



GROWING CAMBODIA NEWSLETTER

March 2024

Hello Growing Cambodia Supporters

Welcome to our first newsletter for 2024 !

Inside you will find an update on our schools and classes this year.

You will also learn about one Sunshine Coast school heading back to Cambodia and our schools again.

A new multi-purpose building is under construction at Beng thanks to a major sponsor.

Back home it was ladies only for a fabulous High Tea held recently. Please read on



HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Donations to Growing Cambodia

All donations to Growing Cambodia are tax deductible. We ask that you consider either making a one-off donation, a donation for a specific cause and/or a regular monthly donation.

Our bank details are:
Growing Cambodia Inc
BSB: 633000
Account: 150148583

Please then email us at enquiry@growingcambodia.org.au and we will send you a receipt.

Please see other ways to help on the last page of the newsletter.

Kawana Waters State College off to Cambodia again !

Growing Cambodia has been extremely fortunate in having the ongoing support of Kawana Waters State College on the Sunshine Coast since 2018. In September of that year a group of students and teachers first volunteered at our schools. The students and school community have organised fundraising activities every year since. We were thrilled when Lyn Duffy, who puts an incredible amount of work into making both the visits and fundraising happen, joined our committee this year. Lyn takes up the story

In 2023, Kawana Waters State College were finally able to repeat their trip to Cambodia from 2018. COVID put a stop to the trip planned for 2020 and last year was the first time the Queensland Department of Education lifted their ban on international travel for students. We took a group of 31 students and 5 staff. This year we are even bigger with 30 students, 7 staff and 3 volunteer family members of staff, in total 40 participants.

Preparation

Weekly meetings have already begun for participants in preparation for the trip in June. The students are excited and looking forward to this adventure. The group also includes 2 staff and 3 students who went in 2023.

Our preparation always begins a term before the trip. Our meeting timetable for this year is to the right.

Health students and Days for Girls

Our College is located quite close to the Sunshine Coast University Hospital. We have a partnership with the hospital, and we employ 6 qualified nurses/educators who offer Health certificates for our students in Years 10, 11 & 12. In conjunction with the health program and our trip to Cambodia, health students are asked to complete the online training in the Days of Girls education. We work with the local Days for Girls group and collect donations of face washers and girls' underwear, which is used for kits that are sent to countries such as Fiji. We then raise money to buy kits in Cambodia to distribute at GC supported schools. Last year we raised funds to purchase in Cambodia 700 kits and presented the education program to over 100 girls in Koy Meng Secondary School.

Week	Day	Date	Time	Activity / topic	Venue
Term 1					
5	Friday	23 Feb	11:10-11:50am	Student Meeting: Getting to know travel buddies. Introducing yourself in Cambodia	PA 1/2/3
6	Tuesday	27 Feb	8:30-8:45am	Making ice-blocks (2-3 students)	Hall kitchen
	Wednesday	28 Feb	2:30-3pm	Selling ice-blocks (4 students)	Primary front & hall gates
7	Friday	1 Mar	11:10-11:50am	Student Meeting: Clothing/Visa/Cash/Etiquette	PA 1/2/3
	Tuesday	5 Mar	8:30-8:45am	Making ice-blocks (2-3 students)	Hall kitchen
8	Wednesday	6 Mar	2:30-3pm	Selling ice-blocks (4 students)	Primary front & hall gates
	Friday	8 Mar	11:10-11:50am	Student Meeting: Sustainable charity	PA 1/2/3
8	Tuesday	12 Mar	8:30-8:45am	Making ice-blocks (2-3 students)	Hall kitchen
	Wednesday	13 Mar	2:30-3pm	Selling ice-blocks (4 students)	Primary front & hall gates
	Friday	15 Mar	11:10-11:50am	Student Meeting: Days for Girls introduction	PA 1/2/3
Term 2					
1	Friday	26 April	11:10-11:50am	Student Meeting: English as a second language	PA 1/2/3
	Tuesday	30 April	10:20-11:15am	Triple P - Pizza Party	Primary canteen
2	Friday	3 May	11:10-11:50am	Student Meeting: Game making	PA 1/2/3
3	Friday	10 May	11:10-11:50am	Student Meeting: What to teach...	PA 1/2/3
	Wed	15 May	6pm onwards	Parent and student fundraiser dinner meeting @ Grillo, Kawana - all family members welcome	Grillo, Kawana
		24 May	11:10-11:50	Student Meeting: what to teach...	PA 1/2/3
4	Tuesday	28 May	3pm-4:15pm	Days for Girls packing - hall	
	Friday	17 May	11:10-11:50am	Meeting: Hand washing / teeth cleaning / Days for Girls demo	PA 1/2/3
5	Friday	31 May	9-9:30am	Accepting donations	Primary parade in hall
		31 May	11:10-11:50	Student Meeting: Bring your clothes and packing to school	PA 1/2/3
	Tuesday	4 June	3pm-4:15pm	Sorting donations and donation packing	Hall
6	Friday	7 June	11:10-11:50am	Student Meeting: Being safe / Communication / Emergency processes / Final check in	PA 1/2/3
10	Wednesday	12 June	6:15am sharp	Meet at Brisbane international airport	



Kawana Waters State College (cont.)

Packing the Days for Girls Kits



Donations

We ask each family in the school to make a donation. This helps our students, especially the younger children, to understand that they can have a direct way of assisting. We say that donations go from 'Your hands to our hands to their hands'.

Photos: Primary students about to give their donations to the participating students in 2023 and some piles of donations from 2023.

PREP	2 PACKS COLOURED PENCILS
YEAR 1	5 PENCILS, ONE ERASER, ONE SHARPENER IN A PENCIL CASE.
YEAR 2	1 MULTIPACK TOOTHBRUSHES AND 2 TUBES OF TOOTHPASTE
YEAR 3	4 X HANDBALLS
YEAR 4	1 X SKIPPING ROPE
YEAR 5	1 X SOCCER BALL (DEFLATED)
YEAR 6 GIRLS	PACK OF 5 X GIRLS UNDIES ANY SIZE FROM 8 -12
YEAR 6 BOYS	5 PLAIN COLOUR FACE WASHERS
YEAR 7	2 X 4 PACKS SOAP
YEAR 8	NEW (BUT CHEAP) BABY CLOTHES FOR GIRLS OR BOYS
YEAR 9 AND YEAR 10	1 X PICTURE BOOK SUITABLE FOR YOUNG CHILDREN. This can be second hand if it is in good condition.
YEAR 11 AND YEAR 12	1 X STORY BOOK SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN IN SECONDARY SCHOOL. This can be second hand if it is in good condition.
Other items that are useful	Old but good condition prescription reading glasses. New but cheap clothes for girls or boys. Any good condition medical equipment – crutches, slings etc.



CHANGE THE LIFE OF CHILD

FROM YOUR HANDS TO OUR HANDS TO THEIR HANDS!



Kawana Waters State College (cont.)

The Cambodia Trip

After settling into our hotel and a few days of tourist activities including Phare circus, Eco Soap, Floating village and of course Angkor Wat, we ventured out to the schools.

Because we are such a large group, we divide up into smaller groups for school visits. Some to Beng Village, some to Oroluos and some to Kok Beng. Then on the following days we rotate. On the day we go to Koy Meng, we go all together.

At Koy Meng our Health students ran the Days for Girls program.

Other students focused on teeth cleanliness education and effective hand washing awareness games.



Demonstrating doing a thorough job of cleaning teeth.



Singing and teaching a hand washing game.



Here we pass a balloon with glitter on it around to group to represent germs being easily passed from one person to another.



We also took donations to Koy Meng Health Clinic and Oroluos District Hospital.



Kawana Waters State College (cont.)

At Beng Village School, Oroluos School and Kok Beng School we have a few different approaches.

- Sometimes teaching the whole class and following the topics the teachers are working on at that time.
- Often teaching a concept to a small group in whatever space we can find.

We try to demonstrate how teaching can occur through games and fun activities. Last year our student made Snap and Bingo card games. We gave them a template and they had to make the game and then we laminated it and cut them up ready to use. This worked really well and the Cambodian teachers could see how this helped with vocabulary and English reading skills. It was also a lot of fun for the Cambodian children.

Each of our students also published a book about themselves showing photos of their homes, classrooms, hobbies, favourite foods etc. They shared these with the children in Cambodia and left them for the schools to use.

Sometimes just playing with the children and in this way also teaching English. We teach our students to be very repetitive. By using the same phrases over and over in a game we can teach the language of the game.

We also did some eye tests and donated a whole lot of prescription glasses that were donated to us by Spec Savers Maroochydore!

And we filled the storeroom at Oroluos !



Kawana Waters State College (cont.)

Our community project

We raised money in Australia for the community project by selling frozen cordial cups to our primary campus students at the end of the day. That helped us to buy the materials and to hire experienced locals to guide us. Last year we built gardens at Beng Village and Oroluos Schools. We also dug out the swings at Beng Village and installed new ones. Thank goodness the ice-cream man came because we really needed him after all the hard work and sweat!



After a week of school visits, it is hard to say good-bye!



Kawana Waters State College is thrilled to have a formal partnership agreement with Growing Cambodia and the opportunities that partnership creates are invaluable to us.

Our Statement of Purpose:

'We strive to develop lifelong learners who make a positive contribution to a global society.'



High Tea 2024

A second wonderful and successful High Tea was held on 3 February with 60 ladies enjoying a very social and fun afternoon. Other ladies unable to attend also donated to the fundraiser. The event was again organised by Nola Brooks and Vicki Wilkinson (with help from friends) and held at Nola's home. An amazing \$ 5244.84 was raised on the day.

An added highlight this year was The Match Program where doTERRA Healing Hands Foundation matched the amount raised by our wonderful ladies, donating an incredible \$ 5000.00 to our charity. Everyone had the opportunity to meet doTERRA well-being Ambassador Deanne Howard and fellow representative Jen Carroll and learn about their organisation and the great work they do.



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Growing Cambodia are thrilled to have been successful in achieving

[The Match Program](#)
doterrahealinghands.org



High Tea 2024 (cont.)

Thank you, Nola, Vicki and all the ladies that either attended and/or contributed to such a wonderful day and to those who donated food, drinks, raffle prizes and other goods.

Also, a special thank you to Nola's four grandchildren who helped set up and set down on the day - moving chairs and setting up a Gazebo without one huff or grunt. The four also made Loom bands to sell to identify a guest's glass. They then took the empty bottles and cans to the recycle Centre and donated the money raised - a humble \$28.50 but they all understood the importance of being a global citizen.



New Multi-purpose building at Beng

Following on from the generous support from Stephen Giles for the construction of a classroom at Beng a new sponsor has committed funds for the building of a library/computer training/administration building at the same school.

Steven Kastrinakis and his fellow directors from the Independent Pharmacies of Australia group are the incredibly generous sponsors for this project. Construction has already begun with the planned opening for the building being on 6 May. Steven and other company representatives and friends will travel to Cambodia for the opening along with some Growing Cambodia committee members.

Not only has the company itself committed funds but both employees and suppliers are also raising money. These donations will be used to buy computers for the new computer training classroom and a minibus to transport students who live further away. The minibus will also make it safer for students to travel home at night.

It is planned that Beng will become a learning hub for the area and the use of the minibus will allow students from other villages to access these learning facilities.

Thank you, Steven, IPA and its employees and suppliers!



Operational Update

The start of 2024 has seen 31 classes being run at our 4 schools. The total number of students attending the classes at the end of January was 888 – comprising 346 boys and 542 girls.

At Oroluos school Ms Ratha, Ms Rathana, Mr Nin and Ms Veary – a new teacher – run 10 classes for 229 students.

Over at Beng Mrs Samphaos, Mrs Reaksa, Ms Srey Nith and Mr Orn share 9 classes involving 288 students – an increase in numbers from last year.

Mr Samnang and Mr Oudorm continue to run 2 evening classes each at the Kok Beng Primary school. Numbers here have also increased with 146 students normally in attendance.

At Koy Meng the classes are run both during the day and the evening. Ms Chantry, Ms Rany and Mr Chanthorn have 225 children in their 8 classes.

Thank you to our wonderful teachers and happy learning to all the students !

OUR COMMITTEE FOR 2023/2024

Our Committee for the 2023/2024 year is:

Nola Brooks	Vicki Williamson
Nyree Davis	Jen Carroll
Sigrid Tucker	Ash Reed
Warren Davie	Fiona Francis
Jeff Floyd	Lyn Duffy
Pam McAlister (Secretary)	Owen Bentley (Treasurer)
	Steve Davie (Chair)

We also have formed 4 Sub-Committees:

1. **Cambodian Activities** – Chair – Sigrid Tucker - looks after Education, Health and well-being and Visitors and Volunteers. Mel Holden and Tracee-lee Sturgeon from Kawana Waters have also joined this sub-committee. Thank you, Mel and Tracee-Lee, for helping and sharing your expertise in Education.
2. **Communications** – Chair – Warren Davie - looks after the website, Facebook, Instagram, and other communications.
3. **Governance & Risk** – Chair – Pam McAlister – looks after our legal and statutory obligations. Lisa Mainelli has joined this sub-committee to help share the work – thank you Lisa for volunteering your time and sharing your legal expertise.
4. **Finance & Fundraising** – Chair – Owen Bentley – looks after our finance and comes up with fundraising ideas!

Please contact any of our committee members if you would like to become involved!

Other ways you can help

Tertiary Sponsorships – become a Tertiary Patron !

We currently sponsor fifteen students attending various Universities in Cambodia. The number of students has increased this year due to the support of our Tertiary Patrons 2024. The percentage of secondary students going on to obtain University degrees is extremely low in Cambodia mainly due to affordability. You can help a student attend a University and give them an opportunity to obtain qualifications that will help them earn a higher income by becoming a Tertiary Patron. The cost to support a student at university for a Tertiary Patron is \$ 1000 per annum for 3 years. If you are interested, please contact us for further information.

This is the story of one student we are sponsoring this year -Nat is 19 years old. Her house is around 9km away from Beng school and near the lake. Her house is always flooded in the rainy season. She sometimes comes to school by boat with her friends. She has 2 brothers and 2 sisters. Her father is a fisherman. Because of the difficulty of her journey to school, her mother asked her friend to let Nat live with her. Sievhai lives and studies at the house of her mother's friend near Beng village. In the morning, she goes to study at the public school in the morning and come to study English with Ms Sreynit at Beng school in the evening. She has been learning English at Beng school for more than 4 years.

Nat was the only one in her village who graduated from high school last year. Her big ambition was to study at university, but her parents could not afford to pay. Nat decided to apply for sponsorship to study law at university. Nat will move to Siem Reap and rent a small room to live with her friend and find work there and hopefully fulfill her dreams.

"Fill the Bag" Scholarships

You might also like to contribute to a scholarship that allows disadvantaged students to attend a government school. Without this support, these children would not receive any education whatsoever!

The cost to "Fill the Bag" of a student and send them off to school for one year is \$70.00 – this includes the cost of a uniform, a school bag, an exercise book and other stationery.

All donations to Growing Cambodia Inc. are tax deductible.

Our bank details are:

Growing Cambodia Inc

BSB: 633000

Account 150148583

Please then email us at enquiry@growingcambodia.org.au and we will send you a receipt.



"Facilitating a self-sufficient and sustainable quality of life for rural Cambodians"

www.growingcambodia.org.au | enquiry@growingcambodia.org.au |

