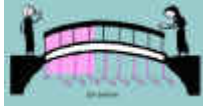


Where are we at with the building of "HOPE BRIDGE"?
ready to begin

May 2006



Click on this diagram to enlarge it and see how much money we have raised so far.

To all of the people who have helped us so far, thank you on behalf of the residents of Prasat Char village. We still have a long way to go though, so please spread the word.....

Despite the fact that we don't have all the money, we are going to start building the bridge.



We are taking a step of faith because if we wait much longer the rain will set in and make things very difficult. And the fact is that the old bridge is ready to collapse any day.

We organised a number of quotes and have finally decided to choose Mr Somart to build the bridge for us. He has experience building bridges and the last bridge he built he did step by step as the money was raised. He also came up with the most realistic price and seems very reliable and trustworthy.

We have enlisted a well respected woman from the village to head up our labour team. Her name is Sowana and we feel extremely lucky to have her on board. The village leader will also be helping organise the labour. We are planning to hire the most needy villagers to work on the bridge.

The first thing we need to do is build a shelter at the bridge site to house all the materials. To try and engage the villagers more and make them feel like this is their project we have asked them to donate what they can in the way of building materials to build the shelter. The commune leader is also going to ask the villagers to donate some money towards the cost of building the bridge. We don't expect them to raise much at all, but even if they donate a little it will help them to feel ownership towards the bridge.

Below are two short stories about people who will directly benefit from the new bridge.



Sorwt is 15 son of Mr Sang, tried to help died of has also been extremely sick with tuber backbone and spent two years in hospit hospital he was in was about 5 hours by bus from the village so he had very



years old and is the the mar who, u tubercu



Some of the very generous people who have donated money for the bridge so far are:

Barry and Kay Groves (thanks Mum and Dad!)

The Swift Family

The Short Family

Graham Day

Morris and Jeanne Jones

Shirley, Peter in Darwin, Peter in Queensland

Jacqueline Gray, Helen

Niek and Dalin

Abelard & Augustine Narcida

Nana Hill

Matthew Firth

Shaun and Donna

Many anonymous donors

Anna, Mandy M, Miss Catherine S

Bernie, Petra, Mereya, Sandy

Leonie and Carolyn

Mandy - the Sunshine Coast's award winning bridal florist.

www.mandartau.com

Sandy D, Steph A

Tanya Chesterton-Smith and family

Carly and Tracey Jackson

Camille, Paul, Isabelle and Madeleine O'Reilly

"Daddy Kool" from Darwin

Noosa Permaculture

He was not there when his father passed away. He has been back in the village for a few months now. His illness has left him crippled and he needs a crutch to walk. While he was in hospital, as part of his rehabilitation, he was taught how to repair bicycles. We recently bought all the tools and equipment Sorwt needed to set up a bicycle repair business. Sorwt lives very near to the bridge so the increased traffic that the new bridge will bring will mean a real boost for his business. This won't just help him but will help his whole family. (Photo 1: Sorwt and his Mother, Photo 2: Sorwt and his brother in law at the sign advertising the bicycle repair business, Photo 3: First customer!)



This baby is 8 months old. His mother is 28 and this is her fourth child. Unfortunately, all three of her other babies died before they were two. This little fellow has a number of medical problems and needs hospital treatment. To get to hospital they need to cross the bridge.



When we first met him he was covered in inflamed sores, but this seems to be the least of his problems. The poor little fellow has no control of his neck. He cannot hold his head up constantly supported. We organised to take him to the hospital



in itchy, and needs to be immediately.

He was treated for the rash, which I assume was contagious, and sent home with strict instructions to bring him back to hospital as soon as it was cleared up so that his other medical problems could be addressed. He's just about ready to go back to hospital now.

Click on the following links to read more about our bridge project:

[Group](#)

[Meridian State College](#)

[Neil and Anne Mathison](#)

Quotations from the villagers about the bridge:

“I fell off the bridge with my motorbike. The water was up to my chest and my motorbike ended up in the water.”

“Some people have been injured falling off the bridge.”

“Many people have fallen off the bridge along with their bicycles and motorbikes.”

“A new bridge will be good for the economy of the village.”

“I get very scared when I have to cross the bridge.” (Sorwt, a 15 year old disabled boy.)

“Sometimes during the wet season we can't cross the bridge so we can't get to work and we make no money.”