



Friends of Venilale e-Newsletter February 2019

<http://venilale.com>
facebook.com/groups/friendsofvenilale



Update

The only trip to Venilale in 2018 was made by Lynn Elder and Andy Barltrop, enabling much needed medical and educational supplies to be delivered. The Partnership Program continues to grow and submissions from Venilale have very generously been financed. Fundraising activities have been fun and informative and as always the Mansfield community has been incredibly supportive.

We felt great sadness at the passing of Janet 'Mac' Mackenzie, an amazing woman and ardent supporter and member of FoV since its inception in 2004. We constantly feel her absence.



Wild Timor Coffee is a coffee importing company founded by four Australian Peace-keepers after returning from service in East Timor. FOV supports 'Wild Timor' because it is a new business and they pay their farmers even better than fair trade companies.

<http://www.wildtimorcoffee.com/>



DON'T MISS -Tess Hall



Where—Delatite Hotel Function Room
When— Saturday March 2
6pm—pre dinner drinks
7pm—dinner
7.30 pm—presentation about mental health in East Timor, followed by question time
Cost—entry by donation

Tess is a Research Fellow and PhD Candidate at Melbourne Uni. She is an experienced public health and policy researcher throughout the Asia-Pacific, South America, Australia and the UK. She spent one year in Timor-Leste conducting interviews and making observations in health, social and community settings. She worked with the Venilale Health Clinic for six weeks.



Venilale has a renewed visual and welcoming sign.



Joni met the US Ambassador at the Community Centre



Ela Mae and Joshua from Darwin teach the children how to be creative with Hama Beads at the Community Centre



Joni working as tour guide

As of January 2019 Joni has added the role of Tour Guide to his position of Friendship Liaison Officer. He also volunteers one afternoon a week to teach at Bercoli Junior High. He has been very frustrated by the lack of internet service which has meant numerous long trips to Baucau to visit Timor Telecom. Friends of Mansfield meetings had to be attended and reports written for FoV meetings. He is always a wonderful host for visitors like Lynn and Andy and has been very busy dealing with Partnership submissions.

Boss, our interpreter, has also been busy. He attended a bamboo architectural workshop in Bali and dressed in traditional clothing to welcome the US Peace Corps Volunteers.



Lynn Elder and Andy Barltrop visit Venilale



Lynn and Andy managed to squeeze 15 Days for Girls packs into their luggage. The girls at the Senior Secondary School were delighted and Candida was able to instruct them on how they could be used. Enabling girls to attend school more regularly despite a lack of water and toilet facilities demonstrates the value of these packs. Lynn also received letters outlining their proposal for a small library which they hope their partner school, Geelong Grammar School Timber-top Campus can help them with. Some small stationery items were presented to Director Alcino dos Santos. Lynn met with scholarship students and chatted with them about the value of the scholarship and their future plans.



They visited Bercoli and Uai Bua Junior High Schools where again donations from partner schools have enabled them to make necessary improvements to basketball courts

They met with the staff at the Venilale Health Clinic handing over supplies organised by Ann Eldred, Rachel Greenway and Will Twycross.



As you can see travelling from Dili to Baucau is quite an experience while major roadworks are under way. Rather than 5 hours the journey took Lynn and Andy more than 7.

Partnerships

Following on from Rachel Greenway's trip to Venilale in 2017, Mansfield Hospital was keen to assist the Venilale Health Clinic and develop a friendship. The nursing staff have generously raised \$728 toward the two nursing scholarships offered in 2018. The Deckhands Mahjong group also donated \$320 for the 2 recipients Duarte do Rego and Mario Vitor Sarmento.



Students from Mansfield Secondary College raised \$275 for sports uniforms and equipment at Bercoli Junior High. Funds raised by Bella McMunn meant that backboards on their court could be completed and the court repaired.

Uai Oli Primary School was delighted to receive funding from Mansfield Christian Fellowship and The Mansfield Anglican Church which enabled them to buy a computer, printer and microphone. The students and teacher walked a 4 hour round trip to collect the gear.



On behalf of the Mansfield Anglican Church, Lynn and Andy organised a very successful Trivia Night which raised \$1244



Geelong Grammar School Timber-top Campus raised the amazing amount of \$1700 for a library proposal at Venilale Senior Secondary. Pictured is the proposed site for a quiet reading room and study area.



Students, staff and the community of Uai Bua Junior High contributed \$1,853 and all the labour for the urgently needed renovation of their basketball court. This was made possible by a donation of \$860 from Lauriston, Howqua Campus.

Fundraising for Venilale From Community groups

The Mansfield Joey Scouts raised \$100 and the Barwite Bookworms \$400 for projects in Venilale.





The new committee elected at the Annual General meeting in October 2018 consists of :

President—Ann Eldred

Vice President— Julie Aldous

Secretary—David Foster

Treasurer—Karen Lewis

Committee members are—Rachel Greenway, Rachel Meadows, Andrew Crockett, Helen Crockett, Lynn Elder, Andy Barltrop, Jenni Best, Margie Twycross, Will Twycross, Darcy Croxford-Demasi, Anne Foster

President's Report

October 2018

Many thanks to the Executive Committee especially Julie & Karen, to the general committee and to anyone who organised or helped with events this year. It's a strength of FoV that individuals think of ideas and take responsibility to run with them. It certainly spreads the workload.

Friends of Mansfield relies almost totally on Joni now. Ernesto resigned in February, replaced by Cristovao in April but we cancelled the Tourist Officer position in September due to lack of tourists.

We greatly appreciate donations from Apex (annual donation towards the Friendship Liaison Officer salary), Mansfield District Hospital staff (enough for one and now nearly two health scholarships), The Deckhands mahjong group (also towards health scholarships), Barwite Bookworms, Joey Scouts, Bella MacMunn (for Bercoli JHS & Days for Girls) and Lily Bennett (for the orphanage).

There have been ups and downs this year but we remain most optimistic about the direction and activities we are undertaking. The friendship between Mansfield and Venilale remains strong.

David Foster

CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE OF JANET (MAC)

MACKENZIE

21 October 2018

Janet has left us but she is still with us.

Her achievements are still with us in all the community endeavours that she threw her heart into.

Her determination, flair, attention to detail and excellent communication meant she could always be relied on to follow something through.

Janet was involved in FoV from its inception in 2004. She avidly took up the East Timor cause. Janet visited Venilale with Al in 2009 and that just made her more resolute to help the Venilale community. In the past several years she was our super Secretary and was instrumental in FoV never losing its direction and punch. She was a great crosser of t's and dotter of i's, remembering what the rest of us had overlooked.

She was a famous critic of and fighter against injustice and a powerful supporter of the fair go.

She was courageous in her battle with cancer yet continued to be a valuable worker for FoV in the last difficult years - an amazing achievement.

Janet will be sorely missed by us at FoV. Her commitment, sense of purpose and passion are her legacy. She is still with us. On behalf of FoV, I extend our condolences to Al, Rosie, Sam and the extended family.

David Foster



The Ridgeline Walk for Venilale Scholarships

Another perfect day brought out many keen walkers. This annual event raised about \$1400 towards scholarships for a range of students from high school, university and medical staff. It is amazing the impact that \$100 can make to a student in Venilale where the average daily wage is \$2.

It is a rare opportunity to walk through privately owned farmland with stunning views across the Mansfield valley. We sincerely thank the local farmers for their generosity and Helen and Andrew Crockett for their massive effort in organising this very popular event . The BBQ organised by the Mansfield Rotary Club is always a welcome finish to the event.



Pictured are just some of the 22 scholarship recipients for 2018.



The scholarship process in action. Students are awarded the scholarships based on their academic performance and family circumstances. The decision is made by the individual schools and the students are interviewed individually to ascertain their goals. They have to meet Mestri Pedro, the Education Support Officer, at the Community Centre to collect the payment and this often involves a long walk. Some students also chatted with Lynn Elder when she visited their schools.

FoV Special Events



Unusual fund raiser—a garage sale brought in \$2,500

Pat Walsh, a supporter and human rights advocate for Timor Leste, spoke about 'East Timor's Historic Brexit from Indonesia: a participant's perspective.' It was a compelling account and he donated books he has written to the local library and secondary schools. An auction for a holiday in Peterborough, courtesy of Julie Aldous, and raffle raised about \$1800. The occasion was also a good opportunity to thank representatives of the volunteers who make the Days For Girls kits and a representative of the Deckhands Mahjong group. A film night for 'Undermined' and stall at the Steiner Open Day were also interesting new initiatives.



Regular bush market

Need ideas for that piece of tais you bought?

Tais chair made for Tilly Appleby's 18th birthday. What a fabulous way to remember her trip and the people who have become part of her extended family



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN 2019?

Find out about our projects on the 4th Wednesday of each month, 6 pm at the Mansfield Library . Enter from the rear car park.

WANT TO BE INVOLVED?

Here's your opportunity to contribute. Everyone welcome.

Friends of Venilale

MEMBERSHIP -If you are new or your membership details have changed please print this form, fill it in with your updated contact details and mail it to the address below. You may pay by cheque or direct deposit.

Bearing in mind that FOV is a purely voluntary organisation which is trying to make a difference, your annual membership of \$20 helps keep it viable.

NAME:

PHONE:

ADDRESS:

.....

EMAIL:



Please post to—
Friends of Venilale
P.O. Box 204
Mansfield Vic 3724



If paying by direct deposit

ANZ

Account Name: Friends of Venilale Incorporated

BSB: 013714

Account number: 269147371

Use your name as reference

If you want to know more about FoV or Venilale check out these websites:

<http://venilale.com>

facebook.com/groups/friendsofvenilale/

If you do not wish to receive emails from FoV in future, please email anne_foster28@hotmail.com

SCHOLARSHIP FUND DETAILS

How much does education cost in Venilale?

For one year:

Junior High School

Grades 7-9 = US\$80

Senior High School

Grades 10-12 = US\$120

University—US\$240

Technical College - US\$240

To study to be a nurse or midwife - US\$530



Venilale Scholarship Fund

Hunger for Education

Timor Leste has had a tumultuous history over the past twenty years. Forced occupation, a war of independence and civil unrest have ruptured many families and deprived children of opportunity.

But the hunger for education is strong. One of the 2012 scholarship winners is Adriana da Costa, who walks two hours each way each day to attend Year 11 classes at Luga Oli Senior High School. After Adriana's mother died in 2001 her father remarried and is no longer in contact with her.



If you would like to contribute to this fund use the same direct deposit details as for membership