



Repairing Bodies.
Rebuilding Lives

insideINTERPLAST

June 2009

Hand Therapy Unit Opens in Bangladesh

In 2007 Occupational Therapists (OTs) began volunteering with Interplast teams with the aim of improving access to appropriate therapy for Bangladeshi patients following hand surgery at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). Hand therapy is required to maximise the post operative outcomes of hand surgery patients and to prevent the recurrence of deformity following the surgery.

The majority of hand therapy cases are complex burn scar contractures. Suffering a severe burn, surviving, and learning to live with the scars is traumatic enough. Losing function of your hand, rendering you dependant on others and unable to make or sell wares in the market, or toil in your field makes a bad situation terribly worse.

With funding support from AusAID, Interplast volunteers have been working at the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP) Savar and Mirpul Campuses, to establish Hand Therapy services. The CRP is a not for profit organisation and the major trainer and employer of OTs in Bangladesh. Activities have involved the delivery of a range

of tutorials and lectures at both the CRP and for the OT students at the Bangladesh Health Professional Institute (BHPI).

“OT students learn the theory but their studies involve very little practical training, which is an essential part of practising OT, and with very limited resources for therapy equipment we are really challenged applying our (cont page 5)



Interplast volunteer Alison Hardman helping cut the ribbon at the official opening of the Hand Therapy Unit at CRP Bangladesh

CONTENTS — Moving into Mongolia, The year in review, Smiles in the Solomons, and more ...



Little Laotian girl with cleft lip and palate awaiting treatment



Laotian girl sleeping soundly in mums arms with a repaired cleft lip and palate



Founded in 1983 as a joint project of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons and Australian Rotary Clubs, Interplast Australia & New Zealand (a Company limited by guarantee) provides voluntary medical teams who carry out plastic and reconstructive surgery and deliver training in developing countries. Whilst Interplast is not an official project of Rotary International, Interplast is actively supported by Rotarians in Clubs and Districts throughout Australia and New Zealand.



ROYAL AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

ACFID AUSTRALASIAN COUNCIL FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT



NEW ZEALAND ASSOCIATION OF PLASTIC SURGEONS

Australian Society of Plastic Surgeons

Thank you

Our thanks are extended to the many organisations that continue to support Interplast. Thank you to Virgin Airlines for carrying our equipment and supplies and waiving excess baggage charges to Tonga and Samoa.

Thank you too to Johnson & Johnson who are donating a significant amount of the sutures we require this year.

KCI Medical are also continuing their relationship with Interplast in 2009. We are thrilled to welcome Avant to the Interplast family of supporting companies. Please see the article on page 8 for further information.

Johnson & Johnson
MEDICAL



The year in review 2008/09

As we close off our accounts for our 26th financial year, it is a good time to reflect on the inroads your funds have helped us make in the last 12 months providing access to quality health care for the disadvantaged.

This year saw nine surgeons, two anaesthetists and two hand therapists brought to Australia for conferences and training who have returned to their countries to pass on their new skills and knowledge.

Early Management of Severe Burns (EMSB) training courses continued in Papua New Guinea and Bangladesh and commenced in Fiji. These programs continue to excite the Interplast medical volunteers from the Australian & New Zealand Burns Association (ANZBA) with the local enthusiasm and thirst for knowledge.

Interplast began work in its 24th country, Mongolia, with the Australian Society of Anaesthetists conducting an anaesthetic training course. This is an incredible story of self driven achievement by the newly formed Mongolian Society of Anaesthetists.

Of course our main programs of training and provision of operations continues; our complete list of activities includes

- Papua New Guinea, Rabaul/Bougainville — Jul 2008
- Samoa, Apia — Aug 2008
- Fiji, Taveuni — Aug 2008
- Nepal, Kathmandu — Sept 2008
- Papua New Guinea, Port Moresby — Sept 2008
- Papua New Guinea, EMSB Training — Sept 2008
- 9 surgeons (5 countries) to ASPS conference — Oct 2008
- 2 Bangladesh OTs to Hand Therapy Conference—Oct 08
- Sri Lanka, Colombo — Oct 2008

- Sri Lanka, Hand Surgery Educational CD—Oct 2008
- Kiribati, Tarawa — Nov 2008
- Philippines, Baguio City — Nov 2008
- Bangladesh, EMSB course — Nov 2008
- Philippines, Cagayan de Oro — Jan 2009
- Vietnam Quang Nam needs assessment — Feb 2009
- Laos, Xayabouly outreach program — Feb 2009
- Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh City — Feb 2009
- Laos, Vientiane—Feb 2009
- 2 Laotian doctors training (Perth) — Mar to May 09
- Tonga, EMSB assessment — Mar 2009
- Papua New Guinea, Madang EMSB Course Apr 2009
- Bangladesh, Dhaka OT — Apr 2009
- Bangladesh, EMSB Course — Apr 2009
- Solomon Islands, Honiara — Apr 2009
- Nepal, Katmandu — May 2009
- Tonga, Nuku'alofa — May 2009
- Bangladesh Needs Assessment — May 2009
- Bangladesh, Dhaka OT — May 2009
- Indonesia, Balikpapan — Jun 2009
- Fiji, Pacific Region EMSB course — Jun 2009
- Mongolia, Ulanbaatar — Jun 2009

This would not be possible without your support and the incredible contribution of Interplast Volunteers.



Laotian girl with bilateral cleft lip

Laotian girl with repaired bilateral cleft lip. Her proud father never left her side

Laos — Outreach and Burns Training

Interplast has been working in Laos for 15 years. During that time our volunteers have played an important role in training Laotian surgeons from the Mahasot General Hospital to perform cleft lip and palate operations. This skilled team now provide services and train their colleagues in provincial centres through Interplast outreach programs, while Interplast training at the hospital shifts its focus to burns management.

Rotary District 9470 funded both a Laos outreach program and burns training program in February 2009.

The Laotian surgeons chose Xayabouly as the location for Interplast's second outreach program, which involved a flight to Luang Prabang, a four hour bus trip on windy unsealed roads and a ferry crossing of the Mekong.

Patients ranged in age from 5 months to 47 years, many were unfortunately underweight which meant the team were

unable to perform multiple surgeries on them, referring them to Mahasot General Hospital for surgeries at a later date.

Alan Golding was the Rotary Observer for the burns training program in Vientiane and had this to say of his experience:

“ The obvious words to describe the Interplast medical team are professional, caring and competent, but they also have an amazing natural ability, talent and capacity to achieve wonderful life changing results.

The patients who received attention from this team were all very needy cases, indeed I think it would be fair to say that the burns victims, although they may wish for the scars not to be there, are all looking forward to a better quality of life. This project is so very worthwhile, achieves so much and changes lives so dramatically that it must be vigorously further promoted to achieve even more in the future.”



Laotian boy waiting for treatment by the Interplast burns training team, unable to straighten & properly use his arm.



Laotian boy able to straighten his arm for the first time since his accident, now waiting for surgery to heal

Thank you RACS

The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) and Rotary established Interplast in 1983 and both organisations remain avid supporters in many ways to the life changing work of Interplast.

The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) are rightly proud of the many roles they have played in the training of overseas medical personnel and the over 18,000 life changing operations Interplast volunteers have provided.

Much work goes on behind the scenes to bring the teams of volunteers, and those in need of training and surgical intervention together.

For the past two decades RACS has provided office accommodation to the small, dedicated team who work

behind the scenes to make Interplast happen. The Board of Directors, and especially the staff, would like to extend their thanks to RACS for the provision of modern office space.

The support provided by RACS enables Interplast to allocate the funds raised to help those who need it most.



Interplast Board Members David Inglis, John Spark and Glenn Wran in our new offices



ROYAL AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

Taking on a Challenge? Do it for Interplast!

Everday Hero is a website that allows people (everyday heroes) who are participating in an event or activity to raise funds for a charity of their choosing. The website states "by making giving as easy, efficient, beneficial and ultimately as 'everyday' as possible, our world will improve ... one act of kindness at a time." Most of the big fun runs and major events have a



charity they are raising funds for, and in most cases you can also choose your own charity.

If you enter an event (such as those shown, or many others) please consider using it as an opportunity to raise funds for Interplast. Some of our supporters have, and have said they have found it very easy and a great way to support interplast. For more information go to www.everydayhero.com.au.



black and white

Over 250 people enjoyed a wonderful night at Sydney's Ivy for the inaugural Interplast Black and White Ball in March 2009. Pre dinner drinks were served over three levels before guests entered the Ivy Room featuring striking zebra print carpet, six huge chandeliers, and made complete with a black and white dance floor and life size inflatable zebra known as Zeb—just for a bit of fun.

Wendy Harmer opened the evening with her usual flair, setting the tone for a fun night ahead for a great cause. Delicious meals excited the taste buds while the many raffle and auction prizes excited the guests. After the live auction everyone got up to dance to the ten piece band 'Superstitious', with dancers spilling over the dance floor. The most outstanding news of the night was that nearly \$45,000 was raised through the inspiring generosity of so many people and businesses. Thank you to the marvelous team at Merivale, the members of the ball organising team

Sandy Grice, Marie Gay, Amanda Whitty, Melissa Parkin, Kathryn Shield, Rewa Shaw, Virginia Binns and Verity Lucky. Thank you also to The Hon Bob Carr, Peter & Carol Heartsch, Sarah Rhodes, Jeremy Hunt, Judy Somers and the team at Impact Printing. Our heart felt thanks also to the talented, courageous and wonderful Ms Wendy Harmer.



Eureka Climb 09— Sunday 22 November

The Eureka Tower Climb to raise funds for Interplast and Whitelion will be held on **22 November 2009** (Sunday) in Melbourne. This unique fundraising fitness challenge is a major fundraiser for Interplast this year and will now include Southbank market stalls.

The event will include both individual and team entries (categories still to be finalised) and is open to all people to walk, climb or run to the top of the world's tallest residential tower and raise money for disadvantaged young people, both here and abroad.

Participants can choose the thrill of climbing, or the challenge of being timed. Entries open Monday 3 August and are \$45 plus a pledge to fundraise a further \$55. If you want to be timed and eligible for placing prizes, the entry fee is \$55 plus a pledge to fundraise \$55. Entry for a team of four

people is \$160 (\$200 to be timed) and a pledge for the team to fundraise \$220. Fundraising is easy on line with all funds shared equally between Interplast and Whitelion.

For more information go to interplast.com.au



RACS team at the bottom of the Eureka Tower in 2008

Hand Therapy Unit Opens in Bangladesh *(cont)*

Continued from page one.

knowledge of basic hand therapy principles using local supplies in our teaching” said Jane Aarons, Interplast volunteer

Since Interplast's first Hand Therapy visit

- A Hand Therapy interest group meets regularly at CRP,
- Lectures and training have been delivered to strengthen the skills of OT in the specialty of hand therapy,
- Two Bangladesh OT have attended training attachments in Melbourne,
- A formal referral system has been developed resulting in a steady referral base,
- A hand therapy unit has been established at the CRP,
- The hand therapy unit at CRP now has the equipment necessary to build splints and other therapy aids,
- A curriculum on Hand Therapy has been introduced at

BHPI and,

- Links to facilitate a formal and sustainable relationship with Monash University in Victoria have been initiated.

Allied therapy is a natural expansion of traditional Interplast surgical services. The success achieved to date in Bangladesh results from the dire need for these services and the passion of the Interplast Hand Therapy working group, led by Interplast volunteers Jane Aarons and Alison Hardman.



Moving into Mongolia

Anaesthetic residency training in Mongolia to date has been inconsistent and unstructured. The provision of surgery is limited by the quality of anaesthetic services available.

Since 2001, Australian anaesthetists have visited Mongolia on an annual basis and organised anaesthetic training seminars on their own initiative and financial resources. During the same period several Mongolian anaesthetists have had the opportunity to attend the World Federation Society of Anaesthetists one year training program in Thailand. There is now a critical number of enthusiastic, young, advanced trained anaesthetists, who with the assistance of Australian anaesthetists, have the capacity and dedication to establish and maintain anaesthesia training in Mongolia.

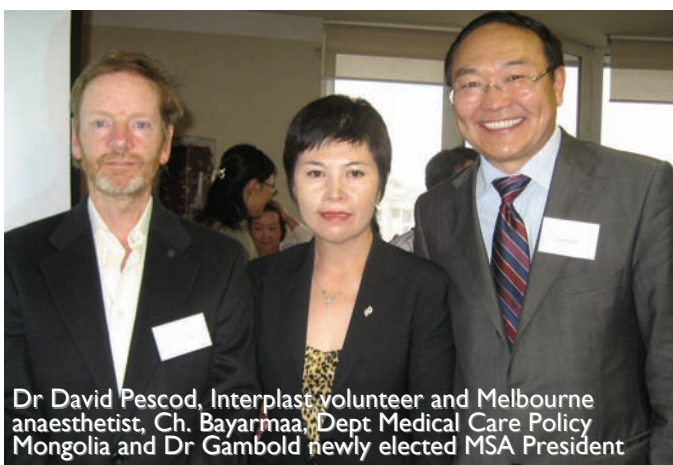
This year Interplast began working with anaesthetists from the Australian Society of Anaesthetists and the newly established Mongolian Society of Anaesthetists to implement

safe anaesthetic training. The project has seen the development of training materials and curricula, and established an anaesthetic resource centre to facilitate access to textbooks, journals and the internet. The resource centre also accommodates the new part time project coordinator, employed to implement the program and supervise trainees. The first intake of the trainees into the new program is scheduled for September 2009.

In June 2009 over 100 Mongolian anaesthetists attended an 'Airways Management' course in Ulanbataar. Interplast funded more than 30 from outlying provinces to attend, and training was delivered by six Australian anaesthetists. Importantly this course also educated senior Mongolian anaesthetists to become future trainers.



Dr Ian Hogarth training Mongolian anaesthetist



Dr David Pescod, Interplast volunteer and Melbourne anaesthetist, Ch. Bayarmaa, Dept Medical Care Policy Mongolia and Dr Gambold newly elected MSA President



Training on the front table Australian anaesthetists Dr Anthony Hull, on the rear table Dr Dan Jolley and Dr Maggie Wong.

Hedin — back to Vietnam

Dianne Hedin volunteered as an Occupational Therapist with the Interplast team to Cho Ray Hospital, Vietnam. This is her story.

“I was thrilled when I was asked to travel with the Interplast Team to Cho Ray Hospital. As the trip drew closer however, I became somewhat anxious about working in the country that my family fled 34 years ago.

As the trip drew closer, however, I became somewhat anxious about working in the country that my family fled 34 years ago

Arriving at Cho Ray Hospital Burns unit on our first morning, we were overwhelmed by the crowds waiting for visiting hours. There were hordes of people moving in and out of lifts, so much mayhem meant lift attendants were necessary to direct traffic. The entrance to the Burns ward was also manned to regulate visitor numbers.

The 40+ bed burns ward was full of patients, most of whom had major full body burns from gas explosions, petrol and acid dousing and electrical burns. Many were severely disfigured.

On the ward, everything was scarce: staff, space, equipment, dressings, medication. Patients relied on family and friends to care for them. In their absence, patients looked after themselves and each other. One very

on in the ward to look after another patient, a man who had been blinded by acid dousing and who had no family to care for him, as a bilateral below elbow amputee from electrical burns, he was totally dependent.

severely burnt woman regularly fixed her own dressings.

Patients did not seem self-conscious of their deformities but far more concerned about their functional impact.

One particularly sweet lady, on her discharge from treatment to correct deformities resulting from her husband setting her on fire, changed from her pajamas into casual clothes and stayed

I was really inspired and heartened that people who lived in such trying conditions, could be so energetic and so positive.”



Interplast Volunteers in dark blue shirts (L-R) Dianne Hedin, Lynette Maclean, Mr Michael Leung and Dr Stephen Leung pictured with patients and staff.

Become a Rebuilding Lives Fellow

Since being launched nearly a year ago, Interplast’s monthly giving program, Rebuilding Lives Fellowship continues to grow, and with the continuing need and invitation for the expansion of Interplast services — we need it to.

Numerous achievements have been made in the provision of quality health care in the countries in which Interplast works, and some countries/hospitals are now in a position of self sufficiency for some services, thanks to the donations we have received and the Interplast volunteers.

Regular giving, allows more secure planning of Interplast services. Rebuilding Lives Fellows simply nominate the date and credit card for their monthly donation by completing the appropriate section on the donation

form on the back of this newsletter — and we do the rest. At the end of every year a tax receipt is sent.

Please become a Rebuilding Lives Fellow and help little boys like Onh, who you may remember touched the hearts of Interplast volunteers in their program to Laos in 2008. Onh lay untreated for over a month with burns to over 60% of his body; the fire was so bad his fingers had been burnt off, they did not know how he survived as long as he did. Onh was the recipient of multiple skin grafts, thanks to the Interplast team as part of the burns training conducted at the Mahasot General Hospital, that have enabled his injuries to heal, and Onh to walk. Onh came back to the hospital earlier in 2009 and is seen (right) waiting for further treatment. With ongoing funding we hope Onh will be the recipient of further treatment



Onh blowing bubbles with his family and the Interplast team in April 2009. Below: Onh in 2008.



Smiles in the Solomons

AusAID, through their Pacific Island Program, funded Interplast's 24th program to Solomon Islands National Referral Hospital in Honiara.

Significant efforts were made to

notify locals of the impending surgical visit and this was reflected in the large turnout of patients from many regions, some having travelled long distances. Outpatients trickled in as the boats arrived, so the team held improvised clinics in their lunch hour outside the operating theatre.

Interplast worked in cooperation with a visiting speech therapist from Japan and a local Occupational Therapist. Both were invaluable and enthusiastic about managing Interplast cases.

Nurse Jan Sloan volunteered for the first time with Interplast on this program and had this to say:

"We had a very rewarding trip with a total of over 60 operations performed.

"The look in parents eyes seeing their babys cleft lip repaired — each one will live with me forever" Jan Sloan Interplast Volunteer

There were a variety of cases with cleft lip and palate along with tendon/ hand injuries being dominant.

Quite a few of the patients had a two day boat journey from the outer islands to Honiara for their consultation. For many it would have been their first trip to the city, and a daunting experience.

The local staff were eager to be part of the team. Their co-operation and efficiency enabled us to complete as

many cases as we did, with their willingness to stay back to finish lists with no such thing as overtime!

It is a humbling experience to see how well everyone copes with so little, whilst we who have it all, waste so much!

My most memorable moments included;

- Being told there was no poverty because they have food and shelter,
- The calmness of the local people,
- And the look in parents eyes seeing their babys cleft lip repaired — each one will live with me forever.

I hope we have left as good an impression on the Solomon's as it has on us. It was a most fulfilling experience of which we all benefited. The warmth and hospitality was first class."



© Sarah Rhodes

Above: Interplast volunteer Mr Darrell Nam and local nurse. Right: Happy mum after babys' cleft lip repair. Below: Before repair of cleft lip. Below Right: 7 days after lip repair, you can see the happiness in her eyes.



© Sarah Rhodes



Interplast Chosen as Charity of Choice

Avant Mutual Group Limited, Australia's largest medical defence organisation providing medical indemnity insurance to over 40,000 healthcare practitioners, is proud to announce Interplast Australia & New Zealand as its Charity of Choice for 2009 & 2010.

Avant strengthened their already robust Corporate and Social Responsibility activities by formalising a workplace giving program, "Our staff can of course make a pre-tax donation to a their favorite charity, however we are using this opportunity to promote a successful but is lesser known charity, Interplast." said Rebekah Silver, General Manager—Human Resources and Chair—Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability Committee.

"There is obviously a natural synergy between our organisations, Avant, Australia's largest medical defence

organisation and Interplast, Australia's best kept foreign aid secret.

Many Australian and New Zealand medical professionals give their time and talent to Interplast to make a big difference in the lives of the people they help. We hope Avant, can make just as big a difference in the life of Interplast by supporting them this way."

For more information on the ways Avant are supporting Interplast go to www.interplast.com.au.



Contact

Mail Interplast Australia & New Zealand
Royal Australasian College of Surgeons
250 — 290 Spring Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Email Interplast@surgeons.org

Web www.interplast.com.au

Tel 03 9249 1231

Fax 03 9249 1235

Interplast Australia & New Zealand is a registered charity that sends volunteer medical teams to the Asia Pacific region to provide programs of treatment and training. Interplast was founded in 1983 as an association between Rotary District 980 and the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, Interplast is accredited with AusAID as an NGO, and is a signatory to the Australian Council for International Development Code of Conduct. Copies of audited financial statements can be obtained by contacting the office or on line at www.interplast.com.au.

Thank you for

Repairing
Bodies.

Rebuilding
Lives.

Donation Form

Yes I would like to help rebuild lives

Title _____ Name _____ Surname _____

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Suburb _____ State _____ Post Code _____

Email _____

Phone _____

By making a donation of \$ _____ My cheque payable to
Interplast Australia & New Zealand Overseas Aid Fund
 From my credit card (please complete details below)

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Please tribute/credit Rotary Club _____
Insert name of the person or Rotary Club you would like to tribute your donation to

JOIN THE REBUILDING LIVES FELLOWSHIP

I would like to join the **Rebuilding Lives Fellowship** and make monthly donations from my credit card.
Please deduct \$ _____ on the _____ of every month from my credit card until further notice.
Insert amount Insert date

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