

# **Annual General Report 2011/12**

W O M E N   L A W Y E R S '  
Association of SA Inc



## Index Page

About Women Lawyers' Association of SA Inc (WLA)	3
Our Objectives	3
Strategic Vision	4
Our Values	5
Welcome - Annual General Report 2011/2012	6
Feature Article – 'Fifty Years On Since Dame Roma Appointed Silk'	7
Presidents Report	9
Statistical Feature– National Law Society Profile 2011	13
Women Lawyers' Association of SA Inc Committee	17
Special Feature – Dame Roma Mitchell	21
Feature Profile– Justice Margaret Nyland	24
Charity Profile –Migrant Women's Association	25
Treasurers Report	26
Committee Report	28
Governance Statement	30
Australian Women Lawyers'	35
Events	37
Annual General Meeting - 2011	37
Quiz Night -2011	38
Christmas Drinks with the Judiciary -2011	38
Strategic Planning Day -2012	38
Unifem Breakfast – 2012	39
Alternate Careers Seminar -2012	39

## ABOUT WOMEN LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION OF SA INC

The Women Lawyers' Association of South Australia Inc (WLA/'the Association') is a professional association that represents the interests of women legal practitioners across South Australia. The Association is an affiliate of the national branch of Women Lawyers' and its Committee meets once a month at the Law Society of South Australia. The SA branch of the Association runs fundraising events for charity as well as making representations to parliament and other bodies on issues that impact upon the status of women in the law and society. The Association also fosters networking amongst women members of the profession.

Membership of the Association is open to all practitioners and law students who wish to further the interests of women under the law and women legal practitioners in South Australia.

The following is a synopsis of the key activities regularly undertaken by the Association:

- consultation with the State Attorney General on the appointment of senior counsel and the judiciary in South Australia
- the submission of reports and papers on proposed law reform(s) which affect women and impact upon the broader justice arena;
- the hosting of regular social and networking events, to provide women with legal backgrounds and women practising in the profession the opportunity to develop valuable contacts and meet likeminded professionals; and
- hosting educational activities including career seminars and information sessions for law students and junior solicitors.

## OUR OBJECTIVES

The Women Lawyers' Association of SA Inc. (WLA/ 'the Association') is the South Australian branch of Australian Women Lawyers Association (AWL) and was founded with a number of objectives in mind.

These objectives include:

- achieve justice and equality for all women
- further the understanding of, and support for, the legal rights of women
- identify, highlight and eradicate discrimination against women inherent in the legal system
- identify, highlight and eradicate discrimination against women in the community generally
- advance equality for women in the legal profession
- create and enhance awareness of women's contribution to the practice of law
- create and enhance awareness of women's contribution to the development of law
- make recommendations and/or submissions on law reform related matters
- provide a professional and social network for women lawyers
- do all such other things as may be incidental to the attainment of the Association's objectives
- fulfill any other objects the members of the Association may in a General Meeting decide

## STRATEGIC VISION

WLA's strategic direction is underpinned by the following:

- improving our profile among the legal profession, business and the community
- providing opportunities for our members to engage with fellow female practitioners including senior practitioners and members of the judiciary
- improving the level of engagement with our members
- ensuring our membership is diverse and includes members from private practice, the public sector, 'in house', courts, universities, law students, the Bar, the judiciary and non practising practitioners

In achieving its strategic vision WLA recognises that it must continue to strive for excellence in all aspects of its operation. This includes hosting events, engaging in consultation with stakeholders, providing professional development for members and fostering strong and enduring relationships with sponsors and members.

# OUR VALUES

## Respect

Respect is an essential and core value which drives all dealings undertaken by WLA. The Association prides itself on engendering respect and esteem from the legal profession, the judiciary and the business community. By pursuing excellence and having committed and professional people to deliver, work towards and achieve its goals WLA aims to earn the respect of all parties that it deals and interacts with.

As a professional Association, WLA respects its members, stakeholders, all members of the legal profession, the judiciary and members of the broader community.

## People

People are integral to the success of WLA and are its most important asset. It is essential to WLA that its members feel proud of their involvement and participation in WLA and receive benefit from their membership.

## Excellence

WLA is committed to strive for excellence at all times. This includes being innovative and delivering a wide range of services tailored to benefitting the needs of its members.

WLA is committed to hosting events that exceed the expectation of its members, stakeholders, sponsors and associated charities.

WLA is committed to improving the level of enjoyment by WLA members, their colleagues and the 'Friends of WLA'.

# ANNUAL GENERAL REPORT 2011/2012

## WELCOME



Welcome to the Women Lawyers' Association of SA Inc. (WLA /'Association') Annual General Report for the financial year 2011/2012. The focus of this year's report is on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Dame Roma Mitchell being appointed as Australia's first female Queens Counsel ('silk'). In this edition we not only profile Dame Roma Mitchell and her extraordinary achievements but statistically examine the number of women appointed Senior Counsel since 1962.

In this report the Association also provides a quick statistical snapshot of the number of females in the profession according to the recent National Law Society Profile Report 2011 which was recently commissioned for the Law Society of NSW. It also provides a profile on our patron Justice Margaret Nyland, who is retiring after many years of dedicated service to the profession and an overview the activities and achievements of the Association during the last financial year.

The Committee would like to thank all of the Association's members who have attended our functions and contributed to its activities over the previous 12 months. In particular the Committee would like to acknowledge the special contribution that Justice Margaret Nyland has made to the Association as its patron.

In April 2013 the Association will be hosting the inaugural Margaret Nyland 'Long Lunch' to recognise her achievements and formally acknowledge the service that she has provided to the Association as its Patron.

# FIFTY YEARS SINCE DAME ROMA APPOINTED 'SILK'

## A TIME LINE OF SOUTH AUSTRALIAN WOMEN APPOINTED SILK IN SA\*

- 1962 Dame Roma Mitchell QC**  
First woman in Australia appointed Queen's Counsel  
First woman in Australia appointed a judge of the Supreme Court, 1965  
First woman in Australia appointed as Governor, 1991  
Prior to her appointment to the Bench specialised in family law
- 1984 Frances Nelson QC**  
Fourth woman in Australia appointed Queen's Counsel  
Chair of the South Australian Parole Board  
First woman elected to a metropolitan racing club committee  
Specialised in commercial law
- 1992 The Hon Robyn Layton QC AO**  
Appointed a judge of the Industrial Relations Court and Deputy President of the Industrial Commission of SA in 1978 (at the age of 33)  
Returned to practice at the Independent Bar in 1989  
Appointed a judge of the Supreme Court in 2005  
Resigned her judicial appointment in 2010  
South Australian of the Year 2012  
Specialised in industrial law
- The Hon Catherine (Cathy) Branson QC**  
Appointed Crown Solicitor in 1984  
Appointed a judge of the Federal Court in 1994  
Resigned her commission in 2008  
President of the Australian Human Rights Commission 2008-2012  
Specialised in administrative law
- 1994 The Hon Justice Ann Vanstone**  
Appointed a judge of the District Court in 1999, and of the Supreme Court in 2003  
Formerly a prosecutor with the DPP
- Belinda (Lindy) Powell QC**  
Practices at Bar Chambers  
Specialises in criminal defence
- 1996 Marie Shaw QC**  
Appointed a judge of the District Court in 2005  
Resigned her judicial commission and returned to practise at the Independent Bar in 2010  
Specialises in criminal defence
- 1998 Wendy Abraham QC**  
Appointed silk while a prosecutor at the DPP  
Currently practising in Sydney at Wentworth Selborne Chambers  
Specialising in appellate and criminal law
- 2002 The Hon Justice Patricia (Trish) Kelly**  
Appointed a judge of the District Court in 2003  
Formerly a prosecutor at the DPP

- 2004 Maurine Pyke QC**  
Practices at John Bray Chambers  
Specialises in family law
- Dr Melissa Perry QC**  
Practises in Sydney at Sixth Floor, Wentworth Chambers  
Specialises in appellate advocacy, public law and native title
- 2006 Sashi Maharaj QC**  
Practices at Murray Chambers  
Specialises in public law
- 2010 Liesl Chapman SC**  
Practices at Len King Chambers  
Specialises in criminal law
- 2011 Her Honour Judge Geraldine Davison SC**  
Appointed to the District Court 2012  
Formerly a prosecutor at the DPP
- 2012 Sandra (Sandi) McDonald SC**  
Crown Prosecutor at the DPP

\* Prior to 2008 “silks” were appointed by the Governor on the advice of the Chief Justice and were referred to as “Her Majesty’s Counsel” or Queen’s Counsel. In 2008 the Government agreed to cease the appointment of silks and the Chief Justice commenced the present practice of appointing Senior Counsel in accordance with Practice Direction 12.

## SOME OBSERVATIONS

According to research recently undertaken by Australian Women Lawyers’ into the advancement of women at the independent bar; fifty years on since the appointment of Dame Roma Mitchell as Australia’s first Queens Counsel only 7.92% of female Senior Counsel practising at the independent bar across Australia are female with at least 121 women, since 1962, being appointed silk nationally - ACT: 1, Tas: 1, NT: 3, WA: 9, SA: 13, Qld: 14, Vic: 41, NSW: 39.

State	Number of Practising Female Senior Counsel	% of all Practising Senior Co at the Independent Bar
NSW	22	6.53% (337 in total)
Vic	23	8.40% (238 in total)
Qld	5	3.97% (126 in total)
SA	7	20.59% (34 in total)
WA	2	6.90% (29 in total)
Tas	1	7.69% (13 in total)
NT	3	33.33% (9 in total)
ACT	1	4.54% (22 in total)
TOTAL	64	7.92% (808 in total)



# PRESIDENTS REPORT



I am honoured to provide you with the following report as President of WLA (SA) for the year 2011/2012.

Thank you to the hard working members of the management Committee for another successful year of fun, friendship, fundraising and promoting awareness for our various charities and causes. A big thank you again also to the ongoing support and encouragement of our Patron, the Honourable Justice Margaret Nyland AM. Our Law Society CRP Alison Robins is also very deserving of our special thanks.

## Committee

This year the Committee members who dedicated their time and effort to the organisation of our activities for the 2011 – 2012 year were:

### Current Executive

- Shelley O'Connell (Vice President)
- Amy Challans (Secretary and Australian Women Lawyers Director)
- Ilona Schultz (Treasurer)

### Current Committee Members

- Melissa Ballantyne
- Kerry Clark (retiring)
- Daniella Di Girolamo
- Taruna Heuzenroeder
- Megan Langford
- Adeline Lim
- Amy Nikolovski

### Retired Committee Members

- Rachel Cain
- Adriana Pasquale

### Retiring, Retired and New Committee Members

#### *Kerry Clark*

Sadly, Kerry Clark, a long-time member of WLA, is not renominating for a position on the Committee. Kerry has tirelessly served the Committee since 2005 and held the office of President for 4 years between 2007 and 2010. During her time on the board she has been responsible for many, if not all, of our submissions to various government bodies on law reform and been an important liaison with the Australian Women Lawyers, South Australian Bar Association and the Equalising Opportunities in the Law Committee of the Law Council of Australia.

Kerry's voluntary activities extend well beyond her involvement in WLA and it is her ongoing commitment to the improvement of the access to justice which has led to her decision. The intensity of her dedication to helping the

underprivileged in our community is of a calibre rarely seen and all of us who have served on the board with her have greatly benefited from her experience, knowledge and guidance. On behalf of the Committee and members of WLA, thank you Kerry for all your hard work, your absence from the Committee will be keenly felt.

#### *Rachel Cain and Adriana Pasquale*

Rachel and Adriana were both very active members of the Committee since they both joined in 2009. Rachel moved to Perth and Adriana took up another volunteer board position close to her heart. We thank them both for their hard work while on the Committee.

#### *Adeline Lim and Megan Langford*

Adeline joined our Committee at last year's AGM and Megan joined in March 2012. We have enjoyed having new members on the team and look forward to their involvement in our activities for many years to come.

### **Appointments**

In the past year several female members of our State profession have been appointed to senior levels. Among these most notably are:

- Magistrate Jayne McGrath appointed to the magistracy;
- Judge Geraldine Davison SC was appointed as Senior Council in October 2011 which appointment was soon followed by an appointment to the District Court in June 2012;
- Judge Elizabeth Bolton appointed as a Judge of the District Court.

### **Congratulations**

A big congratulations is extended to Shelley O'Connell who welcomed her first baby, Gloria Grace O'Connell, into the world on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2012.

Our congratulations also go to Adeline Lim and Alison Robbins on their respective nuptials this year.

### **Functions and Events**

The Committee's main focus in 2011-12 was on social functions and fundraising. We hosted the following functions, all of which were well attended:

#### *August 2011*

- Bimonthly Social Drinks at Saldechin

#### *September 2011*

- Quiz Night at the Hungarian Club of SA
- Welcome drinks for Justice Bell of the High Court at Bar Chambers (hosted together with the South Australian Bar Association)

#### *October 2011*

- Welcome drinks for the new Bar Readers at the Dragonfly Bar

#### *November 2011*

- Centenary Dinner at the Stamford Plaza Hotel (hosted by the Women Lawyers Committee of the Law Society of South Australia and the Law Society of South Australia)
- Annual Christmas Drinks with the Judiciary at the Lyceum Club

March 2012

- UN Women's International Women's Day Breakfast at the Convention Centre
- Law Careers Fair at Flinders University

April 2012

- Alternative Law Careers Fair at Adelaide University

### **Annual Charities**

In 2011 our fundraising events raised money for the Birthing Kit Foundation (Australia) (BKF). Thanks in large part to the success of the Quiz Night we were proudly able to donate \$2,750 to this very important cause. This was a significant donation for the BKF and was equal to the amount of donations normally received by the organisation in one month.

In 2012 our charity is the Migrant Women's Support Service and funds raised at the Movie night in September 2012 and the upcoming Christmas Drinks with the Judiciary will help to support this cause.

### **Achievements and Activities**

The following are some of the other achievements and activities of WLA over the past year:

WLA successfully applied for Endorsement as a Tax Concession Charity from the Australian Taxation Office. This means that as an organisation we are not liable to pay tax on income and alleviates the administrative task of preparing tax returns.

Our Secretary, Amy Challans, has served as WLA's representative on the board of Australian Women Lawyers since 2010. At AWL's recent AGM, Amy was appointed as the Vice President for the 2012-2013 year with the view to hold the position of President in 2013-2014. Congratulations Amy!

The Association also entered into an arrangement with the University of Adelaide and Flinders University to award a law prize to the most meritorious student completing Anti-Discrimination and Equality Law at Adelaide University and Women's Rights and the International Protection of Human Rights Law at Flinders University.

The Committee of WLA has contributed to the work of the Law Society of South Australia as members of the Women Lawyers Committee of the Law Society in the following ways:

- Contributed to comments on the Sex Work Industry Bill 2011 (SA);
- Provided comments on a Law Council's inquiry into the Marriage Equality Amendment Bill 2010 (Cth);
- Assisted the organisation of and chaired a CPD session titled: *'Attitudes and Expectations: is Super Woman Helping or Hindering Women in Law?'*;
- Authored several special feature articles for the Bulletin Magazine, November 2011 edition: commemorating the centenary of the passage of the *Female Law Practitioners Act 1911* (SA);
- Attended confidential consultations with the State Attorney-General on upcoming judicial appointments and with the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court on Senior Council appointments;
- Liaised with Australian Women Lawyers, South Australian Bar Association and the Equalising Opportunities in the Law Committee of the Law Council of Australia and matters relevant to women practicing law in South Australia; and
- Written letters of congratulations on behalf of WLA to newly appointed members of the judiciary and Senior Counsel appointees.

## Strategic Planning & Membership Strategic Planning

In February 2012 the Committee held its annual strategic planning meeting. In addition to planning this year's functions the Committee decided that membership and the services we deliver to our membership needed to be given a special focus. Accordingly we decided that whilst the Quiz Night was an excellent fundraising opportunity this would become a biennial event in order to free up the Committee's time for this change in focus.

As part of implementing this change in focus, in March 2012 the Committee held its first Membership strategic planning meeting. From this meeting the following goals and ideas emerged:

- Update and improve the functionality and relevance of our website;
- Create a presence with social media, in particular Facebook;
- Review our categories of membership and the benefits attaching to membership;
- Explore the opportunity of creating a new Corporate Membership category;
- Host an annual or biennial lunch lecture with a prominent guest speaker who would address a topical issue relating to antidiscrimination;
- Improve and increase our partnering with the Law Society of South Australia on matters such as membership, functions and continuing professional development;
- Consider partnering with other associations with similar goals and objectives;
- Establish an annual seminar series with topics which address equality in the workplace and provide practical solutions to improve work-life balance for women lawyers – and in fact all lawyers with family commitments;
- Establish an award or accreditation procedure which recognises law firms and employers who have flexible, family friendly policies and practices.

### Our Focus for the Future

Based on the above list, there are a lot of things our Committee would love to achieve. We wish we could deliver these new goals immediately, but the reality is that due to everyone's volunteer hours being impinged upon by work and family commitments, these changes will take some time to achieve.

I am happy to announce, however, that the following items are currently receiving our attention and will be getting off the ground in the coming year:

- You can now "like" us on Facebook and find out about our upcoming events and view photos from recent functions at our new Facebook page;
- In April 2013 (exact date to be confirmed) we will be hosting our first '*Margaret Nyland AM Long Lunch*'. This event will be held in honour of our patron Margaret Nyland AM to acknowledge her tireless work in assisting women in the law. Her Honour will be also delivering the inaugural keynote address. The lunch will be held on a Friday and will be co-hosted by the Law Society of South Australia;
- Establishing a new category of Corporate Membership which will allow firms to join and thereby enabling all eligible lawyers in their employment to become members of WLA;
- Gearing up for the first Australian Women Lawyers Conference to be held in Adelaide in 2014. This will be a very exciting event for Adelaide!

Thank you for allowing me to serve as President for the past year and I wish the incoming President all the best in her role.

The coming year promises to be an exciting one for our organisation and I hope you are all looking forward to the year ahead as much as I am!

## STATISCAL FEATURE

\*Figures and commentary from the National Law Society Profile Report 2011 published July 2012 by Urbis for the Law Society of NSW.

### GENDER OF SOLICITORS BY STATE/TERRITORY

According to the report 31,422 (54.6%) of practising solicitors in 2011 were male and 27,858 (45.4%) were female.

The report states: “The gender ratio of solicitors is broadly similar across most states and territories, with the exception of the Northern Territory where a greater proportion of solicitors were female (55.0%). The jurisdiction with the most even distribution of male and female solicitors was the ACT (51.7% male, 48.3% female), whilst Tasmania was most skewed towards male solicitors (60.7% male, 39.3% female)”.

**TABLE – GENDER OF SOLICITORS BY STATE/TERRITORY**

STATE/TERRITORY	MALE		FEMALE		TOTAL
	N	%	N	%	
NSW	13,112	53.4%	11,431	46.6%	24,543
VIC	9,241	56.3%	7,166	43.7%	15,407
QLD	4,704	55.5%	3,770	44.5%	8,474
WA	2,239	55.4%	1,799	44.6%	4,038
SA	1,845	52.9%	1,640	47.1%	3,485
ACT	730	51.7%	682	48.3%	1,412
NT	213	45.0%	260	55.0%	473
TAS	272	60.7%	176	39.3%	448
Total	31,422	54.6%	27,858	45.4%	59,280

## SOLICITOR AGE BY GENDER

According to the report the age profile of solicitors differed substantially by gender.

The report states: "Close to half (48.8%) of all female solicitors were aged under 35 years, compared to only one quarter (24.2%) of male solicitors. Conversely, two fifths (40.4%) of male solicitors were aged over 50 years, compared to only 15.2% of females".

**TABLE – SOLICITOR AGE BY GENDER**

AGE	MALE		FEMALE		TOTAL
	N	%	N	%	
<24	353	1.1%	692	2.7%	1,045
25-29	3,441	11.0%	6,218	23.9%	9,659
30-34	3,796	12.1%	5,800	22.3%	9,596
35-39	3,819	12.2%	3,989	15.3%	7,808
40-44	3,738	11.9%	2,997	11.5%	6,735
45-49	3,426	10.9%	2,291	8.8%	5,717
50-54	3,708	11.8%	1,903	7.3%	5,611
55-59	3,747	12.0%	1,175	4.5%	4,922
60-64	2,830	9.0%	571	2.2%	3,401
65-69	1,487	4.7%	221	0.8%	1,708
70-74	604	1.9%	63	0.2%	667
75+	283	0.9%	31	0.1%	314
Unknown	122	0.4%	115	0.4%	237
Total	31,354	100.0%	26,066	100.0%	57,420
Estimated mean	45.6		37.4		42.0

Note: excludes ACT and Tasmania (missing data)

\*Mean age has been estimated by using 23.5 years as the age value for the lowest age bracket, using 76.5 as the age value for the highest age bracket, and taking the mid-points of each other age bracket.

**TABLE – SOLICITOR AGE BY GENDER – SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

AGE	SOUTH AUSTRALIA					
	MALE		FEMALE		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<24	42	2.3%	67	4.1%	109	3.1%
25-29	192	10.4%	362	22.1%	554	15.9%
30-34	205	11.1%	308	18.8%	513	14.7%
35-39	170	9.2%	229	14.0%	399	11.4%
40-44	192	10.4%	166	10.1%	358	10.3%
45-49	221	12.0%	150	9.1%	371	10.6%
50-54	220	11.9%	167	10.2%	387	11.1%
55-59	252	13.7%	109	6.6%	361	10.4%
60-64	210	11.4%	56	3.4%	266	7.6%
65-69	94	5.1%	18	1.1%	112	3.2%
70-74	22	1.2%	8	0.5%	30	0.9%
75+	12	0.7%	0	0.00%	12	0.3%
Unknown	13	0.7%	0	0.0%	13	0.4%
Total	1,845	100.00%	1,640	100.0%	3,485	100.0%

## YEARS SINCE ADMISSION BY GENDER

According to the report the changing gender profile is due to considerably more female solicitors than male solicitors being admitted in the past 10 years.

The report states: “Females comprised over three fifths (61.1%) of all solicitors admitted in the prior year, and 57.8% of those admitted in the last 10 years. Of all female solicitors, approximately two thirds (66.1%) have been admitted in the last 10 years, compared to only 40.2% of all male solicitors. Conversely, close to half (48.9%) of male practitioners were admitted for 15 years or more, compared with 22.2% of females.”

**TABLE – YEARS SINCE ADMISSION BY GENDER**

AGE	MALE		FEMALE		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
≤ 1 year	2,311	7.4%	3,365	13.9%	5,964	10.4%
1-5 years	4,872	15.5%	7,109	27.3%	11,981	20.9%
6-10 years	5,416	17.3%	6,479	24.9%	11,895	20.7%
11-14 years	3,298	10.5%	2,883	11.1%	6,181	10.8%
15+ years	15,352	48.9%	5,789	22.2%	21,141	36.8%
Unknown	122	0.4%	170	0.7%	292	0.5%
Total	31,171	100.0%	26,065	100%	57,436	100.0%

Note: excludes ACT and Tasmania (missing data)



# WLA COMMITTEE 2011/212

## Christina Von Muenster

### President



I have been a member of WLA and the Committee since September 2006.

I joined and have remained on the Committee because it exposes me to areas of law outside my normal area of practice and gives me unique opportunities to get to know other women in this profession.

Since joining the Committee I have learned many valuable skills and made many new friends. I have very much enjoyed being President for the past year and look forward to the projects we hope to get off the ground in the coming years.

Quiz Night subcommittee (2011)

UniFem Breakfast (2011)

Movie Night subcommittee (2012)

Membership subcommittee (2012)

Website (2012)

## Shelley O'Connell Vice President



**Member of the Association and the Committee since 2006.**

**I joined the Committee as I was attracted to the idea of having a role in an Organisation whose objects are to promote equality for women in our profession and to strengthen support for women in our profession in terms of networking, relationship-building, socialising and fundraising for charity groups with a similar ethos.**

**I enjoy feeling part of a wider group of women with similar ideas and objectives, and I also enjoy organising events that bring us all together, such as our annual Christmas Drinks with the Judiciary, and more recently our Movie and Quiz nights.**

**I think I bring to WLA commitment and enthusiasm and a desire to see our Association reach its goals as best we can.**

**Monthly networking drinks subcommittee (2011)**

**Christmas Drinks subcommittee (2012)**

**Membership (2011)**

## Ilona Schultz Treasurer



Member and Committee Member since December 2009.

Ilona completed her law degree at Adelaide University in 2011 and is currently completing her GDLP with Australian National University in Canberra.

She is currently the Administration Manager responsible for HR, Finance and Administration at the Family Violence Legal Service Aboriginal Corporation in country SA, a Non-Government Organisation (NGO) funded by the Federal Attorney-General. The Service is part of a national network of Family Violence Prevention Legal Services servicing Aboriginal Communities in remote and rural Australia. It is survivor-victim focussed and provides free legal services and community legal education to the Aboriginal community. Once admitted Ilona will also practice as a solicitor with the Service.

Movie Night subcommittee (2011)

Quiz Night subcommittee (2011)

Christmas Drinks subcommittee (2012)

Finance and Audit subcommittee (2011& 2012)

Membership (2011)

**Amy Challans**  
**Secretary**



Member of the Association and the Committee since 2006. Secretary since 2009. Vice President Australian Women Lawyers and Member Law Council of Australia – Equalizing Opportunities in the Law Committee.

I joined WLA so that I could be actively involved in bringing a female perspective to the culture of the legal profession and to meet likeminded individuals.

I bring to the Committee firsthand knowledge as an employee relations practitioner of the people and business challenges faced in shaping/influencing cultural change in the workplace which is essential to the work of the Association in advancing the adoption of practices/attitudes that support the advancement and promotion of women in the legal profession.

One of things that I enjoy most about being on the Committee is working with a group of likeminded, highly dedicated and enthusiastic professionals.

Movie Night subcommittee (2011)

Quiz Night subcommittee (2011)

Christmas Drinks subcommittee (2012)

AGM Report subcommittee (2011& 2012)

Website (2011 & 2012)

**Melissa Ballantyne**

Member since 1998. Committee member since 2000 with the last 4 years as Vice-President.

I joined WLA because it was an opportunity to meet women practitioners from all parts of the profession.

It is a great way to assist female practitioners to further their opportunities in the profession and to raise issues of concern to the profession and women generally.

I bring to the Committee over 20 years' experience as a practitioner and a real passion for social justice and women's issues.

Alternative Careers Seminar subcommittee (2011 &2012)

Membership subcommittee (2011 & 2012)

---

**Kerry Clark**



**Member since 2004. Committee member since 2006 and President since 2007.**

**Bar Readers subcommittee (2011 & 2012)**

**I joined to give practical expression to my values as a feminist, to advance the position of women in the profession and to be an advocate for women's issues in the wider community.**

**What I most enjoy about being on the Committee is the friendship of the other Committee members (past and present), who represent the legal profession in all its diversity, most of whom I would not have met in my day-to-day practice.**

**I hope that over my term as President I have provided leadership and contributed to building relationships with Government, the judiciary, the Law Council and Bar Association. I am also proud of the generational change we have achieved over the last few years.**

**I think the enthusiasm of our new Committee members will ensure the continued development of Women Lawyers Association of SA Inc as an organisation and its relevance to young practitioners.**

---

**Daniella Di Girolamo**



**I have been a member since 2009 and a Committee member since 2010.**

**Christmas Drinks subcommittee (2011)**

**I joined Women Lawyers because I thought it would be a good way to meet and get to know other women working as lawyers and barristers in SA. My firm only has one other female lawyer so I thought meeting some more couldn't hurt!**

**Monthly Networking Drinks subcommittee (2011)**

**Women and Wine Function subcommittee (2012)**

**I enjoy being on the Committee because it is made up of such a great group of Women who are passionate about the law and about furthering the role of women in the legal field. I like that the women come from all different areas (private, public, CBD, rural, all areas of practice, etc ).**

**I like to organise things (which I know sounds odd) so I hope I have brought my organisational skills to the Committee. I have run a few fundraising events over the years so I hope that I bring my knowledge in that area too.**

---

**Taruna Heuzenroeder**

I have been a member since about 2004 and I joined the Committee in 2010.

I joined WLA because although we are the majority of graduates, we are not yet anywhere near half the partners, senior counsel and judges. It is easy to think that as we dominate law schools, there are no longer any barriers to women in the law. While the culture of the profession has changed enormously over the past 50 years, there is still room for improvement, and organisations like Women Lawyers play an important role in fostering networking, support and mentoring for female practitioners.

I enjoy the wide range of experiences of the other women on the committee and I bring to the Committee a barrister's perspective.

Christmas Drinks subcommittee(2012)

Monthly Networking Drinks subcommittee (2011)

UniFem Breakfast (2012)

Women and Wine Function subcommittee (2012)

---

**Megan Langford**

---

**Adeline Lim**

I have been a member of the Association and Committee since 2011.

I joined WLA because I wanted to meet and network with female practitioners from other areas of the profession. I believe in the objects of the Association and in particular, am passionate about promoting equality for women in the legal profession.

I bring to the Committee my experience of being in private practice both here and overseas and also as an In-house practitioner. I believe that I contribute enthusiasm and new ideas to the Committee.

Movie Night subcommittee (2012)

Alternate Careers Fair subcommittee (2012)

Facebook subcommittee (2012)

---

**Amy Nikolovski**

**I originally joined the Women Lawyers Association in April 2009 and was appointed to the Committee in May 2011.**

**I joined the Committee as I have an interest in Women's issues and in particular to promote women lawyers in what was a male dominated profession.**

**I bring to the Committee my passion for social justice in addition to a "Young Lawyer" perspective and have the ability to use my current position as Chair of the Young Lawyers Committee to promote women's issues to those new to the profession.**

**Movie Night subcommittee (2012)**

**Facebook subcommittee (2012)**

## SPECIAL FEATURE

### DAME ROMA MITCHELL 'ONE NOT TO BE EXCLUDED'

A celebration of women in the law in South Australia cannot pass by without a salute to the First Lady of our legal profession, Dame Roma Mitchell.

The Honourable Dame Roma Flinders Mitchell, AC, CBE, CVO, QC, was born in Adelaide in 1913 and died in March 2000. "Our Roma", as we affectionately and possessively refer to her, has become the inspiration of generations of women both in the legal profession and in wider spheres. Her life and achievements marked several "firsts" for women in the profession and put South Australia, for a time, ahead of the country. She was the first Australian woman Queen's Counsel (1962), the first Australian woman Supreme Court Judge (South Australia, 1965), the first woman Chancellor of a university in Australia (University of Adelaide, 1983-1990) and the first woman Governor of an Australian State (South Australia, 1991-1996).

We know about these outstanding achievements. We know she attained several other honours, such as being appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) for her services to Law (1971), becoming the Chairman of the South Australian Parole Board (1979 - 1981), being appointed Companion of the Order of Australia (AC) (1991) and being appointed Commander of the Royal Victorian Order on 1 January 2000, just over 2 months before her death.

But who was she?

Dame Roma was raised by her mother, Maude and had an older sister, Ruth. Her father was killed in World War I, when Roma was aged 4. In a 1993 interview with Robin Hughes<sup>1</sup>, Roma recounts her earliest childhood memory, in which her father and another adult male were playing with a mechanical toy she had received for Christmas - excluding her. She recalls "I was thinking, I'm not going to be left out anymore. I think I thought I was excluded and that's why I remembered it, obviously. It's those things that children do remember." Roma went on to live an incredibly full personal and professional life, in which she could never be described as allowing herself to be excluded from anything worthwhile.

She was a woman who thought of others first, and about how she could improve their lives and experiences. When Roma's father died, she went out of her way, at 4 years of age, to break the news to her sister Ruth, with the idea that that would save her mother from the pain of having to do so<sup>2</sup>. This incident reveals Roma's strong desire to care for and protect others, which would lead her in later life to such roles as the Founding Chairman of the Human Rights Commission (1981 – 1986).

Admitted to the Bar in 1934, Roma never wanted to do anything but be a lawyer, and the desire was so entrenched in her that she cannot remember how it formed. She supposed that her family background had something to do with it. She said of entering the law: "I think what I thought was that I was going to get people their rights. I think it was an advanced human rights effort. We didn't ever hear of human rights in those days."<sup>3</sup> She was always the one at school who defended others who were being picked on, or who spoke up when things weren't "fair".

In her early years of practice, in matrimonial law, she helped countless women to escape domestic violence, in a time where women had no rights to have a violent husband removed from the house if it was owned or rented in his name. She was a vocal campaigner for equal pay for women in a time when pay rates were based on an

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.australianbiography.gov.au/subjects/mitchell/interview1.html>

<sup>2</sup> "Dame Roma Mitchell's Unmentionables – Sex, Politics and Religion", Susan Magarey, History Australia, Volume 5, Number 1, 2008, Monash University Press, page 12.4.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

assumption that a man always had a wife and children to support but the woman had only herself to support, notwithstanding a man may be single and a woman may have dependent children or elderly parents.

She acted for women who had been deserted or who had lost custody of their children on "moral" grounds – notwithstanding her devout Catholicism, and the fact that the Pope of the day had reiterated the abhorrence of divorce and declared "the emancipation of women and the education of children by the state to be among the great evils leading to a humanity without God".<sup>4</sup> The independence of Roma's mind was proven nowhere more profoundly than here, as the moral and ecclesiastical rulings of the Church, especially in those days, must have conflicted with her preferred approach to her chosen profession and her entrenched desire to empower and protect the vulnerable and disadvantaged. She espoused open-mindedness as being of utmost importance, and urged others to "recognise your own prejudices and don't let them rule you".<sup>5</sup>

Dame Roma initially did little criminal work when she went into legal practice. In those days, women still could not serve on juries, so a case would involve a male judge, an all male jury, and the only female was likely to be a witness who would be accompanied by a member of the women police force which at that time was a separate body to the SA Police. She said of that time: *"it was not thought appropriate for a woman to hear, and still less to use, some of the language that might be used in the court. And so I felt I would be doing a disservice to the client if I went into the Criminal Court, that I would have been an object of curiosity myself. So I rather eschewed the criminal work"*<sup>6</sup>.

Dame Roma later led the charge to lobby for women to serve on juries, convincing Sir Thomas Playford that it was a "reasonable idea" and while he was ultimately thwarted by his ministers who "wouldn't like to see their wives sit on a jury", the law was amended by the next government in 1966<sup>7</sup>.

In 1965 the then Premier Don Dunstan invited Roma Mitchell QC, as she then was, to lunch at Parliament House and asked her if she would take up an appointment to the Supreme Court bench. She was shocked and immediately said yes, but only did so "because I thought I should accept the appointment. I thought I owed it to women. I really didn't want it at that stage. I was enjoying life as a Queen's Counsel and I really didn't want to go onto the bench. ... And I thought I wouldn't enjoy it....but I was wrong. I did enjoy it. .... There's no excitement in connection with a judge's life but it was still interesting all the time."<sup>8</sup>

She said at the time of her appointment, horrified by the publicity she was receiving, that *"As far as being a woman is concerned, I am hopeful that in my lifetime, appointments such as this will not excite comment."*<sup>9</sup>

On her appointment to the Supreme Court Bench in 1965, she said: *"Women should be able to take whatever place they are fitted to take in the professions. I do not mean that a woman should ever be appointed to any significant office, merely because she is a woman. But women's intellectual and other attainments should be recognized objectively and I am sure they are being more widely appreciated nearly everywhere in today's world."*<sup>10</sup>

And 17 years later, in 1982, she said *"better opportunities for women do not mean they should relax. Results of past discrimination are going to take a long time to reverse."*<sup>11</sup>

While at one point in her career she believed that the way to defeat prejudice on the grounds of gender was to *"ignore it and it will go away"*, she later acknowledged that *"There is a need for affirmative action, not to give*

---

<sup>4</sup> "Dame Roma Mitchell's Unmentionables – Sex, Politics and Religion", Susan Magarey, History Australia, Volume 5, Number 1, 2008, Monash University Press, page 12.7

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.australianbiography.gov.au/subjects/mitchell/interview4.html>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.australianbiography.gov.au/subjects/mitchell/interview3.html>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.australianbiography.gov.au/subjects/mitchell/interview3.html>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.australianbiography.gov.au/subjects/mitchell/interview3.html>

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.slsa.sa.gov.au/women\\_and\\_politics/mr24.htm](http://www.slsa.sa.gov.au/women_and_politics/mr24.htm)

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.slsa.sa.gov.au/women\\_and\\_politics/mr24.htm](http://www.slsa.sa.gov.au/women_and_politics/mr24.htm)

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.slsa.sa.gov.au/women\\_and\\_politics/mr24.htm](http://www.slsa.sa.gov.au/women_and_politics/mr24.htm)



preference to women over men in employment, but to ensure that women do not suffer detriment by reason of gender."<sup>12</sup>

In her later years, Roma was asked what she would say to a young lawyer entering the profession. In Robin Hughes' 1993 interview she said: *"Well, the main piece of advice I do give sometimes is not to be deterred, not to be put off. I think if somebody really has an ambition to do something, he or she ought to follow that ambition. Fortunately nowadays, people can change more than they could when I was young so if they embark on something that doesn't work for them they can more readily change than they used to be able to. On the other hand, they find it very hard to get started now with the limitations on places in universities in particular. So I think they really have to be pretty determined to get themselves going and I speak really quite from the heart because although, as I said, my mother was very encouraging about my choice of a career, there were plenty of people to say, 'It's not a career for a girl. She'll never do any good in it and why doesn't she do this, that and the other,' and I think it would have been an error if I or my mother had listened to that piece of advice."*<sup>13</sup>

Certainly Roma was not one to be put off, deterred or excluded. Personally, she was hugely popular, had a wide circle of friends and the fabulous parties she (allegedly) threw have become the stuff of Adelaide legend. Professionally she was a force to be reckoned with and utterly fearless (her only admitted fear was that of rats and mice<sup>14</sup>), and she was respected and admired by many, irrespective of gender, religion or political affiliation. She was a robust defender of the vulnerable and disadvantaged. She was both a devout Catholic and the quintessential modern professional woman who embraced new and challenging music, art and architecture. Susan Magarey calls her "quite as much an advocate for [women's] rights and protections as she was an example of all that a woman could achieve".<sup>15</sup>

In the words of the Builders Labourers Federation upon her swearing in as Governor in 1991- *"Good on ya, Roma"*.<sup>16</sup>

By Shelley O'Connell  
Vice President

---

<sup>12</sup> [http://www.slsa.sa.gov.au/women\\_and\\_politics/mr24.htm](http://www.slsa.sa.gov.au/women_and_politics/mr24.htm)

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.australianbiography.gov.au/subjects/mitchell/interview6.html>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.australianbiography.gov.au/subjects/mitchell/interview7.html>

<sup>15</sup> "Dame Roma Mitchell's Unmentionables – Sex, Politics and Religion", Susan Magarey, History Australia, Volume 5, Number 1, 2008, Monash University Press, page 12.12

<sup>16</sup> *The Australian*, 7 February 1991 cited in Dame Roma Mitchell's Unmentionables – Sex, Politics and Religion", Susan Magarey, History Australia, Volume 5, Number 1, 2008, Monash University Press, page 12.1

# FEATURE PROFILE

## JUSTICE MARGARET NYLAND

The Honourable Justice Margaret Nyland AM is South Australia's most senior female member of the Supreme Court. She is also the devoted Patron of the Women Lawyers Association of SA.

Justice Nyland studied law at Adelaide University in the early sixties and was admitted in March 1965.

At a time when it was extremely difficult for women to find a place to complete articles, she was fortunate to be articled by Pam Cleland at the Adelaide firm Genders, Wilson and Bray.

Following her admission she continued working with Pam Cleland and followed her when Pam set up on her own practice in 1966 at Azalea House in Waterfall Gully. Justice Nyland soon joined Pam in partnership and later set up a very successful family law practice together with David Haines QC known as Nyland, Haines & Co.

She was appointed to the District Court bench in March 1987 where she served for more than 6 years before being appointed to the Supreme Court.

Upon her appointment to the Supreme Court in October 1993, she became the second female Supreme Court Judge in Australia, second only to our very own Dame Roma Mitchell.

Justice Nyland has also served on many boards and tribunals during her esteemed career. These positions include:

- Chair of the Commonwealth Social Security Appeals Tribunal;
- Chair of the South Australian Sex Discrimination Board;
- Deputy Chair of the Equal Opportunities Tribunal;
- Chair of the Australian Dance Theatre;
- President of the Law Foundation; and
- President of the Australian Association of Women Judges.

She has also been the patron of the Women Lawyers Association of South Australia since 2000 and provides its committee and members with invaluable support and encouragement.

It was her involvement on these many committees that lead to her receiving the Member of the Order of Australia on Australia Day in 2005 for "*service to the judiciary, to human rights and to the equal status of women*".

On 15 October 2011 she surpassed Dame Roma's tenure to become the longest serving female member of the South Australian Supreme Court.

Her many years as a Judge have enabled her to be a willing and devoted mentor to the many fledging practitioners who have had the privilege to be her Associate. Whilst she does not have children, she has adopted her Associates as her own and she continues to look out for them even long after they have stopped working with her. It could be said that she probably has over 20 "children".

Rumour has it that she is also well known for having "the party chambers" in the Supreme Court library building. She (at times together with Justice Perry) has (allegedly!) hosted many a morning tea and after-work party for the Associates and court staff. There have been Halloween parties, costume parties, Melbourne Cup parties – by the sounds of it she has taken every opportunity to bring life and fun to her chambers.

We are continually delighted to have such a woman as our loyal patron.

By Shelley O'Connell  
Vice President




## CHARITY PROFILE

The Migrant Women's Support Service Inc. (MWSS) formerly known as Migrant Women's Support & Accommodation Service is WLA's nominated charity for the 2012 Calendar year. Operating since 1985 the service is a non-government, not-for-profit community based organisation, that aims to promote the basic human rights of non-English speaking women and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, to enable them to live free from domestic violence.

The Service Inc. offers a range of culturally responsive services to non-English speaking migrant and refugee women and children who are experiencing domestic violence and/or are receiving broader sector support for domestic violence in South Australia.

MWSS receives its funding from the National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA) and operates within a Feminist framework that recognises the diversity of women's culture and family forms, promotes equality and supports the rights of women and children.



**MWSS**  
MIGRANT WOMEN'S  
SUPPORT SERVICE INC

**PH: (08) 8346 9417**

ALL MIGRANT WOMEN SAY  
NO TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

PHỤ NỮ VIỆT NAM CHỐNG VẤN ĐỀ  
BẠO HÀNH TRONG GIA ĐÌNH

ANG MGA KABABAIHAN  
PILIPINA AYNAGSASABING  
HINDI SA KARAHASANG PANTAHANAN

LAS MUJERES DE HABLA HISPANA  
DICEN NO A LA VIOLENCIA DOMESTICA

POLSKIE KOBIETY SĄ PRZECIWNE  
PRZEMOCY W RODZINIE

ΟΙ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΔΕΣ ΑΕΝΕ ΟΧΙ ΣΤΗΝ ΟΙΚΙΑΚΗ ΒΙΑ

DONNE ITALIANE DITE  
NO ALLA VIOLENZA DOMESTICA

ŽENE IZ BIVŠE JUGOSLAVIJE  
KAŽU NE ZA NASILJA KOD KUĆE

**admin@mwss.org.au**

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012

	<b>BALANCE</b>
	<b>\$</b>
<b>Opening Bank Balance at 1 July 2011</b>	<b>5,541.97</b>
Credits 1 July 2011 - 30 June 2012	10,145.28
<b>total credits</b>	<b>15,687.25</b>
Debits 1 July 2011 - 30 June 2012	8,933.05
<b>credits less debits</b>	<b>6,754.20</b>
less unrepresented cheque No.200196 (food for Bell J drinks)	15.93
<b>reconciled balance as at 30 June 2012</b>	<b>6,770.13</b>
<b>Closing Bank Balance at 30 June 2011</b>	<b>6,770.13</b>
<b>Profit for the year</b>	<b>1,228.16</b>

**SUMMARY OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE**

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>\$</b>
Membership subscriptions	3,150.00	Australian Women Lawyers	689.00
Functions	6,006.00	Functions	2,646.23
Donations Received	960.00	Donations Made	2,750.00
Bank Interest	29.28	Website Management	355.00
Unpresented cheque #200196	15.93	AWL Conference Scholarship	1,303.00
		Gifts	99.15
		Miscellaneous expenses	1,090.67
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>10,161.21</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>8,933.05</b>

## TREASURER'S NOTES

### Comparison 2010-2011 to 2011-2012 Financial Years Income and Expenditure

Income	10/11 FY	11/12 FY	Expenditure	10/11 FY	11/12 FY
Membership Subscriptions	3,150.00	3,150.00	Australian Women Lawyers	1,082.95	689.00
Functions	7,370.90	6,006.00	Functions	4,197.48	2,646.23
Donations Received	150.00	960.00	Donations Made	2,961.00	2,750.00
Bank Interest	20.31	29.28	Website	414.54	355.00
			Gifts	247.01	99.15
			AWL Conference Scholarship	1,000.00	1,303.00
			Misc	440.60	1,090.67
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>10,691.21</b>	<b>10,145.28</b>		<b>10,343.58</b>	<b>8,933.05</b>

Overall the past financial year was quite successful for Women Lawyers' Association (SA) Inc ('WLA') in comparison to last financial year. Although WLA made less income than the previous financial year, it spent less than the previous year and received more in donations. WLA would like to sincerely thank its patron Justice Margaret Nyland and founding member FM Charlotte Kelly for their generous donations and ongoing support of WLA.

Our most successful function was the Quiz Night held in September 2011. WLA made a profit of \$3655.73. From this profit we were able to donate \$2750 to our designated charity for the year, the Birthing Kit Foundation (Australia) and provided most of \$1303 to a law student to attend the AWL national conference in Canberra in August of this year.

WLA also substantially reduced its expenditure on functions primarily Committee Members assisting with catering rather than outsourcing to professional caterers. While the advantage of this lies in greater savings for WLA the disadvantage was Committee Members spent more time involved with catering at functions rather than socialising with guests. WLA is working on achieving middle ground in this area.

Income from functions was down but this was due to the 2012 Movie Night not being held in the earlier part of the year. Profits from this event will be reflected in the next financial year's report. Bank interest was up as a result of WLA having more funds in its account to earn interest. Expenditure on gifts was considerably down but miscellaneous expenditure was considerably up. Miscellaneous expenditure consisted of bulk wine purchases for events, professional label printing for envelopes, ongoing eGive fees, and the WLA Committee Christmas meeting. Events which traditionally make a loss include the Christmas Drinks with the Judiciary, the Bar Readers Drinks and the AGM.

# COMMITTEE REPORT

(This report is to the year ended 30 August 2012)

## Committee Members

The names of the Committee members of the Women Lawyers Association of SA Inc. ('WLA/the Association') who held office during the financial year and until the date of this report are as follows:

- Shelley O'Connell
- Christina von Muenster
- Ilona Schultz
- Amy Challans
- Melissa Ballantyne
- Kerry Clark
- Daniella Di Girolamo
- Trauna Heuzenroeder
- Adeline Lim
- Megan Langford
- Amy Nikolovski

The following Committee members retired/resigned during the 2011/2012 year

- Victoria Lecky
- Adriana Pasquale
- Rachel Cain

The following Committee members were appointed during the 2011/2012 year

- Adeline Lim
- Megan Langford

## Nature of Operations and Principal Activities of the Association

The principal activities of WLA during the 2011/2012 year were as follows:

### *Consultation, Recommendations and Nominations*

- Engaging in consultation with the State Attorney General regarding appointments to the judicial bench including the appointment of the new Chief Justice
- Engaging in consultation with the State Attorney General regarding Special Counsel appointments
- Putting forward recommendations (through Australian Women Lawyers ) for appointment to the High Court, Federal Court of Australia and other Tribunals
- Supporting the nomination of Nadine Levy for the inaugural Australian Women Lawyers Award

### *Sponsorship*

- Sponsoring the law school prize for Anti-Discrimination Law at The University of Adelaide
- Sponsoring the law school prize for Women's Rights and the International Protection of Human Rights at Flinders University
- Sponsoring a law student to attend the 4<sup>th</sup> National Australian Women Lawyers Conference in Canberra from 10 -12 August 2012

### *Services For Members*

- Lodging and successfully obtaining Tax Exempt status from the Australian Tax Office
- Engaging the services of a second website designer to update the website with improved features and capabilities

- Distributing membership feedback survey to members
- Hosting miscellaneous networking and fundraising functions
- Establishing a Facebook page to enhance the promotion of events and the Association's communication with members

## **Future Operations of the Association**

### *Services For Members*

- Continually improve the Association's level of communication and correspondence with members
- Continually develop new events that are relevant to the interests of members

## **Significant Changes in the State of Affairs**

There have been no significant changes in WLA's state of affairs during the 2011/2012 financial year.

## **Significant Events After the Balance Date**

The only significant event occurring after balance date (30 August 2012), which may affect either WLA's operations or results of those operations or the WLA's state of affairs is the financials expended from the Christmas Drinks with the Judiciary which is scheduled for 27 November 2012. The Association does not expect to raise money from this function but may incur financial costs associated with its hosting. The expenditure from this event will be reflected in the financial figures for the next financial year and therefore will be reflected in the next AGM reporting period.

## **Likely Developments and Expected Results**

The Committee does not expect any significant changes to the operations of WLA but significant changes to the executive of the Association.

Christina von Muenster President of WLA has indicated that she will not stand for re election as President at the upcoming Annual General Meeting but will nominate for the Committee.

Due to her recent appointment as Vice President of Australian Women Lawyers', Amy Challans has indicated that she will not stand for reelection as Secretary at the upcoming Annual General Meeting but will nominate for the Committee.

Ilona Schultz Treasurer as has indicated that she will not stand for reelection as Treasurer at the upcoming Annual General Meeting but will nominate for the Committee.

Shelley O'Connell Vice President has indicated that she will not stand for reelection as Vice President at the upcoming Annual General Meeting but will nominate for the positions of Secretary.

## **Rounding**

The financial report is presented in Australian dollars and all values are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars (\$'000).

# GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

## INTRODUCTION

Women Lawyers Association of SA Inc. ('WLA/ the Association') is incorporated under *the Associations Incorporated Act (SA) 1995*. The business and affairs of WLA are overseen and controlled by a Committee ('the Committee'). The Committee comprises of WLA members elected to office bearer positions, namely, President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and eight other WLA members elected as general members of the Committee.

WLA is governed with integrity and in a responsible and accountable manner. The Committee is dedicated in their approach to work continuously to meet the objectives of the Association and to implement strategies in the pursuit of excellence and providing the best membership value.

The Committee meets eleven times a year for the purposes of overseeing all aspects WLA's business plan, its objectives and values. Additionally, the Committee reviews its performance by measuring the outcomes of its events and yearly actions against its objectives and ensuring that it complies with any legal requirement(s).

Twelve meetings of the Committee were held during the period 1 September 2011 -30 August 2012.

## MEMBERS ROLE

The Constitution of WLA requires that a meeting of full members known as the Annual General Meeting ('AGM') is to be held annually; refer to section 4.7 of the WLA Constitution.

The purpose of the AGM is to:

- To confirm the minutes of the preceding Annual General Meeting
- To receive the President's report for the previous financial year
- To receive the Treasurer's report and the financial statements for the previous financial year
- To elect or re-elect the Office Bearers and Committee Members who must consent in person or in writing
- To conduct any other business placed on the agenda before the commencement of the meeting

All Full (voting) members of WLA are advised in advance of the AGM in accordance with the requirements of the Constitution. This notice includes notice of nominations for the election or re-election of office bearers and general members of the Committee. The notice for this year's AGM was distributed to all members via e-mail on 4 September 2012.

WLA Committee encourages all of its members to attend the AGM.

## COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

The names and details of all Committee members in office up to 30 August 2012 are set out in this annual report.

The composition of the Committee reflects the broad range of experience, skills and knowledge required to oversee the running of WLA, its business and affairs.

The Committee is responsible for wide variety of matters including succession planning.

Eleven meetings and one Annual General Meeting were held during the period of 1 September 2011 – 30 August 2012.

The following members of the Committee were either appointed at the last AGM, during the period 1 September 2011 – 30 August 2012 or retired during this period:

<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Date of Appointment</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Date of Retirement</b>
Christina von Muenster	22/09/2011	President	
Shelley O'Connell	22/09/2011	Vice President	
Ilona Schultz	22/09/2011	Treasurer	
Amy Challans	22/09/2011	Secretary	
Melissa Ballantyne	22/09/2011	Committee Member	
Rachel Cain (retired)	22/09/2011	Committee Member	June 2012
Kerry Clark	22/09/2011	Committee Member	
Daniella Di Girolamo	22/09/2011	Committee Member	
Taruna Heuzenroeder	22/09/2011	Committee Member	
Megan Langford (New appointment)	March 2012	Committee Member	
Adeline Lim	22/09/2011	Committee Member	
Amy Nikolovski	22/09/2011	Committee Member	
Adriana Pasquale (retired)	22/09/2011	Committee Member	October 2011

## **SUB COMMITTEES**

To assist in the execution of its responsibilities, the Committee has established a number of subcommittees. These subcommittees operate on a needs basis to fulfill a number of diverse roles.

These roles include:

- To provide specialist knowledge to the Committee on a certain matter(s)
- To review and/or advise the Committee on legislation, policy, best practice
- To organise specific social events
- To manage certain projects outlined in the Association's business plan
- To make recommendations to the Committee on a range of matters

Each subcommittee meets as required. The composition and functions of the WLA sub-Committees during this reporting period are summarised below.

- Monthly Networking Drinks
- Unifem Breakfast
- Alternate Careers Seminar
- Movie Night
- Quiz Night
- Bar
- Bar Readers Drinks

- Christmas Drinks with the Judiciary
- Membership
- Professional Development
- Women in Wine
- AGM Report
- Finance and Audit

### **Monthly Networking Drinks Sub Committee**

This subcommittee is responsible for organising the Association's bi monthly networking drinks function. This includes focusing on sourcing appropriate venues and marketing the event. This subcommittee did not convene for the second half of the 2011/2012 reporting period due to a change in focus for the upcoming year.

### **UniFEM Breakfast Sub Committee**

Due to the high level of demand from members to attend the annual Women's International Day UniFEM breakfast this sub Committee was established to coordinate expressions of interest and table bookings.

### **Alternate Careers Seminar Sub Committee**

This subcommittee is responsible for organising the Association's annual Alternate Careers Seminar. The key responsibilities of this sub Committee include identifying speakers, organising their attendance, marketing the event to law students and liaising with Adelaide's three universities to source appropriate venues. The key challenge for this sub Committee is to maximise the attendance of law students who are increasingly time poor.

### **Movie Night Sub Committee**

The role of this subcommittee is to coordinate all aspects of the Association's annual movie night. This includes, sourcing an appropriate location, identifying movie options, negotiating discounts, drinks, catering, marketing and logistics. This sub Committee organised a fabulous event and raised a significant amount of money for the Association's designated charity in the 2011/2012 reporting period.

### **Quiz Night Sub Committee**

This subcommittee is responsible for project managing all aspects of WLA's Quiz night; including the identification of sponsors, venues, hosts, marketing and prizes. The Association's Quiz night was held on 9 September 2011 and raised a considerable amount of money for the Associations designated charity (for the calendar year of 2011) The Birthing Kit Association. Please note that this subcommittee will now be convened on a biannual basis.

### **Bar Sub Committee Sub Committee**

The aim of this subcommittee is to focus on issues specific to women at the Bar and is responsible for liaising with the SA Bar Association. In October 2011 WLA hosted its second drinks night for female Bar Readers who successfully completed their Bar exams.

### **Christmas Drinks Sub Committee**

This subcommittee is responsible for organising all aspects associated with WLA's annual Christmas drinks function. The key responsibilities of this sub Committee include coordinating the large number of invitations, marketing the event, managing attendance, coordinating raffle prizes, catering and sourcing the key note speaker.

### **Membership Sub Committee**

This subcommittee is responsible for reviewing WLA's current membership policies including membership benefits and services. It is envisioned that this sub Committee will have a large role to play in the 2012 -2013 reporting year due to the Committees increased focus on its membership base.



### **Professional Development Sub Committee**

This subcommittee has specific responsibility for identifying, sourcing and developing professional development services, events and seminars for members. This sub Committee represents a strong intent by the Association to extend the range of services and benefits that it offers members.

### **Annual General Meeting Report Sub Committee**

This subcommittee was established to identify and source content for the Annual General Report. This is the third year that the Association has produced an Annual General Report and the sub Committee is pleased to hear from anyone with feedback on the 'report'.

### **Finance and Audit Sub Committee**

This subcommittee is responsible for overseeing WLA's accounting and reporting practices including the effectiveness of the Association's accounting and internal control systems, its management reporting and ensuring that the Association complies with all policy, regulatory and legal requirements.

### **Sub Committee Membership**

The composition of each subcommittee has been determined on a voluntary basis taking into account the skills, experience and individual interests of each member. Each sub committee meets on a needs basis and formally reports back to the Committee as required each month.

<b>Sub Committee</b>	<b>Membership</b>
Monthly Networking Drinks	Not formed for 2011/2012
Unifem Breakfast	Taruna Heuzenroeder (2012)
Alternative Careers Seminar	Melissa Ballantyne Adeline Lim
Movie Night	Adeline Lim Amy Nikolovski Christina von Muenster (2012)
Quiz Night	Ilona Schultz Amy Challans Christina Von Muenster (2011) Rachel Cain (Retired)
Bar Readers Drinks	Kerry Clark
Christmas Drinks	Daniella Di Girolamo Taruna Heuzenroeder
Women in Wine	Daniella Di Girolamo Taruna Heuzenroeder
Bar	Kerry Clark

Membership	Ilona Schultz Melissa Ballantyne Shelley O'Connell Christina Von Muenster (2012)
Professional Development	Not formed for 2011/2012
Annual General Report	Amy Challans
Finance and Audit	Ilona Schultz

## **COMMUNICATION TO MEMBERS**

WLA aims to ensure that members are informed of all major developments affecting the Association. Information is communicated to members as follows:

### **Annual report**

WLA has an annual report that is made available to all members. This report includes relevant information about the operations of WLA during the year and details of future developments. It also discloses information required by WLA's rules and policies or by law. A copy of this report can be downloaded from the members' only section of the WLA website after its Annual General Meeting.

### **Website**

WLA's website provides up to date information for all members. It includes advance notice of events, articles of interest, policies, information about membership, Committee member profiles and WLA's member distribution and referral system.

### **Member E-mails**

Regular emails are distributed to members who have submitted their email address to WLA. Examples of e-mails include advance notices of WLA events, external events, membership information, membership deals and offers and Scholarship opportunities for members.

### **Facebook**

The Associations Facebook page enables the Association to communicate with members and share information. The information contained on this social media site includes photographs and event notices.

# AUSTRALIAN WOMEN LAWYERS

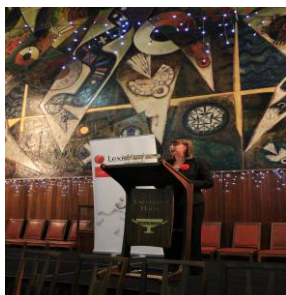


The previous financial year for Australian Women Lawyers' (AWL) was extremely busy with the Association planning its annual conference for August 2012, redeveloping its website and appointing a new President and Vice President, for the financial year. During this timeframe the Association also held face to face meetings in Darwin (August 2011) and Melbourne (March 2012).

The AWL Board of Directors for the period 1 September 2011 – 30 August 2012 consisted of the following members:

- Rebecca Lee – President – Perth
- Chris Melis– Vice President – Victorian Women Lawyers'
- Sara WegeWood – Secretary – Australian Capital Territory
- Kim Knights – Treasurer – Victoria Women Barristers Association
- Sandra Taglieri - Tasmania
- Sue Oliver – Northern Territory
- Susan McNeil – Queensland
- Amy Challans – South Australia
- Rebecca Barry– New South Wales

## Australian Women Lawyers National Conference -2012



AWL held its 4<sup>th</sup> National Conference from 10-12 August 2012 at the Australian National University Canberra. Titled "Women Lawyers in a Public World" approximately 150 delegates heard key note addresses from the Federal Attorney General Nicola Roxon, Chief Justice of the Family Court, Justice Diana Bryant, Chief Justice of the High Court Robert French, and Justice Virginia Bell from the High Court of Australia.

Delegates were also treated to Australia's Global Ambassador for Women and Girls, Penny Williams who spoke to delegates about the key role that the lawyers play in advancing the legal protection of women and girls globally and the unique responsibility of the legal profession in advancing this group in society. Ms Williams's appointment to the role of Global Ambassador is of special significance to AWL as the position was created by the Prime Minister Julia Gillard in response to lobbying and campaigning by AWL and other likeminded organisations.

The conference program also featured discussion panels on the topics of digital and intellectual property rights, the perils and opportunities created by social media for practitioners and an update on the Trailblazing Women and the Law project being run Professor Kim Rubenstein from Australian National University.

Following the conference Ms Amy Challans from the Women Lawyers' Association of SA was elected Vice President of AWL and Adelaide was announced as the host city for the 5th National Conference to be held in 2014.

## Website

AWL recently launched its 'find a female barrister' web page. Located on the AWL website this page is designed to provide a 'one stop shop' for any firm or potential client to source a female practitioner at the independent bar, in all States and Territories of Australia. The web page also includes links to the Law Council of Australia Equitable Briefing policy. In the coming months AWL will be populating its website with new and updated content to ensure that it is relevant to our constituent bodies. Make sure that you log on!

## AWL Award



The patron of AWL, Chief Justice Diana Bryant, announced the first recipient of the AWL Award at the National Conference Gala Dinner in Canberra. Congratulations go to Elizabeth Heenan from Western Australia who was announced the inaugural recipient.

# WLA EVENTS

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (2011)



The 2011 Annual General Meeting of the Women Lawyers Association (SA) was held on 22 September 2011 at the South Australian Lyceum Club.

Outgoing President Shelley O'Connell chaired the meeting and highlighted several of the year's activities which included the annual Christmas Drinks with the Judiciary, the 100<sup>th</sup> International Women's Day Breakfast, the annual Movie Night Fundraiser and the Quiz Night

fundraiser, career events for tertiary students and our work at the national level with Australian Women Lawyers towards the AWL Conference in 2012.

Shelley made special mention of the centenary of the Female Law Practitioners Act (SA) 1911 and referred to a number of activities held to recognise and celebrate this milestone. In particular, she referred to the upcoming Centenary Dinner at the Stamford Plaza on 18 November 2011 and the historic photograph taken at the Adelaide University soccer oval on 18 October 2011 to celebrate female legal practitioners in South Australia.

Shelley also acknowledged the number of females appointed to senior positions during the previous financial year including Her Honour Senior Judge Susanne Cole who was elevated to the position of Senior Judge of the Environment, Resources and Development Court, and was the Association's keynote speaker at the AGM.

In addition, she thanked the Committee for their hard work and dedication during the previous 12 months to ensure that 2010/2011 was a successful year. She thanked WLA's Patron The Honourable Justice Margaret Nyland and acknowledged the contribution of former Committee member Philippa Branson. In addition she welcomed the committee's newest member Amy Nikolovski, thanked WLA Secretary Amy Challans for compiling the Annual General Report and acknowledged the work of the Association's Treasurer Ilona Schultz for ensuring that WLA's finances were kept in order.

Following the Presidents report, the Association's Treasurer Ilona Schultz reported the good news that WLA had been able to donate approximately \$3,000 to Nunga Mimirar (its nominated charity for 2010) as result of the previous year's fund raising activities.

At the AGM the following members were elected to the committee for 2011/2012:

### Office Bearers

- Christina Von Muenster (President)
- Shelley O'Connell (Vice-President)
- Amy Challans (Secretary and Australian Women Lawyers Director)
- Ilona Schultz (Treasurer)

### Ordinary Committee Members

- Melissa Ballantyne
- Rachel Cain
- Kerry Clark
- Daniella Di Girolamo
- Taruna Heuzenroeder
- Adeline Lim
- Adriana Pasquale
- Amy Nikolovski

After the appointment of the Committee, Her Honour Senior Judge Susanne Cole gave a fascinating key note address reflecting on 100 years since the passing of the Female Practitioners Act.

Following this speech all members mingled and took the opportunity to reflect upon the great progress that has been made by women in the law since the passing of the Act.

### **QUIZ NIGHT (2011)**



Article not submitted

### **CHRISTMAS DRINKS WITH THE JUDICIARY (2011)**



The WLA's annual Christmas Drinks with the Judiciary was held at the Lyceum Club on Thursday 24 November 2011. The event was well attended by WLA members and the Judiciary, and the crowd was entertained by the Cam Blockland Trio, made up of musicians hailing from the Elder Conservatorium of Music. Proceeds raised from the raffle went to the Birthing Kit Foundation, WLA's charity of choice for 2011.

### **STRATEGIC PLANNING DAY (2012)**

On Saturday 11 February 2012, the WLA Committee held its annual Strategic Planning Day. As an outcome of this meeting the Committee appointed its nominated Charity for the 2012 calendar year and determined the range of activities that the Association was going to host including the establishment of sub-committees.

List below are the outcomes of this meeting:

- Migrants Women's Centre- 2012 Charity
- Membership Services/promotion- sponsor Women Studies Book Prizes at Adelaide University and Flinders University on a bi-annual basis.
- March: Unifem Breakfast
- April: Alternate Careers Seminar
- May: Movie Night (No 1)- changed to September as the committee thought "Kath and Kim" would get a larger audience- attendance on the night was 96 guests- the biggest event held.
- July: Wine function
- August: Annual General Meeting
- September: Bar Reader's Drinks (dependent on the number of female readers)
- October: Movie Night (No 2) (possibility)
- November/December: Christmas Drinks

**UNIFEM BREAKFAST (2012)**

WLA booked a table for the UN Women International Women's Day Breakfast, which this year was held on Friday 9 March, 2012. Despite the early start, the event was, as usual, very well attended. Approximately 2069 people attended and \$60,000 was raised for UN Women. The breakfast was hosted by Senator Penny Wong and the guest speaker was the inspiring Alice Pung, a Melbourne writer, lawyer and teacher. Alice's speech was wonderfully funny, moving and inspiring. She recounted her own experiences growing up, and reflected on her mother's experiences of isolation and marginalisation as an illiterate migrant woman. Although this event occurs during the madness of the Fringe, and painfully early in the morning, it is always worth dragging yourself out of bed for, and we hope to put together at least a table of women lawyers every year.

**ALTERNATIVE CAREERS SEMINAR (2012)**

Article not submitted.

**WOMEN IN WINE FUNCTION**

On Thursday 26 July the WLA held it's first "Women in Wine" function at Anthony Mason Chambers. Craneford Wines were kind enough let us borrow Kristin Falkenberg, their production manager, and Carol Riebke, their wine maker, who held a wine tasting and spoke to the attendees about being a woman in the wine industry. There were a variety of wines available, showcasing the styles that Craneford produce. It was a great evening with Craneford Wines, and was enjoyed by all.