

## **A Brief History of Chiangrai Vidhayakhome School (CVK)**

More than 150 years ago, most Northern Thai people had no opportunity to attend school. Only officers' sons and daughters or rich people were able to receive an education. Male children become monks to complete their studies at the temple. But others had no chance to study.

At that time, a group of Protestant missionaries from the West came to spread the Christian religion in Thailand. They found it was difficult to teach people the Bible who did not know how to read and write. Thai people also did not know about modern medicine. So, this group of Protestant missionaries brought modern medicine to cure the ills of the Thai people and taught them how to read and write. Once the Thai people knew how to read and write, the missionaries found it easier to teach them about the Christian religion.

In 1888, Dr. Daniel McGilvary built a Christian church near the Mekong River bank in Chiang Saen, Chiangrai province. Miss Kuykaew Suwan taught the church members how to read. In the same year, the governor of Chiangrai gave land near the Mae Kok River to this missionary group to be used for teaching their religion. They built a school and Kru (Teacher) Nanta was the first principal of the school. At that time, women did not go to school. The first school was a school for boys, called CHIANGRAI BOY'S SCHOOL.

In 1919, the name of the school was changed to BRIGS ANUSORN SCHOOL in memory of Dr. Brigs who had played an important part in the school's development. In 1922, the school changed its name again to CHRISTIAN VIDHAYAKHOME SCHOOL (CVK). In the years 1914 to 1917, the missionaries also built a school for girls named SATRIVICHAKARN located about one kilometer to the east of CVK. In 1934, they merged Christian Vidhayakhome School and Satrivichakarn School into one school and called the new school CHRISTIAN VIDHAYAKHOME SCHOOL. It was the first school in Chiangrai based on Western educational standards.

During World War II, the Japanese army attacked Thailand and the missionaries went back to their home countries. The Japanese did not like Christianity because they considered it an enemy religion. They prohibited all Christian activities, including instruction at any Christian school.

However, Thai government officials still believed that schools were useful in educating Thai children, so they transferred control of the school to the Thai government. In 1942, the government appointed Mr. Wisit Ruangamporn to be the owner and manager, and changed the name from Christian Vidhayakhome School to Chiangrai Vidhayakhome School. Later in 1946, when World War II ended and the Japanese army was defeated, the Thai government returned the school to the Christian mission. When that missionary group left Thailand, Chiangrai Vidhayakhome School was placed under the authority of the Foundation of the Church of Christ in Thailand (CCT).

Chiangrai Vidhayakhome School celebrated its centennial (1888-1988) in November 1988. Ten years later, in 1998, the school built a new building for elementary students. The new building was named Akarn Chalerm Prakriat 6 Rob Prachonmapansa, celebrating the 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle Birthday of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej. HRH Crown Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn presided over the opening ceremony of school's new building on January 25, 2000.

In the year 2008, Chiangrai Vidhayakhome School celebrated 120 years. Over the years, the school has focused on several fundamental areas of student development including Christian education, athletics, moral development and social skills. The school is very proud of the results that it has seen demonstrated in the lives of its students. Today, the primary objective of the school continues to be the development of these skills in CVK students. The school is working to enhance students' abilities by using modern technology in teaching and working to improve the school's educational standards to world-class levels. Each division of the school (Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary, Middle School and High School) has developed a good reputation for producing talented, intelligent, and skilled students who are strong in athletics, moral development and social skills. CVK also develops the creativity of individual students.

CVK now has 2,774 students enrolled in Kindergarten through high school (Grade 12) with 220 Thai teachers and 13 foreign teachers. The current manager of the school is Mr. Sathaphon Limpadoong and the current director is Mrs. Pikul Ngaotrakul.