

### East Timor – Kangaroo Valley Village Partnership

In May, Maureen Magee and Libby Turnock spent two weeks in East Timor. They saw first hand the almost total destruction of buildings and infrastructure in that country. Outside of the capital, Dili, conditions in the villages are very difficult. People told us of eating only rice and sugar, or rice and salt, for up to two weeks at a time. Pillows, sheets, blankets and mattresses are almost non-existent there.

We set out with the intention of establishing a partnership between Kangaroo Valley and somewhere in East Timor. The Timorese suggested Remexio (pronounced Remeshu). It is a beautiful place up in the mountains above Dili. The people there are keen to develop a friendship with us and hope we can help

them to regain their self-sufficiency and put their lives back together again. Our children at Kangaroo Valley School are writing letters and drawing pictures to send to the school children in Remexio. Everything in the schools throughout the country has been destroyed. Some musical instruments for the school would be wonderful. The village church in Remexio, St. Joseph the Worker, asked us if people could help them with a microphone so that people can hear the priest.

There is no electricity at present, the generators having been burnt by the Indonesians last September. Peter Stanton is going there this month to find a suitable site for setting up a small hydro-electricity system which will also provide water

throughout the village. The women said they walk two to three kilometres to get water since their system was wrecked.

If anyone wishes to help these courageous people re-establish their lives, they can donate money to the Kangaroo Valley/East Timor Assistance Fund. Any money donated will be accounted for in this paper, and will be spent 100% on the Timorese, no overheads, and no waste. Every Valley resident who gets involved in this project will be entirely self-funded for travel, expenses etc. For anyone who would like to do something special, a literacy kit for 40 children, which includes a teachers kit, costs \$100. What a wonderful way to contribute!

*Maureen Magee*