



humanitus
empowerment through education

Newsletter

May 2017



Mkak Primary School children, on a day off, ready for some fun and adventure...

CONTENTS

Page 2:	Director's Report from Jeffrey Richards
Page 3:	Report on Pichey Rangsey School/Caulfield Grammar School from Sally Cordner
Page 4-6	Report on a dental visit to Pichey Rangsey School from Julie Cordner
Page 7:	Update on what's happening at Mkak Primary School
Page 7-8:	Overview of attendees at our Supporters' 'Thank You Evening' on March 24
Page 9:	Further Humanitus News
Page 9:	Contact details



Dear friends and supporters,

Once again it is time for our regular newsletter to update all of our friends and supporters on the latest news from Humanitus, our loyal team and in-country partners.

Firstly though I would like to sincerely thank all of you who were able to attend our *Supporters Thank You* evening at my home in St Kilda on March 24th. We could not have wished for a more perfect evening. It was indeed a fun night with delicious food, fabulous wines, along with relaxed and gregarious guests and some great give-away prizes. We tried to make the evening a little different to our previous gatherings, and judging by the positive feedback we received I believe we succeeded beyond our expectations by hosting an event that will definitely be replicated in the future. It was all about thanking our supporters, so there was no charge to attend and each guest received two raffle tickets on arrival. We did give people the opportunity to contribute by way of our silent auctions indoors. The auction items, kindly donated for the evening, caused some amusing moments with the silent bidding becoming more and more competitive as the deadline grew closer. We also received an unexpected, and greatly appreciated, surprise when Ian Cordner offered a second weekend getaway at the Cordner family beach house in Point Lonsdale to the runner-up bid. It was 'all hands on deck' for the evening to ensure our guests were relaxed and in good spirits, and Melbourne certainly turned on a perfect late summer's evening for our garden soiree.

A special thank you needs to go out to Christine Gilliland for her exemplary catering skills; Mea, Aja and Tina for keeping the food and drinks constantly flowing; and Simon and Julie for making certain everyone was mingling and having fun. All up we raised \$3000 on the evening. Given this was a thank-you evening without too much emphasis on raising money we were all very surprised and delighted with the outcome. We will be certain to give all of you plenty of notice for our next event, and I look forward once again to opening my home to you all.

With relation to Cambodia, I am certain most of you are aware that Julie Cordner joined our team last year. Julie is now permanently residing in Cambodia, and we are thrilled that she has taken on the role of Operations Manager for Humanitus. One of our biggest problems over the years has been getting our projects and commitments up and running. With no Humanitus team members on the ground in previous years we have often struggled to ensure projects are completed in a timely manner. With Julie's management of our projects we are now confident that things will happen in a timely manner and monies raised will be of even more benefit to the children and communities we work with. Our modus operandi will start changing slightly as we move forward, and it is our desire to focus more on health care, access to clean drinking water, and educational support, rather than infrastructure projects. While we remain proud of our achievements in the area of infrastructure we realise the same level of learning can be achieved in a basic bamboo classroom as can be in a Taj Mahal replica. We all know that through Julie's passion for Cambodia, and its people, along with her adeptness at networking, innovating and initiating change, our work in Cambodia will be further enhanced and more efficiently managed.

During my numerous trips to Cambodia over the past 12 years I have regularly seen various structures, toilet facilities and water pump stations, donated by well-meaning Westerners, rendered virtually useless due to lack of care and maintenance. In this area of concern we need to somehow educate communities who, along with their families, benefit from these projects. It is important that we get them to take an active and responsible approach to maintaining facilities that are built expressly for their benefit. Not an easy task in a country where overseas aid and financial assistance is often seen as a basic human right.

On that note I will sign off and give you the opportunity to read on and enjoy our latest newsletter.

With sincere thanks, and best wishes,

Jeffrey R. Richards
Executive Director and Cofounder

① PICHEY RANGSEY SCHOOL

CAULFIELD GRAMMAR SCHOOL / PICHEY RANGSEY SCHOOL REPORT

In 2017 it is hoped that Caulfield Grammar School, Malvern Campus - with its continuing links to the Pichey Rangsey School in Phnom Penh - will work on a program with the students there on Dental Health. This will form an addition to the current Health Program CGS provides for the students of the PR School which has greatly enhanced their health as well as their capacity to learn.

It has been noted at the PR School that vendors are in the school grounds selling snacks to the students. This of course provides the vendors with a source of income, and by no means do we wish to stop this trade. However, it has contributed to a decline in the teeth of the children, as most of the snacks are sugar-based.

It was thought that the students at Caulfield Grammar might be able to develop a Dental Health program in the form of Instructions for Teeth Care - which they will formulate - along with the possible addition of ongoing fluoride tablets, toothpaste and toothbrushes. This program is in its infancy and we look forward greatly to the contributions from the students at Caulfield Grammar to further the links between the student bodies.

Sally Corder
School Projects Director

Photos at right taken during several visits at Mkak School [we have no images of those at Pichey Rangsey], showing vendors in and around the grounds



DENTISTS AT PICHEY RANGSEY

Back on February 17, I was privileged to be able to be an observer to a visit to the Denzil Sprague Pichey Rangsey School by a group of dentists from San Francisco, organised, in the main, through KIDS [Kids International Dental Services] and COLT [Cambodian Organization for Living and Temporary Care]. COLT has been hosting an annual dentist action for years now, the initiative having been instigated by American dentist Bob Renner ("Dr Bob") and his wife Purobi, who were touched by Cambodian poverty when they visited COLT during their holidays some time ago. They put their heads together with COLT board member André Ruys and his wife Lily, and gave life to the annual dentist action featuring an international team of dentists, interns and assistants visiting several projects each year to treat the teeth of Cambodian children. Through the years, the importance of this project has become clear, as many children had been unable to get their rotten teeth pulled and were in so much pain that they were unable to eat - sometimes to such an extent that they actually ended up becoming underfed.



Here is part of a report from KIDS on the team's visit: *"K.I.D.S has treated tens of thousands of children in Cambodia since 2010, and along the way we have forged strong relationships with local NGOs and community members. As a result, we are able to treat many of the same children, year after year, helping to stabilize the dental health of the communities we serve. The second week of our time in Cambodia was spent treating children in and around the capital city, Phnom Penh. We partnered with local organizations, including the Cambodian Organization for Living and Temporary Care (COLT), Care 4 Cambodia, and Sreyka Smile. We treated many familiar children, but through help from these organizations and others throughout the city, many new children were treated as well.*

"Over the course of our two weeks in Cambodia, K.I.D.S. dentists and non-dental volunteers screened and provided preventative fluoride treatment for 4,150 children. Additionally, all children were provided with a dental health education program in their native language. A total of 926 children received additional treatment, including the extraction of painfully decayed teeth."



From my perspective, purely as an observer (although I did end up taking on a 'Security Officer' type role as I attempted to keep curious kids away from the rooms where the dentists were working!), it was a fascinating insight into what can be achieved by a dedicated team of professionals—and lay people. Having done this many times before, the group worked as a 'well-oiled machine', each person taking on an assigned role with vigour. Dr Bob made an initial assessment, then the kids went on down the line to receive basic teeth care advice (including their own new toothbrush), then were 'released' or sent to the waiting room to await treatment.

More from the KIDS report: *"In each community, K.I.D.S. dentists work under primitive conditions, with little to no access to electricity. During these visits, many of the children receive dental care for the first time in their lives, so treatment is focused on relieving severe pain and preventing serious infections that could impact a child's health and quality of life. In addition to extracting teeth and draining painful abscesses, dentists perform ART restorations and molar sealants.*

"Many non-dental volunteers join each KIDS team. They assist with fluoride treatment, sterilize instruments, and provide comforting care to the children before and after treatment. KIDS is also dedicated to educating the communities we visit in basic oral hygiene practices. In most cases, this means teaching children to use a toothbrush for the first time in their lives."

The unfortunate outcome of the day, however, was that the dental team made the general assessment that the children's teeth had taken a turn for the worse...in the sense that in too many cases, children whose teeth had been good—or at least on the improve—the previous year, were now in seriously bad condition, with abscesses and infections being rife! The battle faced by the team includes prevailing disinterest by the children's parents—and in some cases, outright dissension—plus the presence of food vendors who sell cheap 'junk food' to the kids rather than anything healthy. The major culprit appears to be some sort of pink, sugary confection...and, of course, kids here LOVE eating sugar cane: sugar on a stick!



Julie Cordner
Head of Projects—Cambodia

Kids International Dental Services
Patient Name: Man Partha Sex: M Age: 16

SCREENING EXAM
1.25% NAF APPLIED

Treatment Date: 2/25/16

Examiner: [Signature]

Kids International Dental Services
Patient Name: _____ Sex: M Age: 17

1. * S, T abscesses - 600

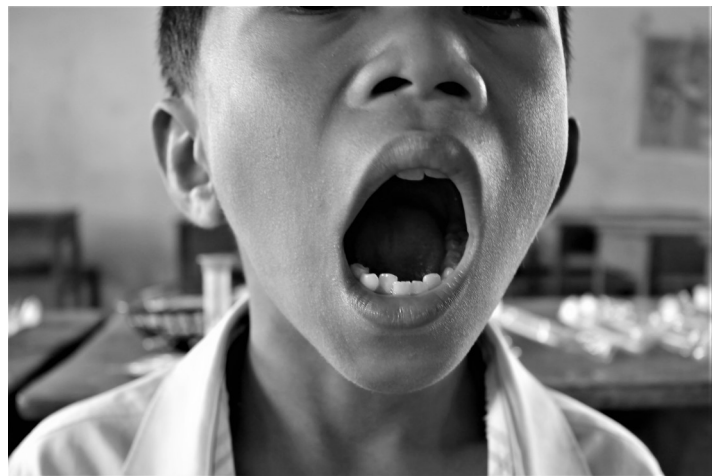
Treatment Date: 2/17/17

Examiner: [Signature]

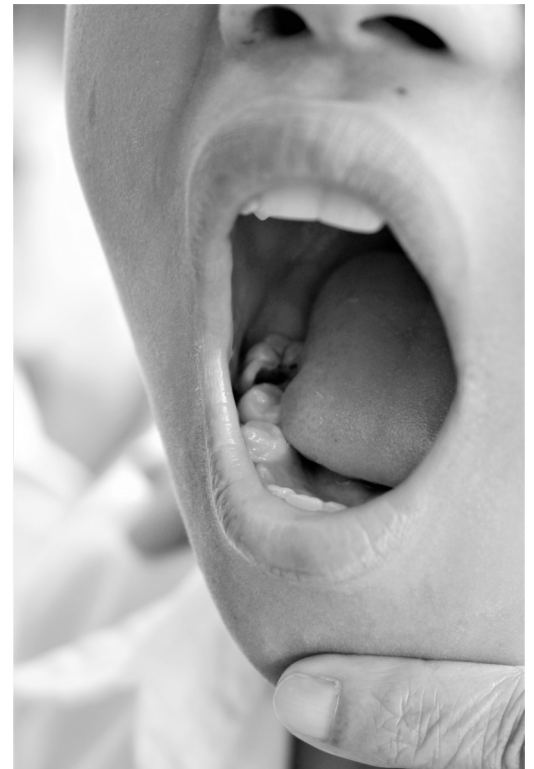
Kids International Dental Services
Patient Name: _____ Sex: M Age: _____

Treatment Date: _____

Examiner: _____



Ongoing reports from the KIDS teams ensure comparisons can be made year-to-year. In this case, there is clear evidence of deterioration in this young man's teeth from 2016 to 2017.



One of the most satisfying treatments performed by the visiting dentists is repair-work of damaged teeth, rather than extraction. This young man was able to provide a shy smile [see next page] as confirmation of his approval of the work...



Dental repair-work means that a young man can have restored confidence in his appearance, particularly as he approaches those awkward years of teenage-hood...



The journey of one young boy piqued my interest, as he had his first assessment by “Dr Bob”, was given instruction in using a toothbrush [his first!] by one of the volunteer nurses, then as he waited for treatment... Which all became a bit too much eventually! NB: The bars on the window do make the class-rooms look a bit prison-like, but do provide security, as well as much-needed ventilation during the hotter months.



② MKAK PRIMARY SCHOOL

With funds raised by the Leos of Wanaka in New Zealand (the Leos being a junior group of the Lions), it is hoped that we will be able to sort out the water-tower and well in land opposite the school at Mkak. As the tower is made of timber, and as termites eat timber, the legs and supports are being chewed away... We are researching the possibility of replacing the timber with bamboo, in the hopes of extending the life of the tower—as well as extending the supply of water to the school itself. Stay tuned for updates...



Wanaka Leos have raised funds which will be allocated to the repair and/or replacement of the tower and well currently located in land owned by the Director of Mkak School, Piseth Luon. It is hoped that the water supply might also be re-routed to the school itself...



③ ON THE HOME FRONT...



As mentioned in the Director's Report, a Supporters' 'Thank You Evening' was held on March 24, at which \$3000 was raised for future projects. The garden in St Kilda looked beautiful, and guests were greeted by Mea Cordner, who along with Tina Lofitis and Aja Cordner, kept guests fed and 'watered' during the event.



③ Continued...



Top right: (L-R) Linda Mathieson, Graham Woodford, Alan Pace, Mirella Manganaro, Nigel Giles. Top right: Christine Gilliland, Jeff Richards and Susan Grover. Far left: Jeff Richards and Gail Lee (winner of the major prize of a weekend at Point Lonsdale, courtesy of the Cordner family). Left: Justine Hill and Mark Swanson (who also won a weekend at Lonny for his bid). Below, far left: Tina Lofitis, winner of the 'Cambodian Elephants' print donated by artist Lucy Simms, with Jeff Richards. Below centre: Spot prize winners, Alan Pace and Mirella Manganaro. Below right: Spot prize winner, Issy Ballantyne.



MELBOURNE GRAMMAR SCHOOL REPORT

The Term 2 Casual Day for Melbourne Grammar's Grimwade House will be held on Monday, June 5. The students will be asked to donate a pink note or gold coin, and the service learning team are already excitedly working on a presentation for assembly, but first they have to work out the important details regarding what the students should be wearing!

In Term 3, the Year 6 students look at a unit of work involving Asians as their neighbours - so this is where we are presented with an opportunity to teach further about Cambodia, charities, and NGOs.

It is hoped that the school body can raise over \$1000 on the day, which will be directed towards a Humanitus project yet to be determined.

I look forward to delivering the funds myself when I visit in September this year.

Simon Cowell
Education & Learning Director



Grimwade House students

BELLARINE FRIENDS

We are happy to welcome a group of 'Bellarine Friends' to our wider group of 'Friends of Humanitus'. This group has been formed by Sally Cordner, who resides on the Bellarine Peninsula, and the response to the creation of a group based there has been most pleasing.

So far, the group has expressed its interest in contributing to fund-raising, as well as being kept up-to-date with current projects. Their input as a group and individually will be much appreciated - and on August 5, Sally will be hosting a 'Welcome Drinks & Nibbles Evening' [5.30-7.30pm], which will incorporate the facility for receiving donations, plus the activities of silent auction items and spot raffle prizes...as well as providing a meet-and-greet opportunity with fellow Bellarine Friends.



**Students at Denzil Sprague
Pichey Rangsey School**

CONTACT US

POSTAL ADDRESS: **Humanitus Foundation Inc.**
 3 Charnwood Grove, St Kilda VIC 3162

EMAIL: **admin@humanitus.org**