

# Rani's Thailand Experience.

This is a true story and a preliminary to the return of a loving spirit.

My name is Edgar Kitson Southward, and I graduated from the Inertial Navigation and Radar School located at Keesler Air Force Base, Biloxi, Mississippi, in February of 1970. My first duty assignment as a radar technician was at Homestead Air Force Base in Florida.



I departed Keesler AFB on my 1967 Suzuki X6 Hustler on that eight-hundred-twenty-mile ride to Florida with everything I needed securely packed within saddle-bags and a homemade scoot boot.



I had been at Homestead for little more than a month, and while returning to the base one evening in April 1970, I stopped to help a fellow cyclist attempting to get his Harley restarted. The problem turned out to have been a blown fuse; we wrapped the old fuse in some tinfoil from a gum wrapper, got his bike restarted, and road the rest of the way back to base together. Shortly after that incident, we

developed a lasting friendship.

John Daniels was a Staff Sergeant, and everyone called him Dan. He was a communications specialist in my squadron but not within my section. Dan was quiet and unobtrusive. He was close to six feet tall and about a hundred and eighty pounds, had a ruddy complexion, sandy-colored curly blond hair, and blue eyes. We were about the same age and had similar interests in cycling. We spent time together traveling to places like Florida's Daytona Beach and Fort Lauderdale on our motorcycles when not on weekend duty. We would travel light and often sleep on the ground.

Between June and September of 1970, Dan, I, and the rest of our squadron were sent on a temporary duty assignment to Kunsan, Korea, which is material for another long story.

Once back on regular duty at Homestead, I stopped by Dan's workplace one afternoon in late July 1971. When he saw me enter, he greeted me with a broad smile and said, "Guess what, I just got orders to Udorn, Thailand; I leave at the end of the month."

"Hey, that's great! I'd love to go with you, but I'm not yet due for any transfer."

Two weeks later, I double-timed it to Dan's shop and shouted, "Dan, where'd you say you're going?"

"Thailand, why?"

"Where in Thailand?"

"Udorn."

I breathlessly held out my orders and gleefully exclaimed, "Look here, I just got my orders, and I'm going to Udorn too; I'll see you there." Then I jokingly added, "Find me a good-looking girl. I'll only be about a month behind you."

I departed the US and arrived at Udorn Royal Air Base, Thailand, in mid-August 1971. I would be eligible to venture off the compound after signing in to the base and completing the required orientation classes on the country's customs and courtesies,

Meanwhile, I called Dan's duty section to obtain his work schedule, and it was no surprise to learn that he was living off base. I then used the Base Locator Service to get his off-base address.

Once authorized to leave the base, I ascertained when we both would be off duty. Luckily, it was my first non-duty Saturday, so I walked to the main gate and got into a local taxi at about noon. Since I had not yet learned to pronounce numbers, much less the names of the streets, I handed the driver a paper with the address, #25, Soy Mohonmot. We arrived ten minutes after the noisiest, bumpiest, wildest ride over the worst potholed streets imaginable. The driver slid to a cockeyed stop in the middle of the dirt road and pointed to a bungalow set far back from the road. I paid him five baht (25 cents) for the carnival ride and climbed out of the cab.

Dan's bungalow was a single-story structure made of poured concrete slabs. There were two front entrances, one on each end of the dwelling. The building was one of three structures in a two-acre compound surrounded by enormous trees on three sides with a wire fence bordering the road.



I entered through a gate and followed the smooth dirt path that circled a large open area within the compound. As I followed the path toward Dan's place, I saw a large two-story wooden home to my left, secluded behind tall green bushes. On the far side of the open area was another large wooden single-story house to my right. There was no sign of life anywhere.

I went to the entrance on the right and gently knocked, and a beautiful young woman opened the door. She was demure and possessed the innate beauty only Thailand could produce.

I respectfully asked, "Does Dan live here?" She nodded her head and called Dan. He came to the door, greeted me like a long-lost brother, invited me in, and introduced me to his lady. I do not remember her name because I could not pronounce it even then. We'll call her ShiTong.

He furnished his dwelling in Thailand's unique wicker and bamboo, making it warmly inviting. We spent the afternoon discussing what it was like living in Thailand while ShiTong prepared the dinner. I knew not of what it contained and was afraid to ask. It was my first off-base Thailand cuisine; it was delicious, and I did not become ill.

At about dusk, Dan and I were sitting on the couch in the living room, sipping native tea, when there was a light knock at the door. ShiTong admitted the caller. I thought ShiTong was gorgeous, but the girl who stood by the counter that divided the dining area from the living room was breathtaking.

I mean that I did not realize that I had stopped breathing until I suddenly could not get my breath. I inhaled like a drowning man breaking the ocean's surface.

This beautiful young lady was about five foot five, slender in stature but with everything in the right place and proportion. Her skin was satiny and smooth without a blemish. Her hair was naturally jet-black, a black with a sheen that glistened in the smallest reflective light, cut to not quite shoulder length so that it curled gently around her face. A stunning face with high cheekbones and slightly almond-shaped eyes that were like glowing embers that flashed fire with the joy of life and became accentuated by the radiance of her smile. She wore a spectacularly white traditional smock-like dress, cinched at the waist with a gold sash that did remarkable wonders for her figure.

When I had finally regained my equilibrium enough to look away from her and back toward Dan, I uttered, "Who is she?" An unoriginal question, but that is all I could say.

He smiled at me with his mischievous, impish grin and said, "You asked me to find you a girl, well - here she is."

"You've got to be kidding. Who is she? - Really."

“No kidding, this is Pang. She lives in that big house next door, the one you passed on the way in.”

While sitting there agog, instantly mesmerized and staring, Pang stood by the edge of the living room, looking unbelievably beautiful. Dan beckoned her to join us. Pang approached within three feet of me and placed her palms together with fingers tilted upward under her chin. With her head slightly tipped forward and eyes closed, she said, “Saw-wah-dee'-kah.”

I had just received my first Thailand greeting. The hand gesture means the goodness and worth of my soul recognize the virtue and value of your soul. It is known as a wai, pronounced Why.

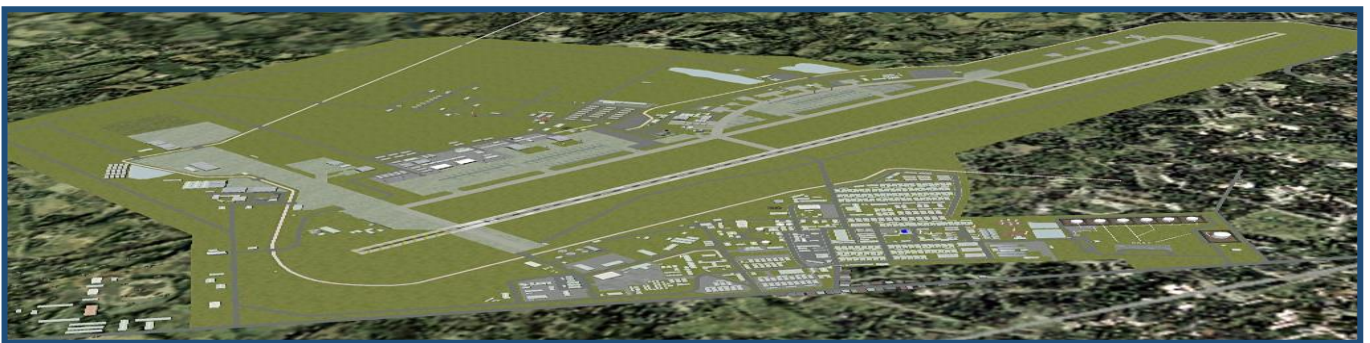
I stood and stammered something like - pleased to meet you - an utterly inadequate response in the good old-fashioned Western tradition.

Pang seated herself on a chair opposite the couch while I sat back down next to Dan. I do not remember much of the conversation because I remained utterly mesmerized by her presence in the room. I remember that eventually, Dan and ShiTong retired, leaving Pang and me alone, and we spent the rest of the night talking.

Her full name was Kom Plang Pontan-aboon. She was twenty-seven, recently divorced from a Thai man who treated her miserably and was living with her mother and two children in the big house next door. Pang was the personification of that proverbial beautiful girl who lived next door that I had never met - until then!

All the squadrons on the base employed local civilians as domestic servants to clean rooms, make beds, shine shoes, and wash and iron clothes. Pang had learned some GI English while working as a house-girl in one of the other squadrons for the past two years. Sunday morning found us bleary-eyed and well-talked out for the time being. Pang returned home, and I said goodbye to Dan and ShiTong. I walked about a half-mile up Soy Mohonmot to the main road, caught a cab back to base, and slept most of the day because the following day began another arduous duty day.

In 1970, Udorn Air Base had the longest active single-runway in the world.



Working in the inertial navigation department placed us very close to the runway. I could watch the F4 Phantom jets as they lined up four abreast and screamed down the runway. The

roar was near deafening as they neared the far end, and the pilots fired their afterburners. The most spectacular sights occurred during night takeoffs.

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I visited with Dan as often as our different duty hours would permit, which was seldom. I continued to see Pang whenever I could. We often went to dinner and sometimes to the outdoor amphitheater to see movies. The base Personnel Service Department had set up a series of excellent sightseeing tours. Whenever Pang and I could arrange mutual time off, we took advantage of several tours.

The Inertial Navigation and Radar department divided the two duty sections into twelve-hour shifts. My shift was from midnight to noon. I did not mind going to work at midnight. My problem was that when the sun came up in the morning, my body said it was quitting time, and those remaining five hours each morning were absolute misery. When I got off duty at noon, I would have lunch in the mess hall and then try to get some sleep.

Pang did not work in my squadron, but sometimes, when she got off duty around five o'clock, she would come and sit by my side until I woke up. The only bright spots during this miserable work schedule were on the days when I would wake to find Pang sitting beside my bed. The first time I awoke and saw her, I asked why she was there."

She said, "I come look you."

I did not ask her why - I just enjoyed her being Pang. What she did not know was that I was hopelessly infatuated with her.

When I eventually got up the courage to ask her to share a house with me, she said, "GI's come Thailand for good time — you go town — have good time — when you finish — you ask me `gain."

I said, "I thought you knew me better than that. If all I wanted was sex, I would've already gone to town. I am asking you now."

She confided, "I never bin with GI before. I don't know if can. All girlfriend say I should stay you. I thinking bout it."

After nearly two months of coaxing her to share a home with me, she finally began considering that she might. However, before she would agree, I had to sit before her mother and request her permission. That in itself was an adventure.

I did not know then but subsequently learned that Pang had to be sure that what she was considering was in her best interests. She had gone to 'The Old Woman of the Tree' for advice.

In the Buddhist religion, which is much older, wiser, and more comprehensive than the Western religions of the Occident, the people commune with spirits of all kinds. The 'Old Woman of the Tree' is a hamadryad with whom most Udorn and the surrounding area went for information and guidance.



After I had rented a house across the road from her compound in desperate anticipation, I guess I passed muster on both fronts because Pang came to live with me the following week.

There were three basic prices in Udorn. One for the American GI who tried to buy something, one for us if we went together, and one for her if she bought something alone. Her price was invariably seventy-five to eighty percent less than mine would be.

Since I paid nearly \$75.00 a month for the house, Pang suggested finding a cheaper place to live. She located and rented a brand new, solid teakwood, never-occupied two-bedroom house, built according to true Thai fashion, supported on solid teakwood pillars holding it eight feet above the ground. There was a front and rear entrance, staircases to the back door and a front porch balcony. There were shutters on all the windows and a two-hundred-gallon cistern we used to collect rain-water. We drank, cooked, and showered with pure rain-water for about \$18.00 monthly. I bought us both bicycles, so we didn't have to walk the mile to the base.

Shortly after we moved into the new house, Pang went to the local Wat (a Buddhist temple) and arranged for the Buddhist monks to visit and perform a New Home Ritual. A Buddhist tradition is that all new dwellings receive a cleansing and purification ceremony. It will ward off any negativity present and, more importantly, establish the positive vibrations of peace and harmony.

I did not fully understand the significance of the monks' actions, but I will relate what I saw. We held the ritual on one of those rare Saturday mornings when I did not have to report for duty. It was a beautiful, warm, sunny morning like most mornings in Thailand.

After Pang told me about the upcoming celebration, we prepared the house for the festivities. We took a ball of twine and encircled the house several times, just above the window level. The twine symbolized a barrier to prevent evil or harmful spirits from entering the house. I secured a bright white linen cloth along the longest living room wall directly under the windows and draped it to flow down the wall and onto the floor, covering about one-quarter of the room. We placed five large soft throw pillows covered in subdued colors of reds, greens, and browns on the cloth close to the wall under the windows. At the left end of the line of pillows was a silver chalice filled with water. Next to and slightly

behind the chalice was a small table upon which Pang placed a golden Buddha figurine. The figurine was about fourteen inches tall and enclosed in a glass case. There were also two slender crystal vases containing several bright yellow flowers.

There was also a small cylindrical container holding incense sticks and a small pile of yellow tapers. A low-cut box was approximately a foot square in front of the chalice. Protruding straight upward from each box corner were slender sticks about eighteen inches long, and the twine that surrounded the house entered through a window and laid across the pillows. It was then wrapped around the upright sticks of the box in the same fashion as the house. An assortment of brightly colored flowers filled the box.

I learned that partaking in sumptuous food is part of finalizing the ceremony, so our neighbors brought trays filled with specially prepared foods. These trays nearly covered the floor of the unused bedroom where we stored the bicycles.

Pang's children, mother, and neighboring families filled our home that day.

Pang and I stood on the porch balcony and watched as the Buddhist monks approached on foot along the dirt road in front of our home. They removed their sandals at the foot of the staircase and ascended to the porch. As they entered the living room, they greeted us with the traditional 'Whi' and 'Saw-Wah-Dee'-cop."



The monks seated themselves cross-legged on the pillows. They placed their hands in the 'Why' position with the twine between their thumb and forefinger. Everyone in the room sat on the floor with their hands in the 'Why' position and quietly observed as the priests began to chant, burn tapers, and incense. The chanting lasted about twenty minutes. After it ended and the tapers extinguished, the final portion of the ceremony commenced as we all feasted on the delicacies provided for the occasion.

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The people of Thailand are mostly Buddhists and have an entirely different outlook on life. I had always sought— what I called the 'Big Picture' because I have always believed there was more to life and beyond than the myriad of religious teachers would have me believe. While in Thailand, I learned that life truly exists beyond what most people realize. I was not then, nor am I now, a Buddhist, but the experience is one that I will never forget.

The cleansing ritual must have been successful because as long as Pang and I lived together in that house. There was never a voice raised in anger or a crossword between us.

There was always peace and tranquility. Our house was a sanctuary of love and harmony amid the continuing hostilities of the war-makers a mile and a half away.

My original tour of duty was to be one year. I applied for several extensions to my tour but only received one ninety-day extension. There are not enough words to describe the remainder of my stay in Thailand other than the entire experience was much too short. After thirteen incredibly spectacular months living with Pang, I realized what true love was like for the first time.

By November of 1972, the time had arrived for me to leave. I turned down the routine military departure flight to Bangkok, requested a five-day delay enroute, and provided my own transportation. I procured train tickets to Bangkok, and Pang took a week off from her job.

Pang and I took a taxi to the train station on the morning we left and traveled by rail to Bangkok. We spent our last week together enjoying everything the magnificent historical city had to offer. I reluctantly boarded a commercial flight and flew out while Pang returned to Udorn by train.

Fifteen months after leaving the United States, I returned to Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, Mississippi. Once there, I began pestering the sergeant in charge of reassignments with my requests to return to Thailand. Pang and I wrote letters and sent audiotapes to one another for two years, but no request for reassignment to Thailand ever occurred.

When her letters suddenly stopped, I learned from a mutual Thailand friend that Pang had become very ill and, shortly thereafter, had surrendered the mortal body. My beautiful, loving Pang had crossed over.

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I added this portion of the saga concerning Hamadryads in 1990.

Some dictionaries inadequately define a hamadryad from Greek and Roman Mythology as a wood nymph who lives only as long as the tree she inhabits lives. I learned from Pang that this is false.

A hamadryad is a living spirit, just like all immortal spirits (souls) that inhabit the bodies of all living things. Hamadryads live symbiotic with the spirit soul of the tree where it dwells. A young dryad spirit joins with the young sapling's spirit and symbiotically shares the tree throughout its life cycle. The tree grows tall, strong, and healthy from the nourishment it gains from the earth where its roots burrow. The Dryad gains her knowledge by tapping into the well of knowledge within the very core of Mother Earth. And it increases its wisdom from having lived so long.

The Dryad's primary purpose and functions are to provide women of the planet access to the knowledge, wisdom, and understanding of the ages that concern all women, i.e., advice on conception,



how-to or not-to conceive, best ways to raise their children and what to teach them that will assist in fuller, happier, more productive lives.

This knowledge is given freely and lovingly to all women who come in a positive seeking way. The symbiotic relation is such that those who seek knowledge and commune with the tree's spirit can see a visual change in the bark structure - a face will appear. The actual communication occurs while the tree's Dryad's spirit sings her messages to the recipient. This service is for women only and is never observed by males. If anyone approaches the tree in a hostile, bitter, angry, or otherwise negative manner, acknowledgment is never given; it is merely a tree.

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### **The Old Woman of the tree, as the one Pang visited.**

The 'Old Woman of the Tree' to whom the women of the Udorn area visited was a hamadryad that indwelt the Banyan tree that grew a short distance off the end of the runway of the Air Base. Some seven hundred years ago, this Dryad entered the very young Banyan sapling as a youthful spirit. They grew together where the tree became large and robust; the Dryad became knowledgeable and wise.

A dryad had made herself available for hundreds of years to all the women of Udorn and surrounding areas with everyone who wished to commune with the spirit-being.

As a result of the Vietnamese war outbreak brought about the activation of Udorn airbase, and the story I am about to relate came from several reliable sources.

During a landing of one of the F4 fighter planes, the pilot came in too low, brushing the top of the Banyan tree. Consequently, the base commander ordered to chop out a massive portion from the top of the tree.

When the local women learned of the desecration that was about to happen to their tree, they rose in great protest.

They tried vainly to explain what the tree meant to them and their culture to the military leaders. The base commander would not honor the country's customs or its people, for what does an occidental war-maker know or care of wood nymphs? He could have easily ordered his pilots to make their approach slightly higher and avoid the tree altogether. But no! He ordered to chop out the top center of the ageless tree. The women also warned him about repercussions if he committed this sacrilege. The military carried out the order, and the tree became severely assaulted and wounded.

As the rest of the story goes, the first plane to attempt a landing after the tree topping crashed without any discernible cause. Neither the pilot nor navigator was seriously injured, but neither could they explain why their six-million-dollar aircraft's engine flamed out during the landing approach. The F4 fighter jet was a total loss.



I obtained this photo from Google – labeled, F4 crash Udorn 1970

The spirit, the very life's essence of the tree itself, plus the indwelling Dryad, did all they could to sustain the continuance of the tree. Nevertheless, the desecration of this ancient Banyan tree, caused by the continued bombardment of negativity from the war machines, eventually withered and died. This atrocity also forced the 700-year-old resident Dryad from her home. She tried to locate another host tree that would accept her because she was sorely needed to serve all the women in the shadow of war. She could not sustain her mission, so she returned from whence she came to rejuvenate her soul. She will eventually return to a new sapling and begin anew. Such is the cycle of life for us all.

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### **The return of a loving spirit is a true story of an actual occurrence.**

In mid-August of 1990, my clairvoyant seer Magna came to me and said. "I have just received a message from Dominic; he says that a spirit-being just arrived and requests to speak with us." Dominic is Magna's spirit guardian, with whom she converses freely.

I asked, "Who's here?"

Magna confirmed, "I sense a yin spirit, a strong but loving spirit."

They began communicating, "She calls herself SueLee."

I asked, "Why does she want to speak with us?"

As Magna continued speaking with her, we learned that SueLee had recently crossed over and resumed her chosen path of destiny. As an immortal spirit, she has always been a

universal healer from the house of Avalon. SueLee explained that all beings, mortal and immortal, are essentially electrochemical. She traverses the universe, administering aid to all who request it and assists in maintaining their proper physical and spiritual electrochemical balance.

When she finished her explanation, I asked, “When did you leave your last mortality?”

SueLee conveyed, “Several of your Earth’s years ago.”

I asked, “Where did you live?”

The instant she stated, “In Thailand,” a sharp electric sensation coursed up my spine, and my thoughts raced. “Could it be? No – not likely, but not impossible.”

While slowly recovering, I asked the pertinent question, “Who were you? Did we know each other?”

Magna paused, took a deep breath, and said, “She wants me to tell you... Yes, she was Pang and has come to affirm her love.”

At that instant, I visualized my beautiful Pang as I had first seen her as she stood in Dan’s living room. Before I could develop a coherent response, Magna continued to translate, “SueLee is saying that, as mortals, neither of you had any way of knowing that you had prearranged your meeting in Thailand before coming into your present mortalities. She is saying that after having crossed over, she learned that you have shared many past lives together and will share many more in the future.”

SueLee visited us often and assisted us in bolstering our immune system in defense of the many new biological diseases that were developing. She continued until we moved out of the Arizona Mojave Desert.

Remember John Daniels, my Air Force motorcycle friend from Homestead, Florida. He is the person I must thank for bringing Pang and me together in Thailand. Dan was a Buddhist even before we first met in Florida, so it was no surprise to learn that he returned to Thailand after he retired from service, where he presently resides in a Buddhist monastery.

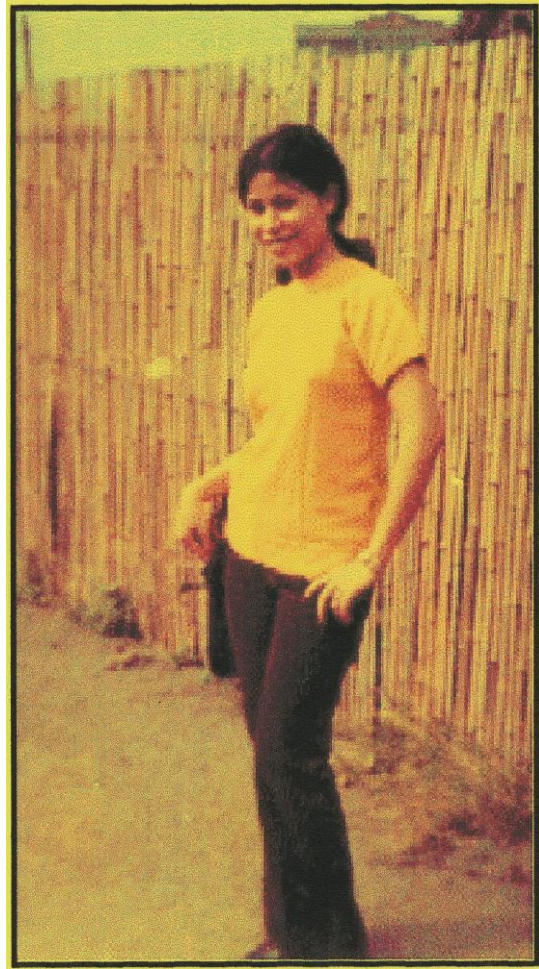
In truth, none of our meetings would have occurred without the loving assistance from all our mutual spirit guardians, who managed to direct everyone involved to be in the correct place at the proper time. There is no such thing as a coincidence!

I believe that at the time of our historically divine meeting, our immortal spirits recognized each other even if our mortal minds did not. Why else would I have felt the way I did?

This may be the end of the dissertation of the experience, but not the end of our story, for all life is continuous, and we will again reunite.

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This is the last photo  
I received from Pang  
before her crossing  
in 1975.



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Read And Nurture Intellect

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