



VIEW FROM CHROY CHONG YA BRIDGE

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Greetings from Cambodia everybody,

The floods still remain in some provinces in the country. Even though some parts are unaffected but the government has predicted that we need at least three years to recover from its impact. Due to this flood disaster, the celebration of the public national ceremony, the Water Festival, will be cancelled this year, so we have no chance to see the boat race.



Some of placements are affected by the flood while the other, which is based in the main city, is fine. I hope everything is going to get better.

Besides the local news, by reading this issue you will get the various articles from up-coming volunteers, current and ex-volunteers who express their times, expectations, experiences that they achieved or wanted. Amid those articles, there is one from our Journalism volunteers, which was the outcome while she was working on her project – Journalism.

It should be enough for me, but let me say welcome to the 32 new volunteers in November and thank you to all volunteers who have already finished their project. Your contributions will make changes in this country either more or less.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue.

Best regards,

Mao Pises
Country Director

Flood in Cambodia



Update from last month; in October, Cambodia's floods still remain bad which has led to increasing damage of private and public properties and frustration. Shelter and food issues are the main problem that the government has to priorities. There are many provinces that have been affected by the flood and a lot of people have been evacuated. In addition, crops have been damaged over hundreds of hectares and animals have died. It has been worse than ever in the last few years. The government predicts that it will take at least 3 years for affected areas to recover. We wish everything will go better in the near future.

Cancellation of Water Festival

The Water Festival is a public national day which is celebrated each year. Everyone, not only the local people but also the tourists, were looking forward to it. However, we regret that unfortunately as this year we have suffered the effects of the flood – the big disaster of the year - so the government has decided to cancel the celebration of boat race which is intend to be celebrated in capital of Phnom Penh.



The main reason is that a lot of people, especially in the countryside, have been in a bad condition so we should keep the budget for the Water Festival for supporting those who are in need of food, shelter, health care and so on.

Even though the celebration will not take place this week; we will still have a public holiday during the Water Festival – three days holidays

Fashioning the future - By Lucy Douglas, Journalism Volunteer

Source: Globe Magazine

Cambodia's rising fashion industry is ready to step into the spotlight – but is the consumer market ready for luxury, and is some of the talent getting left behind?

Phnom Penh's Street 240 has become something of a tree-lined haven for the city's wealthier residents, a shaded refuge for expats, tourists and Cambodia's emerging middle and upper classes, decorated with stylish galleries, Western-style patisseries, chic cafes and pricey fashion boutiques.

Foreigners and locals with a sense of style and money to burn stroll the tranquil pavements, representing Cambodia's growing demand for a luxury lifestyle sector.

This is the foetal heartbeat of a domestic fashion industry. Far from the mass production factories of the garment sector, filled with overworked and under paid locals producing mountains of cost-effective apparel to ship out West – a sector that has formed a vital artery of Cambodia's developing economy – this tiny industry is built on the ideals that



quality is utmost, cost is relative and style is everything.

Its market is small, but growing; its producers talented, but for the most part lacking in the capital or industrial resources to invest in expansion of their companies.

This year however, Cambodia's fledgling high fashion industry takes a big leap

forward. October will mark the first Cambodia Fashion Week, an event its organisers hope will put Cambodia on the world map as a credible fashion hub of the East.

The brainchild of the Cambodia Fashion Council, a small organisation of business professionals with an interest in the fashion set up last year that aims to develop local design talent into commercially robust labels, the 10-day long event will showcase the finest in Cambodian and Cambodian-based design to a carefully selected audience of the world's fashion media, buyers of international brands and potential investors.

It's a familiar model, and one that has been met with enthusiasm by those looking to get in on the action. "We're getting a lot of interest from sponsors," says organiser Teia Rogers, Business Development Manager at Star Events, a Phnom Penh-based events company. "It's exciting because everyday I get confirmation that this is something that people want to be a part of."

"Fashion week is getting a very good response," agrees Haniz Yasin, secretary general and treasurer of the Cambodia Fashion Council. "I'm so surprised. This is what we want; we want people to say, 'Let's find out what fashion week is.'"

According to Rogers, the event is already set to welcome fashion media from around the world, as well as buyers from international brands and members of the Asian delegation. The idea is not only to convince the world that Cambodia is a potential fashion hotspot, but also a credible emerging market with massive potential for investment.

"This is going to be a really awesome opportunity, this is not the Cambodia of 10-15 years ago," she says. "You can't throw a stone outside without hitting a Lexus. Things are changing and they're changing rapidly. This is a whole different Cambodia that's happening right now, that's moving forward financially and socially."

Fashion week will, Rogers says, give the designers the exposure to international media and investors, with the hope that some of Cambodia's talent will be invested in and exported internationally. "We have to proceed carefully, because we want to be as inclusive as possible. The goal is to support the fashion industry in Cambodia." But, she says, "We have to make sure that the designers [getting the most exposure] are the ones who have the capacity to move beyond Cambodia."

Perhaps they are not as inclusive as they might be. Yasin explains that there is currently a lack of Cambodian designers involved in the Cambodia Fashion Council, a fact he attributes to a language barrier. "They think this is an English organisation, that speaks English all the time," he says, explaining that in fact, all CFC seminars are given in Khmer as well as English, and that the CFC is looking to bring on board more Cambodian designers.



Boutiques such as Fabrizio Sartor's Oro Rosso make up the emerging fashion hub on Street 240.

Moreover, Cambodia Fashion Week seems to have passed by a lot of the expat designers and business owners that have hitherto made up a significant sector of the industry in Cambodia. Fabrizio Sartor, owner of Oro Rosso boutique, explained that Cambodia Fashion Week and CFC

currently meant little to his business, adding that "I think it's a good thing, but needs time to establish." Likewise, Sandrine Bury of Subtyl boutique said, "I hardly hear of it at the moment...I don't even know what is being organised."

Nonetheless, the CFC's mission is receiving the attention it needs from the top. The Ministry of Commerce Trade and Promotion board stated that it offered its full support to the council, a valuable feat for the budding industry. "The most important thing for us is to have the support, especially of the Ministry of Commerce, because fashion is all about business. It's about art, but it's also about business."

Big business at that; fashion represents one of the largest industries in the world. The British fashion industry, to compare, is worth an estimated \$34 billion a year and directly employs 816,000 people. Japan's is worth an estimated \$5 billion.

"The fashion scene comes with many other elements: consumers, press, magazines, shops, fashion shows and events, production and certainly talented designers," explains Eric Raisina, Madagascar-born couture designer based in Siem Reap, whose work has featured in New York Fashion Week. "My point of view is that people don't yet realise the values of creativity."

But cynics might wonder how a country with a per capita GDP that still ranks as one of the lowest in the world can hope to sustain an industry founded on exclusivity and wide spread prosperity. Yasin, however, is realistic about the opportunities available in the Cambodian market. "What's opening up here is not luxury. Right now, Cambodia is not ready for luxury," he says, explaining that the emerging fashion market is "somewhere in the middle."

"We've got this emerging market with this money to spend, so if we create an opportunity for them to do that, then what they're doing is ultimately putting money back into the economy," says Rogers.

Still, those on the front line of the industry do not necessarily reflect her indefatigable positivity regarding the fashion market. "I must say right now the economy is not really good for us," says Bury, whose business relies heavily on the tourist and expat markets.

Indeed, with so many Western economies in turmoil and more leading international brands such as Mango and Axara setting up shop in Phnom Penh, providing Western trends at affordable prices, competition for business is fierce among the independent boutiques that make up much of Cambodia's established design talent.

"One good thing is that if people see that they can buy everything here they won't go to other places to buy," Bury points out. "Even in this street [240], we're happy when someone opens a new shop because it brings more nice things together. "And though times may be tough for some, the future of fashion in Cambodia looks bright. "For those who want to invest in Cambodia, now is the right time," says Fabrizio Sartor. "[Fashion Week] certainly will help everyone involved with fashion to prove their determination," says Raisina, adding that Cambodia needs to surprise both the local consumers and the international community with its signature style.

Whether involved in Fashion Week or not, there seems to be a united belief that this budding industry can only go from strength to strength, and that it has plenty to offer those willing to look for it. "Most of the time if you go to a big city, you only have international brands that you can find anywhere else," says Bury. "It's special here."

UPCOMING HOLIDAY

There are two special national holidays in Cambodia in November 2011. On 9th November it is a Cambodia's Independent Day. From 9th to 11th, there is a Water Festival.

We at Projects Abroad Cambodia would like to announce that on the above dates our staff will be on holiday, but will still be contactable if you have any urgent problems.

One week - I am in love already with Phnom Penh - Susanna

There is so much to say about Phnom Penh, so I have a feeling I will have to write blogs at least every other day! Where to start...

I was picked up at Phnom Penh airport last Sunday, 2nd October, by the Projects Abroad staff. Little did I realize that this will probably be the last time I ride in a car for at least several months, as the primary modes of transport here is motorcycles and tuk tuks. It had just started to rain as we reached the hired car and as we began to weave through heavy traffic, it really began to chuck it down. And when I say HEAVY RAIN, I mean some seriously crazy rain. This is Southeast Asia in the wet season. Unless you have visited or lived in the Tropics, you would have never seen rain like this. It was so torrential that within minutes the roads became mini-rivers, and the moto drivers had to pull over to shelter under petrol station roofs because it was too difficult to see with the pounding rain.

The cleansing rain was a good omen, I felt, and pretty much a good introduction to life in Phnom Penh during the wet season. The weather in Phnom Penh has two seasons, either hot and wet, or hot and dry— this means it is approximately 32C during the day and about 28C at night most of the year, and the only difference in the seasons is how much rain you get on a daily basis. It seems to rain about 4pm every day for a few



hours, or if it's a 'dry day' it starts raining at 7 or 8pm. You get so used to the rain that you don't even worry about using an umbrella; you just walk in the rain unless it's a really heavy downpour. You don't mind it anyway, because it's so cooling! You average at least 2 showers a day here, so if it rains, you may be able to opt out of one of your showers!

Speaking of water, I drink at least 12 liters of water a day. I probably average about a liter an hour, and if I don't have a bottle of water nearby at all times, I really notice it. It must be due to the constant heat, but rarely am I so hot that it is unbearable (that has only happened in the narrow walkways in some of the markets). Our apartments have well stocked fridges full of lovely cold purified water bottles –the empties are left in the kitchen sink for our 'house mom' (the Cambodian woman who lives in our apartment and is our cook/cleaner) to wash and refill from the water purifier in every kitchen. I have a ritual of grabbing at least 3 bottles from the house fridge and "DEET up" with copious amounts of mosquito spray containing at least 50% DEET before I head out!

The mosquitoes here aren't too bad, they are everywhere but I have a ritual of coating myself in DEET several times a day to cope with the little bastards and I've probably had only 10 bites in the last week, which is really good for me! I'm usually the one that informs everyone that there are mosquitoes present, as I will have received three itchy bites within seconds of mosquito contact. Considering this, I think Cambodia has fewer mosquitoes than



North Carolina – or at least I must be more obsessive about DEET wearing than I was there....

I am very aware that there would be not only mosquitoes bites to worry about, but also malaria and dengue fever that are possible consequences of mosquito bites here. Malaria is not very common here in Phnom Penh, so I'm currently not taking any anti-malarials. However, dengue fever is still a risk, so I'm pretty keen to avoid that. Dengue fever is like a REALLY BAD case of the flu, there are no vaccinations available, and you're pretty weak for a month or so. I had brought some impressive DEET supplies with me, ranging from 50% DEET roll-on, 25% DEET wipes, and then a small bottle spray of DEET MAX 100. My uncle had given me the wipes and the DEET MAX 100, so I hadn't really taken a look at them until last week. I suddenly realized the reason it is called DEET MAX 100 is that it is 100% DEET! If you've ever used DEET, you'll know that is serious stuff – it melts plastic and who knows what serious chemicals are in it! I've never used anything higher than 50% before...and that it some really potent stuff! So I've held off using the DEET MAX 100 until I get into the jungle in high risk malarial regions!

VOLUNTEERS' UPDATE

UPCOMING VOLUNTEERS

There are 32 volunteers who will come to Cambodia for voluntary work with Projects Abroad in November. They are of various nationalities and will do different projects.

Here they are:

**We are looking forward to welcoming and meeting you in
Cambodia in November 2011**

Let's hear the messages from some of our prospective volunteers who will be coming in November 2011.

From Rebecca

I'm Rebecca and at the moment I'm taking a gap year to get a bit of an idea about the working world before going into university to study Politics. I decided to volunteer as a teacher when I realized I had plenty of time and the schools need plenty of help. I also hope to get as much as possible out of this year- including travelling- so this felt like a great opportunity. I am German, but I grew up in Spain, the UK and currently live in New York. I really have no idea what to expect but I think it's going to be fun!

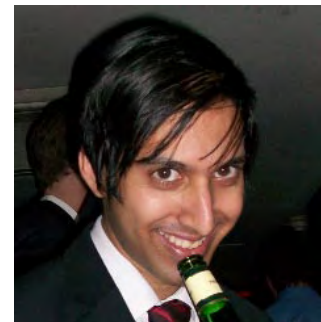


Regards,

Rebecca

From Jason

I'm Jason and I'll be working for two months in with the Housing Rights Task Force in Phnom Penh. I'm from London, England and I'm 27. I studied Human Rights and International Relations at university and since graduating four years ago I've been working in London for a global public affairs company. But I decided it was time for a change, so I signed up for the Human Rights project. I've never done any travelling before so I'm somewhat nervous, but excited too. Looking forward to meeting everyone soon!



Jason

From Laura

Hello 😊 my name is Laura and I am from Melbourne, Australia. I am 20 years old and currently in my second year at university studying Psychology. I also work part time teaching children how to swim which is where I realized how much I love working with children. I am so excited to come to Cambodia, a volunteer program is something I have wanted to do for a while and I cannot wait to help the children there, care for them and teach them as well as learn about and embrace the Cambodian culture. See you all soon.

Laura

From Thijs Lameij

My name is Thijs Lameij, I'm 18 years old and I live in The Netherlands. I'm going to Cambodia on October 31st. I will be teaching 4 to 6 year old children at the VCAO. Before I'm going to tell more about this project I will continue my biography. I just finished high school and I've been working to collect money for my trip to Cambodia. Somehow, I want to help these children to have a great time and to learn some English. Furthermore my interests are paragliding and my girlfriend. I'm really looking forward to meet everybody over there.

So I hope to see you all soon!

Thijs Lameij

From Lyn Hingston and Peter Hingston

Hello fellow Volunteers,

Hi, my name is **Lyn Hingston**. I live in Point Cook, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

I am married to Peter and we have four grown up children.

I enjoy photography, gardening and travel.

This year Peter and I have done a four week trip to Western Australia (W.A). We first flew from Melbourne to Perth and then onto Broome.

We hired a four wheel drive vehicle and travelled up to Cape Leveque and down as far as Coral Bay which is on the Ningaloo Reef. We enjoyed snorkelling around the

reef looking at coral and beautiful coloured fish. We also went inland to Tom Price where there is a huge area being mined for iron ore. We then hiked into some very rugged but beautiful gorges in the Karijini National Park. The soil is a red colour in W.A.

I am looking forward to meeting everyone and especially working in the orphanage. I hope that I will be able to make a worthwhile contribution to the lives of the children. It will be a whole new experience for me and I am looking forward to coming to Cambodia with excitement.

In the morning we are going into the city of Melbourne for our vaccinations (ouch!) and as it is getting late now, I had better get off to bed.

Kind regards

Lyn Hingston

My name is **Peter Hingston** and this is an added comment from Lyn's description above.

I am currently employed as a Sales/ Business Development Manager for an engineering company and am looking forward to spending a month in Cambodia enjoying your culture and hope to be able to make a contribution to the people we work with.

I have travelled through UK and some of Europe and some of the US and Canada but have only spent time in Singapore in the Asian region. In my

recreational time I enjoy fishing on Port Phillip Bay with my family and through the summer months enjoy sailing on the bay in a twilight competition. I also spend some time assisting family members with their property maintenance.

I grew up on a farm and have spent some 20 years running a 300 acre property as a part time project in the early years of our married life which was a great experience for our children growing up.



We now have only 3 weeks before we will meet you all. Amazing just how quickly it is going as we endeavour to complete all the preparation. See you all soon!!

Best Regards

Peter Hingston

From Rianne

Hi everyone,

My name is Rianne, I'm 23 years old and I'm from Veldhoven, Holland. I studied graphic design at the Academy of Arts. I'm a music addict – I listen to everything, but my favourite genre would have to be rock. In my spare time I watch a lot of movies and TV shows.

During the weekends I work in a clothing store. Monday to Friday I work at a primary school where I supervise a class of 9 year olds during lunchtime.

Before I start working fulltime as a graphic designer, I'll be volunteering in Cambodia for 3 months. From what I've heard, I think Cambodia is a fascinating country; I can't wait to experience it myself!

See you soon,

Rianne



From Laurent

My name is Laurent and so I decided to come as a volunteer in Cambodia because I often travelled to Asia and I loved all the countries I visited.

I especially like the mood of people, the way they design their simplicity. The reception given to foreigners is particularly noteworthy, all of which are rich in lessons for the west.

With regard to Cambodia in particular, this country has especially affected me, as knowing its history well enough, I find it's people have always brightened the way with a smile. Its desire to always grow in knowledge and education also oppressed in the past is inspiring.

This country has an enormous capacity, its youthful population and his desire for knowledge and understanding of the world around it. A real potential exists on the will of the people loving his country and willing to evolve and spread around the world.

I hope that Cambodia and the Cambodians can evolve in knowledge and modernity, knowing to keep in mind that its culture and its customs are a real treasure, while avoiding following the example of a western world full pervarsity, and without reference to flight.

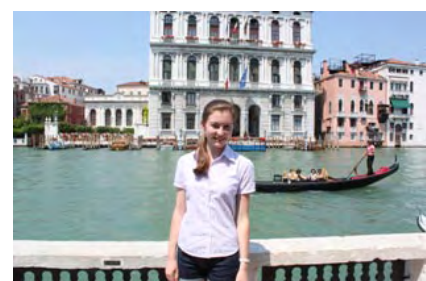
Best regard

Laurent



From Imogen

Hey everyone! My name is Imogen and I'm from Perth, Western Australia. I am currently in my second year at university studying Commerce and Economics. I love to swim and go surfing at my local beaches. I'm a keen traveller and am looking forward to experiencing the culture and people of Cambodia. I have volunteered for the Teaching project for 6 weeks. I look forward to seeing you all on November 26th!



From Olwyn

Hello,

My given name is 'Olwyn' but I am known to my friends and family as 'Oki'. I am very happy to have been accepted as a volunteer to work on the island of Koh Rong Somloen (I'm not sure if I have the spelling correct!). I am also delighted to be in the company of my brother Mike and our nephew Robert (who live in a city a thousand kilometres away from my town) and we are looking forward to meeting other volunteers as well as the people of Cambodia. Mike and Robert will be diving with the Marine Science Project, and I hope to be able to assist the children of the island (and maybe the adults!) to learn to speak English.



I am a little nervous about living in a country where I am unable to speak the language at all, but I was reassured by the article written by Neha Nagakar which was in the August newsletter. She had expressed similar concerns to me, but she wrote very positively about her stay on the island. I have no formal teaching qualifications, so I hope my enthusiasm and life experience will be enough for the children to benefit - hopefully we will have a mutual learning experience.

I know a little about the history of Cambodia, and I hope being immersed in the culture will really enhance my knowledge from the point of view of the people themselves. I have travelled before, although a long time ago, and not in Asia, and I found my experiences so enriched my life that I have always wanted a repeat, but just haven't had the opportunity until now.

I am a midwife and registered nurse, and I would like to be able to use my skills and knowledge by assisting in the Medical Clinic on the island, if this is possible, as well as teaching. I am hoping also that I may be able to be involved in the Marine Science Project in some way, whether it is cataloguing shells or cleaning up the beaches - I don't mind, so long as I can do something useful. My brothers and sisters and I lived on an island when we were children, and it is an environment which is very dear to my heart.

I am an artist, so it will be wonderful if I can manage some time for drawing and painting while I am on Koh Rong Somloen (I hope this skill may be useful for educating the kids) and to be able to take lots of photos for future artistic reference and to show Cambodia to the people of my Central Queensland home. Then maybe they will be inspired to travel and give their time to help the Khmer people!

Mike, Robert and I will be arriving at the end of November. Although I am sad to be leaving behind my husband over our Christmas season, I am very excited about the project and look forward to seeing you soon.

Sincerely,

Olwyn 'Oki' Rose

From Phillip Lindstedt



My name is Phillip Lindstedt. I come from Sweden. Kim mentioned in this recent letter that some of us might feel worried. That's what I'm starting to do. There is mixed feeling of anxiety since this is my first trip outside Europe and I'm doing it alone, it's a bit scary (though I'm going to meet a lot of people) and the good kind of anxiety since this is going to be quite the adventure for me. I knew little of Cambodia and their people, they don't educate about their history or heritage in school, I never heard of any one visiting the country. So when I decided that I didn't want to spend the entire long cold Swedish winter and read about this amazing project I got really interested of learning more about this "unknown" part of the world.

The environmental part of the project is quite appealing, since the global climate changes show little impact of Swedish climate it might be a wakeup call to see the decline with my own eyes. I hope that I will experience something that I can tell and show back home to further push the focus of climate changes. Asia, and east Asia have always seem different and exotic from our way of living in the western part of the world. The only exposure I've had is from media and there is always some sort of...projected image. I wish to experience this other way of living that I've heard so much about.

The days are coming closer and closer it seemed so distant a time ago but in less than a month I will be there. I still can't believe it.

I wish the best of luck for all of us and I will see you soon.

From Yves

Hi, my name is Yves, I'm 35 years old, live in Zurich (Switzerland), will arrive in Phnom Penh on Nov 15 and will stay there for a month.

Finally I took a sabbatical month in order to fulfil a project which has been on my mind for a long time. It's time for me to develop some new skills.

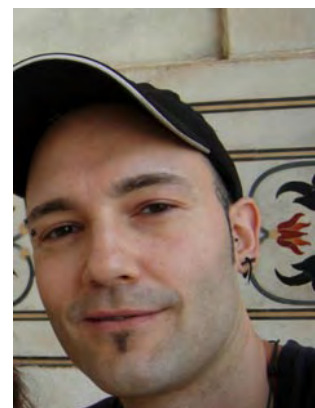
Working as a volunteer in a care centre or an orphanage will be a challenge by the fact that it doesn't have anything to do with my actual job (certified assayer for Swiss Precious Metals Control). However, I'm ready and self-confident enough to take up this challenge and am looking forward to helping the children in any way I can, with an open mind and enthusiasm.

I speak French (native language), German (with a Swiss accent) and English but not as well as I used to.

I like to travel, to explore new cultures and to broaden my way of thinking and my horizons.

My interests include squash, photography, animations and sociology.

I'm looking forward to meeting you all.



Sincerely,

Yves

VOLUNTEERS IN DESTINATION INTEREST

The Importance of Cleaning Your Teeth – By Kylie Ferggusen



The kids are so poor, and hygiene is minimal, well actually, non existent. I've noticed the kids have holes in their teeth, or no teeth, or rotten teeth. Not good. So I decided even more important than learning English is to have teeth, and went into the market to try to buy toothbrushes and toothpaste and cups.

We needed about 80...not such a simple task when Khmer is the only language of communication, but anyway we went off to school yesterday

with a bag full of toothbrushes and posters we had made with some of the other volunteers describing the steps to brush your teeth.

Sounded like a really simple and straightforward idea...ha...we were kidding ourselves! The logistics of teaching 70 little kids who just want to play and have fun and who have no concept of teeth cleaning; it was challenging! How do you get them to line up and give them a toothbrush with their name on it? How do you even put a name on a toothbrush when you have no permanent markers? Kids...ever heard of order and lining up and listening to the teacher? It was so funny, and a fantastic thing for all the kids - in fact for the whole school...we seemed to attract all the other kids and the principal who were all watching our spectacle.

Anyway, Ry(my son), I and two other volunteer ran our own little "How to brush your teeth" show and I'm confident the kids understood it - they seem to be lapping it up. They followed the whole process again today successfully, so I am really hoping we have introduced a little system for them all to follow. Just have to somehow encourage the school to facilitate it every day now, and the kids will hopefully start to look after their teeth a bit better.

It's these kind of things you know really do make some kind of difference...and the kids just love it! (How come it was never like this trying to get Ry to clean his teeth each day?)

3 Weeks Down - by Robyn Donaldson

So it's October already and today I've been here 3 weeks. In reality, it feels like I've been here for more like 5 or 6 weeks...wow. Every day is jam packed with things happening and each week is full to the brim, so days and weeks feel long (in a good way), but on the other hand, it feels like time is racing by and I cannot believe that I only have 6 weeks left in Phnom Penh (PP) – two months felt like such a long time at the start. I also cannot comprehend that I was in Brisbane just over 3 weeks ago – it seems like a lifetime ago.



Yumiko arrived the other day and didn't leave for the island until the next day. So she asked if she could come along with me to school for the day. All approvals were sought and given, so we jumped on the back on my regular moto and headed off to school. Bad traffic day, so poor Chann (my moto driver) had a few hairy, sudden stops with 3 of us on his tiny moto.

The kids at school were awesome and welcomed Yumiko as if they'd known her for ages. At break time she brought her camera out to take some photos of the kids, and she was instantly "Miss Popular" as they just LOVE cameras – both being photographed and taking photographs. So we both spent the break taking dozens of pictures. She also loved seeing parts of Phnom Penh that she would have missed had she gone straight to the island, but as it was her first time on the back of a moto (motorbike) she found it a tad challenging. It was also an eye opener for her, going into the slums to the school, and I think she was amazed at just how happy the kids are, considering their home lives. Personally, I enjoyed having her company for the day.

Friday night, Seang (Social Co-ordinator for Projects Abroad) invited us to an opening of a new guest house and bar near riverside. Free food, free drinks, so we were there. Nice guest house with odd named rooms, i.e Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and a great terrace on the roof - was it 5 or 6 floors up? Can't remember but it was like climbing Mt Warning I can tell you – they have the steepest staircases in the world here!! The food was great and all the Aussies agreed that it was like being at home at a BBQ – they had the best potato salad and



really nice roast beef. After that, a group of us went to the night market – interesting place, they had a talent quest happening so we got to hear some talented and not so talented singers, and witnessed some amusing rap dancing by 3 teenage guys decked out in baggy jeans, American-style t-shirts, and back-turned baseball caps. Didn't do much shopping, but did pick up a snow globe for Sally as promised...over here they're glitter globes as I'm pretty sure they have no idea what snow is, so can't replicate it. Although, talking snow, I saw a street vendor selling Milo snow cones the other day! We don't even have those at home.

Saturday was an interesting day. My morning was good in that I went for a huge walk, and did some shopping, got toenails painted - with pretty flowers etc, and then after

lunch a group of us went to a sanctuary for rescued animals – monkeys, gibbons, tigers, lions, crocodiles, deer, bears, slow loris', snakes, birds etc. It was great and sad at the same time. These animals have been mostly mistreated by the people that owned them, and some have been injured etc. But it was also great to see them up close and to have a guided tour, and to know that they are now safe and well looked after.

The traffic was chaotic, to say the least, and in the really deeply flooded areas, kids were

being kids, and splashing around and swimming in the streets – the water was filthy, but as I said, kids do kid things. I was supposed to catch up with Tim after dinner but there was so much flooding around town that we figured we'd take a rain-check (pardon the pun) and catch up later in the week. About 9 of us ended heading to Greetings Cafe for coffee shakes and free WiFi.

It's been a great week being back with the kids at school and it was fantastic on Friday when I reviewed the lessons with the senior class and realised that they've learnt a lot from me and retained quite a large amount of worthwhile information. They told the teacher to let me know that they're happy with my lessons, and said some of them are hard, some are easy, but they're enjoying them...woo hoo! I've also had some great success with the slower learners in the junior class – they can say their ABCs but really struggle to write them, so we practiced a lot of writing this week, and I've seen a great improvement. In Khmer, words in sentences are written all together – i.e no spaces between the words - so I'm having to break that cycle when it comes to writing English and it's a hard habit for them to break but we'll get there – the kids are bright and oh so keen to learn.

Friday from 10am – 11am is cartoon time, supposedly to learn English. When I was at the Russian market last week I bought a Wiggles DVD, thinking that the kids might enjoy it. The teacher played it on Friday and the kids hated it. After 15 minutes she asked me if I minded if she stopped it and I was fine for that. When the teacher suggested stopping it, to the kids, they all cheered. Seems The Wiggles are just an Aussie thing. We ended up watching some of Monsters Inc, so I was happy with that – I love that movie, as do the kids.

Talking about the kids, one of their favourite games to play in the classroom is “Slap the Board”. It's a word search game, where you write lots of English words on the board, two students stand in front of the class with backs to the board and I then call out a word and they compete to find it. When I first started here, that was basically the idea of the game so I've introduced new rules where they have to say the word, spell it and say it again...the teacher and the kids love it. Anyway, the other day we had a game and it was girls against the boys. I have no idea where I learnt it, but when the girls were winning I started this stupid thing of standing up, doing a stupid dance of swivelling my hips and doing a stirring motion with arms/hands and chanting “go girl, go girl” (seriously what stupid show on TV did I pick this up from?). Anyway the kids loved it, and it's become the thing to do...even the boys do it. So the next day I introduced “woo hoo” for the boys as they punch the air. Even the teacher is in on the silly dance, and when I leave school, I often hear someone giggling behind me, and then the familiar “go girl, go girl”. They are so much fun!!! I was hoping for a more inspirational legacy to leave the kids, but I fear it will be “go girl”.

Ok, so that's about it. I've got some lessons to prepare for the coming week, so will go do those, and catch you all later. Hugs as always from Cambodia.

Tasting and Cooking – Amok Cambodian Food – By Sionnie Kelly

Cambodian food is amazing, sometimes scary and other times surprisingly delicious. Since coming here I have become slightly addicted to Fish Amok and sticky mango rice. Unfortunately I don't think Adelaide has much Khmer food wise and the rest of Australia probably doesn't either, so I've now spent several weeks eating Fish Amok or Chicken Amok whenever I go out. Amok is a curry that is steamed rather than boiled and can be made in a banana leaf or a coconut. Last week at placement I ordered a Chicken Amok wrap, it was so good. I even did a cooking class last Sunday so that I could get the recipe for amok and learn how to make it. I also met some new people, which was nice too. I sort of felt like we were in some sort of country joke though; an Australian girl, an American girl, a British guy and a

Danish girl all enrolled for a cooking class....

In the end the British guy didn't really get to make the sticky rice because he was used as a demo. Britain is the demo country now. There are so many jokes I would like to make here but in the end I'm just making fun of my heritage and myself. Plus I have friends who live in England and they may actually be insulted.

So, one of the best things about being over here is the cheap and tasty food. There are some really great restaurants you can also go to, Titanic on riverside has an awesome view of the river and the food is well presented and delicious. Friends Restaurant on Street 178 is one of my favourite restaurants in Phnom Penh, it is run by an NGO that helps to train street children in the art of cooking. The food is amazing and there is nearly always a wait whenever you go with a large group because it is so popular. If you're coming to Phnom Penh it is definitely a place you should check out. The FCC on Riverside is also a good place to go if you want a drink but the food there is quite expensive and there are other places that are just as good and cheaper.

Now back to my fixation with Fish Amok, one of the best things about the cooking class is that I learned how to make it and I got the recipe, which I plan on sharing very soon!

A good thing about amok is that you can chose how hot you want to make it. If you hate spicy food you probably won't be able to tone it down enough though so this probably isn't the recipe for you. But for those who just don't have a high tolerance then you should be fine. Most Khmer food isn't actually that spicy, that was rather disappointing for me when I first got here because I thought it would be similar to Thai food. Really they both just have rice in common but Khmer food is still really great and you can still get some freaky things on sticks, like snakes.

The reason Khmer food isn't overly spicy is because their recipes date back to before the From the chilli, which wasn't actually introduced until the 16th Century by the Portuguese.

When making the amok you will need:

5 dried red chillies (soaked, drained and chopped into paste)

3 cloves of garlic

2 tbsp galangal (cut small)

1 tsp lemongrass (thinly sliced)

Zest of ¼ kaffir lime

1 tsp salt

Variation: 4 tbsp peanuts

This first stage is called the kroeung and is where you combine all the above ingredients in a blender until they are a thick paste. What we did in the cooking class though was use a mortar and pestle; this is the more traditional way. If you have any of the mixture left over it is recommended that you put it in the fridge and use it for stir fries and soups later.

Then there is the next stage where you will make the actual amok. You will need the following ingredients:

30g young nhor leaves (there's no real substitute to this)

3 tbsp fish sauce

3 tbsp kaffir lime leaves

3 chilli peppers

500g fish (and meaty fish works)

¾ cup coconut cream

2 cups coconut milk

1 egg, beaten



Serves 4

Slice the fish thinly and then remove the nhor from steam and slice the kaffir lime leaves and the cayenne peppers thinly.

Stir the kroeing into 1 cup of coconut milk until it has dissolved, then add the beaten egg, fish sauce and sliced fish. After this add the remaining coconut milk and mix well.

Now it's time to make the banana leaf!

First clean the leaves with a wet cloth and then dip them into boiling water so that they become soft and don't break when you bend them.

Cut circles 25cm in diameter and place them together. You really need two leaves because one will not be enough to hold the mixture.

Make a square in the middle of the circle; this will make the bottom of the cup. Then put a thumb on the right angle of the square and pull up two sides, tucking the fold, and pinning together with a tiny bamboo stick aka a toothpick snapped in half.

Move the next right and repeat and then continue until all four sides of the cup are held together.

Now back to the mixture! Pour the mixture into the banana leaf and steam for 15-20 minutes. Then put the coconut cream on top and then the thinly sliced kaffir leaves and cayenne peppers. Steam until the mixture is solid but still moist.

If you don't have the ingredients for the

Kroeing part of the process then you can use: dried red chillies, grilled or steamed kapi (shrimp paste), or prahok (fish paste), roasted peanuts and julienned peppers.

So that is the recipe to one of my all time favourite curries, perhaps my all time favourite dish. I only hope that when I get back to Australia I will be able to cook it semi-well. It won't be the same as what I've had in Cambodia but I can try.

Now for the next recipe! This is something that is relatively easy and can be brought in Australia. Sticky Rice and Mango!!!! You will need:

2 cups of sticky rice

4 tbsp palm sugar

2 tbsp shredded coconut

½ cup of coconut milk

2 large ripe mangos, sliced into pieces

½ tbsp butter

A few sesame seeds

Firstly steam the sticky rice until it's well cooked. Then add the palm sugar, keep stirring, boil for about five minutes and then add the butter and a little bit of water and mix until smooth.

Place some of the sticky rice in the middle of a plate and arrange sliced mango around. Pour a little bit of the palm sugar syrup on the sticky rice, the mango slices and around, and then put the shredded coconut and sesame seeds on top of the rice.

All done! Now you have a main meal and a dessert! I think that is enough recipes for now, I think this is a good range.

Anyway, 2 months left until I get back to Australia!

A new appreciation for recycled A3 paper, castle plaza and family trees

So here's a funny thing. I brought recycled A3 paper with me (thanks Jensens!!!) grabbed a whole lot of old plans we were using for castle plaza and for Noarlunga Railway Station precinct, and also green street. Paper is kind of scarce in the school.

I ran a lesson with the older kids about family trees -it was easy to explain because Ry(Kylie's son) was with me so I could show them the connection between mother and son etc... and

then got them to draw their family trees (which was a kind of challenging lesson in itself because I quickly learnt that some of them didn't have brothers or sisters or fathers or mothers so I felt bad for introducing the concept, it highlighted the sadness some must face...although they did laugh their head off when I suggested that they might have dogs or birds in their family which most of them did, so their family tree pictures concentrated mostly on colourful drawings of their dogs. Anyway, this story is about the A3 paper that I used, not the lesson itself which is a whole other story!

The paper caused much interest in the class.

Why? because although I really wanted them to use the blank side of the Jensen's recycled A3 paper to draw their family trees on, they were much more interested in the "beautiful" images of street perspectives and concept plans of suburban streets on the other side of the paper..."teeeeechr (read..teacher), beeeeeewtiful teeeeechr, ooohhhh beewtiful" they continued to exclaim. Each time I tried to encourage them to use the blank side, they resisted big time. They were just so taken with our western street plans.

Now the classroom has castle plaza and green street brompton images taped on the walls (I keep turning the paper around to display the family trees but when I come in the morning and I'm greeted with "teecher, see, beewtiful!

And here's me thinking it was going to be a highly educational lesson around use of English and family connections. It turned into an art lesson with a bunch of kids copying western concept plans.

VOLUNTEERS' CORNER

It's My Luck, My Opportunity, My Challenge – By Clarissa Hirst, Asia Hope



I arrived in Cambodia at midnight on Saturday 30th July. I had already been travelling for five weeks in the United States and had been alone for two whole days after a long flight from LA to Guangzhou (China) with a 15 hour layover there in a small and stuffy airport hotel where nobody spoke English, followed by another (delayed) flight from Guangzhou to Phnom Penh where I had to fill out what seemed like a million forms to acquire my visa.

I was exhausted and lonely, so safe to say I had a bit of

an emotional breakdown when I finally got to my apartment!

Luckily for me, my experience improved dramatically after my arrival. I settled in quickly to apartment 6, which is located far away from the other 5 Projects Abroad apartments. We called it the 'girls apartment' because all of us, except for Piet, a lovely guy from Holland, were girls in our early twenties. After travelling in America with two guys, this was a very welcome change and we enjoyed several girls nights where we would eat chocolate (usually purchased at the Blue Pumpkin or the supermarket down the



street) and watch a chick flick. As everyone in the apartment will attest to, I have an obsession with chocolate and I was addicted to Blue Pumpkin brownies! The Khmer food made by our cook was amazing, but it was often nice to indulge in some Western dishes like spaghetti bolognese or French fries, so we had some great dinners out on Riverside or Wat Langka. My placement, which turned out to be one of the best things I have ever done in my life, was not



what I expected. I signed up for Care and was given a position Teaching English at a primary school run by a Christian organisation called Asia's Hope. While initially hesitant about this sudden change of plans, I soon immersed myself in my role as 'teacher', or 'mummy' as the kids would often call me. Working with these children, mostly aged between 7 and 11, was incredibly challenging, particularly as I had no previous teaching experience with large groups (back home I am a private music tutor, but that involves one-on-one lessons where all the kids speak fluent English - not the case at Asia's Hope!) BUT, and I must stress the but, the fact that it was difficult made me all the more determined to make the most of it, and it did become easier as I began to get to know the children individually and their varying levels of English.



I was very lucky in my second week of teaching to have the opportunity to accompany some of the older children to Battambang for a youth conference. As a strict atheist I predicted I would spend a day at the conference and head back to Phnom Penh. Things worked out a little differently! I met Steve and Paul, two pastors from Sydney who live probably an hour or so away from me, and John McCollum, the Founder/Director of Asia's Hope and some of his colleagues. Having dinner with them most nights was fascinating as I got to listen to their

vision for the organisation and learn how Asia's Hope had originated, as well as discovering the backgrounds of some of the children I was teaching. Basically the majority of the kids had lost their parents and did not have immediate family who were able to take proper care of them and so they were brought to Asia's Hope orphanages where they were given an extended family. I visited all 5 Prek Eng orphanages during my time in Phnom Penh and a couple more while in Battambang for the conference. Each one has about twenty kids and a mum and dad who take care of them, along with a cook. Each house is funded by a church back in the US or Canada. Just from observing the children one would never know that they had come from such extreme circumstances. Particularly at the youth conference, the joy, hope and lust for life the children possessed was amazing to me. This was no better exemplified than in the Friday night dance party which ended the conference, where everything from J-Lo's 'On the Floor' (a party favourite in southeast Asia right now it seems) to hardcore dance tracks to traditional Khmer songs were played, and everybody - children, parents, teachers, pastors, and myself, happily made complete idiots out of ourselves! Although spending time with the Asia's Hope family was certainly the highlight of my trip to Cambodia, I had so many incredible experiences outside of my volunteer role. I rode the bamboo train in Battambang with a young university student who I met that same day; a

guy who worked as a moto driver to earn extra cash. I hopped on the back of his friend's moto later the same day and ended up on a tiny boat in the middle of a lake eating waterlilies and drinking coconut milk. Fellow volunteer Issa and I spent a weekend with photographer Nathan Horton visiting Silk Island, Udong and the floating village of Kampong Chnang for a photography course. I went to Mondulkiri province alone for the weekend and found myself elephant trekking in the jungle with a Scottish girl, an Australian couple and a couple from the UK I met at my guest house. I visited Angkor Wat and pretended to be Lara Croft at the tomb raider temple in Siem Reap. I met a bunch of girls travelling from the UK and America on my last day in Siem Reap. and they came with me when I got my first tattoo done. It was of the Khmer word for 'smile', a word which, more than anything I have described above, sums up my experience in Cambodia. If you come here you too will find yourself smiling, not just politely, but genuinely, and it is an action that transcends all cultural and language barriers. I had come to Cambodia during a gap year after finishing university and in the wake of a recent family tragedy. In Cambodia I learnt to laugh and smile again. I met people everywhere who had suffered and lost much more than I had and yet were passionate about life, generous to others and hopeful for the future. To these people I am truly indebted, for they taught me so much. I will end with this simple piece of advice for those considering volunteering alone in Cambodia but hesitant about doing it: when you are travelling solo, you may be by yourself but you are never alone. And if you feel lonely, try smiling at someone as you walk by. I can guarantee that the Cambodian smile you receive in return will warm your heart.



Clarissa Hirst
From Australia

1 mois à Phnom Penh – orphelinat : CPCDO – Written By Ophylie **Care Project at CPCDO**

France article

Etudiante anxieuse et stressée, j'avais besoin de faire le point sur ma situation. Pas envie de passer l'été à bosser dans un fastfood, je voulais voyager et en même temps vivre quelque chose d'inconnu, d'utile et qui m'aiderait à relativiser.

Ce sera donc « Care Project » 1 mois à Phnom Penh au Cambodge, avec Projects Abroad.

Je me souviens encore du jour de mon arrivée, en sortant de l'aéroport : ce trafic chaotique, ces bruits de klaxons ... ça file dans tous les sens - mais où suis-je ??

Lors de mon introduction le premier jour, j'ai été très rassurée par le staff, très souriant (surtout Sophan) et motivé ! L'après-midi, c'est Chammy qui m'a amenée à mon orphelinat.

Ça m'a un peu secouée : un directeur qui tente d'obtenir de l'argent de ma part, la chaleur sous ces toits de tôle, la petitesse des chambres, certaines odeurs ...

Quel drôle d'effet lorsqu'un petit bout (collant de sueur) se blottit contre ma poitrine ! Je dois me ressaisir, car le lendemain je commence réellement.

Je m'intègre rapidement au sein de l'orphelinat, mais je prends aussi le temps d'observer et

note les conseils donnés par les autres volontaires de CPCDO. A part elles, je ne dois faire confiance à personne au sein du placement... j'étais très chanceuse d'avoir leur soutien.

Pour la tranche d'âge, ça va de quelques mois à 20 ans. Les plus âgés ont tout simplement décidé de rester à CPCDO car c'est un vrai foyer pour eux (et aussi car ils peuvent avoir le dessus sur les plus jeunes ...), les bébés n'ont pas de famille. Quant à tous les autres pensionnaires, ils y ont été placés par leurs parents - trop pauvres pour leur assurer un bon suivi - qu'ils peuvent visiter en province pour le nouvel an. Chacun a son histoire. Les mouflets âgés de plus de 6 ans sont scolarisés, un groupe le matin, l'autre l'après-midi.

Le fait d'avoir partagé mes impressions avec les autres volontaires m'a permis de comparer et relativiser sur la situation :

Enfin, mon orphelinat n'est pas si sale et désordonné, les enfants sont relativement en bonne santé et propres, et même si le staff est passif il y a une bonne ambiance...

Leur repas reste tout de même assez sommaire : du riz, du poisson, un bouillon de légumes. Les plus petits souffrent de carences. Mes collègues volontaires allaient une fois par semaine au marché local leur acheter poulet, tomates, pommes de terre, oignons et fruits... ce qui leur procurait un vrai repas. Après leur départ, j'ai pu y aller à mon tour.

Même les instants les plus anodins deviennent de vrais instants de bonheur avec ces monstres ! Un jeu ou un exercice d'anglais peut partir en fous rires, notamment lorsqu'ils mettent les règles à leur sauce. Ou encore découvrir ce qu'ils ont filmé ou capturé avec l'appareil photo à la fin de la journée ! Ces moments sont gravés dans ma mémoire !

Et que dire de ceux passés avec les volontaires de Projects Abroad ?! Avoir au moins 6 nationalités autour d'une table lors des repas, on ne trouve pas ça souvent ! Une vraie complicité s'installe, soirées et bons moments tout au long de la semaine.

Durant les week-ends, j'ai pu aller à Siem Reap, Koh Kong et Sihanoukville, ainsi que visiter Phnom Penh. J'ai fait des rencontres inattendues, appris beaucoup de choses sur l'histoire et la culture du Cambodge : un vrai enrichissement personnel, des souvenirs inoubliables et une cure de sourires.

Tout cela fait qu'un mois passe trop vite et qu'il faut en profiter un maximum. Après cette expérience, je me sens un peu plus grandie, comme après une leçon de morale. Je ne m'étais pas attendue à vivre quelque chose d'aussi percutant avant mon départ.

Inutile de dire que quitter les enfants, le staff et les volontaires pour retourner au pays a été dur. J'ai vécu quelque chose d'unique.

Vive les Cambodgiens!

Cambodia!!! – Written By Lucy Watkins, Teaching Project at VDTO



What can I say, this time last year I was planning my trip and a year later, its over. 5 weeks of what I can only describe as an experience of a lifetime and worthwhile trip to do.

The build up to Cambodia had been constant, with me counting down the days and buying essentials way in advance, and when the big day finally arrived on 13th July, lots of emotions were running high. I was excited, nervous, sad, scared, as well as not

really knowing what to expect, just a month of learning something new and helping children and feeling good about the whole experience.



I was also excited as it was my first time on a plane, so that was another whole new experience altogether. When the big day finally arrived, Wednesday 13th July, I was excited but also very nervous. My parents took me to London Heathrow Airport, ready to check in at twenty past four in the afternoon. I left my parents and when I boarded the plane at twenty past six, it finally occurred to me that this was it and my adventure started here. My first flight was from Heathrow to

Helsinki which was approximately a three hour flight. I then boarded my next flight straight away which was to Bangkok, which was just under ten hours. My final flight was from Bangkok to Phnom Penh which was about an hour and a half, and then I was finally there...CAMBODIA!!!! Despite it being the winter season and half past eight at night, it was still hot. I was greeted by one of the Projects Abroad staff and taken to the apartments where I was shown my room and met my two roommates, Jill and Nadine, who were lovely and really friendly and welcoming. I was very jet lagged so felt very tired and emotional as well as being in a whole new place.

The next day, I had my induction where in the morning I was shown around the main centre of Phnom Penh and then after lunch I was taken to my placement where I met the director. My placement was working in a primary school and called VDTO or Vocational Development. My day consisted of starting at 8.30am until 10.30 am then going back and starting the day again at 4.15pm and finishing at 6.30pm. Three of my four classes that I taught were aged between 8-10 and my last class, which I did for 5 weeks. Over the next few days and weeks, I started to make a lot of lovely people and we all become very good friends, and it was also lovely to meet people from different parts of the world. I made five friends who were from the UK; Georgie, Emma, Violet (or as we re-named her, Destiny), Kirsty and Anna. I met two people from Canada, Jill and Nadine, and four people from Australia, Jen, Mina, Sionne, Maddie and Alison. We spent a lot of our time looking around Russian and Central markets, haggling and coming home with far more stuff that we were expecting to buy. As well as this we also spent a fair bit of time at Daughters of Cambodia, a place where you can get manicures, pedicures and massages from \$3 or just go for a coffee and something to eat. Daughters of Cambodia was set up to stop and prevent sex-trafficking in Cambodia and to help and support women in need, which I think is a much needed cause to support.

On what was supposed to be my last weekend in Cambodia, Jen, Mina, Emma, Georgie, Sionne, Violet, Jill, Kirsty, Maddie, Alison and I went to Siem Reap from Friday to Monday. We stayed in a lovely hotel called Mother Home, which was very welcoming and had HOT WATER! On Friday night we went out to dinner to a restaurant called Red Piano which served lovely food, then went to the night market then back to the hotel as some of us had an early start the next day as we were going to the temples. The rest of us were getting up at 4am so that we could watch the sun rise at Angkor Wat. 4am arrived and we met in the lobby downstairs to get taken to the temples by Mother Home. We spent about 5 hours at the temples. When we arrived back I tried to get some sleep but couldn't so Georgie and I ended up getting our free massage, which was nice and relaxing. We then went out for a meal later on, which again was lovely, then went to the night market in the pouring rain, but it was so nice to be able to feel a bit cooler after the recent hot humidity. My official last weekend was spent at the beach in Sihanoukville with Georgie, Jen, Mina, Violet and Sionne, where we stayed in another lovely guesthouse called Coolabah. When we arrived on Friday,



we just relaxed and had dinner at the beach, which was amazing but felt so unreal. On the Saturday, we went to the beach where Mina, Jen, Sionne and Violet walked but Georgie and I cycled. We spent 4-5 hours on the beach where it was so hot. Georgie and I went jet skiing which was absolutely amazing! We then went back to the guesthouse at about 4, relaxed for a bit then had dinner at Coolabah, which served really nice food and we didn't feel like going anywhere else as we were all very sun burnt. Mina,

Jen, Sionne and Violet were going to leave the next day, but Georgie and I felt like staying an extra day so on the Sunday we cycled to the beach again and sunbathed for a while. We then headed back and went to the supermarket and relaxed in the guest house for a bit before having dinner again at Coolabah. The next day we relaxed in the guest house for a while and went to the spa as our bus wasn't until half two, then started heading back to Phnom Penh. It had been a lovely weekend and so worth extending just an extra week for. On Tuesday, Georgie and I went to the Russian Market, and then went to Bodia, a lovely spa which does all types of treatments. In the evening, we went out to 'Friends' a tapas restaurant, for Jill and mines leaving meal. When we got back to the apartments, I said my goodbyes, in case I missed some of them in the morning, which was very emotional and I felt I had become very close to them. Wednesday the 17th arrived, my day of leaving and it felt really strange to be going but also I felt excited that I was going to see all my family and friends. I spent the morning with Georgie and we went to 'Friends' to have lunch then to Daughters for a coffee, then I went back to the apartments to collect my luggage and left at half three to get to the airport to check in for half four.

Placement Update

SFODA, CUCO

That is my sadness to share with you with the news update of some placements that have been affected by the flood. These are SFODA, and CUCO.



Staff update

Mr. Pheng Sophan

We would like to say congratulations to Mr. Pheng Sophan for his promotion from Volunteer Coordinator to Volunteer Manager. We really appreciate his hard working and strong commitment to achieve the organisation's goal.

We hope he will perpetuate his commitment and hard working for the organisation's growth.



A Library at the office of Projects Abroad Cambodia

Volunteers in Cambodia keep increasing, especially Care and Teaching volunteers. More resources will be needed to support our volunteers during their projects at each placement. We used to have only a treasure chest – A big box on the corner of the first floor office, but we recently have decided to upgrade the resource stock for the volunteers, that is a Library – a stock of resource some kind of book, materials so on and so forth.



We hope that it will be useful for upcoming volunteers and it is available to check during working hours from Monday to Friday. If you want to see how it looks, come to check in our office.

Social Media Links for Projects Abroad in Cambodia



Follow us on Twitter at Projects Abroad Cambodia – Here is the link:

http://twitter.com/Proj_AbroadCAMB

Share your information, ideas or tips for anyone who is going to do voluntary work on our official Facebook Group. Here is the link:

Facebook Group: <http://www.facebook.com/groups/projectsabroad.cambodia>

Be informed about this and that in Cambodia and in Projects Abroad by reading our monthly newsletter. You can read it by just clicking the link:

Country Newsletter:

<http://www.projects-abroad.co.uk/volunteer-destinations/cambodia/newsletters-from-cambodia/>

Write down your interests, expectations and feelings before or after coming to Cambodia. Just use your Username and Password to log in. The link is:

Mytripblog: <http://www.mytripblog.org/pg/groups/2845/Cambodia>

All your contributions – stories, updates and self-introductions etc are very useful for others. We really appreciate it. Thanks.

Please log in Mytripblog by using your Myprojectsabroad username and password. In case, it is not working, please feel free to contact me: kimseang@projects-abroad.org.

Thanks.

PHOTOS OF THE MONTH



Break time, Sionnie and her student



A group of students at SCC.



Jungle trip by elephant walk.



Volunteers in front of accommodation



Under water activity – Diving and Marine Conservation project.



Trip to Siem Reap temple.

SOCIAL EVENTS

Get to know some main social events from Projects Abroad Cambodia.

Dirty Weekend at VDTO (School)



I'm sure there are certain people whose minds have gone straight to the gutter on reading the headline...hmmm, what can I say, I got as dirty as you would if you were rolling around in a gutter, but the reality is we went to a school and painted walls...it was SO much fun and I feel great. What a rewarding day!!!

We headed off early knowing little of what to expect. The school we went to accommodates 200 kids, in 3 shifts throughout the day...but there are only 4 completed the rooms, the rest are under construction.

Our job today was to paint and decorate the staircase that was recently completed...easy enough in Queensland, but in Cambodia where there is no such thing as workplace health & safety, it's a challenging task. I will include photos. Anyway, 12 of us got to work and somehow managed to paint the walls and then decorate them for the kids. Some of the walls were at least 20 - 25 feet high, and all manner of implements were taped to the rollers and paintbrushes in order to reach every nook and cranny. I'll let the photos tell the story of the ladders and "scaffolding" used.



One of the volunteers was from Poland (Ola) and was great fun, and said about 100 times throughout the day "I love it"....she/we really got into the day and had a ball.

Anyway, I will leave it to the pictures to tell the story...Oh, by the way, we got VERY DIRTY during the day and I feel fantastic now that I've scrubbed away the paint and grime!

Hugs, Rob, xx

Monthly Dinner Party



At Chhay Cham Restaurant, where we celebrated our Monthly Dinner party in September, the special was we got to see the Khmer traditional dance show at the restaurant. Everyone, staff and volunteers really enjoyed it. Hopefully, next month it is going to be more fun 😊.

IT's Free



I got information that there was a new restaurant celebrating its Grand Opening on 7th Oct and they invited everyone to join. They arranged food and drink for guests and it was all for free.

A group of volunteers and staff were waiting to see how it was. It was fun and good but the only problem was that we were on the top roof (5th floor) of the restaurant but the food was on the ground floor. So we needed to go up and down the stairs a lot.