

# **THE JOHN FAWCETT FOUNDATION INC [JFF]**

## **The Original Concept: An Historical Overview**

This overview covers the period from 1989 until 2000, the year in which the JFF is incorporated. This account is fully documented in the Minutes of the Board of Management for the Rotary International District 9450 Mobile Clinic for Cataract Surgery Committee. These Minutes, Monthly Statements of Accounts, and Audit Reports at six monthly intervals covering the entire period were handed over to the JFF secretary Rod Eagleton about 2000/2001 by Past District Governor [PDG] John Hollingshead. NB. A Postscript in parts three and four briefly highlights the continuing success of the JFF to April 2009.

The Chairman of the managing committee from 1989 until 1999 was PDG John Hollingshead [West Perth Club and Foundation Life Member]. Committee members surviving from those days are Rotarians Win Jones [Dalkeith Club], Bevan McInerney [North Perth Club], Angus Buchanan and Merv Lamb [West Perth Club], Geoff Summerhayes [Perth club] and Dr Peter Graham, the project ophthalmologist.

### **Part One: The Dilemma of Funding 1991-2000.**

#### **The Lead up to the Establishment of the JFF and its Incorporation**

**Rotary Foundation Health Hunger and Humanity [3 H] Grant.** In November 1990, the Trustees of The Rotary Foundation [TRF] approved an Health, Hunger and Humanity Grant [3 H Grant] of USD157,545 to cover the purchase of the original mobile clinic for cataract surgery, a second hand 24 seater Mazda bus, its conversion into a 2 bed operating theatre, the construction of its trailer, the cost of the move of these to Bali by WA Stateship and the cost of running the project for 2 years, ie for 1991 and 1992.

AUD 8,000 was saved and used for other purposes by cancelling the Stateship move of the mobile clinic which was flown to Bali by RAAF Hercules aircraft on the authorisation of the then Chief of Staff of the Australian Defence Forces [ADF], General Peter Gration. This authorisation began with a phone call by John Hollingshead to a RAAF Squadron Leader at the RAAF HQ in Canberra, nephew of one of the committee members. The call was diverted to a Group Captain, Head of the RAAF Medical Services, who enthusiastically supported the request for the Mobile Clinic to be flown to Bali.

The author and signatory of this RI District 9450 3 H grant application was John Hollingshead, with invaluable assistance from John Fawcett in Bali. The sponsoring club in D9450 was the Rotary Club of West Perth.

3 H grants are most difficult to achieve, and this was no exception taking 18 months to succeed with the first application being negated. Fortunately the Trustees of TRF reviewed the application after the personal intervention of Royce Abbey, the fourth Australian to be an RI President 1988/89 and

known to the author. In addition the Trustees ordered a special review of the intended project on site in Bali. This was conducted by PDG Ben Titiharuw from RI D3400 Indonesia.

Only 8 such grants were awarded in 1990 amongst some 1.2 million Rotarians and more than 500 Rotary Districts, and this was the first 3 H grant awarded in WA. The original application requested funding for 4 years. The grant was paid out in stages, and evidence of adequate progress had to be submitted to get the next moiety. Eventually the grant was acquitted successfully.

**AIDAB and AusAID funding.** In 1991, an application was made to AIDAB, [Australian International Development and Assistance Bureau], for AUD 50,000 and much to our surprise it was granted.

This success led to a second application in 1993 for AUD 192,843 to fund the project for a further 2 years. In the early 1990's Rotary Clubs in Australia were able to obtain grants from AusAID for overseas projects that were registered with Rotary Australia World Community Service [RAWCS]. An application was made requesting AusAID match our own fundraising achievements on a 3:1 basis. By that time the project had received in excess of \$60,000 in donations mainly from Australian Rotary Clubs. Thus a budget was submitted to fit! It succeeded!

NB This grant commenced 1/10 1993 and was completed 31/12 1995.

Accounting to AIDAB/AusAID had to be precise and very accurate. Monthly returns were sent from John Fawcett's office in Bali to the managing committee in Perth, and the accounts audited every 6 months. Our project was commended for this diligence, a somewhat rare occurrence by awardees in those days. It was regarded as a model for others to follow. This could have been a forerunner in building up our reputation which led to such extensive support from AusAID after the Bali bombing.

NB. In the period 1991/2, Mr Phillip Flood was the Director General of AIDAB. John Fawcett met him in Canberra, and John Hollingshead in Perth. He had been the Australian Ambassador in Jakarta and had visited the Mobile Clinic.

**SMALL ACTIVITIES SCHEME [SAS] AusAID Funding.** Several grants of about \$100,000 from this source were obtained for the latter part of the 1990's as a result of John Hollingshead visiting the AusAID office in Perth, from where the application forms were obtained.

These funds were jointly managed by the Australian Embassy in Jakarta and an Indonesian Government Cabinet Administrative Committee, and paid direct to our account in Bali.

**Rotary International.** An intense effort was made to obtain funding from a number of RI sources. The priorities were clubs in WA, throughout Australia and world wide. The West Perth and Scarborough Clubs spearheaded the donations donating respectively \$43,751 and \$38,183. During the period 1991-2000 \$295,271 was received from Rotary Clubs in Australia.

There are 23 Rotary Districts in Australia who were kept fully briefed on the project by three 10 minutes promotional videos, illustrated brochures, and articles published in the regional magazine Rotary Down Under.

**The Rotary Foundation Matching Grants program** was used to maximum benefit. The Rotary bureaucracy involved much attention to detail in accounting for the use of the funds. However more than \$97,600 was raised through these grants.

A classic example followed from an article published in the Weekend Australian Magazine of 14/15th March 1998 entitled *Bali Eye* . About \$16,000 was received from this excellent six page illustrated story. \$10,000 was used in a Matching Grant, and thus a total of \$26,000 was generated.

**Rotary Foundation Grants for Volunteers** were used whenever possible. These grants were mainly applicable for visiting ophthalmologists and specialist nurses, and covered travel costs and gave a per diem allowance. A minimum of 28 days had to be spent with the project.

**The Paul Hamlyn Foundation of London.** John Fawcett had met Sir Paul Hamlyn, later Lord Hamlyn, in Bali. Applications were made to this Foundation [a major publishing business] for funding within their guidelines. John Hollingshead twice visited their offices in London whilst on holiday in the UK and briefed the CEO on our work. During the period 1991-2000 AUD 70,899 was received from this source.

**Other initiatives.** \$41,000 was raised from three car raffles, the proceeds being used specifically for Public Relations Promotion; business men and women, visitors and friends in both WA and Bali were approached by John Fawcett for donations for specific reasons EG for the transport of hospital equipment from Australia to Bali, for special operations for children, for blind Balinese to receive Braille computer training in WA, and to set up a Special Purposes Fund in the WA accounts.

The latter enabled costs of travel to and from Bali to be covered for those directing and administering the project without prejudicing donations for Cataract operations and the like. Special gifts were given to underwrite administrative costs particularly for telephone, fax, computer and office expenses in Bali.

From 1991-2000 a total of \$163,169 was raised from Surya Bali and \$110,541 from sundry donors to cover the costs listed above.

**PR Promotion.** Past President the late Bill Harwood, Rotary Club of Scarborough, assisted by his wife the late Mrs Alison Harwood, spearheaded the most successful PR drive.

Bill produced three promotional VHS videos. The first in October 1991 entitled “A Gift Most Precious”, running time 11 minutes 30 seconds, traces the story from the original concept to its first three months in the field by when 400 successful operations had been performed.

The second in March 1995 “Out of the Darkness”, running time 13 minutes, brought the story up to date and by now more than 4,000 operations had been completed in the Mobile Clinic. This was

filmed by a STV Channel 9 team from Perth, the journalist being Scott Bevan. Scott Bevan published the biography of John Fawcett in the book "Water from the Moon". [Currently he is the ABC correspondent in Moscow and Europe].

The third in April 1996 "Terima Kasih", ["Thank You"], running time 11 minutes 30 seconds, tells the story of Iluh, a 13 years old girl, cataract blind since birth, having her sight restored. Shortly after her operation Iluh, with Dr Dhayarta and his wife, and John Fawcett attended the D9450 conference in Geraldton in April 1996. Their surprise appearance on stage after this video had been shown was an emotional and dramatic moment! The commentary of this video was generously donated by Greg Pearce, now a TV Channel 10 news reader. The pictures were filmed by a friend of Bill Harwood.

Complementing the videos, Bill Harwood produced a series of illustrated brochures. These were distributed on a very wide scale to enhance the fundraising.

From January 1991 until 31 December 2000, a total of \$1,421,943 had been received into the Rotary Sight Restoration Project Account in Perth. NB A detailed copy of this consolidated statement of accounts may be obtained from John Hollingshead.

#### **Developing Difficulties.**

- Ten years of intense fundraising had exhausted the resources and energy of the driving committee!
- Income from Rotary Clubs was beginning to "dry" up and could not be relied upon;
- There was hope in 1999 that the Indonesian Government would accept financial responsibility but to what extent?; an economic downturn had hit South East Asia;
- Australian/Indonesian Government tensions over East Timor Independence had become a serious problem; the ADF were now fully committed and we were advised that aircraft and ships to convey equipment to Bali would no longer be available;
- It was very obvious that long term and reliable funding is vital for the maintenance, training, development and future viability of the project;
- During this 10 years period, a number of projects were running parallel to the Sight Restoration Programme EG the Cleft Lip and Palate Programme, Tuberculosis Project, the Munti Gunung Village Clean water Project, and Children's Special Operations and must be funded for the future;
- **A new initiative was urgently required to ensure the long term financial viability of the Rotary Sight Restoration Project in Bali.**

## **Part Two: The Establishment of The John Fawcett Foundation Inc**

**The Pipe Dream.** The Rotary philosophy is to recognise a need, investigate, devise a plan, ensure success for the long term, and start anew.

After 10 years of restoring sight and training local doctors and nurses in the relevant techniques with the provision of the latest operating equipment, the programme directors could be forgiven for thinking a self sufficiency point had been reached!

Overtures too had been made over a protracted period to the Indonesian Government to take financial responsibility for the infrastructure of the project. The Committee's supporting role would be to provide medical supervision, training, equipment and its maintenance.

At the RI District 9450 conference in Mandurah on 28<sup>th</sup> March 1999, John Hollingshead gave an address to up date progress on the Sight Restoration Project in Bali. He said, "The programmes of the Rotary Foundation aim to give skills to enable the less fortunate to become self sufficient. By the diligent use of a 3H Grant, Matching Grants, Volunteer Service Grants, AusAID and a vigorous fund raising campaign, our Rotary Dream of 10 years ago is nearing completion.

**"John Fawcett and I are proud to report that the Indonesian Authorities take financial responsibility for the project next month.**

"At the same time I stress our role is to ensure that the required medical standards and maintenance of our sophisticated scientific equipment is kept to the highest possible level".

Alas, the reference to Indonesian Government financial control was too premature! However this statement would not have been made at such a conference without prior strong evidence that Indonesian Government financial support was imminent. Ultimately there was an increase in meeting infrastructure costs for the BKMM, the Community Eye Hospital, such as basic staff salaries, and costs for services such as water, power, phone and staff transport to villages.

**The Indonesian Political Revolution.** In 1999 a major economic and catastrophic downturn hit south east Asia coinciding with the birth of democracy in Indonesia. Student unrest, the collapse of banks and businesses combined with provocateurs to destabilise the newly elected democratic government, generated a volatile situation. With millions at virtually starvation level, it rapidly became obvious that if the Sight Restoration Project was to survive, an urgent long term financial plan was needed independent of the Indonesian Government.

**A New Vision.** Since 1974, John Hollingshead had been the founder and administrator of the Neuromuscular Foundation of WA Inc, an institution established to raise capital for research into Neuromuscular diseases. John too had met and heard Dr Fred Hollows address Rotarians on his outstanding work for the blind, and how financial support for this came from the Fred Hollows Foundation.

It was clear that for the Humanitarian projects in Bali to survive, an independent financial institution was a vital necessity to ensure long term continuity through financial viability. Why not set up our own foundation?

John Hollingshead thus suggested to John Fawcett the concept of the John Fawcett Foundation [JFF] to raise capital for the long term viability. John Fawcett at first modestly demurred at having his name linked to such a venture, but was soon persuaded to agree. **It was pointed out that he was very well known in WA; throughout Australia particularly at Federal Ministerial and Ambassadorial levels and on the international scene. JOHN FAWCETT WAS THE KEY TO SUCCESS!**

**A vital Board meeting.** The following is an extract from Minutes number 63 of a Board meeting of the RI District 9450 Management Committee of the Rotary Sight Restoration Project in Bali held at the Royal Perth Yacht club on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> November 1999.

At this meeting the reality of the project's financial crisis was highlighted. John Hollingshead tabled at annexure B to the Minutes "A Concept to Support Financial Humanitarian Projects in Bali".

After discussion John Hollingshead moved the motion and the committee resolved that: **"That this committee approves the concept of establishing the John Fawcett Foundation for Humanitarian Projects in Indonesia, and that action is taken to draft the necessary Articles of Association prior to the next meeting"**.

**The Initial Concept.** Main points :

- Suggested title: The John Fawcett Foundation for Humanitarian Projects to Benefit the Peoples of Indonesia [both within Indonesia and Australia].
- Humanitarian Benefits include Restoring Sight; Prevention of Blindness; Cleft Lip and Palate surgery; Provision and Maintenance of Hospital Equipment; Medical and Technological Training for Drs, Nurses, Technicians; Special operations for Children; Appendectomy Operations; Support of Orphanages and Literacy and Numeracy Pilot scheme.
- The Foundation to have incorporation in WA, Public Benevolent Institution and Tax Deductible Gift status.

**Incorporation.** West Perth Club Rotarian Mal Di Guilo, a Chartered Accountant, kindly offered assistance. He introduced John Hollingshead to a Barrister and Solicitor, Allan Scalise of Fremantle. Allan very generously agreed to undertake pro bono the work to incorporate the JFF.

After mutual discussions which included John Fawcett, a draft constitution was approved by the Sight Restoration Board of Management.

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of March 2000, The Ministry of Fair Trading issued the Certificate of Incorporation registered number A1008300Y certifying that "THE JOHN FAWCETT FOUNDATION FOR HUMANITARIAN PROJECTS TO BENEFIT THE PEOPLE OF INDONESIA, SOUTH EAST

ASIA, THE FAR EAST AND AUSTRALASIA INCORPORATED has this day sixteenth day of March 2000 been incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act 1987”.

**Objects of Association.** These were to:

- Relieve sickness, suffering and distress in families of the lower socio economic group occasioned through blindness, eye disease and cleft lip and palate, appendectomy and serious crippling and debilitating disease particularly in children through the provision of medical equipment and medical services to cure, prevent, cure and control such diseases and ailments and the provision of technical, advisory, welfare and support services;
- promote literacy and numeracy projects to alleviate poverty as the root cause of problems in health, nutrition and crime and war;
- raise, receive, hold and invest funds to financially support such work;
- carry out such other related purposes as the committee may determine.

It was evident that these aims can only be achieved through the transfer of medical technology and the supply of medical and surgical equipment to apply that technology.

**Gifts and Tax Exemption.** For the past ten years, the Sight Restoration Project had been registered with Rotary Australia World Community Service Ltd [RAWCS] and the International Projects Advisory Committee [IPAC]. This association allowed gifts destined for the Bali projects to be tax deductible. However it was an untidy arrangement, and it was very desirable for the JFF to have tax exemptions and gift deductibility in its own right. Legally too a complementary organisation was required in Indonesia, and great benefit would arise if gifts for the project attracted tax exemption from other countries such as the UK and USA.

The bureaucratic challenges to achieve these ideals were eventually gained by the superlative work of Mr Graeme Robertson of Bali and Singapore, then Chairman of the JFF Board of Management, John Fawcett, Dr John Lake of Perth who is currently the Secretary of the JFF, and West Perth Rotarian Patrick Emery, JFF Treasurer.

### **PART THREE: A POSTSCRIPT REPORTS FROM THE FIRST AGM OF THE JFF HELD ON 11<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2003**

#### **Establishment of the Yayasan Kemanusiaan Indonesia [YKI]**

On 30<sup>th</sup> April 2003, John Hollingshead reported to the West Perth Club that he had attended the first AGM of the JFF on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2003. He stated:

- Mr Graeme Robertson, President Director of PT Adaro, a multi-national coal mining company in Kalimantan, became the Chairman of the JFF Board.
- The JFF Board had recognised the necessity for there to be in Indonesia a complementary Charitable organisation to provide legal status for the projects and possibly enable benefits

of exemption from Indonesian taxation, and recommended that an Indonesian Foundation – YAYASAN KEMANUSIAAN INDONESIA [hereafter referred to as YKI], the action arm of the JFF, be established.

This would create a strong and unique organisation, the JFF in Australia, the YKI in Indonesia, and both still attracting the support of Rotary International through RAWCS, and Rotary clubs in Australia.

### **12<sup>th</sup> October 2002 Bali Bombing Tragedy**

Referring to this, John Hollingshead reported on the aftermath referred to in reports from the AGM. The YKI office in Bali for weeks after the explosion was tested to its limits as a focal point for organising crucial humanitarian assistance for those, both Balinese and international visitors, caught up in the disaster. This response established the YKI in the eyes of the general public and other Non Government Organisations in Bali in the most supportive and positive way. The latter included the Friends of Bali, The Australia New Zealand Asscn, The Australia Indonesia Institute and the British Embassy in Jakarta. There had already been established during the past decade a close liaison with the Australian Embassy in Jakarta and with the Australian Consul General in Bali

An immediate response of the Australian Government was to consider an appropriate memorial to commemorate the tragic losses to the Balinese, Australian and International communities. The Australian Government requested YKI prepare a report on Bali's medical needs, including some solution to the massive cataract blindness problem. As a result of the JFF/YKI's report, Australian Government funds were allocated through AusAID for the building of a AUD 6.5 million eye centre in Denpasar. On completion, this was handed over to the Bali Health Department.

### **The Deputy Chairman's Report to the JFF AGM 2003**

Rotarian Geoffrey Summerhayes OAM, a past president of the Rotary Club of Perth, and in 2003 the Deputy Chairman of the JFF, concluded his report to the JFF AGM stating:

- "With its roots in Rotary, the JFF carries forward all the Rotary ideals and is able through its Committee of dedicated Rotarians and others to guarantee transparency and accountability.
- "The JFF has earned the confidence and respect of both the Indonesian and Australian Governments, and is strategically placed and has the track record to carry out major humanitarian initiatives, such as re-equipping the hospitals in Bali, setting up a tuberculosis diagnostic laboratory, establishing and managing eye treatment and training facilities with outreach programs in West Papua, South Kalimantan and other Indonesian Provinces.
- "The confidence placed in the JFF is demonstrated by the Commonwealth Government's accepting a proposal to establish a Memorial Community Eye Treatment Centre in Bali as a fitting tribute to those who lost their lives in the 12th October 2002 disaster.
- "Rotary can proudly feel a significant part of this new initiative which has grown out of its Sight Restoration and blindness Prevention Project. The establishment of this modern facility is a giant step towards improvement of health facilities on Bali.



· “The JFF is proud of its Rotary beginnings and calls upon all Rotarians to feel likewise about the initiatives, hard work and successes of its humanitarian programs in assisting Australia’s nearest neighbour, Indonesia”.

## **PART FOUR:POSTSCRIPT CONTINUED Ongoing**

### **Work, Challenges and Concluding Comments**

JFF/YKI surges on in its efforts to assist the socially disadvantaged in Bali and other provinces in Indonesia. WHO figures established in 2008 that in Indonesia 115 million live on just US \$2 per day and it is within this group that a massive cataract blindness backlog of 3.5 million [plus] is located. Whilst there are 800 ophthalmologists in Indonesia, the total number of cataract operations performed each year is only 80,000. There is also an annual increment of 230,000 new blinding cataracts. **This is the Foundation’s challenge for the future.**

**In the JFF News Update for October- December 2008, the Sight Restoration Outcomes for 2008 record that the JKI/JFF restores or SAVES SIGHT of 81,736 patients!**

Recently the latest JFF News Update of January-February 2009 reported more exciting developments, EG a new Mobile Eye Clinic, [there are now a total of four mobile clinics in Bali or neighbouring Provinces], the construction of a new base/camp store for the South Bali Mobile Eye Clinic, the TB training program entering its final year, and more Children’s Corrective Surgery, and so on and so on!

The wonderful achievements recorded to day are a far cry from August 1988, when John and Helen Hollingshead were on holiday in Bali, staying with John Fawcett. John Hollingshead was then a Rotary District Governor Elect. Over a beer or two he asked John Fawcett to suggest what Rotarians in WA could do to help the people of Bali. “To attack the huge problem of cataract blindness” was Fawcett’s response! This was the catalyst and inspiration for the planning to begin!

So to those of us who had a vision in 1988, 21 years ago, of setting up a mobile clinic for cataract surgery and working out from scratch how to make this work, the results of to day are a *miracle* !

**But nothing would have been gained without the drive and resourcefulness of the Rotarians of WA, led by the Rotary Club of West Perth, and with West Perth Club Honorary Rotarian John Fawcett at the front line in Bali to make it all work.**

This dedicated team slowly but surely, created from 1989-2000 the building blocks upon which the John Fawcett Foundation was launched.

Rotary International time after time helps ordinary men and women to do quite extraordinary things, and this story now recorded for prosperity is one such example.

*“Per Ardua ad Astra” “Lest We  
Forget”*

*With grateful acknowledgement for editing and information to John Fawcett and the  
staff of the JFF/YKI*

PDG John Hollingshead OAM and Life Member of The John Fawcett  
Foundation Inc; Chairman RI D9450 Rotary Sight Restoration Project Board of  
Management 1989-1999.

26th April 2009