



Branching Out

Up until now we have focused on establishing school libraries in Takeo Province of Cambodia, particularly assisting secondary schools near Ang ta Som town. We based ourselves in that area because the founding trustee, Jennie Wilson, had strong connections with the area and with Meas Siphon and Im Mach, both teachers in local high schools.

At our planning session last year we decided to also support primary school libraries. By targeting primary age children we hope to help create a love for books at an early age. Most Cambodian families have few or no books in their homes owing to a lack of money and understanding of their importance in a child's education.

The London gig organized by Naomi Andrews last year provided us with the impetus to start. Funds raised in London made it possible to establish the library at Ang Chouk Primary School. They had a room available but very little else. The London funds trained the librarian, bought shelving, books, tables and vinyl for the floor and tables.

We also purchased books for two other primary schools that are feeder schools to the secondary schools we have an involvement with. When Judith Miller (Trust secretary /treasurer) and I visited Cambodia this summer we were so impressed by the enthusiasm of the librarians and directors of these schools. It's not only the students who benefit. Teachers also use the library to read books about agriculture and life skills and also make extensive use of English language books.

Helen Walch, chair



"The new plastic flooring was down at Ang Chouk and Sarkum (the librarian) was thrilled with it.

She said the children came in with their shoes off and just sat and rubbed their feet over the lovely smooth floor.

I also took the new plastic to cover the tables and on our next visit they were out in the sun with kids sliding their bottoms up and down on them to stretch the plastic smoothly across!!

Carolyn Coxhead, our Australian trustee

4500 books purchased this year!

It's a huge job stamping, taping, sorting and listing of the books before the books can be delivered to each school. This year for the first time we decided to employ some students and local women to help get the job done more quickly and efficiently. With the going rates very low by NZ standards, it cost only US\$42 to get the work done. This meant that Mach and Siphon, our Cambodian partners, and the visiting trustees had more time to visit the schools and meet with the librarians and school directors.



The students were delighted to get a sneak preview of the books going to their school!

Changes and developments

Over the summer four trustees had the opportunity to visit the schools we support in Takeo Province. We were impressed by the developments and were intrigued by the various ways in which the schools and the librarians are developing their libraries .

Weekend Lending

Initially schools were inclined to put the books in locked glass fronted cupboards. Books were so precious to them. Now at least 3 of the schools allow students to borrow books over the weekend. That's a significant change in their thinking and recognises a level of confidence in their systems for tracking the books.



The full library at Ang Run Secondary School during the morning

More space needed – different solutions

Kla Krohim High School found their library was too small to cater for those who wished to use it and for the training of librarians from other schools. Last winter an extension was built on to the library. Ang Run High School is hoping to knock out part of a wall to enable them to take in the adjoining room, thus making the library bigger.

At Vihea K'pos Primary School when we asked if the children use the library in the breaks, the librarian laughed " Oh, Oh Yes" . The library is so full the librarian has developed cloth "shelves" to hang outside on the trees to enable all those who want to read to access the books. They've also notice that parents look at these books when they come to pick up their children.

Recording attendance

The librarian at T'nort Chum Secondary School uses sets of two different coloured chopsticks to check the number of students who come to the library in break time. Each student takes a black (boys) or red (girls) chopstick from a jar and puts it in the large jar when they visit the library. The number is counted and the attendances recorded each day.

Finding the right English book

The students were often saying they had difficulty selecting books at their level of ability. So a US Peace Corp volunteer at Moy u Sophea Secondary School is grading the books by putting different coloured tape on the spine to help students identify material at the different levels.

School attendance

Im Mach, one of our local partners, commented that absenteeism is lower in schools where there are libraries, as the students are less likely to wander off in spare periods. Many chose to go to the library.



The Vihea K'pos librarian was very proud of her hanging shelves.

“It's like the children are thirsty and the books are water for them.”

A comment by the Principal of Ang Chouk Primary School to two of the trustees who visited this summer

Not just Schools

It is not only the school communities who crave access to books but also the wider community who have been without books for the last 35 years.

Books For Cambodia focuses on developing and supporting libraries within schools but we also from time to time donate money for books and reading materials to selected orphanages and Community Learning Centres each year.

This year we have donated \$500 to the Hope for Happiness Centre recently built by Siphen and Mach and their extended family alongside their home. (The Centre is dedicated to improving the quality of life of the many underprivileged children in the area. The majority of the families in their local area are very poor. The children attend school intermittently and food is their main priority.)

Noel and I experienced first hand the desire within the community to access books when we processed the books for our 2011 issue to schools:

The children would come in from harvesting rice and sit around the tables totally absorbed in the books;

An 80 year old Grandma came up and pored over a brightly illustrated Khmer children's story, quietly mouthing the words; and

The taxi driver delivering a group of guests to and from the Home Stay would park his car and go straight to the table of books and spend time reading.

All these people, and more, will have the opportunity to access books and learn to read within the new Centre.

Noel and Carolyn Coxhead

Discover Cambodia Tour

15-days travel in Cambodia focused on cultural insights and experiences, NGO visits and a volunteer project

Join us on our annual 'all ages' not-for-profit trip to Cambodia over the holiday period,

28 Dec 2011 - 11 Jan 2012. It involves 15-days travel in Cambodia focused on cultural insights, amazing experiences, and volunteering with a couple of fantastic NGO project initiatives.

It's our best Cambodia itinerary yet and highlights of the trip will be...

- * Participating in a Books for Cambodia initiative
- * Helping build a simple home in an impoverished community
- * Markets and museums of Phnom Penh
- * NGO visits looking at education, health and vocational training
- * The relaxing coastal town of Kampot
- * Insight into rural life, home-staying with a wonderful Cambodian family
- * Architecture and ambience of Battambang
- * Floating village homestay and boat trip in Prek Toal Biosphere bird sanctuary
- * Incredible temples of Angkor Wat
- * Very personalized small group experience (max 12)
- * Escorted by fantastic trip leader/s supported by local guides



Feel free to pass this info on to anyone you know who might be interested. All the trip info is on our website or contact Jennie Wilson phone 03 922 0866

<http://www.pacificdiscovery.org/small-group-tours/discover-cambodia-tour.aspx>

NB Pacific Discovery who offer this tour donate their fee (\$500 pp) to Books for Cambodia



Who's Who

Trustees

Scott Burnett, Nelson, also with Pacific Discovery

Carolyn Coxhead, Melbourne

Stephanie Edwards, Wellington

Judith Miller, Otaki (Secretary /Treasurer)

Helen Walch, Otaki (Chair)

Jennie Wilson, Nelson, also with Pacific Discovery, is the trustee who visits Cambodia most frequently and is responsible for book purchasing.

Raymond Simpson, Auckland, Trust Accountant

Im Mach and Meas Siphon, husband and wife who teach at Moy u Sophea and Kla Krohim High School are our key contacts in Cambodia.

Our NZ Charities Commission number is CC11467.



BOOKS FOR CAMBODIA

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Your Help is needed – please use this return slip

I would like to help with the purchase of books and training of school librarians in Cambodia

Here is my donation.

NB NZ taxpayers are able to claim a tax rebate on their donation—\$1 for every \$3 donated.

\$25 (approx 5 books) \$50 \$75 \$100 other (Please indicate the amount)

My cheque is enclosed.

I have deposited the money into the BOOKS FOR CAMBODIA account 15-3953-0614339-30

If you are doing this by internet banking can you please ensure your name appears on our statement so that we can send you a receipt.

I would like to make a regular automatic payment of \$...... each month

Please send me the necessary form.

PAYPAL is also an option. See our website www.booksforcambodia.org/make-a-difference

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

We would like to keep you informed about BOOKS FOR CAMBODIA.

If you would prefer that we did not, please indicate here.



Staff at Ang Roka School (2435 students) with the shelves to be filled!

The address for Trust supporters in Australia

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