



We wanted to say a HUGE Thank you to everyone who donated to the Christmas Gifts appeal last year. All together we raised: £1458.00

Which has been sent to the projects listed to be used to help those most in need.

In January, Sudbury Baptist Church help an 'Auction of Promises', everything from a car valet, meals for 6 people, freshly baked meringues, to classic car drives with afternoon tea were on offer along with many items; over

100 lots all together. The evening was a great success with over £1300 being raised for Cambodia Action and the Bright Futures Project.

We have received our first donation from Give A Car this last quarter. If you have a car that is an MOT failure, or one that you've never got round to fixing up, Give A Car will take it off your hands at no cost to you. the proceeds will come to Cambodia Action once it is sold or scrapped.

If you are interested in organising a Fundraiser with your church or group then please get in touch with Steve Millard: [s.millard@CambodiaAction.org](mailto:s.millard@CambodiaAction.org)

He will be very happy to help with ideas and some



resources that we can send out to you to help with the event.

Throughout the year, if you use inkjet printers then you can send the used cartridges to Recycle 4 Charity ([www.recycle4charity.co.uk](http://www.recycle4charity.co.uk)) and they will give us a donation for each one they receive.

We are very happy to try and attend any events that you are holding so please let us know and we will see if a member of the CA team can join you to give you some up to date information about the work going on in Cambodia.



Cambodia Action, Bawtry Hall, Doncaster, DN10 6JH.  
Tel: 01302 - 714004, Email: [office@CambodiaAction.org](mailto:office@CambodiaAction.org)

Web site: [www.CambodiaAction.org](http://www.CambodiaAction.org)  
Registered as Southeast Asian Outreach Charity No: 293382



# ACTION

Number 164 : Winter 2013



Sowing the seeds of a new tomorrow for Cambodia



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# Cambodia Action

Registered Name:  
Southeast Asian Outreach  
UK Charity Number: 293382

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Cambodia Action is an evangelical inter-denominational mission and development agency, founded in 1973 by Major Taing Chhirc of the Cambodian Evangelical Church. The Object is to promote the Christian faith and relieve poverty and distress among the peoples of Southeast Asia. Work is now solely amongst Cambodians.

Cambodia Action is a member of International Co-operation Cambodia (ICC), Global Connections, the Evangelical Fellowship of Cambodia (EFC) and British NGO's for Development (BOND).

## DONATIONS

We rely on God to meet our needs through gifts. All donations are acknowledged unless otherwise requested. General gifts may be allocated to the greatest need, although donors can indicate a preference. Funds given for a specific appeal will be used for that purpose.

Cheques should be made payable to "Cambodia Action" and sent to the Bawtry Office.

## BANKERS

National Westminster Bank Plc, 23,  
Market Place, Bawtry, Doncaster,  
DN10 6JL, UK.  
Current A/C: 69404054;  
Sort Code: 60-02-50  
A/C name: Cambodia Action

Cambodia Action, Bawtry Hall,  
Bawtry, Doncaster, DN10 6JH  
Tel: 01302-714004; Email:  
office@CambodiaAction.org  
Web site: www.CambodiaAction.org



Cambodia Action is working in partnership in Cambodia with five other missions as part of **International Co-operation Cambodia (ICC)**

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# >> EDITORIAL - New Year, New Faces, New Challenges

Dear Friends

First of all a very Happy New Year to you all!

New Year brings a time of thinking and reflection for many people. Looking back over the previous year and looking forward with expectation to the coming year, it is good to look back and to be able to see God's hand in all that we have experienced in the past year, or more. As we look forward to 2015 and all that this year will bring we can be sure that God is with us in all that will come to pass in the next 12 months.

For us in Cambodia Action, this year is a time of change. Geoff Collett stepped down

as the Executive Director at the end of December, he reflects on his time with Cambodia Action in this magazine.

At the time of writing we have just appointed a new Executive Director - Chris Catlin. He shares a little about himself and his family in this edition.

For many of the team in Cambodia this year will be a time of change as well, Colin Saunders writes about how the changes at Hope School will affect them as a family, and also many others of our team who have children at Hope school in Phnom Penh. Hope School in Siem Reap has also moved to a new campus recently, a move that involved CA members Jez

and Jacqui Heasman, helped by their son Paul!

As we start the New Year, We wanted to take the time to thank all of you who have prayed and supported the team and projects throughout 2014. We are grateful to God for the continuing generosity of his people.



Steve Millard  
Deputy  
Director



Join us this year at GO Fest. Come and learn more about God's mission to the world and how you can play a part in it.

Cambodia Action will be exhibiting in the GO Connect Exhibition tent, so why not come along and say Hello?



Whole Life  
Whole Church  
Whole World

19-21 June 2015  
No Jolly, Bolly  
Discover your place  
in God's mission  
www.gofestival.info



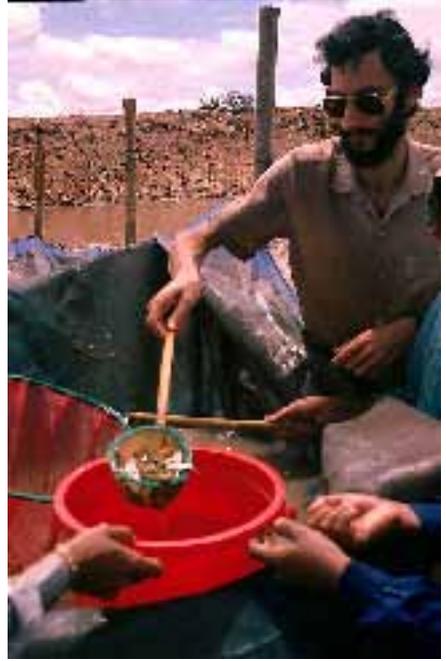
I wonder if any of you can remember what was in the news when you were 13 years old. I remember the BBC News showing a map of Cambodia with arrows depicting the advance of the Khmer Rouge on Phnom Penh as the city filled with refugees and the international community prepared to flee. In 1989 my mother wrote a letter of complaint to our MP, John Major, following the screening of a programme about the indirect support the British Government were giving to the KR by training the soldiers of the coalition they were part of. At the time I was unaware of the significance of these things in my future.

When my wife, Carol and I felt led to explore serving on the mission field overseas we assumed that it would be in South America where I had a head start on the language. However after seeing our details on Christian Vocations, John Heard contacted us as part of a search for the first field team in

Cambodia what was then called SAO.

Within a few months, in late 1991, we were landing on Phnom Penh in a Turbo prop plane that had left Bangkok from a quiet corner of the runway, as diplomatic relations didn't exist with Cambodia. Hard to believe now but we travelled into Phnom Penh, from the airport, in the only car on the road.

The city was semi derelict, the refugees not yet back from the border camps and the infrastructure destroyed. Electricity was sporadic and water a muddy trickle. Bridges had been destroyed and apart from two in the city centre, the roads were unsurfaced. Foreigners had just been allowed to move out of the hotels and rent houses and we moved into SAO's team house.



Geoff and the first Tilapia fingerlings

Carol and Anna, our 9 year old daughter learnt to travel the city in a cyclo and I rode a motorbike for the first time and before helmets were available.

The plans were to establish two projects, one working in eye health care, refurbishing the facilities in the near empty city hospitals and performing eye surgery procedures, the other to improve food security

through an aquaculture development project. I was jointly responsible for the latter and after a construction project to build the first fish breeding ponds, we took delivery of our first fish fingerlings from Thailand. From these and other stock were to come all the fish which we used to supply village level aquaculture facilities. The project continues as a local NGO, called Farmer Livelihood development to the present day.



UN Soldiers defend their HQ

Carol ran the first British curriculum school with four students from the SAO team. The expat community was small in those days with only a few hundred foreigners in the country.

Living in Cambodia was a bit like living in the Wild West as guns were ubiquitous and the population, traumatised by years of violence under the Khmer Rouge and then the Vietnamese occupation, solved many arguments by using them. It was commonplace to

have gunfire echoing around the streets and

*Through your sacrifices there are more Cambodians in the Kingdom of God!*

unsettling to listen to heavy machine guns and military vehicles at night by the light of a flickering candle. It helped that we were sure we were where God wanted us to be and we had an excellent opportunity to learn to trust Him.

Progress with the project work was painfully slow. Most of the intellectuals were murdered by the

KR and no education had taken place since then so the nationals found it difficult to engage with the task we had at hand. We were grateful of our supporters' prayers as we travelled in mined areas, with the civil war between the KR and the Government continuing sporadically despite the signing of the Peace Accords. It was sad to see the victims of the conflict coming into the unequipped hospitals where the only real option to treat injuries was amputation.

We returned to the UK in 1993 leaving behind many Cambodian friends who we hated to leave in such circumstances.





The derelict city

I was able to re-join the mission in 1997 as a Trustee and returned to the country on regular visits to help guide the work and support the team. I eventually left my job in Environmental research to become the Director in 2003 after SAO had joined the ICC partnership.

The 11 years since then included the name change to Cambodia Action and our involvement in a wide range of project work opened up to us by the expertise that exists within the ICC partnership.

The country itself is transformed to become virtually unrecognisable from the place my family knew when we were living

there. The Phnom Penh skyline and gridlocked roads are worlds away from the time when the Wats (temples) were the tallest buildings and cyclos and push bikes ruled the roads. The lot of the average Cambodian has improved immensely an indication of this is the average life expectancy moving from 40 years old in 1980 to around 65 in 2012. Now there are over 25,000 expats in Phnom Penh alone and a whole business sector exists to serve their preferences. The urban Khmers are increasingly international in their habits and the gulf between their lives and the rural Cambodian is widening.

It is a joy to have seen the growth of the national

church from the couple of thousand that met under the suspicious eyes of the communist authorities. With around two hundred thousand Christians and two thousand churches, God's kingdom has grown miraculously. To see the commitment many in the national church have to serve the poor and know that it grew from the model that the foreign Christians set in their holistic ministry is also a personal reward.

So, after eleven years it is time to make changes and I set down the Executive Director role at the end of 2014, reverting to being a trustee. As we thank God for all that He has done through us over the last decade then let us all pray that the new incumbent of the post will be empowered and guided to lead the mission into the new things that God will have for us.

My thanks go to all who have supported, served on the field, overseen me, funded and prayed for SAO/CA during my tenure. As a Cambodian said to me recently, through your sacrifices there are more Cambodians in the Kingdom of God. 🇰🇲

**A BIG welcome**  
to our New Executive  
Director - Chris Catlin.

to South Africa.  
It was in my new country  
that I got saved at a very  
young age, met my wife

poor and seen miracles as  
the Kingdom of God broke  
through time and time  
again, in power and deed.



**Chris, Susannah and Richard Catlin**

Chris started work with  
Cambodia Action on  
the 2nd February, so is  
spending a bit of time  
getting used to how things  
work and who is who  
in the organisation. We  
wanted to introduce him,  
so here are his first words  
for you:

Christopher, Susannah  
and Richard, make up  
the small Catlin tribe  
that now live in Sutton, a  
South London Borough.  
I, (Chris) was born in this  
city and immigrated in the  
early 70's with my family

and received a call to  
make a lasting difference  
in some of the poorest  
countries on the planet.

In 2010 we saw the  
close of decades of  
work that both my wife  
Susannah and I had  
birthed, spearheaded  
and grown across the  
Southern African regions.  
Mozambique, a country  
with a very painful past  
was our main stomping  
ground. We had planted  
churches, preached the  
gospel, survived floods;  
helped the poorest of the

During that closure, the  
Lord had prepared my  
heart for the new chapter  
of our lives; the call back  
to the country of my birth.  
Our move was made in  
stages, firstly my son,  
to set him up in school.  
Susannah followed suit,  
who set up home and  
joined a charity as their  
legal advisor. I brought  
up the rear, happy to be in  
the country that God was  
calling me to.

On discovering the  
ministry of Cambodia  
Action, I felt two things:

Firstly, this is the  
placement of the Lord for  
me.

Secondly, catching that  
heart for the poor that the  
Lord has.

Cambodia Action has this  
heart and I look forward  
to see what is ahead, as I  
seek to serve with passion  
and honesty. Bless you all.  
Chris Catlin.

## >> Moving HOPE - The Saunders family.



**Colin and Rachel with Phoebe, Jamie, Ewan and Lucia.**

Since we came to Cambodia and started working at HOPE International School in August 2009 to serve Mission families here, HOPE has been looking for a long term or permanent home. It was with great excitement that the announcement was made last summer that HOPE would have a new home early in 2015.

As this news sunk in we started to consider the impact it will have on our family and other

families within the HOPE Community. I thought it would be helpful to give you a clearer understanding of this and so I'll describe it from the perspective of our family.

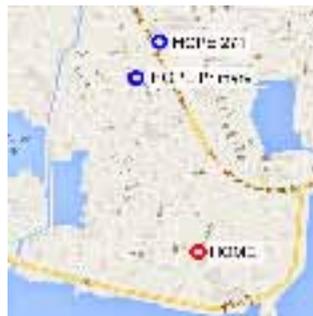
To set the scene I'll explain our current situation. We live within 10 minutes of HOPE South (Primary)

and HOPE 271 (Secondary). It's a short tuk tuk or moto ride in the morning / afternoon to get to and from school. That will all change on March 2nd. The maps show the relative positions of HOPE South, HOPE 271, HOPE North and our house. From

March, Phoebe, Jamie & Colin will face a much longer journey to school. Colin was very happy when the routes of school buses to HOPE North were announced recently with

start point of route A just 5 minutes walk from our house. However, Phoebe & Jamie were not so happy with the 06:50 start

time (they usually get on





a tuk tuk at 07:30-ish). And that means Ewan & Lucia will have an earlier start too, leaving home about the same time to go into HOPE Primary with Rachel for her 07:00 start.

Our school day routine will start about an hour earlier and it will finish an hour later too. Also, we will no longer need to employ our regular tuk tuk driver, Sron, to take us to school. He has worked for us since we came in 2009 and it will be sad to let him go.

Last year we renewed the contract on our current house until June 2015 so that we would have a few months

to see if the commute from here to HOPE North was manageable. However, there is a lot more traffic in Phnom Penh now and with a 1 hr bus journey each way we have decided that we will move to be near the new school at the end of this school year.

We don't know if our faithful house-helper, Sambadt, will want to work for us in a new area. This could be another big change for us.

After the logistical challenges of the next 6 months, there will be the upheaval of moving house. We have a lovely house at the moment so that's going to be hard. We've lived here for 3 years so we know & like the area and feel at home here. Moving to a part of town we've never actually been to before will be a challenge with many unknowns. What will it be like? Where will

our kids friends live? Will we feel safe?

However, despite the challenges ahead and looking past them to a new normal we ARE all very excited about the new home for HOPE which will bring huge benefits to the students and staff alike.

Please pray for us as a family, and all the other students, families and staff, as we all go through this big transition together so that we can continue to support the work God is doing in Cambodia.

Many of our Cambodia Action team are either working at Hope School or have children who attend the school, so the impact of this move is being felt by lots of the team.

Please also pray for the practicalities of finishing the first phase of the Building Project for opening day which is less than 2 months away.

Blessings Colin, Rachel, Phoebe, Jamie, Ewan & Lucia.



Bob Dixon, deputy chair of the CA trustees reports on his recent visit to Cambodia.

I was pleased to represent the trustees at the Cambodia Action Team Day in Phnom Penh last November. We met at Hope Primary School, a last minute change of

venue. Hope School was well represented, not only through Colin and Rachel, but also Mark and Jane Prothero, Mark Rye and Heather and Phalla Korm.

Steve Millard opened our devotions on the theme, 'Thus far the Lord has helped us', from 1 Samuel 7, referring to the Ebenezer (stone of help). Phalla Korm led our worship on guitar.

This was Geoff Collett's last team meeting as Executive Director – though we are pleased that he has agreed to become a trustee. Many tributes were made to



**Some of the CA Team discussions**

Geoff in gratitude for his seven years recruiting and supporting members and at least one member could recall Geoff and Carole from their time living in Cambodia, beginning in 1991.

Colin Saunders shared his experience in completing a UK tax form and Geoff updated members on his latest reading of the tax situation as well as other UK-related matters such as NHS entitlement and eligibility for higher education of children of members as UK nationals rather than 'overseas' applicants with much higher fees!

A final group photo of some of the team with Geoff was taken for the records, though the Heasmans and Herjantos weren't able to join us.

Earlier that week, Steve Millard, as our Deputy ED, had represented us at the Board meeting of International Cooperation Cambodia, with David Adams, our chairman, observing. ICC is the organisation through which some of our work is delivered in Cambodia.

Meanwhile I spent time with Sarah Chhin and staff of

M'lup Russey, preparing for a visit next April to evaluate the present three-year phase of the programme. Loosely translated as 'the shade of the Bamboo tree', the programme aims to encourage family- or community-based care for vulnerable children and young people. Often 'orphans' in Cambodia are in reality poor children with one or more living parents who believe their children will be better looked after and educated in an orphanage. Cambodian government policy is to discourage and even close orphanages, many of which are opened and/or funded by well-meaning westerners.

I also managed, with Sue, my wife, to catch up with Linda Turner, a UK Public Health specialist who has taken time out of her job to volunteer to work for a couple of months with our PARCE project (Poverty Alleviation through Rural Community Empowerment) to understand why project beneficiaries continue to prioritise health as an important issue.

The project is based in Preah Sdach District, Prey Veng Province, south of Phnom



**Team Photo**

Penh near the Vietnam border.

I had met Linda in Manchester before her trip to help orientate her. I first visited this project in 2008 to give some training in monitoring and evaluation, and again briefly with Sue in 2011. My particular memory of the project was of listening to beautiful devotional Khmer songs with the project staff as we sat cross-legged on the floor! Some staff are Christians and they can be a witness to their colleagues.

Our time in Phnom Penh was the end of a journey starting in Thailand as we travelled by road into Laos with other directors and trustees on an exploratory visit.

[More on this in the next Action Magazine!]

We broke our journey by road from Laos to Phnom Penh to call on an OMF missionary family from our own church living in Stung Treng, north-east Cambodia. The nine hour minibus journey to Phnom Penh cost a little less than that of a taxi from our home in Sheffield to the station! It was rather less comfortable however, as a result of the damage caused to Cambodia's roads by the many logging lorries.

Please pray for the safety of our team members and their families as they travel on Cambodia's dangerous roads, not least those in Phnom Penh.