

Flight delays and Fellowship in Philippines

Having been a supporter of Interplast for a number of years I was aware of the impact Interplast has on the lives it touches. What I was not prepared for, was the impact that being part of the program would have on me. To actually meet those who have had to live with a physical abnormality, and to see the joy of having the operation is indescribable.

Although our surgery was very successful our trip had other obstacles that made it a unique experience for all of us.

The Interplast equipment and supplies combined with equipment donated to Philippines hospital meant we had 41 pieces of luggage. Congratulations to Philippine Airlines who did not charge any excess baggage. To make things easier our luggage was checked through to Cagayan de Oro.

At the airport the next morning we were notified of a typhoon off Indonesia that was affecting the weather in southern Philippines. After several delays, our flight was cancelled. We could not get another flight until the next day. On Monday morning we were up at 2.30 am to catch our 5am flight. When we got to the airport the news was delayed, delayed, delayed and cancelled. Back to the hotel and off to do some much needed shopping. 3 days in the same clothes was really quite enough.

Day 4 up at 4.30 for our 3rd attempt and getting on our way. Our delight was evident as we saw our luggage going up the conveyer and onto the plane. Our dismay when a couple of hours later we saw it all coming off the plane. Our flight was cancelled again! We however were not beaten. Today we were going somewhere!!

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Upcoming events for Interplast

If you are organising an event, dinner, auction, meeting or cup of tea for Interplast, please let us know so we can help promote the event, perhaps provide some promotional material — and say thank you.



The Rotary Club of Mordialloc in partnership with the Woodlands Golf Club, one of Victoria's highly ranked sand belt courses, is organising an Interplast fundraiser Golf Day on **Friday 17 April 2009**. The cost is \$55 and includes after game snacks and plenty of prizes. Opportunities exist for sponsorship on the course and single holes. For more information please contact Barry Donaldson on barrydon@melbpc.org.au or 9598 6446 or Russell Hellier on 9589 1083 or rhellier@melbpc.org.au.

ROTARY CLUB OF FAIRYMEADOW

Autumn Ball

The Rotary Club of Fairmeadow are organising a Black Tie Ball on Friday 1 May 2009 at Villa D'ora in Wollongong. Tickets are \$85pp incl arrival drinks, 3 course meal and beverages. Interplast Ambassador Wendy Harmer will be in attendance with well known local radio personality Dave Gore MC for the night. For more information please phone Julie on 0408 411 103, Sandra on 0416 190 760 or Laurie on 0422 531 507.

Flight delays and Fellowship in Philippines *(cont)*

A couple of phone calls later and we were on the 10.30 flight to Davao, the capital of the island of Mindanao, only a short 8 hour bus ride through the mountains to our destination! We were assisted greatly by a Cagayan de Oro Rotarian on holidays in Davao.

Finally we arrived, welcomed by a great group of Rotarians, dinner, bed and a good nights sleep to be ready for the next day at the hospital.

Having done triage and working out the operating program, it was sleeves rolled up and lets get to it. Three operations were done that afternoon, nine operations on Thursday, nine operations on Friday and five on Saturday. This hectic pace was maintained for the eight days we were able to operate.

I have not focused on detailing the operations as although these are terribly important this trip highlighted another important aspect of the program for me.

The delays in the flights allowed me the privilege of getting to know the medical members of the team very well. The head of our team Mike McGlynn and his wife Dee (theatre nurse) have been on excess 50 Interplast trips between them and we talked about the next Interplast trip they were going on. How inspirational this donation of time and expertise is. Our team

of anaesthetists Joe and Ruth McGuinness and John McCarty, have in excess of 30 trips between them. I got to know them as wonderfully compassionate people who just want to help the kids. For first time Interplast volunteers Daniel McGuinness (nurse), Damian Marucci (surgeon) and Melissa Parkin (speech pathologist) I don't think that this will be the last trip for any of them.

My job starts now that I am back to hopefully inspire others to want to be part of this program by raising funds to allow Interplast to send away many more teams.

Kathy Monley, Rotary Club of Templestowe, D9810



Interplast programs delivered Jul — Dec 08

Interplast receives funding from a number of sources to conduct programs. The programs that have been run for the first half of the 08/09 financial year include

- Papua New Guinea — 30 operations & training
- Samoa — 60 operations & training
- **Fiji — 29 operations & training (funded by D9820)**
- Nepal — 5 microsurgery operations and training
- Papua New Guinea — 15 operations and training
- Papua New Guinea — EMSB training and faculty establishment
- ASPS Conference, Queensland — 9 surgeons from 5 countries attended and presented papers
- Hand Therapy Conference, Melbourne — 2 therapists from Bangladesh attended and participated in sessions.
- Sri Lanka — 31 operations & training
- Sri Lanka — Filming of Hand therapy educational CD.
- Kiribati — 57 operations & training

- **Philippines — 52 operations & training (funded by D9800)**
- Bangladesh — EMSB training and faculty establishment.

There are another 20 programs planned for the second half of the 08/09 financial year. Including those funded by **D9810**, (featured in this newsletter), and the three activities that have been funded by **D9470**.

Congratulations and sincere thanks are also extended to the members of the **Rotary Club of Wandin** and **District 9630** that have funded a program to Lautoka in August and the Philippines in October 2009 respectively.

Other Districts and Clubs funding programs later in 2009 include the **Rotary Club of Rosebud**, **Rotary Club of Seaford/Carrum Downs**, **George Malone/Bayside** and **District 9810**.

Bringing an end to burns together

Just as Rotary District 9800 and the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons worked together to establish Interplast in 1983, Interplast has been working with other organisations to assist in the delivery of aid and development programs.

In the year 2000, 238,000 people died as a result of burns — 95% of those people were in developing countries.

Interplast and the Australia & New Zealand Burns Association (ANZBA) faculty members have been volunteering together in Papua New Guinea, Bangladesh and soon Tonga to establish an EMSB (Early Management of Severe Burns) Faculty, and train health care professionals in the early management techniques of severe burns. The aim is in a few years these countries will have a full faculty, and be able to train their own health care workers, without International assistance, in the correct techniques to manage a severe burn in the first 24 hours to maximize the outcome.

In the year 2000, 238,000 people died as a result of burns—95% of those people were in developing countries. The majority of these injuries occur in the home, and over half are caused by cooking over open flames. Electrocutions, hot cooking liquids and acids in the cases of domestic violence are also common causes. It is estimated 3.8 million women fall victim to a severe burn from fire each year—the same as the total number of those who are diagnosed with HIV or AIDS every year.

The treatment of a severe burn injury is long, painful and on average four times more costly than treating other injuries. Most of the patients in developing countries can arrive at hospital many hours, or even days after sustaining their injury; or even worse over half receive incorrect advice such as slathering the burn with mud found at the bottom of ponds, which only increases the risk of infection.

Correct management of the burns in the initial stages will ensure a better outcome for the patient, and be a less of a burden on an already stretched health system.

Please help Interplast volunteers continue to strengthen the capacity of the countries in which we work so that all may have access to appropriate health care. Even a small donation to Interplast can make a big difference.



What Does Interplast Do?

Interplast Australia & New Zealand sends teams of **volunteer** surgeons, anaesthetists, nurses and allied therapists to developing countries of the Asia Pacific region to provide free medical **treatment** and **training**.

Volunteers

Each member of an Interplast program is fully qualified in their field of expertise and VOLUNTEER their time to participate in an Interplast program.

Treatment

Interplast volunteers provide free treatment to people living with a disability from a congenital condition such as cleft lip and palate, or an acquired condition such as burn scar contractures. Treatment is targeted to the indigent population who would otherwise not be able to afford to access services.

Training

Interplast assists with developing local capacity to provide plastic and reconstructive surgery services by providing training and mentoring programs for medical and allied health professionals. All Interplast programs are training programs — leaving a legacy long after the team has gone.

Contact

Interplast has a District Chair in all of the Australian and New Zealand Rotary Districts. Please contact them or the Interplast office if you would like any further information sent to you, or would like to host a speaker who has experienced first hand the incredible work of Interplast's highly motivated and caring volunteers.

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Repairing
Bodies.
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Lives.