



Sentru Formasaun Ba Juventude
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“SENTRU FORMASAUN BA JUVENTUDE NO COMUNIDADE”

TIMOR Learning Centre

RAWCS PROJECT NO 33/2014-15

CENTRE MANAGERS VISIT TO AUSTRALIA – 13-23 October 2025

Managers Dede Da Costa and Atisi Da Costa, were sponsored by “Roasters with Altitude” to attend Sydney to meet sponsors, conduct presentations and visit Australia. They have been working and living at the Centre for nearly 10 years.

Monday 13 Oct - We picked up Dede and Atisi from the airport in the evening and drove them to our residence at Little Bay. They enjoyed a welcome dinner with us, and we briefed them re the next 9-day tour.

Tuesday 14 Oct- Tour of the Eastern Suburbs, shopping and preparing presentations.

Wednesday 15 Oct - Meeting with the Centre’s Matriarch “Queen Margaret Philomena Bleakley” (95 years of age) then travel to our home in Blackheath. Tour of sights throughout the Blue Mountains.



Atisi and Dede

Thursday 16 Oct - Travelled to Cowra and met Peggy Chivers (Inner Wheel), at the Japanese Gardens for afternoon tea.

We attended the evening Rotary Club of Cowra meeting, where members of the A50 District of Inner Wheel were also present. The Rotary Club of Cowra has been our biggest sponsor raising over \$60,000 along with A50 District of Inner Wheel raising over \$16,500. We have forged long term relationships with the people of Cowra and it was wonderful for Managers Dede and Atisi to meet them. We delivered a presentation and presented certificates and traditional Tais to President Kylie Docker, Peggy Chivers, Mike Holloway, Christine Parker, Sue Brown and Brian Webster.



President Kylie Docker



Friday 17 Oct- An early morning start to visit Australia's Peace Bell, Information Centre, the Prisoner of War Camp and a tour of the Japanese Garden and Cultural Centre. We visited the new Rotary Club Book Shop which was very impressive. Travelled back to Blackheath for the evening.



Saturday 18 Oct-worked at Roasters with Altitude where Dede and Atisi met other sponsors, Rotarians and community members.

Sunday 19 Oct-worked at Roasters with Altitude until 1pm and then attended the Planetary Health Precinct where the Centre's Sponsoring Rotary Club of Blackheath (now the RC of Greater Blue Mountains), hosted an afternoon tea and President Barry Taylor facilitated the presentation. Approximately 70 people attended and certificates and Tais were presented to major sponsors and supporters.

President Barry awarded 3 Paul Harris Fellow Awards- in recognition for strong commitment to humanitarian/community service to the Timor Learning Centre.

Beverly de Meur – for starting the Timor Learning Centre's sewing program with her late husband Peter. They visited Timor twice and conducted training for the local staff. They also spent the past 10 years selling products made at the centre, sewing many Days for Girls sanitary kits, clothing, products and co-ordinating them all to be shipped to Timor.



Joan Applin – for starting the Lithgow-Portland sewing group, sewing “gifts for girls” reusable sanitary kits, beanies, blanket, toys etc. A total of 2,300 drawstring bags, 2,300 washers, 4,600 pairs of undies, 4,600 shields and 18,400 liners (36,800 pieces of flannelette). With the assistance of her husband Charles, Vic O’Callaghan and TOLL; 10 shipments have been sent to our Centre since 2016.



Dr Chris Blainey – for supporting the Centre since the very beginning. If it wasn't for his support the Centre would not exist in the way it does today. He supported me when I took a year off work to build the Centre in 2016, Since I left mission life in 2014, he has supported every project and idea I have had to continue growing funds for Timor. Even now he continues to work as a volunteer in our coffee business supporting Timor and other humanitarian projects. He is a medical practitioner to community, family and friends 24/7. Chris has been the strength and support behind me and the whole Timor Learning Centre project.



Other recipients who were in attendance were acknowledged for their long-term support – Tim and Fran Le Ferve, Joan and David Hart, Phil Isacc and Mina Howard.



President Barry presented Atisi and Dede with certificates and Australian gifts for their dedication and hard work since the Centre officially opened in 2016.

An afternoon tea was catered for by Rotarian Adele Bruens which everyone enjoyed.



In the evening local customers from Roasters with Altitude, met for dinner at the Blackheath Golf Club where they presented gifts to Chris in congratulations for his PHF and to Managers Atisi and Dede to welcome them to Australia.

Monday 20 Oct– The day was spent at Scenic World and then we travelled back to Little Bay for the evening.

Tuesday 21 Oct - Meeting and presentation to RAWCS Norwest with National Manager Mahir Momand, National Operations Manager Belinda Griffen, National Admin Officer Pauline Lane and Nishorgo Eve National Partnerships and Fundraising Officer. Belinda and Pauline were presented with certificates and Tais for their outstanding support for the Centre since its inception in 2015. They also presented Dede and Atisi with Australian gifts.



Wednesday 22 Oct- Day tour of Sydney Harbour area and the Opera House.



Thursday 23 Oct – Visit to “Queen Margaret Philomena Bleakley” where Dede and Atisi presented her with a Tais as she wore her traditional crown they had made for her for her.



We then attended St Gabriel’s Catholic Church at Bexley and presented to “Gabbie’s Sewing Angles”, who have made hundreds of items of clothing for our Centre. These clothes have been distributed throughout Timor through the Centre’s outreach program.



In the evening Dede and Atisi flew to Darwin and stayed overnight returning to Dili on Friday 24 October.

I personally would like to say a huge thank you to all of you who made their trip so special. It was a very emotional time for two amazing Timorese men who had an experience of a lifetime – a thank you to them for running the Centre for nearly 10 years.

By the end of 2026 the Centre shall be closed as a RAWCS project and handed over to them to run as a sustainable Timorese owned project, run by them and their own community.

Thank you to the Rotary Club of Blackheath for taking on this project in 2014-15 as a RAWCS project and all the sponsors who have supported the Centre over the 10 years.

Libby Bleakley
Rotary Club of Blackheath
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