

Women Lawyers' Association  
South Australia Inc



# **Annual General Report**

## **2012/13**



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# ABOUT WOMEN LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED

The Women Lawyers' Association of South Australia Incorporated ("WLASA" or "the Association") is a professional association that represents the interests of women legal practitioners across South Australia. WLASA is a constituent body of the national organisation Australian Women Lawyers and its Committee meets once a month at the Law Society of South Australia. WLASA 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. WLASA also fosters networking amongst women members of the profession.

Membership of WLASA 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 WLASA:

- 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

WLASA was founded with a number of objectives in mind.

These objectives include to:

- 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 WLASA's objectives
- fulfill any other objects the members of WLASA may in a General Meeting decide

## STRATEGIC VISION

WLASA'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 lawyers

In achieving its strategic vision WLASA 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 WLASA. WLASA 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 WLASA aims to earn the respect of all parties that it deals and interacts with.

As a professional association, WLASA 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 WLASA and are its most important asset. It is essential to WLASA that its members feel proud of their involvement and participation in WLASA and receive benefit from their membership.

### Excellence

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

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

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

# GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

## INTRODUCTION

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

WLASA 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 WLASA 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 of WLASA'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 2012 - 30 August 2013 including the Strategic Planning Day in February 2013.

## MEMBERS' ROLE

The Constitution of WLASA 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 WLASA 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 WLASA 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.

WLASA 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 2013 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 WLASA, its business and affairs.

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

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 and fundraisers
- To manage certain projects outlined in WLASA's business plan

- To make recommendations to the Committee on a range of matters

## **COMMUNICATION TO MEMBERS**

WLASA aims to ensure that members are informed of all major developments affecting its membership. Information is communicated to members as follows:

### **Annual report**

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

### **Website**

WLASA'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 WLASA's member distribution and referral system.

### **Member E-mails**

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

### **Facebook and LinkedIn**

The WLASA Facebook page enables us to communicate with members and share information. The information contained on this social media site includes photographs and event notices. The LinkedIn profile is similar but does not to date share photos.

# ANNUAL GENERAL REPORT 2012/2013

## WELCOME and PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome to the Annual General Report of WLASA for the financial year 2012/2013.

The Committee would like to thank all of WLASA'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 WLASA as its patron.

It has been an exciting year for the Women Lawyers Association of SA. In April 2013 we successfully launched the Hon Margaret Nyland AM Long Lunch, in partnership with the Law Society. The inaugural Lunch was a great success, and we hope to make it an annual event. Margaret's speech was both insightful and entertaining, and we thank her for her continued support of our organisation.

Amy Challans, a long standing member of the committee and former secretary of WLASA has been elected as President of our parent body, Australian Women Lawyers. We congratulate Amy and look forward to working with the national committee to host the Australian Women Lawyers Conference in Adelaide in 2014.

The Committee of the Association doubles as the Law Society's Women Lawyers Committee, and wearing both these hats our business includes the serious work of consulting and commenting on policy and law reform, as well as providing opportunities for women lawyers to meet and network through our social events. Each year the President of the Association is consulted by the Chief Justice in relation to the appointment of Senior Counsel, an important recognition of women in the profession given that the top jobs at both the Law Society and the Bar Association continue to be overwhelmingly held by men.

Together with the Human Rights Committee, the Women Lawyers Committee of the Law Society formed a working group to provide a detailed submission in relation to the issue of same sex marriage. We are pleased to note that following consultation with the profession the Law Society Council substantially revised its position on this issue.

The Committee endeavours to raise the profile of the Women Lawyers Association, and the issues of concern to us. We anticipate passing the necessary constitutional amendments at this AGM to allow us to launch a corporate membership program, which has been under consideration for some years. It is hoped that engagement with firms, rather than just individuals, will raise the Association's profile and also provide much needed funds to enable us to continue to engage with the profession through a program of events.

It has also been an eventful year for me personally, with the birth of my son Sebastian in early June. I would like to thank the Committee for their support, which has allowed me to continue in my role as President while on maternity leave. I also owe particular thanks to Vice President Daniella Di Girolamo.



## FEATURES

### WLASA's Brand New Website

At this year's AGM WLASA is proud to announce and celebrate the launch of its brand new website. It has only been about 4 years since we last had a new website launch and while this is only a relatively short time ago, how technology has changed!

The main reason the committee decided to start afresh with our website was the ease of updating information. Our old site required us to contact the web-designer almost every time we wanted to change even a minor thing on the site. Our new site has been set up with Wordpress. This platform is very user friendly and means that the committee can add and delete pages and content almost as easily as creating a word document. This is a major improvement for us and will enable the committee to keep the information on the website current and relevant.

We also wanted to ensure WLASA projects a professional image to the legal and wider communities. We thought this of particular importance with the plan to launch a Corporate Membership and dovetails nicely with the creation of a brand new logo as well.

One new feature we plan to develop with this site is a **Find a Female Lawyer** directory and the committee invites all individual members to indicate on their membership renewal forms whether they wish to appear in this directory and in which areas they practice. If at any time you wish to update the information appearing in the directory please email the secretary at: [Admin@womenlawyerssa.org.au](mailto:Admin@womenlawyerssa.org.au)

You will find the new website at the same URL: <http://www.womenlawyerssa.org.au>. We have tried to include content on the site that we think the members want and need. However, please email the secretary ([Admin@womenlawyerssa.org.au](mailto:Admin@womenlawyerssa.org.au)) if you have any comments or feedback – we are always looking to improve our services to the membership.

### New Logo, new Corporate Member category, and changes to the Constitution.

This year the Women Lawyers' Association of SA Inc has decided to branch out and offer firms corporate membership, which has resulted in the drafting of proposed changes to the WLASA constitution.

#### *Corporate Membership*

For some years now, WLASA has had a relatively small and disproportionate membership base when compared to the number of female lawyers and female law graduates in SA. The Committee felt that it was time we had a membership drive to increase our numbers. It was decided that having a new category of membership, that is corporate membership would help boost our numbers.

Legal staff (both male and female) of firms that sign up for corporate membership will enjoy several benefits including:

- Attendance at WLASA events at member discounted rates;
- Attendance at 1 free WLASA hosted CPD session per year;
- Access to a support network of women lawyers extending beyond the workplace, informal mentoring, career advice and friendship; and
- Provision of regular newsletters from our national body, Australian Women Lawyers plus regular communication via email and the WLASA Facebook and LinkedIn pages.

Each organisation that signs up as a corporate member will also receive the following benefits:

- Provision of copies of policies, law reform papers and other publications relevant to the promotion and support of women practicing law in South Australia;
- A listing on the 'Corporate Member' page of the WLASA website together with a link to their website;
- Use of the WLASA "Corporate Member" logo in their marketing materials, website, email signature etc at their election;
- Opportunities to be the exclusive sponsor of certain WLASA events;

- The ability to advertise positions vacant at their organisation through WLASA by email circular to our membership; and
- Entitlement to one vote at each year's AGM and other member meetings, to be exercised by a nominated official delegate.

The official Launch for the Corporate Membership Package is due to be held on Thursday 31 October 2013 at The Marquis, Gouger Street Adelaide.

#### *New Logo*

As a part of WLASA's push to entice corporate members, the committee decided that the WLA logo could use an update to give us a new, more modern, look. As a result we asked University of SA Visual Communications graduate, Nadia Di Girolamo, to come up with some ideas for a new logo in keeping with WLASA's traditional colour, purple. Apart from the colour scheme, which has a historical connection to the women's rights movement, Nadia was given free rein to design.

A series of logos were designed for consideration. There was a lot of discussion between Committee members and ultimately two very different designs were front runners for selection. In the end the Committee opted for a typographic logo, which you might have already seen on some recent WLA correspondence.

The Committee would like to extend a big thank you to Nadia Di Girolamo for designing the new logo.



## TREASURER'S REPORT

1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013

	Balance \$
<b>Opening Bank Balance at 1 July 2012</b>	<b>6,770.13</b>
Credits 1 July 2012 - 30 June 2013	6,252.61
<b>Total credits</b>	<b>13,022.74</b>
Debits 1 July 2012 - 30 June 2013	5,662.58
<b>Credits less debits</b>	<b>7,360.16</b>
<b>Reconciled balance</b>	<b>7,360.16</b>
<b>Closing Bank Balance at 30 June 2013</b>	<b>7,360.16</b>
<b>Profit for the year</b>	<b>590.03</b>

### SUMMARY OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

INCOME	\$	EXPENDITURE	\$
Membership subscriptions	3,010.00	Australian Women Lawyers	648.30
Functions	2,487.00	Functions	2,873.32
Donations Received	100.00	Donations Made	1,300.00
Bank Interest	25.61	Gifts	174.00
Unknown deposits	630.00	Miscellaneous expenses	666.96
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>6,252.61</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>5,662.58</b>

## TREASURER'S NOTES

### Comparison 2011-2012 to 2012-2013 Financial Years Income and Expenditure

Income	11/12 FY	12/13 FY	Expenditure	11/12 FY	12/13 FY
Membership Subscriptions	3,150.00	3,010.00	Australian Women Lawyers	689.00	648.30
Functions	6,006.00	2,487.00	Functions	2,646.23	2,873.32
Donations Received	960.00	100.00	Donations Made	2,750.00	1,300.00
Bank Interest	29.28	25.61	Website	355.00	0.00
Unknown receipts	0.00	630.00	Gifts	99.15	174.00
			AWL Conference Scholarship	1,303.00	0.00
			Misc	1,090.67	666.96
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>10,145.28</b>	<b>6,252.61</b>		<b>8,933.05</b>	<b>5,662.58</b>

The past financial year for the Women Lawyers' Association of South Australia Incorporated ("WLASA" or "the Association") was not as financially successful as previous years. This is predominantly due to the launch of the Margaret Nyland AM Long lunch, an event which WLASA hopes to hold yearly. Although WLASA made less in income than previous years, expenditure is less than previous years, which has maintained a profit result. WLASA would like to sincerely thank its patron Justice Margaret Nyland and founding member FMC Charlotte Kelly for their generous donations and ongoing support of WLASA.

Although the Margaret Nyland AM Long Lunch was not a financial success and significantly impacted on our income from functions, it was an extremely popular event which WLASA may be able to profit from in coming years. Holding the lunch meant that WLASA was unable to hold other fund raising events such as movie nights or quiz nights which has been our main source of income in previous years.

Our most financially successful function was the Movie Night which made \$913.00. Although WLASA did not make a profit from the Judiciary Christmas Drinks or the Long Lunch, a donation of \$1,000 was made to the Migrant Women's Support Services Inc who was our designated charity for the year and \$300.00 was provided to a Flinders University Prize Winner.

WLASA has in the past substantially reduced its expenditure on functions primarily by Committee Members assisting with catering rather than outsourcing to professional caterers. Over the past year, WLASA has balanced the time and effort of Committee Members taking on these responsibilities with some outsourced catering. WLASA will continue to endeavour to appropriately distribute these responsibilities.

Bank interest was down slightly as a result of WLASA having fewer funds in its account to earn interest. Expenditure on gifts has increased but miscellaneous expenditure has decreased. Miscellaneous expenditure consisted of end of year financial drinks, ongoing eGive fees, and the WLASA Committee Christmas meeting. Miscellaneous income of \$630.00 is a result of poor record keeping and unforeseen circumstances. 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 2013)

The profiles of the Committee members of WLASA who held office during the 2012/2013 financial year and until the date of this report are as follows:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>PROFILE</u>	<u>ACTIVITIES</u>
<p><b><i>Taruna Heuzenroeder</i></b>  <b><i>President</i></b></p> 	<p>I have been a member since about 2004 and I joined the Committee in 2010.</p> <p>I joined WLASA 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.</p> <p>I enjoy the wide range of experiences of the other women on the committee and I bring to the Committee the token representative of the bar.</p>	<p>Christmas Drinks subcommittee (2012)</p> <p>UniFem Breakfast (2012)</p> <p>Women and Wine Function subcommittee (2012)</p> <p>Marriage Equality Working Group (2013)</p>

<p><b>Daniella Di Girolamo</b> <b>Vice President</b></p> 	<p>I have been a member since 2009 and a Committee member since 2010.</p> <p>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!</p> <p>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).</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Bar Readers' drinks (2012)</p> <p>Christmas Drinks subcommittee (2011-2013)</p> <p>Women and Wine Function subcommittee (2012)</p> <p>Membership sub committee (2013)</p> <p>Logo revamp (2013)</p> <p>EOFY drinks (2013)</p> <p>Corporate Launch (2013)</p> <p>Constitutional Amendments (2013)</p> <p>LinkedIn profile (2013)</p>
<p><b>Shelley O'Connell</b> <b>Secretary</b></p> 	<p>Member of WLASA and the Committee since 2006.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>I think I bring to WLASA commitment and enthusiasm and a desire to see our Association reach its goals as best we can.</p>	<p>Christmas Drinks subcommittee (2012-2013)</p> <p>Annual Report (2013)</p> <p>Marriage Equality Working Group (2013)</p>

**Laura Kessner**

**Treasurer**



Member and Committee Member since September 2012.

I joined Women Lawyers' Association of SA Inc because I am passionate about the progression towards equality of the legal rights of women in Australia in both the legal profession and in the community generally. As I have worked in male dominated industries since graduating from university, I have been frustrated at the 'old school' beliefs and practices currently occurring in today's society.

My current employer has demonstrated to me that it is possible for companies to keep up with current recommendations and changes in women's rights as they are recognised as an equal opportunity employer and promotes equal opportunity for women in the workplace in accordance with the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999 (Cth). I would be happy to discuss the general types of policies my employer has developed to comply with the Act and the effect this has on other employees for the purposes of providing research for submissions and recommendations on law reform.

I am able to provide insight into the roles and treatment of women in trustee and fiduciary roles and in estate planning and administration through my current employment where I have been involved with the development of estate planning, estate services and estate administration.

Christmas Drinks (2012)

<p><b>Melissa Ballantyne</b></p> 	<p>Member since 1998. Committee member since 2000 with the last 4 years as Vice-President.</p> <p>I joined WLASA because it was an opportunity to meet women practitioners from all parts of the profession.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>I bring to the Committee over 20 years' experience as a practitioner and a real passion for social justice and women's issues.</p>	<p>Alternative Careers Seminar subcommittee (2011-2013)</p> <p>Membership subcommittee (2011 &amp; 2012)</p> <p>Margaret Nyland Long Lunch (2013)</p> <p>Flinders Uni Law Careers Fair (2013)</p>
<p><b>Amy Challans</b> (AWL Director)</p> 	<p>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.</p> <p>I joined WLASA so that I could be actively involved in bringing a female perspective to the culture of the legal profession and to meet likeminded individuals.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>One of things that I enjoy most about being on the Committee is working with a group of likeminded, highly dedicated and enthusiastic professionals.</p>	<p>Christmas Drinks subcommittee (2012)</p> <p>AGM Report subcommittee (2011-2012)</p> <p>Website Redevelopment (2011-2013)</p>

<p><b>Toni Emanuele</b></p> 	<p>I have been a member of the Association and the Committee since 2012.</p> <p>I joined WLASA because it was an opportunity to meet women within the profession and other areas. The Association and Committee provides a great platform to address women's rights and issues. I enjoy being part of a diverse group of women who share similar objectives and ideas.</p> <p>I bring to the Committee my enthusiasm, interest for social justice and experience within the legal profession.</p>	<p>AGM (2013)</p>
<p><b>Adeline Lim</b></p> 	<p>I have been a member of the Association and Committee since 2011.</p> <p>I joined WLASA 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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Movie Night subcommittee (2012)  Alternate Careers Fair subcommittee (2012)  Facebook subcommittee (2012)  Corporate Membership subcommittee (2013)  Margaret Nyland Long Lunch (2013)</p>
<p><b>Amy Nikolovski</b></p> 	<p>I originally joined the Women Lawyers' Association of SA Inc in April 2009 and was appointed to the Committee in May 2011.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Movie Night subcommittee (2012/13)  Events subcommittee (2012/13)  Facebook subcommittee (2012)  Christmas Drinks (2012)  Corporate Membership Launch (2013)  Margaret Nyland Long Lunch (2013)</p>

<p><b>Christie Tsoubarakis (nee Harris)</b></p> 	<p>I completed a Bachelor of Laws and a Bachelor of Commerce (Accounting) at Adelaide University and was admitted to practice in 2007. I have been employed by Tindall Gask Bentley since my admission. I specialize in Motor Vehicle Accident Injury and Workers Compensation, as well as Public Liability and Property Damage. I am both a Member of the Law Society of South Australia and a Member of the Australian Lawyers Alliance.</p> <p>I became a Committee Member of the Women Lawyers' Association in 2012 as I was keen to meet other female practitioners who were also interested in promoting justice and equality for women and expand both my professional and social network. I have really enjoyed my time on this Committee.</p>	
<p><b>Christina Von Muenster</b></p> 	<p>I have been a member of WLASA and the Committee since September 2006.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Movie Night subcommittee (2012)  Membership subcommittee (2012)  Website Redevelopment (2012, 2013)  Constitutional Amendments (2013)</p>

The following Committee members retired/resigned during the 2012/13 year

- Megan Langford
- Ilona Schultz

The following Committee members were appointed during the 2012/2013 year

- Christina von Muenster

## **Nature of Operations and Principal Activities of WLASA**

The principal activities of WLASA during the 2012/2013 year were as follows:

### *Consultation, Recommendations and Nominations*

- Engaging in consultation with the Chief Justice regarding Special Counsel appointments
- Putting forward recommendations (through Australian Women Lawyers ) for appointment to the High Court
- Joining with the Human Rights Committee to make a detailed submission to the LSSA Council regarding same sex marriage.

### *Sponsorship*

- Sponsoring the law school prize for Women's Rights and the International Protection of Human Rights at Flinders University

### *Services For Members*

- Designing and developing new website with improved features and capabilities
- Hosting miscellaneous networking and fundraising functions
- Maintaining a Facebook page and establishing a LinkedIn profile to enhance the promotion of events and WLASA's communication with members

## **Future Operations of WLASA**

### *Services For Members*

- Continually improve WLASA'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 WLASA's state of affairs during the 2012/2013 financial year.

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

The only significant event occurring after balance date (30 August 2013), which may affect either WLASA's operations or results of those operations or the WLASA's state of affairs are the financials expended from the Corporate Membership Launch scheduled for 31 October 2013 and the Christmas Drinks with the Judiciary which is scheduled for 28 November 2013. WLASA does not expect to raise money from attendance at these functions but may incur financial costs associated with hosting the events. The expenditure from these events 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 or executive of WLASA, other than the launch of corporate membership options, which it is hoped will result in increased membership revenue in the next financial year.

# AUSTRALIAN WOMEN LAWYERS



## AWL Report 2012/2013

The previous financial year for Australian Women Lawyers (AWL) was extremely busy with focus on increasing its national profile and media presence in addition to appointing a new President and Vice President, for the financial year.

During this timeframe AWL held face to face meetings in Canberra (August 2012) and Melbourne (February 2013).

The AWL Board of Directors for the period 1 September 2012 – 30 August 2013 consisted of the following members:

- Kate Ashmor – President, Victorian Women Lawyers
- Amy Challans – Vice President, Women Lawyers' Association of SA
- Karen Twigg – Secretary, Women Lawyers Association of Australian Capital Territory
- Susie McNeil – Treasurer, Women Lawyers Association of Queensland
- Rebecca Barry – Women Lawyers Association of New South Wales
- Lisa Coffey and Georgina McMaster – Northern Territory Women Lawyers Association
- Elspeth Hensler - Women Lawyers Association of Western Australia
- Suzanne Kirton - Women Barristers Association of Victoria
- Sandra Taglieri and Bridget Rheinberger - Tasmania Women Lawyers

Throughout the 2012/2013 financial year AWL focused strongly on increasing its national profile and being active in the national media on a range of key issues impacting upon its members. In particular, AWL actively lobbied on issues relating to paid parental leave, child care reform and flexible work place practices and received extensive national television, radio, online and newspaper coverage.

In relation to setting the policy agenda AWL undertook its own investigation into the number of women across Australia appointed silk since Dame Roma in 1962, the number of women practising at the independent bar and the number of women appointed to judicial positions since 1995. These investigations uncovered a statistical picture that showed only 7.92% of female senior counsel practicing at the Independent Bar are female, 50 years after the appointment of Australia's first female silk, only 9.2% of women were appointed silk in 2012 and Australia's judiciary currently comprises 340 female judges or 33.53% of the total judiciary. As a result of these investigations AWL's findings were published in the Australian Newspaper. For further information on these investigations please refer to the attached media releases.

During the last financial year AWL through its participation on the Equalizing Opportunities in the Law Committee of the Law Council of Australia actively campaigned for its members to complete the National Attrition and Reengagement study to assist the legal profession obtain qualitative and quantitative data as to why women leave the legal profession. Through its participation on this committee AWL will continue through 2013/2014 and beyond to be actively involved in lobbying for cultural change across the profession to address systemic/cultural bias against the recognition and progression of women.

In addition to lobbying for law reform and policy change AWL celebrated its 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on 9 September 2012. To acknowledge and celebrate this achievement AWL hosted a gala dinner in Melbourne on 17 August 2013 at the Grand Hyatt. For further on this dinner please tune in to next year's annual report for a full breakdown.

In 2013/2014 AWL looks forward to an exciting and challenging year as it prepares for its national conference to be held in Adelaide. It also looks forward to lobbying all political parties in the lead up to the federal election on important issues such as paid parental leave, child care reform, flexible work place practices, same sex marriage and changes to Anti-Discrimination legislation.

### **AWL 15<sup>th</sup> Birthday Gala Dinner**

On Saturday 17 August 2013 AWL celebrated its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary in style with a gala dinner at the Grand Hyatt in Melbourne. Approximately 200 guests joined the Hon. Chief Justice of the High Court Robert French, the Hon. Chief Justice of the Family Court of Australia Diana Bryant and key note speaker Amanda Vanstone. During the evening AWL raised over \$1000 for the Red Cross and guests enjoyed entertaining speeches from AWL's patron the Hon. Chief Justice Diana Bryant and former Federal Minister for Justice Amanda Vanstone. During the evening AWL acknowledged all of its past Board members and screened video messages from its past President's reflecting on their achievements during their term as President. The location of this event was chosen in recognition of the Grand Hyatt being the location of AWL's official launch on 9 September 1997. The night couldn't have been possible without its two key sponsors Foley's List and Jacinta Fish Legal Recruitment.



# WLASA EVENTS 2012/2013

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (2012)

The 2012 Annual General Meeting of the Women Lawyers Association (SA) was held on 27 September 2012 at Anthony Mason Chambers.

Outgoing President Christina Von Muenster chaired the meeting and highlighted several of the Association's activities over the last 12 months which included the annual Christmas Drinks with the Judiciary, the 'Alternate Careers in the Law' seminar at the University of Adelaide, the UNIFEM International Women's Day Breakfast (organised by The Hon Senator Penny Wong), the fourth annual movie night with a screening of the movie "Kath and Kimderella" and the 'Bar Readers' drinks.

Christina acknowledged the number of females appointed to senior positions during 2012 including Elizabeth Bolton who was appointed as a Judge of the District Court and Sandra McDonald who was appointed silk.

The 2012 year was significant for the Association as it marked the 50th Anniversary of Dame Roma Mitchell being appointed Silk. Most notably, the Association also recognised the Honourable Justice Margaret Nyland's impending retirement from the Supreme Court of South Australia in November 2012 after 25 years on the Bench with nineteen of those on the Supreme Court. Her Honour was the Association's keynote speaker at the AGM.

In addition, Christina thanked the Committee for their hard work and dedication during the previous 12 months to ensure that 2011/2012 was a successful year as well as thanking WLASA's Patron the Honourable Justice Margaret Nyland.

At the AGM the following members were elected to the committee for 2012/2013:

### Office Bearers

- Taruna Heuzenroeder (President)
- Daniella Di Girolamo (Vice-President)
- Shelley O'Connell (Secretary)
- Megan Langford (Treasurer)

### Ordinary Committee Members

- Melissa Ballantyne
- Amy Challans
- Toni Emanuele
- Christie Harris
- Laura Kessner
- Adeline Lim
- Amy Nikolovski
- Ilona Schultz

It was noted that Christina von Muenster had elected not to renominate at this stage but intended to stay on the WLASA Committee as an observer.

Following a marvellous key note speech by Justice Nyland 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.

## CHRISTMAS DRINKS WITH THE JUDICIARY (2012)



The WLASA's annual Christmas Drinks with the Judiciary was held at the Prince Alfred Hotel on Thursday 29 November 2012. The event was well attended by WLASA members and the Judiciary. Milenka Vasekova from the Migrant Women Support Service was the guest speaker and proceeds raised from the raffle went to the Migrant Women Support Service.



The Christmas Drinks event for 2013 is scheduled for 28 November so keep an eye out for your invitation and save the date!

## STRATEGIC PLANNING DAY (2013)

The WLA 2013 Strategic Planning day was held on Saturday 9 February.

The events that were held in the 2012 calendar year were discussed in detail and whether or not they were successful and needed to be held again. A new Calendar event "The Margaret Nyland Long Lunch" was also put forward to honor our Patron following her retirement from the Bench.

The following events were confirmed to go ahead in the 2013 calendar year with each committee member being allocated to one or more events:

- UNIFEM Breakfast- (March) (table to be organized if possible or alternatively advise members of event);
- Margaret Nyland Long Lunch (April);
- Alternative Careers Fair (Adelaide University);
- Flinders & Adelaide University Careers Fairs;
- Movie Night (September- depending on movie availability);
- Bar Readers Drinks (to be determined by how many women would be sitting the course this year);
- Drinks with the Judiciary (November).

Much discussion was also had with respect to starting a Corporate Membership package to be offered to employees as a way of expanding WLASA's membership and profile.

## FLINDERS UNIVERSITY CAREERS FAIR 2013

On the 18 March Committee members Melissa Ballantyne and Megan Langford attended this annual Fair. We provided information to many students about the role and functions of WLASA. We have attended this Fair on a number of occasions and appreciate the opportunity to talk directly with students not just about WLASA but also generally about career opportunities in the law. Many thanks to Flinders University for the invitation to attend.

## THE HONOURABLE MARGARET NYLAND LONG LUNCH 2013

(As aforementioned in the President's Report)



## ALTERNATIVE CAREERS SEMINAR – ADELAIDE UNIVERSITY 2013

On the 27 May the WLASA in conjunction with the Adelaide University Law Students Society (AULSS) conducted an alternative careers seminar with the aim of giving students information about career options and progression beyond traditional private firms. A panel of speakers comprising Committee member Melissa Ballantyne (community legal centre sector), Joanne Deuter (barrister), Mandy Edwards (Legal Services Commission) and Alicia Burgemeister (corporate in house lawyer) provided a snapshot of their careers to date, information about working in their positions and some general tips about furthering career opportunities. This seminar has been an annual event for some years now and we have presented a variety of speakers over that time. Our sincere thanks go to AULSS representatives for working with us to ensure the success of these seminars.

## FINALLY.....

**Congratulations go to members of our Committee who had significant personal "events" in their lives in the 2012/2013 year!**

- Christina von Muenster gave birth to Louise, a little sister for Nick;
- Alison Robins (our former LSSA CRP for the Women Lawyers Committee) gave birth to Emily and promptly moved to Bangkok for her husband's work;
- Taruna Heuzenroeder gave birth to Sebastian;
- And Christie Harris became Mrs Tsoubarakis in early 2013.