

# Anne's Diary - March 2010

Ten years ago Anne and Fiona spent 3 months in Timor in 2010. Most of this time was spent in Hatobuilico but for the initial month they stayed in Dili with a friend, Beba, while they found their feet and learnt some Tetun. Their purpose was to spend some time in Hatobuilico and investigate walks in the Hatobuilico surrounds. The walks booklet was the outcome and this will soon be on the Hatobuilico page of this website. Anne and Fiona were volunteers, working with the Blue Mountains Hatobuilico Friendship Committee and BMETS.

## Week 1 (Dili) - March 2010

Well here I am finally in Dili Timor Leste. I feel like a very naïve traveller – someone who knows nothing but I am very happy to be learning.

Today I have been noting some of the surprises, and things that I have noticed... like:

- There are few flies
- On the drive from the airport you drive past some pretty poor areas but there seems a pride in their little places - they all look clean and tidy. This could be my first lesson – honouring all that I have. The less I have the more I may value each precious little thing!

- Nobody has much of anything – furniture etc
- I am seeing for the first time just a little of how most of the world lives on ... so different from me – the mere fact that I sit here and write these things on my computer feels bourgeois.
- The traffic is chaotic but slow and I would nearly say considerate – doesn't seem at all "angry". A mix of bright yellow taxis, UN 4WD, newish cars and 4WD and lots of motor bikes.
- There are no strong pervading smells
- The dogs that roam

the streets are, so far, quiet even if some look like they could have a bit more to eat. I only saw one that I felt a need to avoid. They share the streets with chickens, goats, and pigs – not a lot but some.

- The joy of seeing the familiar – children playing hopscotch.
- In general Dili is pretty much as I pictured it.

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*The less I have the more I may value each precious little thing!*



## Week 2 (Bogoru and Liquica)

It was a lovely drive up the coast to Liquica. Different from an Australian coast drive – no waves, no sand, lots of rubbish by the road. The road was not great but very drivable in a small car. Fiona and I were VERY pleased to have the air-conditioning. After seeing Mana Kasian at Bogoru we drove to Liquica town and had lunch (bbq chicken, rice & chips) then a look at the beach and drove home.



Along the road many people had enterprises: groceries for the locals, fruit (bananas – hudi \$1/

bunch, paw paw – aidila \$1, limes - derok) wood, bamboo strips for building, fish.

Being malai (foreigners) we are given high status. This is most evident around meal time. No one eats until we do. Feels weird to me. We also don't help in preparation or clean up afterwards. Fiona says this will relax with time. I also noticed

today that as I sit outside our room on the lounge – no-one else sits here and I feel bad as there are only plastic chairs around to sit on.... I don't like feeling that I am intruding.