

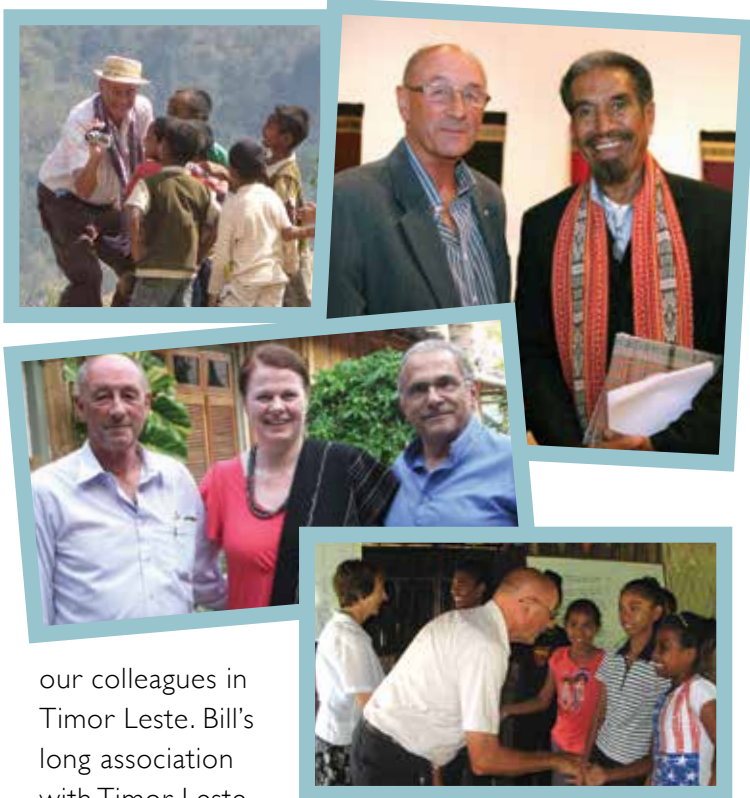
# Friends of Suai/Covalima

Friends of Suai/Covalima is a program of Health, Equity and Social Justice at the City of Port Phillip

October 2016

## Chairperson Bill Armstrong retiring

Bill Armstrong A.O. is retiring from the Chair of the City of Port Phillip's, Friends of Suai/Covalima [FoS/C] after thirteen-year leadership. Bill has guided the work of the Community Committee, contributed to the strategic planning of the Friendship and mentored



our colleagues in Timor Leste. Bill's long association with Timor Leste and his ongoing commitment to the FoS/C Committee has ensured that the community links between our countries have strengthened further. We thank you Bill for your Friendship. ●

## Community at the centre of development

Friends of Suai/Covalima invite contributions for an ongoing *Community Development scholarship* in honour of Bill Armstrong's vision for Covalima. Please donate on-line <https://www.givenow.com.au/cause/266> or send a cheque payable to City of Port Phillip to Friends of Suai/Covalima, Private Bag 3, St. Kilda 3182. ●

## Suai Visit 2016 - Impressions and Observations

Visiting Suai in June, 2016 enabled Friends of Suai/Covalima [FoS/C] Committee member Megs Alston and Coordinator Pat Jessen to see the Covalima Community Centre in full swing.

We were able to finalise the handover of the water, sanitation & hygiene [WASH] project to the local secondary school. What a great legacy for the school's current (1,600) and future students: the construction of a water bore, an electricity upgrade, a water tank, a septic tank and 18 toilets. Health and hygiene training for the school community is the final phase of the project. Thank you to Rotary International, City of Port Phillip and all our community donors who have made this possible!

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Health and Hygiene training with the new water supply to the school

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Community training in IT and English continues with 570 participants in the last year as well as external training to government employees. A new agriculture project in partnership with Oxfam is up and running for the next three years. The project provides quality training to improve food production, including making compost and organic pesticides, seed selection and management, economic management and responding to new markets. The CCC's Rural Women's Development Project supported by IWDA reaches over 100 women in the sub-districts with an emphasis on community leadership. Four women are running for local village elections and others are already engaged in local level development (PNDS) committees.

Alberto Barros, the CCC Director, facilitated a strategic planning session for the CCC management committee and staff during our visit. A new CCC strategic plan was the result with five strategic goals including a new focus area on land ownership and land rights.

The CCC also received a positive, clean audit report from an independent auditor based in Dili. What a great outcome for the CCC providing confidence and pride for the staff at the Centre supported by City of Port Phillip and other donors.



During our visit we met with and observed a new generation of appointees to positions of authority in Suai; such as the Director General at Suai Hospital, Municipal Administrator, Department of Health Director, and Director of Education. We noted the new appointees are young, qualified and supportive of the CCC's work. We also met numerous people whose further qualifications have been supported by FoS/C who are now employed in senior positions. ●



Carlene Harlock a Community Development student from Victoria University and local resident also completed her field placement at the CCC late June. Carlene researched the effectiveness of the Friends of Suai/Covalima friendship, its support and mentoring for the CCC and the outcomes FoS/C have achieved. The research findings demonstrate both partners are strongly committed to ongoing

cooperation and to further strengthening the friendship. The evaluation report recommendations are based on ensuring the partnership is sustainable working toward community development as an approach and decentralization to local government for much needed future development in the district. The report is available on request email: [pjessen@portphillip.vic.gov.au](mailto:pjessen@portphillip.vic.gov.au). ●





# National Infrastructure Developments in Covalima



The Suai international airport terminal under construction

Covalima district is located in the southern-western part of the country and borders Indonesia to the west. It has an area of 1.226 sq. km with a population of 64, 500. On the outskirts of town, major road works are underway on the Suai-Beco road and will connect future industrial clusters on the south coast of Timor-Leste and will have significant benefits for the Timor-Leste petroleum industry.

Suai international airport described as 'a new gateway for Timor Leste' is to be completed in 2017. The contractor is Indonesian with a mainly Indonesian workforce.

By contrast, the nearby housing development for those who had to move, is a local enterprise training 200 local village people constructing the housing,



Community Housing Ltd a good model of development which employed local labour from the village to be relocated to build the first twenty five houses with more to come.



Roadworks of 156 kms underway in Covalima

making the earth bricks used in the construction. There is some discontent with house sizes not being of equal value or land size equal to that forfeited. There is less land for agriculture, chicken raising or much garden. Land prices have now risen in Covalima.

The \$700m Suai Supply Base [SSB] is on hold after the major contractor pulled out in June 2016. The SSB is basically a harbor, port and warehouses. The implications of this decision are still unclear as to how this will impact in Covalima. ●

## Condolences

Friends of Suai/Covalima sadly acknowledge the death this month of Jose Pina Cardoso, Municipal Administrator, Covalima. The City of Port Phillip and Friends of Suai/Covalima extends its condolences to the family and community of Covalima. ●





## timor film event

After the successful Timor Short Film event at the 2014 St Kilda Film Festival we are planning another event in MAY 2017. We are seeking any films of up to 40 minutes in length that are either Timorese made or about East Timor.

Email [timorfilm@varmr.com](mailto:timorfilm@varmr.com) with leads or expressions of interest.



## trivia night

Following on from the successful 2016 Trivia night the 2017 event will be held in March at the Middle Park Bowling Club. Watch for details.

If you would like to assist putting these events on please email [pjessen@portphillip.vic.gov.au](mailto:pjessen@portphillip.vic.gov.au)



## speakers series

In 2017 we are planning a series of 3 speaker events on the topics of Democracy, Development and International Relations.

If you would like to assist putting these events on, or subscribe to receive speaker series news, please email [pjessen@portphillip.vic.gov.au](mailto:pjessen@portphillip.vic.gov.au)



## scholarships

2017's FoS/C fundraising activities involve the scholarships fund, including the new Bill Armstrong Community Development

Scholarship which will provide further education in putting communities at the centre of development. Other young trainees from disadvantaged backgrounds prepare for entry in trades, hospitality, administration, teacher training and nursing.

Donations are needed for 2017: \$1,000 to fully fund a scholarship, but any amount is welcome. If you have ideas or would like to assist raising funds, please email [pjessen@portphillip.vic.gov.au](mailto:pjessen@portphillip.vic.gov.au)



## 2017 activities

### or how to get involved in friends of suai / covalima

## election observers

Presidential and Parliament election dates in Timor Leste are yet to be set, expected Mid-2017.

The 2017 Australia Timor-Leste Observer Mission is being independently coordinated under the generous auspices of the VLGA and with the support of the Australia Timor-Leste Friendship Network.



Friends of Suai/Covalima is organising a group to observe the Parliamentary election in Covalima, Timor Leste, our friendship city.

If you would like to be involved please express interest to [pjessen@portphillip.vic.gov.au](mailto:pjessen@portphillip.vic.gov.au)

## find out more

Visit the website at [www.friendsofsuai.org.au](http://www.friendsofsuai.org.au) to find out more information

## get involved

by contacting Pat Jessen, Coordinator Friends of Suai by phone on 9209 6598 or email [pjessen@portphillip.vic.gov.au](mailto:pjessen@portphillip.vic.gov.au)



Keep up to date with events and news through the facebook page at [facebook.com/friendsofsuaicovalima](https://facebook.com/friendsofsuaicovalima)

or the Covalima Community Centre facebook page (run from Suai) at [facebook.com/FriendsOfSuaiCentroCommidaDeCovalima](https://facebook.com/FriendsOfSuaiCentroCommidaDeCovalima)

community engagement committee

The Port Phillip community is formally committed to a partnership of assistance the East Timorese coastal community of Suai, and also to the surrounding province of Covalima.

# friends of suai / covalima

