



**Bondia
Baguia**

Friends of Baguia

Timor Leste

Newsletter 10 : August 2008

Bondia = Good Morning in Portugese and Tetum, the two official languages

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COMING EVENTS for your diary

TEXTILES FROM TIMOR LESTE:

- ◆ **Exhibition** 3rd to 30th September
- ◆ **Market** Sat 6th Sept

At New St Kilda Town Hall and Gallery

An exhibition presented by many groups and organisations helping East Timor. Friends of Baguia will be there with Tais recently brought from Baguia. All our supporters are encouraged to drop in for a look at the exhibition, and especially to buy some of these colourful, wearable textiles at the market.

MUSIC FROM TIMOR LESTE:

Advance notice of a concert of songs from and for East Timor. Friday 24 October, artists still being arranged. To be presented by The Boite World Music Café in Fitzroy. Details from the newsletter editor.

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING:

Wed 8th October - 6.15 to 8.15 pm

Upstairs Meeting room at the Malvern Library, High St, Malvern. *All Supporters are most welcome to attend.*

DILI FRIENDSHIP CONFERENCE

By Adrienne James

This was the first Friendship Conference held in East Timor and we had the honour of christening the newly built Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The slogan of the conference was "Strengthening Communities Through International Friendship" Over 200 people from both Australia and East Timor attended and 40 friendship groups were represented. It was really exciting to be there and to meet friends from East Timor, often for the first time. There was a real feeling of connectedness, excitement, respect, promise and

energy, sharing with different groups and projects to really appreciate the importance of the friendships for us all. The food was outstanding and also gave us a taste of the Timor cuisine.

It was wonderful to see Leo again and to meet her husband John who is also warm, open, hard working and intelligent, just like Leo. We were able to set up our Friends of Baguia display and many people commented on the quality of our pamphlets and photos.

President Ramos Horta and the Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao both addressed the conference, stressing the importance that was placed on this gathering. Typically our fearless leader Derarca led the way for us to sit in the front row at the conference, in the special guests area, so we got to shake Xanana's hand which was a highlight.

It was a real privilege to attend the conference and represent Friends of Baguia.



Adrienne, Beth Davidson (VLGA), Leo, John, and Derarca

WWW.BAGUIA.ORG.AU

*Website where you can get lots more information and pictures of Baguia and our projects over there. You can download your wine orouder form, or get back copies of our newsletters. **Check it out!***

REFLECTIONS ON PROGRESS TO DATE

From Derarca O'Mahony, President

Our recent AGM for the year ended 31 December, 2007, gave us a chance to reflect back on what our Friendship Group has achieved to date. Our projects kicked off in September 2005, and below is a summary of how that money has been spent up to December 2007. It has been a lot of work for the committee, but a fantastic achievement to have funded approx Aust\$24,000 worth of projects (Timor local currency US\$19,248). We thank all of our supporters for their contribution to making this happen.

Project Spend (US\$19,248) Sept 2005 to Dec 2007	
Scholarships	28%
Teachers' Salaries	19%
Schools - Materials	18%
Bread for Orphanage	16%
Visit by Leopoldina	12%
Womens' Projects	7%

Our focus remains on education, as we feel this is a niche area which is not supported in remote areas by the larger NGO's in Timor. It is also a way of sprinkling our assistance throughout the community and hopefully reaching those most in need. We try to avoid creating a "hand-out" mentality. We hope scholarships will provide a "hand-up" to some children who can later achieve a job and provide support back to their families in the villages. The mountain schools and desks that we help to build are done with voluntary labour from parents.

Below is a photo of Adrienne, Leopoldina and myself with some of the final year graduating students in Baguia in June. It's very heartening to realise that none of these 11 students would have been at this graduation ceremony without the scholarships that supporters of Friends of Baguia have paid to support them for the three years of their Junior High School schooling. The next challenge is to expand our scholarship program into Senior High, which I'm delighted to announce the Committee has just approved.

In 2008 we are now entering a new era, with our own Australian Volunteer – Margaret Norris, who from August will be living and working full-time in Baguia for 6 months as our project officer. We are delighted to be in this co-funded partnership with AVI, and which is also supported by City of Stonnington. Having some-one "on the ground" will strongly assist our capacity-building of the local community, and also allow us to expand the type of

projects we are initiating. One of Margaret's first tasks is to mentor the setting up of a workshop series on nutrition for pregnant women and young children with regard to locally available foods. This was a project proposal Adrienne and I received from a local Baguia woman, who will be paid to run the workshops.



Derarca, Adrienne and our successful students

A BIG THANK YOU to:

Meagan Lowe (Year 11) who advocated and made a presentation to her Church group, which enabled FoB to be selected for a funding grant.

Sacre Coeur and Korowa Girls schools, for donating materials and money, and most importantly, allowing Leopoldina to spend time at their schools.

Council's continuing help in supporting the operations of the group is greatly appreciated.



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Please pass this newsletter on to friends who may be interested.