Grace House Cambodia Charity Inc.

You are receiving this newsletter as you have visited or volunteered at Grace House, are Australian, and/or are aware of the Grace House Cambodia Charity, Inc.
Membership is now open.



NEWS FROM THE CHAIR
Ann Brownlie

Greetings and welcome to our third newsletter. You may notice it is coming from a new email address. Based on feedback, we've moved away from Gmail as it isn't the best fit for a charity, and the Grace House address provides a more professional and consistent point of contact. It has been a steady but productive period, with significant work happening behind the scenes. During March, I was invited to speak at three Rotary meetings to share insights into the work of Grace House and explore how Rotary clubs in Australia might support our efforts. I'm delighted to report that all three clubs have now committed to partnering with us—either through sponsorship or by undertaking a project at Grace House in January 2027. This is an exciting development for everyone involved. Two major initiatives are now underway. **First**, we have selected Little Green Light (LGL) as the most suitable database system for the charity. LGL will streamline how we manage supporters—donors, volunteers, and members—while improving reporting, mailings, gift acknowledgements, and receipting. Our goal is to have LGL fully operational before the end of the financial year so that receipts can be issued for all contributions received. **Second**, Peter May from the Toowoomba Rotary Club has generously volunteered his time and expertise to build a new Grace House website. The previous site needed modernising, and the refreshed version will place strong emphasis on attracting volunteers and donations. With LGL integrated into the new site, we expect communication and engagement to become far more effective. You can follow the website's progress at https://gracehousecambodia.org

Thank you to everyone who has already signed up as a member of the charity. Your support brings us closer to our goal of sponsoring a classroom. A membership form is attached to this newsletter, and if you haven't yet joined, I encourage you to consider doing so before June 30 to receive DGR benefits.

I will be returning to Grace House on July 2 and will be in Cambodia for five weeks. I'm thrilled that my daughter Lydia and granddaughter Millie will be joining me. Craig (Treasurer) will also be volunteering again, focusing on planning for the Rotarians' visit.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to the work of Grace House.



NEWS FROM GRACE HOUSE

April is a significant month in Cambodia for several reasons. It is one of the hottest times of the year, with temperatures often reaching close to 40°, making daily life challenging. It is also the time of Khmer New Year when the school closes for two weeks so families can gather and celebrate. For the children at Grace House, the final day before the break is always a highlight — filled with games, relays, water fights, special food, and plenty of laughter and excitement.

This period also marks the annual staff weekend away. This year, the team travelled to Koh Rong, an island known for its white beaches, turquoise water, and water activities. Although the journey involved a long 10-hour bus ride, it was a memorable experience for the staff and their partners, many of whom had never seen the ocean before.

In the weeks since the holiday, the children have been busy preparing for and completing their unit tests. Students learn English through the *Family and Friends* program, and these assessments provide valuable insight into their progress. Each month, one class presents to the whole school, and in March the oldest students shared songs and stories about Space, their topic of study. Other classes have enjoyed outings to the Botanical Gardens and Art Box, received presentations on dental care and hygiene, and planted seeds in the new classroom garden beds. Grace House is always a hive of activity, and these enriching experiences are only possible thanks to the generosity of supporters from around the world.

We were delighted to welcome Dani, our social worker, back to work after a serious bike accident that resulted in a significant leg injury.

Grace House staff also continue to support other NGOs whenever possible. Recently, several team members volunteered at a refugee camp where families remain displaced due to the border dispute with Thailand. They provided haircuts, ran activities for children, and assisted with establishing vegetable gardens. Finally, we celebrated Koy's birthday recently. In her typically generous spirit, she chose to mark the occasion by giving every child and staff member a hamburger — a gift from her to the Grace House family. Gestures like this are a reminder of just how special our team truly is.



MEET THE STAFF

Sara (Koy) Seam

Describe your role at Grace House

I am the manager of the Disability Unit, and it is my role to ensure the three special needs classes run smoothly. I provide physiotherapy for children who need it. The Social Worker and I meet with the individual families to set the goals for each child and provide support to help the families. I work with the volunteers to support them to gain knowledge and the achieve their goals.

What is your background and training in physiotherapy?

I have an Associate Degree in Physiotherapy graduating in 2013 at Technical School for Medical Care, Phnom Penh Cambodia. I am honoured to receive a Certificate from the Prime Minister of Cambodia (40 candidates out of 500 people). I keep doing short course training to continue developing my knowledge.

What do you enjoy most about working with children with would abilities?

I like seeing that they have a great future, not being left out from society. They are part of an inclusive school where there is love and care. They're really sweet, lovely and funny when you get to know them.

How do you see the disability unit in the next 5 years?

I want to see that they're able to join state school, public places and be able to get jobs for teenagers.

What is the best thing about being a member of staff at Grace House?

The best part is the children. Having been here for 11 years, I've had the privilege of watching them grow from little kids into young adults. Seeing them gain confidence and reach milestones they once thought were impossible is the greatest reward. Grace House has become my second home. We've supported each other through a decade of challenges and triumphs, and that sense of belonging is irreplaceable. I've grown alongside Grace House. I never imagined how much these families would teach me about resilience, hope, and kindness. I'm a better person because of this job.



GRACE HOUSE CAMBODIA CHARITY Inc.

No: IA4871467
ABN: 21160477178

REGISTRATION OF MEMBERS INVITATION

Thank you for your interest in becoming a member of **Grace House Charity Inc.**, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to breaking the cycle of poverty for those living within the community (rural villages near Siem Reap Cambodia) to build a brighter future for Cambodian children providing sustainable, quality education and family support by:

- fostering the value and love for learning and education
- improving learning conditions and teacher training
- strengthening family and community support

As a member, you will have the opportunity to contribute to the direction and impact of our work, stay informed about our projects, and play an active role in shaping our future. Membership is open to individuals who share our commitment to compassion, service, and community development.

To proceed with your application, please click on the link below to confirm the following.

☐ I support the purpose of Grace House Charity Inc.
☐ I agree to comply with the constitution of Grace House Charity Inc.

☐ I agree to pay the annual membership fee of $50.00. This gives you voting rights, regular newsletters and advance notice of fundraising functions.

You will also be required to enter personal details for the Member database. Please check these details carefully before submitting.

The Rules of Membership require a Proposer and a Seconder. Many of you will have met and know the Chair (Ann Brownlie), Treasurer (Craig Mathieson), and Secretary (Gillian Meyers) of the charity. Alternatively, you may know someone else linked to Grace House. Please use the names you know as your Proposer and Seconder on the Forms link.
https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/9eRCpCEYd9?origin=lprLink

Please make payment to
Grace House Charity Inc
BSB: 638-260
A/c No: 16879465

SUPPORT GRACE HOUSE BY:

- Become a member.
- Follow Grace House Community Centre on Facebook and Instagram.
  - Like and share the Grace House Community Centre posts.
- Hold a fundraising event or invite us to talk at your school or club.
- Donate to Grace House Cambodia Charity Inc. All funds go directly to Grace House Cambodia
  - BSB 638-260 A/c # 16879465
  - Please provide name/email for receipt
- Volunteer at Grace House Community Centre. It's an adventure, holiday and awesome experience all in one.