



stillbirth

FOUNDATION INC.

little feet taking big steps...to reduce stillbirth



Stillbirth Foundation is Two Years Old

The Stillbirth Foundation has enjoyed its' second year of operation raising \$142,500 in the last financial year. Although short of its desired target, this is a tremendous achievement for a small voluntary-run organisation.

The Stillbirth Foundation sincerely thank you for your generosity. Your support will be instrumental in increasing the awareness of stillbirth and its emotional consequences for parents, families and friends and in hopefully reducing the incidence of stillbirth in Australia and beyond.

There is much to be achieved and during the coming financial year, the Stillbirth Foundation will aim to raise \$200,000 for research that will increase an understanding of the possible causes of stillbirth and means by which stillbirth might be prevented.

This year, the Stillbirth Foundation has received with gratitude a donation of \$15,000 from the family and friends of Amelia Grosvenor. Beautiful Amelia, pictured below, was born on 20th June 2007, second child of Mick and Suzanne Grosvenor and sister of Nicholas. Amelia died at

41 weeks gestation, during labour, from a condition called Vasa Praevia.

One of the aims of the Stillbirth Foundation is to provide a means by which family and friends can demonstrate their love and support for parents whose baby has died and we again would like to acknowledge the kindness and generosity shown to the Grosvenor family and now shared with the Stillbirth Foundation.

The Stillbirth Foundation has a considerable amount of money available to direct at research projects. It is anticipated that the findings of the Stillbirth Foundation and ANZSA's Literature Review, which is currently underway, will provide some direction.

We will continue to seek advice from our committee of medical and scientific advisors and welcome our most recent appointee, Julianne Brown. Julianne, an epidemiologist brings a unique perspective and enthusiasm to her role. As well as her professional skills, she and her husband Paul, are parents to Will who was stillborn in December 2005.

The Stillbirth Foundation hopes to continue to develop positive relationships with Obstetricians in caring for mothers and fathers by determining potential risks associated with stillbirth, education regarding current research that may lead to a decrease in the incidence of stillbirth and the development of best practice principles.

Receiving funds will remain a significant focus of the Stillbirth Foundation. We will be establishing a method for family and friends to donate in memory of a baby, shortly after his/her birth, as was done for Amelia. Our Little Feet Taking Big Steps Ball remains our major annual fundraising event and next year will be held on Saturday 17th May in Sydney—diarise the date—more details to follow! For the first time this year, the Stillbirth Foundation is also formally recognising International Baby Loss Day, through Stella's Sunday.

And, a big thank you for sharing in our journey. Without each of you none of this would be achievable, and it is only together that *little feet can take big steps to reduce stillbirth!*

Patrons

Deborah Thomas

Melinda Schneider

Medical Advisors

Peter Barr

OAM, MBBS, PhD, FRACP

Julianne Brown

MPH, MAE

Jonathan Morris

MB ChB, MM, FRANZCOG, DDU, CMFU, PhD

Deborah de Wilde

OAM, BSW, RGN, CM



Christmas Service



The annual service of *Remembrance, Consolation and Hope* will be held at St Mary's Catholic Church, Miller and Ridge Street on Friday December 7th at 7.30pm.

The service welcomes all who have experienced the loss of a child or grandchild as a result of miscarriage, stillbirth, death in the newborn period or the death at any time of an older child.

This service recognizes that the approach of Christmas, which celebrates the birth of a special baby and with its emphasis on the family, may be a particularly painful and poignant time for those who are living with loss and grief. Many families have found the ritual of coming together with others at this time soothing and reassuring.

The service will be of approximately one hour in duration. Whilst children are most welcome to attend, we would ask all attending the service to be sensitive to the experience of others. It would be appreciated if parents keep their children with them. Should children become bored or disruptive it is suggested that you move them to a grassed area outside which can be accessed through a door on the left of the church.

As in previous years, photographic images of the children will be projected into the dome of the church. If you would like to provide a digital image please email it to Deborah de Wilde at peterbarr@bigpond.com. If you have any questions, please contact Deborah on 0412 514 996.

Stella's Sunday

For the first time, the Stillbirth Foundation warmly invites you to commemorate International Baby Loss Day with us on Stella's Sunday, 14th October 2007. We have already received a thrilling response with many parties, lunches and teas planned to be hosted for Stella's Sunday. This is a fabulous way that family and friends can support the Stillbirth Foundation in their local area. Please see our website for all the details.

Twinless Twins

The image of a mother holding her newborn baby is usually associated with happiness and celebration. However, when this newborn baby is the sole survivor of a multiple pregnancy, it is a very misunderstood and complex situation. Of course the parents (and older siblings) are joyous and hopeful for their surviving twin, however, they find themselves navigating their way through a complex dichotomy of feelings as they grieve (often silently and unsupported) for their baby that has died. Just how do you reconcile joy and celebration for one twin and intense feelings of grief and loss for the other twin? These extremes of emotions are often experienced simultaneously in this situation and it is only with time and the right support systems in place that grieving families begin the task of separating the two, and finding that special 'place' in their family that only their 'angel' twin can occupy.

So just how do you support a family grieving the loss of their twin?

Firstly, it is of immense importance

that grieving families have their babies openly acknowledged as a set of twins. Acknowledging the babies twinning begins at their birth regardless of the circumstances (even in a simple gesture as a card acknowledging the birth of both babies and a gift symbolising their twinning, eg: 'twin' figurines or teddy bears). This acknowledgement needs to be ongoing and is especially important on 'family occasions' such as the surviving twins birthdays, Mothers day, Fathers day, Christmas, etc. It is also important to acknowledge the surviving twins twinning as he/she reaches important milestones such as starting school, etc.

Secondly, grieving families can be supported through creating memories of their 'angel' twin. It is recognised that memory creation is important for grieving parents and thankfully these days hospitals provide parents with mementoes such as photos, hand/foot prints, baby blanket, etc. I would like to suggest that creating memories will also be important for the surviving twin as he/she grows in their awareness of their birth sibling and of themselves as a

twin. As with acknowledgement, memory creation is also ongoing and especially important on the twins birthday and their 'angel' baby's anniversary day.

Thirdly, supporting grieving families can be in the simplest of ways. Grieving families need opportunities to talk and express their feelings, and know that those they turn to will be unwavering in their support. One of the most important needs of a grieving family is to talk, cry and feel they have been heard and understood.

For more information regarding support specifically for families raising a surviving multiple birth child, please email Julie Bryant at: OzMOST-owner@yahoo.com or visit the following two websites:

<http://au.geocities.com/jjtmnb> and <http://au.geocities.com/ozmod2004/ozmost.html>

Julie Bryant, OzMOST





Meeting Melinda Schneider

It is with absolute delight that the Stillbirth Foundation welcomes the very talented and beautiful singer – songwriter, Melinda Schneider as it's newest Patron. Melinda joins Deborah Thomas, Editorial director of the Australian Woman's Weekly, as ambassadors for the stillbirth cause and we are most fortunate to have the assistance of these two brilliant Australian women.

For several years now Melinda has been a leading light of the 'new-breed' of Australian Country artists. In a career which began with a stage debut at the age of three, (appearing with her mother internationally renowned yodeler Mary Schneider) she has kept her family tradition alive by becoming one of Australia's most sublime singers and popular live performers, but it is through her assured and accomplished song writing that she has really discovered her true voice.

Four albums and eight years on, she has won numerous awards, four CMAA

Golden Guitars – including 2005 Album Of The Year with 'Family Tree', APRA Song Of The Year for the song 'Real People' and Female Vocalist Of The Year in 2003 for 'The Story Of My Life'. Melinda has just been nominated for the prestigious 'Song Of The Year' at the Americana Music Awards held Nov.1st in Nashville TN, alongside Patti Griffin and Lucinda Williams, for her song 'Sometimes It Takes Balls To Be A Woman'.

Melinda's songs have been recorded by artists as diverse as John Farnham, Jimmy Little and US country artist Elizabeth Cook. She now divides her time between Sydney and Nashville, where she enjoys a growing reputation as a popular and prolific song writer.

Melinda, pictured at right performing at our Little Feet Ball in 2006, is sympathetic to the stillbirth cause, as her family has experienced the loss of a baby. Her beautiful tribute, 'Watching Over Me' was written in this baby's memory.



CHIPPENDALE

Thank You once again to Chippendale Printing of Concord West for their generous and kind support of the Stillbirth Foundation through printing all our material

- we are incredibly grateful!

Pregnancy After Loss Groups

The Pregnancy After Loss (PAL) antenatal support and education group is designed for pregnant parents who have previously lost a baby as a result of stillbirth or death in the newborn period. The group meets over several months with a combination of day and evening sessions.

The group provides an opportunity to meet with others who have also experienced the death of a baby and now face the joy and uncertainty and anxiety of another pregnancy, a place in which hopes and fears can be talked about and hopefully worked through.

Each meeting looks at a specific aspect of the experience of subsequent pregnancy. One session, for example, looks in detail at the experience of induction of labour and the experience of birth via caesarean section. Another involves a chance to meet with a couple who

have previously participated in a PAL group and are now parenting their 'new' baby.

Others deal with the experience of the loss of the previous baby and the way in which the impending birth of another baby can act as a catalyst for emotions about the baby who has died.

Following the birth of the babies, the group continues as a parent and baby group, a place to reflect upon their journey to parenthood and to discuss the experience of getting to know their 'new' baby while maintaining a bond with their baby who has died.

All meetings are held at Stormanston House, 27 McLaren Street, North Sydney at no cost to participants. For further information, please contact Deborah de Wilde on 0412 514 996.





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Are you on the Stillbirth Foundation mailing list?

If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically or are keen to be involved in any of our fundraising ventures or to be notified of any news please send your contact details to: info@stillbirthfoundation.org.au or 0419 995 464



The Stillbirth Foundation operates to ultimately reduce the incidence of stillbirth in Australia.

To achieve this goal, the Stillbirth Foundation works with three main aims, to:
 increase public awareness of stillbirth, and the effects it has on women and their families;
 support hospital bereavement services;
 and most importantly, to fund and encourage research into stillbirth.

Thank you to David and Carmel Shaw who have kindly committed to another two years of maintaining the Stillbirth Foundation website through their business, www.shawware.com.au, and for renewal of our domain name. Their generosity has ensured that news of the stillbirth cause has and will continue to spread.

They are a gorgeous and wonderful couple who are vitally important in the development of the Stillbirth Foundation.

www.stillbirthfoundation.org.au

Indulge at Lavender Manor

If you are in need of a fabulous break to relax and rejuvenate, then the beautiful Lavender Manor is the perfect place! Lavender Manor is located in the Blue Mountains at Blackheath and offers accommodation 4 to 12 guests, with Lavender Day Spa on site. It's perfect for a family getaway or a group of friends. The owners of Lavender Manor are very kindly offering to donate \$100 to the Stillbirth Foundation for every booking of 8 or more guests between now until the end of February 2008. So, now there's no excuse, get planning to enjoy time in the relaxing Blue Mountains while supporting the Stillbirth Foundation! Simply mention the Stillbirth Foundation when you book.

Further information about Lavender Manor can be found at their website, www.lavenderbluemountains.com or by calling 02 4782 2385.

City to Surf 2007

Seven purple caps. 65,000 of our closest friends. Fourteen kilometres ahead of us.

When the Stillbirth Foundation City to Surf 2007 team met outside St Mary's Cathedral 8:15am Sunday morning, the wheat quickly separated from the chaff as game plans were voiced. Some of us were running. Others proudly walking. Then there were those of us who were going to play it by ear, depending on how our fitness held up.

Our team of seven enthusiastic women each wore a purple cap emblazoned with the Stillbirth Foundation logo.

Our lively group was a mix of first timers and old hands - one of which, 'Nana' was competing for her 18th year in a row! A veteran of the City to Surf course, I later severely regretted turning down Nana's wise offer to smear my calves in tiger balm - a tried and tested preventative against Monday-morning-calf-shrivel.!

In a matter of minutes, purple caps had disbursed through the heaving crowd, and each member of our team was left to fulfil on their plan of attack. Sydney put on a brilliant showcase of clear blue skies and sunshine, with friendly participants

and hundreds of cheering roadside supporters creating a terrific atmosphere.

The 2007 City to Surf collectively raised a staggering \$1,049,048 for charity. Having spent 13.5 kilometres of my first City to Surf vowing to never enter again, second time around, walking (with the occasional jog) to raise money and awareness for the Stillbirth Foundation felt fantastic.

Congratulations and tremendous thanks to all those who supported us on the day!

Danielle Hairs

