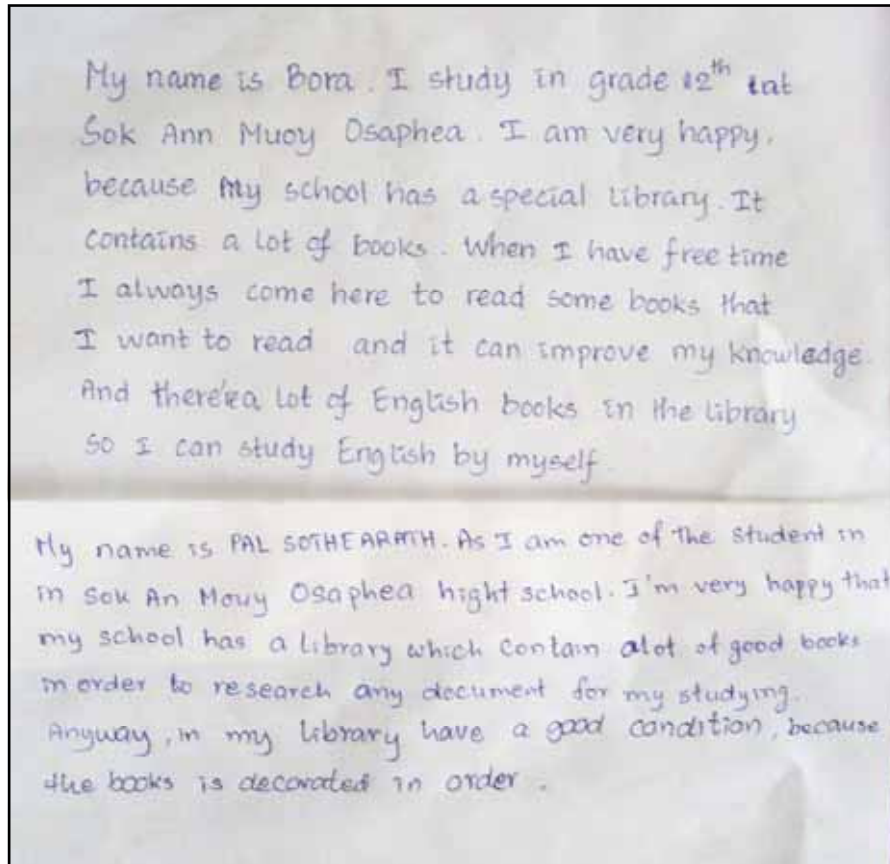




## Some comments from students about their library

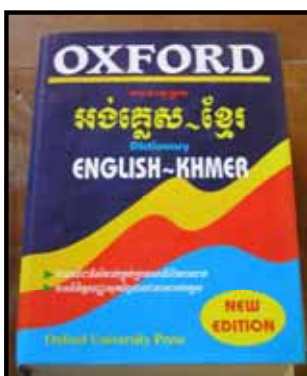


## Some of the books in the libraries we support

We have purchased Bilingual material, often Khmer folktales and legends. Much of the books in the students' own language is non-fiction science, geography, history, biographies and information about the wider world.

As English is the compulsory second language at secondary schools, we also include English language books. They are mostly purchased in Cambodia where they are much cheaper than in NZ. Sometimes we do take books across from NZ but we select them carefully to ensure they are relevant to the students' situation and world view. A lot of western fiction would be very strange to Cambodian students.

75% of the books purchased cost less than US\$3 each.



Reference books



Biographies



Translations of some children's classics

## Progress over the last year

Each year at least one of our trustees is in Cambodia and spends time with our Cambodian partners Meas Siphen and Im Mach visiting the libraries to see progress.

Jennie Wilson was there over this summer.

So what has Jennie reported?

The visit to Ang Run was a highlight. The school has a small initial collection which is well organised by Ye their librarian. She, together with Mach and Siphen, will be assisting some of the other librarians to enhance their libraries. The students are avid readers of sustainable living books published by SIPAR\*.

Students at Moy U Sophea and Kla Krohim Schools are enthusiastic about their libraries and both libraries are well used. These were the first libraries we assisted.

On earlier visits, book buying has been difficult because of a lack of suitable material. However this year it was encouraging to find availability of new publications is increasing.

Participants on the Discover Cambodia tour and the Hurley family visiting from NZ were a great help in processing all the books ready for distribution to the schools.

And some of the challenges?

Due to the scarcity of resources in Cambodian schools, books are highly valued. To keep them safe from damage, the books are sometimes locked away in glass fronted cupboards or kept in a back room. Jennie asked that all books supplied by Books for Cambodia be on the shelves and freely available to all students and teachers.

While librarians in all the schools we assist have had some basic training, some of them need greater on-going support to ensure that their library operates effectively. During the year the trust will be providing materials for shelving for Leay Bo school and blocks to assist with cataloguing books at Ang Roka.

There are 100 high schools in the Takeo province where we are involved. Only 20 have a library and we are providing books to six of them.

### From an email from Siphen 23 Mar 2010

"I would like to let you know that, recently the Ministry of Education and SIPAR organized a meeting about our Pilot project of setting a secondary school library in six schools in Cambodia, that meeting was held in Phnom Penh. Now that committee involved from the staff of Ministry, SIPAR and Books for Cambodia representative, Im Mach. On Thursday 25th this week the committee will come to visit and have another meeting with the school directors, staff and community of Kla Krohim school in order to learn more about how to prepare the new library.

This such a big achievement that we all have. Please be proud of that."

The work of the Trust is now being recognised by the Cambodian Ministry of Education—a real achievement.

\* SIPAR is a large French NGO. They have worked in developing primary school libraries and publish books suitable for school libraries.



*Siphen and Mach packing the car to deliver books to one of the schools*

## Discover Cambodia Tour

From 27 December 2009 until 12 January 2010 I had the pleasure and privilege of being part of a group of seven ladies who took part in the inaugural Books for Cambodia field trip. We were extremely fortunate to be led by Books for Cambodia founder and trustee, Jennie Wilson.

So what did our trip involve? We flew into Phnom Penh where we had a chance to acclimatise and explore what is a slightly crazy but nonetheless charming and exciting city. For me, the most memorable sites were the Killing Fields and Tuol Sleng prison. While they make for harrowing viewing, I think it was important to see close-up the sites of one of the most horrific events in recent history, particularly because those events are still affecting Cambodians today and they therefore provided context for, and a greater understanding of, the Cambodian people we met during the course of our trip.

From Phnom Penh we headed to Kampot on the South Coast. In addition to some R & R, we spent a day in an extremely poor village assisting with the building of a house. I have never before encountered poverty to that degree. I still struggle to get my head around the fact that halfway across the world there exist children who are about half the size of New Zealand children due to malnutrition and who have no access to education or health-care. The day with them was exhausting, humbling and thought-provoking.

The next chapter in our journey was when we engaged with the work of the Books for Cambodia Trust. We stayed in Takeo province with the family of Jennie's close friend Siphen. As we experienced warm and generous hospitality from our hosts, we spent several days covering and stamping hundreds of books for distribution to schools in the local area. Our visits to several of those schools provided testament to the thanks with which the books are received and the impact they have on the literacy of the children and teenagers in Takeo Province. The sparse shelves in the school libraries we visited demonstrated the obvious need for the books provided by the Trust.

After Takeo we again played tourists in Battambang and Siem Reap, with a night at a floating village in between. The great thing about playing tourists under the guidance of Jennie is that we only stayed at locally owned and operated guest houses, were directed to restaurants and shops run by NGOs and were taken to some incredible organisations doing difficult but rewarding work with impoverished people (the three that stand out being the Lotus school for ex-dump children in Phnom Penh, the art and acrobatic school in Battambang and the Children's Hospital in Siem Reap).

For anyone remotely interested in doing this trip in the future I would say DO IT! The trip will both inspire and enrich you.

Briar Charmley

*Last year Pacific Discovery, the tour organizers donated \$500 for every person on the tour. They are planning to do the same this year with the tour starting on 28 December. Check out either [www.pacificdiscovery.com](http://www.pacificdiscovery.com) or [www.booksforcambodia.org](http://www.booksforcambodia.org) It's a great trip! You'll see more of Cambodia than just Angkor Wat and you get to make a useful contribution while you are there.*



*The team at work on the new books*



*Briar and one of the students enjoying a new book*

## International connections

While the Trust is based in NZ, we also receive support from people in other countries.



**American students** who have stayed with Siphen and Mach during study trips to Cambodia with Pacific Discovery have undertaken fundraising on their return home. Their generous and ongoing support has been very much appreciated.

In **Melbourne** Carolyn Coxhead, our newest Trustee, who has also participated in Pacific Discovery trips, undertakes fundraising activities there.

And more recently as a result of seeing our website, a group in **London** are planning a fundraising gig there in May and have also made possible a £1000 donation from a private family trust.

A big thanks to all our international supporters and donors.



## Who's Who

### Trustees

**Scott Burnett**, Nelson, also with Pacific Discovery

**Carolyn Coxhead**, Melbourne

**Stephanie Edwards**, Wellington

**Judith Miller**, Otaki (Secretary /Treasurer)

**Helen Walch**, Otaki (Chair)

**Jennie Wilson**, New Plymouth, also with Pacific Discovery, is the trustee who visits Cambodia most frequently and is responsible for book purchasing.

**Raymond Simpson**, Auckland, Trust Accountant

**Im Mach and Meas Siphen**, husband and wife who teach at Moy u Sophea and Kla Krohim High School are our key contacts in Cambodia.

Our NZ Charities Commission number is CC11467.



## Your Help is needed – please use this return slip

I would like to help with the purchase of books and training of school librarians in Cambodia

Here is my donation.

*NB NZ taxpayers are able to claim a tax rebate on their donation—\$1 for every \$3 donated.*

\$24 (approx 6 books) \$48 \$72 \$96 other ..... (Please indicate the amount )

My cheque is enclosed.

I have deposited the money into the BOOKS FOR CAMBODIA account 15-3953-0614339-30  
If you are doing this by internet banking can you please ensure your name appears on our statement so that we can send you a receipt .

I would like to make a monthly automatic payment of \$.....  
Please send me the necessary form.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_



*Staff at Ang Roka School (2435 students) with the shelves to be filled!*

### The address for Trust supporters in Australia

c/- Carolyn Coxhead  
3 Bayview Lane  
Aspendale 3195  
Victoria

We would like to keep you informed about BOOKS FOR CAMBODIA.

If you would prefer that we did not, please indicate here.