

MUIRFIELD FINANCIAL SERVICES NEWSLETTER Autumn Edition 2009



Suite 2,17-19 Fenwick St
GEELONG VIC 3220
Ph: (03) 5224 2700
mfs@muirfieldfs.com.au
www.muirfieldfs.com.au

In this issue...

It's wonderful to bring you good news and let me start with the rising sharemarket. To see a 14% rise in the sharemarket during March gives you a long overdue uplift. The early losses during 2009 on most client portfolios have been recovered – Hallelujah, we're excited!!

I still find it hard to believe that the blue chip Australian companies such as the big 4 banks, BHP, Woolworths, CSL and Telstra that continue to make good profits can be purchased for approx half the price of November 2007.

In other good news we welcome back Andrew Torney for another tour of duty at MFS, and on Thursdays and Fridays Alice Halliburton will be the face and voice of Reception.

It's pleasing to see our younger planners continuing to develop their skills and knowledge. Ngan, Melinda, Carl and Andrew are more than capably attending to your administrative and financial planning needs. At the same time, Commerce graduates Melinda, Carl and Andrew are completing further study towards the Certified Financial Planner qualification. Melinda in particular has been very closely involved in assisting Ross Duff for the past 3 years and with Ross' impending retirement on May 1st, continues to attend to the majority of his clients needs.

Ross has been a vital part of MFS for the past 7 years. Ross' understanding of financial planning strategies, knowledge of Centrelink and Aged Care issues, his personal skills and integrity all combined wonderfully well to meet your financial needs. We wish Ross a happy and healthy retirement and thank him for his most significant contribution.

Another positive has been the use of our website – 10,000 hits in March! We continue to put items of interest on our site and your uptake has been encouraging. Most of you now utilise emails and the internet and this certainly makes our communication with you much quicker and easier. Two new presentations on the website from Aviva and AXA are very informative. Visit www.muirfieldfs.com.au

We have also been heartened by your extremely kind words during the economic downturn of 2008, as well as your acknowledgements that the movement of investment markets are beyond our control. If we'd had a crystal ball we'd have used it! If this downturn means you need to reassess your financial position, we are only a phone call or email away and will endeavour to help in whatever way we can.

Our young advisers are not only up to date with all the technical and legislative issues surrounding financial planning, they can also relate very well to the issues facing the young – debts, home loans, the need for insurance, tax minimisation strategies, savings plans for children's education and superannuation. We encourage you to refer your children for financial planning advice. We do not charge for this appointment and a one hour free consultation will identify issues your children can consider in setting the right course for their financial future.

May your autumn leaves fall and investments rise.

Australian Sharemarket 2008/09



What can we do for you!

At Muirfield we specialise in:

- Financial planning and investment strategies
- Retirement planning and management
- Superannuation analysis, advice and management
- Social Security advice
- Salary Packaging
- Aged Care Fees and Bonds advice.
- Tax Planning Strategies
- Insurance

Please contact us if you have needs in these areas.



General advice disclaimer for publication: Section 945 of the Corporations act requires advisers to obtain information from clients before making recommendations. This publication can only make general recommendations and cannot take into account each person's individual circumstances. Reliance is NOT to be placed upon recommendations in this publication without references to your adviser.

Pension drawdown relief for retirees

In response to the downturn in global financial markets, the Federal Government has announced a 50% reduction to the minimum drawdown requirement for account-based pensions for 2008-09. This measure applies to protect pensioners from having to sell investments in a depressed market.

Education tax Refund – Get 50% back

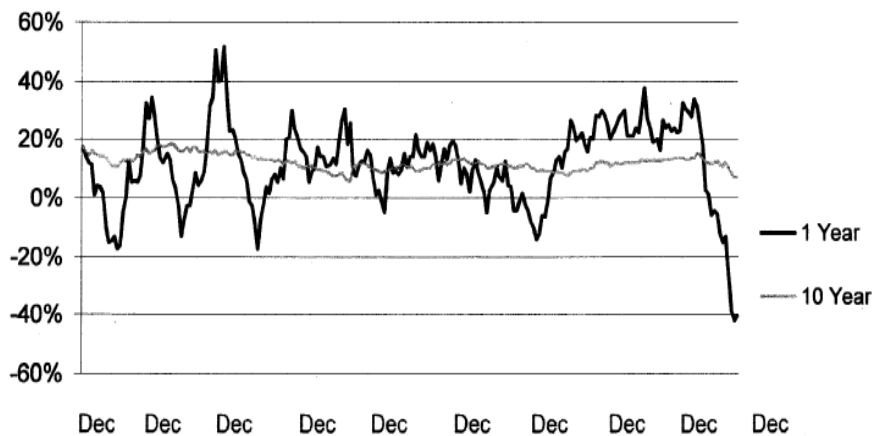
This may have relevance to you, or more likely your children. If you or they receive the 'Family Tax Benefit Part A' for primary or secondary age children and incur eligible education expenses, then up to \$750 per child is claimable. The refund is payable for the purchase of computers, printers, internet, software, stationery, textbooks, art supplies or trade tools for trade courses. You can claim these expenses in your 2009 tax return.

For more information visit www.educationtaxrefund.gov.au

Short-term versus long-term investments

Volatility of Shares – Australia

Rolling periods from 31-12-1988 to 31-12-2008



Centrelink Deeming rates changes

In March and September Centrelink adjusts Pension rates in line with CPI changes.

When calculating income from financial assets, Centrelink applies a 'deemed' rate of interest. The tiered rates are now 2% and 3% per annum.

Age Pension:

	Rate per Fortnight	Annual Income Limit	Homeowner Asset Limit
Single	\$569.80	\$41,015	\$555,750
Couple	\$475.90 (each)	\$68,497	\$882,500

The reduced severity of the income test may result in an increase to your existing pension or access to a Centrelink pension. We encourage you to check your situation.

Should your income and assets now be under the limits shown, we suggest you contact Centrelink to make an application.



Reminders before June 30

- Ensure your tax return of 2007-08 has been completed. If your taxable income for 2007-08 was \$100,000 or less and you paid tax, you could be eligible to receive a bonus payment of up to \$900. Your payment will be made to your nominated bank via your tax return or by cheque.
- If you are working and your income is lower than \$60,342 don't forget to make a personal contribution to your super fund to claim the **co-contribution**. Don't have the spare cash? Use the \$900 bonus!
- If you are self employed, look at making a **deductible contribution to super** to reduce tax.
- Are you getting more via a pay increase, bonus or tax cut in the new financial year? Why not contribute the extra to **super**?
- For those with a Spouse who is non-working or receiving an income less than \$13,800 pa, you may be entitled to a tax rebate! By making a **contribution of up to \$3,000 to your spouse's super you could** receive up to a \$540 as a tax rebate!

If you would like further information on any of these points please contact our office.

The Wheels of Life!!!

