

OUR WORK IN CAMBODIA

In 2011, Patti Lee, Barbara Seagram and a group of 50 docked in Phnom Penh. We were armed with clothing, pens, notebooks, rulers, sharpeners, toys, pencils, stickers and anything else you can dream of. We had heard about an Ontario resident, Lisa McCoy who was known to have dedicated the last few years to being on the ground in Cambodia for several months per year. Working alongside Lisa is a fabulous Australian volunteer, Pauline Johns. Pauline currently lives in Cambodia, co-ordinating our projects. Other groups had built two schools in Takeo province in Bakot, Prokeab and in the province of Battambang.

At that time, our group and other friends from the Toronto area donated 40 bicycles at a falling-down shack outside Phnom Penh: Banyan Learning Tree School. We went there in a small tuk-tuk along the dusty roads of Phnom Penh and beyond. The bikes were given to mainly children of landmine victims. It was all very uplifting but Patti and Barbara looked at each other and wondered how long this shack would remain standing. We inquired how much it would cost to build a permanent school and found that it would be \$24,000.00. We returned to Toronto determined to build a school. We raised \$40,000.00 that year so we also furnished all three schools and built a library at one of the schools also. Since then, we remain committed to sustaining **FOUR** schools...paying teachers, librarians, paying for costs of electricity etc: Costs per year for sustaining all these projects: \$17,000.00 total. You can see that money goes a long way in this country.

We now have 580 students in our schools. There is a huge need in the remote villages for medical help. Many never see a doctor. We work to make families aware of community resources and transport them to existing clinics. Many do not have a doctor and who cannot travel to one. We try to help them to have:

1. Access to safe water. This is a fundamental human need and a basic human right. In some cases, this may be as simple as teaching them the necessity of boiling water.
2. Access to health care.
3. Education.

Patti and Barbara are excited and optimistic about our projects and hold several fundraisers a year. If you are able to make a donation, we would be so grateful.

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