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# KABAR

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## AIA News

### Australia Indonesia Association

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**March – May 2010**

*Established in 1945*

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#### President's Message

Hi Everyone,

Welcome to our new members and to those who have renewed their memberships. Congratulations to Colin McGregor and Chris Curtis who renewed during January and won the lucky draw for meals at Delima restaurant. Selamat Makan!

Christmas already seems so long ago, and we are well and truly into the 2010 year, the start of the "teens" after the "noughties" decade.

The last few months in NSW have seen drought breaking rains and flooding in some areas, and fortunately there have not been any major disasters in Indonesia. In Haiti, however, a major earthquake has killed hundreds of thousands of people, injured many more, and left millions homeless, reminding us of the forces of nature, and of the need to help those less fortunate than ourselves.

Australia seems to have weathered the Global Financial Crisis quite well, as has Indonesia, but other parts of the world are still struggling, and there may yet be repercussions on Australia.

In early March we look forward to welcoming Indonesia's President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono to Sydney. He will be visiting Canberra and Sydney on this trip, but the itinerary is not yet clear. We hope that AIA members will have an opportunity to see him in Sydney, and will let you know details as they are confirmed.

Also in early March there will be a match between the Indonesian national football ("soccer") team and the Australian Socceroos in Brisbane for qualifying for the Asian Cup. Indonesia won the first round against Australia, so there is pressure on the Socceroos to win this match.

2010 also brings with it, the 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the AIA. Yes, the AIA was established in July 1945, one month earlier than Indonesia proclaimed its independence. To celebrate this anniversary we will be holding a function in July, and we will keep you informed as more details come to hand.

In 1945, Australian wharfies demonstrated their support for Indonesian independence by refusing to load Dutch ships bound for Indonesia. This event was recreated in the film "Indonesia Calling" which many of you may have seen. The AIA has formed a small subcommittee to research and plan for a commemorative plaque to remind Australians of the close ties between Indonesia and Australia. We have had discussions with the Maritime Union of Australia who are planning to develop a History Walk in the Barangaroo Development area.

Recently some of our committee attended the premier screening of "Mud Max" a documentary of Lusi, the mud flows near Sidoarjo in East Java. Very interesting and thought provoking, suggesting that the mud flows were most likely caused by tectonic and volcanic forces.

In January, we had a very relaxing barbecue at my place. It was good to catch up with so many of our old and new members.

I was in Melbourne in January to visit with family, but also to meet with our sister organisation, the AIA Victoria. They are somewhat larger than us in NSW, and have a different focus, but we have agreed to communicate and work together to provide more and better services to our members. We have also agreed to assist groups in Queensland and West Australia to establish local AIA associations.

Our next major function is our "Jakarta By Night" dinner to be held jointly with the Australia Indonesia Business Council on Sat 13 March at Jimbaran Restaurant. It's a great opportunity for those who have lived and worked in Indonesia to reminisce about their days in Jakarta or elsewhere. See our website for details.

The following week we have our Annual General Meeting, where you get to elect your committee for the next year. We are always on the lookout for people who are keen to help us organise our activities over the next year. Hope to see you there.

Please check out our website [www.australia-indonesia-association.com](http://www.australia-indonesia-association.com) for details of activities and membership. We are also on Facebook.

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**March – May 2010**

## JOURNEY OF INDONESIAN TB PATIENTS IN SYDNEY IN 1946

By Anthony Liem

Unbeknown to most Australians and Indonesians alike, on August 21, 1946 in the Sydney suburb of Turrumurra, 25 Indonesian TB patients were evicted from the Princess Juliana Hospital, managed by the Netherlands Indies Civil Administration (NICA). Thousands of Dutch living in Indonesia, with their armed forces, commercial and shipping enterprises, had been granted permission to stay in Australia until it was free from the occupation of the invading Japanese.

The helpless patients, in desperate need of temporary accommodation and medical care and unable to communicate in English, were found in the icy and windy streets by three supporters of the Indonesian Independence Movement, Mr Gerald Peel, an advocate for freedom for all people; Mrs Granny Byrnes, who had taken up the Indonesian cause; and Mrs Elsie Reid, an active humanist and the mother of Charlotte Maramis, journalist and author.

*The Sydney Morning Herald* of August 22, 1946 reported, following a press statement from an NICA representative, that 'the Indonesian TB patients walked out of the hospital'. It added that 'members of the Australia Indonesia Association (AIA) were there to look after the men until a bus appeared and took them to the Chinese Youth League (CYL) in Dixon St, Sydney's Chinatown. The Turrumurra Hospital was being "closed down" and all patients would be taken down to the Queen Wilhelmina Hospital in Randwick'. These reports were a clear fabrication. In fact, the Turrumurra Hospital was still open in the 1970's.

The three members of the AIA – Gerald, Granny Byrnes, and Elsie Reid knew the President of the CYL, Fred Wong and the Assistant Secretary of the Chinese Seamen's Union, Arthur Chang, So it was to these two men that they turned for assistance (Charlotte Maramis, aged 17 at the time, had met both men). Prior to this debacle, Arthur had already assisted jobless Indonesian seamen in Sydney. They had used the CYL for meetings and to nurture their hopes for an independent Indonesia to return to, free from the shackles of colonialism.

Without hesitation, Arthur arranged for a truck to take the patients to Chinatown from Turrumurra. He had found a loft above the CYL headquarters in Dixon St. There the men were cared for by members of the local Chinese community despite protestations about the 'importation of an infectious disease'. In the meantime, urgent efforts were made to find a place where the patients could receive more permanent accommodation and specialised medical care.

After a week, a NICA run clinic for officers, the Oranje Clinic in Kent St was found. In the presence of members of the Waterside Workers' Federation and the Press, the

patients were admitted and all the medical staff and officials could do, was to stand back and watch the procession of Indonesian TB patients make its way into the clinic.

These patients were eventually shipped back to Indonesia on the HMAS Manoora in November 1946. Subsequently, the AIA received a letter of thanks written on the ship by two former patients, B. Asmadi and F. Soedjadi, saying that "..... the TB patients were evicted from Turrumurra Hospital and you spared no efforts to render to us all kind assistance ..... your names will be remembered by us as long as we live, and we all are sure, that when the Republic is informed about your work, the Republic itself will be grateful. We consider the TB patients as our heroes..... Their brave endurance from being moved in the cold weather from place to place and their cheerful acceptance of fate knowing that they were also fighting for their country demands our admiration for them..... we may not be able to see you, but we hope, that you enthusiastically continue the work, that we have started.....to foster and strengthen the friendship between Australia and Indonesia."

Edited extract from 'Echoes Book Three, Kenneth Frederick Wong' by Charlotte Clayton Maramis.



*Charlotte (Lottie) Maramis and Frederick Wong reunited recently after so many years.*

(Charlotte is currently a Patron of the Australia Indonesia Association, and is the author of Echoes Book One and Echoes Book Two, *My Years in Indonesia 1949-1952*, publ.2005. Fred Wong (1906-1948) was the founding President of the Chinese Youth League and a champion of the rights of those who could not fight for themselves)

**Echoes Book Three, Kenneth Frederick Wong, will be launched at 2pm on April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2010 at the Writers' Centre, Callan Park, Balmain Road, Rozelle NSW.**

## Unfinished Nation: Indonesia before and after Suharto

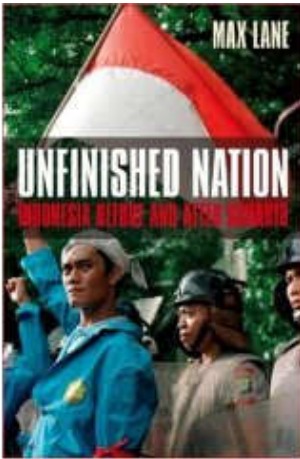
Reviewed by Nick Everett

*Unfinished Nation: Indonesia before and after Suharto*

By Max Lane

Verso 2008 312 pages

RRP (Australia) \$49.95



In May 1998, Indonesian dictator General Mohammed Suharto was forced out of power when his cabinet ministers and the other generals — faced with escalating mass protests — abandoned him. A second upsurge of protest, drawing in even larger layers of the population in November 1998, forced Suharto's successor as Indonesian president, Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibie, to call elections. These events signalled the end of Indonesia's New Order dictatorship, which had dominated Indonesian political life throughout most of the archipelago's post-colonial history.

*Unfinished Nation* traces the evolution of Indonesia's political struggle from the stirring of an anti-colonial movement at the beginning of the 20th century through to the post-Suharto era. It tells the story of the real heroes of this struggle: Indonesia's workers, peasants and urban poor, whose sustained mass action was the determining force in overthrowing the New Order regime.

The book's author, Max Lane, writes both from the viewpoint of a participant in this movement — as a close collaborator with Indonesian radicals who formed the Peoples Democratic Party (PRD) in the mid-1990s — and someone who has participated in building solidarity with the anti-dictatorship struggle in Australia. Lane came into contact with the first wave of student protest against Suharto in 1975 as a participant in the Bengkel Theatre, led by dissident playwright WS Rendra. Lane translated one of Rendra's plays, *Kisa Perjuangan Suka Naga*, into English. The play was published in the US and Australia and later performed in several countries.

In 1981, Lane helped found a journal of Indonesian studies, *Inside Indonesia*, which has contributed to critical debate on Indonesia and roused interest in solidarity with the anti-dictatorship struggle in the 1990s, particularly among Australian university students. During the 1980s, Lane translated Indonesian novelist Pramoedya Ananta Toer's *Buru Quartet*, bringing to light a rich historical narrative of Indonesia's national revolution that had been suppressed under the Suharto dictatorship.

Returning to Indonesia in 1990, Lane made contact with a younger generation of Indonesian political activists and witnessed the stirring of a new anti-dictatorship struggle that had begun with a series of mass protests against the World Bank-financed Kedung Ombo dam project. There he met with activists who pioneered the revival of street protest mobilisations, factory strikes and land occupations. Many of these activists went on to form the Partai Rakyat Demokratik (PRD – Peoples Democratic Party), which first emerged from underground in 1994. On his return to Australia, Lane was a founding member of Action in Solidarity with Indonesia and East Timor (ASIET), which played an instrumental role in building solidarity with both Indonesia's anti-dictatorship struggle and East Timor's independence movement in Australia during the 1990s.

In his introduction to *Unfinished Nation*, Lane explains that his analysis draws the conclusion that "Suharto did not just fall from power — he was pushed and the movement that pushed him from power developed as the result of an arduous, conscious effort to build a political movement, based on mobilising masses of people in action." To understand this revival of *aksi* (protest action), Lane argues that it is necessary to view the rise of the anti-dictatorship movement, and subsequent struggles, within the history of Indonesia's struggle for national liberation. "Mass mobilisation politics", Lane writes, "played a central role in the anti-colonial struggle that began at the beginning of the twentieth century and continued up until 1945 and in a struggle to 'complete the revolution' that unfolded between 1945 and 1965."

Lane draws strongly on the literary novels of Pramoedya to illustrate how Indonesia's national revolution came into being. Pramoedya was, according to Lane, the central literary figure in Indonesia's national revolution and a committed revolutionary. Pramoedya's novels span a thousand years of Indonesia's history. His most famous novels, *This Earth of Mankind*, *Child of all Nations*, *Footsteps* and *House of Glass* (known together as the *Buru Quartet*) tell the story of Indonesia's national awakening. They were written during Pramoedya's incarceration on Buru Island.

The first three novels are narrated by their central character, Minke, based on the writer, journalist and political leader, Tirta Adhisuryo. The first indigenous Indonesian to publish a daily newspaper, Adhisuryo used the paper to promote the struggle against Dutch colonialism and the organisation at the forefront of the struggle, Sarekat Islam (Union of Islamic Traders). The traders were the motive force of independent political and cultural life outside the enclaves of native civil servants employed by the Dutch. Sarekat Islam soon attracted all types of traders as well as workers and peasant farmers, claiming a membership of 2 million by 1919.

Lane explains that this organisation split in 1921, with a massive left wing, opposed to both colonialism and capitalism, forming the Sarekat Rakyat (Peoples Union). It was from this current that the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) emerged. Although the PKI was brutally suppressed by the Dutch colonial authorities in 1926-27, and again by Indonesian nationalists during the four-year guerrilla war against Dutch attempts to restore colonial rule in 1945-49, it was to re-emerge again in the post-independence era as a mass political force.

According to Lane, "Political parties, and the mass organizations affiliated to the parties, filled a social and cultural vacuum. Four hundred years of colonial intervention had held back energies that were now unleashed, energies to organise social life." Trade unions and peasant organizations flourished, particularly those affiliated to the PKI and the Indonesian National Party (PNI). By March 1958, 6 million workers were organised in trade unions and hundred of thousands involved in strikes. Workers occupied almost every Dutch-owned company in Indonesia, including mines, plantations, factories and import-export houses.

Increasingly ideological divisions emerged. The PKI and Indonesia's first president, Sukarno — whose political strength arose from their organisation of the proletariat and the peasantry — argued that the national-liberation revolution had not been completed by the independence struggle in 1945-49 and that the economy was still in the grip of Dutch and other foreign business interests. The PKI and Sukarno called for the nationalisation of foreign-owned businesses, a role for workers in the management of state-owned enterprises and distribution of land from landowners to tenant farmers and the landless. The army, the right wing of the PNI and the Islamic parties opposed this perspective, instead seeking cooperation with the US and the other imperialist powers and greater access to the economy by foreign capital.

The struggle came to a head in 1965, when Suharto seized power in a military coup and launched a counter-revolution aimed at destroying the PKI and its mass organisations, which claimed a total membership of 25 million. Despite Sukarno's huge popularity, he had few allies in his cabinet, which was dominated by the right wing of the PNI and the Islamic parties. The army gained increasing economic power as its senior officers asserted themselves as managers (and later owners) of nationalised foreign companies, including more than 400 plantations and scores of commercial, industrial and banking enterprises. Indonesia's military officer caste therefore had a vested interest in Suharto's counter-revolution.

Between 500,000 and 2 million Indonesians were slaughtered by the military and militias connected with the right-wing parties. Lane explains: "Most of these people were leaders, activists or supporters of one component or other of the Indonesian left... [and] many of those killed died horribly, as part of a terror campaign. They were decapitated, disembowelled, dragged behind a truck or otherwise cruelly killed. In addition... hundreds of thousands more were detained... [and] at least 12,000 were further detained for another ten to twelve years."

Commenting on the 1990s anti-dictatorship struggle, Lane observes: "The political party most connected to the struggle to re-establish mass mobilisation as a political method has been the PRD." He also observes that the ideological outlook that underpins the PRD's program of socio-*demokrasi kerakyatan* (popular social democracy) has continuity with the program of Indonesian socialism espoused in the 1960s by Sukarno and other forces on the left. But he writes: "The PRD has not attempted to build upon the theoretical work done by either Sukarno, the PKI or anybody else active prior to 1965." Lane cites the systematic wipe-out of the memory of political history that followed by 1965-67 "ideologicide", and the radically different international context, for this discontinuity.

Despite the counter-revolutionary suppression of the memory of Indonesia's national-liberation revolution prior to 1965, Lane observes that "the historical legacy of a class consciousness developed out of collective national struggle... the charisma of Soekarno and the extraordinary rapidity of the re-emergence and spread of *aksi* [political activity] remains a fundamental feature of Indonesian politics".

The imposition of harsh neo-liberal policies by successive post-Suharto governments has, according to Lane "deepened class divisions, multiplying socio-economic grievances, creating a huge population of workers, semi-proletarians and peasant farmers collectively suffering under this offensive." Lane concludes, "The method of struggle of the national revolution — mass political mobilisation — has been regained. Political organisation of the popular classes has begun, but remains at an early stage, held back by the counter-revolution's suppression of ideological life, of the people's memory of the national revolution that created Indonesia."

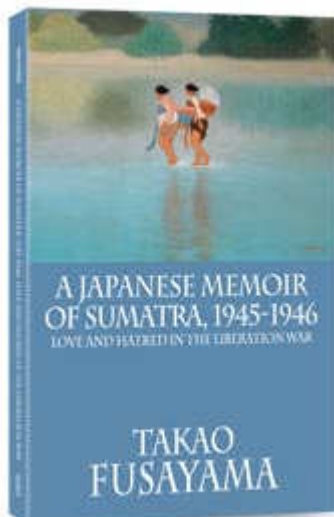


Max Lane was in conversation with Professor Adrian Vickers at Gleebooks in February. More information on Max Lane and *Unfinished Nation* can be found at <http://maxlaneonline.com/>.

Max Lane was also the first editor of AIA's *Kabar* newsletter.

## Focus on Books:

**A JAPANESE MEMOIR OF  
SUMATRA 1945 – 1946.  
Love and Hatred in the  
Liberation War**



Dr. Takao Fusayama's memoir was first brought to our attention by Louis Allen, the well-known English historian of World War 2 and author of the classic account of the Allied victory in the Pacific, *End of the War in Asia*.

Dr. Fusayama, an eminent professor of dentistry in Tokyo, in his search to obtain a copy of Allen's book, then out of print, spent a couple of days with Louis Allen at his home in Durham in the northeast of England, about four years ago. Fusayama recounted his experiences as a signals officer in the Japan's Imperial Guard Division to Allen, who even persuaded his guest to talk over the telephone with one of the British officers who had interrogated him after Japan's surrender more than forty years earlier.

While in Sumatra Fusayama had become involved with the Indonesian war of independence, and, as Allen wrote: "All this he has not only written up in Japanese, but he's produced a typescript, about 50,000 words, I reckon, on this period of the surrender and the various modus vivendi he and the other Japanese had to contrive in order to walk the tightrope between obeying the surrender orders to us and keeping the friendship of the locals whom they'd, in their view, liberated from the Dutch. It's an interesting document on this period, and he is an intelligent observer."

Through the good offices of Dr. Peter Carey at Oxford, Louis Allen finally submitted Dr. Fusayama's memoir to Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, offering to write an introduction for it. Sadly, Allen died in December 1991, long before we were able to prepare Dr. Fusayama's memoir for English publication.

Instead, Dr. Saya Shiraishi, who is currently teaching at Cornell, has provided us with an interesting introduction from a historical perspective, throwing light on the importance of this memoir for an overall view of this period in the history of Japan and Indonesia. Dr. Shiraishi has herself researched and written on the Japanese occupation of Sumatra, and during the 1970s she interviewed many Japanese army veterans, both in Sumatra and Japan, who had participated in the occupation of Sumatra and its aftermath.

One of our chief reservations in publishing the memoir lay in the author's description of it as a "documentary novel," but we discovered that the "fictions" in the narrative relate mainly to Dr. Fusayama's dramatization of the action by putting into direct speech his memories of the general tenor of his conversations with some of the major protagonists. As he notes in his Preface, he recorded his recollections

immediately after his repatriation to Japan, and it is evident that his rendition of the events he witnessed are true to his perceptions at the time. Dr. Fusayama has not changed the names of the major historical actors involved, and, as he reassured us:

"In reality fictional names were used only for Jusuf and his lover, Merry. Jusuf was killed in the war but his relatives are alive. Merry is also alive somewhere in Holland. Since Jusuf was suspected to be related with enemy, I do not like to embarrass them by disclosing the real names. This hiding will not affect the history because they did not play any significant role."

Dr. Fusayama's memoir offers an unusual and illuminating account of this period in Sumatra's history.

ISBN: 978-602-8397-19-3

Author: Takao Fusayama

Pages: 228

Format: Softcover

Size (Inches) 6x9"

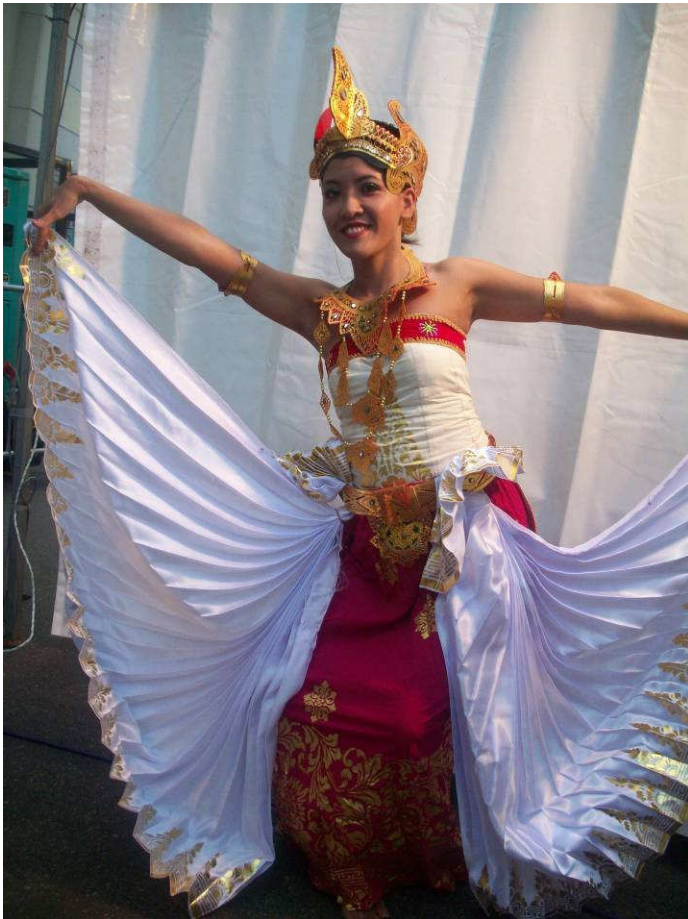
Weight (LBS) 2.00

Publication Year: 1993, 2010

US\$ 29.95 plus postage

AIA members receive a 25 percent discount on books from Equinox Publishing. A full list of titles can be found on <http://www.equinoxpublishing.com/default.htm>.

If you wish to purchase this or any of the other Equinox book/s, please contact Melanie Morrison at [melaniemorrison@bigpond.com](mailto:melaniemorrison@bigpond.com).



Sisca Hunt dancing at the Chinese New Year celebrations in Sydney in Februar

PHOTOS FROM THE 2010 AIA BBQ



Sekaa Gong Tirta Sinar and dancers.

More information on Sinar Tirta performances can be accessed on <http://www.tirtasinar.org/>



**Recipe:****Cucumber and Pineapple Sambal**

1 Small or ½ large ripe pineapple  
 ½ a cucumber halved lengthways  
 50g/2oz dried shrimps  
 1 large fresh red chilli seeded  
 1.25cm cube shrimp (terasi)  
 juice of one large lemon or lime  
 light brown sugar to taste  
 salt

Cut off the top and the bottom of the pineapple. Stand it upright on a board, then slice off the skin from top to bottom, cutting out the spines. Slice the pineapple removing the central core. Cut into thin slices and set aside.

Trim the ends from the cucumber and slice thinly. Sprinkle with salt and set aside. Place the dried shrimps in a food processor and chop finely. Add the chilli, prepared shrimp paste and lemon or lime juice and process again into paste.

Rinse the cucumber, drain and dry on kitchen paper. Mix the pineapple and chill. Just before serving spoon in the spice mixture with sugar to taste.

Mix and serve.

Selamat makan.

**FOR THE DIARY:**

**3 March: Indonesia vs Socceroos, Suncorp Stadium, Brisbane, 7pm**

**Jakarta By Night**

**Sat 13 March 2010 – 7pm**

**Jimbaran Restaurant, 129 Avoca St, Randwick**

**Cost: \$55 per person (incl GST)**

**Calling all Australians who have worked in Indonesia.**

**Join us for a night of fine food, entertainment and nostalgia. Revisit your Indonesia adventure!**

**Joint AIA and AIBC event. Guest Speaker, Trivia Night, Raffles and Door Prizes.**

**Contact:** Michael Kramer 94895357  
 John Luxton 0400 227377

**Online Bookings:** [www.aibc.com.au](http://www.aibc.com.au)

**20 March: Indonesia Australia Association AGM**

**2pm. Refreshments served. Venue: TBA**

Contact Eric de Haas for more information. All welcome.

**8 April: Public Meeting, 6.30pm Direct Action Centre 72/65 Myrtle Street, Chippendale.**

The Struggle Against Neo-Liberalism in Indonesia Today featuring Zely Ariane, national spokesperson Committee of the Poor – People's Democratic Party. Further information at [www.rsp.org.au](http://www.rsp.org.au) or [Sydney@directaction.org.au](mailto:Sydney@directaction.org.au) or 9114 5883.

**11 April: Launch of 'Echoes Book Three, Kenneth Frederick Wong' by Charlotte Clayton Maramis new book, Writer's Centre in Rozelle, Balmain Road 2-4pm.**

**17 April: IAWA dinner dance, 7pm**

Canterbury Leagues Club, Cost \$60 per person. Contact Ike for more information – [mdehaas@hotmail.com](mailto:mdehaas@hotmail.com).

**2 May: AIA History Walk, Woolloomooloo Wharf at 10am.**

Meeting at the Victoria Street entrance to King Cross railway station finishing before 1pm around Woolloomooloo wharf where there are plenty of lunch venues available. Cost: \$5 including a briefing by Neil Smith, a tour of important sites of the Indonesian independence movement. This will be a joint walk with the Blacktown historical society. For more information contact Neil Smith [neilsmith418@hotmail.com](mailto:neilsmith418@hotmail.com).

There have been very informal discussions about setting up a 'malam ngobrol' along the same lines as that held regularly by AIA Victoria. If you are interested in brushing up on your bahasa, please let Melanie Morrison know on [melaniemorrison@bigpond.com](mailto:melaniemorrison@bigpond.com).

**Contributions to Kabar**

We are interested in any contributions to *Kabar* from both members and non-members. If you have recently been to Indonesia, eaten at an Indonesian restaurant, read a book or attended an Indonesia related event, please feel free to write an article including photos. Send all material to Melanie at [melaniemorrison@bigpond.com](mailto:melaniemorrison@bigpond.com).

## More photos from the AIA BBQ



*The AIA Newsletter is produced by the Australia Indonesia Association. Statements made in this publication do not necessarily represent the view of the Association or its members. For editorial, distribution, advertising and membership contact the AIA secretariat.*

*The next deadline is 25 May 2010.*

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***To foster and promote friendship, understanding and good relations between the peoples of Indonesia and Australia***

***Bercita-cita membina persahabatan, saling pengertian dan hubungan antar-masyarakat yang erat antara Indonesia dan Australia***