



Operation Cleft Australia is an international project of the Rotary Club of Box Hill Central Inc. District 9810 Australia



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Christmas 2018

Smiles Update Share the Festive Joy - be a Smile Donor!



From recently appointed Chair Bruce McEwen

It is with a deep sense of both humility and excited anticipation that I write to you as the recently appointed chair of Operation Cleft Australia Foundation (AGM Oct 29th).

Humility, because as secretary of Operation Cleft for the past five years and a supporter of this amazing program since its inception 2005, I'm so very aware that I find myself following in the footsteps of some remarkable leaders. Professor Lindsay Mackay as chair over these past two years has provided exceptional leadership not only in the direction and oversight of the program, but as a visionary in the planning and implementation of the exciting new collaboration agreement we now have in place with partner DCKH.

On behalf of the Management Committee and I'm sure all our friends and supporters, I thank Lindsay for his wise leadership,

encouragement and never-failing enthusiasm for the Operation Cleft program and the smiles it has brought so far to more than 11,500 children and their families. Thank you Lindsay (Lindsay will continue on as a member of the OCA Association).

Excited anticipation because I'm deeply aware through my recent April visit to Bangladesh and the realisation that Operation Cleft has left such a deep impact on the lives of so many children, their families, Surgeons and Rotary Clubs across Bangladesh, and then our recently initiated collaboration agreement with DCKH, that now with the combining of surgeons, and efficiencies through the combined administration, that this year we anticipate completing up to a record 1500 free Cleft Lip and Palate surgeries for the children of Bangladesh.

This amazing transformation of a child's life is only possible because you believe in this program and continue to give your hard-earned dollars to make it happen. Your support as a 'Smile Partner' has made this all possible. Thanks to you, your families and our many Rotary Clubs, and other organization for your great support. We are excited about seeing even more children's lives changed and to see smiles of hope on their faces and the faces of their most grateful families. Smiles that now replace sadness and a sense of hopelessness.

Thank you for making it all possible.

I wish you and your family greetings for a Happy Christmas and New Year.



Bruce McEwen

Message from Immediate Past Chair

It has been an exciting time for Operation Cleft, as from July 2018 we have begun to collaborate with German Cleft (Deutsch Cleft Kinderhilfe e.V.) in Bangladesh. German Cleft have been providing cleft repair surgery in Bangladesh since 2009, and like Operation Cleft, their surgery is conducted by highly qualified local surgeons. By combining our surgical program and our team of surgeons with German Cleft's we have been able to set a combined target of 1500 operations in 2018/19. And we have been able to keep the overall cost of surgery to \$300.

We are pleased that Moinul Islam, who was Operation Cleft's Bangladesh in-country manager for the more than 3 years, has agreed to accept the honorary role of the Operation Cleft Australia Foundation Goodwill Ambassador for Bangladesh.

Our Smile Donors have continued to develop a number of innovative ways to raise donations. These include a member of the Rotary Club obtaining sponsorship for his Around the Bay bicycle ride, a bride and groom's gift to Operation Cleft in lieu of providing gifts to wedding guests, an Interact Club which held a Krispy Kreme donut day, and a school Spellathon. I encourage you to develop new ways to support Operation Cleft.

I hope you enjoy reading about these and other matters below.



Dr Lindsay Mackay



Operation Cleft Australia joins hands with German Cleft!



Operation Cleft Australia is now partnered in Bangladesh with DCKH—Deutsche Cleft Kinderhilfe e.V. (German Cleft).

The Deutsche Cleft Kinderhilfe e.V. was founded in 2002, but already in 2005, they were able to finance 1,271 cleft operations as well as 83 operations on craniofacial anomalies

(major congenital deformations) in India and 62 operations in Cameroon. Today German Cleft is providing free surgeries and related services in 12 countries, including in Bangladesh since 2009. Working together, Operation Cleft Australia and German Cleft plan to undertake more than 3,000 cleft surgeries in Bangladesh over the next two years.

The partnership will also open doors for Operation Cleft Australia to have access to the Comprehensive Cleft Centre being established in Bangladesh by German Cleft. This will provide cleft patients with access to Speech Therapy and Orthodontics - a plan OCA has been aiming for!

Appointment of a Goodwill Ambassador for Bangladesh

Moinul Islam has accepted the honorary position of Operation Cleft Australia Foundation Goodwill Ambassador for Bangladesh. Moinul was Operation Cleft's Bangladesh in-country manager at Glencoe Foundation for 3 years up to June 2018. In that role he did an outstanding job in liaising with a wide range of groups, including surgeons, hospitals and government authorities, to ensure the smooth and efficient delivery of the surgical program in Bangladesh.

Moinul was initially employed by German Cleft as country manager to establish the collaborative surgical program between Operation Cleft and German Cleft. Moinul has left the employ of German Cleft but continues as a consultant to German Cleft assisting in the implementation of the collaborative surgical program. As Goodwill Ambassador, Moinul will generally promote Operation Cleft's program in Bangladesh, and liaise with our partners and in-country donors and supporters.



Training of Surgeons for the collaboration with DCKH

Joining hand with German Cleft required our Doctors and their administration staff undergo a training program on the new system. A training session was organized in Dhaka at Hotel Orchard Suite where surgeons and their assistants were present. The training was majorly focused on training surgeons on the online based database system of DCKH. It was also a start-up meeting and gathering of all surgeons together.

Naba Kishor Pujari, Manager, Communications and Newsletter from ABMSS, India were present in the training as a trainer. The training included ins and outs of the database system. A practical session was organized to give some insight and experience with the inputs and outputs of live data information and its management.



OCA and DCKH training in Colombo



In late October all surgeons involved in the Operation Cleft/DCKH surgical program in Bangladesh attended a training and planning program in Colombo.

Donation of a Vital Sign monitor



In August, OCA made provisions to donate a Vital Sign monitor to the Bangladesh surgical team headed by Dr M. Quamruzzman. The machine is a very important component in cleft operations and it was received with many thanks.

Our Volunteers

We say goodbye to Ken and Suzanne!

Operation Cleft has lost two of its most valuable volunteers in Ken Clark and Suzanne Deering. They have relocated to Geelong as the next step in their life.. Ken is a past Treasurer of OCA, and for many years Suzanne has fund-raised through the sale of her delicious homemade jams and relishes. Recently these have been sold through Rotary Recycle with all proceeds going to OCA. Ken and Suzanne have been consistent volunteers by processing donations and issuing receipts to donors – a demanding process that occurs on a weekly basis. We are extremely grateful for the contributions that Ken and Suzanne have made to Operation Cleft and wish them well in the future.

We are seeking generous supporters who are willing to contribute their valuable time volunteering for OCA. If you are interested in volunteering to help with donation processing and banking at our Blackburn office, for a few hours a week, please call or email us.





Dr Robert Dunn's around-the-bay ride to gift a smile for life!

Dr. Rob Dunn has been quite a keen recreational cyclist. Along with his wife, Patricia, he has completed two Great Victorian Bike Rides in 2004 and 2009 and even completed a 220km Around the Bay in a Day ride in 2005..!

When Dr. Dunn joined the Rotary Club of Box Hill Central earlier this year, he was introduced to the club's international project, Operation Cleft. The idea to "come out of retirement" and do the 100km Sorrento to Docklands ride in October 2018 was born in order to support of Operation Cleft!

Dr. Dunn was excited about the campaign and the challenge to make a difference to many disadvantaged children born with cleft lip/palate who can't afford the corrective surgery.



We hope you will join Dr Dunn in his journey, support him and help Operation Cleft Australia continue to provide free cleft lip and palate surgeries for poor children in Bangladesh.

You can still donate to his campaign by following the link provided on our website in News and Media section or at Grassroots platform by searching for operationcleft/dr-robert-dunns-round-the-bay-ride.

So far his campaign has raised \$4500!

Bentleigh College Spellathon 2018



For the ninth consecutive year, Bentleigh Secondary College held their annual Spellathon to raise vital funds to provide free cleft lip/ palate operations to poor children in Bangladesh. Months and months of excitement and preparation came down to one fun-filled morning on the 7th September at the school library. OCA would like to congratulate the winners and thank the school's wellness coordinator and Rotarian Dr Intha Chetty, teachers Suzy Watt and Marc Koenig, volunteer Marge Cheggwidden and all the students who participated. A big thank you also goes to Rotary Club of Moorabbin, who have been passionate supporters of Operation Cleft Australia. The 2018 Spellathon raised over \$1,500 to help support children with cleft lips and palates in Bangladesh. Early this year, the Scrabble Night and Film Night brought in an additional \$528 and \$855 respectively.



Greensborough Secondary College Interact Club Fundraiser

Greensborough Secondary College Interact Club ran a Krispy Kreme donut day to raise funds to support Operation Cleft Australia in August. The event brought in more than \$300 in fundraising.

Blessings from Romina & Paul's Wedding



Romina and Paul of Aspendale Gardens chose Operation Cleft as their charity to support in lieu of presenting the guests with wedding souvenirs. Instead of giving gifts, the couple gave OCA badges accompanied by a beautiful note to state that the guests helped raise funds to provide free corrective surgeries for disadvantaged children who are born with a cleft lip/palate in Bangladesh. This beautiful gesture raised \$800!

Family Wedding, Anniversary or a Birthday coming up? Many of our supporters take donations to OCA in lieu of presents, so together they can transform the lives of underprivileged kids in Bangladesh. Please let us know if you are planning to raise funds while celebrating your life event!

