



**Interplast**™

Repairing bodies & rebuilding lives  
in the Asia Pacific region

# ROTARIAN *review*

AUTUMN 2015

INTERPLAST AND ROTARY. CHANGING LIVES TOGETHER SINCE 1983.

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WELCOME TO OUR FIRST DIGITAL VERSION OF ROTARIAN REVIEW!

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## DONATE TO INTERPLAST

THERE ARE MANY WAYS FOR ROTARY TO SUPPORT INTERPLAST. EVERY DOLLAR RAISED HELPS US DO MORE OF OUR LIFE-CHANGING WORK.

YOUR INDIVIDUAL DONATION CAN BE ATTRIBUTED TO YOUR CLUB, WHICH MEANS YOU RECEIVE TAX-DEDUCTIBILITY, WHILE BOOSTING YOUR CLUB'S FUNDRAISING TOTALS.

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## SAMOAN BUS DRIVER HAPPY TO BE BACK ON THE ROAD

CONTINUING INTERPLAST'S INCREDIBLE WORK IN SAMOA



Plastic and reconstructive surgeon Ben Norris and Faafoi

In October last year Interplast Rotarian Coordinator Di Gillies was privileged to witness an Interplast team reunite with a Samoan bus driver who injured his hand in a car accident.

Interplast first met 31 year old Faafoi in 2011, soon after the accident occurred. He had sustained a de-gloving injury to his left hand, meaning an extensive section of his skin was torn off the underlying tissue, severing its blood supply. During that visit, the Interplast team repaired the injury using a flap of muscle from his chest (a pedicle pectoralis flap).

On seeing the Interplast team again in 2014, Faafoi reported that his recovery from the first surgery had been a little slow but he had begun his own self-managed hand physiotherapy, which had left him with reasonably good hand function. But Faafoi still wasn't able to use his hand completely. The flap made his hand bulky, with limited movement.

Unable to handle the steering wheel of a bus, Faafoi had been out of work since the accident. This had a significant impact on his and his family's life. Faafoi told Interplast he hoped the appearance and function of his hand could be improved.

Australian surgeon Ben Norris operated on Faafoi's hand, 'debulking' the flap. Four days after the surgery, Faafoi could already see improvement, and was able to touch his index finger and thumb together for the first time since the accident.

Interplast volunteers taught Faafoi to further his own physiotherapy by squeezing a towel in his hand, once stitches had been removed. Faafoi was very excited to have function back in his hand and was looking forward to going back to work.

Interplast's 2014 surgical and training visit to Samoa was funded by the DFAT Pacific Island Project, which is managed through the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons.

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# ROTARIANS WITNESS THEIR GENEROSITY FIRST HAND

Last year three Rotarians were given the opportunity to witness Interplast's life-changing work in person.

Steve Dixon from Rotary Club Osborne Park, Peter Harris from Rotary Club Seaford-Carrum Downs and Interplast board member and Rotary Club Kew member Michael Stillwell observed the work of Interplast in Lautoka, Fiji. They were funded by their clubs to be an observer on the program.

Peter, Steve and Michael witnessed the work of Interplast volunteers while they performed various plastic and reconstructive surgeries. In addition, local



surgeons and anaesthetists received clinical training from the Interplast doctors and Interplast nurses provided training sessions with local theatre, recovery and ward nurses.

Peter, who has been a Rotarian for 26 years and a long-term supporter of Interplast, shared his thoughts about joining the program as an observer, "I was very keen to experience the good work of this program first hand."

Peter said it was rewarding to see Interplast's training and capacity building at work in Lautoka. "It was a pleasure watching the professional manner in which the medical team worked together, their

excellent liaison with the local staff and willingness to impart their knowledge to the local medical team," he said.

He was intrigued watching surgeons repair lips and palates, burns contractures and other conditions, saying, "it can only be regarded as sculpture in skin. It was inspirational."

Peter was also impressed by the work of Fijian surgical registrar, Dr Rachna Ram. "Rachna's dedication to develop her skill was enlightening," Peter said.

Interplast has supported Rachna's training placement in New Zealand which is supervised by Interplast volunteer surgeons.

Peter was touched by the hospitality he and the team were shown during their visit, "I was overwhelmed by the caring nature, willingness to help and dedication of the local people not just at the hospital but everywhere in the area."

## INVITE AN ENGAGING INTERPLAST SPEAKER

WANT TO HEAR THE INTERPLAST STORY IN PERSON? INVITE A SPEAKER TO VISIT YOUR CLUB.

EMAIL THE ROTARIAN COORDINATOR  
DI.GILLIES@INTERPLAST.ORG.AU

## BOYS IN THE BAND COME TO BALLARAT

Special thanks also to our Rotarian champions in Ballarat who are holding a fundraiser for Interplast in April. The show 'Boys in the Band' celebrates the world's greatest hits from the most iconic bands of the 20th century.

A proportion of the cost of tickets sold through the Club will go towards Interplast.

**When: Thursday 2 April**

**Where: Her Majesty's Theatre, Ballarat**

**Tickets: [www.hermaj.com/buy-tickets-boys-in-the-band](http://www.hermaj.com/buy-tickets-boys-in-the-band)**

Or the box office on 03 5333 5888

(Please select Rotary and use the promotional code Interplast when booking)

## TURIA PITT'S INTERPLAST GALA NIGHT



You and your Club are invited to join Interplast ambassador Turia Pitt for an extravagant night at the Interplast Gala in Sydney.

Kick up your heels Great Gatsby style and celebrate Turia's incredible passion for Interplast's work.

Featuring Ben Fordham (2GB and ex-Today Show) as MC and taking place at the iconic Doltone House, don't miss this very special night.

**When: Thursday 16 April**

**Tickets: \$135**

**Tickets: [www.trybooking.com/GLEX](http://www.trybooking.com/GLEX)**

## SAVE THE DATE MELBOURNE

A special evening with Turia will be held in Melbourne on 19 June. For full event details visit [www.interplast.org.au](http://www.interplast.org.au)

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