



KEP GARDENS NEWSLETTER



MARCH 2020

Hi Everyone,

Hard to believe that just a couple of weeks ago we were going about our normal business and now the world is in lockdown! Please follow the rules and keep safe.

I am going to carry on as normal with the newsletter and tell you about all the good things that had been happening at Kep Gardens before 16-3-20 when the Government closed all schools until further notice.

Outside Presentations

Great teamwork on New Year's Day for Class 6's second presentation at Villa Kep. Chanloun operating the projector and music, the dancers, and students doing the verbal presentations. Great job done by all. I look at these students and think back to when they first started at Kep Gardens. How they have grown in confidence and turned into wonderful young adults. One young girl last night when she finished her presentation came off and said to herself "I can do it!" Of course she can, I never doubted it but now she has proved it to herself. Thank you to Yuhan and Marco for giving the students the opportunity to find this out for themselves. How powerful is self-belief?



WE CAN DO THIS. TOGETHER WE WILL GET THROUGH THE LATEST CHALLENGE THAT LIFE HAS THROWN US.

Memorial

Last July, one of our students, 10 year old Ty Ahroun and his cousin Monyroith were killed in a motor accident. After the 100 day celebration his parents gave Kep Gardens two avocado trees, a football and a volleyball. We had a small plaque made up in December when we were in Phnom Penh. Today the staff, Ahroun's 2 brothers, his mother, father and grandmother, 14 of his friends from Kep Gardens, plus a few people the family had invited, held a small memorial ceremony by one of the avocado trees. It was a very brief but moving ceremony, no big fanfare, just the people who knew and loved or liked him, sitting on the ground in the shade near his special tree listening to the monks praying.



Sport Days

The Youth Programme have been very busy organizing football and volleyball games against other schools and organizations.



Phnom Penh Post

Please click the link below to read a recent article by the Phnom Penh Post about Kep Gardens.

<https://www.phnompenhpost.com/.../kep-gardens-association-pla...>

Kindergarten Cooking Classes

Kimhean's Kindergarten class has had 2 cooking mornings this year. The first time they cooked rice together and then they all cooked their own omlette to go on top. The second time they cooked fish cake, a type of sweet. Please check out our Facebook page to see the photos, especially the children cooking their omlettes.



Class 6 Debates

Class 6 held their annual debates early February. For many it was their first time - first time and in a second language - good job. Others improved greatly from their first year and some gave a performance as if they were born to debate. A real mixed bag that made me proud, every student stood up and did their best. Thank you very much to Kasim, Maria and Long Han for taking on the difficult job of judging.



Not good pictures unfortunately as our camera is not good at night.

Buddhist Library Debate

We had 3 weeks practice before our fifth annual inter-school debate with the Buddhist Library. Students on both sides did an excellent job. They are getting better and better every year. Thank you to a visiting group from Cambodia Cycling from the UK who judged the debate. A hard job done well. At Kep Gardens we highly value our partnership with the Buddhist Library from donations to the English school, sharing training workshops and debating. Both schools look forward to this annual contest.



Driver Safety

We held another successful parent workshop in January. Many parents came to refresh their memories of the road rules. Thank you to the Department of Public Works and Transport for again making helmets available to participants who answered questions correctly. We enjoy working in collaboration with them to work with the community towards making our roads safer.



International Womens Association

Thank you to Melissa, Vicki and Ian for making the younger classes very happy when they distributed backpacks and pencil cases from IWA, International Womens Association. IWA employ local people to make a variety of goods out of recycled cement bags and plastic bags. What a great idea! Providing employment as well as helping to clean up the environment, a win-win situation. Thank you very much for including Kep Gardens on your list of schools that benefited and thank you to your sponsors in Switzerland that made it possible.



Jolly Phonics

We held a very successful 3 day training course for Kep Gardens and the Buddhist Library staff on Jolly Phonics in February. The Buddhist Library staff was lots of fun. Thank you to Shainaz, our trainer, who had travelled from India. Her great rapport with the students helped to make the training course enjoyable. We all learnt heaps, made new friends and enjoyed the 3 days of "school". The following 3 days saw another Jolly Phonics course for the Government school teachers. We organized and held these training courses at Kep Gardens to try and help teachers with their own pronunciation so they can pass it on to their students. Jolly Phonics was thinking of holding a pilot project in Kep with all the schools but of course this is temporarily on hold.



Marine Conservation Workshops

For many weeks now, Marine Conservation has been holding workshops with all of our students, class by class, on various topics such as fish, coral, dolphins, sea grass, octopus-squid-cuttlefish, giving more information as classes became older. As the Kep Archipelago is our backyard, it is important that the students know about marine life and learn how to protect what is right on their doorstep. Each workshop ended with a craft session. I showed some coral and fish pictures last newsletter, this time see if you can guess what the theme was!



The highlight was when we were presented with our own Irrawaddy dolphin that has been spotted and identified in the Kep Archipelago. We held a competition asking all students to submit a name. The top 10 were then voted on. Kimsry in Class 4 was the winner. The dolphin's name is Sovancongia and means "golden water". We will be sent updates when they spot it, where it was spotted, what it was doing etc. All students painted some of this picture. Trouble is now we have to find somewhere to put it out of the weather. This is proving quite a challenge as it is very big.

Answers: Row 1 sea grass Row 2 shells Row 3 octopus

Marine Conservation has been quite a hit at Kep Gardens. We had almost finished the workshops when covid19 struck. We look forward to the time when we can resume our workshops. Thank you to Marine Conservation.

Koh Sey Island Trips

Lori Goodroad offered to raise funds for this project which is close to her heart and we thank her and her family and friends very much for providing such an opportunity for our older students. Koh Sey, is an island off the coast of Kep, the last island before Vietnam and home to Marine Conservation Cambodia. MCC have shown how the destruction of the ocean bed by trawling can be reversed in the protected zone around the island. We wanted our students to see this for themselves to hopefully bring them closer to understanding why every individual needs to "do their bit" in protecting marine life.

The students learnt how to snorkel and looked at the reefs. One group even had the chance to go dolphin watching on MCC's big boat! They have been suitably impressed seeing the ocean from an entirely different perspective.

Thank you to MCC for allowing us on the island and showing us around; thank you to friends for their supervisory support; thank you to Mat for taking the photos; thank you to Michael for giving us a discount on the boat rental; thank you to Phum's dad for getting us there and back safely.

Visits to the island are not allowed unless educational tours but if you would like to volunteer please check out their website. What a great place to live for awhile!! An island paradise!! <https://www.marineconservationcambodia.org/>



Amazing what a day of sun and sea air will do for you!!

Reading through this, I can't believe that we packed all of this into 2½ months as well as our classroom time!! No wonder I was looking forward to Khmer New Year and a break. Now I have an enforced break as do most of us. Please be careful and I hope you and your families come out of this fit and healthy.

Cheers,
Janine and Andrew

We thank the Buddhist Library in Australia and Cambodia for their continued support of our project.

Global Development Group not only provide tax deductible receipts for donations but also provide support for their members in many varied ways.

Did you know GDF is registered in New Zealand, PO Box 10076, Bayfair, Tauranga 3152
Email: info@globaldevelopment.org.nz
Website: globaldevelopment.org.nz

Did you know that GDG is registered as an ANBI organisation in the Netherlands? **European Union donors** may be eligible to receive a tax deductible receipt (Donors need to ensure they can claim in their country).

To Give from the EU: www.gdg.org.au/PayPal

Use this link to go direct to Global Development Group to ensure a tax deductible receipt for your donation or sponsorship.

<https://globaldevelopmentgroup.org/au/projects/j674n-kep-gardens-community-project/>

Don't forget, tax deductible donations can be paid through GDG Project J674N.



Proud to partner with Global Development Group (ABN 57 102 400 9930) for project J674N





SOVANCONGIA - GOLDEN WATER



Common Kingfisher



Black-crested bulbul



Black-collared starling
We have many more but I don't have the pictures yet. Shainaz, the Jolly Phonics trainer is a bird watcher and sat by the dam dawn and dust and got many pictures of different birds.