



Friends of Venilale e-Newsletter November 2020

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



Update

No trips to Venilale this year but still lots going on. The Ridgeline Walk in 2019 was a great success and enabled our scholarship programme to continue. We were lucky to meet up with five Seasonal Workers from Timor-Leste who visited our Queen's Birthday bush market stall and Vintage Traders Trash and Treasure event. We received photos from Joni describing what was happening in Venilale and improvements to roads that we will certainly appreciate when next visiting. Nothing could stop the vigorous FoV committee so despite physical restrictions they all learnt how to use Zoom and this meant that Joni and Boss could often 'attend' meetings also.

Buy your coffee at
'Oakbank
Produce' or
contact Ann
Eldred—
0419950724

**DON'T MISS
Trash and Treasure at**



Wild Timor Coffee is a coffee importing company founded by four Australian Peacekeepers 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/>



**Where - Shed 2G, Crosby's Lane
When - Wednesday to Sunday , mid-day -5pm**

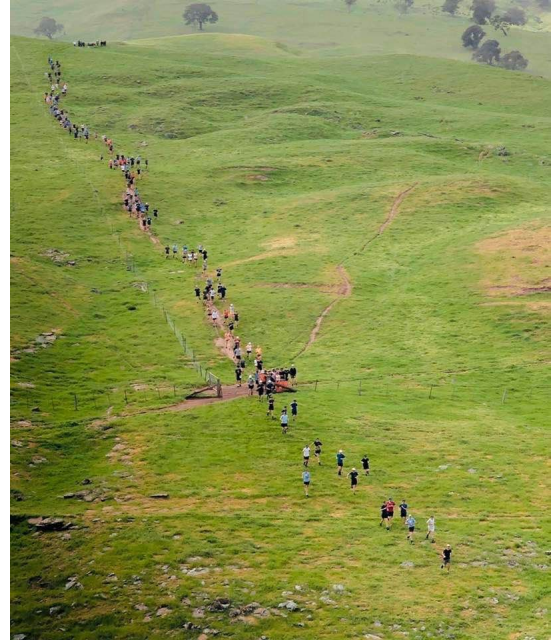
FoV has a stall and all funds help our projects in Venilale

If you have any knick knacks, furniture or pre loved treasures to donate

contact Ann Eldred—0419950724



The Ridgeline Walk held in November 2019 was a fabulous day, perfect weather, huge numbers and great support from Geelong Grammar Timbertop. Funds raised go towards scholarships for Venilale students.



Some of the 22 Scholarship recipients for 2020



Natalina da Costa
Soares, 21
Venilale Senior
High



Longuinos de Sousa
Bercoli Junior High



Jose Teresa da
Costa, 21
Uai Bua Junior
High



Getrudes Elvira
Soares, 14
Uai Laco Junior High



Ivonia da Cunha
Amaral, 22,
Dili University



Elisio Adre da Silva,
22
Venilale Senior High



Demetrio Jacob da
Silva, 15
Uai Laco Junior
High



Tatina Freitas Guter-
res, 14
Uai Bua Junior High

Markets Roundup



Queen's Birthday Bush Market

Bitterly cold but nothing could deter Helen and Andrew Crockett and Maggie Magee, a visitor from Gloucester in NSW from manning the stall. Only \$170 raised but lots of valuable interaction with our community.

Vintage Traders Emporium

Febby d'Sousa, a Timorese student, enjoyed her visit to the Emporium and was impressed by how such a small town can be so supportive of Venilale.

The Emporium has been a fantastic bonus since we began our stall. We are extremely grateful to Melinda Grant for suggesting the idea and the continued support of Julie Glazner. We are also very thankful for all the donations. Ann Eldred's commitment to it has been tireless and Karen Lewis's help has been greatly appreciated. Nearly all FoV income has been raised here during this difficult year.



Vintage Traders Emporium Park Trash and Treasure— Special Event

Another enormous effort from Ann, Ken and FoV members as well as Ann's family, friends and neighbours. Even the Seasonal Workers including the Timorese ,Tongans and Samoans helped to pack up at the end. Over \$1,000 was raised for the Venilale community.

Special Visitor –Febby d' Sousa

Febby who is from Venilale visited in March and enjoyed a lovely weekend in Mansfield starting with the 'Picnic in the Park at Mirrimbah. She is studying her second year of a Masters in Applied Economics at Monash University. Before that she was working in the Department of Finance in Dili. She stayed with David and Anne Foster for the weekend and made some excellent suggestions about how FoV could improve their communication with the people of Venilale.



Febby was amazed by Andrew's flag collection and enjoyed raising the Timor-Leste flag



She learnt about many facets of farming in a very practical way



Travelling on the ute tray gave her a great view of the livestock and kangaroos



FoV Committee for 2021

Enormous thanks to the committee of 2020 superbly led by President, Ann Eldred. The new position holders are:
President—Julie Aldous
Vice President—Rachel Meadows
Secretary—David Foster
Treasurer—Karen Lewis
Committee Members—Lynn Elder, Andy Barltrop, Margie and Will Twycross, Ken Hall, Andrew and Helen Crockett, Kaylene Conrick, Lise Andreasen, Rachael Noble, Michelle Harmer, Anne Foster, Joni, Boss

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN 2021?

Find out about our projects on the 4th Wednesday of each month, 6 pm

WANT TO BE INVOLVED?

Here's your opportunity to contribute. Everyone welcome.

Seasonal Workers

Five young Timorese men who left their country and families to work in the Seasonal Workers Programme braved the cold of a Mansfield winter. Savio and Aderito from Maliana, Nesto and Peter from Lospalos and Afonso from Baucau soon learnt that thongs and shorts were not going to keep them warm. Also because of Covid they suddenly had to deal with reduced hours and income. They were meant to return home in September but extended their stay in order to earn more money to support their families. Many organisations who help anyone in need supported these workers. This includes St Vincent de Paul and Mansfield Uniting Op Shops, Mansfield Shire Council, Rural Australians for Refugees, the Wodonga Food Bank and FoV. It's been a tough year for them as they struggled with language and social interaction. Huge thanks to all the Mansfield people and organisations who have supported our visitors.



In April Ann Eldred checked that they had enough warm clothes



In May when incomes were reduced the workers were grateful for some extra supplies



The workers visited The Produce Store

Page 22 - MANSFIELD COURIER - Wednesday, June 10, 2020 mansfieldcourier.com.au

Mansfield district supports Timorese seasonal workers

By LYNN ELDER

THE COVID-19 pandemic has created uncertainty for many in the Mansfield district.

But being a foreign seasonal farmworker a long way from home and family, and suddenly dealing with reduced work hours and income and without supports, has been the case for five young East Timorese men.

The plight of these men (aged from 22 to 29) who arrived in January, came to the attention of members of the Friends of Ventile (FV) group two months ago.

According to FV committee member Anna Eldred, these young men were not only isolated by the state government restrictions of COVID-19 but also culturally and socially.

Through Ms Eldred's contacts she has got to know them by name and learn where each are from in Timor: Savio, Aderito, Nesto, Peter and Afonso.

The good news is that their hours have been increased again, giving them more financial security.

Ms Eldred was impressed by the number of local services and organisations able to advocate and provide for the men's immediate needs.

"It highlights that services are available locally for anyone who needs them," she said.

Welfare assistance was provided by St Vincent de Paul.

They struggled with language and lack of interaction with people when they first arrived.

Thankfully, that experience has been reversed through the actions and support quickly gathered by Mansfield community organisations and individuals, ranging from food vouchers through to warm clothing enabling them to survive a sudden cold snap.

A reduction in work hours impacted their ability to pay rent and buy food.

One man has become a father to a baby girl back in East Timor over three weeks ago so is also feeling the pain of separation from family according to Ms Eldred.

"They now are feeling cared for and supported, which has made a big difference to how they feel about their experience in Mansfield," Ms Eldred said.

They are due to finish their work here in September when they will return home.

CRATEFUL THANKS: East Timorese men (from left) Savio, Aderito, Nesto, Peter and Afonso who were overwhelmed by the generosity of the Mansfield community during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Mansfield Uniting Op Shop, Mansfield Shire Council, Rural Australians for Refugees (RAR), the Wodonga Food Bank, FV and their various contacts to source items.

Being able to address their material needs has been a vital part of the support for these five men.

But Ms Eldred stressed the need for socialisation, friendships and outings as also being an important part of the on-going contact.

"As restrictions have been lifted, the men have been able to visit new friends and enjoy cultural experiences," she said.

"They have enjoyed nights around the fire pit playing Spotify, kangaroo spotting at Goughs Bay and being in awe of our beautiful autumn colours."

Ms Eldred said there were plans for more trips once the restrictions are lifted to include Mount Buller, Melbourne including the zoo, and bush walks.

"The Timorese love their music and have been given two guitars so they can play," she said.

On behalf of the FV group, Ms Eldred wanted to thank all those local people and organisations who have helped to make such a difference.

They include Michelle Harner and Graeme, Mary Dunn, Marie Melnik and Marie Sedgwick (RAR), David and Anne Foster, Ken Hall, Toni Appleby (sourcing guitars), John and Kate Schneider, Ray and Colin Brumley, Greg (Vinties), Kyla Zerk (Uniting Church Op Shop), Kay Hunt (banana cake - the men's favourite), Julia Glanzer (Vintage Traders Market), Francine and Alain Fleuret, Ben Farmer and many more.

Lynn Elder wrote an article for the Courier which led to Ann and Nesto being interviewed on ABC Radio

Venilale News



FoV was able to send US\$1,000 for Covid supplies.

Left—nurse checking temperature of mother and baby

Right—The staff of the Venilale Health Centre and the director Senor Domingos



Mana Teresa and Mana Candida preparing boxed meals for Portuguese tourists in Venilale



The Minister for Tourism visited Mt Ariana in September



In August the new bridge at Laleia was finished



Minor roadworks at Uato Haco

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/](https://www.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