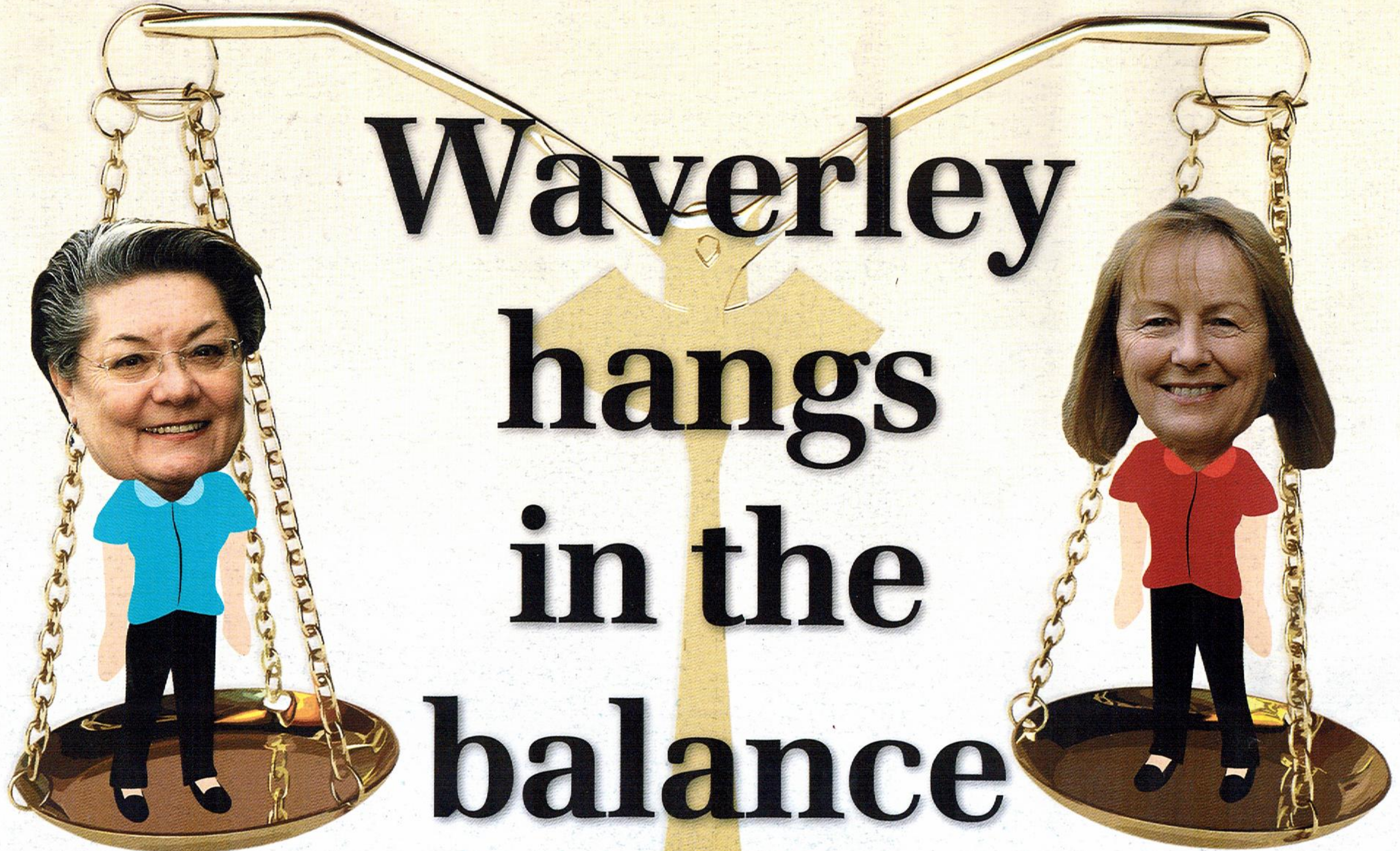


# Wentworth Courier

Wednesday, September 24, 2008 ■ [wentworthcourier.com.au](http://wentworthcourier.com.au) ■ Established 1947



**Waverley  
hangs  
in the  
balance**



# Going beyond the nip and tuck

Rob Bates

BONDI Junction plastic surgeon Ben Norris recently traded boob jobs and facelifts in the Eastern Suburbs for life-saving procedures on patients in Samoa.

Volunteering through the charity organisation Interplast, Dr Norris and his team flew to the island of Savai'i where they donated two weeks of their time and expertise.

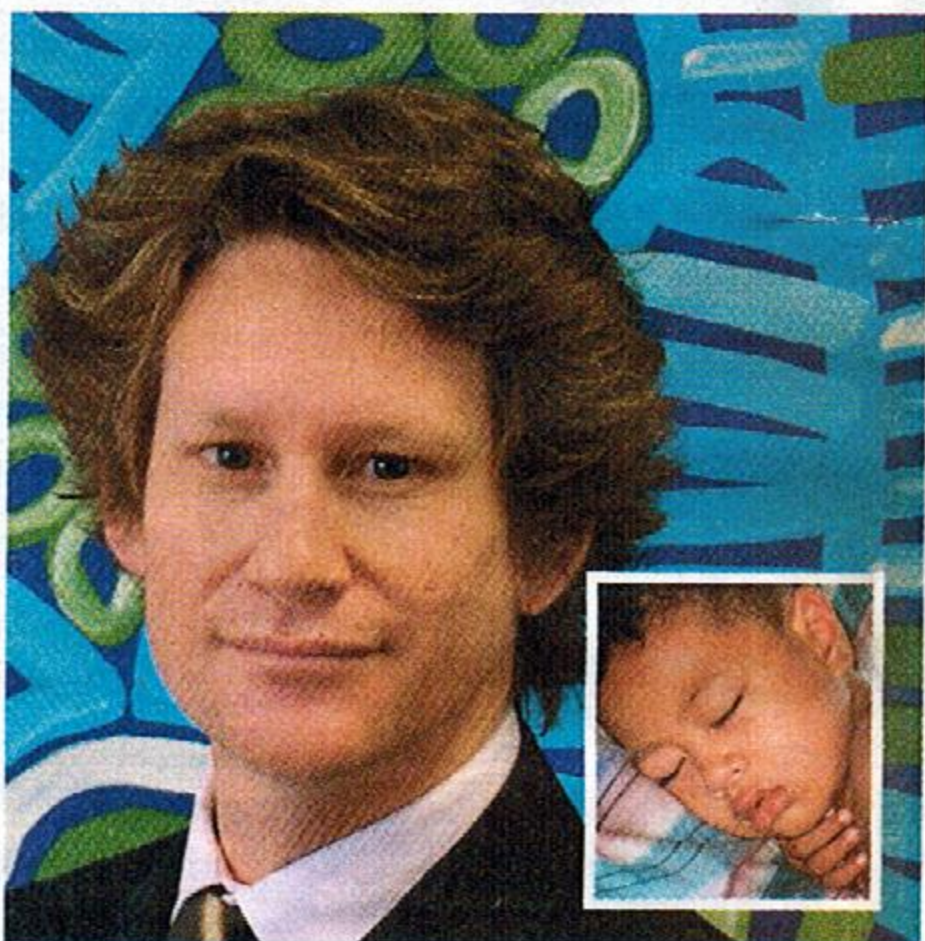
"The last team only managed 14 or 15 operations, so we were terribly afraid that if there weren't enough patients then Samoa would be dropped from the program," Dr Norris said. "It can be very difficult, because these are very poor people and often there's a huge expense for them to get to us."

With the help of his Samoan wife, Norma, and her family, Dr Norris and his team managed to see 100 new patients for consultation and perform more than 60 operations.

"Because my wife's family live there and are of good standing in their community, we were able to get the message down through the hierarchy and all the way to the outer villages," he said. "It helped dramatically having her there, because she could connect with the patients emotionally and communicate in a culturally sensitive way."

Dr Norris said one patient, a 14-year-old boy with burns to 25 per cent of his body, probably wouldn't have survived had it not been for their intervention and that many of the relatively minor operations would have an immense impact.

"Repairing a cleft palate makes a huge



Dr Ben Norris; and (inset) one of the young patients he assisted in Samoa.

difference because the condition impairs language – and in Samoa, if you can't speak properly, you don't go to school," he said.

Based on the success of this visit, Dr Norris and his team have been pre-approved for a second trip at the end of the year. "There's a slight sadness because you meet people that you know you're not going to be able to see in the short time you're there," Dr Norris said. "However, a major component of the program is educating local staff so that they can repeat some of the procedures off their own bat."

For more information on Interplast, or to make a donation, visit [www.interplast.com.au](http://www.interplast.com.au).



## ACADEMIC

### BUILT-IN WARDROBES

Organised Interiors  
Stylish Exteriors

ACN 002 815 426

ABN 73 259 273 933

Gold Licence No. R89011



Call us now for a **FREE!** quote

**CHATSWOOD**

Shop 1,  
71-73 Archer Street

**9415 2133**

**LEICHHARDT**

**NEW STORE**

479 Parramatta Rd

**9518 0180**

**KINGS PARK**

5 Turbo Road

**9622 9777**

- HINGED AND SLIDING DOORS
- MIRROR, TIMBER, GLASS, PAINTED OR LACQUER FINISH
- HUGE RANGE
- GUARANTEED QUALITY