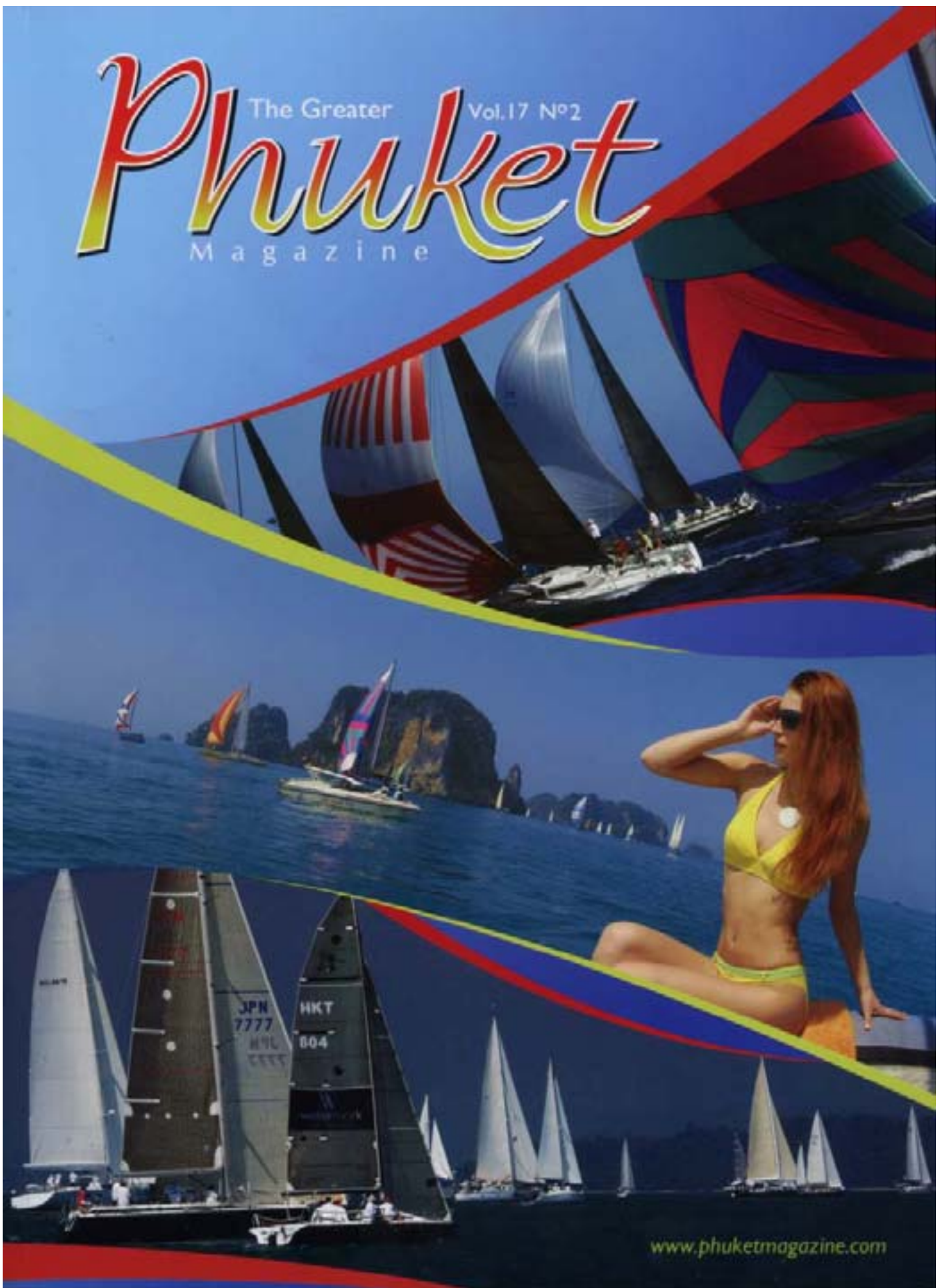


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# Sailing away to Phuket

By Chantana Jasper



Property developer and sailor Henry Kaye has been charmed by the island since the 1960s and tells the tale of how he got here and why he's stayed.

Former Hong Kong entrepreneur turned Phuket developer Henry Kaye, leads a very interesting life. This is not surprising, when you consider that, he, along with his wife, Maria Kaye, and three prominent Swedish business partners, are building the 65-unit Baan Yamu, on the east coast of the island. One of the partners owns three successful hotels on the island, including the stylish and much-talked about Twinpalms Hotel. Baan Yamu is designed by the same internationally acclaimed architect, Tierra Design.

The Cape Yamu site was selected for the development due to its stunning sea views, and proximity to marinas, golf courses, international schools, airport and shopping facilities. "You also have the ability to climb on

**No other area has the combination of facilities, climate, oceans, beaches, small outer islands and the ease of access that Phuket has.**

a boat from the pier below and be in Phang Nga Bay in 15 minutes," says Kaye. The east coast is not known for its beaches but for its incredible islands. "Slowly, people are beginning to realize that when you come down here on holiday, or even if you are living here, you don't actually spend a lot of time on the beach. It's pretty hot."

Phase I of Baan Yamu will be completed in December of 2006 and the units will have "very high ceilings with lovely big opening windows and doors so you can look out over the ocean". Phase II should commence about six months later. "We've

got over 44 rai there, so each of the individual executive homes will have at least 1rai (1600sqm) of land," says Kaye.

Kaye had been coming to Thailand on business since the mid-1960s. "Because of my sailing interests, we used to do some dinghy racing at the Royal Varuna Yacht Club near Pattaya," he says. "I read about the first King's Cup Regatta in 1987, so I came down here in 1986 and did some research on where to stay as well as the best beaches and islands to visit."

In December 1987, he chartered a 54ft cruising yacht with some friends from Hong Kong and they cruised to Phi Phi, Krabi, and around Phang Nga Bay for 10 days. They ended up at Nai Harn Bay, where they then proceeded to take part in the first King's Cup Regatta. "We enjoyed it so much that I chartered another boat the next year and we won the regatta," he says, "and since then I've always either brought one of my boats down from Hong Kong, or I've chartered a boat here."



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Developer Henry Kaye had been coming to Thailand since the 1960s.



Kaye's wife, Maria, is from Sweden. They met during a regatta in Malaysia and sailed to Phuket together in 1989. They were married in Hong Kong a few years later and have a 9-year-old daughter. The family bought their first home in Phuket in 1990 from friends at the Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club and only just sold that house last year. "For most of my holidays in the late '80s and early '90s, I used to come down here," says Kaye "and during that time I also realized the potential of Phuket and I started to buy some small plots of land." He eventually

built five different homes on the island over the course of 15 years.

"Gradually my contacts with people here grew as did my enjoyment for the Phuket

**"With the new Royal Phuket Marina and other new marinas on stream, the yachting and boating business in Phuket is going to grow enormously."**

lifestyle and I kept recommending to people in Hong Kong, particularly at the yacht club, that they should come down for the King's

Cup Regatta," explains Kaye. He says the majority of the owners of the larger cruising and racing yachts in Hong Kong have over the past 18 years brought their own boats down to Phuket to race. "With the new Royal Phuket Marina and other new marinas on stream, the yachting and boating business in Phuket is going to grow enormously."

He says, "I looked at Penang, I looked at Langkawi, I looked at various places in Bali and Indonesia.

And I visited many different islands in the Philippines – but none had the combination of facilities, climate, oceans, beaches, small outer islands and the ease of access that Phuket has." The negative publicity Phuket received after the tsunami did little to affect the real estate business and Kaye is optimistic about the future of Phuket. "I'm surprised that more people don't come down from Hong Kong," he says, "If they just came down here for a week and looked around, they'd be amazed at the opportunities."

Kaye says having a young family keeps him busy, but he manages to play golf two to three times a week, on what he considers some of the finest courses in Asia (there are no less than eight to choose from). He also sails about twice a month. "Phuket is still a wonderful place; people from Hong Kong can come down and charter a boat and go sailing for a week as I did in the mid-80s," he says. The area offers a variety of islands where cruisers can find little restaurants and bungalows. "It's fantastic for cruising, it really is amazing," Kaye says. "Every time I go to Phang Nga Bay, I find another island I've never seen."



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Phase I of Baan Yamu will be completed in December 2006.

