

Newsletter

มูลนิธิภูเก็ตมอบสิ่งดีๆ แก่เรา



Vocational Opportunities
Through English

MAY 2026



Welcome to our Special Edition Newsletter!

Inside, you'll find reflections from when the Foundation was first established, along with thoughts from our teachers on the continued importance and impact of our English programme. We also share news from a recent fundraising event and celebrate the wonderful donors whose generosity continues to make it possible for us to provide fully funded English education to underprivileged children, 20 years on.

- Inside This Issue:
- Celebrating 20 Years
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 - How You Can Help

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Celebrating The Foundation's 20th Anniversary!!

How it all Began

It all began after the 2004 Asian Tsunami, with the late Tom McNamara, the owner of Baan Rim Pa Restaurant, and his daughter Fleur Atkinson looking to provide fully funded English education to underprivileged children of Phuket. They understood it was the key to the children's future success. Phuket Has Been Good To Us was

established, with the first English programme introduced to Kalim School, in 2006.



*Tom McNamara at
the opening ceremony*



Fleur and her boys

And now, 20 years on

An Interview with Fleur Atkinson

Fleur Atkinson is a Psychodynamic Counsellor, registered with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP).

She lives in the UK with her two teenage sons.

Q: What was the inspiration behind starting the charity 20 years ago?

After the tsunami, many people felt helpless and wanted to support Phuket, but were unsure how to ensure their contributions would be used responsibly. My father, Tom McNamara, had a wide network of trusted connections, and people from around the world reached out to him, asking for guidance. He became the custodian of significant donations and felt a deep responsibility to ensure they were used effectively. At the same time, I had just returned from studying at Smith College in the US. I felt incredibly fortunate for the education I had received and wanted to give something meaningful back, while also spending time with my father as his health declined. Together, we agreed that education is something no one can take away. We looked at what kind of education would make the greatest difference in Phuket.



As the island developed, we saw that a lack of English was preventing many Thais from progressing into senior roles, often forcing them to leave for work elsewhere. We wanted to change that by creating a practical English programme to open doors and create opportunities locally. With an existing relationship at Kalim School through my father's restaurant, **Baan Rim Pa**, we were able to pilot our English programme there.

Q: What was the biggest challenge in getting started?

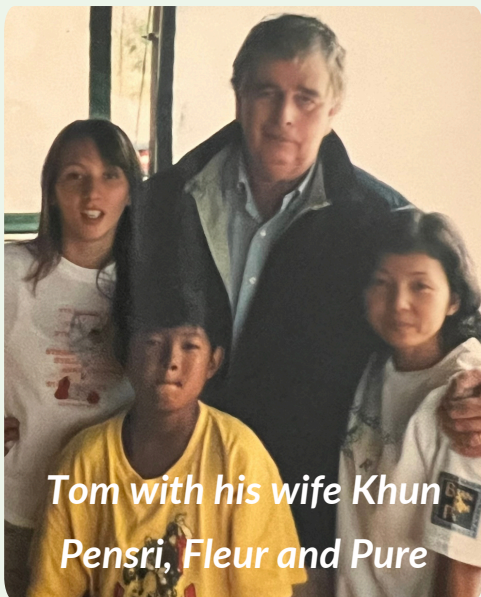
For me personally, it was navigating the complicated legal process of establishing the foundation. Although I already spoke conversational Thai, this required a deep understanding of legal and technical language. At that time, there were also many fraudulent charities emerging after the tsunami, so building trust required patience, humility, and cultural sensitivity. Looking back, this experience gave me a much deeper empathy for Thai students learning English and strengthened my commitment to making language learning more accessible.



Tom and Fleur

Q: Looking back, what achievements are you most proud of?

I'm most proud of the way we have supported children holistically. While we began with a focus on English education, the foundation has grown into something much broader. Through our teachers and programmes, we've helped build confidence, break down cultural barriers, and create meaningful connections.



Tom with his wife Khun Pensri, Fleur and Pure

Learning a language is one thing, but bringing it to life through activities—whether that's sports, cooking, swimming, or creative arts—has made a lasting impact on the children's development.



Q: What do you think has made the biggest difference in the children's lives?
Without a doubt, it's the people. The teachers and volunteers who genuinely care. They take the time to get to know each child and invest in their future. English is just the starting point; it's the care, encouragement, and belief in the children that truly transforms lives.



Students from Kalim School 2006



Q: What has this journey meant to you personally?

In many ways, this was the final collaboration between my father and me, and it continues to grow and evolve. When I first came to Phuket as a child, my father and I planted a coconut tree together. He told me it could provide

everything: water, food, shelter, even a way to start again. That idea became the inspiration behind the charity and our after-school Coconut Club. The foundation is our way of giving back to Phuket and ensuring children have the opportunities they need to thrive. My father would be incredibly proud of what has been achieved; this was the work he cared most deeply about.

Q: What would you say to someone thinking about getting involved for the first time? This is a charity with a big heart and a lot of optimism. Get involved, you'll make a difference, and it will stay with you.



Remembering Friends From Around The World

For 20 years, behind the scenes, there have been dedicated teachers and volunteers from around the world who have given their time, energy, kindness, and hearts to the children we serve. From English lessons and Coconut Club activities to birthday parties, swimming lessons, sports, creative projects, and simply being there to listen and care, every person has played a part in shaping brighter futures and creating happy childhood memories. This collage celebrates some of the incredible people who have been part of our journey over the past two decades, along with the friendships, laughter, learning, and love shared along the way.



Remembering Friends From Around The World



To every teacher, volunteer, donor, and supporter who has walked beside us over the last 20 years, thank you. We are deeply grateful for the difference you have made in the lives of so many children.



Reflections By Sue Ultmann

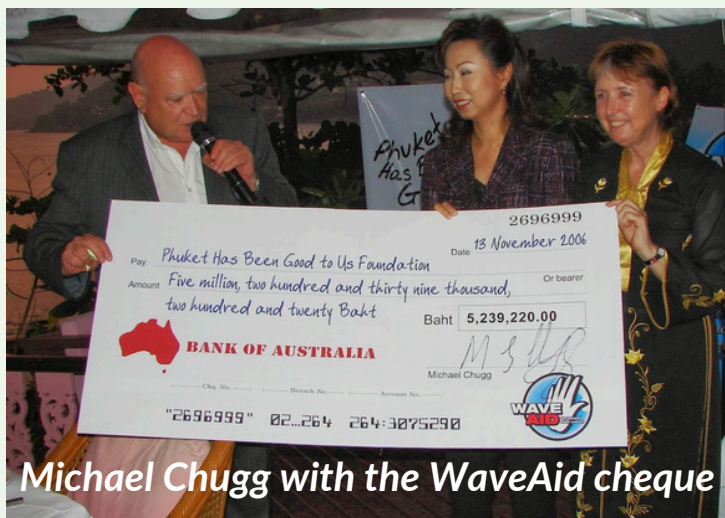
Chairman – Board of Managers – PHBGTOU

Executive Manager & Marketing Director – BAAN RIM PA restaurant



Running a charity comes with many challenges. When you begin, you don't always think about what lies ahead, or the obstacles and people that may continually stand in the way of success. At first, all you have is a great idea and the hope of getting people on board to assist and donate.

Often, the enthusiasm fades and some of the passion dissipates when the hard work begins. However, a dedicated few continue to forge ahead, hoping that what they are doing is recognised, appreciated, and supported.



It is hard for me to believe that 20 years have passed since we started Phuket Has Been Good To Us Foundation. In some ways, it feels even longer. When my late boss, Tom McNamara and his daughter Fleur, came up with the idea that expatriate businesspeople who had been successful in Phuket should give

back to the community, by providing fully funded English education for underprivileged Thai children in local government schools, they received tremendous support. From this shared vision, the charity was born.





For those of us who lived through the 2004 Asian Tsunami and its aftermath, the memories still linger. Lives were torn apart, property was destroyed, but people showed remarkable resilience and life eventually returned to normal.

I worked alongside Tom and Fleur from the very beginning and watched a simple English teaching program for 124 children grow into an established part of the school curriculum, now reaching more than 700 children every year.



Even today, we still struggle to raise enough funds. Although we hold regular fundraising events, we often wonder how long we can continue. Please, if you are able to help financially in any way, you will be giving young people the opportunity for a brighter future and better employment opportunities.

Why PHBGTO Teachers Are So Essential 20 Years On

By Senior Teacher Jerlin, Kamala School



Jerraleen J. Balais

As I reflect on the ten years since I joined PHBGTO Foundation, I am filled with gratitude for the growth and transformation we have achieved together. Each year brings a fresh wave of students and challenges, but our kind supporters' steadfast commitment has been the pillar of our success.

When I first started, our English programme often depended on school textbooks, with teachers creatively developing their own syllabi. This initial structure demonstrated the dedication and passion of our previous team, yet it became clear that a robust framework was needed to provide direction and effectively identify learning gaps. In response, we crafted our own flexible curriculum, aligned with the standards of the Thai Ministry of Education. This evolving document, born from years of collective effort, allows us to continuously adapt to meet the needs of our students and schools.

We observed that many students, while able to engage in basic conversations, faced challenges in reading and writing. To tackle this, we included phonics and active reading, breaking paragraphs



into sentences to strengthen their skills. Additionally, we equip students with crucial approaches to learning (ATL) skills, teaching them how to learn independently, inquire deeply, communicate effectively, think critically, and manage themselves. These are essential tools for succeeding in today's world.





While our focus is on teaching English, we embrace a holistic approach by integrating concepts from other subjects like Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, IT, Economics, and more. This method helps students recognise the relevance of learning English and other languages in daily life, illustrating how these skills

expand their possibilities and open doors to opportunities that can lead to realizing their dreams.

Every effort is worthwhile; my favourite moments include witnessing students' joy as they master reading and writing. Hearing from former students about their successes and their desire to give back to their communities highlights the importance of our work.



We need funding to create a safe environment and provide personalised learning for our diverse students and growing class sizes. Your ongoing support allows us to equip them for real-world challenges and inspires them to chase their dreams, ensuring each effort makes a meaningful difference in their futures and communities.



Thank you for standing with us on this journey.



Making A Real Difference Outside The Classroom

By Teacher Da, Coconut Club Co-ordinator

To complement our daily English lessons, PHBG TU also runs an after-school Coconut Club for the 250 children who reside at the school. Many are orphans or their families are unable to have them living at home. For them, the lively and welcoming atmosphere of the club, is a very special part of their daily lives.



Coconut Club is a place where relaxation, creativity, and learning come together, offering students the chance to unwind after class while building confidence and friendships.



Their PHBG TU Teachers and volunteers provide a wide variety of activities to suit different interests, including sports, yoga, arts and crafts, board games, cooking, and computer skills.



These sessions encourage teamwork, creativity, communication, and personal growth, helping students become more confident and well-rounded young people.

For many of the children living at school, Coconut Club is much more than an activity programme, it is a safe and supportive space where they feel cared for and valued.



Living at school can be challenging, and their PHBGTO teachers are always there to offer encouragement, guidance, and a listening ear whenever needed. Whether students are feeling overwhelmed, worried, or simply need someone to talk to, the club provides comfort, stability, and a sense of belonging.



Children learn through imitation and repetition. Giving them the opportunity to interact with their PHBGTO teachers and volunteers in Coconut Club enhances their confidence, speech abilities and English vocabulary. Free play is also known to help minimize anxious feelings. This is especially valuable for the residential students when they first arrive at school and are still adjusting to their new environment. Their teachers help the children build trauma coping skills and integrate skills in solving conflicts through modelling and roleplay. Over time, we see remarkable transformations as shy children grow into confident learners and leaders.



This is only possible thanks to kind sponsors. Every donation helps us provide not only enriching activities, but also the support, care, and positive role models these children need to thrive and build brighter futures.

Thank you for sharing so much happiness.



Helping Disadvantaged Children Pursue Their Dreams

By Teacher Melody, Chicorée Foundation Kalim School



I have been with PHBG TU for 3 ½ years and along with PHBG TU Teacher Laila, I am teaching English at Baan Kalim School. We are 100% committed to strengthening students' English skills, to broaden their opportunities and help them pursue their dreams. To ensure no child is left behind, we also provide

additional support outside of class hours for students who need extra help.

Our classes include both local Thai and migrant children, creating a multicultural environment where diversity is celebrated and every student feels valued. This inclusive approach has helped students thrive academically, while embracing their unique identities and backgrounds.



The impact of PHBG TU's interactive and holistic English programme has been remarkable. Students from Baan Kalim School have become more confident English speakers. They have won gold medals in provincial inter-school English storytelling competitions, and achieved excellent academic results. In the 2025

National Education Test (ONET), the school's Primary 6 students achieved one of the top four English scores among Phuket's public schools.





As a teacher, nothing is more rewarding than seeing students grow in confidence, enjoy learning, and make real progress in their English skills. Beyond the classroom, the support of donors, volunteers, and the wider community allows the children to enjoy birthday celebrations, swimming lessons, and

after-school clubs that enrich their lives and build self-esteem.

All of these achievements are possible because of the generosity of people who believe every child deserves opportunity and support. Education is a proven pathway out of poverty and, in Phuket, English language skills are essential for accessing better employment and brighter futures.



Your support is invaluable in helping PHBG TU continue providing quality education to vulnerable children in underserved communities. Whether through donations, volunteering, providing teaching supplies, or organising community fundraisers, every contribution helps create lasting change.



*Together, we can continue
empowering children and opening
doors to a brighter future.*

THANK YOU
for being a part of this journey.



Fundraising

International Women's Day Lunch 2026

On Friday 6th March, 170 guests gathered at the **Courtyard by Marriott Phuket Town** to celebrate the personal and economic benefits of giving #GiveToGain.

A huge thank you to our generous prize donors (see the list below) and all our amazing guests who came together to enable us to raise an amazing total of **THB 450,000**.

Thanks to the support, we are able to employ a fully qualified English teacher for the 2026 school year, starting in May, to teach disadvantaged children at Kamala School.



Special thanks to our talented photographer, Kolin Friske, for capturing these fabulous moments.



Lucky guests had the chance to bid on amazing prizes, including these fabulous staycations and shopping experience:

Live Auction Prizes



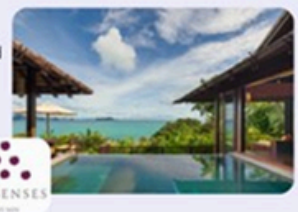
A 5 Star Marine VIP Private Captain's Choice Charter with your itinerary designed by the experienced captain and crew on the day of your tour. For up to 15 guests to islands within 1 hour of Phuket. Valid to 21st February 2027 (excluding 15 Dec 2026 - 15 Jan 2027)
Value 34,000 THB
Does not include lunch, national park fees, or transfers.

3 days 2 nights in a **Paradise Koh Yao** Plunge Pool Deluxe Seaview Studio breakfast and shared speedboat transfers. Valid to 20 December 2026. (excluding 12-17 April 2026)
Value 37,000 THB



A VIP Shopping Experience for Four A £500 gift voucher; train tickets or Valet Parking; a champagne breakfast on arrival; lunch for four; priority access to village boutiques; a bespoke shopping consultation. Exclusive all-day access to *The Apartment*. Valid to 6th March 2027. Must be pre-booked at least 48 hours in advance.
Value 52,000 THB

2 nights in a **Six Senses Yao Noi** Ocean Pool Villa One Bedroom including breakfast for 2 and shared land and boat transfers to and from Phuket Airport. Valid to 20th March 2027 (excluding 31 March - 12 April; 30 April - 6 May; 1 - 7 October; 20 December - 10 January; 1 - 28 February.)
Value 150,000 THB



International Women's Day Lunch 2026

First Mystery Table Prize Draw

Prizes donated by Marriott Southern Thailand Hotels

One (or more!) of these prizes sits in the gift bags on your table.

The more tickets you purchase, the greater your chances to win!

Autograph Veranda Resort	2 x 1 night in a Deluxe Room including breakfast for 2
Autograph Veranda Resort	2 x Afternoon Tea for 2 at The Parlour Restaurant
Courtyard by Marriott Patong Beach	2 x Food & Beverage vouchers valued at THB 3,000
Courtyard Phuket Town	3 days 2 nights in Family Room inc breakfast for 2 adults & 2 children
Courtyard Phuket Town	Market Place Buffet dinner Fri or Sat for 2 adults & 2 children
Four Points by Sheraton Patong Beach	2 x International Dinner Buffet at Chao Leh Kitchen for 2
JW Khao Lak	2 Nights in a Deluxe Pool View Room, including breakfast for 2
JW Khao Lak	Dinner Buffet at any Themed Night Buffet for 2 (food only)
JW Marriott Khao Lak Resort & Spa	Quan Spa 60 min Family Package for 2 adults & 1 child (5-12 years)
JW Marriott Phuket Resort & Spa	A Food & Beverage voucher valued 2,500THB for Cucina Restaurant
JW Marriott Phuket Resort & Spa	A Food & Beverage valued at 2,500THB for Siam Deli Restaurant
Le Méridien Mai Khao	2 x 1 night in a Deluxe Guest room, Garden View inc breakfast for 2
Le Méridien Mai Khao	1 night in a Deluxe Guest room, Garden View inc breakfast for 2
Le Méridien Phuket	2 nights in a Deluxe Pool View Room including breakfast for 2
Phuket Marriott Merlin Beach	2 x Dinner Buffet voucher inclusive free flow soft drinks for 2
Phuket Marriott Nai Yang Beach	A 90 minute Aroma Massage for one person at Quan Spa
Renaissance Phuket Resort & Spa	2 nights in a Deluxe Garden Room
Renaissance Phuket Resort & Spa	A 90-minute Aroma massage for one at Quan Spa
Ritz-Carlton Reserve Phulay Bay	Breakfast at Jampoon Restaurant for 2
Ritz-Carlton Reserve Phulay Bay	Luxury 60 min massage & wonderful thermal suite facilities-Vitality pool, Steam and Sauna for purifying and balancing circulation 30
The Naka Island Phuket	2 x Food & Beverage Dinner at Aiyara at THB 3,600 for 2
The Naka Island Phuket	A 60 Minute Body Massage at Spa Naka by HARNN

More Mystery Table Prize Draws

One (or more!) of these prizes sits in the gift bags on your table.

The more tickets you purchase, the greater your chances to win!

Albatross Cafe	Vouchers
Andara Resort & Villas	Lunch at Silk valued at 3,000 baht
Baan Rim Pa Restaurant	A 2,000 baht voucher
Barada chocolate	1Kg of handcrafted chocolate
Centara Grand Beach Resort Phuket	1 night in a Deluxe Room inc breakfast for 2
Chem Hair Salon	5 x hair cut or treatment
D&K Smiley Phuket Resort	2 nights in a Pool Villa inc breakfast for 2
Dusit Thani Laguna Phuket	F&B for Casuarina Beach Club valued at 2,000 baht
HEH	2 x 2,000 baht voucher
Gluck Cafe	5 x a coffee voucher
Goat Beach Club	2 x 1,000 baht voucher
Nomad Beach Club	A 2,000 baht voucher
Lost Horizon Resort Khao Sok	3 days 2 nights in a Lakeside Villa inc breakfast for 2
Kata Rocks	Signature Pool Brunch for Two (alcohol package included)
Keemala	3 x 3,000 baht vouchers
Mrs B Bar & Table	A 2,000 baht voucher
Millionaires Burger	6 x vouchers
Oasis Spa	1x King and 1x Queen of Oasis 2 hour Signature Massage
SunUp	Breakfast for two
Phuket Table Tennis Club	1 group class for one adult or one child
Ramada	1 night in a Deluxe Room inc breakfast for 2
Sol Cafe and Restaurant	A 500 baht voucher
STAY Wellbeing & Lifestyle Resort	1 night in Junior Suite Pool View with breakfast for 2
SUAY	2 x 2,000 baht vouchers
TA Chalong	4 x 1,000 baht nail and hair vouchers
TALAY	2 x 1 night stay inc breakfast for 2
Taste Bar & Grill	Sunday Brunch for 2
The Barrel Cherg Talay	A voucher for wine tasting & one for 6 bottles of Prosecco
Wyndham Grand Phuket Kalim Bay	Thai Cooking Class for 4 at the Wyndham Grand Orchard

A massive thank you also to our inspiring presenters: Sue Ultmann, Chairman, Board of Managers, PHBGU; Kirsten Fletcher, Australia's Consul-General to Phuket; Nidhi Kapur child protection, gender and inclusion specialist; Martin Carpenter MBE Founder and Managing Director of Phuket Concierge Co. Ltd.; Natalie Coulson, Founder, Kicking Goals Marketing and Communications; Colin Gallagher, Assistant to the Dean for International Affairs, Prince of Songkla University; Heidi Oxley-Whitnell, Community Engagement and CAS coordinator, UWC Thailand; Padme Elsa Ostlind, Final year A-Level student, KIS; Wiphaporn Jobrich, Learning Manager, Four Points by Sheraton Phuket Patong Beach Resort.

We are so grateful to everyone who helped make this meaningful and inspiring event such a success.



Donors & Supporters

Every Sip Makes a Difference!

Coffee Culture Thailand introduced the Coffee Culture Thai Brew Collection in support of Phuket Has Been Good To Us.

Perfect for your morning ritual or as a thoughtful gift, each box includes 6 single-serve pour-over drip coffee bags.

A THB 400 donation per box, with 30%

going to Phuket Has Been Good To Us, helps provide FREE English education for disadvantaged children in Phuket. Every cup helps create brighter futures.

To order, contact: Tina@phukethasbeengoodtous.org



Long-term Friends of the Foundation



Friends of the Foundation **Mike and Kim** continue to send boxes of goodies from Australia, filled with classroom & after-school club supplies, as well as fantastic birthday gifts for the children who have to live at school; their generosity brings so much joy. And thank you to **5 Star Marine** for receiving these parcels too!

A big thank you to **Kevin Vaz** for his continued support. In April he brought a huge 15kg bag of donations for Coconut Club and birthday celebrations. We're so grateful to his wonderful friends and family in Canada for helping to collect these items.



How You Can Help

Become a Sponsor

A huge thank you to AustCham Thailand

We are incredibly grateful to the members of AustCham Thailand for their continued support through the AustCham CSR Programme. Thanks to their generous donation of **THB 60,000**, we are able to continue providing free English education to our Primary Year 3 students at Kamala



School — helping them build confidence, develop essential skills, and create brighter opportunities for their future.

Sponsor a Child

We would not be here 20 years on without the support of our kind donors. Please help us to continue our work. An annual donation of just **THB 10,000** provides the funding for one student to receive a full year of English education and fun Coconut Club activities and we'll keep you updated on your student's progress.

If you want to offer a child a better future, please contact Tina Hall at: tina@phukethasbeengoodtous.org



How You Can Help

#Coins for Charity, is a campaign that urges people to donate the small change they have gathered at home. These donations have been used to purchase teaching equipment and supplies.

Please remember,
every little bit helps!!



Please Help - Make a Donation



Bank name: Siam Commercial Bank - Patong Branch

SWIFT Code: SICOTHBK

Savings Name: Phuket Has Been Good To Us Foundation

Savings A/C #: 601-2-71944-7

If you are kind enough to donate, please let Tina know at: tina@phukethasbeengoodtous.org

Phuket Has Been Good To Us receives **no government funding** and relies solely on the generosity of businesses and kind individuals. **WE NEED YOUR HELP** to continue providing quality English education and after-school programmes for **FREE** to orphans and children from low-income families.

You Can Also Purchase Supplies

- Large, strong standing fans
- A durable laminator
- Ink for after-school computer lab
- Epson printer 001 M, C, Y & BK
- A5 triple-lined notebooks
- A4 copy paper
- Hand sanitizer gel
- Classroom cleaning supplies

A Very Special Thank You To Our Sponsors



If you would like to find out how you can help
PLEASE contact Tina Hall at: tina@phukethasbeengoodtous.org



@phukethasbeengoodtous



www.phukethasbeengoodtous.org



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