



The Don Chipp Foundation

Newsletter

The Don Chipp Foundation is an independent research body affiliated with the Australian Democrats. Don Chipp, as the founder of the Australian Democrats, vowed to 'keep the bastards honest'. The Foundation aims to retain that basic premise through the promotion of fiercely independent research and public debate.

From the Chair

Welcome to the second newsletter of the Don Chipp Foundation. Since our last newsletter we have been very busy organising forums, handing out small grants to worthy organisations and planning activities for the next few months.

You may be aware that the Federal Government has granted the Foundation tax-deductible status. This is a very important step as it allows us to make serious efforts to seek funding sources beyond the Federal Office of Finance and Administration. I would like to thank all those who have helped us achieve this status, acknowledging especially the efforts of the legal firm Speed and Stracey for their valuable assistance.

In outlining briefly some of the activities we have undertaken in the last few months, I note our forum on the role of the Senate held in Melbourne in May was extremely successful and highlighted the important place this 'States' House' and House of Review has in our legislative processes.

While in Melbourne, the Board met to consider the 32 applications for small grants funding that we allocate each year. In the three years we have been

in operation we have allocated over \$75,000 in grants funding to many worthy institutions and community groups. While we may be small, we still make a valuable contribution to the community. The successful projects for this year are listed elsewhere in this newsletter.



We are also very pleased to be able to showcase at our next seminar the research undertaken to date by recipients of the 2005 grants round. This will again happen in Melbourne on 29th September – and we hope that Don Chipp will be there to open proceedings. See inside for details of this seminar.

Don't forget to visit our website where we detail aspects of our work and where you will find very useful information on topics of great community interest.

Dr Nina Burridge

Chairperson

Don Chipp Foundation

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INTERVIEW: Senator Andrew Bartlett

Senator Andrew Bartlett is an Australian Democrats Senator for Queensland. He is also a Director of the Don Chipp Foundation. Below Senator Bartlett talks to the Foundation about his work for social justice and the challenges ahead for him in the next 18 months.

DCF: *You seem to hold a number of portfolios relating to issues of serious national concern, with special media focus of late. What do you see as the most pressing issue for indigenous communities?*

AB: I see two very pressing issues. One is the lack of priority given to indigenous issues by political structures and by the media, which tend to be driven by and react to headlines and crisis, rather than the hard slog of day-after-day engagement at community level. The second is the lack of indigenous voices and views in public debate on these matters, which reinforces perceptions of powerlessness and means that the people who have most of the answers never actually get heard.

DCF: *Another area of serious concern is the treatment of refugees. What changes would you like to see as to the Government's policy on refugees?*

AB: We should be taking more refugees each year, for a start. One aspect of the government's policy on refugees that is not too bad is the overall intake from offshore, which is a reasonable number (6 000 refugees plus 7 000 special humanitarian each year). However, given the massive increase in the size of our migration and residency intake in recent years, there is certainly room for a few thousand more each year, particularly as these people are cherry-picked by the government and are not necessarily the most needy or those who have been waiting longest.

By contrast, the treatment generally meted out to refugees and asylum seekers who claim protection in Australia is an absolute disgrace. There is no excuse for the suffering deliberately inflicted on these families, the lack of support, the deliberate discrimination and the lack of basic legal rights. There should be a complete overhaul of the Migration Act to re-introduce due process and basic rights, which is something I am attempting to do through a range of Private Members' Bills I have been introducing into the Senate this year.



DCF: *You have also worked tirelessly for animals over many years. Do you think animal welfare is improving in Australia?*

AB: There have been some positive steps forward, but there have also been many big steps backwards. Almost all of the improvements have been directly due to campaigning by people in the community – a good reminder of why it is so important to keep pushing for change, even when it seems as if governments are not listening.

Some of the state laws have been slowly improving, and community tolerance of cruelty to some animals has declined. However, the growth in intensive farming has meant many farm animals suffering massively more than previously. This occurs because many people are not aware of the truth and because governments argue that jobs take priority. I believe there is plenty of potential for jobs without the necessity of gross cruelty, and that is what the community should be insisting on.

DCF: *With an election approaching, what are the other key issues you would like to see the Australian Democrats focus on over the next year?*

AB: The Democrats stand above all else for democracy, and the serious threat our democracy now faces should be a core part of our campaigning into the election. The slow strangling of the Senate by the federal government now that it has a majority there is just one example, but a very serious one. If the government maintains a majority in the Senate after the next election, the damage to our democracy could well be permanent.

DCF: *As a director of the Don Chipp Foundation, what role do you see for the Foundation in fostering positive social values and where would you like to see the Foundation headed in the future?*

AB: We need more engagement with the public about the issues that affect their lives, which has to include more ways for people themselves to influence decisions on these issues. Above all else, Don Chipp spoke about the importance of people having a say – something harder than ever for our form of democracy to achieve as governments, state and federal, grab more and more power to themselves.

“... the serious threat our democracy now faces should be a core part of our campaigning into the election.”

ARTICLE: Michael Cebon, Global Trade Watch coordinator

In 2005 Global Trade Watch was awarded a Don Chipp Foundation small grant of \$5,000. Below, Michael Cebon, the founder and coordinator of Global Trade Watch, talks about the organisation's project and the challenges involved in monitoring the activities of the powerful corporate sector.

The tremendous power of corporations is one of the defining features of our age. Their size and influence makes them omnipresent in modern life in a way that was almost inconceivable only 50 years ago. Corporations now make up 52 of the world's 100 largest economies, and control over two thirds of global trade. They increasingly own entire food supply chains, provide us with our most basic services like education, healthcare, transport, even water, and increasingly control the media, providing us with almost all the information we receive about the world.

This power would not be of concern if these entities were, like governments, accountable to citizens and willing to make their decisions based on an assessment of their overall impact on society. But the rapid increase in the power of corporations has not been accompanied by a corresponding increase in corporate responsibility or accountability to citizens.

Since 2002, Global Trade Watch (GTW) has been active in community education and advocacy focused on the unfair global trading system, and on advocating fair and environmentally sustainable alternatives. In 2006, with the help of a grant from the Don Chipp Foundation, GTW has established Corporate Watch Australia – a project that aims to monitor the activities of Australian corporations (here and abroad) and international corporations operating in Australia.

At the centre of the Corporate Watch Australia project is a new website with three core purposes. The first is to initiate and publish new research on the environmental, labour, and human rights records of Australian corporations and international corporations operating in Australia. This will involve bringing together a group of researchers to work on producing new research on industry practices, consumer perspectives and ethical investment.

The second core purpose of the website is to bring together, and act as a clearing-house for, the research and other corporate-focused work being done by Australian organisations, including unions, environment groups, development groups and other (non-profit or for-profit) groups. We have begun establishing links with some of these disparate groups, and we hope to see a strong network develop out of this project.

The website's third purpose is to undertake advocacy on issues of corporate accountability/responsibility and corporate law reform within Australia. This advocacy will draw on current strands of advocacy focused on corporate social responsibility (CSR) and corporate law reform, both in Australia and internationally. Examples include the campaign on the UK's Company Law Reform Bill being run by the Corporate Responsibility Coalition (CORE) and the Trade Justice Movement (TJM), the draft Corporate Code of Conduct Bill prepared by Democrat Senator Natasha Stott Despoja in 2004, and the work of the international Publish What You Pay (PWYP) coalition.

While the Don Chipp Foundation has given this project a great kick-start, our challenge now is to make the links with other organisations and develop the ongoing funding streams needed to make this site a valuable resource and a strong voice for justice and corporate accountability into the future.

You can visit the Corporate Watch Australia site to check on our progress at www.corporatewatch.org.au.

Michael Cebon

Global Trade Watch coordinator

Winners of the 2006 Don Chipp Foundation Grants Program

The winners of the 2006 Don Chipp Foundation grants program have now been announced. The Foundation received over 30 applications for funding, all of a very high standard. Four grants of \$5,000 each were awarded to the following projects:

Julie Cassidy

Deakin University, in conjunction with the New Matilda:

Does Australia Need a Bill of Rights?

Lenore Manderson

Monash University

Immigrant Health, Community Action and Sustainability: the evolution of the Multicultural Centre for Women's Health

Nonie Harris

James Cook University

The Rise of the For-Profit Child Care Sector:

Grant Mitchell

Hotham Mission Asylum Seeker Project:

Seeking Protection: the impact of the Australian government's Bridging Visa regime on community-based asylum seekers in Australia.

Immigrant Health, Community Action and Sustainability: the evolution of the Multicultural Centre for Women's Health

In the most recent round of the Don Chipp Foundation's grants program Professor Lenore Manderson of Monash University was granted \$5,000 to undertake research into methods of improving health care outcomes for immigrant women, including women with limited English language skills. Below, Prof. Manderson, Dr Devva Kasnitz and Ms Katie Vasey discuss their work.



Dr Devva Kasnitz (nearest the projector) in 1977, speaking to women about health issues. This was one of the first projects undertaken by the team.

Social inequalities are important risk factors for ill health and disability. Disadvantaged individuals often lack the information, personal resources, and support systems to prevent poor health and the social exclusion of disability. In our Don Chipp Foundation-funded research we will explore ways to maximise health through truly innovative public health education to some of those at greatest risk – working immigrant women uncomfortable using English and, through them, their whole families.

In November 2004 Dr. Devva Kasnitz, an American anthropologist from the University of California, Berkeley, visited Australia for the first time since doing her PhD research in Melbourne on immigrant women's health 1975-1978. She discovered that the small NGO she had helped start, Action for Family Planning, was now a large and unique agency, Melbourne's Multicultural Centre for Women's Health (MCWH), also known as Working Women's Health, <http://www.mcwh.com.au/>.

With assistance from unions, MCWH started with a pilot factory-visiting program in 1977 to provide family planning education to immigrant women factory workers in their own language and at their work places. They trained a group of immigrant women as family planning educators and took them to factories to provide information to their peers. Over almost 30 years the group expanded to include broader reproductive, sexual, occupational, and mental health education in a variety of community settings to tens of thousands of immigrant women. Despite this expanded scope, it has maintained its woman-to-woman model, conducting multilingual health promotion by and for immigrant working women. The NGO started with Italian, Greek, Arabic, and Turkish programs, and it now offers training in almost 20 languages. The program now also includes training for health professionals, community workers, and employers, and the production of publications on immigrant women's health, consultation, and advocacy. It also has an extensive and unique multilingual library and resource collection that specialises in immigrant working women's health issues.

The scope and inclusive nature of MCWH is unique. It offers an extraordinary model of peer community development and the sustainability of an organization dedicated to social and economic justice steeped in the labour movement. It deserves to be described and copied.

We are honoured to have Don Chipp Foundation funding. We will use it to begin the task of documenting a history and a 'replication kit' of MCWH and its unique service-delivery model for wide distribution. We will place the agency's 30 year history in the context of the history of Australian immigration, health care, and public health education policies. We hope to contribute to MCWH's mission to 'provide national leadership and excellence in multilingual health education, advocacy, training, and research with specific expertise in sexual, reproductive, occupational, and mental health'.

Upcoming Events

The Janine Haines Lecture will be held in Melbourne on Wed 23 August from 7.30pm. Special guest speaker is **Anne Summers**. Visit Senator Lyn Allison's web site at http://www.democrats.org.au/people/index.htm?person_id=77&display=1&level=1, e-mail her office at siobhan.omara@aph.gov.au or phone 03 9416 1880 for more information/bookings, .

The Don Chipp Foundation is sponsoring two upcoming forums on indigenous issues. The first will be held on Tuesday 1 August 6:00pm – 8:00pm. The title of the forum is '**Indigenous Equality Forum**: Hear three Aboriginal Queenslanders giving their views on the way forward'. It will be held at the Heritage Room, Yungaba, 120 Main St, Kangaroo Point. Speaking on the night will be: Auntie Ruth Hegarty, stolen wages campaigner; Tiga Bayles, 98.9 FM and a founder of the Murri School; and Sandi Taylor, community development practitioner. The evening will be chaired by Senator Andrew Bartlett. Visit Senator Bartlett's web site at: <http://www.andrewbartlett.com>. The second forum will be held on Monday August 21st. Information about that forum will also be forthcoming on Senator Bartlett's web site.

The Don Chipp Foundation Grants Presentation Day will be held on Friday 29 September 2006. The event is taking place at The Uniting Church Administrative Centre, 130 Little Collins Street (between Exhibition and Russell Sts), Melbourne, between 9:00am and 1:00pm. It will be opened by Don Chipp and speakers include Dr. Nick Economou, Dr. Patrick Emerton, Anna Christie, Michael Cebon and Alex Haynes. Speakers will be presenting their findings from research projects funded by the Don Chipp Foundation in 2005. Registration is free, and attendees are welcome to join the Foundation for lunch following the event. To register for the presentation day visit the Don Chipp Foundation's web site at: www.donchippfoundation.org.au or e-mail coordinator@donchippfoundation.org.au.

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