

**ALGWA Northern Territory Branch Inc**  
**GPO Box 3974 DARWIN NT 0801**

March 2013.

## Northern Territory Branch 2012-2013



The Executive Committee elected for the 2012-2013 term -

### President

Pam Robinson OAM, City of Palmerston, Environment & Climate Change Strategic Planner.

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### Vice-President

Clair O'Brien - Farmer, formerly Deputy Mayor, Roper Gulf Shire.

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### Secretary

Alderman Helen Galton, City of Darwin

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### Treasurer

Alderman Sue McKinnon, City of Palmerston

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### Committee Members

Councillor Veronica Birrell, Victoria Daly Shire.

Kerry Moir - formerly Alderman Darwin City Council and President LGANT.

Anne Hammond - City of Darwin, Manager of Strategies and Outcomes.

## Hello from President Pam

Yes, it is March already!

Since I have a lot of information to get to you this month, I will start straight away with recognising the importance of the 8<sup>th</sup> day in the months of February and March.

### **ALGWA NT Breakfast held on 8<sup>th</sup> February.**

It was great to see so many at our Breakfast meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> February at Il Lido.

Thank you for coming and by all reports those that were able to attend enjoyed the networking opportunity, the breakfast itself and we were impressed with our Guest Speaker the Member for Drysdale, Lia Finocchiaro MLA. Lia as we all learnt has many credits in her kit including having been a leading Army Cadet, a practicing lawyer and is a keen participant in the community through a diverse range of interests – all of which ideally qualified her for her new role in Parliament where she represents her community.



*Breakfast Group, Secretary Alderman Helen, Lia Finocchiaro MLA and President Pam*

A report about the ALGWA NT Breakfast along with the group photograph appeared in the Sun Newspapers on 13 February.

The Breakfast also was listed on the ALGWA National Calendar of Events.

The Committee will meet shortly to discuss the potential of another event for June.

## **International Women's Day 8 March**

I am sure many of you have plans for the 8<sup>th</sup> March, either by attending community events or an official breakfast or lunch or as I am doing, getting together with one or two after work.

I would like to bring to your notice information about the 2013 International Women's Day Walk which is being held on Saturday morning the 9<sup>th</sup> March.

The following information is available on the City of Darwin *Life @ The Top* website.

### **International Women's Day Walk 2013**

Please come and join us for the 2013 Walk which will be followed by a reception in The Great Hall at Parliament House. Meet at the steps of Parliament House at 9.00am for a 9.30am start on Saturday 9 March. There will be a number of inspiring speakers, information stalls, morning tea and entertainment to follow from 10.30am - 12.30pm.

International Women's Day is an annual global event that recognises the achievements of women from all walks of life and the great improvements that have been made in the lives of women over time. An international web of rich and diverse activities are held throughout the world in celebration of this event.

For the fifth consecutive year City of Darwin in partnership with United Nations Association of Australia NT are holding the International Women's Day Walk and Community Morning Tea. This event continues to grow each year with over 300 participants in 2012 proudly led by a contingent of 70 police in uniform, the Darwin City Brass Band, police women on horseback and noted dignitaries.

To view the poster - [click here](#)

## **January Profile**

### **Committee Member Kerry Moir.**



I was born in Adelaide and have a twin brother and a sister. My husband Bill and I moved to Darwin in 1969 to teach at Darwin High School. We have lived in the city, in Wagaman, and for the past 21 years in Nightcliff. My husband and I now live in an old but beautiful tropical house. We are fortunate to have our son and his family settling in Darwin after experiencing life outside the Territory.

#### **INTERESTS:**

During the 44 years I have spent in Darwin I have grasped enthusiastically the many challenges and opportunities the 'frontier' environment has offered. In my early years I played sport and bridge, owned a 4-wheel drive and a motorbike and went on family camping trips. With Asia in such close proximity we travelled extensively overseas and we have continued to enjoy the multi-cultural nature of Darwin society ever since. In the 60's and 70's my husband played football for Buffaloes, hockey for Waratahs and I played netball and basketball. We forged many friendships with local families. These have endured to this day. We now have four young grandchildren and we take a great interest in providing and upgrading community facilities for young families - including cycle paths, playgrounds, swimming pools and libraries. Keeping 'hoons' off our roads and stray dogs off our streets are also priorities for me. Maintaining our city's tropical architecture and lifestyle is another passion.

## **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:**

My career as an educator took me from classroom teacher to school principal. I was responsible for the conversion of Casuarina High School to Casuarina Senior College in the 1980's - a very exciting and challenging event. In 1990 I won a Nuffield Foundation Scholarship to undertake an MA by research at London University.

My husband, two children and I spent a year learning how to live in a foreign environment. On our return I took up various appointments in the Human Relations field, culminating in my appointment as Director of the International Unit in the Northern Territory Department of Employment, Education and Training. I retired from the Education Department in 2010.

I was elected to Darwin City Council in 1992 to represent Chan Ward and was Deputy Lord Mayor on a number of occasions. I also served on and chaired various Technical, Community and Corporate Services Committees.

I represented Local Government on the NT Settlement Planning Committee and I was a member of the Disability Access Committee for a number of years. I represented Darwin City Council on the Planning Authority, the Capital City Committee and the Top End Regional Organisation of Councils. I was a founding member of the NT branch of the Australian Local Government Women's Association (ALGWA).

In 2005 I was elected President of the NT Local Government Association which represents all local government in the Northern Territory. I have been guest speaker at national and international conferences focusing on regional development and international relations.

Since I retired from local government in 2012 I have been employed by the NT Education Department to audit non-government schools and I keep my interest in local government and regional development alive by representing Darwin on the NT regional Australia Development Board.

## **CONCLUSION:**

Darwin has afforded me many opportunities in public life. Fortunately I have never experienced the 'glass ceiling' that so many of my female counterparts have. I am keen to encourage women to be strong and to believe in their capabilities despite setbacks they may encounter. I believe the NT branch of ALGWA offers great networking opportunities for women wanting to share their experiences with women wanting to maximise their chances of career advancement, particularly in the local government sphere.

## **The Centre for Civil Society : Innovation and Reform in Local Government**

I thought the following would be of interest to many of you and if nothing else you may wish to contact the Civil Society to be on their mailing list as I am.

**From:** Call for Contributions [info@civilsociety.org.au]  
**Sent:** Friday, 1 March 2013 3:30 PM  
**To:** Colleagues  
**Subject:** Innovation and Reform in Local Government



# Innovation and Reform in Local Government

**Local Voice, Participation and New Social Infrastructure**

**National Conference Tuesday 26 March 2013**

## Innovation and Reform in Local Government

Local government is sometimes referred to as the level of government closest to the people. But is it? Can local government be a tool for communities? Or are communities and citizens too disconnected from municipal structures to work in effective partnership? Is the disparity in power too great?

Is the scale of government too big, out of reach of the average citizen, even at the municipal level? Some argue that the optimum size for a community to function with effective voice, personalised networks, and participatory processes is (and the numbers vary) between 2000 and 200 people.

Some local governments in Australia and around the world have recognised this by introducing precincts for citizens to meet, deliberate, and introduce innovations (like a ward in the City of Chicago, where citizens determine a local budget through a deliberative process). The precincts vary in size from 500 to several thousand.

In local governance, there is interest in the idea of local precincts in several different areas:

In areas with high risk of **fire, flood and other natural disasters**, local governments and disaster prevention bodies are looking at local networks of a few hundred households for communication and mutual assistance in the event of natural disasters. Interesting models are emerging around the country. The rationale for these is that in the face of emergency, only local networks can really do the job.

In areas that have had a traditional Neighbourhood Watch program, there is a recognition that this model needs reworking to move beyond monitoring neighbourhood movements to more effective **community-based crime prevention**. Police forces remain supportive of neighbourhood-based

crime prevention methods.

In **ageing and disability**, there is a recognition that people can live independently in their own homes for longer if they have practical assistance in some simple tasks from neighbours. The problem is that there is no existing mechanism for doing this. Innovative models for facilitating this kind of neighbourhood-based social infrastructure are now emerging.

We want to identify and develop innovation and reform ideas that empower local communities and connect citizens, and introduce new enabling roles for local government.

We also want to explore changes needed in the culture and structure of local governments if they are to perform these enabling roles.

You are warmly invited to participate.



## Call for Participation

Have you considered putting yourself forward for election to your local council? Many consider it but are put off by doubts about whether it's possible to make an impact. The prospect of being swallowed up by "business as usual" is ever present in all tiers of government.

We're interested in hearing from citizens around Australia who want to introduce innovation and reform into local government. You may be contemplating standing for election. You may not want to stand for office yourself, but may be willing to support others who have a reform agenda.

You may be a councillor, a citizen, a municipal employee, a social innovator, or a researcher. We want to pool the best ideas and people to create an agenda that can take the place of "business as usual".

[CLICK HERE](#) to participate in developing a reform agenda in local government.

We are establishing a National Working Group to coordinate the development of this agenda. It will be citizen-led, and oriented to empowering communities and citizens. This process is open to all citizens, and is hosted by the Centre for Civil Society.



## National Conference - Tuesday 26 March 2013 - Melbourne

This conference will explore ideas and strategies for innovation and reform in local government and local communities.

Community leaders and participants, councillors and officers in local governments, prospective councillors, community organisations, services practitioners, researchers, policy makers, and social innovators are warmly invited to participate in this event.

**Expressions of interest are invited** in presenting papers, workshops, and innovation and reform proposals. Abstracts should be submitted in no more than 300 words.

[CLICK HERE](#) to register.

[CLICK HERE](#) to express an interest in presenting a paper or other contribution. *[Photo: Melbourne Town Hall.]*



## Community Building in the 21st Century

## Three Events - Three Days

This is a series of three events over three consecutive days. Participants may attend one, two, or three events as they wish. Each event is a stand alone conference.

### [Beyond Corporatisation: Reinventing Community Organisations for a New Century](#) [Voice, Belonging, Social Infrastructure, Governance](#)

Monday 25 March 2013

### [Innovation and Reform in Local Government](#) [Local Voice, Participation and New Social Infrastructure](#)

Tuesday 26 March 2013

### [Developing a National Community Disaster Organisation](#) [Citizen and Community Leadership in Natural Disaster Preparation, Response and Recovery](#)

Wednesday 27 March 2013

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[CLICK HERE](#) to send in your comments and feedback.

Enquiries:

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This message comes to you from the Centre for Civil Society, a social innovation and public policy think tank leading an empowerment agenda for ordinary people in Australia.  
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## **ALGWA NT Opportunity to attend the National Council of Women's 2013 Conference**

ALGWA National Board made contact with the Presidents of all the State and Territory Branches to put forward a name of someone who could be considered to attend the National Council of Women's Conference. Clair O'Brien, Vice President ALGWA NT was that name put forward for the Northern Territory.

As it turns out Clair had another opportunity to attend which for us was the same thing in terms of her presence at the conference and this in turn enabled a Queensland ALGWA Member to take up the ALGWA offer. A 'win-win' in terms of extra ALGWA attendance at the Conference.

Kathy Benstead National President and Alwyn Friedersdorff, Treasurer ALGWA National Board amongst others were also in attendance. Please see Clair's Report below.



***Kathy Benstead National President and Clair O'Brien, Vice President ALGWA NT at Parliament House and Clair with Judy Peters (QLD) at the Conference Dinner in the Great Hall, Parliament House.***

**Report NRWC Conference & Summit Canberra Feb 2013**  
**From Clair O'Brien, Coodardie Station via Mataranka NT 0852**

*Firstly, I must say the biggest THANKS in appreciation of the Office of Women and NRWC scholarship/support given to me that allowed me to travel, stay and participate in such special rural women's events in Canberra 18-20<sup>th</sup> Feb 2013.*

I travelled ALL day Sunday (4am till 10pm) but that's all good and part and parcel of living in remote regional/rural Australia. Then Mon lunchtime I was able to be part of AWiA (Australian Women in Agriculture) 20<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations in Canberra too as I've been a member since 1996 being at executive level on the national board 1998-2004. Canberra is actually full of 100 year celebrations and they had put aside Feb as a special emphasis on women – great.

*"Be part of something BIG!"* – Big challenges; Big inspiration; Big business; Big networks – was the conference theme. Registration and welcome to the 450+ delegates of the NRWC (National Rural Women's Coalition) was a friendly time of meeting new and inspiring women as well as catching up with friends made at other gatherings like ALGWA (Australian Local Gov Women's Association), ICPA (Isolated Children's Parents' Association), ARLF (Australian Rural Leadership Foundation) and of course AWiA, NRWC and NRW (National Rural Women's Network). Mrs Irene Mills MA, from WA is the current national president. Tupperware sponsored the bags including an interesting holder and salad bowl.

An amazing array of speakers and then concurrent sessions by inspiring presenters made it hard for attendees to choose where they wanted to be throughout the day. I was part of the Big Challenges sessions – Local Gov – Women Walking the Talk. Another was The Outback Way – Australia's biggest Shortcut – a collaborative exercise with WA, NT, & Qld Gvs with a theme of *"If you can leave a place, you will stay."* Profound?



Another was Tourism on the Land – “people want to live your life” (on farm experiences). There are NSW Workshops and promotion of “The Long Table Café” concept of on farm dining. Viability issues and the encroachment of urbanization onto good farming land is REAL. Talked about the move away from central marketing of fresh produce to regional/local and thus the need to promote what’s in season locally through collaboration of suppliers – regional food chains etc. Where does our food come from? USA actually uses point of origin on the labelling – can we?

The Hon Simon Crean was a Keynote speaker at the opening panel session and “Rural Proofing Process” came up as did RDA and the need for local involvement; suggestion that local governments be part of the carbon opportunity; (Diana Gibbs) a “dining boom” was raised rather than the mining boom when speaking about the millions of Asian middle class who want animal protein that we in Australia produce so well; quote from Miriam Silva *“The prize is not being able to go back the city after 2 years in rural Australia, it’s the privilege of being/going to RRR Australia in the first place!”* also *“Service to the Team”* is how she sees her role as a leader; Catherine Marriott *“no conversation should start from the defensive, look for common ground – ie our values and ethics”* – topic live-export and social licence.

Checking the whole program will give you the full range of options. To add to this, there was also a diverse spread of booths to chat with and gather information in the breaks as well as enter some interesting draws for prizes – not that I was that lucky! Then as well, we also had people presenting to us at each lunch time in this huge open area at the marvellous venue – the National Convention Centre. Never a dull moment that’s for sure and so much to take in or to try and report about to you. So please feel free to ask any questions that you may have at any time?

Then, Tuesday night we dined in splendour at Parliament House in the Great Hall where Maggie Beer was our guest speaker and Her Excellency the Governor General also joined us to the thrill of those who wanted/did have a photo opportunity!

Wednesday we were back at the Convention Centre and whilst hundreds of our counterparts continued to participate in the last day of the NRWC Conference, a select group of 52 ladies gathered in another part of the venue for the Summit discussions facilitated by Anne Dunn and Kerry Timms. There was an amazing range of ages and representation of groups that lead us into great deliberations and an outcome that will be circulated shortly under separate cover.

There was a call for the media to take responsibility for inputting/broadcasting more positive rural programs ie Landline is currently a one only? I believe that we should be recording “our stories” from similar gatherings and thus establish a resource bank of such stories that can be drawn on at short notice as when required or for regular distribution etc. In future, we could also utilise delegates’ stories as contributors more and thus not have so many presenters talking at us!

*“When we engage the head and the heart, then we make a difference”* – this is so powerful and the above strategy of individuals personalizing real stories linked to rural regions and or their industries will form an engagement with all levels of government and our city counterparts in a way that social media is perhaps leading the way at present albeit small and unstructured – but it is it a way to bring caring and respect for self and others back into our world? We all need to hear/see a different perspective in order to learn or appreciate that there is more to any issue. Story telling is a multiple art form being lost despite being so effective, cost efficient and long lasting.

I personally, was so thrilled overall to see and be part of, so many articulate/focused young rural women who are obviously making it much easier for us older women, to be satisfied that their passion and commitment for rural, regional and remote Australia will see them becoming the next wave to be reckoned with all levels of government. That’s the proof that our various leadership courses, mentoring, support and encouragement are paying handsome dividends.

Thursday saw me travelling ALL day in reverse this time 8am to 9pm with flat tyre to change in the dark 35kms from home – again all in one’s stride when travelling/living in the NT.

Thanks again and please keep up the good work in your local regions/communities. Your voices need to be heard near and far – remember the head AND the heart together.

*CC O’Brien ...*

### **Information from our recent Guest Speaker, the Member for Drysdale**

Dear Pam

As promised, please find attached the Minister’s statement on her portfolio of Women’s Policy.

Please note that the Ministers policy announcement (as distinct from the statement) will be at the [UN breakfast on International Women’s Day](#).

Kind regards

**Lia Finocchiaro MLA**

Member for Drysdale

**President’s note:** I have attached the Minister’s Statement with the Newsletter, rather than inserting the text into the Newsletter.

### **FINALLY**

To round off this large Newsletter, I wish you all a good day on Friday 8 March, International Women’s Day.

Regards  
Pam

President ALGWA NT  
[pam.robinson@palmerston.nt.gov.au](mailto:pam.robinson@palmerston.nt.gov.au)

### **Secretary’s Notes:**

Helen is away at present. Any specific items of interest or needing attention before the next Newsletter, Helen will send them out separately to you all.

Alderman Helen Galton  
ALGWA NT Secretary  
LGANT Vice President Municipal  
0400659661

