

Court Network Newsletter

February 2007

Executive Director's Report

I hope you had a great break over the festive and new year period. New challenges lie before us all and I hope your 2007 Networking experience is a fulfilling and satisfying one.

I am pleased to advise that Court Network has a new patron, Chief Justice Diana Bryant. Her honour accepted an invitation made by President Gillian Harris at the opening of the Brisbane service on the 1st of December. The Board and I will look to engage further eminent Australians to our panel of patrons over the coming months to lift the community's awareness of the service.

I look forward to seeing you around the courts and later in the year at our state conference.

Nic Bolto Executive Director

Update from the State Manager

I'd firstly like to welcome everyone back, hopefully bright eyed and bushy tailed, and hope you all had a wonderful festive season with family and friends. I'd also like to thank the many of you who have made me feel so welcome to the organisation. I am settling in and over the coming weeks will be making visits to every court to introduce myself and to generally have a chat.

I wish to extend a particularly warm welcome to our newest volunteers at VCAT & the Neighbourhood Justice Centre (NJC). VCAT commenced its operations on the 8th January with the team being very well received. Congratulations on a very positive start. Unfortunately, the NJC team has yet to be able to commence duties due to the ongoing building works. The team has completed their training and is extremely keen to get to 'work'. With any luck we will be in the building for the start of February.

The Program Manager's have commenced planning the 'Continuing Education' program for 2007. The first session is being arranged for February 27th 10:00am – 12:30pm. At this stage we are limited to providing the training in our training room. This means that we can only accommodate approximately 35 people at any one time and so if you have an interest in attending a session you will need to book early.



State Mgr Update *continued...*

We would appreciate any suggestions or feedback with regard to your interests and training needs so that we can make this years program relevant to the majority of Networkers. Many of you have suggested that it would be good to know what is happening in other courts. To this end, a feature of our Newsletter will be the Court Round-up from Program Managers from a sample of courts.

I look forward to the year ahead in working together toward continuing to provide the Victorian community with the same tremendous support it has come to expect from Court Network.

Sue Wilson Victorian State Manager

Gippsland Courts: The Latrobe Valley Networkers are still settling into the new Court Environs. Very spacious, airy and large. As it is so busy, all the Networkers are becoming fit covering the length and additional floors of the building. The Networkers in Sale are settling in for another steady year. Our Christmas break up was enjoyed by all, and we join in wishing all a wonderful New Year.

Lana Tyben Program Manager

Family Law Courts: Networkers in the Family Law Courts are expecting a really busy time in both the Dandenong and Melbourne Registries during February and March as the courts attempt to clear backlog of cases in preparation for changes in Family Law and processes within the courts that will soon take effect. Members of the information team have recommenced their duties at the Supreme Court and are looking forward to a challenging year with proposed structural changes to the court causing some disruption to the flow of traffic around the building. The Education team will resume when the school year begins.

Dorothy Hood Program Manager



Program Managers (from left) Eloise Connelly, Denise Keighery and Dorothy Hood hard at work.

Court Round-Up continued...

Melbourne Magistrates' Court: The room is looking more stylish than ever thanks to Selma's donation of some bright and colourful posters. The team has been enhanced by five new graduates last year. The December/ January period has been very well covered so thank you to those who have been rostered on during this time. Heidelberg Court Network – it is great to have Brenda on board to network with Hula on a Friday. Thanks to Jan for covering Fridays whilst Hula was away and welcome back Hula! Sunshine Court Network – we say thank you and farewell to Geoff who has moved to the Neighbourhood Justice Centre (NJC). At a recent local management group meeting, services commented on the excellent work that the Networkers have been doing and how much they are appreciated. Farewell to Beryl who has resigned from her networking role on a Thursday. We thank her for the legacy she left us – a well ordered pamphlet system. Broadmeadows Court Network – we wish Louise all the best with her work this year and move to NJC. Louise has been a valuable member of the team at Broadmeadows having trained in 2005 and in resourcing a trainee in 2006.

Eloise Connelly Program Manager

Mildura: We have a new Registrar, Selina Pasut who replaces Gayle Chergwin who went to new Neighbourhood Justice Centre in Melbourne. We are gearing up for the committal hearing in relation to the Cardross car accident where 6 local kids were killed. Much local anger and unfortunately the driver was aboriginal thus stirring up all sorts of other issues. We lost our first two volunteers late last year. Currently 9. We are hoping to have another training course soon. Our January staff meeting will include training from a local CALD agency.

Mike Jobe Program Manager

Children's Court: Two new members have joined the Children's Court team – WELCOME Helen and Karen. We farewelled Lesley as she has increased family commitments - she continues to work in Melbourne Magistrates' court. Thanks to Lesley for the gentle wisdom and support she offered distressed court users in the Family Division. Judge Paul Grant, recently appointed president of Children's Court, attended the October team meeting to familiarise Networkers with the 2005 Children Youth and Families Act and to extend his thanks to all team members for their invaluable service.



Recognition Continues

The Court Network Networker Recognition Program will continue in 2007. The next event will be for those in the 2, 3, 4 and 20+ year categories with an Afternoon Tea at the RACV Club on 9 March. More information will follow shortly.

Court Round-Up continued...

Dandenong Magistrates' Court: We welcome June, Elwyne, Sandy and Chandima to the Dandenong team. We also farewell Linda, who has gained full-time employment, Jennifer McCarten, who is looking for new challenges, and Robyn, who transferred to Dandenong Family Court. As the senior registrar Keith Turner continually emphasises this court could not run effectively without Court Network's presence. All members are congratulated on the standard of their court support.

Denise Keighery Program Manager

Ed Team Member Sad Goodbye

James Stryker, a respected member of the Supreme Court Education and Information Teams, passed away on December 24th 2006 after a long illness. James was a vital member of these teams and will be greatly missed by his colleagues and all at Court Network.

James, who was born in Bathgate, Scotland, came to Australia in the early 1950s, and had served with the British army's highland division for 10 years.

James joined Court Network in 1997. A staunch and vital member of the teams at the Supreme, always immaculately attired, his beautiful hair his crowning glory, and with always a rose in his button hole, he greeted those attending the Court with care and respect. Always ready for a debate his challenging wit and active mind kept his colleagues continually on their toes. A true gentleman, we thank him for his great contribution to this organisation.



James' obituary appeared in the Age on 27 Dec 2006. If you'd like to receive a copy, please call Head Office. It is a very informative and worthwhile read.

James (left centre) also featured in the Age for his past involvement as a musician at the 1956 Melbourne Olympics.