

**Colour copies of this and previous newsletters are available on our website at www.fpet.org.au/more.htm**

Appeal from the President

Could you become an active member of FPET? We really need to have more members who can help with the operation of our organisation. We have been blessed with the services of dedicated people since FPET began (almost a decade ago) but the scope of its work has grown and more workers are needed to share the load.

Any organisation benefits from having new people join in to bring fresh ideas and a new energy. The earlier members still active in FPET recognise that it is time to share the benefit of their experience with others.

Apart from the usual organisational committee positions we need people to help with publicity such as our newsletters and website. We need people to research potential projects and liaise with people on a range of issues. You may even have the skills to suggest something that we have not even tried to achieve before.

If you have an interest in social justice for the third world majority you are sure to find something to interest you by joining and participating in FPET.

Jim Johnson 3300 6332

New FPET Treasurer



John Brady (left) with Eric Muir at our latest FPET meeting
John Brady indicated at our last annual general meeting that he wanted to step down from the position of Treasurer. Since nobody else at that meeting was willing to accept the position, John agreed to continue until another Treasurer could be appointed.

Eric Muir only recently joined FPET and has now accepted appointment as our Treasurer. Given his previous experience, we expect he will be able to follow on maintaining the excellent standards set by his predecessor.

John Brady had been Treasurer since the establishment of FPET. Apart from the basic duties of that position, he played a major role in the incorporation of FPET and setting up the direct debit monthly donation systems and the tax deductibility option for donations which have assisted funding for the organisation's major projects. John also represented FPET at the official opening of the Atabae Community Health Centre on 15 August 2008.

The committee and members of FPET thank John for his great contribution to the organisation over such an extended period. We look forward to his continuing involvement along with the new input from Eric Muir.

Nick Delaney



FPET has moved on from building schools such as this one at Atabae and the government has taken over payment of teacher salaries. FPET is now looking to improve the uptake of post school training opportunities by Atabae youth.

Exchanging letters between schools

Exciting developments have recently taken place in establishing a relationship between the primary schools of St Johns Wood / The Gap Parish and the primary schools over in Atabae. On a recent trip to Atabae in January, I was able to pass on letters written by a class from Mater Dei Primary School to the local teachers of the Catholic primary school, Saint Arnold Janssen.

A testimony to the enthusiasm of the teachers and students in Atabae, I promptly received a bundle of reply letters to give to the children at Mater Dei School. Last week, fellow FPET member Jimmy Johnson and I visited the Grade Four class at Mater Dei, to give a small presentation on Timor and give out the letters from Atabae. The Grade Four class were very curious about East Timor and the people of Atabae and asked a number of very interesting questions.

It is hoped that a letter writing programme can be sustained between the two schools, allowing children at both ends to learn about a culture very different from their own. Fund-raising and the involvement of other schools in the Gap area is also a planned project for the future.

Mary Hodge



Jimmy Johnson (right) during a previous visit to Mater Dei school

Atabae students studying in Queensland



From left: Sam Hodge, Serv, Nick Delaney and Jose met at Brisbane airport with Jim Johnson when Serv and Jose arrived. On March 29th, two very studious and proud young men stepped off the plane from East Timor, embarking on a life changing journey that will involve studying a university degree. This became possible because of the generosity of the Sahariv scholarship program.

Jose and Serv are ready to make new friends and this will happen very quickly because of their impressive manner and personality. Both of them are ready to get used to living a whole new life here in Australia. Jose and Serv both come from Atabae, a district in the western part of East Timor.

Jose and Serv are currently studying in an English course while residing at the Gold Coast in homestay. They will then study a Bachelor of Agriculture at the University of Queensland Gatton Campus. Jose comes to Australia having served Friends and Partners with East Timor so well since December 2006. His hobbies are that he “likes to join in with young people in music and dancing”. He doesn't play soccer but he really likes to watch it.

Serv is from a large family too and his hobbies include listening to music and he has already started playing soccer on the Gold Coast. Both Jose and Serv hope to meet a lot of people and be happy here as well as study hard.

Sam Hodge

EDITORS NOTE: More information about the Sahariv scholarship program is available in the FPET website news for this month at www.fpet.org.au/news

Baucau graduates

In October 2009, three Atabae students graduated from the Baucau Teachers College with “Bachelor of Teaching” degrees, accredited by the Australian Catholic University. Antonio Vidal Moniz, Sabino dos Santos, and Venevides Maria Cardoso are now some of the best trained primary school teachers in East Timor. They were sponsored by FPET, as was previous Baucau graduate, Atabae teacher Alice Abu.. This is an important contribution for education in Atabae and the nation of East Timor.



Joel (second from left) with the three recent Baucau graduates.

Unfortunately, when I visited East Timor over the December-January period, I discovered that Antonio, Sabino and Venevides, like many of their fellow graduates, had not found work in schools. As highly skilled graduates, they were looking for work in Dili with NGOs.

After some discussions, the three graduates agreed to return to Atabae and ask the principals of the primary schools there about voluntary teaching. FPET is now providing an allowance to the three graduates during the voluntary teaching to keep them in Atabae, with the undertaking that they and their principals would seek to have them on the Education department payroll by the end of the year. Now the three graduates are voluntarily teaching in Atabae and are very happy to be working in their home town.

Joel Hodge

Strategic review

FPET members have recently reviewed FPET operations and been happy with the successes despite the difficulties of distance. Current challenges include moving the Atabae Community Health Centre towards self sustainability and getting more young people from Atabae to take up suitable post school training opportunities.

Nick Delaney

OUR MISSION

- ◆ To promote and support enduring friendships and partnerships between parishes, communities and people in the western border region of East Timor, and the Catholic parishes, communities and people of Brisbane.
- ◆ To facilitate the mutual sharing of gifts, skills and resources so as to nourish the spiritual development and well being of the participating parishes, communities and people.
- ◆ Bear witness to, and live out, Christ's command to love one another.

So, WHAT CAN YOU DO NOW? - You choose:

- Pray for the relationship, and
 - Join FPET and participate in organisation, and/or
 - Support FPET financially (tax deduction optional).
- Let us know your choice and we will contact you:

Name:.....

Address:.....

Phone and/or.....

email:.....

Mail to: Friends and Partners, PO Box 191 The Gap 4061