

NEW PRESIDENT SANDRA ROBINSON

Welcome to my first column as the president of the NT Women Lawyers Association, and what a daunting task! It has proved much more difficult to write than I anticipated.

First I will explain a little of my background for those who do not know me. I am a graduate of the Northern Territory University. In a previous life I have worked in various private and public organisations. I completed the Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice at the Australian National University and returned to the Northern Territory to commence work.

I am currently employed as a solicitor at Hunt and Hunt. I have a wonderful daughter and enjoy music, dancing, reading and the odd glass of champagne.

I would like to thank past president Jacqueline Presbury and her committee for their hard work and commitment to the NTWLA over the past 12 months.

The new committee is made up of myself as president, Sally Gearin as treasurer, Frieda Evans as secretary, Megan Lennie, Jo Tomlinson and Sylvia Tomazos as committee members. It is particularly satisfying to see young women lawyers getting involved in the association and

their input is encouraged and welcomed.

One of the first functions organised by the new committee was a dinner to meet Laurene Hull, the Candidate for Solomon. This was an enjoyable evening where Laurene spoke about her reasons for standing for politics and her background. Laurene is a graduate of the Northern Territory University, having previously worked for Telstra in very difficult and challenging times.

Congratulations should go to Jodeen Carney of Alice Springs who was elected as the Member for Araluen in the recent Territory election. We wish her success in her shadow portfolio.

It is great to see women lawyers entering the political arena in the Territory. Their example may provide some impetus for other women lawyers to follow their lead. There are a number of strong women role models in the Northern Territory — in the legal profession, political arena and community sectors. These women deserve support and appreciation for their work.

Upcoming events

Plans are underway to hold a function



Sandra Robinson, President of the NT Women Lawyers Association

in Katherine to network with and support women lawyers outside Darwin. A dinner has been suggested and there is also the possibility of some 'boats on the gorge'. We will keep you informed of plans as they eventuate.

The Dame Roma Memorial Lecture, which was very successful last year, is also in the planning stages and I will provide more information early in the New Year.

Of course, it would not be a year without a quiz night and we are planning a 'bigger and better than ever' event to be held early in the New Year. Stay tuned.

One of the major aims of the committee over the next 12 months is fund raising. It is important that we have a voice on the national body and that we are able to send members to participate in interstate meetings.

The NTWLA is an important forum for women lawyers and gives them a place to voice their views and a chance to be involved in providing advice on government policy and decisions that affect women in their work place.

I would also appreciate your assistance in providing articles of interest to women that could be published on the NTWLA page. If anyone is interested in writing articles or have material they wish to publish could they please contact me.

In closing on behalf of the NTWLA I would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Draft Information Bill 2001

The Northern Territory Government seeks public comment from any interested parties on draft legislation that has been tabled in the Legislative Assembly.

The draft Information Bill 2001 proposes the establishment of statutory regimes for:

- Freedom of Information (Access to Government Information)
- Privacy Protection
- Record keeping and records management in the public sector

The Government is particularly interested to receive views as to whether the draft legislation strikes an appropriate balance between the right to access government information and the necessity to protect, in the public interest, certain types of information and the privacy of individuals in respect of their personal information.

A copy of the draft Information Bill 2001, together with a detailed discussion paper, is available from the Department of Justice by calling 8999 7466 or at <http://www.nt.gov.au/ntg/information>.