President’s Report - 2013

It again gives me pleasure in presenting the President’s report for 2013.

I write this having just returned from a working visit to Kampuchea House. It has been so uplifting to see the ongoing progress the children, staff and of the organisation as a whole.

There are currently 27 children housed at the main site at Sala Kor Koh and a further 8 in the transitional house in Siem Reap, completing further studies. It has been amazing to see just how much the children have developed. Our older children have been achieving extremely pleasing school results, and Sor having just successfully completed his electrical apprenticeship.

I had the opportunity of meeting with several local training schools with the focus of preferred placement of our children. This had very promising outcomes with both Haven and Grace House:

Haven is a training restaurant for vulnerable young adults from orphanages and safe shelters, as well as underprivileged young adults from very rural poor areas. In addition to the work training and the life skills workshops they also take financial responsibility of their trainees and provide them with protected and guided shared housing, meals, medical care and a monthly training allowance.

Grace House delivers vocational training to enable young people to learn skills for employment. Their programs include domestic electrician courses as well as computer studies.

Capital works have seen the completion of perimeter fencing as well and a new and much needed amenities block. This block delivers an additional 8 showers and 8 toilets and went into commission on 3rd November. I also wish to acknowledge the great effort and support of Chris Lane and family. Further to the existing water tanks collecting water from the rooves of each house, Chris designed, funded and project managed the installation of a further 4 tanks, each with 20,000 litre capacity. A most impressive project, and one that increases our sustainability reducing requirement of buying water in the dryer months.

Our Cambodian director – Sour Sokleng (Leng) continues to be a shining light of Kampuchea House. Her leadership and direction, combined with her rapport with the children and staff has been fantastic. The children have a real bond with Leng, and we are most fortunate to have her in this role.

We also appointed Sen Naren (Naren) this year in the position of Orphanage Manager. Naren is the oldest brother of six children, having grown up in the Battambang province.  Previously Naren worked as a social worker with the Friends International Organisation in Siem Reap for six years.  During this time Naren worked in the positions of Child Safe Trainer; Hotline Manager, and Community Case Manager. Naren has the orphanage looking pristine - I was extremely impressed to see the work that has been put in in presenting the buildings and grounds.

Hom and the house mothers also continue to provide a happy and harmonious environment, whom we could not do without.

Once again, my sincere thanks to a very supportive committee:

* Belinda Lightfoot (Vice President)
* Karen Connelly (Secretary)
* Richard Fyffe (Treasurer)
* Libby McCann (Fundraising Secretary)
* Lyn Laister (Media & Comms)
* Jennifer Connelly (Youth Committee)
* Tom Wilkins (General Committee)

I would like to make particular acknowledgement of two of our younger committee members who are not re-electing: Tom Wilkins and Jen Connelly. Both have been an inspiration to the committee.

As many of you are aware, Tom undertook a 660km bike ride back in 2008 in gruelling conditions which not only raised tens of thousands of dollars, but also a broader awareness of Kampuchea House in schools and the greater community alike. Tom has continued to organise more social rides in Cambodia each year, and I wish him well for the upcoming 2013 ride which commences at the end of this month.

Jen continues to head up the Youth Committee with an energising team. The Youth Committee remains a pivotal key in forging ongoing awareness and commitment with younger Kampuchea House supporters, the orphanage and the committee. As always, their functions are a delight to attend and are always a success. Their ongoing enthusiasm brings a great deal of energy to Kampuchea House.

Once again, the financial position of Kampuchea House remains in a strong position. Whist operating income is down slightly from last year, we have also seen a reduction in expenditure. This has enabled to increase our deposits, which now exceed $170,000, putting Kampuchea House in good stead for the year ahead. Thanks to our new Treasurer – Richard Fyffe for his efforts and input this year. Richard has enabled greater financial reporting capability for Kampuchea House. Copies of the accounts that are currently under audit are here available for review.

Thank you to William Buck, who again completed our annual audit on a pro bono basis.

Our Fundraising secretary - Libby McCann and her team continue to put in an awesome effort. The “Little Frankston” Golf Day has become a favourite of the year, as well as golfing in Cambodia and other educational and social initiatives. I would also like to thank the volunteers who tirelessly assist Libby with fundraising efforts, activities and support.

Thank you for your ongoing support to the children of Kampuchea House. It is so rewarding to validate that all of our efforts are making such a difference to the lives and well-being of these young people.

Jason May

President