

SULAWESI

August 1999 saw the Brodie family (Paul, Melanie, Kaitlyn 8, Hannah 5 and Matilda 3) from Nowra Teams 5 travel to the unusually shaped island of Sulawesi in Eastern Indonesia to take up a two year teaching position at the Makassar International School, Makassar.



Having taught for 3 years previously in Papua New Guinea we were excited by the prospects of living and working in another country and all the challenges that come with it. However, we soon realised that PNG was a walk in the park compared to Indonesia. Port Moresby in many ways is like Australia – similar money, driving habits, shops and most importantly, language. Makassar on the other hand is nothing like Australia – the money is like Monopoly money, road rules are non existent, shops are full of food you've never seen before and we had absolutely no Indonesian language before our arrival and very few people had any English. All in all it was like we had come from another planet!! The culture shock was immense but we were sure that we would settle into this lifestyle.



And so four or five months into this adventure all of a sudden everything that seemed so strange just became so everyday. The smells, the beggars, the lepers, the food, the crowded roads, the becaks (pedecabs), the pollution, the Mosque call to prayer and the heat all became very normal. As our language improved so too did our ability to interact more freely with the people improve.

Living in a predominantly Muslim society certainly opened our eyes to their customs and rituals as well as strengthening our own Christian values. From our experiences in this Muslim society we know that the average Muslim is just as abhorred by the current world events as we are and that extreme fundamentalism displayed by any faith is firmly rooted in ignorance.



After 2 years living and working in Sulawesi our family has been enriched by the whole experience personally, professionally and spiritually.