

Support Office:
ICMI Speakers & Entertainers
ABN: 42 114 669 224

(PO Box 2311)
Level 2, 159 High Street
Prahran, Victoria 3181

Ph: +61 3 9529 3711
Fax: +61 3 9529 4573

Email: icmi@icmi.com.au
Web: www.icmi.com.au



*Incorporating Olympic Communicators
Under licence from the Australian Olympic Committee*



Geraldine Cox AM

Geraldine Cox, AM, daughter of a South Australian milkman, joined the Department of Foreign Affairs in 1970 and served 18 years in Cambodia, the Philippines, Thailand, Iran and the USA, before resigning and joining the corporate sector in Sydney in 1987 for 8 years. In 1995 events in her life found her in Cambodia 25 years after she had left it, working for the First Prime Minister, before the 1997 coup catapulted her into running an orphanage full time. She divides her time between living at Sunrise Children's Village in Cambodia and travelling to raise funds for her projects.

After resigning from the government in 1987 she worked for 8 years with *The Chase Manhattan Bank* in Sydney before deciding to live in Cambodia in 1996.

Geraldine's original experiences in Cambodia never left her and on a return visit in 1993 she became involved in helping an orphaned Cambodian child. From that small beginning Geraldine founded what is now the *Sunrise Children's Villages*.

King Norodom Sihanouk bestowed her with full Cambodian Citizenship by Royal Decree in 1999 and she spends half the year with the children and the remainder travelling to raise funds.

Pan Macmillan published Geraldine's autobiography, *Home Is Where The Heart Is* in 2000 and *Hollywood* bought the rights to make a feature film based on her book.



The documentary, *My Khmer Heart*, won the *Hollywood Film Festival Documentary of the Year Award* in 2000 and has since been bought and screened by *HBO* and *Discovery Cable Channels*. Her story has been featured on Australian Television over the last few years on *Australian Story*, *The Sunday Program*, *This Is Your Life*, *Four Corners*, *Today Tonight*, *The 7.30 Report* and *60 Minutes*.

- Geraldine was made a *Member of the Order of Australia* in 2000.
- Geraldine has been appointed to serve on the *International Advisory Board of Oasis Africa* - www.oasisafrica.net.
- In November 2006 Geraldine was awarded the *Circle of Courage Award* from the Australian Charity, *Youth Off The Streets*.
- In November 2006 *The Rotary Foundation of Rotary International* named Geraldine a *Paul Harris Fellow* in appreciation of tangible and significant assistance given for the furtherance of better understanding and friendly relations among peoples of the world.
- In June 2007, *Australia Network*, the cable television channel screened in 41 countries, invited Geraldine to be one of their *Ambassadors*, where she will promote the channel and its programs.

PRESENTATIONS

"A DIFFERENT KIND OF WEALTH"

Geraldine speaks about the comparisons between her life of excess and glamour in the Australian Diplomatic Corps and the corporate sector in Sydney, spanning 26 years of hedonism and her life now in Cambodia, living in an orphanage caring for more than 200 orphans and disadvantaged children. She will take you on a ride of highs and lows, telling the tragic stories of the children in her care and how some of them rise above their origins to commence lives of independence and dignity and those that do not. She will describe the war and armed violence she and the children have lived through and survived, to the extent that she has been bestowed with Cambodian Citizenship by King Norodom Sihanouk and calls her previous sworn enemy, the Prime Minister of Cambodia, Hun Sen, her Brother...

"THE HAND THAT ROCKS THE CRADLE"

Geraldine speaks about the indomitable spirit of the women of Cambodia from all levels of the society who, against all odds, battle to keep their children by their side, despite abandonment by their men, neglect by their government, and abuse by an often uncaring and ignorant population. She describes the valiant efforts made by many returned Cambodian women from western countries, determined to make a difference in Cambodia and how they struggle with the knowledge that what they have learned often can not be accepted or applied to present-day Cambodia. She will tell you stories of brave women who risk their lives saving children who have been trafficked into prostitution and child labour. She will describe for you the face and soul of today's Cambodian women, who are shrugging off the cloak of their post-traumatic stress disorders from the legacy of 30 years of civil war, genocide and foreign occupation, in an effort to make the future for their children full of hope, possibilities and achievable dreams...

"COMING OUT OF THE MIST"

Geraldine speaks about modern-day Cambodia and all the issues facing it. She gives a thumbnail sketch of what Cambodia has suffered over the last 100 years and what is being done to drag the country into the 21st century. She addresses the problems of corruption, drug smuggling, HIV AIDS, deforestation, arms dealing, the state of the new Norodom Monarchy, the strength of the present government and its opposition, the obstacles in the way of foreign investment and the challenges for the tourism industry. She explains the huge problems in the fields of health and education and what is being done to improve conditions and how, most of all, why she is optimistic that Cambodia is commencing on a journey of solidarity, prosperity and peace never experienced before in its history...

"SCHOOL IS JUST A DREAM"

Geraldine speaks about the vast disparities between the education opportunities enjoyed by children in western countries compared to the pitiful state of the Cambodian education system. Her talk is aimed at students of all ages to appreciate and value what so many of them take for granted in their schools and from their teachers. She talks about the plight of abandoned street children who do not even dream of ever going to a school, or sleeping in a clean bed, or having access to clean drinking water. She talks about schools with no desks, no cafeterias, no playing fields, certainly no computers and often without qualified teachers.

In **Australia** she has been invited to speak at:

- National Press Club, Canberra
- South Australian Press Club, Adelaide
- The Sydney Institute, Sydney
- Parliamentary Sub Committee on Human Rights, Canberra
- Parliamentary Sub Committee on Cambodia, Canberra
- The Asia Society, Melbourne
- University of Sydney, International School of Public Health
- Chinese Chamber of Commerce, Adelaide
- Women of the Year, Adelaide
- International Women's Day, Gold Coast
- Queen Adelaide Club, Adelaide
- Lyceum Club, Adelaide
- Women Chiefs of Enterprise, Adelaide
- Bennelong Institute
- National Conference of Certified Practising Accountants, Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne
- InvestorInfo's Women, Wealth and Success, Sydney
- Women in Finance, Sydney
- Global Spirited Women, Gold Coast
- Women in Superannuation, Sydney
- Victorian Chapter of Members of the Order of Australia
- Catalyst Network, Sydney
- National Civics & Citizenship Forum, Canberra
- Melbourne University's Asia Link
- Serious Women's Business Conference, Melbourne
- Halogen Foundation - National Young Leaders Day, Adelaide and Sydney
- State Rotary Conventions
- Public and Private Schools throughout Australia
- Interdenominational Churches throughout Australia
- National and State Radio and Television Interviews
- Australian Corporate Boardrooms

In the **United States**:

- Kent State University, Ohio
- Albany University, New York
- University of San Francisco, California
- CNN Television News
- NBC Television News
- State Radio Interviews

In **Singapore, Hong Kong, South Korea and Thailand**:

- Local Television Networks
- Channel News Asia, Cable Television
- Korean National MBC Network
- Radio Interviews

TESTIMONIALS

"Geraldine is one of the world's most warm-hearted people. She is also fearless and tireless and the orphanage, which now exists in politically easier times, was both born and survived entirely as a function of her vigour, generosity and humanity."

Ambassador John Dauth, Australian Mission to the United Nations, New York

"In speaking for the Asia Society AustralAsia Centre in Melbourne 2 years ago, Geraldine Cox took us through the process of establishing the orphanage, Sunrise Children's Village, in a way that was frank, engaging and inspirational. By the end of her talk, there were few in the audience who did not want to get up and volunteer their services immediately in helping her secure the means needed to support her children. Geraldine is also able to place her activities in the context of the dynamic and changing political and social environments of Cambodia, offering a clearer understanding of a country that has experienced so much tragedy."

Prue Holstein, Executive Director, Asia Society AustralAsia Centre, Melbourne

"There are a lot of decisions that she made, by her own admission, could be deemed questionable. You always see the motives that are behind what she's doing and her first priority is the children, you know, in the orphanage and she makes no bones about that, so I think that's really admirable. She's not a saint, she's human. I was just incredibly moved by her and by her work."

Matt Damon, Hollywood

"The heroine at the heart of "My Khmer Heart" is such an astonishing, unpredictable, indomitable force of nature as to be wholly implausible, except for the fact she does exist. Think of Bertolt Brecht's Mother Courage, then add Mother Teresa, Hanoi Jane Fonda and the unsinkable Molly Brown."

Kirk Honeycutt, the Hollywood Reporter's Head Critic, Los Angeles

"Her commitment in bringing awareness about the plight of these forgotten Cambodian children will never be forgotten."

Danny Glover, Hollywood

"What an outstanding story this is and what an outstanding woman Geraldine is and what an amazing path she has travelled."

Harry M. Miller, Celebrity Agent, Sydney

'Geraldine Cox has an extraordinary and important story to tell - and she tells it very well indeed.'

Phillip Adams, ABC Journalist, Sydney

"SMEC as one of Australia's leading consulting firms is also proud to be involved with Geraldine and her work in Cambodia setting an example of how Australian businesses can have a human face on the international scene for such a worthwhile project. Geraldine was one of the principal guests at the inauguration of the SMEC Foundation in 2002 and was invited to speak at the recent anniversary of SMEC's 10 year's of privatization in 2003 and this high regard in which she is held by SMEC management is a reflection of her never-ending efforts to further her goals for the Orphanage and its children."

Leigh Shalless, Senior Project Manager, Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation, Pakistan

"I have known Geraldine for more than 30 years. She has never taken the easy way out. She has demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to endangered Cambodian children and energy levels to match. Her story is one of courage and heartbreak, of hard work and love."

Michael Mann, President, RMIT International University of Vietnam and Ambassador of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta to Cambodia, Ho Chi Minh

Geraldine uses a big heart and openness, combined with subtle tact, to cross borders between cultures, which many people do not even know exist.

Warren Reed, former ASIS Officer and author of 'Code Cicada', Sydney

The orphans of Cambodia have a good chance with a mother like her.

Prime Minister of Cambodia Hun Sen, Phnom Penh

She has the courage to believe she can make a difference.

Peter Ustinov, British Actor, London (deceased)