



## **Mary Borg**

Mary was born in St. Julians, a village in Malta, on 9 April 1938 to Katrina and Francis Vella. Mary was the second eldest of 4 sisters and 2 brothers. Her father was a businessman, while her mother managed the family, working part-time as a dressmaker. When Mary was only 11, her father reluctantly agreed to let his bright daughter leave school to help her mother with the other children.

At 17, Mary met Gerald Borg a stonemason aged 22. They were married in the local Catholic Church in 1960. Five years after their marriage and with two children, Gerald and Mary started to wonder what Australia would be like. They decided to take their sons to Australia for a holiday; arriving on 26 January 1966, they settled in Springvale and never left. Over the next 20 years, until 1986, Mary worked full-time in local factories. She had two more sons during this time. In 1972 she helped to establish a fete to raise money for St. Paul's Missionary College. The fete is still being held and Mary continues to be a valuable member of St. Joseph's Parish.

In 1988, Mary joined the Combined Pensioners Association; although only 50, she wanted to encourage the elderly to have a better quality of life. Through this group she saw a need to start a Maltese Seniors Club in 1991. Representing the Maltese Seniors, in 1993, Mary joined Prime Timers, which brings together 147 organizations in the Greater Dandenong region. In 1999 the Prime Timers were given an award for National Recognition for the International Year of Older Persons. Mary is also a Prime Timers delegate to the Springvale Drug Action Group.

Mary joined the Springvale Senior Citizens in 1993 and is their Vice-President. The S.S.C. is a multi-cultural group with 18 nationalities. There have been difficult times in Mary's life; however, her devotion and dedication to family and community never ceased. Compassion led her to join Joey's Food Van, where she makes and distributes food to homeless people. Springvale is Australia to Mary; she embraced her new country with the same devotion shown

to her family. Her humility, strength and motivation are expressed simply, in one statement, 'For me, I love Springvale`.