



Interplast[®]
Repairing bodies & rebuilding lives
in the Asia Pacific region

ROTARIAN review

AUTUMN 2017



The volunteer Interplast team that travelled to Tonga in February.

Photo: Woodrow Wilson

WATCHING THE MIRACLE OF LIFE-CHANGING SURGERY IN TONGA

By Di North

As the Interplast District Chair for District 9675 for four years, I spent a lot of time visiting clubs to raise awareness of Interplast. In the first two years, the Rotarians of District 9675 raised the significant funds required for an Interplast surgical program. This team went to Labasa, Fiji, in March 2016. The photos and story from this trip enabled me to tell a new story to again enthuse the Rotarians of District 9675 to fundraise for another program.

two anaesthetists, two nurses, a hand therapist, two Rotarian observers and an official photographer. I feel so privileged to have witnessed this team of amazing medical personnel perform the miracle of life-changing surgery for people who would otherwise have no access to this type of surgical care.

It was a very rewarding experience to be a part of this team. All the medical personnel made me feel very welcome. I was given tasks such as helping to record notes. I was able to witness all steps of the surgeries up very close. Everyone was very patient and answered all my questions.

"I feel so privileged to have witnessed this team of amazing medical personnel perform the miracle of life-changing surgery for people who would otherwise have no access to this type of surgical care."

My next goal was to become a Rotarian Observer on an Interplast surgical program. My application was accepted and I was excited to travel to Tonga with a surgical team in February this year.

The team comprised two plastic surgeons,

I initially became interested in Interplast when my first grandchild, who is now 12 years old, was born with a cleft palate, but she had the great fortune to be born in the USA. Help was readily available for her –

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ROTARY AND INTERPLAST: A TRUE SUCCESS STORY

Interplast Australia and New Zealand was established in 1983 through a partnership between Rotary and the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, and Rotarians have been a crucial part of the story ever since.

Together, Rotary and Interplast continue to change futures across the Asia Pacific.

Since 1983, Rotarians throughout Australia and New Zealand have raised significant funds to support Interplast's work. More than 70 Rotarians have accompanied teams as observers and have returned to act as ambassadors for Interplast.

Rotarians also play key roles in the governance of Interplast. Rotarians are Company members, are well represented on the Board of Directors, and a Rotarian Committee of nine past District Governors advises the Board on Rotary matters.

A Rotarian Coordinator on staff coordinates and supports Interplast District Chairs in all 27 Districts of Australia & New Zealand.

Local Rotary Clubs in program countries support Interplast's work in numerous ways, including assisting patients travelling from remote locations, transporting Interplast teams and equipment, partnering for grant applications and welcoming Interplast teams to Rotary meetings.

Thank you for being part of the Rotary and Interplast story. We couldn't do it without you.

Find out more about how you can be a part of the Interplast story.
Go to www.interplast.org.au



Di North joined an Interplast team in Tonga as a Rotarian observer.

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the specialist nurse to advise on feeding a baby with a cleft palate; the surgeon to advise that they would operate when she was 10 months old. I was delighted to see in Tonga a three-year-old boy with a cleft palate able to receive this same life-changing surgery that was so readily available for my granddaughter.

The biggest challenge was trying to come to grips with the fact that I am so fortunate that I was born in Australia where we take this medical assistance for granted but the people of Tonga, purely because of where they were born, do not have the same access to medical care.

About 140 people arrived at the assessment clinic when there was only time for 40 surgeries. It was heartwarming to see the surgeons able to treat children with cleft lips or palates, people with burn scar contractures, and a victim of domestic violence who could not move her fingers due to severed tendons.

I gained far more from this experience than I anticipated. It was an honour to witness the surgeries being carried out, and to see the great teamwork between the volunteer team and local staff that is such a necessary part of making the job successful.

It is a wonderful feeling to know that the money that Rotarians donate to Interplast is definitely making a huge difference in the world. I am happy to share this good news story so other Rotarians can see what great works can be accomplished by Interplast with Rotary's financial assistance.

Di North is the nominee for District Governor for Rotary District 9675 for 2019-20.

ROTARIANS AND INTERPLAST: UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

MOTORCYCLE RIDE AROUND AUSTRALIA



Across April to June, Rotarian Chris Mara is leading a group of motorcycle riders on a 40-day adventure around Australia raising money for Interplast. The core group of riders departed from Wollongong on 26 April, and other riders will join them as they head clockwise around the country. They will be connecting with Rotary clubs as they go, and while in Perth they will also be connecting with Bright Blue – the Police Commissioner's Fund for Sick Kids, who support Interplast's work in Mongolia.

Donations can be made via the ride's Go Fundraise page:
<http://chrismarasmotorbiketrip.gofundraise.com.au>

TRAINING FOR DISTRICT CHAIRS IN MELBOURNE

A big thanks to all of our Interplast District Chairs (IDCs) across Australian and New Zealand who have worked tirelessly to promote our work over the past year, especially to those who are now retiring from their roles. We look forward to seeing IDCs old and new on 12 August for a training day at the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons in Melbourne that will inspire and equip them to support the work of Rotarians in their districts to promote the Interplast cause.

TELL US WHAT'S COMING UP

We want to spread the word about the great work Rotarians are doing to support Interplast via our social media accounts, website and Rotarian Review.

Keep us informed about upcoming events, and update us on how they went, by sending information to our Communications team on contactus@interplast.org.au



Andrew from Tonga was born with a severe cleft lip and palate. Find out about his story in our tax appeal – we'll send it out soon!

STAY IN TOUCH

WITH INTERPLAST AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

CONTACT US ON

☎ + 61 3 9249 1231

✉ contactus@interplast.org.au

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...WE LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU

THANK YOU FOR MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

Over the past year Rotary support has enabled Interplast to continue changing futures across the Asia Pacific through a range of programs that change lives immediately through surgery, and build for the future by training local medical staff.

Examples of some of the major programs delivered with Rotary support include:

- A 10-day surgical and training program in Honiara, Solomon Islands, in June/July 2016. This program included for the first time a hand therapist who worked with the surgical team and provided training to local staff. *Pictured, photo 4.*
- A surgical and training program in Apia, Samoa, in September 2016.
- A two-week plastic and reconstructive surgical program in Cagayan de Oro in the Philippines in September 2016. *Pictured, photo 2.*
- Across September and October two Indonesian anaesthetists were based in Ballarat for a month of observation and training. *Pictured, photo 5 (with Interplast's Thomas Loporto).*
- A 10-day surgical and training program in Tarawa, Kiribati, in November 2016. *Pictured, photo 3.*
- A week-long surgical program to Tonga in February that included a hand therapist. *Pictured, photo 6.*
- A week-long surgical program to Labasa, Fiji, in March. *Pictured, photo 1.*

You can help us to continue this life-changing work and reach even more people.

If you haven't already considered Interplast, please remember us in your Club's end-of-financial-year disbursements.

You may also choose to make a personal donation that can be credited to your Club's fundraising total.

Find out more and make a secure online donation at www.interplast.org.au



ROTARIANS IN ACTION FOR INTERPLAST

Rotarians across Australia and New Zealand are constantly finding fun and creative ways to raise funds and awareness for Interplast. Here's just a small selection of some of the events and activities that Districts, clubs and individual Rotarians have done over the past 12 months.

WOMEN IN ROTARY

On March 8, Women in Rotary hosted the annual International Women's Day Breakfast at the Crown Palladium in Melbourne. More than 1100 people attended, with Interplast one of four beneficiaries of funds raised.

DISTRICT 9800

In early October 2016, the Rotary Club of Keilor in Victoria held a wine appreciation afternoon at the Keilor Hotel. It was well attended, with the 34 people a mix of Rotarians from various clubs, partners and friends. The afternoon raised \$1400 for Interplast, along with introducing new people to our work.

DISTRICT 9820

In late October 2016, the Rotary Club of Frankston in Victoria held a Mad Hatter's Tea Party fundraising day that included raffles, a fashion parade and more. They had a wonderful time, and raised \$3000 for Interplast.

DISTRICT 9455

In November 2016, the Rotary Club of Kalamunda in Western Australia organised an inaugural evening of twilight opera in Stirk Park in the Perth hills, featuring some of Perth's finest opera singers, with all proceeds going to Interplast.



The Queen of Hearts with Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dum at RC Frankston's Mad Hatter's Tea Party fundraiser.

DISTRICT 9810

Also in November, the Rotary Club of Wandin in Victoria hosted a dinner with a 'magic' theme. The public event was attended by 150 people, who gathered to watch magician and past district governor from New Zealand, Jonathan Usher, performing his magic show.

DISTRICT 9780

In February the Rotary Club of Torquay on Victoria's Surf Coast held its 10th annual Torquay Motor Show, with more than 350 vehicles on display. More than 6000 people attended, with Interplast one of the beneficiaries of the event.

DISTRICT 9465

In early April the Rotary Club of Ascot in Perth held its annual week-long Australian Golfing Fellowship of Rotarians. The week was attended by Rotarians from across Australia, and raised more than \$42,000 for Interplast.

DISTRICT 9550

In late April volunteer plastic surgeon Dr Raymond Goh attended the District 9550 'Magic of Community' conference in Mareeba, Queensland, where he spoke about the work of Interplast and the importance of plastic surgery.

MAKE A DONATION

BOOST YOUR CLUB'S FUNDRAISING TOTAL

Rotarians who make personal donations directly to Interplast will not only receive a tax deduction – you can also have the donation credited to your Club's fundraising total, ensuring your Club will be recognised as a key supporter of Interplast's work.

To ensure your donation is credited to your Club's total, please make sure you provide details of your Club and District when donating.

If you are making an online donation, you can do this in the 'additional comments' section of the online donation form.

DONATE

If you haven't already considered Interplast, please remember us in your Club's end of financial year disbursements.

And keep an eye out for our end-of-financial-year appeal, which will be distributed soon

[DONATE NOW](#)