

Court Network Newsletter

December 2006

Executive Director's Report

Great to see so many of you at this year's State Conference. I was very pleased with the job done by the organising committee, a big thanks to each one of them involved. I hope things at your court are going well. From my desk, I'd like to update you about several initiatives we are currently working on. As you may be aware, we are preparing to start services in the Brisbane Commonwealth Law Court. This is a pilot project to test the benefits of Court Network nationalising. Progress at this early stage is very good. Late last week, before we had even formally commenced the service, the profession gave up their meeting room for our use, a spacious room overlooking the river, a very positive and symbolic gesture. Thanks to those Family and FMC Networkers who have been shuttling up to Brisbane to help train the new team there.

We have been awarded a grant from the Victorian Law Foundation to improve the understanding of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse issues. Training for Networkers will commence in early 2007 and Nancy Hanley, our research and projects manager will be in touch with you in the new year with more information on this. Finally, remote courts in regional Victoria. There are many courts where we have no presence and yet there are needy court users who require our services. We are applying at present for philanthropic funding to test an outreach model of assistance to these courts and I look forward to updating this with you as developments come to hand.

All the best for the festive season, I hope you enjoy a well deserved break. I look forward to seeing you at our end of year function in mid December or around the courts next year.

Nic Bolto
Executive Director

Report from the President

This has been a busy year again in Court Network highlighted by an increase in funding, increase in training and Networker numbers and great progress in our national expansion.

On December 1st our service is being launched in the Family and Federal Magistrates' courts in Brisbane. This first step in the achievement of a greater vision is a very exciting one.



The recent combined State Conference and AGM was a great success with approximately 200 Networkers participating. Excellent speakers and meticulous organisation contributed to a memorable function.

After a year where Networkers have again made such a valuable contribution to the court system and to our community, I thank you all. I wish you and your families a Happy Festive Season and look forward to seeing many of you at our End of Year Celebration and Graduation.

Gillian Harris
President

The Brisbane Team

Congratulations to our newly appointed Brisbane Volunteers who are completing the final days of their training with Judy at the helm.

The 16 volunteers will commence the Brisbane program in the Family and Federal Magistrates Courts on the 4th of December overseen by Nicole Little, Brisbane's Program Manager. Volunteer Networkers from Victoria will be spending time mentoring the Brisbane volunteers for the first two weeks of the service.

Court Network wishes Geoff, Rose, Ann, Tagi, Alison, Caroline, Rosemary, Susan, Helen, Pat, Terry, Gay, John, Henry, Beverly and Baz every success in working with court users.

A big thank you to Nancy Hanley in getting this program up and running.

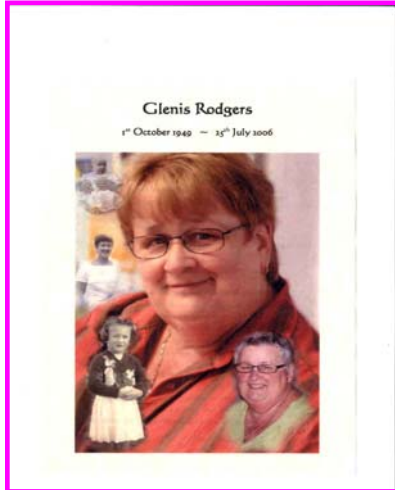
Nicole Little
Program Manager



The Brisbane Team stop for a quick photo during one of their training sessions last month (pictured above).

A tribute to Glenis Rodgers...

Glenis Rodgers joined Court Network in 1998. She commenced networking at Sunshine Magistrates' Court before finding her niche on a Friday at Broadmeadows Magistrates' Court. She was an important part of a team that comprised Broadmeadows Community Legal Centre, Victoria Legal Aid and court staff in working with applicants and respondents in Crimes Family Violence matters. Glenis was also on the Court Network Board from 2001 – 2003.



Terry, a co-networker at Broadmeadows said recently, "I am one of the fortunate ones who had Glenis as a Resource worker. Her attitude was not just to teach me how to do a job, but rather, she came alongside and passed on her vast knowledge and experience. Her desire was that

Court Network's reputation would be enhanced and that Court Users would benefit. She was a bridge builder between Networkers and Court Staff at a time when the relationship was not as rosy as it is now."

We celebrate Glenis' contribution to the organisation and pass on our sincere condolences to the Rodgers family. Glenis will be greatly missed both at Broadmeadows Court and Court Network.

Eloise Connelly
Program Manager

Welcome Sue Wilson

Court Network would like to extend a warm welcome to Sue Wilson, the new Victorian State Manager. Sue was recently Manager of the Counselling and Support Service at the State Coroner's office and will now be responsible for the Collingwood Neighbourhood Justice Centre project, as well as overseeing Project Management at Court Network.

Sue has extensive experience and training in a broad range of areas and she has a Bachelor of Social Work qualification.



Sue looks forward to visiting the courts and meeting Networkers over the coming months.

Welcome Sue!

Conference/AGM 2006

Court Network's annual Conference/AGM was again a great success this year. Held on Thursday 2 November at the Melbourne Town Hall, over 160 Networkers attended the event—the largest turn out to a Conference so far.

Guest speakers included Tim Costello (pictured with Court Network Program Manager Eloise Connelly, below), Arie Freiberg (the *You Be The Judge* segment) and Louise Glanville of the Collingwood Neighbourhood Justice Centre.

The Melbourne Town Hall was chosen again this year as the preferred venue due to the kind generosity of the City of Melbourne, which provided the venue at no cost.

A special thank you to Conference organisers Eloise Connelly, Beth Parle and the Conference Working Group (Barbara, Colin and Fred) who had been organising and planning the event since February.

If you are interested in joining the Conference Working Group for next year's event, please send an email to: beth@courtnetwork.com.au

We look forward to hearing from all interested Networkers in the new year.



Tim Costello and Eloise Connelly (Program Manager) at Court Network's 2006 Conference/AGM at the Melbourne Town Hall.

End of Year Celebration: Reminder

A reminder that the End Of Year Celebration to thank you all for your hard work during the year will take place on Wednesday 13th December at the Radisson on Flagstaff, 380 William Street, Melbourne from 2pm onwards.

Melbourne and Geelong trainees will also be graduating at this function. If you are able to attend, please call Head Office on: 9603 7433.