

# NT Women Lawyers Association

by Melanie Little, President

## Interpreters for Aboriginal People

The Office of the NT Anti-Discrimination Commissioner is holding a public inquiry into "The Provision of Interpreter Services in Aboriginal Languages by the Northern Territory Government", with written submissions closing on March 31, 1999. There will also be the opportunity for oral submissions. The inquiry will report to the Attorney General.

NTWLA will be making a submission on this important issue and seeks input from members. In particular if you have any examples of clients who have suffered disadvantage due to the lack of interpreter services your assistance would be appreciated.

If you wish to assist in the preparation of the submission please contact Cassandra Goldie or myself.

## Domestic Violence Forum

NTWLA is co-hosting a Community Forum on Domestic Violence and the Law entitled "Who are you listening to?" - to be held at the Harbour Room at the Diocesan Office of the Anglican Church (Smith & The Esplanade) Darwin on Friday March 26, 1999 between 10am and 4pm. Please contact Julie Franz from Domestic Violence Legal Help on 89 413394 if you want a copy of the programme or more information.

## Australian Women Lawyers Board Meeting and Alex Richards Visit

The Board of AWL met in Darwin on January 30, 1999. We were pleased to be able to host the meeting and believe it went well. AWL is planning an active year for 1999 - including focusing the Republic debate and Reconciliation. On Saturday evening we hosted dinner for the Board and the dinner was well attended by the local profession. We were pleased that Her Honour Justice Sally Thomas was also able to attend. The President of Australian Women Lawyers, Alex Richards, opened the Legal Year for 1999.

She highlighted the achievements of AWL and the NT Legal Profession in recent times. It was a daunting range of activities and issues. On February 2 members of NTWLA meet for breakfast and this allowed Alex the opportunity to meet with her on a more informal basis. Later that day, the local profession in Alice Springs organised dinner for Alex which was well attended. Congratulations! I hope that the event leads to future initiatives in the Red Centre. I believe that Alex and the whole Board of AWL now has a greater understanding of the

issues for women in the legal profession in the NT.

## Trials Through Time - Law Week May 1999

As I reported in an earlier edition of Balance 'Trials Through Time' will be performed by NT Women Lawyers for Law Week 1999. We will be performing new trials so any suggestions would be very welcome. We need script writers, actors, backstage and front of house volunteers. All who participated last year agree that it was a great experience, so contact us if you wish to be involved.

## Seminar on Salary Negotiations

To be held at Clayton Utz Board Room on Thursday 25 March 1999 and will be about Money Matters. For registration contact Sam Miles at Clayton Utz.

## Meeting with Reconciliation Minister

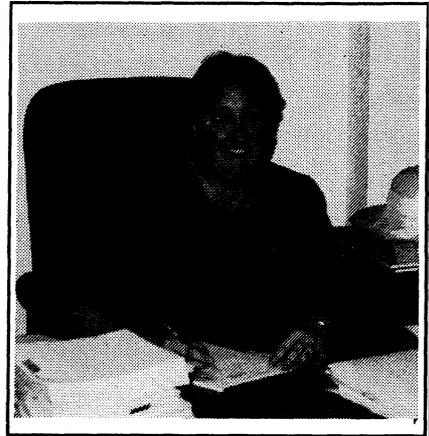
On 5 March 1999 I met with the Minister for Reconciliation, Mr Ruddock, at the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner's office. At the gathering was a number of people from Reconciliation groups including Australians for Reconciliation and Lawyers for Reconciliation. I handed the Minister the latest copy of Themis which included an article on the topic. I also advised him that reconciliation was an issue that Women Lawyers wanted to highlight this year. Any members who wish to be involved in that issue, please contact the Committee. Alternatively there are a myriad of groups based in the NT who are working actively towards Reconciliation and you may wish to be involved that way.

## Speakers Needed

NTWLA has approached the High Schools in the Darwin region to speak on Equal Opportunity and we have a number of schools who have already responded. Please contact me on 89 415 655 if you wish to be allocated a school (then you can negotiate a convenient time with the school contact). The content and format of the talk is really up to you although issues relating to employment and accommodation are likely to be relevant to the age group.

## Women at Risk in NT Prisons

Following a report in the NT News that women prisoners deemed at risk were held in the remand section of the prison at Darwin (that is the male section), we wrote to the Minister of Correctional Services seeking advice from him as to where female at risk prisoners were held and under what



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conditions - both in Alice Springs and Darwin. As yet we have not received a reply. We will follow this up and report back next month.

## Quiz Night

The NTWLA quiz night will be held at the Italian Club on Friday April 16, 1999.

## Drinks

There will be drinks at 5pm every 4th Thursday of the month at the Plaza Hotel Pub Bar - all welcome.

## Contacts for NTWLA

WLA Executive and Committee Members are: Therese Austin (DPP 89997533), Cassandra Goldie (DCLS 89413394), Kate Halliday (TEWLS 89419989), Britt Lardelli (Supreme Court 89 99 6537) Melanie Little (MJ Little 89415655) Janelle Martin (DPP 89997900), Margaret Orwin (Orwin & Associates 89418968), Barbara Tiffin (NAALAS 89815266).

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