

27 June 2014

WILMA LETS NOTHING STAND IN HER WAY

Despite having Usher Syndrome, Bentley resident Wilma has not let this stand in her way of learning to play the piano as well as follow her love of painting and drawing.

Having severe tunnel vision and severe hearing loss, Wilma says although she faces daily challenges she is at a point that she has to accept certain limitations.

“It is a frustrating process. I think playing the piano or keyboard has been a lifesaver so often when times have been difficult. It revives the soul.

“I started drawing portraits in my mid-teens and then a few years ago, I started painting. It was clear that whatever I would draw or paint would have to be traced to get proportion and placement right and then do the detailed work one inch at a time,” says Wilma.

Wilma says she began playing the piano at 14 years of age when she had the opportunity at boarding school but is mostly self-taught. Later in life, Wilma was approached by a young girl at her church who wanted lessons, which Wilma describes as a ‘steep but wonderful learning curve’.

“Although it’s hard work for me to play the piano, as I can only read either the left or the right hand at one time, not both at the same time, I do really enjoy it.”

Usher Syndrome is an inherited condition resulting in partial or total hearing loss from birth and a gradual loss of vision from Retinitis Pigmentosa.

Wilma is able to continue to enjoy her love of music and art and live a positive life with the help of Senses Australia’s Deafblind Services.

“Senses Australia provide communication guide services to me, which are so precious, as going to appointments and new places would be impossible without that help.

“The Usher Syndrome Support group, which is supported by Senses Australia, also hold get togethers every couple of months and they remind me I am not the only one with these challenges. The people in that group just get on with their lives, regardless of the challenges. It is good to be part of that and I have met some beautiful people that have become beautiful friends,” says Wilma.

Matthew Wittorff Senses Australia’s Manager, Deafblind Services says Wilma is an extraordinary person with a passion for the arts.

“You can see in Wilma’s artwork and hear in Wilma’s music that she has a true gift. She really is an amazing person,” says Matthew.

Senses Australia is celebrating Deafblind Awareness Week 2014 from Monday, 23 June 2014 to Sunday, 29 June 2014. The 2014 theme for this international week is ‘we don’t need to see or hear in order to touch the world around us’.

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11 Kitchener Avenue
Burswood WA 6100
PO Box 143
Burswood WA 6100

ABN 93 169 195 127
ACN 162 912 156

Tel 08 9473 5400
Fax 08 9473 5499
Email admin@senses.org.au
www.senses.org.au
www.deafblindinformation.org.au



Media Release



To find out more about how Senses Australia supports the Western Australian community and provides support services to people of all ages with disability or to people who are deafblind, visit www.senses.org.au.

Ends.

Media Contact

Claire Rowe, Public Relations and Social Media Coordinator, Senses Australia
Mobile - 0418 544 032
Email – claire.rowe@senses.org.au

Photographic Opportunity

Wilma is available for a photographic opportunity.

Senses Australia

Senses Australia is a leading, not for profit, disability services provider, providing support services to people of all ages throughout Western Australia.

In 2015, Senses Australia will celebrate 120 years of service to people with disability in Western Australia.

To find out more about Senses Australia please visit www.senses.org.au.

