


Australasian

baker

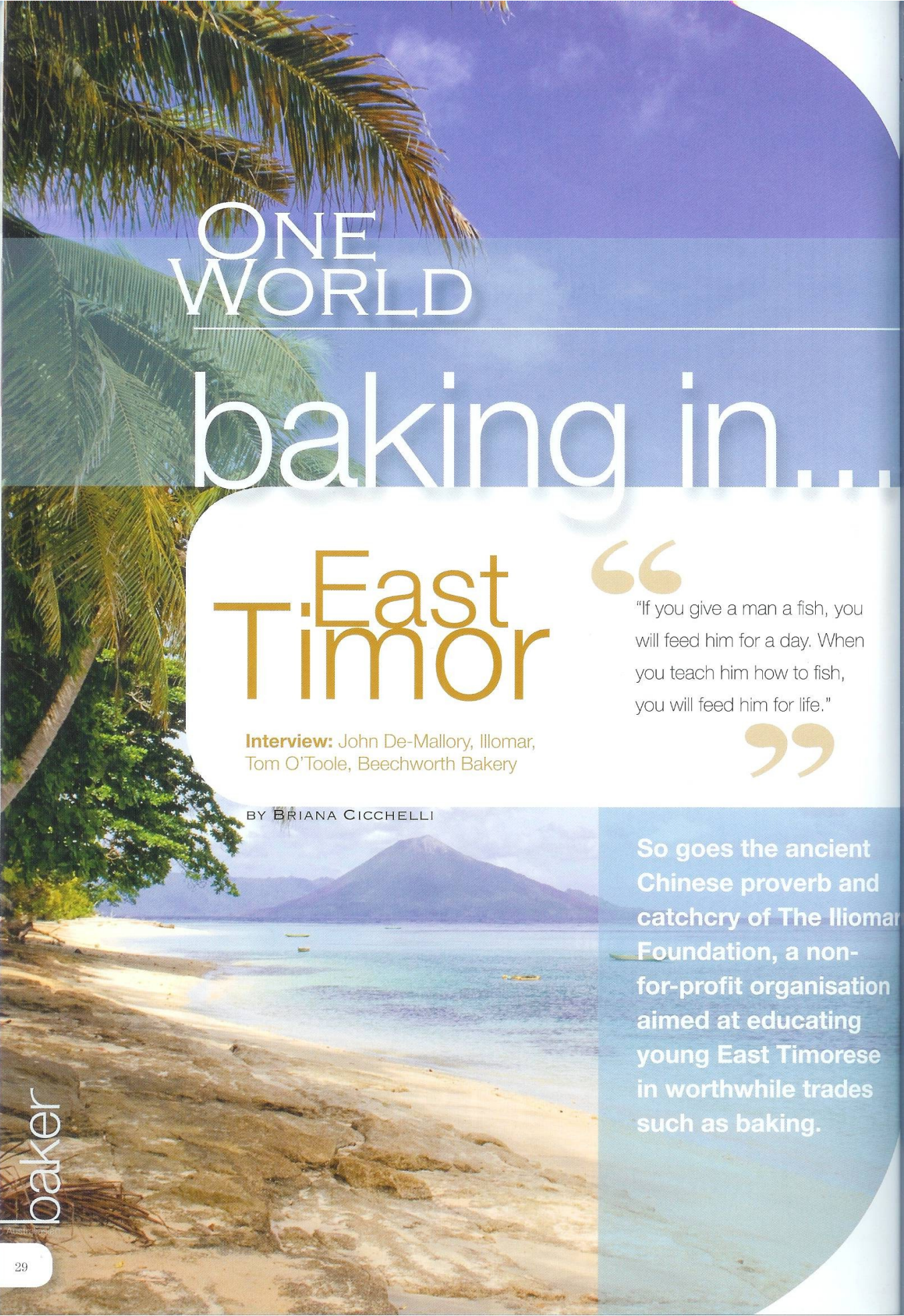
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- A close-up photograph of a person's hands, wearing a blue and white striped shirt, sifting a large amount of white flour into a dark blue ceramic bowl. The flour is captured mid-air, creating a dynamic, cloud-like effect. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the person's shirt and the bowl's rim.
- **BUSINESS #101**
Marketing for small business
 - **BAKING IN EAST TIMOR**
Food, travel and giving something back
 - **FAIR TRADE**
Change to IR Laws
 - **STELLAR...**
Baking's brightest young stars

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ONE
WORLD

baking in....

East Timor

Interview: John De-Mallory, Illomar,
Tom O'Toole, Beechworth Bakery

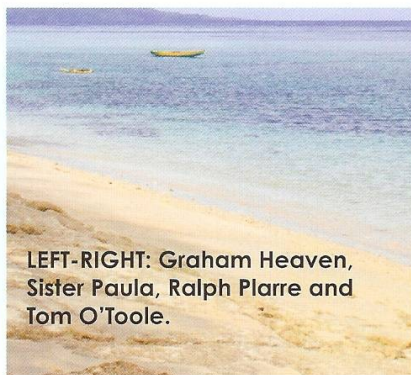
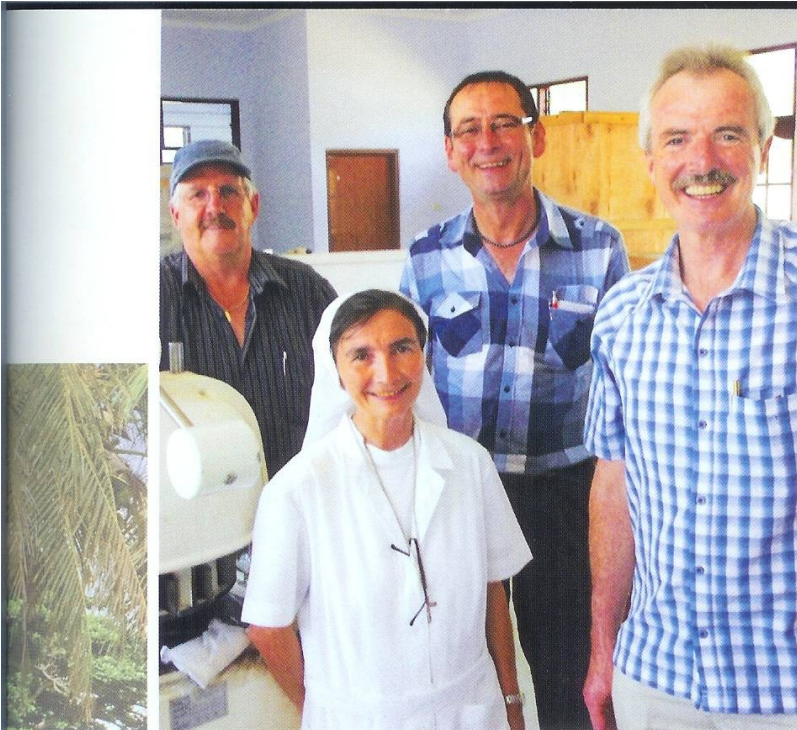
BY BRIANA CICHELLI

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"If you give a man a fish, you will feed him for a day. When you teach him how to fish, you will feed him for life."

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So goes the ancient Chinese proverb and catchcry of The Illomar Foundation, a non-for-profit organisation aimed at educating young East Timorese in worthwhile trades such as baking.



LEFT-RIGHT: Graham Heaven, Sister Paula, Ralph Plarre and Tom O'Toole.

The brainchild of Brisbane businessman John De Mallory, the idea came about through John's work in finance. "One of the main motivations in setting up the Iliomar Foundation was that after asking prospective retirees the inevitable question, too many financially well-off clients had visibly no idea of what they were going to do in their long expected retirement. Many, if not most, muttered about 'doing something useful but different...giving back to the industry, country...etc'. Very few though could clearly define, let alone articulate just how this would take shape. So I thought why not try to match soon to be retired, highly skilled & experienced, financially self-supporting baby boomers with the pressing needs of arguably our poorest & closest neighbour, East Timor?"

Indeed the statistics certainly support this theory. According to the productivity commission, Australia, along with most developed economies, has an experienced, though fast-aging population. East Timor on the other hand has the opposite problem; a largely young, but unskilled population with an average 8.3 children per childbearing woman, most under age 14, (according to a UN report).

And so John began The Iliomar Foundation. At present it is looking at implementing two distinct skill areas, one of which being baking. "There's a great facility in place in East Timor organised and run by the Salesian Sisters, a

Catholic-run mission who have set up a new training centre in Comoro," says John.

"Part of this facility is an industrial-sized bakery filled with all the new equipment needed to train students to Australian standard level two or three. They have all the tools, but no one to train."

So last year John organised for several members of Australia's baking fraternity to visit the facility.

Tom O'Toole of Beechworth Bakery in Victoria was one such member. "What they have is a really incredible training centre. The bakery is beautiful and airy, with nice, clean benches and brand new equipment. There is everything a small bakery needs including electric ovens, roll machines and dough and cake mixers."

Tom believes that the project is 'daunting, but possible'. "It's important to take it all one day at a time. Everything works at a much slower pace over there and there is certainly a long way to go, but it has real potential."

And Tom should know, having set up a commercial bakery in Arnhem Land. "Many said it couldn't be done, but in just three months we had that bakery up and running."

A great key to Iliomar's future success lies in the East Timorese themselves.

Says John: "The youth there are really motivated and conscientious. Often they are the eldest of many children and are just so deeply committed to wanting to help support their families. They just want a chance and Iliomar can give them that."

Tom certainly agrees, however he also believes there is still a serious limitation in that a qualified baker really needs to be able to take ownership of the project in conjunction with Iliomar.

"Iliomar has to find someone looking to make a difference, someone that has the time and perseverance to stay for an extended period and really get the project up and running."

Once the first wave of apprentices have graduated, Iliomar then plans to coordinate transfers to Australia so that Australian bakeries can sponsor them, thus improving Australia's flow of skilled migrants while also providing paid employment for graduates.

"It is a big task," says John. "But after 450 years of Portuguese domination and 24 years of Indonesian occupation there are many skills that the East Timorese simply don't have. Now they have to learn for themselves and acquire all the skills necessary to create a country with a future, Iliomar can be part of that."