



# Manten Kontaktu

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[www.geelong-viqueque.com.au](http://www.geelong-viqueque.com.au)

## 10 Years to Celebrate

It was a meeting of old and new friends at the GVFS 10 year celebration dinner held recently at The Davidson Restaurant. The connection between Geelong and East Timor has resulted in many partnerships and ongoing friendships, and we are incredibly proud of the work being taken up by the schools of Geelong. Education is the key to the future for this young country and having friends willing to help the people of East Timor re establish their education system is both vital and a privilege. Laura Blanchard from Mary McKillop International was the key note speaker. Laura took us through the programs being delivered with funding from GVFS in the Viqueque region.



At the dinner we acknowledged the Butler family for their generous contribution that allowed for the establishment of libraries and the upskilling of staff in such a remote region. It was wonderful that Gael was able to attend the dinner.



A photographic exhibition added some colour to the evening on the theme 'East Timor, Beautiful Land to the North'. With guests having the opportunity to purchase the framed prints at the end of the evening.

Graeme Barton, from Christian College was also able to give a first hand account of their 2018 teacher training program that's going from strength to strength. It has been inspiring to see what Christian College have achieved over the years.

## GVFS Achievements

2018 begins the tenth year since the formation of Geelong Viqueque Friendship Schools. Our group is still very active and we look forward to many years to come in supporting our friends in Timor Leste, especially in the District of Viqueque.

Our Mission in Timor Leste to help Viqueque District students to have a better education by assisting with the provision of school resources and teacher training, and in Geelong to help Geelong students to have a greater

understanding of the conditions and challenges of a developing country through school activities and visits to Timor Leste

A feature of GVFS is that both in Geelong and Viqueque District the schools cross all sectors: Government, Private and Catholic

4 Setembro Years 10-12	Christian College Highton
01 Viqueque Years 7-9	St Joseph's College
Cabira-oan Years 1-9	Kardinia International College
Calixa Years 10-12	Christian College Bellarine
Mundo Perdido Years 7-9	Geelong High School
Olocasa Years 10-12	Geelong Grammar School
St Estevao Years 10-12	St Francis Xavier PS
St Teresinha Years 7-9	Sacred Heart College
Uaimori Years 1-6	Clonard College
Loi-Huno Years 1-9	St Ignatius College

International Relationships: Strong personal relationships have formed between Geelong students and adults with their counter parts in Timor Leste. Many of these friendships have occurred during school visits. In recent years, at least six Geelong schools have made annual visits. Mariano De Silva GVFS project Officer in Viqueque provide invaluable links in fostering these relationships. Geelong people keep returning and the Timorese genuinely appreciate these reunions.

Primary Teacher Training: Programs have been conducted in Viqueque by Timorese educationalist for 150 plus primary teachers valued at \$66,000. Geelong teachers, assisted by students have taught many lessons, mainly in English classes, and in doing so have introduced some new teaching strategies to the local teachers.

School Libraries: The establishment of two school libraries was a special initiative. Currently three librarians are funded. Capital Improvement: Funds have been provided for two school libraries, rehabilitation of a classroom block and school fence, and \$13,000 towards a new school building. Christian College has been responsible for the funding of two primary schools and a pre-school centre. School Resources: Funds have been provided in excess of \$100,000 to a wide range of resources. Scholarships: More than 220 students have received tertiary and secondary scholarships over the years valued at \$55,000.

Geelong Events: A range of functions and events have been held over the years with two that feature annually, Timor Leste Student Day and Independence Day Celebrations. These activities have reinforced the strong connection between Geelong and Timor Leste

## City of Greater Geelong celebrates Timor Leste Independence Day

City of Greater Geelong again celebrated Timor Leste Independence Day. The forum was opened by Deputy



Manger Chantel Allen-Chavet of Community Development followed by a formal address by Deputy Mayor Peter Murrphy. Also attending were Cr Jim Mason (Ex-Oxfam who lived in Dili for 9 months early 2000's). St Ignatius College students made a presentation of their 2017 trip to Timor Leste with a most interesting short DVD display. Guest speaker was Gizela De Carvalho who is a TL women's rights activist studying Community Development at Victoria University of Technology, Footscray. She spoke about the increasing influence of women

in government though expressed concern that they were not well represented at district and local village level. However, she had positive expectations for the future of women in TL. About 45 people attended the event, which included an indoor flag ceremony by Australian Air Force Cadets.

Picture: Brian Edward, Alola Chairperson Maria Bohan, Gizela, Cr Peter Murrirhy and Cr Jim Mason

## New Teachers for Timor Leste

*In March 8 students supported by Geelong Friends of Viqueque and Geelong Viqueque Friendship Schools graduated. It was a very lovely day. We used the renovated Mercado, and even though there was heavy rain, we did not get wet! The students all asked me to pass on their thanks and gratitude for the support given to them during their three years in Baucau. I hope that you can pass their thanks to everyone who has worked so hard to fund these students. Two more will graduate next year.*  
From Margie Beck, Catholic Techer College, Baucau ICFP

Agripina da Costa Freitas  
Natalina de Jesus Castro  
Silvestre Soares Ais



## Geelong Teachers and Students to Visit Timor Leste

In recent years, senior students and teachers from Geelong have been annually travelling to Timor Leste. Preparations are well under way this year in following Geelong schools: Kardinia International College, Christian College, St Joseph's College, Clonard College teachers from schools in St Mary's Parish to Viqueque District, Sacred Heart College to Baucau and St Ignatius to Dili. Strong personal links have been established with the Geelong schools and there partner schools and/or institutions.

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