



AWARENESS CAMBODIA

"Rebuilding the children of Cambodia"

Issue 3 2011

www.awarecam.org.au

Cambodia is a great place to get you thinking...

I remember the first time I visited Toul Sleng; built as a school, converted into an interrogation centre under Polpot and the Khmer Rouge, and now a national museum. Two things stood out to me. First, I was confronted by the sobering reminder of heinous atrocities that had been committed by one human being on another. But secondly, what they had endured from 1975 - 1979 stood in stark contrast to the life I experienced while earning a dentistry degree at a location only six hours away.

Why so different? Was my being born into so much opportunity in Australia just the lotto of life? The more I thought the more I realised it wasn't about location. The lifestyle I was enjoying was the result of choices made by men and women that preceded me, often at great expense to themselves.

Albert Einstein once made this observation; "From the standpoint of daily life, there is one

thing we do know; that man is here for the sake of other men - above all, for those upon whose smile and well-being our own happiness depends, and also for the countless unknown souls with whose fate we are connected by a bond of sympathy. Many times a day I realize how much my own outer and inner life is built upon the labors of my fellow men, both living and dead, and how earnestly I must exert myself in order to give in return as much as I have received."

One of our Graduation House students approached me a few weeks ago. University was going well but there was an excitement in his question; "what are my priorities to make the most of these next years?" That raw passion told me Cambodia's future is in good hands.

Still these changed lives have only been made possible because people like you and I recognise the opportunity given to us and have

decided "to return as much as we've received" for which, on their behalf, I sincerely thank you.

Gary Hewett
CEO/ Founder



Pictured: Makara is the newest and youngest addition to the Awareness Cambodia family. He was rescued from certain death and is now thriving at Sunshine House. Story next page...

Our newest and youngest addition to Sunshine House



Born 7 January 2011, Makara Meoun has already suffered countless hardships. In his first 11 months of life he has witnessed his father pass away, his mother abandon him, and his grandparents unsuccessfully attempted to help him.

When Makara came to us at just seven months old, he suffered from malnourishment, a zinc deficiency, pneumonia and an enlarged heart. We were concerned that his mental capacity had been affected due to malnourishment, and weren't sure he would even survive.

But after extensive medical treatment and daily physiotherapy, Makara's future is positive. With the support of Awareness Cambodia, Makara was rescued from certain death and now lives at Sunshine House with a bright future ahead of him.

When you donate to Awareness Cambodia you are rescuing children like Makara. We invite you to walk this journey with us. Partner with Awareness Cambodia.



*Above: Makara the day he was rescued by Awareness Cambodia in July 2011.
Right: Today Makara is thriving.*



New Playground at Sunshine House

Sunshine House is now home to a new playground thanks to a massive global effort. We couldn't have done it without the support and team spirit of a number of global organisations.

Thank you to the Perth College community; Sopheak Pheng from the Awareness Cambodia Phnom Penh office; the Australian volunteer team who made ground preparations; USA



Awareness Cambodia, our USA volunteer team who erected the 'beast,' Kids Around the World, and Janet and Russ Landreth our USA Awareness Cambodia country coordinators.

Once again, thank you. Your dedication will bring decades of joy to the children of Sunshine House.

OPERATION NIGHTINGALE CLINIC



by Dr Piseth

During a recent visit to Kaheng Ta-or Health Center, I met a 31 year old woman who felt particularly 'giddy'. After checking her with my glucose machine, I realised her levels were so high our machine couldn't even detect it. We immediately began treatment and asked her to come back for a follow-up check.

It was exciting when she visited us again, as she had a smile on her face and no longer suffered from giddiness. She is just one of many hypertensive and diabetic patients in the province of Kompong Speu who receive help from our program.

During the same day, I saw an 11 year old girl who complained of a headache which she had suffered with for quite some time. Her mother had taken her to countless local doctors, who couldn't pinpoint the root cause of her pain. I decided to do a simple eye test, and it turned out she was short-sighted - all she needed was a pair of glasses!

This is a common issue in rural Cambodia, and can often be frustrating for the patient. Local doctors unfortunately aren't aware that short-sightedness can indeed cause chronic headaches in young kids. This family was fortunate they could access our Operation Nightingale clinic.

I'm so glad we can contribute so much to this poor community. The cost of solving their health issues is so little, but makes such a difference.

Dr Piseth is a volunteer Cambodian doctor who works on our medical project, Operation Nightingale. He has worked with Awareness Cambodia since 2007, while continuing his work as a clinical consultant dermatologist. In 2005 he studied at the University of Washington USA, and undertook a fellowship at Harborview Medical Centre, Seattle. Following his time in the United States, Dr Piseth completed his Diploma of Dermatology in Hamburg, Germany.



JOIN US!



THE WESLEY SCHOOL CHALLENGE

...showing young people the value of charity



Pictured: Janeen Cameron accepts a \$5000 cheque on behalf of Awareness Cambodia

Awareness Cambodia had the important opportunity recently to meet with the year twelve students from Wesley College's Walton House, and tell them about the work that we do. This is always a valuable experience as it encourages students to adopt a 'giving back' philosophy and often has a lasting impact on how they view society and the world they live in as they grow and mature.

In early 2011, Janeen Cameron, who is a great supporter of Awareness Cambodia,

went along and talked to the year 12 boys from Wesley Walton House. She challenged Walton House to raise money and asked them to suggest a figure that they believed they could raise in a year. \$5000 was what they declared to the resultant shock of all. Janeen's response was; "Ok If you can achieve that, my company will sponsor two of you to go and work with a maintenance team in Cambodia." So the Challenge was set.

A group took the initiative and organised fundraising activities that included the assistance of children from kindergarten through to year 12. The boys from Walton House planned cake

stalls, worked at home tasks, held a make your own burger day, and many other activities. They also raised money at various Wesley functions and slowly the money began to trickle in steadily. Monday 26 October 2011, Janeen ventured into a large chaotic common room at Wesley College and was handed a \$5000 cheque - the target had been met! What a fantastic achievement by this group of amazing young men.

Thank you all for your incredible support!

If any other organisations would like to participate in, or sponsor this type of project within their community, please contact Janeen at Awareness Cambodia's Perth office on 9370 1457, who is more than happy to help you get started!



www.awarecam.org.au

**We invite you to walk
this journey with us.
Partner with Awareness Cambodia
and donate securely online**

CASE 4 CHANGE – 2011



On 6 October 2011 our staff in Cambodia were able to supply an entire rural primary school with backpacks and stationary. It's a milestone for our Case 4 Change program, which aims to equip local schools in the Kompong Speu province.

It's exciting to see the program developing further and benefiting a number of schools in rural Cambodia. We believe education is powerful, and a basic human right, empowering children to break the cycle of poverty. It prevents inequity that leads to gross human rights abuses, and changes futures.

Thank you to all the 2011 participants including **Parkwood Primary School**, **Wesley College**, **Lake Joondalup Baptist College** and **KAYU** who supported this vital program. And we look forward to more community groups coming on board next year!



The perfect gift this Christmas...



Come Christmas time, the dilemma of gift buying is always at the forefront of our minds. If you're looking to give a memorable gift this year, why not donate to Awareness Cambodia on behalf of your loved one!

Though Christmas gifts are always a delight to open, you can make them even more meaningful knowing that it will reach beyond your immediate world. Think of it as the perfect gift that will keep on giving!

If you would like to make a Christmas donation on behalf of your loved one, please contact our Perth office today!





VOLUNTEERING IN CAMBODIA 2011

On 16 September 2011 the annual Awareness Cambodia Impact Team left Perth shores for Cambodia. The 25-member group was comprised of both a medical and maintenance team.

The trip was a huge success, with our medical team seeing around 900 patients

in just one week. Our maintenance team also had a work out, laying more than 100 metres of concrete paths at Sunshine House.

We really appreciate the sacrifice of each team member, giving up their annual leave to help Awareness Cambodia in its mission.



Friday 24 September 2011 - diary entry by Kim Hewett:

Today our medical team left Kompong Speu town for a village in the Oral District - the middle of nowhere. We crossed unstable bridges, small rivers, and the gravel track we were driving on now resembled a large mud pit. We eventually got bogged two kilometres outside our intended village and couldn't go on any further.

In desperation, we asked residents of a nearby wooden stick house to help us. They kindly agreed to allow us to turn their rice-field homes into a medical clinic for the day. The 'bush telegraph' saw hundreds of villagers arrive out of no-where to help us unpack four vehicles. Bursting at the seams, our cars were filled with doctors, nurses, translators and medical supplies.

The village we were working in is extremely isolated; filled with overwhelming poverty. Our team attended over 200 patients with various ailments, and helped oversee numerous vaccinations. It was especially emotional seeing old ladies and men with tears in their eyes saying 'a kun' (thank you), whilst looking at their hands in wonder. They hadn't been able to see for many years, and it was a



pleasure to be able to provide them with this life-changing gift of glasses.

It's a true privilege to be part of this incredible work, witnessing first-hand the amazing contribution of our teams.



GRADUATING
to
House of
Progress...

GRADUATING to Graduation House...

Congratulations to the latest members of House of Progress and Graduation House. **Pisey KEO** and **Samnang CHIENCHON** have been accepted into a five year degree in English Literature, after passing their high school examinations. We are very proud of our latest graduates!



Awareness Cambodia Story

Awareness Cambodia is a not for profit, overseas aid organisation established in 1996 by Perth dentist, Dr Gary Hewett in response to the incredible suffering and poverty experienced by the

Cambodian people after the execution of 25% of its most intelligent under Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot. We work to relieve poverty and encourage development of life skills through participation in self sustaining projects.

Awareness Cambodia doesn't simply raise funds to pass onto other organisations; instead we initiated projects in response to ongoing needs. Together these projects form an environment that provides a seamless structure for orphaned Cambodian children to transition into well adjusted and self sufficient leaders, so necessary in rebuilding Cambodia's future.

We also see Cambodian culture as a unique national treasure meaning all efforts are taken to ensure our presence doesn't simply result in these children being westernised, relocated to other parts of the world or being reduced to the indignity of a dependency on overseas handouts.

Effective training for indigenous staff, a non adoption policy, working in cooperation with local organisations and government departments as well as the inclusion of self funded business components in projects are key components in reaching our objectives.

"Awareness Cambodia is proud to be a partner for project 'J515 Awareness Cambodia-Stage 2' with Global Development Group, an Australian AusAID approved NGO carrying out quality humanitarian aid and development projects with approved partners to relieve poverty and provide long term solutions."





Donation Form

(Please return by Fax/Post/Email)

Name

Street

Suburb

State

Post Code

Daytime Phone

Mobile

Fax

Email

One-off Donation

☐ \$1000 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$100 other \$

Monthly Donation

☐ \$250 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$60 ☐ \$40 other \$

(please note that all amounts are in \$AUD)

☐ I would like to become a child sponsor

☐ \$55 per month (general & health) ☐ \$60 per month (tertiary)

☐ I would like to become a Monthly Partnership Program (MPP) sponsor

☐ I would like to receive the Awareness Cambodia newsletter

Payment Options

☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa ☐ Amex

Card Number

Cardholder Expiry Date /

Signature

☐ Cheque (please make cheques payable to 'Awareness Cambodia Overseas Aid Fund')

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Thank you for your generous support

If the funds raised exceed project requirements then funds may be directed to a similar project. Donations made within Australia are tax deductible.
Awareness Cambodia Inc ABN: 69 234 355 895 Awareness Cambodia Overseas Aid Fund ABN: 15 815 273 527