

australia timor-leste friendship network

Report on Friendship Groups: Activities in 2013 and Plans for 2014

compiled by
Derarca O'Mahony
National Convenor – AusTimorFN
UPDATED - 15 July 2014

Friendship Group Reports

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Note: This Report was prepared at the request of Sr. Jorge Teme, Minister for State Administration, Timor-Leste, and as a resource for all Friendship Groups to share information on their activities.

Friends of Aileu (Moreland and Hume)

Friends of **Aileu**
A partnership established in 2000

Summary Report: Achievements and Prospects

Members of the *Grupo Lian Babadok Aileu* ('Aileu voice of the drum') youth cultural group, performing at the 20 May 2013 Independence Day celebrations in Aileu



Background

The East Timor Partnership Project (the Friends of Aileu) was established by the Moreland and Hume City Councils **in 2000**, with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) by the Mayors of Hume and Moreland and the then President of the Council of East Timorese Resistance (CNRT), Xanana Gusmão, on behalf of the District Administration of Aileu. The purpose of the MoU was to create a friendship relationship between the people of Moreland, Hume and Aileu to 'assist with the rebuilding of Aileu and the restoration of local democracy'

NOTE: The following is a summary of the 2013 Friends of Aileu Annual Report

Highlights of 2013

The Friends of Aileu, supported by Moreland and Hume Councils, partner organisations and community volunteers, had another successful year in 2013. The following is an outline of some of the achievements.

Visits

During the year, the Project Coordinator, Richard Brown and a number of other members of Friends of Aileu, visited the District. From 5-11 May, the Project Coordinator visited Dili and Aileu District.

In August 2013, Friends of Aileu Community Committee member, Gary Jungwirth, visited Aileu District as part of a VLGA-sponsored study tour.

Key Contact in Aileu is **Mario Soares** – Friendship Project Officer

Projects

AVI Volunteer. The AVI Volunteer Government Administration Adviser in Aileu, Don Higgins, and his wife, decided not to continue their assignment, following a serious breach of security at their residence. Friends of Aileu had been supporting the volunteer and assisting with the payment of his living allowance. Don Higgins and his wife returned to Australia in early January 2013. Friends of Aileu communicated its willingness to support another volunteer to both the Aileu District Administration and AVI.

District Administration. Friends of Aileu provided funding to enable the District Development Officer to graduate as a Bachelor of Financial Management at the Cristal Institute in Aileu. Funds were also provided to support meetings of the Aileu Friendship Commission.

Scholarships. The Friends of Aileu continued to support scholarship programs for secondary and tertiary students from the Aileu District in 2013. Thirty-six students Thirty-six tertiary students received scholarships in 2013 to a total value of AU\$11,969.

Oral Health: The Friends of Aileu, together with other partners and with contributions from private donors, supported the implementation of the Aileu Oral Health Project Plan. A project team, consisting of Dr Martin Hall and Sally Vong from North Richmond Community Health, visited Aileu in April and worked with the local dental staff to extend the oral health awareness program to additional schools in the District. Tetum-language guidelines for the conduct of the program and Tetum-language posters were provided to the dental staff and teachers in the schools and a Tetum-language school reader supporting the oral health message was prepared for use in local primary schools. A quantity of toothbrushes and tooth paste and portable folding dental chairs were supplied.

Uma Ita Nian Parish Health Clinic: The Friends of Aileu continued to support the activities of the Clinic, which is managed by the Maryknoll community in Aileu, including:

- ☐ Support for a community health education program in primary schools
- ☐ Medical supplies for use in the clinic
- ☐ Funding for a piggery
- ☐ Funds for the purchase and installation of a water tank for the Clinic

St Francis of Assisi Disability Workshop: Friends of Aileu fund-raising appeal gave AU\$2000 towards equipment and operating costs for the Workshop.

Laulara Birthing Centre: The Friends of Aileu continued to raise funds for the ongoing operation of the Centre and sent some donated equipment to the Centre.

Aileu Resource and Training Centre: The Friends of Aileu continued to support programs and activities undertaken the Aileu Resource and Training Centre, including:

- Staff development – funding for tertiary studies for two staff at Indonesian universities
- Science and Reading Contest – funds for the competition, which involved 12 primary schools and six secondary in Aileu
- Produce expo – funding for the expo, held on 27-29 November 2013, which showcased local agricultural products, traditional medicines, sewing and other, handcrafts
- Traditional song and dance – funding for performances at the 20 May Independence Day celebrations in Aileu by the *Grupo Lian Babadok Aileu* ('Aileu voice of the drum'), youth cultural group

Friendship Schools: The Friends of Aileu continued to support friendship relationships between schools in Australia and Aileu District. Copies of school readers in the Tetum language, together with letters in Tetum, were sent by students in Australia. St Joseph's College, Echuca, continued its program of study tours, with a visit by teachers to Aileu in April and by Year 11 students in June.

Publishing Project: Friends of Aileu supported a project, initiated by local NGO, Timorlink, to prepare and publish readers in the local languages for use in Timor-Leste's primary schools. It agreed to fund the printing of a number of copies of two books, one with a message about the importance of maintaining good oral health and another supporting about cleaning up the environment in Aileu.

Impact of the friendship relationship in Aileu

Our Timor-Leste partners continue to express their appreciation of the support provided through the Friendship relationship. In particular the Aileu District Administration, the District Health Service, and local schools all reported positively on the impact of activities and projects supported by the Friends of Aileu.

Local NGOs, including the Aileu Resource and Training Centre and the Uma Ita Nian Parish Clinic have remarked on the importance of the contribution made by the Friends of Aileu and its partners to helping fund their activities, which has directly assisted local communities.

Students in receipt of scholarships have spoken of the importance of the scholarship funding to enable them to further their education and improve their job prospects.

Prospects for 2014

2014 promises to be a challenging year for the Aileu District Administration and for the local community. With the increasing pace of decentralisation, a number of significant changes are due to be begin in 2014, including the appointment of people to new management roles in the District and the funding of new projects at the village level by the National Government. The Friendship relationship with Moreland and Hume Councils should continue to play a small, but important, part in assisting the District's development.

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The following are some of the key areas where we hope to make a difference in 2014:

Transition to elected local government in Timor-Leste. 2014 will see the continuation of the formal process of transition to elected municipal government in Timor-Leste, which is expected to culminate in elections in Aileu, sometime between 2015 and 2017. The Aileu District Administration has indicated that is looking forward to advice and assistance from Hume and Moreland Councils during this important process, through such activities as study tours and training activities.

Projects. It is expected that the Friends of Aileu and its partners will continue to support projects in Aileu undertaken by its local partners, including the District Administration, the District Health and Education authorities, the Aileu Resource and Training Centre and the Uma Ita Nian Clinic. It is proposed to continuing to implement the next stage of the Oral Health Project, and involve a number visits by the project team

AVI Volunteer. It is hoped that a new AVI Volunteer Government Administration Adviser can be appointed some time in 2014 to continue the important work begun in 2012.

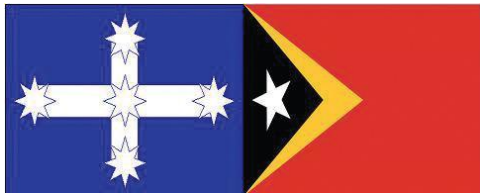
Visits. A proposed visit to Aileu by the Project Coordinator, the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Friends of Aileu Community Committee, could provide a useful opportunity to review progress on projects with local partners and plan the next stage of the relationships with the District Administration and other local partners.

A visit by the District Development Officer to Melbourne for the planned 'Working Together for Timor-Leste: the next 10 years' in 2014, could also provide an opportunity to further develop the relationship.

Conference. The planned conference in Melbourne will provide a major opportunity for the Project to be showcased and for new relationships to be developed with other friendship groups and Australian and Timorese government representatives.

Plan. With the current five-year strategy plan due for review in 2015, 2014 will provide an opportunity to plan how that review can be best be undertaken, in consultation with project partners.

Friends of Ainaro (Ballarat)



Brief history

In **1999** meetings were held between AETA Ballarat Branch and the City of Ballarat about forming a Friendship relationship with a District in Timor Leste. CNRT, the National Council for Timorese Resistance, asked the people of Ballarat to form a relationship with the people of the District of Ainaro. In December 1999, an official letter was sent to Sr Joao Corte-Real, District Administrator of Ainaro, seeking to establish a friendship agreement with the District of Ainaro. A CoB delegation visit to Timor Leste in **June 2003** saw the signing of the Friendship Agreement.

The formal name of the group representing the City of Ballarat is **Ballarat Friends of Ainaro Community Committee (BFACC)**. This is a Section 86 committee of the City of Ballarat and involves members of other Ainaro support groups.

Our key contact in Timor is Sr. Agostinho Caet

2. Key projects undertaken during 2013 outlined under individual Ballarat Ainaro support groups.

Projects supported by Ballarat Friends of Ainaro Community Committee:

- Combined with Education Ainaro traditional music instruments were provided to 5 eskola basika schools. In conjunction with Many Hands International music workshops were held at 6 schools.
- Footballs and volleyballs were distributed to all schools in sub-district Ainaro along with guitars to each of the 5 eskola basika in sub-district Ainaro.
- Extension of support for Ainaro Agricultural programs with CVTL Ainaro including agricultural projects for increased crop production in Leotelo, Suco Mauchiga and fish ponds in Teliga, as well as supporting employment of a CVTL project staff member and provision of computer training programs for local youth.
- Marketing and sale of Maubisse organic coffee in Ballarat – Continuing into 2014.
- Ballarat – Ainaro 5 year Community Action Plan. – Continuing into 2014.
- Funding support has continued for the VPU of PNTL in Ainaro District to conduct community awareness workshops about domestic violence, sexual assault and child protection. – Continuing into 2014.

Projects supported by Teachers 4 Timor Inc (Ballarat):

- Ainaro community English Teaching Program (since 2007), continuing into 2014
- Tertiary scholarships for students in Dili and Baucau CTC, continuing into 2014
- 3 x Youth Leadership scholarship to Australia 2013, continuing into 2014
- Children's Literacy Book project 2013 in conjunction with ACU, continuing into 2014

Projects supported by Ballarat Friendship Schools:

- 5cents -4 –Timor fund raising for Scholarships, continuing into 2014
- Friendship Schools Immersion visits and projects – computer training, 2013 and continuing into 2014

Projects supported by Ballarat Health Services:

- AVI Midwife/Nurse Mentor at Ainaro Hospital (Ms Bernadette Cullinan), 18 month placement, completed April.
- Birthing aides and equipment including an Ultra-Sound machine for Ainaro Hospital.

Projects supported by AETA Ballarat Branch:

- 10th Anniversary Celebration Booklet of Ballarat – Ainaro Friendships, published in 2013 and distributed throughout Ainaro District in 2014.

3. Project plans for 2014.

- Many continuing projects as listed above, including the VPU support program.
- Support for Nafofila Youth Drama group
- 'Ultra-sound' training for midwives in Ainaro
- Budget to support a training program about Tuberculosis for Ainaro health staff
- Development of a Youth Arts Program in Ainaro including arts training of four Ainaro people at Afalyca in Baucau.
- Formation of an Ainaro Community Development Support group.

Friends of Atauro (Indigo)

The Indigo-Atauro Friendship Group is a Section 86 Committee of **Indigo Shire Council**.

How the Friendship began

After East Timorese independence in 1999, the East Timorese Consulate sought to build links between East Timorese and Australian communities. Senor Abel Guterres (East Timorese Consul General to Australia) travelled widely across south-eastern Australia promoting interest in the new nation and assisting local communities to establish friendship links with East Timorese communities.

A local East Timorese Friendship Group was first proposed by members of the **Indigo Shire** Junior Council in **2004**. The association with Atauro Island grew out of links established by residents of the Indigo Shire with Atauro Island to the north of Dili. Atauro Island is separated from the mainland by a deep water strait and is a relatively isolated and poor area in a very poor country. Early visits to the island confirmed the real development needs of the island and its people, and the genuine opportunities that a link between Atauro Island (sub-district of Dili) and Indigo Shire could bring to both communities.

Memorandum of Understanding

The Friendship was formalised in 2008 when Councillor Frances Walsh from the Indigo Shire travelled to Atauro Island for the signing of the formal Memorandum of Understanding that links the two communities. Since then the Indigo Shire has established a committee responsible for advancing the friendship. The goals of this group are to identify and facilitate opportunities for the people of Indigo Shire to engage with and support the people of Atauro Island.

Key projects the Friendship Group has undertaken during 2013.

Program 1: Compact Teacher Training Project

Project need:

The Indigo Shire - Atauro Island Friendship Group is committed to supporting education on Atauro in a sustainable way. Few teachers on Atauro have had any formal training in education and rely on their own experience of schooling to guide them in their teaching. Current educational research suggests that the single most important factor that influences children's learning is quality of teaching. The IAFC has partnered with a team of Timorese teacher trainers, led by the director of the Learning Resource Centre in Dili, who all have had training and experience in delivering a model of in-service training for primary school teachers in Timor, initially funded by the Norwegian Refugee Council. They have delivered the Compact Teacher Training Programme to staff in over thirty primary schools in Ermera and Manatuto districts. The team is based in the Learning Resource Centre in Dili and have so far delivered the program to five of the ten primary schools on the island, receiving enthusiastic endorsement from the teachers,

their principals and the Head of Education on Atauro. The program is endorsed by the **REPÚBLICA DEMOCRÁTICA DE TIMOR LESTE**

MINISTÉRIO DA EDUCAÇÃO INSTITUTO NACIONAL DE FORMAÇÃO DE DOCENTES E PROFISSIONAIS DA EDUCAÇÃO GAVINETE DOS ASSUNTOS DA FORMAÇÃO PROFISIONAL E CONTÍNUA

The project aims to:

- Identify the needs of teachers on Atauro through a process of **consultation** with the teachers and suco chiefs
- **Expand the capacity of primary teachers** and enhance the learning experiences of primary aged children in every primary school on Atauro
- **Offer the provision of the Compact Teacher Training Programme** which involves an intensive five week programme facilitated by two Timorese trainers in Tetum in every primary school
- **Provide focussed, competency based training** covering the domains of **Teaching and Learning, Curriculum, Language and Professionalism**
- **Collaborate with a local partner organisation** to provide qualified Timorese education facilitators, all of whom have a **degree in Education** and a **Certificate IV in Training and Assessment** from Victoria University
- **Undertake detailed evaluations** of each program and provide **follow-up needs analysis** to determine future training needs
- Continue to work with the National Teacher Training Institute and the **Ministry of Education**

Project costs

The estimated cost of each five week training programme is between A\$3500-5000, depending on the size of the school. This covers the allowances for two trainers, one male and one female, all teaching and learning materials, lunch and afternoon tea, a driver and cook and all administration costs.

Key contact person in Timor is: Francisco Jorge dos Santos, Program manager - Learning Resource Development Center

Sentru Dezenvolvimentu Rekursu Aprendizajen

Program 2: Student Scholarships

Project description:

Providing scholarships to take high school graduates from Atauro Island to Dili for further education

Project need:

Very few families on Atauro Island have the financial resources to send their children to the mainland for further education. Most are subsistence farmers and there is a limited cash economy. It is unlikely that young people staying on the island will be able to obtain paid employment. Education is vital to the development of Atauro Island and for Timor Leste as a nation. By providing an opportunity for some of the brighter, hard-working students to pursue higher education we can have an impact on individuals, families and the wider community.

Project description, cost and management:

Marcelo Belo Soares is our liaison officer on Atauro who works with the senior high school teachers to identify potential candidates and to arrange a rigorous selection process including interviews. Indigo Shire, through the Indigo Shire Atauro Island Friendship Committee (Section 86), provides some financial support for the work done on our behalf by Marcelo. He will liaise with the Aloia Foundation to provide the best possible support for the students while they are in Dili.

We have elected to award scholarships to one male and one female student each year. These students will be assisted to select their courses at reputable institutions, then financially supported to attend that institution. Funds will cover tuition fees, books and other stationery, travel costs and living expenses of \$50 US per month. For most students the financial support to complete their education will continue for three to five years. The students will be required to show evidence that they are attending and passing their courses.

Project costs:

Scholarships: For one year (approximately \$1000AUD), for three years (approximately \$3000 AUD)

Students currently supported	Tertiary study
Alirio	Public Health
Anani	Engineering
Barnabe	Pharmacy
Charles	Withdrawn petroleum engineering, investigating alternate studies
Judit	Tourism
Leopoldina	Tourism
Eva	Public Health
2014 Students	
Marcelina	Economy & Tourism
Gedeo	Engineering & Technical Science

The contact people in Timor Leste for this project are:

Marcelo Belo Soares

Nuni Maria Nobre

Friends of Baguia (Stonnington)



Background

Friends of Baguia was formed as a community group that aimed to “**foster friendship, support and cross-cultural exchange at a grassroots level with the people of Baguia**”. The Friendship Agreement was endorsed by a **City of Stonnington** Council resolution in **September 2004**. The first visit to Baguia was made in July 2005 by Derarca O’Mahony (President). Since, then Derarca has made 11 trips to Baguia and there have been 6 visits by other Committee members.

In 2007 **Friends of Baguia Inc** became an Incorporated Association and it is currently in the process of being registered in Timor-Leste with the Ministry of Justice.

In 2008-09 Friends of Baguia supported an AVI volunteer to live in Baguia to support the community and further develop our projects.

Key Contacts in Baguia: Sra. Leopoldina Guterres (Director St Joseph’s High School) and Sr. Antonio dos Ramos (Sub DA Baguia)

Australian Visits: Friends of Baguia has hosted five Timorese from Baguia to visit Australia. In 2007, Sra Leopoldina Guterres was the first person we hosted for three months, and since then at different times we have hosted four other people from Baguia to gain skills and strengthen our friendship relationship.

Projects in 2013

The key focus of Friends of Baguia is on promoting and supporting education for the people of Baguia. Last year this work encompassed:

- **Scholarships:**
 - **125 Scholarships** to Junior and Senior High Schools in Baguia
 - **15 Scholarships** to Baguia students attending Senior High Schools in Dili and Baucau
 - **5 Scholarships** to Baguia youth attending University in Timor-Leste, Indonesia & Philippines
- **Teachers’ Allowances** - Ossofulari Primary School (located high on the mountain) – financial support of 6 voluntary teachers. Also Baguia and Larisula Kindergartens receive financial support for a total of 8 voluntary teachers.

- **Tanks** – tanks have been supplied to a number of mountain schools in recent years and in 2013 two tanks were installed at St Joseph's Baguia Primary School to save the small children carrying water from the local spring.
- **School Equipment** - 50 double tables (for desks) and 90 chairs along with other school equipment shipped from Melbourne to Baguia to be distributed to schools in need. This included some small chairs and low tables suitable for the kindergartens.
- **Schools** - Facilitated the funding and transfer of funds to build 4 new classrooms at St Joseph's Baguia Junior High School and a 4 room (concrete bricks) Primary School at Aletia village. Aletia is currently teaching from a decrepit bamboo shack. *(Supported by Queensland donors)*
- **Computer Program** - Under an MOU with Youth Off The Street, Friends of Baguia manage a Computer Training Program in Baguia which uses 10 local trainers. We provided 20 new laptops to enable the program to expand to try and meet the high demand for more courses. The main participants are High School students, but also trained 70 Volunteer teachers in November at no cost to the teachers.
- **English Classes** - Fund 3 Timorese to teach English with classes free to participants.

Plans for 2014

- **Scholarships:**
 - Increase number of scholarships at the University level,
 - Increase number of scholarships at the High School level due to more Secondary schools being established in Baguia.
- **Kindergartens** – 4 new Kindergartens have been established in 2014 in villages in the sub-district and are requesting financial support for staff and equipment.
- **English Language program** – to be continued due to community demand for English. More English/Tetum dictionaries will be supplied to High Schools.
- **Computer program** - Laptops have been brought from Australia to enable expansion of the program by commencing classes in Laverteri.
- **Science and Volleyball Competition** – funding for the competition prizes, including balls and nets for winning schools. This involved all 12 High Schools in Baguia sub-district.
- **Melbourne Conference** – In July 2014, we will host the Sub-DA, Sr. Antonio dos Ramos and Director of St Joseph's High School, Sra. Leopoldina Guterres to attend the "Working Together with Timor-Leste: The Next 10 Years" conference.

Friends of Barique-Natarbora (Bega Valley)

The Friendship Group, **Bega Valley Advocates for Timor-Leste** (BVATL) is a friendship agreement the **Bega Valley Shire Council** has with the people of the **Barique-Natarbora**, sub-district in Manatuto, Timor-Leste.

Our primary work is in education, women's groups and health.

In 2013/14 funds have been used to:

- assist women's development and focuses on capacity building, skills training and infrastructure,
- provide professional development for teachers, teacher training scholarships and school supplies,
- build community toilets and water infrastructure in schools.

In 2013/14 a teachers' resource and training centre has been established in a partnership between BVATL and the Natarbora Education Commission. Further teacher training and health workshops have been organised and community ventures are being supported. A computer technology workshop was conducted in 2013.

Currently, in 2014 BVATL have sponsored 8 trainee teachers studying for their degree at Baucau Institute (ICFP). One graduate is serving an internship in Natarbora. Seven schools had major upgrades to their water and toilets through an AusAID grant supervised by BVATL. We are committed to developing safer, happier more successful schools in Natarbora.



BVATL is celebrating the tenth year of the friendship agreement in 2014.

When BVATL members and Bega Valley secondary students visit Natarbora in 2014 there will be celebrations and ceremonies to open the multi-purpose building, resource/training centre and women's centre funded by BVATL.

Friends of Baucau (Darebin and Yarra)



Brief History - Friends of Baucau (FoB) began formally in **2002** with an MOU between local government in the **Cities of Darebin and Yarra** in Melbourne and the District of Baucau. For many years, FoB managed a Neighbourhood House in Baucau. While we do not support the centre anymore we are pleased to note that some of the staff trained at this centre have now set up their own NGO as a strong contributor to development in the District of Baucau.

Three years ago FoB Inc. became an incorporated community association. It has continued to receive support from the Yarra and Darebin Councils while growing strongly as a community based organisation. We have also moved away from a Project based activities to a network association in which we work with and through a recently established friendship association in Baucau. We now respond only to their requests, depend on their management of the support we provide and work through their systems of accountability. Friendship and Trust are our guiding principles.

Contact in Baucau - The Executive of the association, called *Unidade, Accao e Progresso* (UNAP) is made up of elected *Xefes de Suco* from all of the 11 villages (Suco) of the Baucau Sub-District and other members of the Village Councils. The association is strongly supported by the Sub-District Administrator, Sra Regina da Sousa and Community Development Officer. Through this network we have assured access to all community members in a fair and equitable manner. Our main contact person is the President of UNAP, Sr. Rui Suquiera, Xefe Samalari

Key Projects - Our association with UNAP in Baucau includes the following:

- **Exchange visits** to learn about each other and how citizens and governments can work better together to improve community wellbeing.
- **Capacity building for village leadership and management.** Encouraging good organisation practice, office management, and access to modern office equipment in each Village Office.
- **Friendship Grants for social enterprise and community benefits.** During the past two years we have donated more than \$1000 for each village for fishing and carpentry cooperatives, a livestock support group, three women's cooperatives, and three projects to engage with young people.

- **Scholarships & Youth Activities.** Including two scholarships annually for Baucau youth to attend the Marist Teacher Training Centre; music and cultural learning opportunities including participation in the Baucau Arts and Music Festival and support for Afalyca Arts and Music Centre.
- **Incidental Support** is provided in response to requests either from Australia or from Timor-Leste. For example, a submission to the Australian Senate Inquiry into the future of our government's relationships with Timor-Leste, solar lamps to communities off the grid and connecting our partners in Baucau Villa with possible contacts and donor funded opportunities.
- **Community Building Events in Darebin and Yarra.** Including opportunities for people who are concerned and interested in Timor-Leste to work and celebrate together and we raise funds through the sale of Timorese coffee and applying for donations.

Plans for the Future

In addition to the activities above, we will be supporting:

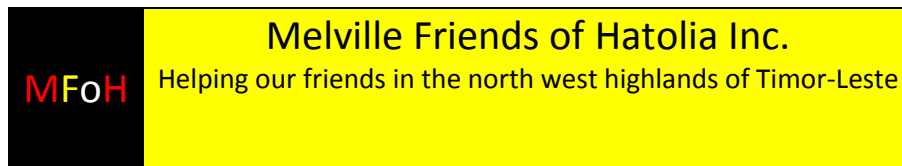
- the establishment of a new Arts & Music Centre and promoting the participation of youth in sport, culture and music.
- **Four delegates from UNAP Baucau will be attending the Friendship Conference in Melbourne in July 2014.**

Friends of Ermera (Casey)

Friends of Ermera's involvement in the Ermera District of Timor Leste 2002 - 2014

1. Friends of Ermera were established within months of TL independence with a focus on education and educational facilities in the Ermera District. It has local government support through the **City of Casey**. Friends of Ermera has:
 - built/rebuilt 9 kindergartens in the district.
 - built/rebuilt many primary and secondary schools,
 - been involved in the training of teachers in all these levels of education,
 - overseen the installation of water supplies to the Letefoho area, paying for the project, monitoring its construction and paying for and encouraging the community ownership and maintenance policies
 - helped establish, fund and encourage many Women's groups across the district
 - provided hundreds of scholarships for girls at secondary schools in the district, continuing our support to those identified through all their years of secondary education
 - provided Teacher Training scholarships and Vocational scholarships to suitable candidates in the district
 - supported to establishment of the Biblioteka (library) facilities in Gleno and then the branches in other district towns
 - established annual Professional Development opportunities for at least one District adult annually whereby they are flown to Melbourne and undertake specifically relevant training. Some of the areas of this training have been in Government administration, Librarianship, teaching, English teaching, pastoral leadership.
 - funded the position of a Community Development officer who works under the Ermera District administration who oversees the projects that we commit to, who liaises between the Friends of Ermera and the locals who are actually being paid to undertake whatever project we have funded
 - established a Friends of Ermera Commission, a committee made of locals from the district that now make many of the decisions and recommendations that our members once could only make after a visit. This Commission empowers those living and working in the areas of need to communicate directly with us and take responsibility for the projects as they are completed.
 - promoted and encouraged the learning of English in each of the subdistricts of Ermera through Teacher Training by Australian volunteers, through the scholarships to 4 of the English teachers here in Australia and through the funding of the ELSC (English Language Study Centres) in one secondary school in each subdistrict.
2. **In 2013** nearly every one of the above items was continued.
3. **In 2014** (as has been in the past 4 or 5 years) we have moved further away from building and providing money for building projects now that the TL Government has taken on such responsibilities and we are moving more (but not exclusively) into training and scholarship programs but still are heavily involved in Women's Groups and scholarships.

Friends of Hatolia (Melville)



1. Brief history/overview of the formation of the group

The Melville Friends of Hatolia Inc. (MFoH) is a group of community members dedicated to providing funding and material resources to facilitate capacity building by the people of the Hatolia sub-district of Timor-Leste (East Timor). The group operates with the support of the **City of Melville** in accordance with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City and the Ermera district administration.

Since its foundation in 2005, the group has focused particularly on education-related capacity building by providing funds for teachers' salaries, construction of class rooms, dormitories and toilets and the purchase of text books. Material resources provided include school furniture (desks, chairs, white boards, etc.), garden tools, sporting equipment, musical instruments and stationery (writing pads, pens, pencils, etc.). MFoH has raised over \$100,000 since its inception.

Up until the end of 2012 the main beneficiary of these efforts was the secondary school in Hatolia but priority is now being accorded to more remote primary schools in the district by funding Professional Development (PD) training for teachers and the provision of basic infrastructure and amenities including toilets and water supply.

Fund raising is achieved by donations and activities including quiz nights, film showings, sausage sizzles, concerts, special dinners and the sale of various products: tais (traditional Timorese fabrics), greeting cards, Timor coffee, jams and chocolate. Partnerships with a number of Rotary Clubs, other service organizations, private companies and individuals also contribute to fund raising efforts.

Bentley-Curtin Rotary Club provides ongoing support by collecting, packing and sending containers of school furniture, equipment and stationery for schools in Timor-Leste, including items requested by schools in the Hatolia district.

MFoH's key contact person in Timor is: **Mr. Xisto Martins**, Executive Director, RAEBIA, Timor Leste

2. Key projects the Friendship Group has undertaken during 2013:

During 2013 MFoH provided funding for:

- Last payment of teachers' salaries at the secondary school. The Timor-Leste government now contributes money for these salaries.
- Professional Development (PD) training for teachers at Leirema primary school.
- Construction of 4 toilets-Libuto primary school to replace existing ones that were beyond repair.
- Purchase of a new vehicle for Daryl Mills, the Rotary Liaison Officer in East Timor along with other Rotary Clubs, Friends Groups and individuals.
- The cost of sending containers of school furniture, equipment and stationery for schools to Dili.

3. Project plans for 2014

MFoH will continue with providing funding support for container transport, PD for teachers and the construction of facilities at Hatolia district primary schools during 2014.

Friends of Lacluta (Wangaratta)

History

A friendship agreement was signed between The **Rural City of Wangaratta**, Victoria and the Viqueque sub district of Lacluta, Timor Leste on the 25th **September 2005**. A delegation of the Mayor and 3 Council Staff members travelled to Lacluta for the signing ceremony. On their return a community meeting was called and the Friends of Lacluta group was formed. Friends of Lacluta is a Special Committee of the Wangaratta Council.

Our contact person in Lacluta is Sr. Rui da Costa the sub district administrator who lives in Dilor.

The first visit of members was in 2008 and since then there has been a visit each year. The exception being 2013 when there were 2 visits in May/ June and October/November

2013 Projects

- In May 2013 we re-established our connection with a Pre-school we had started in 2011. We were able to get an ETCAS grant through AUSAid to fund the training of teachers and equipment for the pre-school. In 2012 we used training offered by Mary MacKillop in Dili. At the start of 2013 through an agreement between Friends of Lacluta and the Ministry of Education, the pre-primary class became one of those established by the Ministry in all TL sub-districts. We continue to fund equipment and extended training for the teachers. The class has 1 Government teacher and her Assistant. At present we provide the Assistant with a small allowance and continuing training. The current training is through ATPE at ETDA in Dili.
- FoL funds scholarships for 6 students to do Tertiary education for 4 years.
- Encouragement Awards are given annually to 20 mothers of Class 3 SMP students to continue schooling into SMA Class 1.
- 5 bikes were presented to the SMA school for pupils to ride to school instead of having to board with families during the school week.
- 20 Mother & Baby pack of clothes, toiletries and soft toys were supplied to the Mid-wife to give to new mothers.
- School requisites were given to all schools, primary and secondary. These were donated by FoL members, friends and local schools. We have also funded some science equipment.
- Sporting equipment-soccer and volley ball's and soccer jumpers donated by Myrtleford soccer club.
- A building had been repaired by the Appin Park Rotary Club, Wangaratta and is now known as Friendship House. This building is being managed and used by a local youth group. In the House there are now 3 computers, musical instruments and 2 sewing machines for use of the community.
- FoL was able to help fund an ADRA sanitation project in the village of Boruk in Lacluta. We have provided funds for 15 toilets and some village water pumps.
- We have provided sporting equipment for the communities.

Plans for 2014

- We continue to fund the pre-primary Assistant and her ATPE training at ETDA Dili.
- The Dilor pre-primary playground will be extended and further equipment provided for this and other establishing pre-primary groups in the sub-district.
- Schools will continue to receive requisites for use in classes.
- We intend to assist ADRA install a water & sanitation unit at an outlying primary school.
- Scholarship students now number 8.
- 16 more bikes will arrive in Lacluta in June for SMA students.
- Our "Days for Girls" packs have been provided for SMA pupils.
- We will continue to provide Mother & Baby packs.
- We will fund the HIAM training of a group of villagers. They will complete a 5 day course for Home Kitchen Gardens and Nutrition.

Friends of Laleia (Bayside)

Bayside Friends of Laleia (FoL) (Australia) is a volunteer group of people from the community of Bayside local government area in Melbourne. The group was **first established in 2004**. It meets in the **Bayside City Council** Chambers each month and raises funds through its own efforts. It also gets support from other members of the community and from service clubs belonging to Lions Clubs International. The Laleia community has elected its own friendship committee to identify local needs, and to manage the Community Training Centre which teaches courses in computers. One member of the Komisaun Laleia provides regular reports back to the Bayside Friends of Laleia in Australia. Both groups have now worked together since 2008.

The Subdistrict of Laleia had 3,205 as recorded in the July 2010 census. The town of Laleia which has the same name as the sub district lies on the road between Dili and Baucau, about two hours from Dili. There are three sucos in the subdistrict - Lifau (760 people), Hatularan (881) and Cairui (1,564). The first two sucos are close to the subdistrict HQ and Cairui is 16 kilometres away over a difficult road.

The **Komisaun Laleia** set up a **Community Training Centre** for young people and the wider community to offer access to computers & photocopying for the community and to give training to young people to build their computer skills. The longer term aim is to fund the centre from activities that the community want and are willing to pay for.

In 2011, Ms Derarca O'Mahony worked as an Australian Business Volunteer (ABV) in Laleia for three months. Ms O'Mahony wrote computer course manuals in the local Tetun language. These manuals were used to teach Ms Word, Excel and Powerpoint. Ms O'Mahony helped trainers to conduct regular evening classes for young people from the community. She was successful in getting funds from the Australian Embassy to complete the renovation of the centre. Bayside Friends of Laleia (Australia) have provided funds for computers, a photo-copier and educational materials for the community.

Bayside Friends of Laleia (Australia) has funded the travel of one community person and one teacher on a study tour to Australia, to meet members of the community and to learn and improve their English. On their return, they shared their learning with their community and acted as contact persons for Bayside Friends of Laleia (Australia). The English teacher who spent time in Australia continues to teach at the Laleia secondary school and is now Secretary of the Komisaun Laleia. The Australian representative of Bayside Friends of Laleia in Timor-Leste was Lorraine McBride while she lived in Timor Leste until 2012. Lorraine has also helped at important stages in setting up the Centre.

Activities in relation to Laleia in 2012-13

A good deal of effort went into planning and preparing an application for another Australian Business Volunteer (ABV) in Laleia. The proposed focus of the ABV was to help set up the Community Training Centre as a viable social business or enterprise.

However, the President of the Bayside FoL, Richard Curtain, held discussions with the manager of the ABV Program in Dili in May 2013 as the physical requirements for the ABV's placement would also be hard to meet the President recommended to the committee the application be withdrawn.

The committee in February decided to fund 11 scholarships for pre-secondary and secondary students in Laleia. The local committee in Laleia selected the students on the basis of three criteria: From a poor family (only a mother to support him or her); they are doing well at school, and at least six scholarships were to go to girls.

Richard was also able to assess the community centre in terms of its training activities and the state of its computers, printer and photocopier. Proposed recommendations about needed changes were put to the committee in Laleia and the committee in Melbourne. Arrangements were made to have the computers loaded with new software. The existing training was halted due to several irregularities and resumed later under a new trainer who lives in Manatutu.

The Bayside FoL identified a new need to direct funds to new activities with clear outcomes. One suggested new direction to be investigated during a visit to Laleia in May 2014 is to work out whether it is feasible to fund scholarships for girls completing primary school to continue onto pre-secondary school. This was identified as a particular need in Cairui, a poor suco some 16 km from the main road.

Activities for Young Women

Laleia Women's Group is coordinated by Teresa Peira from Baucau and supported by Lucia de Araujo. There are approximately 12 young ladies connected to the group, mainly from Lucia's school. Early 2010, Andrea Bashfield and Lorraine McBride began exploring the idea of beginning a young women's group in Laleia. Lorraine brought community development worker Teresa on board and later that year the group was finally established. When the group was established in 2010 a number of activities were suggested of interest, in particular regular volleyball matches. Since the groups inception, 3 to 4 volleyball tournaments have been played per year in alternating locations - Laleia then Baucau. One tournament included a team from Manatutu and another a team from Vermasse. Andrea has encouraged their involvement since.

Andrea runs biannual book stalls to raise funds for the women's group. Proceeds have paid Teresa's monthly remuneration, volleyball equipment and uniforms, associated tournament costs including lunch for everyone, transport to and from Baucau, uniform hire cost for the Baucau team and security on the day. Andrea has also put money toward education scholarships.

Andrea Bashfield visited Laleia mid-2012 and enjoyed being part of a volleyball tournament. At the time of writing this report, Andrea is working with Teresa on a mentoring plan. One of the young Laleia ladies has been earmarked as a potential leader of the group. It is hoped with support from Teresa, she will organise training sessions leading up to the final tournament for 2013 with the hope she might co-facilitate the group in 2014 with Teresa as a mentor. The group has also expressed interest in beginning drama sessions in 2014.

Desks, Chairs and Computers Project early 2014

Just prior to Christmas 2013, FoL were able to obtain 200 desks and chairs (obsolete school furniture in good condition) from Brighton. We checked with Timor-Leste and discovered that up to 125,000 children sit on the floor at school each day. The furniture was shipped via Rotary and a truck with the desks, chairs, computers and new clothing arrived in Laleia in April. The Desks and Chairs were allocated by the **Sub DA Snr Basildo Ximenes** to all 8 schools in the sub District.

The cost of this project will be \$5,500 (supported by Lions Clubs and Church group \$1,550).

Girls Hygiene Kits 2014

Noreen and Tony Carr have taken the initiative in early 2014 to make 200 feminine hygiene kits which will be directed to young girls attending school in East Timor. Research in many countries (Refer www.daysforgirls.org) has shown that girls can miss up to 3 months of schooling each year when they do not have the means to deal with their periods.

Each kit comprises a cotton drawstring bag, 2 shields, 8 liners, a pair of knickers, a face washer, a small bar of soap and 2 ziplock bags to be used for storage and a simple means of washing used liners. It is estimated that given adequate care, the kits will last up to three years.

The kits will be introduced and evaluated by members of East Timor Friendship groups who have networks already established in various communities.

20 kits have been funded for Richard and Jan Curtain to take over to Laleia in May.

Scholarships

In addition to the 11 scholarships of \$100 p a for school students in Laleia, as noted above, FoL has also funded two \$1000 p a scholarships for two young women attending the teachers college in Baucau. The young women are from Laleia and are both resident at the college.

2014 Future activities

Richard Curtain plans to visit Laleia and Baucau between 9 and 17 May 2014 to follow up on the training activities at the Community Training Centre and come together with Komisaun Laleia to identify ways of working together to assist the people of Laleia.

Friends of Liquiçá (Moonee Valley)

Moonee Valley City Council - Friends of Liquiçá

Background

Moonee Valley City Council has a 'friendship' relationship with the Liquiçá District in East Timor dating back to **2003**. It is not an Incorporated Association. We work closely with the Friends of Liquiçá, a community group first established in 2003 and meet regularly to discuss potential projects to raise funds and awareness for the people of the Liquiçá District and to develop recommendations on furthering the friendship arrangement Council has with the region.

History of support

- In 2003, Council established a partnership with the Liquiçá District through the Australia Timor-Leste Friendship Network (AusTimorFN).
- In 2005, we held our first Mayoral Charity Community Race Day (formerly known as the Liquiçá Plate) and since then we have raised over \$120,000 to support projects in the Liquiçá District.
- In 2007, we held a community forum and celebration at the Flemington Community Centre to recognise the anniversary of the East Timorese referendum on 30 August.
- In 2008, we entered into an agreement with a volunteer-based charity called Life, Love & Health to fund two projects in the area; the rebuilding of a school in Garianna and a river diversion project in Lepa. An amount of AU\$33,000 was allocated to fund these projects.
- In August 2010, Council representatives participated in a Strengthening Friendship Workshop. This was to recognise a decade of the Australia Timor-Leste Friendship Movement and each of the Friendship Groups recommitted themselves to a further ten years of friendship with the people of East Timor.
- During this visit, a meeting was held with Leonel de Jesus Carvalho, the District Administrator of the Liquiçá District and Mateus Fatima Luan, the Sub-District Administrator, to discuss key issues in the region and any potential support Council may provide.
- In 2010, we also arranged for sporting goods donated by various clubs to be taken over to the Liquiçá District and sponsored two Timorese locals to travel with the national team to an AFL tournament in Bali.
- More recently, a member of Council's executive staff met with the Liquiçá District Community Development Officer and provided him with a tour of Moonee Valley and discussed potential projects for the region. Projects identified included the development of a football field and the establishment of a satellite internet connection to the District Administrators office and to a community space within the township of Liquiçá.

Technology Resource Hub

- In 2012, Council entered into an agreement with the xband Foundation, a not-for-profit organisation that creates and supports enterprises that encourage social inclusion of disadvantaged people to build their social and economic participation.
- In June 2013, the xband Foundation completed the establishment of a Technology Resource Hub in Liquiçá, in partnership with Info Timor, a local not-for-profit social enterprise focusing on using information communication technology as a primary tool to create positive social change.
- This Hub allows the community access to quality, affordable technology services, including computers, the Internet and associated training. Initially funded by Council, the service is built on a social enterprise model to ensure its ongoing viability and sustainability.
- An existing UN building located beside the Sub-District Administrator's office in the township of Liquiçá was identified as a suitable site for the Hub which is managed by a local NGO. At the start of 2013, staff travelled to Baucau for two months to undertake training on all aspects of managing the facility.
- As of August 2013, there were over 50 local people enrolled in a computer training program at the Liquiçá Technology Resource Hub.

Plans for 2014

On Wednesday 16 April 2014, Council officers and members of the Friends of Liquiçá working group will meet to discuss a further 12 months financial support for the Technology Resource Hub. We will also discuss sponsoring the Liquiçá District Community Development Officer to attend the *Working Together for Timor-Leste* conference in Melbourne in July.

On Friday 3 October, Council will host the tenth anniversary of the Mayoral Charity Community Race Day raising funds for Liquiçá and various other community projects.

Friends of Lolotoe (Mount Alexander)

Friends of Lolotoe (Timor-Leste) Inc. – the Mount Alexander Shire East Timor Friendship Group

Friends of Lolotoe is an Incorporated Association, established to support the 10 year friendship agreement made in **2009** between **Mount Alexander Shire** and the Lolotoe Sub-District.

Key contact in Lolotoe is **Snr Luis Afonsa Barros**

Treasurer of Lolotoe community committee

2013 Projects

Fourteen senior secondary students and three university students received **scholarship support** from the Friends of Lolotoe. The first group of students to be awarded scholarships completed year 11 in 2013.

Two Friends of Lolotoe **members visited Lolotoe** to facilitate community-to-community links and to discuss existing projects and future plans.

A **Book and Garage Sale** was held in August to raise funds for identified projects.

A **Fun Run and Cultural Day** was held in Castlemaine Botanic Gardens in September to build on local knowledge and networks and to raise funds for projects in Lolotoe.

2014 projects

Four members of the Lolotoe sub district community spent a fortnight on a **study tour** of the Mount Alexander Shire in March, organised and supported by Friends of Lolotoe, with generous local sponsorship and support. Aims of the tour were to strengthen the friendship relationship between the Mount Alexander and Lolotoe communities and to demonstrate a range of interest areas, thus enabling the visitors to take home ideas to adapt to their environment as they seek to develop local economies for the future sustainability of their community.

The **scholarship project** is ongoing, with new students being allocated scholarships as others finish school and university.

Ongoing planning and discussions are being held with the Lolotoe community to confirm priorities for other projects in 2014.

Friends of Lospalos (Mornington Peninsula)

Mornington Peninsula Friends of Lospalos

1. Brief History / overview

The relationship with Timor-Leste was first established in **May 2000**, when the **Mornington Peninsula Shire** approved a Friendship relationship between the Shire and the sub - district of Lospalos in the Lautem district of East Timor. This occurred after a delegation of Council visited Lospalos that year.

Organisation Name: Mornington Peninsula Shire Council (located in Victoria)

Committee Name: Mornington Peninsula Friends of Lospalos Community Committee (FOLP)

Organisational Legal Status: Friends of Lospalos is a Section 86 Committee of Council under the Local Government Act.1989.

2. Key projects the Friendship Group has undertaken during 2013.

- 8 Student scholarships to obtain Primary Teaching degree at Baucau Teachers College. \$8000 AUD.
- Tour De Amizade. Fourteen people from the Mornington Peninsula participated in the first ever friendship tour to Lospalos in August 2013. The aim of the tour was to strengthen the links of friendship, provide a cultural awareness experience for donors and supporters, gain new insights and ideas to support the friendship and consult with the leadership of Lospalos about strategic opportunities. An outcome of the tour was an agreement to fund the following projects;
- Esperanca Kindergarten and Youth Project \$1870 USD
- Luzeriero Sewing Training Project \$2500 USD
- Lulira School Music Equipment Project \$2100 USD.

3. Project plans for 2014.

- Continue to fund scholarships for Lospalos Youth to attend Marist Teachers College in Baucau. There are currently five students in years 2 and 3 and three previous students that have now graduated.
- The Lospalos Friendship Commission is currently proceeding with the recruitment of a local person to be funded by the Friends of Lospalos and employed as a Friendship Liaison worker to assist with all facets of the friendship relationship including administration, communication, project supervision and reporting directly to the sub district Administrator and President of the Friendship Commission.
- Host the **Lospalos District Administrator and Sub-District Administrator to attend the “Working Together with Timor-Leste: The Next 10 years” Conference in Melbourne** in July 2014.

Friends of Maubisse (Bendigo)



Bendigo-Maubisse Friendship Committee



1. Brief history:

In late 2006 the **City of Greater Bendigo** sought expressions from members of the Bendigo community interested in forming a friendship relationship with the Sub-district of Maubisse in Timor Leste. A Section 86 Committee now called the Bendigo-Maubisse Friendship Committee was formed. In 2007 the first Committee delegation visited Maubisse with the support of Kirsty Sword-Gusmao.

2. Key projects Bendigo-Maubisse Friendship Committee has undertaken during 2013:

In Timor Leste: Delegation to Dili and Maubisse in March 2013, met with HE Sr Jorge Teme, Minister for State Administration of Timor Leste and his staff. With the assistance of the Maubisse Sub-District office, the Friendship Committee held a Community Forum in Maubisse. From that meeting, the Committee undertook repairs to an existing house, in Maubisse, to become the new radio station Radio Comunidade Maubisse (Mauloko).

In Australia: April 26 – May, the Bendigo-Maubisse Friendship Committee, with the assistance of the Australian Returned Services League (RSL) held an exhibition of historic photographs of Australian troops in Timor Leste in 1942 called 'Debt of Honour'. The purpose was to raise public awareness of the history of Timor Leste and Australia's deep and long connections to Timor. On April 30, the Bendigo-Maubisse Friendship Committee held a fund-raising and awareness-raising evening at a local cinema, showing the newly-released Timor Leste history documentary film, 'Bloodshot'. In August/September the Friendship Committee, in partnership with the Victorian Education Department regional office, members of the Bendigo-Maubisse Friendship Committee hosted a visiting team of Timor Leste educators (from the Education Team of the Alola Foundation in Dili). Meetings were also facilitated by members, and held with, members of Friends of Turiscai (Macedon Ranges) and Friends of Ainara (Ballarat). In November (8 – 13 November), the Bendigo-Maubisse Friendship Committee held a public art exhibition and sale, again to raise public awareness of Timor Leste. The art works in the exhibition were all by Bendigo artists and were all paintings, photographs or sculptures about Timor Leste – many based on photographs taken in Maubisse by Friendship Committee members. Some paintings and photographs were by Committee members.

3. Project Plans for 2014:

In March 2014, a delegation to Dili and Maubisse met with Sra Margarida dos Santos and staff of the Ministry for State Administration of Timor Leste. The objectives of the delegation were to meet with various education providers in Dili, Maubisse and Ainara; and to help set up English Language courses in

Maubisse, as requested by the community members at the Community Forum in Maubisse in 2013. The delegation also met with the Education team of the Alola Foundation, the Education staff of the Australian Embassy in Dili, Staff of the Language Centre of the Dili Institute of Technology, and staff of UNTL's East Timor English Language Program (ETELP). The delegation visited Ainaro to see the facilities of and meet with local teachers of the Friends of Ainaro Teach4Timor program. In Maubisse, meetings were held with the Sub-district administrator, Sr Luis Casmiro Lopes and some local educators including the MACEU centre in Maubisse. The delegation assisted the establishment of a local Maubisse Education Committee charged with the responsibility for setting up and running the Maubisse English Language Course/s. Building on the work of Friends of Ainaro's Teach4Timor program and publications of D.I.T., the Bendigo-Maubisse Friendship Committee has produced a viable course outline which can supplement the experience of local Maubisse teachers.

The new committee in Maubisse also has the task of commencing, at the end of the 2014 academic year, a trial scholarship program sponsored by Bendigo-Maubisse Friendship Committee.

The Radio Comunidade Maubisse radio station has been finished and is now in operation. The Bendigo-Maubisse Friendship Committee will continue its assistance to the Mauloko facilities and program as funds and opportunities allow.

The Bendigo-Maubisse Friendship Committee will also continue to assist the Rotary movement of Eaglehawk, Bendigo and other places in Australia as they carry out projects in the Maubisse Sub-district. Assistance is currently being provided to the sisters of the Carmelite order in their efforts to start up a kitchen for feeding the elderly and infirm of the Maubisse area. Work teams have been constructing the components for a kitchen which is to be constructed in Maubisse in coming months. Assistance will also be provided to building works at the Catholic school at Maulau.

Friends of Oecussi (Whitehorse)

Projects of Whitehorse Community - Friends of OECUSSI Enclave

1. Solar Power panels for Haemanu Primary School, PASSABE Aldeia, OECUSSI Enclave purchased; to be installed May 2014.
2. FEEO (Faundasan Esperanga – HOPE Foundation) OECUSSI township: new, additional room funded and under construction. To be completed May / June 2014. \$4,000-00AUS co-funded Rotary Club – Box Hill CENTRAL and Whitehorse Community – Friends of OECUSSI.
3. Two laptop computers purchased and shipped to Timor-Leste by DIK; one for FEEO office and one for Principal, HAEMANU Primary School.
4. Three “Moonlight” lanterns // torches purchased and shipped to OECUSSI; \$33-00 each and offer made to purchase more for dwellings in OECUSSI.
5. Email contact made with new D.A., OECUSSI Enclave – Sen. Salvador DaCruz.
6. Two week visit to Melbourne // Whitehorse by Merita MARQUES to meet with Yarra Valley Water, WaterAid-Australia and Box Hill Institute. Topics for discussion included Safe Water & Sanitation projects for OECUSSI community and Advanced English Language training.
7. Formal agreement arranged for Friendship School between St. Francis Xavier Primary School, Box Hill and HAEMANU Primary School, PASSABE Aldeia, Nitibe Succo. Students at St. Francis Xavier Primary School raised \$2,500-00 to fund priority needs identified by the HAEMANU School.
8. Discussions commenced regarding Haemanu Primary School participating in the 2014 – GREEN Games program
9. Woven TAIS garments purchased to sell in Melbourne – all money being returned to the women in OECUSSI enclave.
10. In May 2013 Bernie Millane travelled to Timor-Leste to attend a Rotary International Conference held in Dili. The Conference Theme was “Come Celebrate Peace’ and ‘Our Youth – Our Future’. It is proposed to start a satellite Rotary Club in OECUSSI with the Rotary Club of Box Hill Central. This satellite Rotary Club will be able to assist the Friendship Group by cooperating with Merita Marques and the OECUSSI Community Group to identify and prioritize projects and extend the Rotary presence in Timor-Leste.
11. Bernie Millane also spend time in Oecussi in May 2013 to review projects.

Friends of Same (Boroondara)

FRIENDS OF SAME REPORT June 2012-April 2014



BACKGROUND

The Friends of Same community group was set up by Boroondara Council **in 2002** to develop the friendship relationship entered into by the **City of Boroondara** with Same Sub-District in the District of Manufahi, Timor-Leste, as part of the wider friendship program established by the Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) to provide long term community to community support for the people of the newly independent nation of Timor-Leste.

PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY FRIENDS OF SAME 2012-2014 include

- Scholarship program: FoS supports 6 students studying agriculture at UNTL, 9 secondary students supported at the Salesian Sisters Vocational High School, Venilale, and two at Natabora Agricultural College
- Fuan Nabilan Centre for blind and visually impaired children and adults, including a schools integration program enabling blind children to attend school: FoS pays staff salaries and incidental expenses, and also provided several computers
- Tiling birthing wards at the Maternity Hospital, Same to facilitate hygiene, as the plaster walls previously were bloodstained and unsanitary
- Provision of 250 chairs and over 50 tables for secondary schools in Same
- Construction of a drying shed for herbs used in traditional medicine at the CCSJ Traditional Medicine Clinic in Same (this has both health and scientific benefit in that it facilitates the preservation of native plants used in traditional medicine, and so the therapeutic properties may be further investigated by scientists in the future)
- Provision of 26 computers to the Boaventura Youth Centre in Same
- Funding computer maintenance training for the Youth Centre
- Funding the Youth Centre to produce books in Tetum for local primary schools
- Provision of 2 computers to the CIJ Orphanage, Betano (Orfanato São Miguel)
- Provision of 3 computers for the Manufahi Teachers' Association so teachers can prepare lesson plans, student worksheets etc, class notices etc.
- Sending donated medical equipment to Same Hospital
- Supporting science teachers from Same to attend a weeklong workshop in science education

Support for the scholarship program, Fundasaun Fuan Nabilan ba Matan Aa't, the Boaventura Youth Centre and other projects will continue throughout 2014.

FACILITATING COMMUNICATION

The Friends of Same undertook to facilitate communication between Council, and the administration in Same and the District of Manufahi.

This has been achieved through the following:

- Visits by members of the Friends of Same,
- Liaison via other contacts in Timor-Leste
- Appointment of part-time liaison people in Same and in Dili to assist with project management and communication

Communications via contacts in Timor-Leste: communications with the District Administrator, Sr Filomeno Tilman, the Deputy District Administrator, Sr Arantes Sarmiento and other members of the administration, have also been maintained via connections in Same; for example, by visits by members of Friends of Same. Convenor Esther Anderson and Friends of Same member Dr Bill Anderson visited Same twice in 2012 between and once in 2013, living in Same for periods totalling two months, and FoS Secretary Chris Moss and Deputy Convenor Trish Woodcroft Lee also visited Same in 2013. Esther, Bill, Trish and Chris liaised with the District Administration, people involved with the FoS scholarship program, the Same Youth Centre, Fuan Nabilan staff and students, various primary and secondary schools, Manufahi Department of Health and the Coordinator of Same Hospital.

Cooperation with the Royal College of Surgeons (RACS) in administering an AUSAID grant for the Vision Impaired. RACS in collaboration with the Directors of Fuan Nabilan, Joanna Meluk, and Joaquim da Costa Tavares. In 2013 RACS financed five Fuan Nabilan students to attend the Hit BIA blind Institute in Kupang to learn further handicrafts skills, and increase the variety of handicrafts products they can sell in the market, to visitors to Fuan Nabilan (and in Australia when visitors to Timor can bring them back).

COMMUNITY AWARENESS RAISING – SAME

Friends of Same endeavours to raise awareness of its activities and of the friendship relationship by visits to Timor-Leste, and talking to local groups and organisations.

Joint event with UNESCO, Timor-Leste

In February this year, the Centre for blind and vision impaired children and adults, Fuan Nabilan ba Matan A'at, supported by Friends of Same launched their 3rd CD, with songs in the national language Tetum and also the local Same language Mambai, which is the mother-tongue of many people in Same. The launch was held in Same in conjunction with an educational seminar on language organised by UNESCO and Her Excellency, Kirsty Sword Gusmao, who is the UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador in East Timor, (as well as being the wife of the East Timor Prime Minister, Xanana Gusmao.) The guest artist at the Fuan Nabilan CD launch was world-renowned Timorese musician Ego Lemos, who came to Same with his band for the event. Ego Lemos has performed world-wide, including at the Olympic Games concert in London, and is well known for writing the song Balibo that features in the film of the same name, so it was an honour that he came to Same to launch the Fuan Nabilan CD. The launch was attended by the Acting District Administrator, Sr Arantes (Sr Filomeno was ill at the time) as well as the National Vice Minister of Education, and staff of UNESCO. Friends of Same (and by association the City of Boroondara) was represented by the Convenor of Friends of Same, Esther Anderson, and Dr Bill Anderson at this event.

Educational workshop in Same

While Ego Lemos was in Same, he gave an educational workshop on environmental protection to young people in Same. This was requested by the Convenor of Friends of Same and organised with the help of local teachers and Youth Centre staff, and attended by young people from the local school, and was much appreciated. As Friends of Same was mentioned on all the publicity material for this event, and also for the CD launch, this helped raise awareness of Friends of Same.

Fuan Nabilan ba Matan A'at Centre for people who are blind or have low vision:

The Fuan Nabilan ba Matan Aat centre currently provides a residential training program for young people as well as an outreach training program to blind and vision impaired people in remote villages, under directors Joana Meluk and Joaquim da Costa Tavares. Friends of Same funded the construction of the centre, at the request of the District Administrator, Sr Filomeno Tilman, and Friends of Same has met most of the operational costs for the centre since students first arrived at the centre.

As a result of publicity surrounding the production of a CD by Fuan Nabilan, featuring a band formed as a result of music classes held at the centre, the centre has featured on local TV and the band has performed at events such as the Independence Day Celebrations, and a music competition concert at Natabora, attended by young people from the surrounding districts. A second CD was produced in 2011 and a third CD was produced in 2012. The profits from CD sales are used to support the participants and the Centre

An innovation is a Schools' Integration program which assists students to attend a mainstream school, and provides an integration aide. Training is provided for the training of Integration Aides so that the program can be expanded and training courses for Braille Teachers have been run.

The students who studied massage are providing therapeutic massage, and massage fees, together with the sale of the raffia dusters has provided a small amount of income to the students, for purchase of items such as clothing and mobile phone credits. This also gives the students a greater sense of independence and self-sufficiency.

The Coffee project

Sales of East Timor coffee remain the primary source of fundraising for FoS for projects in East Timor. Coffee is the primary agricultural export commodity for Timor-Leste, and the sale of coffee not only raises funds for projects, but assists with the development of market outlets for East Timor coffee.

Community awareness in Boroondara

FoS produces regular newsletters, and maintains a website and a Facebook page, as well as being a regular presence at local festivals and markets.

Friends of Turiscai (Macedon Ranges)

Macedon Ranges Friends of East Timor Inc.



1. Brief History of the group

In **2008 Macedon Ranges Shire Council** supported establishing a friendship relationship with the community of Turiscai, and Steering Committee formed. Turiscai, although very remote selected as community with whom to form relationship.

October 2008 – Launch of MRFoET at Woodend.

2010 – First visit by members & friends to Turiscai, and Dili.

2012 - April Election observers, Cr. H McLaughlin, G Atkin in Turiscai.

2013 - Visit by President & Secretary to meet local organizations

Priorities : Education, Maternal & Child Health, Food Security / Sustainability.

2.Key projects the Friendship Group has undertaken during 2013.

“Designer Handknits” - Local fundraising to support projects in East Timor. Scarves, rugs, children’s toys knitted & donated locally - has raised \$ 4000.00 to support projects in Turiscai since Aug 2011. Ongoing fundraising project.

Wild Timor Coffee: commenced sale of coffee @ 2 shops in Kyneton. Ongoing fundraiser.

Oct 2013 - East Timor “Food 4 Thoughts Forum” – community forum attracted around 70 people from Macedon Ranges Shire with interest / involvement in East Timor. Database of participants, and future involvement in activities.

Nov 2013 - Visit by President and Secretary to Turiscai to identify priority projects and meet with local partner organisations in East Timor.

3.Project Plans for 2014.

March 17 - 22 Cultural Diversity Week – Celebrating East Timor in the Macedon Ranges. A highlight of the week was the Festive Dinner, 107 people attended, and shared Timorese music and food, guests included Friends of Lolotoe & visitors from Lolotoe.

July 14 – 28 Signing of Friendship Agreement - Visit and Study Tour by **delegation from Turiscai, who will also attend Conference in Melbourne.** This is an important milestone in our relationship, when we will work together to plan future projects.

August MILK Morning Tea – Fundraiser to be held in Macedon Ranges for Alola Maternal and Child Health programs in East Timor for World Breastfeeding Week.

September - Teacher training for Reading in Early Learning Years

We are funding a Teacher Training Program, to be delivered by the Alola Foundation in Turiscai. We will also provide a reader in local language to each child in the Early Learning Years at 13 primary schools in the Turiscai sub-District (500 children).

September - Annual visit to Turiscai by MRFoET members *(to be confirmed)***2014 – 2015 - Support for establishing first Kindergarten in Turiscai**

We have been given some kindergarten furniture and would like to support kindergarten teacher training in Dili for a teacher, to establish a first Kindergarten in Turiscai.

Details will be discussed with Sub-District Administrator, Sr Sarmento during July visit.

Key Contacts in East Timor

1. Sr Afonso Sarmento, SDA for Turiscai.
2. Sister Bibianne and Sister Clare @ SPC Convent, Dili, also have an SPC Convent in Turiscai.

Friends of Venilale (Mansfield)

Background

In **2005** a delegation from Mansfield, Victoria, visited Venilale and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Sub-District of Venilale on 20 May. The delegation included the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer of **Mansfield Shire**, other Shire Council members and health, education and community members. It was a joyous occasion with enormous support from the Venilale community. Sr Abel Guterres, now Ambassador of Timor-Leste to Australia, was instrumental in suggesting and establishing the relationship.

Focus of Projects

The focus of Mansfield's assistance to Venilale has been on tourism, education and support for women's handicrafts groups. This focus was agreed to by Venilale leaders and the first Mansfield delegation. It ties in with the recognition of the skills and knowledge that the Mansfield community has to offer and acknowledges that Mansfield is a small town unable to fund larger infrastructure development.

Committees

Each town has established a committee to oversee the relationship. Friends of Mansfield meets regularly with the Venilale Sub-District Administration and village xefis.

FoM's Friendship Liaison Officer is Mana Georgina Sarmento.

Friends of Venilale meets monthly in Mansfield. It is not an incorporated body but is affiliated with and receives support from the Shire of Mansfield.

2013 Projects

- Employment of a friendship liaison officer and tourism officer in Venilale
- A scholarship program for secondary, university and health students funded 14 places
- The community internet centre also offers printing, photocopying, scanning and laminating. It is also a tourist information centre, handicrafts creation and sales area and an office
- Development of a town walking tour and a tourist brochure
- Support with materials and marketing for women's tais and sewing groups
- Support for a cooking and music competition on Restoration of Independence Day
- Refurbishment of the town's kindergarten building
- Teaching of English at secondary schools by Mansfield volunteers
- Development of the website www.venilale.com

2014 Projects

- Friendship Liaison Officer to study English, IT and accounting in Mansfield for two months (completed)
- Number of places in the scholarship program to be expanded
- Creation of a partnership program between Mansfield and Venilale educational institutions plus medical, sporting and arts groups, building on the established link between Mansfield Secondary College and Bercoli Public Junior High School
- **Continuation of other 2013 projects**

Friends of Vemasse (Monash)

History: MONASH FRIENDS OF VEMASSE INC is incorporated in Victoria under Associations Incorporation Act and is affiliated with the **City of Monash**.

We are incorporated to fulfill the following purposes:

To maintain and increase the friendship relationship between the people of the City of Monash and the people of the Sub-District of Vemasse, Timor Leste. To raise in the Monash community awareness of the situation of the people in Vemasse. To work with and through Vemasse Belun (the committee formed in Vemasse to represent the various community groups there) to provide financial and in kind support to assist in the development of their community.

Commencement - Several people in the Monash Municipality in Melbourne were invited in February, **2005** by the Sub-District of Vemasse through Abel Guterres, then Consul-General for Timor Leste in Australia to become a Friendship Group with the Sub-District of Vemasse. A meeting was called on 23rd February, 2005 and the Friendship group was formed. Later, in 2009, the Association was incorporated.

Key projects undertaken in 2013:

Ms Barbara Hadkinson visited Vemasse in October 2013. The intention of the visit was:

In the company of Mr. Venancio Freitas, Secretary of Belun Vemasse and Ms. Lorraine McBride, Ms. Hadkinson made visits to the Commission (Belun Vemasse), the Community Secondary School (levels 10-12) in Vemasse, the Weaving Project, Ostico Primary School and Fr. Locatelli in conjunction with Loilubo pre-Secondary School developments.

- **Meeting Friends of Vemasse, Timor-Leste (Belun Vemasse)**

Re-Election of Belun Vemasse Commission - In the absence of the President of Belun Vemasse, Mr. Tomas Francisco Da Costa Freitas, Venancio Freitas chaired the AGM at which 19 members of the community were present. Elections of members of Belun Vemasse proceeded with Mr. Sebastiao Filomeno de Anunciacao Correia, Deputy Sub-District Administrator was elected as the President.

- **Project - Vemasse Community Secondary School**

A meeting was then held with the Teachers of the Vemasse Community Secondary School. This school was begun for the older children by the leaders of Vemasse in 2007. From the beginning it has been staffed by Voluntary Teachers. Since late 2007 these teachers have been supported with money to buy food by Monash Friends of Vemasse. The school has 181 students at present

Requests from the teachers for improving the school included Computers, Science laboratory equipment, Suitable maths and English books, Soccer and Volley Balls, insufficient monthly 'allowance' for the voluntary teachers,

Upgrading of the School and Teachers The teachers were informed that application is again being made to the Education Department to convert this Community School to a Government School.

Monash Friends of Vemasse has access to a limited amount of funds but supplements this with some goods in kind for the school children, some clothing and some sporting equipment by courtesy of Rotary.

- **Project – Loilubo Community Pre-Secondary School**

In the recent past 3 Voluntary Teachers have been supported at this Pre-Secondary School which was begun by Vemasse Community at the same time as the Vemasse Community Secondary School. It has now become possible for the extended Catholic School in Loilubo to absorb these children and teachers and they are being supported by the Don Bosco Order at Fatumaca. In July Monash Friends of Vemasse gave \$US500 to Fatumaca towards the lunches for the Loilubo children, although this is still short of sufficient funds for their lunches.

- **Proposed Project for Training Teachers of English to become ESL Trainers.**

Consideration was given by Belun Vemasse to the idea of bringing to the school a fully qualified trainer of trainers in English as a Second Language (ESL) for a period of three months to give this training to the two teachers of English and to assist the other teachers in their ability with English. and would benefit the whole community. Ms Hadkinson met the Austraining In-Country-Manager, Ms Naomi Toole, but to date have not been successful.

- **Project – Weaving Group**

A visit was made to the weaving group. The quality of their work is excellent. They were however encouraged to weave in colours and styles that will suit Western people.

Project plans for 2014: continuation of projects of 2013

Key contact person in East Timor: SR. VENANCIO FREITAS

Maliana - Bosco Social Justice Group

1. Overview

Name of Group: **Bosco Social Justice Group/Friends of Parish of Maliana**

History: **Formed April 2012** by members of the **Parish of St John Bosco, Engadine, NSW**. At the instigation of Timor-Leste Ambassador to Australia, Mr Abel Gutterres, members of the group first visited Maliana in October 2012.

Local Council Affiliation: Leichhardt Council, through **affiliation with Leichhardt Friends of Maliana in November 2013**.

Incorporated Association Status: Not yet an Incorporated Association but hope to achieve this status in the near future.

Contact Person in Timor: Fr Ernesto Barreto, Parish Priest, Paroquia Santa Cruz, Maliana.

2. Key Projects 2013

- i. Refurbishment of Infants' classrooms in the Primary School, Parish of Santa Cruz, Maliana.
- ii. Refurbishment of chapel/community centre at Odomau.
- iii. Construction of Women's Weaving Centre at Halecou.

Please note: First two projects almost completed by April 2014. Halecou project has not yet commenced.

3. Project plans for 2014

- i. Continue Halecou project.
- ii. Proposed visit to Maliana in July to investigate possibility of:
 - a. Refurbishment of a building to become a dormitory for male high school students.
 - b. Erection of fencing around the Primary School.
 - c. Education opportunities for young women who have not completed primary schooling.
 - d. Supporting two young women to attend the Marist Teachers' College in Baucau.