



Father's gift a helping hand for disabled

A devoted father's donation will help a family with an ageing disabled child.

John Corbett, who died last year, was a dedicated and life-long supporter of people with disabilities, inspired by his own son Keith who was born with Down syndrome.

He has left the Hawkevale Trust \$15,000 to help a disabled person without family support.

Trust chairman Laurence Iffla said that as the primary carer of his intellectually disabled son, Mr Corbett understood the worry experienced by many families over what would happen to their disabled family members once they could no longer watch over them.

"Mr Corbett's bequest will ensure one family has the peace of mind of knowing their disabled family member would receive ongoing support, lasting until the end of their lifetime," Mr Iffla said.

Mr Corbett's son Keith (52) now lives happily in a group home in Belmont and is supported by services from the trust.

Mr Iffla said Mr Corbett was a founding member of Activ,

which looks after the trust.

"Facing many early difficulties and prejudices, Mr Corbett worked to establish a special school in Doubleview with 35 children in the first intake," he said.

"Before long an annexe was established with 20 more children and under Mr Corbett's guidance the Slow Learning Children's Group became Activ and went on to establish workshops and accommodation that were much-needed."

Mr Corbett was also keen to break down social barriers and asked parents to take their children out in public, into the city on buses and trains, Mr Iffla said.

"Eventually community attitudes towards people with intellectual disabilities started to change for the better," he said.

Mr Iffla said the devoted father was a World War II veteran who fought in the 2/16th Battalion in the Syrian and Lebanon campaign, the crossing of the Litani River, and the seizure of El Atiq Ridge as part of the battle of Damour, and in New Guinea on the Kokoda Track.

"In John's own words: 'I hope

I was a good soldier, I came out of a couple of sticky places actually. I was one of 48 survivors out of 600 men, so lucky,'" Mr Iffla said.

Mr Corbett's bravery was rewarded with many campaign medals, including an African Star and the Defence Star.

Keith was his only child to wife Ivy whom he married the day before he sailed to war.

Mrs Corbett was only 16 and her husband said it was love at first sight.

"Towards the end of John's life he decided to leave a legacy that would help people with intellectual disabilities live a good and secure life," Mr Iffla said.

"He was a remarkable man and his memory will live on in this bequest for a personal support service grant for a family in need.

"Families who have a member with an intellectual, developmental disability or acquired brain injury are strongly encouraged to apply for the grant."

Application forms can be obtained by contacting the Hawkevale Trust on 9387 8288 or by visiting the website www.hawkevaletrust.org.au.



A legacy from war hero John Corbett will provide security for a disabled person and peace of mind for their family.