

Associate Professor Vanessa Hearman, an historian from Curtin university in WA, who specialises in Indonesia and Timor-Leste, is visiting Newcastle for a launch of her latest book *The Good Sea: The Journey of the Tasi Diak and the Politics of Refugee Protection in Australia*

It is the story of the only successful crossing between East Timor and Australia during the 24 years of Indonesian rule, undertaken by a boat called the Tasi Diak in May 1995. *The Good Sea* traces the lives of the young East Timorese on board and the impact of the boat's arrival on Australia's relationship with Indonesia.

*The Good Sea* will be launched in Newcastle by Dr Jude Conway who was an activist with Australians for a Free East Timor in Darwin in the 1990s. In 1995, she was among a crowd of supporters keeping a watch for the Tasi Diak to reach Darwin. Jude became friends and fellow activists with a number of the Timorese from the boat.

Joining Vanessa and Jude is Jose da Costa, an East Timorese writer and actor who came to Australia aboard the Tasi Diak. They will give a brief account of the topics covered by the book at the Hunter Living Histories meeting on 6 July 2026.

You are all also invited to the book launch on 6th July at 5pm-6:30pm in Room X803, Level 8, NUSpace, Newcastle City Campus.

Please register at <https://the-good-sea-launch.eventbrite.com.au>

The launch is sponsored by the University of Newcastle's College of Human and Social Futures and co-hosted by the Centre for the Study of Violence and the Hunter East Timor Sisters.