectations for the 10am start. It was a pleasant time, but with my husband out of town, I felt compelled to be home in time for school finishing so quite honestly I wasn't sure what all the fuss was about.

Roll the clock forward one year and I was back for another try. This time, the venue - Amari Watergate - seemed better, the free flow fizz and food was excellent, the best dressed competitions were fun, the live bands at both the main event and the after party were fabulous and had everyone up and dancing, there were lots of friends present and the energy and zest of close to 500 ladies keen on having a good time was overwhelming!

I have to say I had a ball and think that all of the 20 or 30 SILC ladies present did likewise so a huge thank you to ANZWG and I hope that the event raised the million baht it was targeting for your charity projects helping many of Thailand's disadvantaged children and sick.

To sign off, I was with someone at the Munjai coffee morning held a few days later the same week who revealed they had got in at '1'. The question remains was it 1pm (a bit lightweight) or 1am (very impressive!!!).

Dianne

Photo Competition

SILC ladies, whether you are relaxing in a tropical location or just enjoying a seasonal break at home, how about taking a photo and entering our new competition? The winning photo will be used on the front cover of our magazine in March and will be chosen by our judging panel of SILC committee members.

We are looking for a photograph of something that you consider a beautiful representation of the world we live in today. It can be landscape or portrait.

All SILC ladies are eligible to enter.

The theme is 'The Beautiful World Through My Lens'

Photos must be sent as JPEG files and to be no larger than 2.5MB.

Photos need to be emailed to silcmagazine@gmail.com by the closing date of Fri 16 January 2015.

Happy snapping!



New Members



New Members this month:

Cathy O'Neill

Songsri Asampinawongs

Welcome to SILC!

If you know anyone who may be interested in joining SILC please ask them to contact:

Jane Campton: silcthailand@gmail.com



Mona Salce has been an expatriate for 24 years (with 16 years in Bangkok), longer than her years growing up Los Angeles. Currently a trailing spouse and with 3 children at university and 1 at Bangkok Patana School, she enjoys meeting new people, learning languages and trying new foods.

Put a face to the name.

New members, please send in a short blurb to introduce yourself to other members, along with a photograph if possible (with or without the family).

Send to the editor: silcmagazine@gmail.com



Miss You Mango



This month one of our previous SILC Chairs, Sarah Chaplin, was back in town for a quick holiday so we took the chance to ask her what she missed about living in Bangkok. Sarah's top tip seems to be to make the most of Thailand while you are here as they did!



What's the single biggest thing you miss most? - The lovely SILC ladies and someone to clean & iron for me.

Most missed dining – Bua near Paradise Park and Thai food in general; mango sticky rice and wing bean salad with fried fish; dining outside on a balmy evening.

Most missed evening treat – The rooftop bars in the city.

Most missed drink – Mojitos and champagne at the same bars!

Most missed cheap fun- Taking the orange flag boat for 15 baht and exploring the Chao Phraya River.

Most missed holiday destination – Any 5* hotel on the islands when going sailing; Koh Samet for its relaxed atmosphere; the Centara Villas at Hua Hin for luxury.

What was the best thing about SILC for you? - Having experiences I wouldn't ever have had at home, like visiting the local Pre School at Mahawong or visiting the Munjai Cafe in the Klong Toei slums.

What do you wish you had done while you were still here? - We did lots of travelling but there are always more places. I would still like to go to Myanmar.

And finally, what don't you miss? – Being hot and sweaty all the time!

Thank you Sarah!

Lovely to catch up with so many SILC friends and so glad to find SILC is thriving. Enjoy while you can ladies! Sarah





Bulletin Board



This is the place to pin a note if you have anything for sale or something you are looking for, or would like to share a delicious recipe or a fab restaurant you have found...

Just send the details to the Editor in time for the next newsletter.

We need your help!

to reunite these keys with their rightful owner.

If you recognise this tin containing 4 Espresso cups and saucers that you donated to the Bric-a-brac at our recent bazaar, then you are probably the owner of these keys that were found inside the tin along with the cups.

Please get in touch with us via
silcthai@gmail.com if they are yours.

Thank you

Silc Committee



Welfare need your help in collecting 400 new underwear and socks for the children we look after in our various projects. The children are under 5 year olds who come from underprivileged families and underwear and socks are often overlooked when clothing a child on a limited budget. Your donation will make a difference in these children's lives. We are only looking for new items in this occasion, as it will be part of their Christmas gift.

Under wear for 2-5 year old Socks: we need size 5-7 please

You can pass the socks and underwear onto any SILC welfare member or bring along to the SILC Christmas lunch on 9th December, which will be the last date for collection.



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Lunch Review



Our November Lunch took us to the Elemis Spa and JoJo's at the St Regis Hotel on Ratchadamri. We had a mail before to let us know that our facial session would include removing our make-up. Now as you might have noticed I have ginger hair. If you are ginger, your life will have been blighted by people approaching you and saying "Hey Ginge" as a greeting. We wouldn't dream of going up to you and saying "Hey, big nose" or "Goodness me, you have a large bottom" but it seems that we are fair game for personal comments by way of introduction. And if you asked most ginges how rich they would be if they had a Euro for every time someone had asked (usually male, usually with an inflated sense of their own wittiness) if you had matching collar and cuffs (asking someone about their downstairs is never polite), we would all reply, very. There are only 2 advantages to being ginger and they are that you don't go grey, you just fade and you get instant sympathy if you have no make-up on as you look so pale and wan, handy if you need a duvet day.

But enough of my Orange and Proud campaign (we are an endangered species you know!) and back to the story. In addition to the regular abuse, gingers also have nearly invisible eyelashes and eyebrows therefore taking our slap off fill us with dread. I only have 2 half eyebrows anyway, the rest appear to have migrated to my upper lip. My eyelashes are rather sparse too; they have left to regroup as either chin whiskers or, more recently, nose hair. When I remove my face then, I bear more than a passing resemblance to Elizabeth the First who was famously ginger and bleached looking. (She also only had black stumps for teeth but think I am ok on that one)

I had never heard of the St Regis before, despite Lady GaGa staying there (now there's a woman who can rock a bald eyebrow!) and was blown away by how gorgeous it was – very stylish and expensive, understated on the glitz but loaded with full-on glamour. The Elemis Spa itself is equally fabulous, its decor both relaxing and elegant at the same time. We had our faces mapped on arrival, a tour round the all white treatment rooms then it was time for our facials to begin.

Except it wasn't. We started with a talk on Panama hats. What we don't know about Panama hats now just isn't worth knowing. For example they are woven only in the morning by old men with 3 fingers and very long nails. And the pala toquilla only grows long enough in Equador. And that Panama hats should actually be called Equadors because they don't actually come from Panama at all. The hat lady was very beautiful but I was sad she didn't bring her llama or a potato for the full Equadorian experience.

Eventually we did get started- we were talked through lots of little pots and tubes of unguents and seaweed extract and showed how to do our own facials by the lovely Elemis ladies. We cleansed, toned and moisturised. We applied rejuvenating oils in little pods. We massaged each other's arms with something that contained collagen and what sounded like hakuna matata. (I excused myself from that one as I have awful hands and didn't think Sudeshna would like to be stroked by a hobnob). We even tried neck and bust firming cream. My bust is still vaguely where it should be (on the front, though somewhat closer to my waist band than it used to be) but my neck looks like a tortoise sticking its head out of its shell. By the end of the session, my neck still looked like Cliff Richard's but my face was positively glowing. Jo said I looked 10 years younger though she might have been fibbing.



Before we got our Elemis party bags and vouchers, the workshop finished with the analysis of our skin maps. Apparently I need "resurfacing treatment". I am making arrangements with the tarmac gang who recently did soi 4 as we speak.

We ended our super day with a splendid lunch in JoJo's- their duck comes highly recommended as does the rest of the anti-pasti buffet. Thank you to Katja for sourcing, Jo for organising and the Elemis team for being so fab.

PS: When I messaged Mr C to tell him I looked 20 years younger, he asked if that was now 60 rather than 80. I shan't be kind next time he puts on his Singha vest

Jane





Evening Review



Seven couples came out for a lovely evening at *Wine I love You*. It was very nice meeting everyone's spouses and visiting in this new setting.

My husband and I thought the food was generally good, and the service prompt for such a large group. *Wine I Love You* has a nice variety on the menu: you can choose from pastas, steaks, and burgers, and even Mexican or Thai food options. The atmosphere is upscale for a mall restaurant, and cozy, with good service. They have a wide selection of wine, but I recommend that you check to ensure that they have enough

of the same vintage on hand before you order for a group. We found a bottle we liked, but when we requested another, they were out of it already. The positive aspect is that we were able to try a few different selections, but do keep this in mind at *Wine I Love You*.

One draw back of the restaurant is the acoustics in the room. As the restaurant got busy it became difficult to hear each other talk. In order to hear what another person said one had to get very close. For those who had eaten some delicious garlic fries for an appetizer (as I had), every one of their neighbours knew it during the course of the conversation. This was a slight inconvenience, and I think all agreed that our experience at *Wine I Love You* was worth the effort, and we all enjoyed getting together.

Come join us next time for a fun night out at a new restaurant!

Hosanna



Craft Club



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To purchase email Jane at silcthai@gmail.com

The items will also be available to purchase at our SILC Lunch on 9 December.





Coffee Morning Review



November's Coffee morning was a welcome return visit to the popular Munjai Cafe. Approaching its second birthday, the cafe is one of the micro-enterprise projects initiated and supported by UNOH (Urban Neighbours of Hope) with the aim of helping residents of the Klong Toey slum (this is Bangkok's biggest slum with an estimated population of 120,000 living in just 2km²). 18 SILC ladies attended including several new members who we were especially pleased to meet.

Munjai (meaning "confidence" in Thai) has a special focus on helping youngsters from the slum by providing much needed work experience. The aim of the cafe is to provide a safe and nurturing environment where the young staff members can gain the confidence and skills which can then be taken into job opportunities outside the cafe. Khun Gig, the cafe's original cake maker, has recently made this transition to a cafe on Sukhumvit much to everyone's delight.

As always with a SILC coffee morning, there was a great deal of friendly chatter and some delicious food & drinks. There was also some serious Christmas gift buying with Second Chance & Klong Toey Handicrafts proving ever popular. It was, however, the stories shared by cafe employees Khun Chai Yo, Khun Yim & Khun Mod that we were privileged to hear (with Lish from UNOH translating from Thai into English) that made the morning memorable. Their first hand descriptions of the pain and despair they have experienced in their young lives with the joy and hope Munjai is helping to provide brought many members to tears.

Khun Chai Yo, the cafe manager, was the first to share his story. He has been with the cafe from the very beginning, and at 21 years of age, has a maturity way beyond his years. His 'Story of Hope' began when a benevolent Australian family offered to pay for his High School studies. On visiting the school with his father, he was point blank refused entry when they learnt he was from the Klong Toey slum. Luckily for him, his father managed to overcome the prejudice of the school and he was fortunate in enjoying secondary schooling although he kept quiet where his home was for fear of teasing and being shunned by classmates. After graduation he was teaching at the local primary school but jumped at the opportunity to be the manager of the cafe and be instrumental not only in running a successful cafe, helping and mentoring the young employees, but also being a good role model and friend to his neighbours in the slum. Ultimately, Khun Chai Yo hopes to study Social Work at university to be able to provide even more valuable assistance to those in need.



Next, speaking for the first time at a Munjai “Stories of Hope” was Khun Yim (Yim is Thai for smile and this is very apt as Khun Yim has a very beautiful smile!). She is currently 19 years old and told us about how she had left school at 15 in order to help contribute towards family expenses of her mother and siblings as her father wasn’t present. She found herself working days starting at 5am and lasting until 5pm for just 100 baht/day. This cycle repeated itself many times as she moved from job-to-job usually washing dishes or cleaning. Since joining the cafe she told us “life has improved a lot”. She very much appreciates the stability the cafe gives her and is now trying to finish her studies and then hopes to follow her dreams of working as a hairdresser or with make-up.

Khun Mod also shared a sad story, where she described a very happy life until the age of 9 years old. Her parents were then suddenly arrested and she was taken in by her grandfather. Unfortunately this wasn’t a typical granddaughter/grandfather relationship as she felt he had no care for her. This was made worse as he clearly hated her mother and would often do mean things to Khun Mod like cut the electricity to her room so there was no light or fan. During this time Khun Mod also had no money and little food so she cried a lot and felt very angry. At around 14 years old she went to work for a friend of her mother as a maid but when she was 15 years old her mother was released from jail and so she left work and went to help look after her. Again, like Khun Yim, she did many different jobs to get money. She is now 20 years old and sees Munjai as a “great opportunity and a good job”. She is back studying part-time and actively trying to do things that will “help improve my life”. She has taken over responsibility for cakes at the cafe and according to my children who are regular consumers of Khun Mod’s cakes doing a fantastic job!

Throughout all the stories, the feeling of hope that Munjai helps provide was evident. There was also a strong message that whilst no-one would deny the problems of the slum, many of those living there were good people but need help from organisations like UNOH to overcome their problems and provide a stepping stone to a better life.

To close the event Khun Chai Yo with Khun Palm supporting on guitar played us a lovely rendition of Michael Buble’s “Sway with Me” and 4 Non Blondes “What’s Up”.

So next time you’re hungry and thirsty please visit Munjai as every cup of coffee and every single meal you buy is making a better future for Khun Chai Yo, Khun Yim, Khun Mod and all of the members of the Munjai family. The cafe is especially good for kids as the menu features a wide range of Western food as well as Thai. It is open 9am – 4pm, Thursdays thru’ Sundays. For location and more info see <http://www.munjaicafe.org/>

Many thanks to Sadie for another great coffee morning and it goes without saying that SILC wish you and your family all the very best in Singapore and you’ll be much missed.

For any additional info please contact dianne_darke@hotmail.com.

Dianne Darke





Welfare



Update on Gap, the boy from Sparrow Home sponsored by SILC:

Since May Gap is enrolled in 1 Grade at our local neighbourhood school. According to the teacher he is doing well, being an average child. The only developmental problem he still has is his ability to speak properly. But as you know this is because of his overall slow development. Regardless, we are very happy that he was actually able to join a normal school and we are watching his progress closely.

At Sparrow Home he is an active child and of course enjoys all the activities boys like to do, especially riding his bicycle in the afternoon in front of our house. His big sister, Fan, is still also watching over him. As they have been accepted for adoption, we are now waiting for the process to get finalized.

Kind regards

Monika



Prakkasamai Preschool Activity

The visit to Prakkasamai Preschool was wonderful and the kids were amazing. The staff were very welcoming

It's clear the mission of the preschool is to empower young children by helping them acquire new skills, confidence and positive self-image needed to become healthy young adults physically and mentally.

An environment for playing and learning to be home-like and safe, yet exciting. It was an inspiring and memorable experience.

Chris Metzelaar

