

# Obituary

Alicia Johnson 1.9.63-10.2.91

Alicia came to Darwin in 1987 after completing her Law degree at Monash University with many High Distinctions.

She commenced her Articles of Clerkship with Baker McKenzie of Melbourne, then moved to Darwin to complete her Articles with Mildrens. Shortly after being admitted to the Bar of the Supreme Court of the Northern Territory, Alicia took up a position in Darwin with Australian Legal Aid.

From a very nervous, unsure Articled Clerk in private practice Alicia blossomed into an extremely competent public lawyer who was always willing to do her best for her client.

## Best representation

She believed in ensuring anyone who came to her had the best legal representation she could give.

Just before her death, Alicia had resigned from Legal Aid Commission and took up a full-time lecturing position in the Law School at the Northern Territory University.

She was very excited by the prospect of teaching and had attacked the preparation of lecture material with her usual enthusiasm.

It is a pity the students will not have the opportunity to get to know her.

Apart from practising the law, Alicia sought to involve herself in the community with gusto.

## Community involvement

Her involvement with the Family Planning Association, Rape Crisis Centre, Environment Centre and many other associations and projects kept her very busy.

Alicia was a person who, once she had given a commitment to a cause, poured all her energy into that cause.

Her selflessness was evident in her priorities: hockey would give way to interviewing clients in gaol; lunch

would give way to committee meetings.

If Alicia's friends wanted to see her on a purely social basis, it would always be a quick lunch during a work day or on a rare evening when she didn't have another commitment.

Despite the limited time she allowed herself for social pursuits, Alicia had many friends. Those friends say she was well liked because she never had a bad word for anyone.

She always made an effort (if, indeed, it was an effort for her) to make the person she was talking to feel very special.

## Tribute

The respect people felt for Alicia is perhaps best illustrated by the Women's Advisory Council's recent decision to sponsor an annual lecture called the *Alicia Johnson Memorial Lecture*.

The inaugural lecture will be held on her birthday, September 1.

For one so young to earn such a tribute is remarkable -- but then Alicia was a remarkable person.

With Alicia's death, the world has lost an intelligent, caring and very special person.

Her friends gathered to mourn her loss at a memorial service at her home at Bullocky Point last month.

The Society extends sincere condolences to her family, and her friends give thanks for the time they had with her.

## Defence home amendments affect property settlements

A recent amendment to the Defence Services Homes Act (1918) may have a significant impact on property settlement and family welfare matters. Felicity Barr of the Defence Service Homes (DSH) said the changes mean that where a transfer of property is considered, the transfer cannot be approved by DSH where a DSH subsidy is payable and the proposed transferee is not an eligible person under the DSH Act.

She said options available to a separated/divorced spouse in these circumstances include utilising the spouse's eligibility (if the spouse is also an eligible person), leaving the property in the joint names of the eligible person and spouse, and approaching the Westpac Banking Corporation which may be willing to transfer the loan on an unsubsidised basis. Ms Barr said DSH clients who lodged an application to transfer property prior to the date of assent to the amendments may be affected by savings provisions.

"I fully appreciate that this change of approach may cause some difficulties in the administration of family law matters where a DSH-subsidised home is involved," Ms Barr said.

Ms Barr said people seeking clarification of the changes should contact her at PO Box 21, Woden in the ACT, or telephone (06) 2891111.

## James wins ASC post

Peter James of Ward Keller has been appointed to the NT Regional Consultative Committee of the Australia Securities Commission. Mr James said his appointment to the committee was made on an individual basis rather than as a representative of a particular organisation. But, he said: "I would still regard myself at least as a liaison officer for the Law Society and will be prepared to provide the Society with reports from time to time."