



SMILE!

The Newsletter of Operation Restore Hope Australia
website: <http://www.operationrestorehope.org>

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Operation Restore Hope - giving children a chance

A heartfelt story from our most recent Cebu trip

Maureen Eddison has been working with Dr. Darryl Hodgkinson, the plastic surgeon who founded Operation Restore Hope Australia (ORHA) and going to Cebu with the charity for the past ten years. Maureen is the coordinator for one of the annual missions to Cebu which has just returned from a mission and this is what Maureen has to say:

"Have you changed someone's life immeasurably in the last few weeks? There are not many people who can say that they have. It requires a major shift in someone's fortune to change a life - maybe winning lotto, or receiving an organ transplant.

"There is another, much more simple way to change a life and restore hope to children and their families.

"The volunteers of Operation Restore Hope Australia do it every day on their missions. ORHA is a charity set up to provide free surgical treatment to less fortunate children with cleft lip and palate in the Philippines. There are 50,000 of these children born every year in the Philippines, so their work is just a drop in the ocean, but a very valuable drop. ORHA does not



Surgeon Robin Dyleski takes a minute for a cuddle

receive any government funding, either here or in the Philippines, and there are no paid staff or administrators. All work is done on a completely voluntary basis. We rely on monetary donations, and donations of supplies in order to continue this work. Each lip operation cost about A\$500 to perform.

(continued overleaf)

A Letter from Dr Hodgkinson



ORH Australia in 2006-7

In this past year, Operation Restore Hope Australia has come further than ever in making our dreams a reality. For the first time, we have had a Filipino team of surgeons, anaesthetists and nurses with whom we have been working in partnership carry on surgery even when we were not present. We are excited to include the services of Filipino speech pathologists for the first time in addition to the other medical services provided such as dentistry and paediatric care. Working together, not only our Australian, Kiwi, US, German and other volunteers, but also our Filipino partner NGOs, we have been able to come so far. We still have many dreams and need all the support we can get to make them a reality. How much we can do is only limited by how much support we have.

Giving children a chance (continued from page 1)

"In Australia, the lip repair operation is seen as small and very straight forward, and is usually per-



formed when the child is only a few months old. The palate repair is done during the next year, with other reconstructive surgery, orthodontics, and speech therapy a part of the whole program of treatment mapped out for the child from the day he/she is born. These children will take their place in society without a second thought.

"Imagine having this disfigurement all the way through school (that's if you get to go) and all through your adult life. As well as the feeding and speech difficulties, there is the teasing and social isolation.



Feeding is a difficult problem, with no special equipment available. Many of these children are severely undernourished when we see them. Their speech development cannot happen with a huge hole in their palate, and there's no orthodontics and obturators to help the problem prior to surgery, or afterwards, and no speech therapy. If the palate repair is done after about 8 or 9 years old, these children have a very limited chance of having clear speech and being understood, again making them an object of ridicule among their peers.

Children can be cruel the world over.

"Many of these children are cast out of their family as being shameful, and are not given the opportunity to go to

school. Without education, they are set on a course of poverty from which it is very difficult to escape. In an already very poor country, where there are many people to take one job, the person with the disfigurement goes to the bottom of the pile - no equal opportunity and anti discrimination laws here.



**Operation Restore Hope
Australia is part of
The Smile Train Network**

"What is a small operation in Australia is indeed life changing in the Philippines. The children have a chance to grow, go to school, interact with their friends, and be generally normal happy kids. The delight in the eyes of the parents is also a very satisfying thing to see, and helps put your own busy stressed life in Australia into perspective. We generally have few things to really worry about."

If you are interested in finding more about Operation Restore Hope Australia, or making a donation, please look at the website www.operationrestorehope.org or call 02 9362 7480.

It may just change your life too.



The cost to Operation Restore Hope Australia to repair a facial cleft is approximately \$500 AUD per operation. The more donations we receive, the more children we can help.

No funds received are spent on administrative, accounting, advertising or infrastructure costs. All membership fees and donations are spent directly on surgeries performed.

The Operation Restore Hope Australia ANGELS Club offers you and your friends/workplace/family the opportunity to change one child's life by paying for their individual surgery. ANGELS Club members are sent an official certificate of thanks.

You can also become a Life Member of Operation Restore Hope Australia or just join for a year. Your fee or donation will help fund the cost of a child's surgery.

Name _____
Address _____

Email _____ Phone _____

- Enclosed is my \$500 ANGELS Club fee
- Enclosed is my \$100 Lifetime Membership fee
- Enclosed is my \$20 Annual Membership fee

I also wish to make a donation of \$ _____ \$ _____

TOTAL PAYMENT: _____

Method of Payment:

- Cheque enclosed (to Operation Restore Hope Australia)
- MasterCard Visa

Credit Card No. _____
Signature _____ Expiry Date _____

