



JSTF UPDATE JUNE 2013

www.jstf.org.au

OUR AIM

The Joseph Seridis Trust Fund has been established to assist young people with physical and multiple disabilities by providing equipment associated with enhancing daily living and independence. The income from the Trust Fund will be distributed to approved applicants. Over the past few years a number of individuals have been assisted with a range of equipment that would not otherwise have been available to them. We welcome interest and support from anyone who believes they can enhance the ideals of the Trust Fund.

Current Trustees: Jim Seridis, Gina Torkington, Graham Loveday and Jenny Widdop

**THIS JSTF UPDATE IS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF
MARIA SERIDIS 1946-2012**



MARIA SERIDIS 1946-2012

Born in 1946, Maria, along with her family migrated to Australia in 1959. After settling briefly in the Clare Valley the family moved to Evanston Gardens. Life was challenging being in a new country and with strict traditional family values, and high expectation put upon Maria by her family.

In 1966 Maria married Nick despite much discouragement from their families. To their great credit they made a life for themselves, they were happy and busy working hard together. The early years were tough financially but good nonetheless.

Maria and Nick were blessed with three children but their world seemed to fall apart following the birth of Joseph and the realization that he had been left with severe, multiple disability. Maria's response to this situation was to become a formidable fighter who's maternal instincts came to the fore. It was Maria's determination and strength of character that kept Joseph alive and well and the family strong. With Nick, Maria devoted the next 24 years to the care of Joseph, seeking the best quality of life, dignity and independence for him. Joseph and his family were supported by many organizations and individuals over this time and he grew to be a fine young man of whom they were proud.

Following Joseph's birth Maria and Nick experienced another severe blow with the loss of Tommy, their third child. This of course was a terrible experience but Maria battled on working hard, caring for Joseph and running a household. There was never any time for herself and always a focus on the future, how could the family continue to care for Joseph, how could the best support and help be ensured? Maria was determined to find the best that was available for Joseph.

Despite Maria and the family dedicating themselves to Joseph he died suddenly in 2002 leaving Maria crushed and depleted with a deep sorrow in her heart. At this time Maria was also fighting her own battle with cancer.

Maria was always able to deal with the cards that were dealt to her and eventually she rose again and continued on to the best of her ability, it was all part of the journey, she would say. As time went on things did get better as she focused on family and friends, this is what kept her going.

The birth of grandsons Joseph and Benjamin gave Maria a huge boost and made the family again. Their birth gave her the strength to fight on with her illness. They brought joy, sunshine and love back in to her heart through spending time together, special time that will not be forgotten.

Maria was an incredible person who spent her life thinking of others and doing her very best for her family who she valued above all else. Maria's capacity for getting through life's challenges has been an inspiration to many.

**Nick, Jim, Kellie, Joseph and Benjamin miss Maria so much, a Beautiful Wife,
Wonderful Mother and Great Nonna.**

Establishing the Joseph Seridis Trust Fund.

Following Joseph's death in 2002 Maria was determined to create a lasting memorial to him and did this in a way which both recognized and responded to the struggle that she knew that many families who included a member with a severe disability experienced.

This led to an act of extraordinary generosity and selflessness, the creation of the Joseph Seridis Trust Fund. A fund specifically structured to provide grants to individuals to purchase equipment that would otherwise not be available to them. Maria and her family did this after reflecting on their own experience and recognizing that many other families are facing the same struggles that they had experienced.

Ten years ago the Seridis Family approached Uniting Communities, formally Uniting-Care Wesley Adelaide and Adelaide Central Mission, and asked if they would assist with establishing a trust in the name of Joseph. The family had a relationship with the organizations as Joseph had been a member of a Lifestyle Explorer Group based in Gawler.

Uniting Communities was delighted to be able to work with the family to establish the Trust as a legal entity which complied with all the necessary requirements. In the process Uniting Communities undertook to support the Trust in an ongoing manner through the provision of financial and administrative support, and the nomination of a representative trustee to join Jim and a third trustee appointed by the family.

Over the years the Trust has built a significant support group of dedicated people and each year these supporters get behind the annual fund raising event by attending the dinner and purchasing items at the auction conducted on the night. This support and the interest earned from the capital that was provided by the family allows the trustees to respond to requests for assistance from individuals throughout the year.

Since inception the Trust has assisted 50 plus people with disability and their families. The Trustees receive much feedback from recipients and this has been overwhelmingly positive, people are both thankful and grateful for the help provided.

Without the thoughtfulness and generosity of the Seridis family none of this would be possible. The Trust is indeed a lasting memorial to Joseph and now also a great legacy to Maria, a wonderful person who's memory will also be sustained through the activities of the trust.



DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS

Grants totalling approx \$21,600 have been distributed since the 2011 update thanks to the generosity of the Trust's supporters.

This figure includes the donation of \$10,000 to support the change over and operating costs for "Joseph's Ferrari", the wheelchair accessible vehicle that was purchased by the trust in 2003 in memory of Joseph. The vehicle has been a huge benefit to people with disability over almost seven years and was replaced. The new vehicle continues to be used by the much appreciated team of staff and clients within the Take Five program.

DIARY DATES

9th ANNUAL FUNDRAISING DINNER

GAWLER ARMS HOTEL

SATURDAY 17th AUGUST 2013 AT 6.30PM

ENTERTAINMENT: GERRY O !!!!

**Any donations for the auction are greatly appreciated.
Please contact Jim on 0421 624 177 to discuss**

Further details will be sent to you in the near future.

ANNUAL QUIZ NIGHT !!!

Where: Gawler Arms Hotel

When: October 26th 2013

Hosted by: Symes Accountants.

A GREAT NIGHT HAD BY ALL.....!

KIND DONATION RECEIVED.....

The JSTF wishes to acknowledge the kind donation from "Friends of the Brain Injured" of \$10,000. This money will further support the ongoing requests for grants through the fund.

JOSEPH SERIDIS TRUST FUND PO BOX 2534 ADELAIDE SA 5000 PH: 82025067

Jane and her Motor-Med

Last year The Joseph Seridis Trust Fund kindly donated \$3,000 as part payment for a Motomed for my daughter Jane. This helped us secure a piece of equipment which can potentially change Jane's life. Jane has spastic quadriplegia and is confined to a wheelchair. Her only means of exercising up until last year was swimming. The Motomed is an exercise machine which allows Jane to pedal with her legs and exercise her arms in a rotating fashion not unlike turning a winch. This can be done by using the motorised option on the machine or switching to the manual option. The machine is highly sophisticated and the computer component allows Jane to access readings of kilojoules used and the distance covered. This is highly motivating for her.

Jane's dad, Gerald supports Jane most days to access the Motomed. Jane's determination and drive are right out there when she is on the machine. A hot, red faced puffing Jane works to the best of her ability.

As Jane is physically working the machine she is also learning about the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle which includes a healthy diet, exercise, weight control and a can do attitude. Jane is awesome, the Motomed is awesome and the Joseph Seridis Trust Fund is awesome.

Thank you so much.

Sandy Quirk

