

Helping to Care for Cambodia's Children

The Sharing Foundation

www.sharingfoundation.org

P.O. Box 399, Woolwich, ME 04579

Spring 2003

Roteang Solar Energy Project Goes Live

This fall work was completed on a new solar power system for Roteang Orphanage. This system, installed by Khmer Solar of Phnom Penh, has been able to generate enough power to meet about 80% of the electrical needs of the orphanage – electricity used to pump 15,000 liters of water per day, provide refrigeration for medicines, lighting and fans. This will allow Roteang to reduce its reliance on diesel fuel, which has been used to run a generator 10 hours per day. The importance of this project was underscored last month as the price of diesel skyrocketed due to the impending threat of war.

The system was designed by Khmer Solar, working with adoptive parent Jim Ganley and Mr. Chun Dy Hok, the original architect of Roteang. The group decided to design a system that would work in conjunction with a newer, smaller generator. Having both solar power and a backup generator would provide free solar power most of the time, and allow for a backup power source during Cambodia's rainy season and also additional power during heavy demand



Solar panels perched atop the rear of Roteang Orphanage

peaks. The system includes a bank of batteries that can store up to 3 days worth of electricity and can be charged automatically by both the solar panels and the generator. Prior to the installation of this system the orphanage could not afford to run the generator more than 10 hours a day, which precluded the use of refrigeration for medications. Since this system has been installed the orphanage has added refrigeration (paid for with a donation by the Zand/Hansen family) which has allowed it to begin treatment of several HIV children – a first for any orphanage in Cambodia. The system has a projected life of

Where the Money Doesn't Go

Where does your money go when you donate to The Sharing Foundation? Let us tell you where it **doesn't** go:

The Sharing Foundation pays no Americans, so your money is not spent on executive salaries; the Board members and the parents advisory council are all volunteers. The Sharing Foundation has no office to eat into your contributions, just a rent-free sun porch at the Hendrie/Jones home, and spots in various volunteers homes. There are no paid fundraisers or soliciting staff and no paid advertising campaigns. Last year [2002] TSF overhead was less than 4%. Our only expenses were required CPA and legal expenses, phone and the printing and mailing of the newsletters.

20 to 25 years, and depending upon the cost of diesel will pay for itself in 5 to 7 years.

Little did Sreng Samnang know about American hospitality when she arrived in Boston in November to have her severe cleft palate & bilateral lip anomalies fixed. She had her first surgery December 4th at the Shriners Hospital, expertly done in a procedure that took more than 4 hours. The procedure was performed by Dr Michael Lewis of Massachusetts General Hospital, a Pediatric Plastic expert on this defect. She has two more surgeries to go, one in April, and then another several months later, to complete the closure of her cleft palate and tidy up her nose and lip. All services are being donated by Dr Lewis and Shriners Hospital. It is hard to believe this is the same girl who arrived with such a severe defect, and we wanted you to see her progress and to meet her very

Sreng Samnang: Then & Now



Then & Now - Thanks to efforts by The Sharing Foundation, volunteer family Tim & Mary Hult & services donated by Dr. Michael Lewis & The Shriners Hospital, Sam's facial defects are being fixed.

special foster parents. Sam has been incredibly fortunate to have been living most of the time with Tim and Mary Hult in Carlisle, Mass. Their 3 children grown and out of the house except on special occasions, Tim, Mary & their two dogs have earned some peace. Instead they have volunteered to care for Sam, and she is there having a wonderful time with a field of toys, books to look at,

music to hear and wonderful care. She also has the best wardrobe in town, thanks to many of you, as well as the Hults. Mary has taught Sam to spoon feed [an ability she absolutely lacked and resisted] and Mary and Tim both chase her up the stairs and work on bye bye, patty cake, and other tricks. Sam who will turn one on March 18, and began walking at 10.5 months. We are thrilled that her "talking" is coming along at an absolutely normal pace. Her personality, as always, is irrepressible. The only sad part is that due to US government issues, Sam will need to return to Cambodia, un-adopted, when her surgery is complete. But somewhere in her head she will never forget the Hults, or the outpouring of love and attention from everyone she has met, in Carlisle, at Shriners and wherever she has gone.

Roteang Village Immunization Program

Sea Soapeak, 12 years old, and a village boy in Thom commune of Roteang village, has never had a tetanus shot, although he runs barefoot along with the animals in the mud and the dust of the village roads and fields. He has never had polio protection, or MMR [Mumps, Measles Rubella] nor Hepatitis B immunization either, all shots routinely given to American children by their first birthday or soon after.

Last year we had two deaths at Roteang Orphanage from tetanus; this year we just completed testing of the under 18 year olds in our adjacent village and found over 5% of the children already to be carriers of active Hepatitis B, a life long infection from which many will die young, and which they also can spread to others as they mature.

TSF, with the generous help of The Claneil Foundation, the Entertainment Industry Foundation, the Women's International Group of Phnom Penh, the First Religious Society {Unitarian} of Carlisle MA, and many smaller gifts from individuals and churches, decided to mount an immunization campaign for the village children, approximately 1250 children in all.

We checked with Government authorities, and found that though WHO (the World Health Organization) had promised to provide immunization for children under 5 years old, nothing specific was planned. We were told that education about immunization was a big problem too, and a Ministry of Health spokesman said "[they] notice that when we [TSF] call for vaccination, the villagers all come, but when they make such a program, the villagers all run away and escape". The Ministry offers a very limited program for children under 1 year, and adult women tetanus, and BCG.

We began the Hepatitis B program on February 3 and in four days, Dr Ly and her crew of doctors, plus Dany (the head nanny at Roteang Orphanage) and the head farmer who knows



everyone in the village had identified, inoculated and recorded the first Hep B shot for over 950 children under 18 years of age. On Feb. 4th the Women's Group of Phnom Penh sent observers with T-shirts for adolescent girls [they sponsored vaccine for 50] and sweets for all.

The Hepatitis B program requires 3 shots over six months, and the cost for this program alone will be over \$22,500. The cost per child is \$19; for children over 15 years, where a twice the dose of vaccine is needed the cost rises to \$34. This includes vaccine, syringe, swabs, records for us and the recipient. This adds up to a significant cost, with about 1250 children to test and vaccinate. We also bore the cost of pre-testing for active Hep B status ahead of time, at a cost of \$2.35 per child, or \$2900 total. Fortunately, thanks to generous donations, we have the Hepatitis B vaccination program in hand.

Phase two of the Immunization Program will be DTaP / polio immunization of the children—DT for children over 6 years. We estimate there will be about 900 children in this program as some we began in the National Immunization Project but never completed their course. Again three doses of the vaccines are needed, or a total of about 2700

doses for each vaccine. The cost is about \$20.22 per child for complete polio and DTaP/DT immunization, totaling about \$25,000 for the whole village of children. Some of this we already have in hand, and we are looking hard to raise the rest.

Phase three will be MMR, Mumps, Measles Rubella, this thankfully, is one shot, and will be administered to all children over 1 year. No child has had any to date, so we need about 1250 doses. We have located the MMR in Thailand at a cost of \$4.50/ dose; with needle, syringe, swabs, record keeping and Doctor fee, this will make the cost \$5.12/ dose administered, or about \$6400 to do the whole village of children. We are looking to raise all of this.

We anticipate after completing immunization of the village children that we will keep up with "new" children as they appear, so that this one rural village, at least, will have basic immunization that is just standard for American children. If we are fortunate and raise more money than is required, we will offer our financial aid (meaning pay our doctor and crew) and our name to get childbearing age women protected from tetanus [this also protects their newborns] and participate in a BCG [TB protection] campaign. The Ministry of Health will supply materials for all this: they just want our name and our personnel.

Getting Involved

The work of New York film director Andy McWhirter is a most welcome and unexpected contribution that is making a real difference. His 13 minute promotional film for TSF, which he wrote, directed, and produced, is bringing in sizable dollars to The Sharing Foundation. With camera in tow, McWhirter followed Nancy Hendrie and colleagues as they went about their customary routines in country, catching on video tape the significance of TSF Mission, the spirit of the volunteers, the most beautiful children, and the life in and around Roteang village.

Beginning with the Khmer Rouge and the devastation of Cambodia, McWhirter weaves the story through the history and brings it into the present with its complexities and dilemmas. Lending particular credence to the documentary are on-the-spot interviews with Hendrie, Dr. Ly, Roteang Orphanage director, and Suzanne Gumley of Sihanouk Hospital. This film is used for TSF presentations and sent out as part of grant proposals and is proving to be an enormous success.

Andy & Mary with new daughter Kim Srean



Help us network and reach out to potential donors!!

TSF's projects in Cambodia make a huge difference in the life prospects of Roteang village children and their families. We are now intensifying our fundraising efforts in order to be able to sustain and expand our projects, address other critical needs such as immunizations, and continue to provide for 60 children at the orphanage during this time when U.S. adoptions are on hold. If you can open any doors for us to potential donors (foundations or individuals), we would really appreciate your help. Please email Lisa Hicks, parent advisory council representative, with any suggestions: elliott-lisa@attbi.com. Thank you!

New Playground for Roteang Orphanage

One of consequences of the U.S. moratorium on adoptions in Cambodia is the fact that our children at Roteang are getting older and their interests are expanding. No longer are we heavily weighted towards infants in rocking cribs, although we have some being admitted despite a full house when we feel they will die without admission.



Our toddler children, some now 5 years plus, were in need of outdoor play space, where they could run, climb, and be generally rambunctious. Once again St. Paul's Lutheran School in Lakeland, Florida, and their steadfast booster for the Sharing Foundation, Denise Gosch, swung into action to raise money for a grand playground. It is located in front of the kitchen building, between the main building and the wooden building. The children now spend several periods out there daily, scaling the climbing structure, vigorously

working the swings, more sedately swinging with their nannies in the lawn swing, or constructing roads in the huge sand box. We really

appreciate this wonderful gift, and the fund raising energy and incredible giving spirit of Denise and her St. Paul's angels.

(Right) the new playground, (Left) Children climbing in the new playground. (below right) Swinging with the nannies, (below) Rattana plays with a truck in the new sandbox.



Getting Involved *It takes much more than money.*

The Sharing Foundation in the U.S. is run entirely by volunteers, many of whom are parents and families members of those who have adopted from Cambodia. These are the reflections of one adoptive parent, Jim Ganley from Portland, Maine, who got involved with the Solar Project while waiting to bring his son Ethan home.

The waiting is the hardest part... In February of 2002 I attended a travel meeting for Adopt Cambodia. This was a meeting for waiting parents who might be traveling soon, to brief us on what to expect, what to pack, what documents we needed. Up to this point, although I knew of the Sharing Foundation I wasn't very involved with them, I was more focused on the adoption Agency, and bringing home Ethan, our son that we had been matched with for 5 months. Then I had no idea that it would be another 10 months before he would get to come home.

After the meeting I heard Dr. Hendrie remark that she always thought it was a waste that solar energy could not be harnessed at

Roteang. The orphanage needed to generate all of its own electricity for water pumping, lighting and fans and so had to run a large diesel generator 10 hours a day. I mentioned to her that there must be a solution out there, that a colleague of mine had recently added solar energy to her vacation home, and before I knew what happened I was appointed the guy in charge of the Solar Project!

I began researching solar power systems and talking with vendors, and then in March I traveled to Cambodia for the first time to adopt my son through the Cambodian Courts (although it would still be 9 months before the INS would let him come home). While in Cambodia I met with the architect of the orphanage, Chun Dy. Hok, whom I had been corresponding with via email, and we discussed the needs and usage patterns of the facility. At the time Roteang was over capacity, with over 70 children, around 35 Nannies, plus support staff. We realized that

given the always changing size and needs of the population of Roteang Orphanage we had better build a system designed to withstand sudden growth.

Later that week in Phnom Penn Dr. Hendrie, her assistant Elephant and I met with one of the local vendors of solar products and began discussions on systems, plans and installations.

Once back in the States I spent the next few months corresponding with Hok, various vendors and began to review designs and bids. In late August we finally had plans that we could present to the board of directors for the Sharing Foundation. After some discussion the board approved the expenditure and we notified Khmer Solar to begin work.

And they worked fast! In little more than a month the bulk of the system was in place, and by mid October the system was up and producing all of the energy needed for lighting, fans and refrigeration, with plenty of power to spare. In December I traveled again to Roteang, this time to bring my son

home and I took time to visit with Hok and inspect the solar power system. The quality of the installation was outstanding; the contractor had done a very neat and thorough job. I discovered some items that needed to be changed – there was no wiring in place to allow the solar system to back feed to the pumps, and we were still waiting for a new, smaller generator. Overall the system looked great.

Back home in Portland with my new son, I still correspond with Hok & Elephant, we are still working to fine tune the system and it has helped me to stay connected with Roteang as well as give back something to the place that gave me my son.

So what can you do? The Sharing Foundation is always looking for volunteers to help with projects, fundraisers and more. C'mon and help us help the children of Cambodia. Contact a board or parent council member with your ideas for getting involved.

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Roteang Orphanage



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Children Pumping water at Roteang Village School

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