

## Kidshelp Newsletter 02/2023

Let's start with wishing everyone a slightly belated Happy New Year for 2023 and of course for the New Year of the Rabbit.

January 2023 was an extremely busy month for Kidshelp in Cambodia. At various times between 1<sup>st</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> January, there were up to 7 members visiting from Germany, United Kingdom, Malaysia, and Singapore. Some stayed a few days, some for weeks.

We also welcomed our newest volunteer, Bettina Martens who joined on January 3<sup>rd</sup>. She will stay until end March, when she and Marija Cucuz, who arrived in October 2022, will return to Germany. Both Marija and Bettina have brought new ideas to supplement and support our local teachers. Marija is now working with two of our teachers to recommend how the recently introduced internet can be used to support teaching.

January 7<sup>th</sup> saw the reintroduction of the Annual Graduation Ceremony at our English School, the first in 3 years. It is the time to recognise top students from every grade, recognise outstanding performances, listen to English presentations, enjoy dance and acting and of course for students to enjoy fun games and tombola draws.



*Awards for top students in our English School – Khemara Kidshelp School.  
Teacher Phal Pheaktra and girls from her class performing traditional dance.*

During the visit the members got an unexpected surprise by way of an invitation to join the wedding celebrations of Khemara, our school principal to Ratana, an ICT teacher from Koh Kong province, where he works for a Japanese NGO for inclusive education of children with disabilities. The wedding was celebrated with around 100 guests, including some past pupils, in the grounds of the school on the evening of Tuesday January 17<sup>th</sup>. Congratulations to Khemara and Ratana. All back to school and normality on Wednesday.



*Left: Khemara and Ratana.  
Below: Guests at Khemara and Ratana wedding – Marija Cucuz, Bettina Martens, Elke Giersberg, Beatrix Moder and Nanette Langfeldt*



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In August 2022, Cambodia had welcomed a new United Kingdom Ambassador to Kingdom of Cambodia. Given the strong connections with UK – Kidshelp Cambodia – England is a registered charity in England & Wales and our focus is teaching English language, we felt it would be good to present our aims, achievements, and future plans to the Ambassador. Patrick, Nanette, and Steve were invited to a one-hour meeting at the Embassy on January 11<sup>th</sup>. Whilst the Ambassador, Dominic Williams, explained he was happy to endorse our work and support any local activity, he pointed out that in the immediate term, funds were limited, but putting down a marker and being kept aware of developments could only help in the future.



*Steve Wells, Nanette Langfeldt, Patrick Byron, and Ambassador Dominic Williams during our visit January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023*

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Saturday, January 14<sup>th</sup> Khmer Sight Foundation organised an eye screening at our English School. A team of 8 doctors and nurses from KSF supported by 11 volunteers from Kidshelp, examined the eyes of 169 patients from our village between 08:00 and 12:00. 50 Patients were identified as needing cataract or pterygium surgery. All 50 patients have been invited to attend surgery at the Khmer Sight Foundation Research & Development Centre in Phnom Penh, on February 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>.

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*Some of the 11 Kidshelp volunteers supporting the KSF team.*

On January 8<sup>th</sup> we invited all students to attend the monthly Kidshelp meeting lead by Tharith Hun, who takes care of all of our scholarship students and their accommodation. 31 students attended the lunchtime meeting, and in the evening, the visitors hosted a dinner, attended by 37 students. These two meeting gave opportunity for students to meet and talk to visitors and of course for the visitors, all of whom sponsor at least one student, to ask questions in a more relaxed atmosphere.



*Students attending a meeting to share their needs, concerns, and plans. Following this meeting one of our 4<sup>th</sup> Year Law students Sokhom SreyThom was elected as a new dormitory manager for our big dormitory as the current manager had completed her study and was moving out in August. Our new 2023 scholarship students will all move to the big dormitory as they are all in one friendship group.*

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On afternoon of January 11<sup>th</sup> after the meeting at British Embassy, we were invited to meet the Senior Management Team of DHL Express Cambodia. DHL in both Cambodia and their Corporate HQ in Germany are one of the major Corporate sponsors of Kidshelp through cash donations, supply of recycled laptops but equally important through short term internships and mentoring of students through coaching on interview skills and CV creation




Visiting Kidshelp guests were all invited to meet and management team of DHL Express Cambodia and hear about the experiences of the Kidshelp interns in the DHL Marketing Dept in November 2022.

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During our visit we also managed the installation of new security grids (funded by DHL) to create a new study environment on the top floor of our new girl's dormitory, repaired or replaced around 20 lights in the dormitories and school, replaced waste pipes on 5 hand basins, replaced a bathroom and an external steel door in the old dormitory, replaced door handles and windows in our school and a whole lot more.

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And whilst all the hands-on work was going on, we were contacting members, sponsors, and friends, and at time of writing, we have sponsors for 9 of our scholarship students. The 2023 academic year will start in March, so a few more weeks left to find support for the 1 student who still hopes for a scholarship.

And finally, some late exciting news. The top student at our school in 2022, was unfortunately ill in December when the exams were held, she was not up to successfully completing the exam on the day. She will redo the exams at end of 2023. For this year she has been awarded a 12-month supported Kidshelp/Khmer Sight Foundation internship and will gain work experience at Khmer Sight Foundation. This is the first time that Kidshelp have awarded a scholarship for structured on the job training rather than university study.

We would like to thank you once again for the trust you have placed in us over the past year. Without your help, our work would not have been possible. We hope that we can count on your support in the upcoming year.

Your team from Kidshelp Kambodscha e.V. in Germany, Cambodia and the United Kingdom.

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