

MESSAGE FROM EAST TIMOR

NTWLA is proud to announce that our membership has now increased to sixty two. This was as a result of our recent membership drive and thanks to the efforts of Freida Evans (Secretary) and Sarah Hawke (Committee member).

At last our committee meeting it was agreed that \$500.00 should be donated to Kate Halliday to contribute to her expenses whilst she is undertaking volunteer work in East Timor. Kate has taken four months leave from her employment to work with a local organisation in East Timor known as Fokupers (Communication Forum for East Timorese Women). Kate has suggested that it be applied for specific purposes outside of support for her and we are presently looking at ways of achieving this.

Fokupers is based in Dili and provides a wide range of services including a women's shelter in Dili, an outreach support and counselling service to three towns in the districts, and education program and conducts research in violent crime committed against East Timor Women during the Indonesian occupation. The staff consists of about 15 Timorese, other locals and three international volunteers.

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Kate reports that her specific areas of involvement include issues in relation to domestic violence and the law. She values

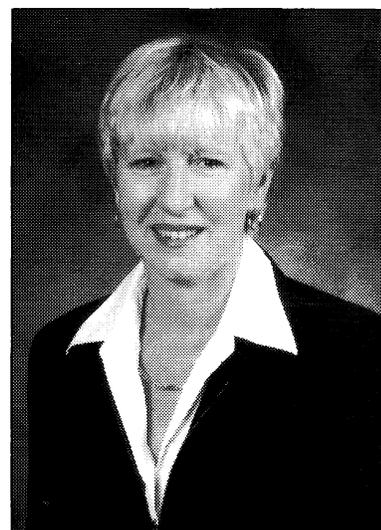
and is enjoying the opportunity to contribute to the development of a new nation and working towards improving the status of women.

Kate writes:

While Fokupers recognises the need to continually raise the issue of domestic violence, it is seeking to do this in partnership with other non-government organisations as they believe it is not simply a women's issue, but rather an issue which men must be concerned with. It is also aware that campaigning on domestic violence may leave them vulnerable to allegations that they are bringing about the fragmentation of families and are applying standards which are not culturally appropriate for East Timor.

The irony is that recent history in East Timor has resulted in increased awareness of the importance of maintaining and promoting human rights, Fokupers is educating the community that according to women their human rights means protecting them from all forms of violence whether that violence is categorized as political or domestic.

Over the last week I have reviewed the criminal procedure regulation passed by UNTAET in September 2000. In many respects the regulation is quite progressive as it includes specific rights for victims of crime including the right to obtain a copy of the prosecution file if a charge is dismissed (withdrawn) prior to trial and the right to request a review of such a decision. I will be assisting Fokupers to



Jacqueline Presbury, NTWLA President

produce resource material for its staff and volunteers on criminal procedure and victims rights. I will also be assisting Fokupers to more effectively advocate on behalf of its clients with police and prosecutors.

Next issue

Britt Lardelli has volunteered (or was she co-opted?) to contribute next month. She has undertaken to write an article focusing on indigenous issues, which coincidentally is in keeping with the theme of the annual patron's reception sponsored by NTWLA patron Her Honour Justice Sally Thomas, "Indigenous Women and the Law."

Bouquets

Congratulations go to Lisa Yeu Ming Wong and Deborah Kay Matheson who were admitted to practice on Tuesday 5 June 2001.

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Mediation Training for East Timorese Public Servants

impressive and spirited group of indigenous Timorese men – ranging from young recent law graduates (Indonesian educated) to public servants who had worked for many years in the Indonesian civil service in East Timor. All were committed to the advancement of their nation, but under no illusion as to the daunting nature of their brief. In the East Timorese context, where land tenure is fundamental to the way of life, they were interested in the potential of dispute resolution through mediation to indirectly benefit through enhanced community harmony other sectors of Timorese society.

Training lasted for five days in the 'Harbour

Room' of Christ Church Anglican Cathedral on the Esplanade. Devised and presented by Darwin-based trainers and stalwart members of the Law Society's ADR Committee Tony Fitzgerald (Co-ordinator Resolve) and Pat McIntyre (mediator and barrister), the course consisted of formal instruction, role plays, observation of the Supreme and Magistrates Courts in session, and observation of an actual mediation using Resolve's closed-circuit TV system.

The trainees' language of choice was 'Bahasa Indonesia' which was managed with the able assistance of a tag team of two brilliant interpreters – Umi Rasmi, a Darwin-based Indonesian woman, and Siobhan

Campbell, a Dili-based Australian woman.

The trainees were enthusiastically received by members of Darwin's Timorese community – members of which attended the graduation ceremony and dinner, provided the venue for the ceremony (the Portuguese Timor Social Club), catered for the dinner, and arranged for the trainees to appear live on Community Radio. Total costs of the project were met jointly by Anglicare and the Unit. The course was well received and it is expected that Resolve will be invited to observe the trainees in action in Timor sometime in 2001.