

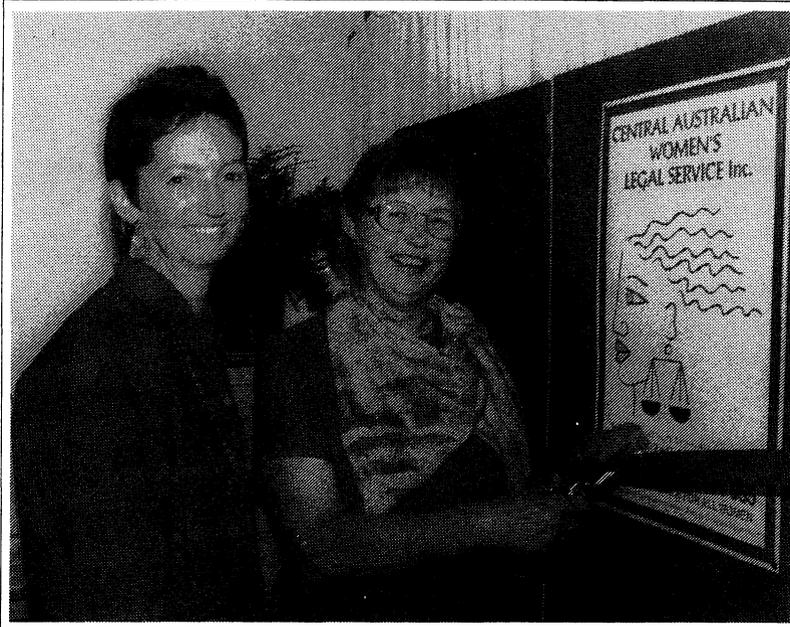
# Central Australian Women's Legal Service

The Central Australian Women's Legal Service Inc. (CAWLS) was officially opened by the Deputy for the Administrator, Mrs Minna Sitzler on 20th May 1997.

The opening was well attended by members of the legal profession and other community representatives and was held at the CAWLS office at Suite 3, 15 Leichhardt Terrace, Alice Springs.

CAWLS is funded by the Commonwealth Attorney-Generals' Department. Funding for women's legal services throughout Australia came about as a result of the Australian Law Reform Commission's inquiry: *Equality before the Law - Justice for Women* in 1993/1994. The creation of the service also represents years of hard work by a small, but dedicated group of women (some of whom are lawyers) who form the management committee.

CAWLS aims to provide legal assistance and representation for women in



Nanette Rogers, solicitor & Chairperson, CAWLS and Mrs Minna Sitzler

Central Australia, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, with special concern for women who face additional discrimination for reasons such as, but not limited to, race, culture, poverty, language, sexuality and disability. Special concern is also extended to women who are affected by domestic violence,

Aboriginal women in remote communities and all women who cannot afford to access other legal services. In addition to the provision of legal advice, as well as case work, CAWLS offers free workshops to interested communities and organisations about women and the law. CAWLS employs a coordinator, a para-legal worker and one solicitor.

CAWLS is not intended to take work away from private practitioners, nor is it intended to duplicate legal

aid services. In addition to the Australian Law Reform Commission's interim report which identified areas in which women were not afforded access to the justice system, or equality within it, CAWLS engaged independent local consultants in May last year who identified further areas of need in Central Australia. Consequently CAWLS is designed to complement existing legal services and provide assistance to women who are not able to access existing services.

CAWLS may be able to provide general assistance to practitioners in the Territory given its emphasis on women in the law. Its



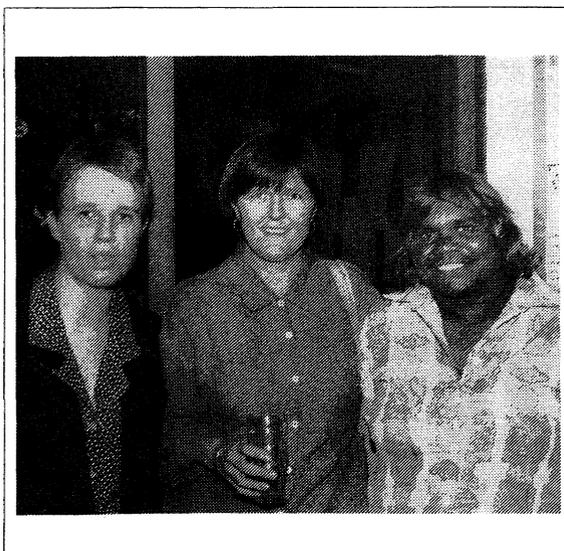
Max Horton, Caro Walters & John Birch

networking abilities and resources database are significant, and practitioners may wish to bear this in mind in the event that they require assistance in specific areas.

I am sure all practitioners welcome the establishment of CAWLS which looks forward to working in association with members of the profession.

Address for CAWLS is PO Box 3496, Alice Springs, NT 0871, telephone 8952 4055, fax 8952 4033.

- Jodeen Carney  
Management Committee Member



Jodeen Carney, Jane Lloyd & Helen Ward