

### Visit to 5 Schools in Ninh Tay

On 31 December 2015, we visited Ninh Tay district for the first time. Located a few hours drive from Nha Trang in the mountains, live some minority ethnic groups. These families are very poor and live in small wooden shacks. As it is very cold here in winter, we delivered warm jumpers, toys and treats to 145 children at 5 different kindergartens and schools. The children were so thankful and excited to get a small gift. Check out their beautiful smiles!



#### What was spent?

\$363 for 145 sweaters

\$151 for 145 toys

\$40 on sweet treats

\$70 for the car and driver

\$8 for the banner

[www.quanamfoundation.org](http://www.quanamfoundation.org)

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## Helping out friends

Over the past 4 years I have made many wonderful friends while visiting Nha Trang. Some of these friends have gone to great efforts to help with my work and I'm forever grateful.

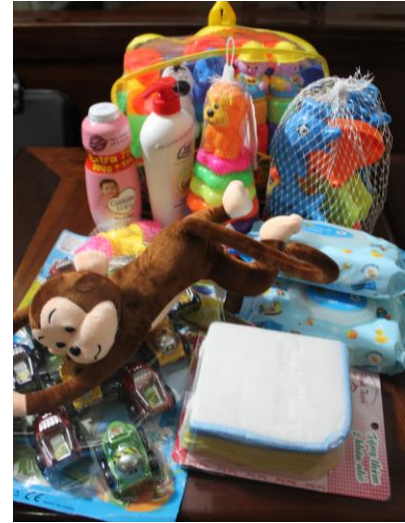
**Mr Duong:** The night guard of our hotel is a lovely old man who sleeps outside every night to let guests in after dark. Mr Duong's granddaughter (now 15 years old) has been disabled since birth and requires 24-7 care, milk powder and various medication to control pain and seizures. While I was visiting Mr Duong's wife had a bad motorbike accident and required shoulder surgery. Without insurance this is a huge and unexpected cost to the family.

**Quy's family:** I've also known Quy's parents and 2 younger sisters since my first trip to Nha Trang and Quy and his wife are now good friends of mine. Quy supports his parents and the education of his 2 sisters while working at a hotel. He also has a 1 year old baby boy.

### *What was spent?*

\$100 food parcel for Quy's Family

\$483 donation to Mr Duong towards his wife's surgery, and medication for his granddaughter (sponsored by Quan Am and me personally)



## Phu Quang Orphanage

On 4 January 2016, Quan Am Foundation visited one of my favourite places, Phu Quang pagoda. Phu Quang is home to around 25 children and it's a beautiful and loving place. The nuns are so kind to the children and you can see how much they adore them. Recently Phu Quang received a new baby girl who is now 7 months old and named Tomato! Quan Am visited the nuns, enjoyed a lovely lunch and donated the following: 2 large bags of rice, 3 bags of potatoes, 10 packets of dried mushrooms, 25 packets of pho noodles, 10 boxes (25 packs in each) of noodles, 10 bottles of oil, 3 bags of pasta, 10 bottles of soy sauce, 10 packets of seasoning and a bag of lentils. The children at Phu Quang also attended our exciting field trip on New Years Day.

### *What was spent?*

\$232 for food and supplies

\$35 car and driver





# New Years Eve Party at Loc Tho Orphanage and Charity School

On 31 December 2015, Quan Am Foundation hosted a fun party for the children at Loc Tho. The children had great fun playing games (special thank you to Hieu and friends), then we ate cake and the kids each received a toy and bread to take home.

## What was spent?

- \$71 for 5 cakes
- \$10 for plates and forks
- \$165 to give each child a toy
- \$115 on bread to take home
- \$9 on the banner

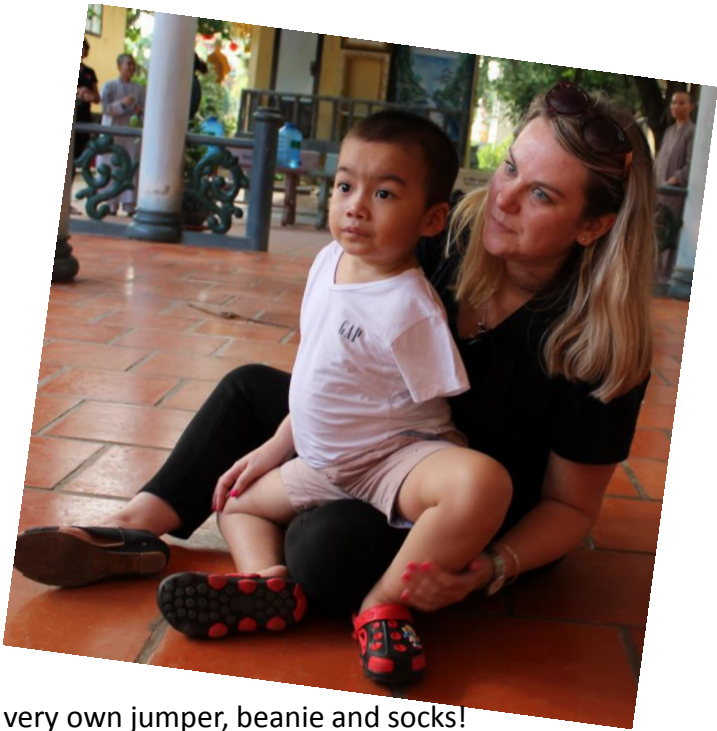




**Phan Thien Hue - No Arms? No Worries!**

Hue has a special place in my heart and I know he does for many of my supporters too. Thien Hue turned 4 in December and he had gotten a lot taller (and heavier!) in the 8 months since I had last seen him. Hue is doing extremely well and really thriving despite his disability. He attends a local school which he loves and returns back to Loc Tho pagoda in the evenings. He is adjusting to sharing his room with a new baby boy who was abandoned at the pagoda 4 months ago.

Hue has plenty of new tricks and as always, a great sense of humour. He speaks a few phrases in English like 'I love you' 'New Zealand' 'naughty boy' and 'Happy New Year!'.



A special thank you to Rona for knitting Hue his very own jumper, beanie and socks!

**Food for the Elderly**

On 30 December 2015, Quan Am Foundation delivered food parcels to the poor and elderly people of Vinh Ngoc district. It was a moving experience to speak with those who cannot afford the basic necessities of life. We were able to donate each woman a bag of rice, box of (24 bags) noodles, oil and seasoning. They were also able to collect a small allowance from the government to help with their electricity bill.

**What was spent?**

\$870 for 70 food parcels





# Field Trip! Phu Quang Orphanage and Kim Son Charity School

On 1 January 2015, Quan Am Foundation took around 60 children from Kim Son Charity School and Phu Quang Pagoda on a fun-filled field trip! We fit loads into our first day of 2016, starting out on 2 big buses we stopped at Vinpearl park for some group photos, followed by the Oceanographic Institute where we saw tropical fish, sting rays, sharks, seals and turtles! Outside, Hieu and his friends organised games and singing before we headed to Long Son Pagoda for a delicious lunch in their restaurant. After the children prayed inside the temple we had a few hours free time to play outside, attracting a lot of attention from tourists who wondered what on earth I was doing with so many children! From there we went to the beach for further play and a rest before it was time to head to a traditional Vietnamese water puppet show. It was an incredible day for the kids who rarely leave home or their pagoda and come into town. If they weren't, I was certainly ready for bed when we got home!

## What was spent?

- \$84 tickets to the aquarium
- \$139 bus hire and drivers
- \$177 lunch at Long Son
- \$16 water
- \$313 water puppet show

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Stay up to date with our activities and see all the photos of my latest trip!





## A visit to Kim Son Charity School

On 4 January 2015, we visited 3 places, starting with Kim Son Charity School. First Hiep gave the children a lesson on behalf of Project Healthy Smile on cleaning our teeth. Project Healthy Smile also donated toothbrushes and paste to all the children. Following this LovingKindness Vietnam (who we partner closely with) donated each of the children a warm jumper for the cooler winter weather. Obviously not paying attention to my dental lesson we then distributed some chocolate treats! The children were thrilled to receive a new jumper and were excited to try them on!



## Food Supplies for Thua Sai Disabled Orphanage

Our last stop on 4 January 2016 was to Thua Sai home for disabled children. This Christian home is a wonderful place for the kids and it warmed my heart to see how much the carers love them. After Hiep distributed toothbrushes on behalf of Project Healthy Smile, we sat down for around an hour for singing and play time. The children love to sing and took turns to lead the class. After this, Quan Am Foundation donated food to the head nun including: 2 large bags of rice, 10 boxes (of 25) noodles, 10 packets of pasta, 10 bottles of oil, 10 bags of seasoning and around 70 eggs. Of course I didn't listen to the dental hygiene lesson again because we also gave some treats!

### What was spent?

\$232 for food and supplies

\$35 for car and driver



## Volunteering at New Hope Cambodia

On 10 January 2016 I arrived in Siem Reap to teach at New Hope School for the second time. New Hope provides free education and school supplies to over 700 students. It has 9 English classrooms, 1 computer room, 1 sewing room and 1 music room. The school aims to equip these children with the skills so that they can one day get a job at a hotel, restaurant, office or as a tailor. The children who attend come from an extremely poor area – see my photos from the slum visit.

The computer class has 20 computers and teaches the children basic skills such as typing, Word, Excel, Powerpoint, Email and the Internet. There are two different music classes, in the morning is western musical instruments such as keyboard, drums and guitar, and the afternoon class is traditional Cambodian music. Working in a hotel or restaurant playing music is a far better lifestyle than collecting rubbish or begging from tourists.

There are up to 40 students in the kindergarten class who are taught basic English such as the alphabet and numbers. Sometimes student's younger brothers or sisters come to class because their parents are working and would otherwise be at home alone.

The sewing room has around 20 machines and aims to teach students for 1 year. They learn to make clothes, souvenirs and school uniforms before the second half of the course which focusses on wedding dresses and more intricate outfits. A traditional Cambodian wedding may have 7 or 8 outfits for the bride so getting a job as a tailor can earn good money. Most of the girls in this class used to be prostitutes and many are HIV positive with young children and no education. Now they can work on their own, in a shop or a clothing factory.

New Hope also has a training restaurant where students can study for 6 months to be a waitress or cook. The restaurant then hires them or tries to find them a job at restaurants in town.

On site there is a clinic which provides free treatment and medicine for people in the area. There is currently 1 local doctor, 1 nurse and 1 pharmacist. Many people suffer from a lack of food or lack of hygiene so are often sick or have poor health. The clinic can also offer home visits and transport for more serious cases to the local hospital. The clinic provides free formula until children are 2 years old. There is currently a big scam in town where mothers beg tourists to buy formula which is then sold back to the shop to buy alcohol or gamble. This is not acceptable and anyone caught doing this will no longer be given free formula. For many mothers the formula is not enough but due to poor health and malnutrition they cannot produce breast milk. Mothers also get sick after returning to work 1 or 2 months after child birth and leave babies at home with older siblings.

Above the clinic is the outreach centre where social workers coordinate sponsorship of 290 families. Their receive rice and a small grant each month. The social workers find out about the family situation and sponsors receive an update twice a year. There is a clear contract with these families that any cases of violence, gambling, alcohol, children not attending school etc, the sponsorship ends. You can also sponsor a student at primary, secondary or University. There are currently 170 students sponsored and 30 or so at University. Most families have 7 or 8 children so sponsors can also donate a bicycle, milk powder, mosquito nets, blankets, pillows, rice etc.

Next to the clinic is a library of English books where children learn to read and write. Volunteers are also currently working on a sanitation project which will provide clean water to people in the area.

The latest project (because there's so many!) for New Hope is a government primary school to open this month. Some families have up to 15 members living with them and although government school is free, things like books, pens and uniforms are not. Families cannot afford these basic items or the transport to take their children so they are often sent to work, collecting rubbish at the temples. New Hope has registered new students and they will be able to attend a half day lesson there followed by a half day at the English school.

Impressed? I am! New Hope is a wonderful organisation and I'm thrilled to have found it. This year I had such a short time but was delighted to help teach English for a week. There are often up to 15-20 volunteers at any time who assist the local Khmer teachers. If you're interested in visiting or sponsoring a child – check out [www.newhopecambodia.com](http://www.newhopecambodia.com)

### **What was spent?**

\$773 donation towards teacher salaries and school resources  
(in part by Quan Am and me personally)





## Volunteering at New Hope Cambodia





**Visiting the New Hope community**

There is a big reason why the children flourish at New Hope school, it's because they understand the importance of education and getting a job which can support their family. The children who attend New Hope come from an extremely poor community which I visited for the second time in January. Home to around 300 people (and only 15-20 houses) there are many children wandering alone while their parents are at work. Often up to 15 people share a house which is put together with scrap metal, cardboard on a government road they have taken over. The houses have no toilets and are surrounded by rubbish so you can imagine when the floods come it's an extremely unhygienic environment. But the children play and smile and life goes on.

[www.newhopecambodia.com](http://www.newhopecambodia.com)





## Sponsorships – Chhaina and Ly Hour

While in Siem Reap it was lovely to visit with my sponsor child Chhaina and her family. I was also surprised to see that Chhaina had a new baby brother having not known her mother was pregnant when I last visited! Chhaina is 9, her older brother is 11, and younger brothers are 5 years and 6 months old. The family are very poor and currently only Chhaina's father is working to support the 8 people living at the house. He is a tuk tuk driver who earns around \$5-10 per day. The cost to rent his motorbike and tuk tuk is \$90 per month so it leaves little left over for food, meaning the family tend to eat only twice a day. I purchased a lot of food and supplies for the family which should last a few months, as well as a new bicycle for Chhaina so now all 3 siblings can go to school together.

I have also enquired about sponsoring a new child at New Hope. His name is Ly Hour (photo below) and he was in the class I was teaching this year. Ly Hour is around 10 years old and has a severe facial deformity. He speaks clear English with pride and beamed when I gave him a new school bag.



## A very special thank you!

This woman here is the only reason why my trips to Vietnam are so wonderful. I've been working with Hiep since 2012 when I was introduced to her via LovingKindness Vietnam (another amazing charity who connect people like me and enable us to provide help to all deserving children).

Without Hiep I could never do any of this work and with her by my side we are a power team! Hiep literally organises every detail from the moment I book flights – she visits and calls each pagoda and orphanage to understand their needs, organises our transport and drivers, finds the best wholesale prices whether it be clothing, food or anything else we need, convinces her sons Long and Hieu to look out for me or volunteer for free, does all the shopping before I arrive and has a detailed itinerary that she meticulously updates each day!

Aside from that she buys medicine when I am sick, takes me out for the best noodle soup, includes me as part of her family celebrations and birthdays, spoils me with presents, even hosts me at her house when I couldn't afford a hotel and endlessly drives me all over town on our shopping expeditions.

Hiep has a true compassion for the poor and when not helping me she is constantly rallying around to fundraise, has probably taught every student in Nha Trang, is a caring mother and wife and all round good person. So, thank you Hiep. I couldn't and wouldn't want to do it without you!

