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# FRIENDS OF HELENA GOLDIE HOSPITAL

## WELCOME TO NEWSLETTER NO.6

As we near the third anniversary of the Rotary Club of Burnside visit to Munda in May 2005 it seems appropriate to review events in the interim .-How has the Helena Goldie Hospital fared?- Has the involvement of the Club ( and others) helped in any way ? -What has been learnt?-What of the future/

The tsunami in April 2007 was an unexpected turning point with major effects at the time and many repercussions since. In spite of the disaster and with on going demands on their resources the staff of the hospital have doggedly persisted in providing medical and nursing services to the local population . Rotary Club of Burnside has continued to support the hospital by the provision of needed equipment and materials. A further container is now overdue for dispatch. Contributions to nursing training and secretarial services were made by the Zonta Club of Adelaide and the School of Nursing Flinders University in previous years, and, now other Clubs and individuals -both locally and interstate - have become involved as very practical friends of Helena Goldie.

What has changed with the tsunami is the workload of the hospital and indeed when the tsunami put Gizo Hospital out of action the Helena Goldie Hospital assumed responsibility for the whole of the Western Province.The spectrum of illness, surgery and obstetrics remains unchanged. Malaria is still common in spite of the successful use of impregnated bed nets mediated by the Rotary Against Malaria program. Ross Roberts-Thomson, a medical student sponsored by the Club, visited HGH before Christmas 2007 and like ourselves was dismayed by the deaths of young people from TB. Ever present on the horizon is the thundercloud of HIV/AIDS, which has already devastated PNG.

As well as bringing death, destruction and chaos at the time the tsunami has caused a significant change of plans for the long term. HGH itself sustained relatively little damage but has made the decision to relocate the facility to a safer site well above high watermark. Rotary Club of Burnside's ambitious plan to upgrade and refurbish the present buildings is no longer relevant. The Club continues to support efforts providing maintenance at the present site now and for the next few years. It remains in contact with the administration about priorities for equipment, projects and providing assistance with strategic planning. We are acting as a coordinating body and are happy to provide information to clubs or individuals wishing to become involved with HGH now and in the future. However the main focus is now on the challenge of relocating the hospital.

The Solomon Islands Department of Health is asking the United Church and Helena Goldie Hospital to provide a fully professional Strategic plan for relocating the hospital to its new site. This would include not only the choice of the new location appropriately surveyed but also plans for the new buildings based on estimated future needs. Estimates of clinical needs and workload extrapolated from current workload figures

with expected demographic changes. Gizo Hospital is due to be rebuilt at a new location near to its previous site and this factor would impinge on HGH clinical workload.

Funding for the HGH relocation will be far beyond the capability of Rotary at Club and District level and must of necessity involve Government involvement. The HGH administration has welcomed the offer by Rotary Club of Burnside to assist in producing the strategic plan. Steps have already been undertaken to identify a person/persons with suitable qualifications .It is hoped that one of the Overseas Aid Agencies funded by AusAid will provide financial support for a planner to travel to Munda and work alongside the team based there on this project.

As time passes the Rotary Club of Burnside sees itself more and more as a "clearing house" collecting information about the needs of HGH and linking up these needs with others able to meet these needs. By doing this we have provided ,on request, detailed information to several Rotary Clubs, church groups and individuals keen to be actively helping HGH. One important aspect of this has been avoiding duplication of effort, another has been providing help according to local priorities, yet another has been emphasising the need to use local labour and materials whenever possible and best of all to encourage a teaching component in any project undertaken. Our other function is of course to keep you all informed by our regular Newsletter.

### **Acknowledgements**

We wish to acknowledge the work of our many friends and contacts:- those in Munda ; the Rotary Clubs of Honiara, Gizo and Munda,; individuals Jeff kite, Mike Willis, Trevor Cumberland, Vince Brooker and Geoff Bond; the Rotary Clubs of Loxton, Maffra, and Bundaberg; and the Newlife Church of Robina. We thank you all and any others not specifically named but noted for your support.

We acknowledge the support given by the late PDG Bob Northcote to the project.

### **Donations**

**To make a donation toward the Helena Goldie Hospital Program please make cheques payable to;**

**Rotary Overseas Aid Fund (Helena Goldie Hospital-41/2005-6)**

*Private donations are Tax Deductible*

*forward to-*

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**Friends of Helena Goldie Hospital**

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