

# Friends of *inter*PART Inc.

International Partners in Action Research and Planning

Issue 3  
October 2004  
Vol 2, No 3

## Newsletter

### Inside this issue:

War & Conflicts:  
What Price? 1

*inter*PART & Associates:  
UPDATE 2

## Feature

*Social Justice & Human  
Rights* 4 - 5

A Just Australia 6

Snippets 7

Friends of *inter*PART Inc.  
is incorporated under the  
SA Associations  
Incorporation Act 1985  
Registration Number  
A0023669R

Friends of *inter*PART Inc.  
PO Box 1775  
MACCLESFIELD SA 5153

interpart@bigbutton.com.au  
www.interpart.org.au

### WAR AND CONFLICTS: WHAT PRICE?

Many of us who have worked in war zones and refugee camps are horrified and appalled at what is and has been happening in Iraq, Darfur and other countries experiencing conflicts. I am sure that many who have not been exposed to these experiences, also share the horror of the situations. We all ask ourselves how can this be happening and shake our heads at the insanity of it all. Surely there is enough suffering through natural disasters and the consequences of the poverty that is making most of the population in 'developing' countries exposed to continuing food shortages, poor health and lack of income.

I also ask the question: "What is happening to the 'most vulnerable' in places like Iraq, and Darfur?" - especially the disabled.

As I have been working with people with disabilities for most of my life, I and many others are concerned at first what happened and is happening to those who are already disabled and living in those situations and second, how many more people have become disabled as a consequence of military activities.

Can you imagine what it must be like to be blind and hear bombs raining down or being deaf and see everybody around you fleeing in panic or being an old person or a young person who can't walk or run to escape the bombardment or ravages. It must be terrifying. For any person it would be absolutely frightening but it is hard to imagine what it must be like for those who can't escape the situation. Many die of course. There are also first hand experiences from ordinary people who have escaped from such situations and have recounted what actually happened to people with disabilities; shooting, rape, butchery and so on.

The on-going effects of war, such as maiming due to landmines and unexploded ordnances, is well documented. Thousands of people in many countries throughout the world - children, women and men (often poor rural people) - have lost limbs, become blind etc. Of course many combatants on both sides of a conflict suffer mental and physical disabilities for the rest of their lives.

Why am I putting pen to paper? Perhaps to air my frustration and anger; perhaps to say to myself and others "enough is enough" and somehow to try harder to stop the insanity that seems to be encompassing so much of the world today. In particular the notion that wars and conflicts can solve problems.

Please stop for a moment ; imagine being huddled in a room, the rockets are exploding close by, will the next one hit us. Will we die? Will we be hurt? Will my child be killed?

Perhaps we should put some of our global politicians and other decision-makers in the midst of this reality of war.

Any discussion about the above comments are welcome.

Helen Pitt  
helenpit@bigbutton.com.au

*The views expressed above are those of the author but are shared by many of her colleagues.*

***inter* PART Newsletter now online @**

**www.interpart.org.au**

## *interPART & Associates - UPDATE*

It's been a busy few months, characterised by shifts into new directions – literally and figuratively! ... north to Queensland and Malaysia, riding environmental and social health waves, just for starters!

Let me start with congratulating Jenny Biven in representing *iP&A* as the keynote speaker at the Johor Occupational Therapy Conference in Malaysia. As always, Jenny was extremely professional and thorough in preparing and delivering the keynote address and her workshop sessions around the conference theme of Changing Trends in Mental Health. With around 150 participants from Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei, it was some event! This was an exciting invitation, made additionally special by the contributions of Wayne Allen and Helen Pitt in particular, to the research and development of the paper, which focused on promoting community-based policy and practice.

On other fronts, our intensions of consolidating our South Australian based work has been somewhat thwarted this year by our success in attracting work in northern Queensland. And, no, it hasn't just been an excuse to escape the southern winter blues for the fabulous warmth of northern outback, reef, beaches and rainforests – though this has been a rather wonderful bonus!!

Overlapping and building on our efforts in facilitating participatory development of the Natural Resource Management Plan for the Southern Gulf Catchments (SGC) region, we were a key part of the successful consortium that won the contract to do the same for the Cape York Peninsula. At around this time, Barry Lincoln was mid-way through a separate but inter-related Landcare consultancy with SGC, so it was all rather hectic for a few months as Barry and I moved from Mount Isa and surrounds across to Cairns and Cape York. Barry has brought valuable NRM policy and planning experience to both teams, and together with his skills in working with a diversity of community stakeholders, has been instrumental in ensuring that both the process and products have "hit the mark".



Cape Tribulation- CYP



Joe near watercourse in the Southern Gulf Country

We would not have been able to undertake these various pieces of work so successfully without important contributions from Joe Byrne and Andrew Biven. Joe and Andrew have been instrumental in assisting with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultation and capacity building processes, which have been a core component of *interPART's* responsibilities. Joe assisted with SGC while Andrew joined us with CYP. Working as a team, Barry and Kerry also facilitated the overall engagement, capacity building and monitoring and evaluation components of the planning and Plans.



Andrew at Kulpa – Cape York Peninsula

While there are some striking similarities, the contexts between the two regions are very different. Among the things that have particularly hit us are the circumstances, including the political, social and economic dynamics that continue to impact so drastically on Indigenous and remote rural communities, and yet the resilience of so many people – Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal – who continue to fight for what amounts to "a fair go". It has been a remarkable few months – a privilege to be able to visit people on their country, in their homes, and to hear their stories and aspirations and ideas for the future and how this could be achieved.

With this has come responsibilities for how we manage the insights and information that people have shared – a particular challenge when we do not control how decisions will ultimately be taken.

## *interPART & Associates - UPDATE*

What has also been striking is the bottom-line that different and often competing sections of the population have when it comes to prioritising their issues and actions: people, be they pastoralists, Traditional Owners, conservationists, agency workers, business operators or our young folk, want to be *listened to, valued and respected*. At every level, they seek relationships that respect diversity yet deliver coordination. They also want to see NRM occurring within a context of social, cultural and economic sustainability. It has been both exciting and a challenge to hear this and begin to map out with people what these things mean in practical, policy and political terms, within the context of planning for natural resource conservation and management.

The approach adopted by *interPART* to these processes and challenges, grown from our experience overseas and in other sectors such as community health, has generated interest and appreciation at multiple levels. It is heartening to learn that the draft SGC NRM Plan is now being held up as the Queensland exemplar and nationally is being promoted elsewhere across Australia. There is however still much to be done, with ongoing involvement in Cape York Peninsula in particular over the next couple of months.

Through this time, Kerry has continued periodic contributions to Program Monitoring and Review work of AusAID's Community Water Supply Program in rural Timor Leste. With assistance from Helen she was involved as a capacity development adviser in appraising proposals and tenderers for the AusAID Occupational Skills and Standards Project in PNG.

Keeping our connections going with UniSA, Jenny Biven, with some minor input from Kerry, was marvellous in conducting another round of online seminars with 3<sup>rd</sup> Year Occupational Therapy students. Utilising the modules developed by *interPART* last year, the focus was on helping students consider aspects of community practice from a 'development' and 'cross-cultural' perspective using case studies from Africa and HIV-AIDs.

Helen has been invaluable in keeping the Macclesfield office operating, while also undertaking her important research work *and* concurrently developing up manuals and material for use by community-based disability organisations in strengthening their organisational and programmatic capacity, primarily in developing countries. All of this, combined with ongoing, inter-related work on behalf of Friends of *interPART* (*and* further amazing efforts in her wonderful Sanctuary Garden!) Following her research and development initiatives Helen is shortly off to Vietnam and Cambodia, accompanied by Tania Radis.

Across the organisation, internally and externally, our experiences of the past few months have generated much to be critically reflected upon, learnt, explored and consolidated – something we plan to focus on during the remainder of the year. New ideas are emerging around some of our core themes of leadership, capacity development, governance, policy-planning-practice, tracking change and adaptive management. So stay tuned – or give us a call if you would like to be part of our discussions!

Kerry Thomas  
Sept 2004



Father and son fishing -  
Mornington Island, SGC

Droving – Southern Gulf Country



# Social Justice & Human Rights

Politics bores me!

Social Justice and Human Rights concern me a great deal.

When political policy ignores such fundamentally important issues I get very cross. This article is about some of those concerns and ways being pursued to bring about long-term change in Australian society.

In the July 2003 Newsletter I wrote about our opposition to the war in Iraq. We were not alone as people right across Australia marched in Peace Rallies including 100,000 in Adelaide. A large and diverse group of organisations publicly joined the outcry against the idea of invading Iraq to remove Saddam Hussein. They included church groups such as Uniting, Anglican, Catholic, Church of Christ, and the humanitarian organisations like Oxfam Community Aid Abroad, Care Australia and many others.

The Returned Soldiers League, The Australian Education Union, and most of the political parties including The Greens, Democrats, Labour, many independents, and of course the United Nations itself, all clearly opposed the idea of war to resolve the complex issues faced by the people of Iraq.

But **John Howard knew better**, and he certainly had no interest in having this most critical of all decisions made democratically. Despite strong opposition from most Australians, he chose to take our country to war, with one of his several doubtful reasons paradoxically being to take democracy to Iraq (complete with depleted uranium bunker busters for encouragement).

The great tragedy of that callous decision has been unfolding ever since. We are confronted with the subsequent death, destruction, despair and unsurpassed political mayhem and anarchy on our TV's daily, whilst the poor Iraqi people are confronted with it every moment of their very uncertain lives. This is the liberating gift to Iraq from our very own prime minister, and the other members of the "Coalition of the Willing".

Much has been written and reported about all that has happened and is still happening, but I think that the feelings of the Iraqi people were pretty well summed up by the ABC 4 Corners program on 6 Sept 04. The people despised Saddam and his murderous regime as we did, but they equally detest the destruction, death and despair brought upon the innocent civilians of their country by the initial terrible bombardment, and subsequently the reign of terror across their country. The invasion was never designed, in my view, to liberate the Iraqi people, or even to genuinely fight terrorism, but to meet the needs of hidden agenda. The lack of 'weapons of mass destruction' or any proven link of Iraq with Al Quida, are but reasons among many for reaching this conclusion.

**Now, with the benefit of hindsight, Mr. Howard has announced what he would do , if faced with the same decision again today. He would make the same choice! Yes, that's right, he said that he would make the same choice again!** I personally find that concept absolutely offensive and abhorrent. But, what worries me even more than this is, as I am writing, the political polls reveal that enough Australians may still be comfortable enough with the PM for his government to win the looming election. How can that be I ask myself over and over again? The question torments me continuously as I search for answers. Is it ignorance, or complacency, or lack of alternatives, or perhaps a combination of the three. I used to believe that generally Australians were pretty fair minded people. I'm not so sure about that any more.

Anyway by the time you read this, the election may have been run and won. But whichever party wins, the difference in policies will probably and unfortunately, be not greatly different. The reality is that we live in a society which is one of the richest in the world. We are part of the 20% of the earths population which uses 80% of the worlds resources. This inequity is not well received by the scores of millions of people in the world without so much as clean water to drink, let alone sufficient food, shelter, health, education or assistance for those unfortunate enough to have a disability. I learnt about all this long after I left school, and I'm sure many of you reading this had the same experience. The most significant thing perhaps for me, which I eventually came to understand, was the fact that the resource rich lifestyle which I enjoyed, not only impacted negatively on the environment, but on the lives of my brothers and sisters around the world. The war in Iraq, I believe, is all a part of this reality. You see when your lifestyle requires so much energy (not mention all the other resources), the only way you can ensure that supply is by being very powerful. The United States spends \$30 million an hour on its military machine with bases all over the world. I may be naive, but I doubt very much if all that is required just to defend America.

*The views expressed in this article are not necessarily those of the Friends of interPART Inc. If however the information arouses debate, draws attention to those who deserve our support and compassion and advocates appropriate action, then it will only serve to validate the inclusion of the article in this newsletter.*

EDITOR

There have been scores of books written about the history of western nations coming to such a position of dominance in the world. Sufficient here to say is that much of that history has been dominated by greed, theft, violence against the innocent, including in Australia. If that were just the history, it would be terrible enough, but at the moment it is an ongoing day by day fact, and I, like many others, don't want to be a part of it. I believe, like many, that unless we are a part of the solution, we are actually a part of the problem. The first step I guess is to live a simpler, more equitable and sustainable lifestyle. The choices after that are endless. But because we live in a democracy and have the right to speak out against social justice and human rights abuse or whatever, I feel that privilege also burdens us with a responsibility to do so. John von Doussa, the Equal Opportunity Commission President, as quoted in the Jan 2004 Adelaide Review said;

**'As Australians let us not be damned by our silence. Or shamed by our ignorance.'**

I support those sentiments entirely, and have been thinking for a long time that perhaps a beginning to preventing that happening in the future, is to work with students in schools and universities, to at least reduce the ignorance and encourage participation, rather than apathy in our democracy. I told Helen Pitt about the idea and she thought it was a good one, but before starting she wisely suggested I should see what others might be doing in the area. This led me initially to seek out a retired teacher (like myself) who was a long time member of the Australian Peace Committee. Talking with him led me to becoming involved with a small group of people who were using the rare opportunity to make submissions to the Senior School Curriculum, with the idea to make Human Rights a compulsory subject at that level. We encouraged others to also make submissions, and I know some Friends of *interPART* did that. So thank you for your support. Other encouraging support came from the Australian Education Union and The Equal Opportunities Commission. We await with interest to see what the response will be to those submissions.

After that I found myself at the Global Education Centre in Adelaide city, where I have found that many of the things I felt important were already happening. So for the last few weeks I have been doing some voluntary work with them, to find out if that is the best organisation I can support, and work on some of my own ideas as well. The GEC is predominantly a resource for teachers or members of the community with special interests, having a library of books, magazines, videos, kits etc. on issues such as:

- Cultures around the world.
- Free Trade and Fair Trade.
- Globalisation, Global Citizenship.
- Human Rights
- Refugees
- United Nations Declarations which Australia has signed or not.
- Environment and Sustainability Issues
- Global Equity, and more fundamentally important issues in an ever shrinking and uncertain world.

In addition one staff member lectures all student teachers in many of these areas, which is now a compulsory part of teacher training. Another part time staff member goes into schools to run sessions around these issues, or school groups come to the centre. Another very important aspect related to the GEC is the Asian Village at the Kidman Park primary school which is extremely popular for schools to visit.

The curriculum provides plenty of opportunity for these important issues to be addressed. However it is so far largely up to individual teachers to decide how much and what they actually include. I personally believe that the subjects listed above are so important, that they must be given a much higher profile in the school curriculum. Only then will we have any chance of a nation less ignorant, and less able to tolerate governments without wisdom, or compassion or understanding of our responsibilities in an inequitable and troubled world.

Peter Morrison  
18 Sept. 2004

# A Just Australia

**To: Helen E Pitt**

I am writing to you to let you know that the petition you signed to urge the removal of children from immigration detention in Australia has now closed.

In the eight months the petition has been circulating, 51,685 signatures have been received.

A Federal Election has been called in Australia for 9 October, and the Government decided that the Parliament would not sit before the election. Consequently we were unable to arrange a formal lodgement of the petition with the Parliament. We have, however, advised the result of the petition to the leaders of the major political parties, and will issue a media release about the large number of people who have signed this petition.

As I write, this week there are still 82 children in immigration detention as a result of Australian Government policy, many of them for three years now. This is down from the 184 at the time the petition was initiated.

Through ***A Just Australia***, and other organisations and groups across Australia, we are continuing to pressure all parties to ensure that this situation ends. If you want to be informed about the continuing campaign, including the Campaign for Permanent Protection, please go to [www.ajustaustralia.com](http://www.ajustaustralia.com) to register your interest. Or if you want to show your ongoing support by finding out about, and signing, the "Refugee Guarantee", then go to [www.refugeeguarantee.com.au](http://www.refugeeguarantee.com.au).

Otherwise you will not receive any further contact from us as a result of your signature to the petition.

Thank you for putting your name to the petition.

Yours sincerely,

**Malcolm Fraser AC CH**

This message was sent to: [helenpit@bigbutton.com.au](mailto:helenpit@bigbutton.com.au)

## Friends of *inter*PART Committee

Chairperson	Wayne Allen
Deputy Chairperson	Cathy Megson
Treasurer	Jenny Biven
Secretary	Nicole McDowell
<i>inter</i> PART & Associates Representative	Kerry Thomas
Committee members	Ray Walker Sharron Harkin Peter Morrison Glenn Williams Vicki Williams

## Snippets - Snippets - Snippets

Extract taken from *Haqqi*, a newsletter of the Child Rights Regional Program in the Arab world, a joint program between the Arab Resources Collective and Save the Children Sweden [www.mawared.org](http://www.mawared.org):

*According to UNICEF, more than 1000 children in Iraq have been suffering from playing with arms, missiles, and bombs left over in the fields since April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2003. A call was made by UNICEF to dismantle these arms, after specifying that 30 children have been killed in Hodaytheh, 260 km North Baghdad while gathering metals to sell them; 133 in Karkork killed or injured in the last two weeks of April; 20 hurt daily in Mousel. Moreover, the UNICEF director adds that in addition to the direct impact of these arms, some parts of these weapons drop yellow gas that is poisonous and causes lung problems, burns, and slow death (As Safir, 18/7/03)*

This information was given over 19 months ago!!! **WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?**

### THE CHANGING WORLD

Populations are aging in almost all countries in the world. In 1960, there were 200 million older people. In the year 2000, that had tripled to 600 million. By 2050, one in five will be over 60. The speed of change is without precedent. Nearly 80% of this increase took place in the developing world.

More than two-thirds of the world's disabled people live in developing countries with numbers growing, and the fastest growth is in the older age groups, particularly 65 plus.

More information available from HelpAge International [www.helpage.org](http://www.helpage.org)

### WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS?

HelpAge International is a global network of not-for-profit organizations with a mission to work with and for disadvantaged older people worldwide to achieve a lasting improvement in the quality of their lives.

During my overseas work it has been my pleasure and honor to have been associated with HelpAge International in Africa and Cambodia where the organization provided funding and general support for many of our rehabilitation programs.

Helen Pitt

## Friends of *inter* PART Inc. Financial Report

(as presented by the Treasurer at the Annual General Meeting, August 2004)

Once again this year has seen a successful fundraising effort by the Friends of *inter* PART. This has occurred not only through the continued sale of wine and renewing of membership but also the introduction of new activities that have proved to be very popular and well supported.

The dedicated effort by members Ray and Tania (on the bicycles) and Helen Pitt (in the 'support' team) for Cycle Cambodia raised over \$11,500 for special projects in Cambodia in addition to our regular payments to the Rabbit School.

The Irish Night proved to be a hit with many of the locals around Macclesfield not only demonstrating their dancing skills and ability to have a great time but also their generosity with \$2,342.00 profit being made overall.

Otherwise chocolates do not seem to lose their popularity and movie and gift sales have also contributed to a great year of fund raising.

I would like to make a special thankyou to those individuals and organisations who have made donations to Friends of *inter* PART as we do not have tax deductibility status for money donated. After further financial advice the committee has decided not to pursue gaining tax deductibility status at this stage due to the added accounting and auditing costs which could well outweigh the benefits for a small organisation such as ours.

The quarterly payments made to the Rabbit School in Cambodia totalled \$6,740 for the year however this amount needs to be reviewed for the forthcoming year to include incremental increases and the recognition of further qualifications gained by teachers.

Friends of *inter* PART has now come of age with Margaret Megson supplying our meetings with computerised transaction sheets. Therefore I have taken the liberty of presenting an overview of significant aspects of fundraising efforts over the past year with the offer that the detailed transaction sheets are available to those who are interested.

Well done all those members and interested people who have enabled Friends of *inter* PART to make these project contributions possible.

<b>Income for 2003-2004</b>	
Memberships	\$680.00
Donations	\$1,249.10
Cycle Cambodia contributions	\$11,593.90
Movie Fundraisers	\$329.50
Wine	\$6,313.70
Cards/Cambodian gift sales	\$1,149.25
Chocolates	\$921.10
Irish Night	<u>\$2,342.70</u>
<b>Total Income before expenses</b>	<b>\$24,579.25</b>

<b>Expenses for 2003-2004</b>	
Wine purchases	\$2,670.00
Cadbury fundraising	\$290.88
Auditor fees	\$45.45
Bank fees	\$20.20
Purchase of video and camera equipment	<u>\$1,704.55</u>
	<b>\$4,731.08</b>
<b>Total Income less expenses</b>	<b>\$19,848.17</b>

### Contributions

Rabbit School payments x 4	\$6,740.00
Cycle Cambodia special project donations (rounded off figure)	<u>\$8,700.00</u>
Total Payments Cambodia – approx.	\$15,440.00

### Opening Balance at 1<sup>st</sup> July 2003

National Bank Account	\$2,157.58
JB Were Management trust Account	<u>\$2,480.26</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>\$4,637.84</u></b>

### Balance of Funds at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2004

National Bank Account	\$4,374.66
JB Were Management Trust Account	<u>\$3,646.27</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>\$8,020.93</u></b>