



KEP GARDENS NEWSLETTER

December 2015

Hi Everyone,

We started off the new school year packed to the rafters. Now we have 1 class in the morning along with the playgroup and 5 classes in the afternoon/evening. Many new young ones in the playgroup which is good to see and a lot of new students in the youngest English class.

Volunteers

We have had a full house the last couple of months. Two men have been sleeping outside on bamboo beds. They love it as did I when I first came to live here. Go to sleep looking at the stars and wake up with the sun. Can't be much closer to nature!!



Dominique

Dominique comes from The Netherlands and has been our BeMore volunteer for 7 weeks teaching each class for a week as well as participating in the Reading and Conversation Programme on a daily basis. She is a favourite with the teenage girls, being invited for jungle walks and lunch on the weekends and playing volleyball with them.



Craig

Craig hails from Australia and has spent 5 weeks at Kep Gardens participating in the Reading and Conversation Programme each day.

A new innovation this year has been to take out 6 boys who struggle with learning English and give them carpentry type jobs to do; learning to measure, design, draw up and then make using a drill, screw driver, saw etc. Their first job was a bag rack for the students' school bags. Craig has taken this class and done a great job, encouraging punctuality and pride in one's work. The end result is not only a much needed bag rack but the boys have achieved much more than they ever did in English class raising self-esteem and confidence.



A couple of boys missing the day I took the photo!



Why hadn't we done this before!!!

We need more Craigs so we can continue with this programme into 2016. It doesn't have to be carpentry; gardening, animal husbandry, embroidery, sport come quickly to mind but whatever your skill is come and share it with a group of students.

Additionally Craig has taken football practice every Saturday and Sunday afternoon, helping the Cambodian coaches with new ideas for learning ball skills, getting teams organized into positions, measuring out a new, larger pitch and many other helpful jobs. We'll miss him when he goes as he has many skills to share.



Jill



Greg

Jill and Greg visited again this year for 2 weeks and did so much while they were here. Greg worked with Andrew in Kampot with the trade training guys passing on his many skills. For the first 6 weeks at the beginning of the school year I was here by myself so didn't have time to organize such things as the Youth Programme which is now called Leadership Through English. I had a very long list which Jill undertook to have meetings with the necessary students and now all are organized and up and running thanks to Jill. A weight has been lifted from my shoulders. Thanks to you both for sharing all your knowledge and skills with the students at Kep Gardens and Kampot.



Wim

Wim recently retired from 37 years teaching at the same school in The Netherlands. He will be spending 3 months at Kep Gardens. Who knows what new ideas and programmes we may undertake during his stay. I am looking forward to digging into his fountain of knowledge and experience to see what comes out.



Marta



Catarina



Filipa

Three Portuguese girls visited for 2 days and joined our Reading and Conversation Programme. The beauty of this programme is that people can participate for one

day or many days without interrupting the scheduled classes. Thanks girls for helping at Kep Gardens.



Rebecca

Rebecca who lived at Kep Gardens for 5 months a couple of years ago returned for a few days volunteering her services. Lovely to see her again.

Career Student Sponsorship

A big thank you to the people who have supported our career students this year for their 3rd year of study. We still have a way to go to achieve the annual total we need.

Results for 2nd year are available for the nurses and it is gratifying to see that Savry was 2nd, Sreyleap 3rd and Tann 9th in their class of 19 students. 2016 they have two work experiences,

the first in Takeo Province in January and the other in July, again in Phnom Penh.

Our Engineering student, Baraing, passed his exams and commenced 3rd year in October. He needed a laptop for 3rd year which we duly purchased from funds donated by the students' supporters.

***PLEASE SUPPORT OUR CAREER STUDENTS
FOR THEIR 3RD YEAR OF STUDY.***

Trades Training Programme

We now have 10 trade apprentices. They have been very busy this year, mainly in Kampot. Their latest job is building a theatre restaurant on the river which must be completed by the end of the year.



They have built a stage and restaurant, kitchen, toilets, bar, housing for the owner and storage areas. Some new, young apprentices joined the group during this period. One boy who can't read or write Khmer and found English classes too hard has turned out to have some good skills which will improve with training. He now has a future. This is a perfect example of what Kep Gardens is all about.



At the same time, we have been building our workshop area which has two toilets incorporated into the building for visiting groups that camp.



The back closed in part will be a tool shed and storage area which can be locked at night. The open front area will be the workshop.

Thank you very much to St Augustine's College, Sydney for their generous donation helping to finance and build the final stages of our trades training workshop. They also brought over toolboxes filled with tools which they left with us. Thanks guys for everything you gave us and did to help us, a great effort and one that will be remembered every time we use the building.



and scorpions out as they will have nowhere to hide!!



St Augustine's and our apprentices.

Once the roll-a-door is on we will be able to lock up. Andrew can hardly wait to set up the tool room and be able to put all the tools and screws/nuts etc which are scattered around the place into one area. The same goes for me with the storage area. We'll be able to move out a few boxes from our bedroom and chase a few lizards

We will add a 6 metre verandah to the front of the workshop and then we will be able to use this building for many things especially in the rainy season as we will have a large under cover space. It will certainly be a multi-functional area and get lots of use. Thanks St Augustine's.

Thank you also to Merijn's school in The Netherlands who initially helped finance the slab, toilets and upright steel work. You'll be happy to know that we have finally finished building.



Library System

Yankalilla Area School library staff will be cheering when they read this! Thanks to them we have had a computerized library system with a scanner no less for some time, but never seemed to find the time to set it up. One of Craig's many skills is IT so he set up the system and we are entering data bit by bit every day. The mind boggles at a computerized library scanning system out in the jungle!! Thanks to John and William Brodie-Tyrrell who donated a 2nd hand laptop and rebuilt the software. Photos later of it in action.

Parent Workshop

We held a workshop recently outlining ways parents can help their children with their education. Thirty-three parents came, many fathers, which was encouraging. Jill prepared a handout of 9 ways to help including healthy food, sleep, encouragement, involvement, regular attendance etc. Kimsy talked and we answered any questions between us. We should have more of these information sessions but must make sure we are not seen to be criticizing their methods and culture.

Football Federation of Cambodia Visit

Unfortunately the football played here is not Aussie rules but soccer. Oh well, never mind. In 2026 there will be an Asian World Cup held in Phnom Penh. The Federation wants to set up competitions in the rural areas in the hope of finding David Beckhams to play for Cambodia when the time comes. They are travelling around looking at available facilities. We are hoping that Kep Gardens may be a venue for competitions in Kep Province as we have 2 soccer fields now.



Buddhist Library/Sports Morning

Every day I send a thank you in my mind to the Buddhist Library who donated the Montero to Kep Gardens. Today I made a couple of trips back and forth to ferry the younger soccer team and the girls' volleyball team to a sports morning against a local high school. The Buddhist Library also put some information about Kep Gardens in their newsletter in the hope of attracting some donations for us. Thank you for your support. We may also hold an inter-school debate together. Class 4 held their debates last week so we are working on joining together.



The girls' volleyball team have improved so much thanks to a teacher who comes Saturday and Sunday afternoons for training. They actually won today 4-2. Great excitement.

End of Term

Last Friday a man from Kampot Circus came to Kep Gardens and put on a show for the students. Mainly juggling but he was able to speak Khmer fluently so talked as he juggled and got them involved. Wim, a volunteer, shouted them all an ice cream. A happy afternoon was had by all. Class 4 had a party Friday night and Class 3 a party on Sunday night. Two weeks holiday now,

time for a break. Lots of sleeping and reading for us both. Going to Phnom Penh for a few days.



**MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL OUR
FAMILY AND FRIENDS**

**MAY 2016 BRING YOU MUCH
HAPPINESS**

As Miss Spry is pregnant, the cat is pregnant and the geese have 7 eggs, 2016 will bring a nursery to Kep Gardens. So much for the village vet!!!

Cheers, Janine and Andrew

Front Entrance

While St Augustine's was here they also put up our sign at the front gate. Had it made ages ago but the trades section have been away for some time working in Kampot so it never got done.



See as you drive out.



See as you drive in.

This is such a beautiful photo I had to share it with you. The two older boys attend Kep Gardens. I went to visit the family when their baby brother was born and took some photos to frame for the family.

