



VENERABLE SAO KHON

April 17, 1934 - September 12, 2017

THE VENERABLE SAO KHON

Before entering monkhood, Venerable Sao Khon was born to Mrs. Miev Soun, (Mother) and Mr. Sao Tol, (Father) on April 17, 1934 at Oh Village, Chrey Kreing District in Siem Reap province of Cambodia. His parents were rice farmers. The Venerable had a younger brother. Due to sickness, his father passed away when he was one year old, leaving him with his mother and a younger brother.

At a tender age of 14, he was ordained as a novice under the tutelage of a Buddhist master, Venerable Sok, at the Khsac Temple located at Sangveuy sub-district, Chrey Kreing District in Siem Reap province.

He enrolled at a local Buddhist Dharma school and completed First, Second and Third Level of schooling before furthering his education in Pali and Sangskrit at the Junior and High Buddhist School in the Capital City of Phnom Penh, Cambodia. While he was away studying Buddhism in Phnom Penh, his mother became quite ill and passed away. Unfortunately, he was not able to attend his mother's funeral due to receiving late news of her demise. Toward the end of 1974, the Venerable went on to further his Buddhist education in Thailand with the goal of learning from different great Buddhist masters and scholars from abroad. On April 17, 1975 Cambodia fell into the hand of the communist Khmer Rouge, or the Democratic Kampuchea. Then, Venerable Sao Khon decided to stay on and further his education and

meditation practice specializing in Kantiya Tuk-ra and Vapasana Tuk-ra in southeastern part of Thailand; thus avoiding going back to Cambodia during the Khmer Rouge regime from 1975 to 1979. Venerable Sao Khon came to the United States of America through the invitation and sponsorship of the late Samdech Preah Maha Ghosananda in late 1985. He has been residing in Lowell and North Chelmsford, Massachusetts ever since.

Since arriving in Lowell, Massachusetts, Venerable Sao Khon has been working tirelessly to provide spiritual counseling and Dharma teaching to the Cambodian refugees who had just arrived from refugees to resettle throughout Lowell city and surrounding towns. He worked with community leaders and other Buddhist monks to build the first Buddhist temple, Trairatanaram Temple, in order to provide Buddhist Teachings and organize different cultural activities for the growing Cambodian community members in the Greater Lowell area.

Venerable Sao Khon has had participated in numerous educational, social, and religious activities as well as health and mental health settings. He has provided countless spiritual advice to many community-based organizations, health centers, hospital and mainstream institutions such as Metta Health Center, Lowell Community Health Center, Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association, and others. He also helped create the Lowell Southeast Asian Water Festival Project in 1997 with Mr. Samkhann Khoeun, former Executive Director of the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association of Greater Lowell, Inc. and other community leaders. He also helped establish another Cambodian Temple, Sao Sok San Buddhist Temple, in South Carolina.

In early March of 1993, Venerable Sao Khon along with many other elder Buddhist monks and leaders, under the tutelage of Samdech Preah Maha Ghosananda, established the Community of Khmer Buddhist Monks, Inc., (CKBM), a national Buddhist Association aimed at assisting and strengthening all Cambodian Buddhist temples and Buddhist monks across the United States of America. The vision and mission of the CKBM are to work in solidarity with all Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike to promote the practice of

the Theravada Buddhism, preserve and develop Khmer traditions and culture, and also to address the unmet needs of the Cambodian elders, youth and families who have been resettled and rebuild their new lives throughout the Cambodian diaspora communities.

Venerable Sao Khon was elected as the Preah Sangha Thipathi, the highest title of the religious Buddhist secular organization in America, and also as President of the Community of Khmer Buddhist Monks, Inc. at the national Buddhist Monks Assembly and Conference. Since then, he has been working tirelessly to preach the Teaching of the Lord Buddha, promoting Cambodian tradition and culture, helping many families and youth, many of them in incarceration, to relive their lives accordingly the Dharma and also to get back to their families and community.

In addition, he has conducted many ordination ceremonies to ordain numerous Cambodians and non-Cambodians as Buddhist novices, particularly those who wish to learn about Buddhism and practice meditation. He has provided countless hours of spiritual counseling, console many families who lost their loved ones, attending to the sick in hospitals and homes, conducting many Buddhist funeral ceremonies for the deads, and organizing many religious ceremonies and cultural activities throughout the many years as well as servicing hundreds and thousands of people.

In late 2011, Venerable Sao Khon lead the Buddhist monks and laypeople to build new religious center, known as "Vatt Khmer Lowell and Khmer American Cultural Center." It is A Temple of Hope and A Center of Renewal, which reflect and represent the common experiences of the Cambodian elders and families, who are as the survivors of the Cambodia civil war, of the genocide or holocaust, of foreign colonialism, as refugees, and also as naturalized citizens of United States of America. This new temple will be built on a parcel of 12 Acre of land located along the Merrimack River in Lowell where the CKBM purchased in late 2011. The goal is re-establish the temple as both the Thervada religious institution as well as the Cambodian American Cultural

Center, the first-ever institution in America. It will be equipped with cultural museum, library, school, and community function hall to further develop and promote Khmer tradition and culture the Cambodian diaspora communities.

Venerable Sao Khon has recently been embarking on the most noble 84,000 Buddha Capital Campaign project which is dedicated to the highest Buddhist Canons of 84,000 Preach Dharmas as described in the Tripitaka. It is hoped to reach out and recruit 84,000 donors/supporters with a humble request of \$100 each toward this campaign. As a token of appreciation, the campaign will have the donor names will be engraved on the pedestal of the small Buddha statue. And all 84,000 Buddha statues will be permanently enshrined inside the new temple, forever!

Venerable Sao Khon has been dedicating his entire life to the practices of Theravada Buddhism and promotion of traditional Khmer culture since he had been ordained as monkhood at the age of 14. He is now 83 years old, still going strong servicing his people till last breath. He served compassionately everyone, from all walk of life, young and old, men and women, youth and families, and many other nationalities as well. His tireless effort is to help people find peace, harmonious life for families and community, and to live a dignified life.

He passed away peacefully on the morning of Tuesday, September 12, 2017 at Vatt Khmer Lowell located at 48 Townsend Ave.; Lowell, Massachusetts 01854.

SERVICES WILL BEGIN AT THE FAY McCABE FUNERAL HOME, 105 MOORE STREET, LOWELL, on FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2017 at 2 PM, with a PARADE to the TEMPLE scheduled to take place at 2:30 PM.

Some Interesting Info about the Most Venerable Dhammathero SAO KHON:

§ Ordained as a Theravada Buddhist monk for 70 years; aged 14 till his passing on Sept 12, 2017

§ Loved doing meditation under the trees

§ Loved working with youth, particularly helping delinquent youth becoming better persons,

compassionate and contributing citizens

§ Spoke at least five languages: English, Khmer, Thai, Laotian, Pali, Sanskrit, and some French

(Cambodia was under the French Colonization for over 90 years – 1860 to 1954)

§ Founding member and Abbot of Vatt Khmer Lowell & Khmer American Cultural Center; 2011-2017

§ Spiritual Leader of the most auspicious 84,000-Buddha Capital Campaign Project aimed reaching out and recruiting 84,000 supporters to raising \$10 million to build the first-ever Vatt Khmer Lowell and Khmer American Cultural Center...A Temple of Hope and A Center of Renewal; 2012-2017

§ Abbot & Spiritual leader of four Special Buddha-Abhiseka Ceremonies as part of the 84,000-Buddha Campaign Project; 2013 - 2016

§ Founding member of the Community of Khmer Buddhist Monks Vatt Sao Sok San in South Carolina

§ Founding members of the Community of Khmer Buddhist Monks, Inc. (CKBM); March 1993

§ Elected President for Five 5-year term of the Community of Khmer Buddhist Monks, Inc. 1993 - 2017

§ Elected President for first 3-year term for the International Buddhist Sangha

§ Elected President of for the first 5-year term for the International Community of Khmer Buddhist Monks

§ Founder and Abbot of Trairatanaram Temple in North Chelmsford, MA; 1985 – 2011

§ Founding member and Spiritual Advisor, Lowell Southeast Asian Water Festival Project 1997-1999

§ Spiritual Advisor to the Metta Health Center/Lowell Community Health Center 1998

§ Board of Director of Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association of Greater Lowell, Inc.; 1986-1988

§ Spiritual Advisor of the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association of Greater Lowell, Inc. 1988-2002

Previous Events

PARADE

SEP 15. 2:30 PM (ET)

Fay McCabe Funeral Home
105 Moore Street
Lowell, MA 01852
(978) 459-9222
sean@faymccabe.com
<https://www.faymccabe.com>

Reception at the Temple

SEP 15. 3:00 PM (ET)

VATT KHMER LOWELL - COMMUNITY OF BUDDHIST MONKS
48 Townsend Avenue
Lowell, MA 01854

View and Pay Respects to the Body of the late Dhammathero SAO KHON

SEP 15. 4:30 PM - 9:00 PM (ET)

VATT KHMER LOWELL - COMMUNITY OF BUDDHIST MONKS
48 Townsend Avenue
Lowell, MA 01854

Pay Homage to the Triple Gems, Chanting the Five Buddhist Precepts, Alms Offerings to the Buddhist

SEP 16. 9:00 AM (ET)

VATT KHMER LOWELL - COMMUNITY OF BUDDHIST MONKS
48 Townsend Avenue
Lowell, MA 01854

Food Offering

SEP 16. 11:00 AM (ET)

VATT KHMER LOWELL - COMMUNITY OF BUDDHIST MONKS
48 Townsend Avenue
Lowell, MA 01854

Food Offering to the Buddhist Sangha, Praying, Paying Respects to the late Dhammathero

SEP 16. 11:00 AM (ET)

VATT KHMER LOWELL - COMMUNITY OF BUDDHIST MONKS
48 Townsend Avenue
Lowell, MA 01854

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48 Townsend Avenue
Lowell, MA 01854

Food Offering to the Buddhist Sangha, Praying, Paying Respects to the late Dhammathero

SEP 17. 11:00 AM (ET)

VATT KHMER LOWELL - COMMUNITY OF BUDDHIST MONKS
48 Townsend Avenue
Lowell, MA 01854

PARADE

SEP 17. 1:00 PM (ET)

VATT KHMER LOWELL - COMMUNITY OF BUDDHIST MONKS
48 Townsend Avenue
Lowell, MA 01854

Tribute Wall

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“ Sorry I haven't left a note since Venerable Khon Sao passing, but it was he, who I went to as a Captain of the Lowell Police for help in reducing violence in the City. A true leader who didn't hesitate to assist us in our path forward to reduce violent crime, which we did. In memory of my friend Venerable Khon Sao. 🙏. Captain Bob DeMoura retired LPD

Bob DeMoura - July 14, 2024 at 10:19 AM



“ VENERABLE SAO KHON

January 28, 2023 at 03:09 PM

SR

“ Sean & Erin Rourke lit a candle in memory of VENERABLE SAO KHON



Sean & Erin Rourke - September 19, 2017 at 08:27 PM