

addressed his request to Donna).

The Law Society has also donated a title *Sheila* by Lloyd Davies. It is an inspirational read.

Finances

We sponsored the Dame Roma Memorial Debate at a total cost of approximately \$1,200. However, set off against this was the gold coin donation and the raffle which raised about \$400. The Quiz Afternoon raised \$520 and as previously stated \$500 of this has been earmarked for donating to Dili.

Thanks

Thanks must go to the committee and particularly to those who put in a huge effort to ensure that NTWLA remains an active and vibrant association. Thanks must also go to members generally. Special thanks to her Honour Justice Sally Thomas and the NT Law Society for their support of the Association.

I am standing down after two years on the committee, one as president. I wish the new president and committee well.

New Committee

The new committee includes the following representatives:

President, Sandra Robinson, Hunt & Hunt

Vice President, Kate Halliday, TEWLS

Secretary, Frieda Evans, Supreme Court

Treasurer, Sally Gearin, William Forster Chambers

Committee Member, Jenny Devlin, NT Legal Aid Commission

Committee Member, Jo Tomlinson, De Silva Hebron

Committee Member, Sylvia Tomazos, De Silva Hebron

Committee Member, Megan Lennie, Hunt & Hunt

Public Officer, Kathryn Ganley, Office of the Ombudsman

Vice President Kate Halliday will also continue as the NT representative to the Board of Australian Women Lawyers (AWL). Kate was offered sponsorship by AWL and NTWLA to attend the AGM of AWL but was unable to attend due to the sudden demise of Ansett. On this occasion Kate will attend by telephone.

DEFENDING THE ENVIRONMENT

The Environmental Defender's Office (NT) has been in operation since 1996. It is located in Darwin and was created in response to a need identified in the Keating government's Access to Justice reforms for specialist public-interest environmental law community legal centres. It is mainly funded by the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department under its Community Environmental Legal Program.

The Office is constituted as an incorporated association and is managed by a committee drawn from its membership. It is part of a national network of EDOs established in each capital city in Australia (plus one in North Queensland).

The role of the Office is to provide a range of legal services, including legal advice and information, representation, research into and comment on policy and law reform issues, and education about environmental law. Services are generally provided without charge, although the Office does seek to generate income from some of its activities.

The Office employs a solicitor, Tim Prichard, and an administrator, Sally Lineton.

"Environmental law is a huge and burgeoning field which touches upon almost every other area of law," said Tim. "The fascinating thing about my job is the variety. From defending uranium protestors to commenting on proposed environmental impact assessment legislation, advising

community groups and individuals about planning and heritage law, gene technology regulation, native title, mining, pollution and waste management, protection of endangered species, greenhouse, landclearing, the list is almost endless.

"Our object is to help people to protect the environment through the law.

"We are also active in seeking improvements to the law. Here in the Territory we are behind the other jurisdictions in many respects. For example, we badly need freedom of information laws, third party appeal rights in planning cases, improved heritage and environmental impact assessment laws, effective landclearing controls and better regulation of mining, to name a few. Importantly, we also need to provide for better enforcement of environmental laws and mechanisms for members of the community to take action where authorities are unable or unwilling to do so," said Tim.

"As a community organisation we want to ensure there are adequate opportunities for public input into decisions which affect the environment, such as decisions about zoning, assessment and approval of development proposals, management of natural resources and commercial use of wildlife.

"The benefits of involving the community in these decisions are apparent not only from a community and an environmental point of view, but from a commercial and governmental perspective as well," he said.

"Ultimately we all have to share the same environment so everyone should be able to have a say in what we do with it."

The EDO is open from 9.00 to 5.00 Monday to Friday. Tel: 8982 1182, Fax: 8982 1183, edont@edo.org.au. **New members welcome.**



Committee members at the Environmental Defenders Office AGM held at Darwin Community Legal Service on 26 September 2001. Tim Prichard is second from left.