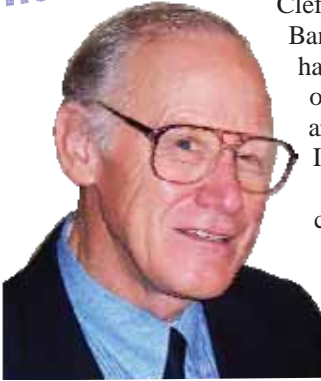


**From the Chair**



With another year drawing to a close, I reflect on the work that Operation Cleft has done for the children in Bangladesh. To date, our surgeons have completed more than 8,250 operations of which almost 40% are considered complex surgery. I am inspired by the fact that these children's lives have changed forever due to our commitment and the skills of our surgeons. I admire the courage of the parents who present their children for surgery despite their fear of

hospitals and anesthetics due largely to ignorance and superstition. I am encouraged by the generosity of so many individuals, businesses and clubs in Australia and overseas, who share our passion for helping these poor children to have a life of dignity and hope. To all who support this unique project I say a heartfelt thank you.

Exciting times are ahead for Operation Cleft. Two Rotary clubs have partnered with their Districts to sponsor surgical outreach programs. In October the Rotary Club of Essendon, joined with District 9800 to sponsor a surgical camp led by Professor Bari at the Shaheed Zia Medical College & Hospital in Bogra. The second camp, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Box Hill Central and District 9810, is scheduled for late November and will be led by Assoc. Professor Ali. It will be held at the Khulna Medical College Hospital and it is expected that as a result of these two camps, around sixty children will be given a "Smile for Life".

Our General Manager, Julie Stein and the incoming Chairman will travel with me to Bangladesh in February for contract renegotiation with our surgeons and in-country partner, CDD {Centre for Disability in Development}. We will take the opportunity to speak at several Rotary clubs and catch up with project Patron, Asif Moyeen and local Ambassador, Faiyaz Khan. A group of Rotarians holidaying in Bangladesh and India will link up with us during their tour. They are very excited about visiting a surgical camp in Dhaka where they will experience the tensions and joys of Operation Cleft as they mingle with surgeons, patients and parents.



Currently consideration is being given to supporting efforts to increase the number of qualified plastic surgeons in Bangladesh.

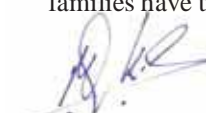
At present there is a ratio of one plastic surgeon to almost ten million people; an impossible workload. We will be meeting with senior surgeons and the Society of Plastic Surgeons when we are there to discuss how we can assist. If ever Bangladesh is to be self-supporting in the treatment of clefts, burns, and other important surgical requirements then the number of skilled plastic surgeons must increase significantly and there must be wider distribution across the country rather than accepting the current concentration of surgeons in the capital, Dhaka. Our ultimate aim is that all children who need their services have ready access to the skills of well qualified Bangladeshi plastic surgeons."



This year, the Management Committee of the Operation Cleft Australia Foundation Trust has undergone some changes. Two members, Jenny Hamley and Sandy Kemp have retired and three new members have been appointed. Bruce McEwen, Vici Funnell and Richard Lim were nominated and subsequently welcomed on to the committee. Bruce is the current President of the Rotary Club of Box Hill Central. Vici brings considerable experience in health services administration and Richard is an accountant in the not for profit sector.

The other major change is that at the end of October, I will stand down as Chairman. I have enjoyed my work with the project immensely over the past three and a half years, It has been greatly encouraging to meet so many people - our surgeons, supporters, donors and Rotary Clubs and their members and to recognise their interest and concern for the children we are helping in far off Bangladesh. It has been a privilege and pleasure to lead Operation Cleft as it continues in it's life changing work."

Thank you for your support throughout 2013. It has been a year of significant activity and our patients and their families have truly benefitted from your generosity.



Michael Kirk OAM  
Chairman



Operation Cleft Australia Inc. is the corporate trustee for the Operation Cleft Australia Foundation Trust which is a public ancillary fund with DGR status. All donations of \$2.00 or more are fully tax deductible in Australia. ABN # 36 063 471 446



## Future planning



Prof. Abul Kalam,  
Professor and Head of  
Department of Plastic Surgery and Burns Unit  
Dhaka Medical College Hospital.  
Secretary General  
Society of Plastic Surgeons of Bangladesh (SPSB)



The future of Operation Cleft is determined by the needs of the children, availability of qualified surgeons and the generosity of our supporters. Sustainability of the service we provide can only be assured by an increase in the number of skilled surgeons, broadening the geographical spread of operating facilities and increasing and continued loyalty from people who are willing to generously contribute to the project. To ensure our goals are on track with the needs of the children and the medical profession in the country, we will meet with Professors Kalam and Khondoker when we are in Bangladesh. Further meetings will be held with all members of our surgical team to establish their continuing commitment to providing this very important service for the children of poor families who would otherwise spend their lives in isolation and misery.



Prof. Sazzad Khondoker  
Department of Plastic Surgery and Burns Unit  
Dhaka Medical College Hospital.  
Editor in Chief,  
Bangladesh Journal of Plastic Surgery (BJPS)

Research done and strategic plan in place, the rest is up to you. Our future and that of the children is in your hands. Without your support, the children will not receive this great gift of

"a smile for life"



## CDD

You have often heard us refer to CDD, our in-country partner organisation; but who are they.



Abedin Khan  
Assistant Director



Noman Khan  
Executive Director



Nazmul Bari  
Director



Md. Shahjahan,  
Head of Finance



Joya Hasan  
Project Manager



Masud Kamal,  
Assistant Coordinator

CDD, (Centre for Disability in Development) is a not for profit organisation established in 1996 to develop a more inclusive society for people with a disability in Bangladesh. Without intervention and support, these people are ostracized and excluded from mainstream life. CDD's mission is to educate the broader community, whilst providing support services to enable an integrated and inclusive society. Operation Cleft is one of 350 national and international organisations who, in partnership with CDD, work towards giving all people in Bangladesh an opportunity to reach their full potential.

Executive Director, A.H.M. Noman Khan, had the honour of being awarded the international Ramon Magsaysay Award in recognition of his pioneering leadership and dedication to building a society that is truly inclusive.

Early next year, Operation Cleft Australia will renegotiate a further three year partnership agreement with CDD that will incorporate our strategic plan for ensuring future growth and long term sustainability of Operation Cleft as a service to disadvantaged children born with a cleft lip or plate in Bangladesh.

## Ambassadors



Dr. Parul Marhawa is the newest member of the Operation Cleft team of Ambassadors. Parul from Mitcham Victoria is a Project Coordinator at Melbourne Dental School & Oral Health Cooperative Research Centre at the University of Melbourne.

If you would like to know more about how you can help give the children a "Smile for Life", please contact your local Ambassador - details available on our website in the "Who's Who" section or email [info@operationcleft.org.au](mailto:info@operationcleft.org.au).

We are looking for Ambassadors in New Zealand, Tasmania, Western Australia and Victoria. Do you share our belief that the children are the future?  
Email [info@operationcleft.org.au](mailto:info@operationcleft.org.au) to find out more.



## A stitch in time

Since Operation Cleft began, our surgical team have completed more than 8,250 operations. 60% of our patients present with complex bi-lateral cleft lips and cleft palates. Rashed pictured below fortunately did not have a cleft palate but still required multiple operations to correct his bi-lateral cleft lip and prolabial protrusion. (Where the central soft tissue segment of the upper lip protrudes.)



In March 2012 Rashed, then just 18 months old was assessed by one of our team. Although his palate was intact, due to the width of the cleft and a severe prolabial protrusion, surgeons decided that he would need multiple procedures to achieve the best outcome. Assessment completed, Rashed was scheduled for surgery where he had a bilateral lip adhesion. He was rescheduled for the definitive repair a few months later. Unfortunately after returning to his village in Panchagarh, Rashed dislodged the stitches on the right side of his lip and again underwent surgery to repair the initial procedure.

Three months later, after the tissue had stretched and the prolabium had set back some, Rashed finally had the definitive repair. Although the post surgery photo of Rashed (right) is not one of a happy little fellow, the surgery really did transform this little boy. He went from being a social outcast with an ugly facial deformity to a happy little two year old loved and accepted by everyone in his village.

*Shubho Borodin*

*Seasons greetings (in Bangladeshi)*

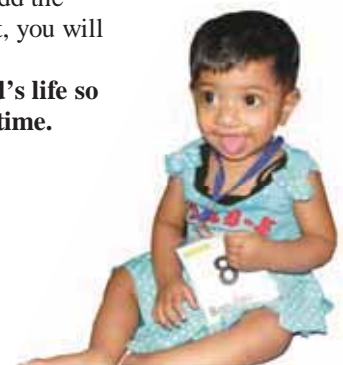
Never know what to buy people? Have you considered giving *"a smile for life"* to an underprivileged child in Bangladesh in lieu of a Christmas present? Or indeed any time of the year in lieu of a gift.

If you send a donation to Operation Cleft of \$60 or more in lieu of a gift for family, friend or staff member, we will send you a tax deductible receipt (in your name) and a gift certificate of appreciation (in the nominated persons name). Simply complete the form on the back page and be sure to add the certificate recipients name. Within one week of receiving payment, you will receive your receipt and gift certificate/s.

**What other gift could you give that would change a child's life so dramatically and give them a smile that will last a lifetime.**



*How else can you help?*



If you would like to support Operation Cleft, there are many ways in which you can help:

- ◆ **Give a donation**, using the form on the back page or via PayPal from our website - All donations of \$2 or more are fully tax deductible.
- ◆ **Schools** - Run a Spellathon or fundraising event.
- ◆ **Rotary Clubs** - Make a club contribution and encourage your members to support this Rotary project.
- ◆ **Businesses** - Give a donation and/or encourage your staff to give a donation and match their contribution.
- ◆ **District Governors** - Suggest your spouse nominate Operation Cleft as their project of choice in your year.
- ◆ **Community Clubs** - Invite a guest speaker to tell your members about this amazing project.
- ◆ **Accountants /Lawyers** - Suggest Operation Cleft to your clients as a worthy and reputable charity.



**A Smile**

What sunshine is to flowers, smiles are to humanity.

These are but trifles, to be sure; but, scattered along life's pathway, the good they do is inconceivable.

*Joseph Addison  
circa 1695*

**The cost**

With the support of our plastic surgeons, Operation Cleft keeps the cost of surgery to a minimum.

**\$250** will give an underprivileged child in Bangladesh a

**"a smile for life"**

*(All figures quoted in Australian dollars).*

**To make a donation, complete the form below**

**For more details go to [www.operationcleft.org.au](http://www.operationcleft.org.au)**

I/we would like to make a donation  \*monthly  \*quarterly  \*Please tick your preferred donation method

*\* If ticked, the amount indicated below will be charged to your credit card each month or quarter until you terminate the request.*

Credit card donations may also be made via PayPal, (our secure online payment facility) - visit [www.operationcleft.org.au](http://www.operationcleft.org.au)

\$250 for cleft repair surgery for one child *or*  \$..... for ..... operations

I would like to make a donation of \$ .....

My cheque is enclosed *(Cheques should be made payable to Operation Cleft)*

Please charge my credit card - MasterCard  Visa  .....  
Please print name above (as it appears on your credit card)

Number on card \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ Expiry date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ .....

Signature of cardholder

Name .....  
First name Last name Please print the name of your club, business, school or group if applicable

Address ..... State ..... P/code .....

Telephone H: .../..... B: .../..... Mob: ..... Email:.....

\* For donations in lieu of - I would like a certificate in the name of .....  
as this donation has been given in lieu of a gift for :  birthday  Xmas  other *or*  in memory of

*please tick where applicable*

Please send this completed coupon with your donation to: **Operation Cleft, PO Box 631, Box Hill Vic. 3128**

**For further information - Tel: 0414 246851 Email: [info@operationcleft.org.au](mailto:info@operationcleft.org.au) Web: [www.operationcleft.org.au](http://www.operationcleft.org.au)**

*Operation Cleft Australia is a Public Ancillary Fund with DGR status. ABN - 36 063 471 446*

Donations of \$2.00 or more are tax deductible in Australia