

Part 345 for Cathy's blog

Tuesday 14th to Sunday 19th, April, 2026

Tuesday 14th April, 2026.

The first day of three days of celebrations for Khmer New Year.

Temple Day : Wat Athvear

Wat Athvear is an Angkorian temple that lies between our house and Phnom Kroam. It has a working Pagoda to its east and is still home to many families displaced by the Thai incursion into Cambodian land (before Christmas last year).

We rode along the side of the temple and modern pagoda, a concrete road lined with bamboo and flowering tamarind trees and small rice fields.



**One large, raised block is home to hundreds of stupas
(where the ash remains of people are housed).**



Fields often have raised levee banks with the Cambodian sugar palm trees planted up to 40 years ago. Even at the end of the dry season, there is water to irrigate the rice field.

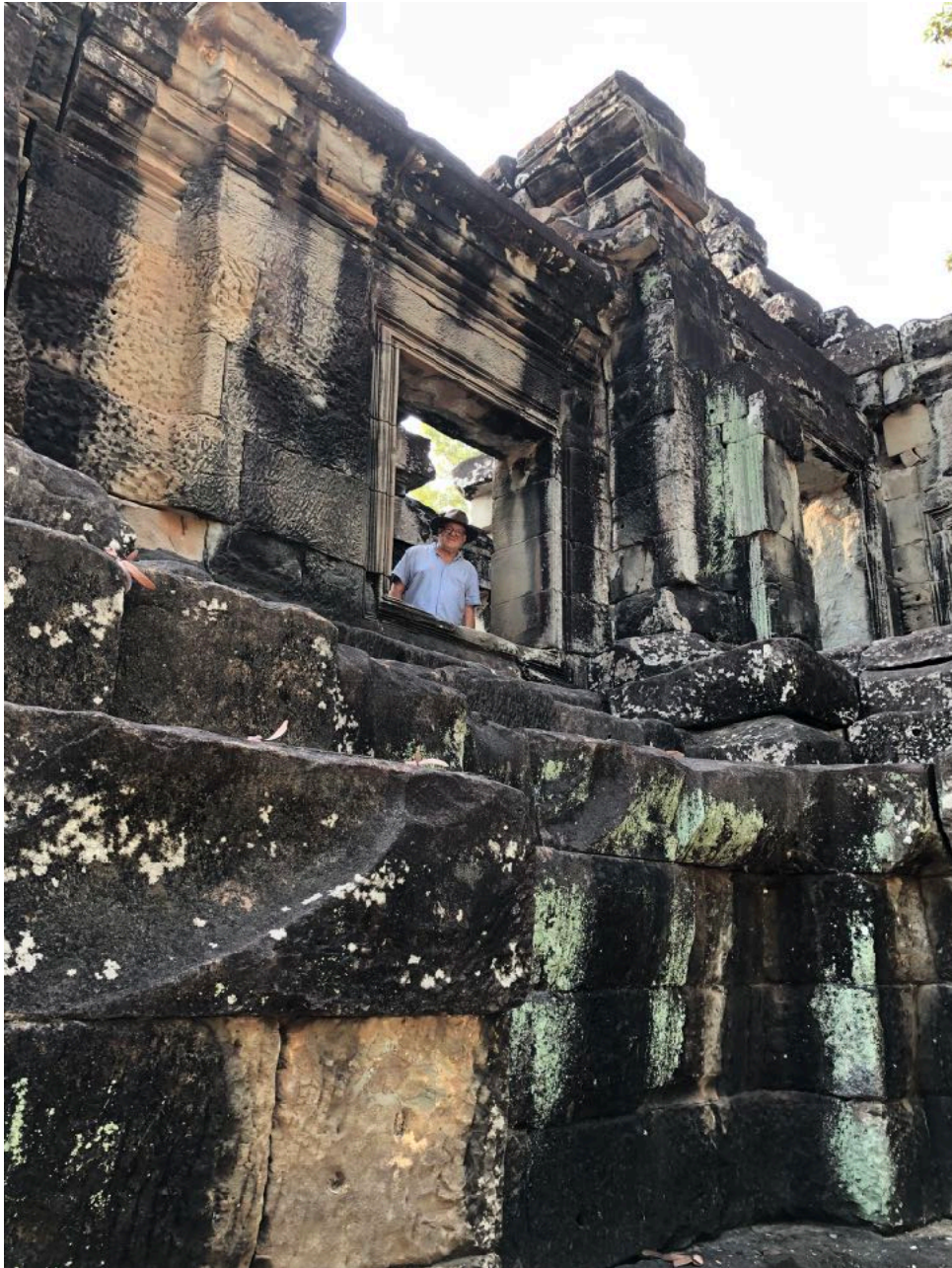




At Wat Athvear, the sandstone blocks are big!



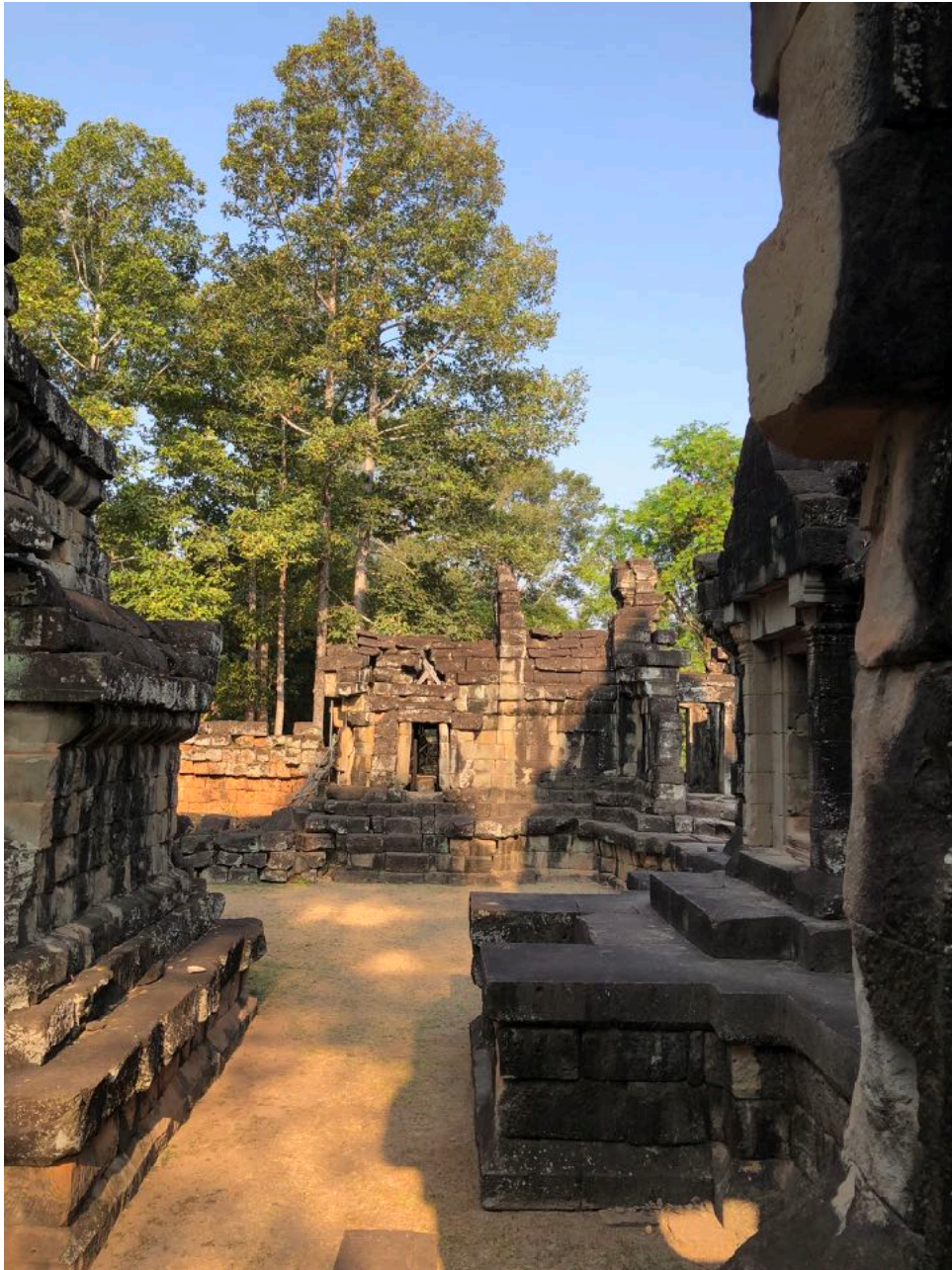
We think the snakes like to rub against the rocks to take off their skins.



The building itself doesn't have much decoration, but the windows and doors are framed.



This window has some carved decoration.

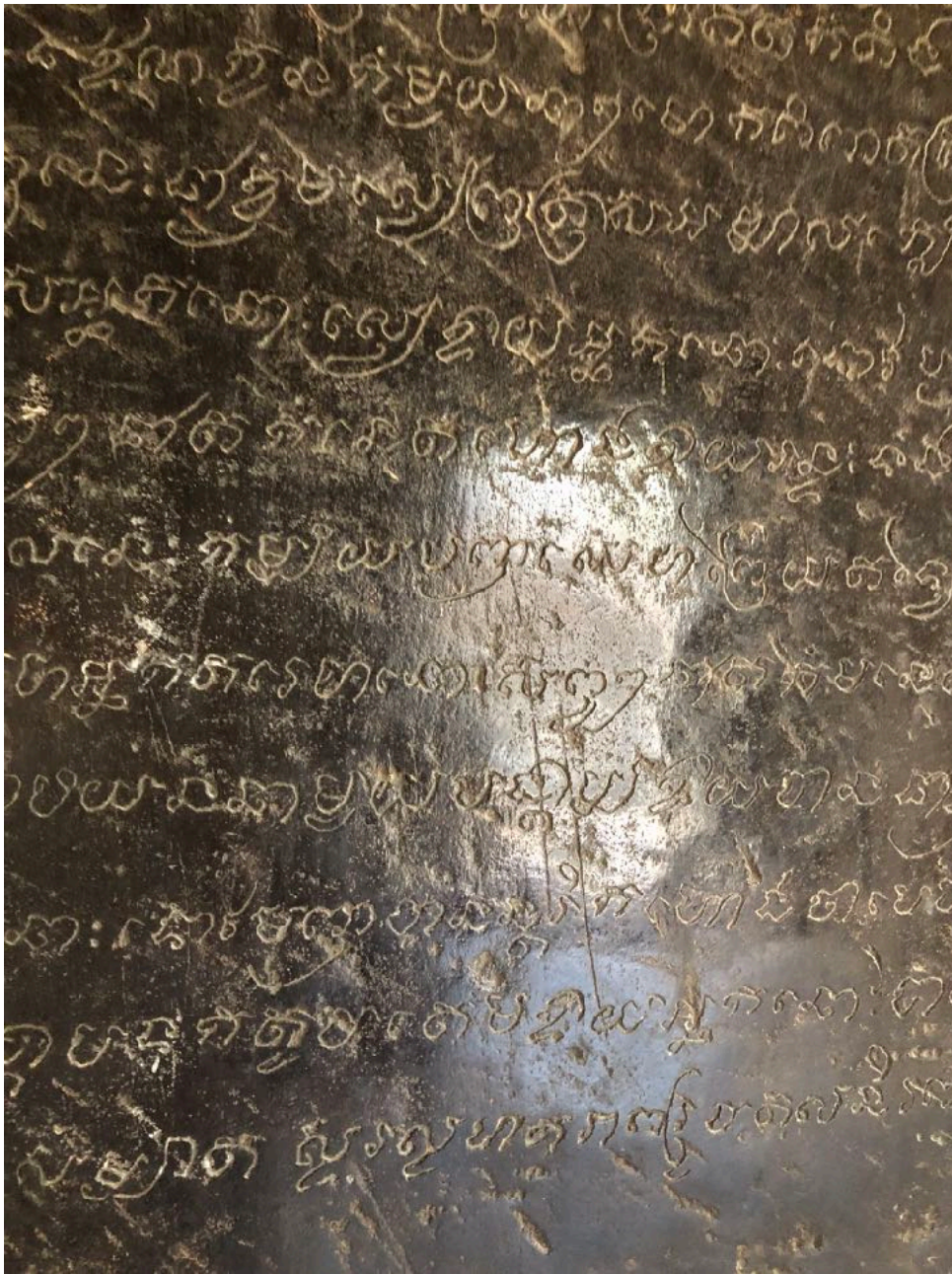


Although much smaller than Angkor Wat, the layout is the same with a main central building with tower and libraries inside a wall. Wat Athvear also faces west, not east.

This is looking towards the main western entrance.



Structural support for one of the libraries and the modern pagoda buildings outside the wall.



Inside the temple there are two large scripts. (No, I can't read it partly because not all the letters are the same... but I do recognise some words and letters.)



Some broken interior carvings.



**We have met some of the cats at Wat Athvear before.
This one was quite talkative.**



More stupas in the grounds outside the temple wall.



In the pagoda grounds, they are setting up for Khmer New Year games. Here are the sand castles.



Food stalls are also just setting up.



Pagoda with Wat Athvear behind it.

Wednesday 15th April, 2026.

The city is now full of locals visiting family and friends and taking short breaks from their work. It is too busy for us, so we stayed home rather than brave the traffic.

We even ordered in dumplings for tea (delivery here is what you decide to pay... the riders get a set delivery fee and you can tip them extra... we usually tip \$1 extra).

Thursday 16th April, 2026.

The last day of Khmer New Year.
We stayed home.

Friday 17th April, 2026.

Temple Day : Prasat West Top and Kravan

It is very hot and we try to get out before 7:00am, to get to the temples by about 7:30. (Our neighbours are just getting home from their walk at 7:00 and our landlord has been working in his garden from about 6:00, so we are not the earliest risers.)



Water throwing has been going on for two days now and the streets are wet. This car is parked by the local trail bike rental shop (in Road 63, by the river).



Rubbish waiting for collection, and water, at the corner of Pub Street.



Pop up stores are set up along the roads near Angkor Wat, hoping to sell hats and scarves etc to international and local tourists alike.



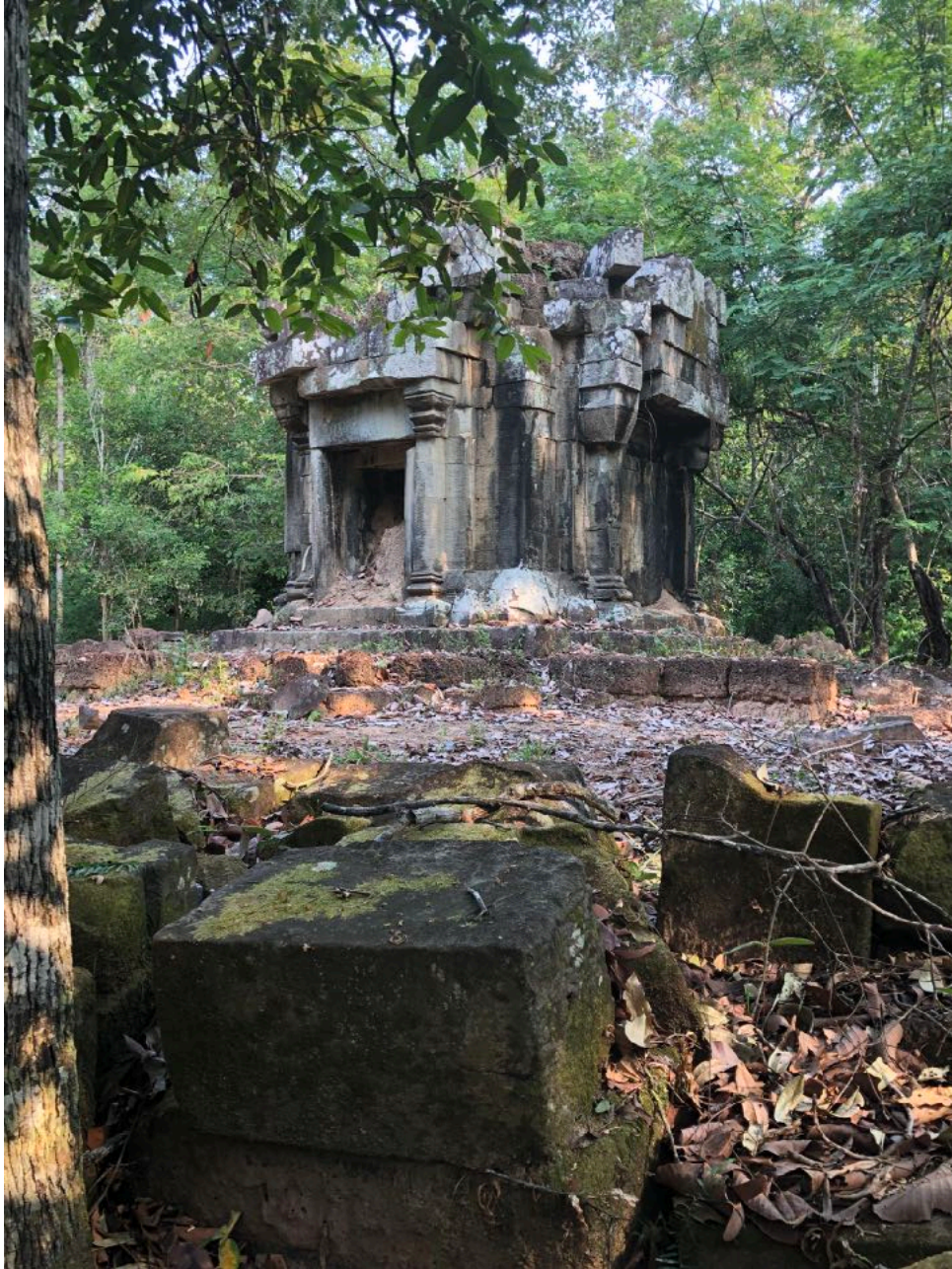
This is the road around the entrance to Angkor Wat.



We met the geese again. They are doing a good job protecting this pagoda.



The Cambodian flag and the Buddhist flag, decorating the entrance to this pagoda.



Then it was on to West Top Temple.

It lies about 200m from the road past Ta Keo. It is in line with Don Mao and the Eastern Terrace and Pier. It is not much of a temple.



After it rains, you cannot get to it because of flooding at the foot of its small hill.

(Not so) exotic wildlife at Prasat Top West.

Then it was on to Kravan.



The five towers of Kravan.

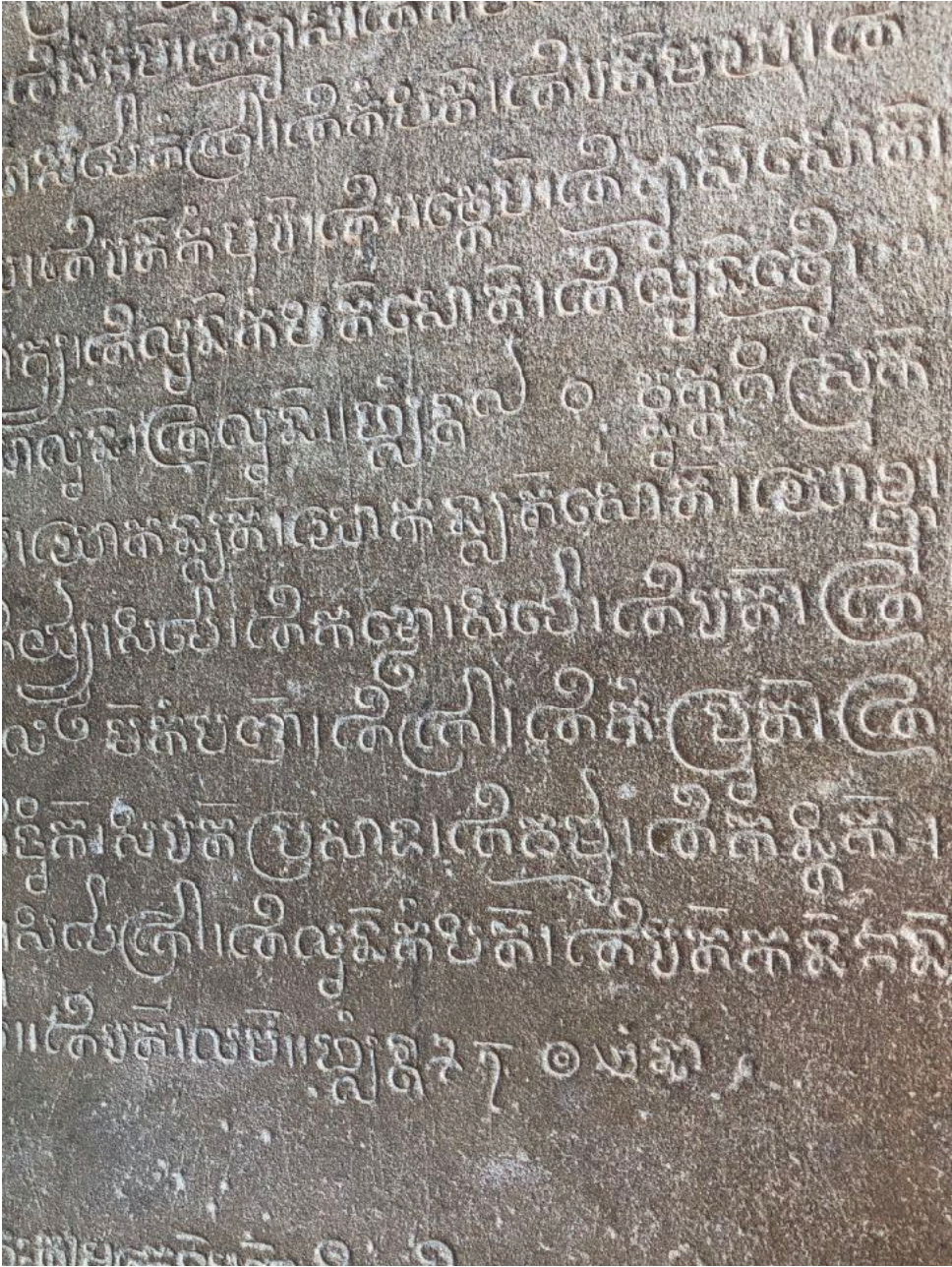


Worker's bike.



Looking back at a platform to the east of the main towers. Sometimes, the hotels will run in a dinner and Apsara dance show here.

Carved script at Kravan.





Kravan from the east. Look carefully and you can see David with more chickens.



How many people can you fit into a twin cab (and tray).

You were correct if you said 20!

The roads and the city are still busy. We caught a Tuktuk into town for tea, to avoid dodging people, motorbikes, tuktuks and cars.

After tea, we walked to see the Magawa statue.



Side street life in Siem Reap.



These two locals have had a hard day!



And this is Magawa.

He was a HeroRat.

Magawa worked for five years. He found more than 100 unexploded “bombs” (or other ordinance) and cleared more than 141 000 square meters of land. He was the first rat to be awarded the PSDA Gold Medal for bravery. He was born in Tanzania in 2013 and was trained to detect the chemicals in land mines etc, not the metal, which meant he ignored any scrap metal.

He weighed 1.2 kg which meant he did not detonate any land mines. It took him 20 minutes to clear a “tennis court” sized area (which would take humans 1-4 days).

He was an African Giant Pouched Rat.

He retired in 2020 and died in 2022.

Go and see his workmates at the Appopo rats in Siem Reap. You get to see them working, hold them and your entrance ticket helps feed them, train them and keep them working to clear mines laid during the Viet Nam war.

Saturday 18th April, 2026.

A quick Tuktuk ride to the Angkor supermarket.

Sunday 19th April, 2026.

We stayed home (as usual).

