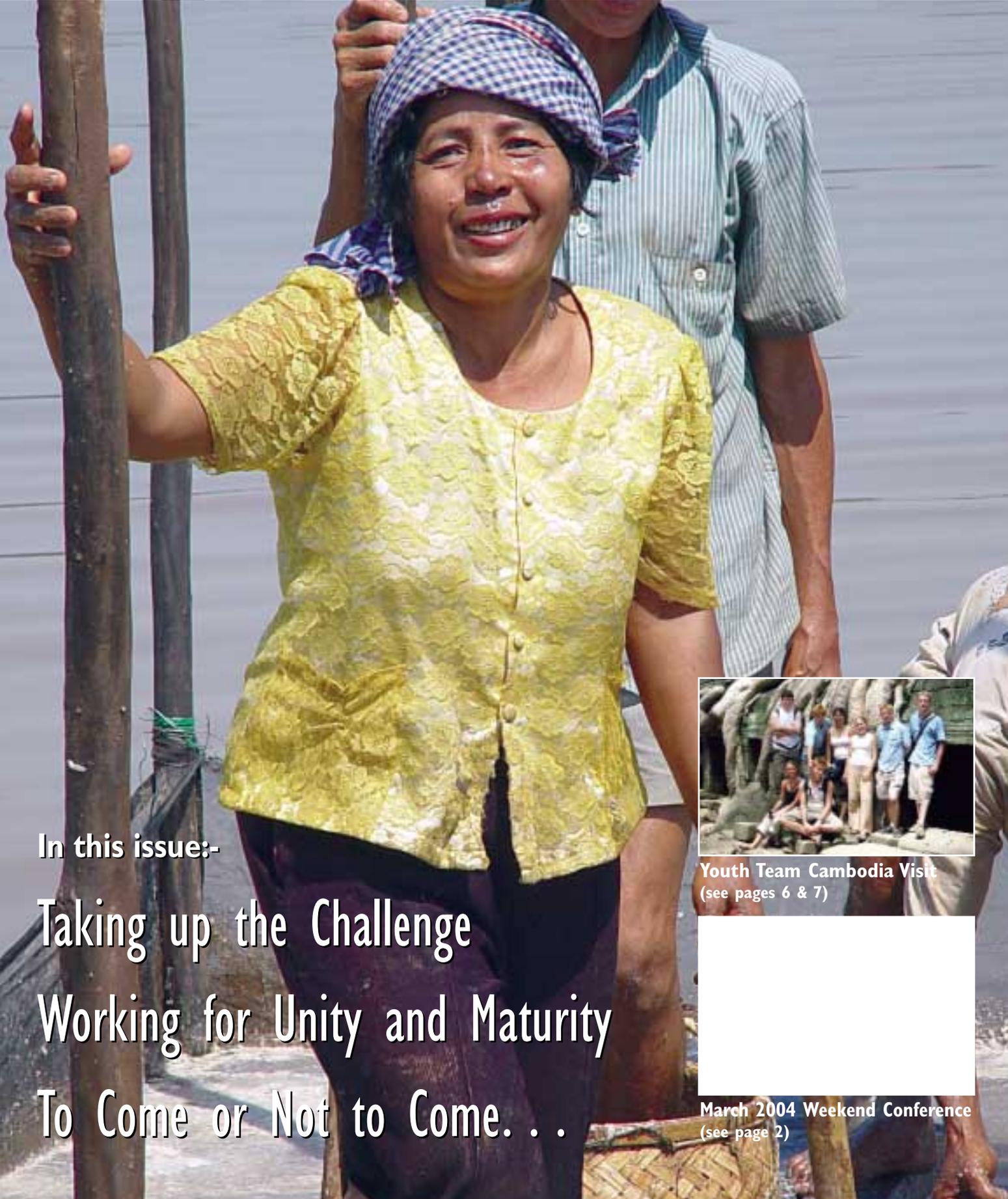


VISION

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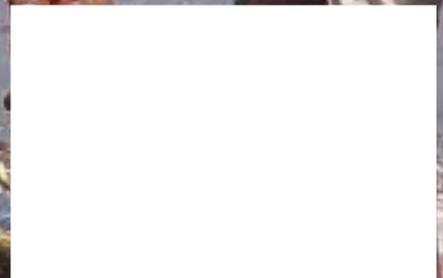
Taking up the Challenge

Working for Unity and Maturity

To Come or Not to Come. . .



Youth Team Cambodia Visit
(see pages 6 & 7)



March 2004 Weekend Conference
(see page 2)

SAO Cambodia

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UK Charity Number: 293382

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GENERAL INFORMATION

SAO Cambodia 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.

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

VISION for Cambodia: Winter, Spring, Summer and Autumn. News for Praise and Prayer is issued with VISION magazine

DONATIONS

We rely on God to meet our needs through gifts from Churches, individual supporters and funding agencies and events. 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.

We invite individual donors who pay UK tax to complete a Gift Aid Declaration Form (obtainable from the Bawtry Office). This will enable us to claim back from the Inland Revenue tax already paid (currently 28% of the gift). Cheques should be made payable to "SAO Cambodia" and sent to the Bawtry Office.

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SAO Cambodia is working in partnership in Cambodia
with four other missions as part of
International Co-operation Cambodia (ICC)

Editorial:

Although, God willing, I hope to continue making a contribution, this VISION is the last issue for which I take editorial responsibility. It is a role I have held since 1985 with only one break, an issue in 1992 when I had an extended stay in Cambodia.

Much has happened in these years and those who have received VISION over this period will have followed many exciting developments, the most encouraging being that many have met with the Lord Jesus. It has been quite an experience to have watched progress!



John Heard

A Visit to Britain, May 2003

London, Landscape, Beauty

Pastor TITYING

When sun nearly down,
On way to London town,
Beautiful landscape,
Crowded tourists

Good roads, houses
Flower garden, good smell,
What I see makes my heart ache,
I think of war and poverty.

Beautiful landscape, trees, gardens, flowers,
Birds on water, land, air, mix of colour
Created by GOD.
Good talk, good welcome,

My heart in debt, can't forget.
When I leave,
My heart says "miss, miss, miss you".
Please God, we will meet again.

Not more initials!

Income Generation Programme (IGP) becomes Skills Promotion for Poverty Alleviation (SPPA).

Managed by Hery Heryanto, one of the SAO team working within the ICC partnership in Cambodia, the name change brings a sharper focus on the project's strategic micro-enterprise development among the rural poor.

Front Cover Main Photo: courtesy Nigel Goddard

Weekend Conference March 19th to 21st 2004

Mission Ahead

You are warmly invited to join our **Weekend Conference, Mission Ahead**, Friday March 19th to Sunday 21st 2004, at the Wycliffe Centre, High Wycombe. Registration from 5 pm on Friday and close after lunch on Sunday. Cost from £80. Please book with the SAO office at Bawtry.

Our Bible speaker will be **Peter Lewis**, Pastor of the Cornerstone Church in Nottingham. Peter will be sharing a message on "The Unequalled Christ".



Peter Lewis

Meet **Geoff Collett** our new Executive Director now in overall charge of all mission affairs. Geoff was part of the SAO team that pioneered our work in Cambodia in 1991 and for the last few years has sat on the SAO Council. There will be opportunities to hear and

respond to new SAO initiatives including youth team visits.



Geoff Collett

Meet **Jez and Jacqui Heasman** who will share about their work with minority tribal groups in north east Cambodia. They hail from Gosport in the south of England and were commissioned to serve by Jacob's Well Pentecostal Church where they were both part of the pastoral team until they left for Cambodia in January 2002. They have engineering and computer backgrounds.



Jez and Jacqui

Meet **Hery and Susie Heryanto**. They arrived in Cambodia in 2001 and were sent by the Navigators of Indonesia. Through their project, Skills Promotion for Poverty Alleviation (SPPA), they work to help the village poor have a reasonable and regular income and a better standard of living,. Outside working hours Hery is involved in local church ministry and a discipleship Bible study. Susie takes children's meetings and trains Sunday School Teachers.



Hery and Susie

During the conference we will conduct a **Live Telephone Link** to Cambodia to give you an opportunity to quiz a team member. Come prepared with questions you would like to ask. 🍷

Opportunities to raise your mission awareness

Jez & Jacqui Heasman will be speaking in the UK from 29th March - 22nd April and **Hery & Susie Heryanto** from March 16th till April 6th. Both the Heasmans and the Heryantos have vacant slots in their schedules. If you would like them to speak to members of your fellowship, group of **friends, school or business** colleagues then please contact the SAO office. Read about them in the March Conference details, above.

Geoff Collett is also available to speak at functions too on issues such as **Partnership in Mission, Young People or Third Agers in Mission, the Work and projects of SAO, Working in a Buddhist environment**, to large groups or small. Contact Geoff on 01480 395726 or email him on g.collett@sao-cambodia.org 🍷

Past Members

A search has been carried out of memories and records over 30 years since we were formed in 1973 and, where contact addresses have been identified, a letter has been sent to everyone who has served with us in some capacity, be it team or Council, short or long term, consultancy or strategic support.

The letter invites everyone to our Conference at the Wycliffe Centre March 19th to 21st 2004. Please forgive us if you have not received this letter but have served SAO in such a way. We would love to hear from you and would love you to join us! 🍷

Taking up the Challenge

It was with real excitement, not a little trepidation and a lot of prayer, that I took up the post of Executive Director at the beginning of September. I have been involved with SAO Cambodia now since 1991, so I am well aware of the challenges to come. Twelve years ago my wife Carol, daughter Anna and I landed at Pochentong airport, Phnom Penh, to be driven into town by the only car on a road mainly frequented by pushbikes, cyclos and motorbikes.



'The First Fish for SCALE (1992)'

We lived in a house shared with other team members, endured frequent power cuts, at times collected rainwater to drink, bought ice to keep our food cool, cooked on charcoal and went to bed to the sound of gun fire and tank engines. Carol's school of four children was the only one in Cambodia with a British curriculum and was convened in a room built on the side of our house. I was kept busy co-directing the SCALE fish project and leading the team for five months as well, before, after twenty hard months, we returned to our jobs in the UK.

During my family's stay in Phnom Penh we made lasting friends amongst the Cambodians we met. For example, the two Khmer Christians Marie and Sinau, who ably looked after us. Many of you know Marie Barnett's story as she is now resident in the UK. Sinau, our longest serving employee, has cared for many SAO team members over the past eleven years, looking after us, our homes and providing food faithfully and with a true servant heart. It will fall to me to represent SAO at her retirement from this service this November.

Marie and Sinau remind me that the work of SAO is not judged in terms of projects completed or objectives achieved, but in terms of how we have served God in our calling, the relationships built, the people brought into or nearer the Kingdom of God, the lives spiritually changed and the physical circumstances improved.

Of course our projects form a vital backbone to support these desired ends as well as a means to achieve them. Without the professionally run development activities we

would have no credibility in Cambodia and no reason in the Government's eyes to be there.

The Cambodia that I visit in November will have many differences from the one I left a decade ago. The development of Phnom Penh has raced ahead, infrastructure and utilities are vastly improved, there are traffic jams, traffic lights and traffic police, you can shop at supermarkets, worship at any number of different churches, go bowling and sun yourself on the beach. But many things are still the same; the desperate inequality between some in the city and the rest, particularly in the countryside, injustice, exploitation of the weak and the spiritual emptiness of many. We will continue to address all these areas, in God's strength, as we continue to serve the Cambodian people.

The verse we had on our wall in Phnom Penh back in 1992 still seems to have relevance to me: *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your paths straight.* PROVERBS 3:5,6. 🍀

*power cuts, ice,
charcoal... gun fire
and tanks.*



'The children of Cambodia'

The Future

Over the next few years, with God's grace and guidance, I hope to lead SAO Cambodia forward into new ways of supporting the Khmer church in their mission to reach out to their neighbours and to help all Cambodians improve their lot spiritually, physically and socially.

For the furtherance of God's kingdom in Cambodia, we in the UK will be seeking to serve:-

- **the Church** in both Cambodia and UK, facilitating partnerships and involvement in mission,
- **the disadvantaged people** of Cambodia, through the support of our development projects
- **yourselves** as SAO supporters, again by providing you with resources for informed prayer and support
- and our own **SAO staff** within ICC, with pastoral, liaison and administrative help.

So you see we will be very busy and look forward to your involvement and help.

Short Term Programmes

Trends in recent years in the UK have shown a growth in volunteers offering their services for **short periods** at various stages of their lives. The numbers of volunteers derived from GAP year students, post grad students and early retirees has grown rapidly at the expense of the numbers of those willing to commit to long term work of more than four years. Other short term groups also exist, such as those taking career breaks, or those between jobs who are often exploring a calling to mission. Some short term assignments can be in the order of a month or two or up to a couple of years. The different age groups and categories have very different characteristics and there are benefits and drawbacks for each.

The drawbacks are that short-termers rarely have time to acquire sufficient language skills or understand the culture. They require time and effort to orient into the ways of the country and a significant proportion of their stay can be soaked up in this unproductive stage. The impact for long term development projects can be questionable and project staff are often too busy to help.

But the benefits far outweigh the drawbacks. Over the years SAO has benefited enormously from the involvement of short termers. For example, the civil engineers who performed crucial service in the SCALE project were only around for six months at a time and indeed I myself was a short termer too.

Why do STP?

- to raise the awareness of Cambodia and our own work to promote the Christian faith and relieve poverty and distress amongst Cambodian people.
- to assist churches to be involved in Mission.
- to encourage our support network to increase prayer, practical and financial support.
- to address the issues of skilled staff recruitment for long term project commitment.
- to promote a mutual approach to mission work, believing that the Cambodian Church has something to offer in building God's Kingdom around the world.
- to play a part in the development of individuals' spiritual lives and to allow them to broaden their Christian experience and test a calling to Mission work.
- to build Cambodian self esteem and a sense of country value in the world community
- to provide an outlet for Cambodians to give in gratitude for what has been given
- to provide an opportunity for Cambodian Christians to share their experience for the benefit of others.

turn the page for STP in action

Youth Team Cambodia



'The Team'

Geoff Collett

In the context of our short term strategy SAO sent out two GAP year students in June for six weeks with a team of six more young people joining for the last three weeks in July. The group was led by myself and Tim Williamson, the assistant pastor of Godmanchester Baptist Church.

Our practical project was at a local

OBJECTIVES:

- Meet Cambodian Christians
- Find out about Mission life
- Find out about ICC/SAO work
- Help build God's Kingdom
- Do a useful project
- Grow spiritually
- Broaden our experience
- Have a good time!

A life changing experience

Sitting on the plane it finally kicked in that I would spend the next two months in Cambodia as part of my GAP year. I didn't know that what awaited me was a life changing experience! For the first month Murray Greer and I worked with the FAITH project setting up and cataloguing a library and then training a Khmer staff member. We also did English teaching, a daunting task as I had only recently left school myself. I enjoyed the work and got to know ordinary Khmer people, making some great friends. What struck me most was how

school running workshops in learning through physical activities (one of our group was a new teacher) and to build play equipment. As always, things didn't go quite to plan and we arrived to find that the school was to be used as a polling station. Despite not having access for half the time, everyone worked hard and we finished on target with time to visit SAO/ICC projects, sightsee and relax on the beach.

much Cambodia must have changed over the past ten years or so, especially in the cities. We were lucky enough to have a three day trip to villages in Svay Rieng province with the FAITH team. The true level of poverty really struck me, seeing kids whose families were struggling to feed, let alone clothe them. It was great to see FAITH's work.

God really worked in my life helping me to realise how much I need to rely on Him. My eyes were opened as to how blessed we are compared to those in the developing world.

Geoff Sare

Murray Greer's emails

It seems really strange but I actually and 10 pm. I think my body is in shock getting up at 6 am causes the most. We start teaching English at the 10 am. We teach the teachers so the teachers as "Sir!" It's tough going as some the alphabet is the starting point. A female tells us she is single and glad. Out in the village is a real experience 1/2 hours on those roads, giving my so tight. We travel to many villages eat lots of rice and they worry about rice is hard to swallow after a while. We mix with local Christians and people to my dismay they prefer volleyball teacher - and struggle to understand drops when we explain we can't speak

Tuol Sleng Visit

Some of the terrible things that took place at the infamous S-21 prison in Phnom Penh, other

Probably because it has been left almost intact and sounded. Countless pictures of prisoners' faces myself becoming drawn to study every face. The survivors provide a harrowing insight into the through, out into the courtyard.

Perhaps the most intriguing room is the one served under the Khmer Rouge. Many experienced unaware of the suffering inflicted. Indeed, caught up trying to survive by joining the party, sadness and distress towards the oppres



Visit Summer 2003

lly go to bed each night between 9
ock with the early nights although
trauma.
cal primary school from 8 till 9
bles are turned and they address me
haven't got much English and so
When we ask for introductions one
ives Geoff and I a worrying look!
ence. It's tough travelling for 5
muscles a good workout, holding on
s and meet many village chiefs. We
ut us not eating enough, but dry
le.
ay sports at the Bible School, but
to football. We meet the head
d his broken English. His face
k Khmer!

e during the Khmer Rouge regime in the late 70's are brought home at the
erwise known as Tuol Sleng.

ntact, I need little imagination to picture how the compound looked and
faces line the walls, yet instead of becoming numbed by the repetition I find
e. The detailed yet almost cartoon-like images painted by one of the few
o the horrific murders. I cannot bring myself to look at them all but pass

ne displaying photos and biographies of victims and generals who survived or
ress intense bitterness, sadness and hatred, while some perpetrators seem almost
while few took direct responsibility for events, many claimed to have been
movement. A book chronicles the thoughts and feelings of visitors, expressing
ressed and disgust, anger and hatred towards



'The play equipment under construction'



'The Finished Article in use'

Extracts from the team diary

Another early start for breakfast of orange juice, fruit, bread and scintillating conversation! After sticking my head in the bucket for a shower, I'm ready for church. We pile into the Land Cruiser for another exhibition of Khmer driving from Geoff. We arrive at Church and Geoff proves the importance of cultural orientation by sitting on the female side. Are you sure you've been to Cambodia before? Then back home for yet another shower...

In the evening everyone gathers in our air-conditioned room (only us girls have an air-con unit) to discuss plans for the playground equipment. This raises arguments over the distance between monkey bars! With all the plans sorted it is an early night, which makes a change...

Travel in style to the village in our new mode of transport - a minibus. Enjoy the space until we pick up two Cambodians at the FAITH office; no need to wear a seatbelt wedged between them. The village is very different to Phnom Penh, with wooden huts and boreholes for water, as I imagined Cambodia to be. As we admire the wooden church, word goes around we are to perform and a crowd gathers. We entertain by teaching the children choruses with actions. Not only are the Khmer Christians more holy than us with a church service every evening but they also out do us singing an English song...

What is more challenging however is to think of how Jesus' cross was enough to forgive even such sins as these. Of course we know we are sinners yet the temptation remains to imagine we are not as bad as all that. And yet there is no scale of sinning with God.

ROMANS 3: 22B-24 tells us *"...there is no distinction, for all have sinned and fall short of the Glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."*

What unbelievable forgiveness and what a reminder of God's amazing commitment to us all.

Lewis Green

Working for Unity and Maturity in th

The Evangelical Fellowship of Cambodia (EFC)

Encouraging wise and appropriate strategies and service together

Brian Maher

Is a forester and arborist from America who first came to Cambodia in 1990 and 1992 to work with Cambodian young people. He caught a vision for Cambodian young people and moved his family to Phnom Penh in 1994 to set up a Youth Ministry under CSS with the help of Harry Zuberbuhler and Uon Seila of YWAM. The Youth Commission is now operating under EFC and will run its 9th National Youth Leaders Camp in April of 2004

In considering 'missions' in Cambodia, one essential feature is learning how to work alongside, value and respect the National Church. Failure to do so risks being categorised as 'great white saviours' with 'top down' funds, strategies, education and answers. I have been in Cambodia for over 10 years and have seen, very generally speaking, two basic types of thinking toward the church by foreign missions.

The first and most difficult one is squatting down and serving. This may mean starting in the kitchen

washing dishes, doing little things that may seem a waste of time or beneath one's dignity. It is often a long process before one can win the right to be taken seriously. Some turn back at the first discouragement with feelings of being left out and de-valued. Those who persevere are more than likely, sooner or later, to be recognised. There is a weariness in the trudging along, that's for sure, but the results are worth waiting for.

The other approach is when missions set up shop, as many have done over these last few years, and immediately conclude that the national church is not easy to work with. They learn the language and start their own church planting and/or hire 'instant' Cambodian church planters. This way, the process appears quicker and easier, with seemingly less problems. But the reality is somewhat different and the sustainable nature of the work risks being poor.

It takes a long time to be taken seriously

However, examples of missionaries working well with the Church are increasing. One model to be grateful for is the EFC, one of the five umbrella organisations which represent evangelical Christianity to the Government.

It was in March 1994 that the World Evangelical Fellowship (WEF) representatives set up a meeting in Thailand for Cambodian church leaders to clarify issues concerning national fellowships. Dr. Sandararaj of the Evangelical Fellowship of Asia (EFA) and Dr June Vencer of WEF held a two day seminar which laid the ground for EFC creation. A steering committee was formed to begin putting together a framework for what would eventually be the EFC Constitution and By Laws.

I have had the privilege to see the conception, birth and growth of the EFC. Today the EFC is the largest of five councils which represent the church before the Government and makes it an aim to bring unity to the church at large.

Recently I found myself sitting in a hotel meeting with the EFC board. The larger part of the board consisted of Cambodian church leaders both young and old. But expatriates were also present, consisting of two Americans, Steve Westergren and myself, Milet Goddard a Filipino working with SAO/ICC, Philip Scott an Englishman from YWAM, and the Rev. Mok Wai Mung, a Malaysian from Singapore and Prefect of Cambodia's Anglican Church in Phnom Penh. We met from 8 am to 9 pm for four days straight.

During the meetings I looked around the room at the Cambodians. I knew much of their history and their personal conflicts.



Brian Maher at a church seminar

e Cambodian Church

I knew of the hurts they had received at the hands of foreign missionaries. I understood the cultural dynamics between the three levels of Cambodian leaders: a) those who had had an uninterrupted education and received their high school diploma before 1975, b) those who had never got past the eighth grade and c) those now coming up through the ranks with weak secondary school education, some with Bible School training.

I also knew the tensions between Cambodian pastors resettled overseas from the border camps in the early eighties and who returned in the nineties with theological qualifications. Lastly I was aware of the issues between those who were trapped in the camps for many years and those who considered themselves true patriots for remaining behind in Cambodia.

Another thing I noticed was that there was a foreign woman on the Board and a Cambodian woman facilitating the meeting. The level of dynamics in that room was enough to keep a truck load of sociologists going for years. I want you to know that I was witnessing a real miracle. Not too many years prior, such meetings would not usually see a woman, other than Samoeun Intal of FEBC, be a part of the board,

I was witnessing a real miracle

a chance to learn from Cambodian Christians

certainly not facilitating the meeting.

Former EFC Board meetings usually decided on which churches or organisations could become members and how to put out fires between the Christian community and the government. But

over the last few years the EFC has been well on the way to becoming proactive rather than reactive, and is now in the process of finalising a master strategic plan.

We have a constitution with a Vision and Mission Statement. We have core values and an organisational chart. We have commissions, departments and task forces which partner with all our member organisations, both expatriate and Cambodian. Cambodians are trying to put conflict and bitterness behind, the old are letting the young have a voice and EFC is moving closer towards gender balance.

I have learnt much about how God can change people seeing them working together in spite of past history, external dynamics, inter-cultural problems, age, gender and national barriers. Cambodian pastors now talk about wisdom, patience, forgiveness and how not to rejoice too much in successes but rather in the fact that our Father in heaven loves us.



Young people at an EFC Youth Commission conference

Difficult issues are placed on the table for discussion that would normally have created a heated and tense atmosphere, inciting unkind words. In the past, Board members would have taken sides but now restraint and patience are the victors. Ephesians 4 says that it takes biblical unity to bring maturity and it has been a privilege to see this happening, but not only that, it is a chance to listen and learn from Cambodian Christians. They have humbled themselves to serve the body as a whole and are a great example to me.

Please pray for the EFC. And please thank God for their work in bringing church unity and maturity and for those whose efforts kept it going in the midst of conflict. ❤️

Working with EFC

After completion of further language study, SAO Cambodia's Graham Symons will be taking a post with EFC in capacity building and training for their financial systems. Graham has been an SAO member in Cambodia, now seconded through ICC, since 1998. Married to Deth, they have a 6 month old son, Matthew.

Milet Goddard, who joined SAO in 1993, has been working within EFC for the last three years with the FAITH project, alongside churches in grass roots community development in poor villages. Milet is married to Nigel and they have two children, Sean 5 and Jasmine 3.

Time to relax at a youth conference



To Come or Not to Come, that is the Question

Gerald and Maureen Harley

Gerald and Maureen Harley, from the South Island New Zealand, spent the last 3 years teaching and nursing in a small rural area in Central Otago. Prior to that they had 3½ years with INF in Nepal where Gerald was principal of a mission school and Maureen trained nurses to work in a new intensive care unit.. They had hoped to return but were refused visas. Their official title in ICC is Pastoral Care couple which is a new position started in July.

Some stark facts: Cambodia has 6 million people under 19, over half the total population, many living on the streets. Kids are trafficked to serve the sex trade in Thailand and Vietnam and many die of Aids. The rural poor go into debt to buy rice to survive. The urban poor are moved from their makeshift dwellings to make poverty less evident.

Doesn't it make your heart bleed? Don't you look at your life and think "Could I help? There must be some way I could be part of the solution." Do you sense the call of God to serve these people?

We would say "**come!**". But **come** knowing. **Come** prepared.

Come only in God's will and timing.

Come knowing yourself. Know that the very things you want hidden will dog your efforts. Know that the one you love most will bear the brunt of your bad days. Know that the lows seem to last longer than the highs, that the very things you most need, be it a good book, or enough exercise, marmite or fish and chips will be difficult to get and assume importance beyond their value.

Come knowing your limitations. You won't of course. They will be revealed as you



Maureen & Gerald Harley

struggle with the relentless heat, the crowds, the tiredness and the tribulations which don't seem to trouble others. But allow yourself to be tested before you come, discover where you self protect, where you avoid, where you react.

Come knowing the cost of loneliness. It takes time to make friends, not necessarily those you would have chosen at home. You may be the only single, or the only ones with young children, or the only older couple.

Come knowing the cost of foreignness. Here you always will be the foreigner. Other foreigners will find you hard to understand, to work with, to laugh with. The food, the humour, the world view are all foreign.

Come knowing the difficulty of not understanding the language. It takes many years and much energy to become fluent. No amount of effort will make you learn any faster than you are able - and the process will expose vulnerabilities, pride, self condemnation and expectations you did not know exist.

Come prepared to be shaken... and shattered and drained and tested and left to suffer until you think you are forgotten.

Ah, but come also to be grown and stretched and healed and blessed.

Come knowing your God. Know that anything achieved that is of value will be done by God, despite your best efforts rather than because of them. Know that only in your weakest weakness can God be fully revealed.

Come prepared to see God work... in ways you have not dreamed.

Come prepared to learn... from and be ministered to by the people of this country. They are not just a vast cauldron of needs but also gifts of blessing to you and me.

Come knowing you will be surprised. No matter how much you think you know the country, yourself, your work and your God, you will actually find nothing quite as you thought.

Come prepared to love and to be loved in ways you had not expected.

Come!

But don't come until your wanting to come is less important than your wanting to be who and where God wants you to be.

With us, it took 50 plus years. But the pre-field training was invaluable!

Come in God's timing. Or stay back in God's timing. He needs both. In either case pray.

And if it should be that you do come, well we will be right here to welcome you and listen to you say "it's not like you said at all".

On the other hand . . .

I (Maureen), wrote the letter below to our son and his wife in response to their suggestion they come for a year. We surprised ourselves by the different perspective we took when it was our own involved. They have one daughter (18 months) and their second child, currently referred to as "Bump", is due in November.

My dear Steve and Jane,

While I counsel myself most severely not to even hope we might both end up serving here at the same time I do find myself running the idea round - sort of tasting it like a boiled sweet. Like - how would Steve like the endless rice? Like how would you cope with the bazaar, the touching, the lack of privacy? How would Kaela and Bump react to having their cheeks pinched by every stranger that just has to touch white skin.

I jump on a motodop and think - would you risk two wee ones with Mum on a moto - or even on two, one with Dad? Would you hire a nanny, the norm with mission families, so both parents can learn language and overcome the difficulties of getting around with kids in tow? Would you leave the children with a stranger? One who doesn't speak English?

Some of the things I can imagine doing with you, meals out (rice!), ferry boat ride. . . the heat, the prickly rashes, mosquito nets, no outside play, tiled floors so unforgiving on soft hands and knees. On the other hand being where God wants you - being unique and accepted in a place where others are uniquely accepted too - the

widening of concepts and the discovery of self - good and bad - and the God who knows both in us and still loves us.

I want it for you but . . . I would be afraid for the kids. Did I tell you about Francie who's 3 and has had a chest infection for 2 months, is on her 3rd lot of antibiotics and had a chest x-ray which showed a shadow. TB is the least alarming thought! But then another doctor said "no shadow". No radiologist, no specialist, no definite diagnosis - what to do? God is good, God is enough, God can . . . I know, but. . .

A storm has just hit us. Skies open and the ground becomes a lake - lovely, clean, drenching, warm, refreshing, rain. Kaela and I would be out dancing, - bless her; she would have all her clothes off in a minute. And I wouldn't begrudge the gas to boil the hot water for her bath afterwards - not at all.

So come! Or maybe don't come. I'm torn. Pray!



I jump on a motodop and think, would you risk two wee ones . . . ?

Cambodia News



World Trade Organisation

At a meeting in Cancun in Mexico the World Trade Organisation agreed to admit Cambodia and Nepal. They will be the first "least developed" countries to join since WTO started in 1995. Entry, expected in 2004, is expected to boost the economy, but critics say it will worsen rural poverty. They say lower import tariffs will fuel foreign agribusiness investment that could hit small farmer competitiveness. Opposition leader Sam Rainsy said "The risks are enormous and potential job losses are considerable". Around 80% of the 13 million people eke a living from small-scale farming and about 36% live under the official poverty line of about 25pence a day.

General Elections

The July Election gave 73 seats in the 123-seat assembly to Hun Sen's Cambodian People's Party (CPP), short of the two-thirds needed to form a government, thus causing a deadlock.. The royalist Funcinpec Party won 26 seats and the Sam Rainsy Party 24. After a vexed appeal from King Sihanouk in early November, the parties agreed to form a coalition led by the CPP with Hun Sen continuing as prime minister. Funcinpec will hold National Assembly presidency whilst the Sam Rainsy Party will take vice-presidency. Previously parliament had been sworn-in at a Buddhist ceremony attended only by CPP members complete in their white jackets and purple pantaloons.

Khmer Rouge

With the resolution to the political deadlock, there is renewed hope that the UN -backed trial of surviving Khmer Rouge leaders will proceed. Meanwhile, Cambodian judges upheld the conviction of a former Khmer Rouge commander who was found guilty of killing three backpackers from Britain, Australia and France. Mark Slater, David Wilson and Jean-Michel Braquet were killed with thirteen Cambodians in 1994 after ransom demands failed.

Political Killings

There have been many political killings since the election. A Cambodian pop star, Touch Sunnich, 24, was in critical condition after being shot in the face. Her 62-year-old mother died immediately in the attack. The singer was described as "the voice of Funcinpec". A reporter who worked for a Funcinpec radio station was shot by two men on a motorbike and a Sam Rainsy Party member was killed in a grenade attack. Meanwhile a Cambodian court sentenced two men to 20 years for killing Om Radsady, a FUNCINPEC senior adviser.

Drugs

Facing international criticism of its weak drug controls, Cambodia has charged a general with trafficking after a record seizure of heroin. This so called start of an anti-drugs crusade was heralded with a public burning of the drug.

The Royal Family

Prince Norodom Narindrapong, the second son of King Sihanouk and Queen Monineath, has died in Paris at the age of 49. He was schooled in Moscow and spoke Russian and French fluently. He was a prisoner with the King and Queen in the Royal Palace during the 1975-1979 Khmer Rouge regime. 🇰🇲

