



**NSW REGIONAL
WOMEN LAWYERS**

2023 CONFERENCE

FRIDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2023

12PM-5:30PM

COLLECT 3 CPD POINTS

Charles Sturt University

7 Major Innes Road, Port Macquarie, NSW

REGISTER NOW

www.nrwl.org.au | secretary@nrwl.org.au

NSW REGIONAL WOMEN LAWYERS CONFERENCE

NSW Regional Women Lawyers Inc ('NRWL') has been established by a group of energetic regional women lawyers who are working to ensure that those practising in regional, rural and remote (RRR) NSW have the same benefits and opportunities as their city colleagues. NRWL has already established representation in the Central West, the Far West, the Illawarra, the Southern Highlands, the Hunter, the Central Coast and Western Sydney and many of the RRR areas.

This conference on the 8 September 2023 in Mid North Coast NSW's beautiful Port Macquarie, offers a great environment for networking and an opportunity to top up your CPD points. Our dynamic and diverse program includes some amazing speakers and well-known lawyers who are experts in their field.

JOIN US FOR PANEL DISCUSSIONS ON

- **How women in the regions can achieve the same benefits and opportunities as their city colleagues when working in the law**
- **Progressing in leadership - What will I do to lift myself? What will I do to lift other women?**
- **Community Lawyering in regional New South Wales - Community Legal Centres; Legal Aid**
- **Becoming a Partner for Regional Women Lawyers**
- **Running your own law firm in Regional NSW**
- **Career pathways - from the bar and bench for regional women lawyers**

TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION

The Port Macquarie region is on the NSW mid North Coast, four hours drive north of Sydney and six hours south of Brisbane. Trains stop daily at Kendall and Wauchope, and the journey from Sydney takes around seven hours.

You can also fly into Port Macquarie Airport and hire a car to explore the region.

Accommodation in Greater Port Macquarie suits various budgets and ranges from camping and holiday parks to high-end seaside resorts.

- Visit <https://www.visitnsw.com/destinations/north-coast/port-macquarie-area/accommodation>

Rydges Port Macquarie is in the heart of the CBD, and provides breathtaking views of the Hastings River. They are offering guests a special rate of \$199pn. Please note that you are a NRWL conference delegate when booking.

- Visit <https://www.rydges.com/accommodation/port-macquarie-nsw/port-macquarie>

Please contact:

Jackie Lawlor, Conference & Events Sales Manager

Rydges Port Macquarie, 1 Hay Street, Port Macquarie NSW 2444

Direct: +61 2 6589 2819 Email: jackie_lawlor@evt.com | Web: www.rydges.com

IN-PERSON AND ONLINE EVENT

COLLECT CPD POINTS

If this particular educational activity extends your knowledge and skills in areas that are relevant to your practice needs or professional development, then you should claim one (1) "unit" for each hour of attendance. Refreshment breaks not included.

**\$325 MEMBERS, \$380 NON-MEMBERS,
\$69 DINNER, \$55 STUDENTS + BF VIA HUMANITIX**

Conference registration cost includes gst, attendance and catering for light buffet lunch and afternoon tea.

SPEAKERS



BRONWYN AMBROGETTI

Principal, Hunter Community Legal Centre

Bronwyn has worked at a senior level in community legal centres where support is provided to those experiencing financial hardship, social disadvantage, housing issues, domestic or family violence, discrimination and other legal and social issues. She has been the Managing Solicitor of the Hunter Community Legal Centre for the past 8 years and prior to that she was the Managing Solicitor of the Central Coast Community Legal Centre.

Bronwyn has organized programmes around community legal education and law reform activities relevant to the needs of the centres' disadvantaged clients. She has mentored numbers of students who have done placements at the community legal centres where she has held management roles. She is also a regular presenter at CLC conferences – both state and Federal.

Bronwyn completed her legal education at Macquarie University and after being admitted to practice worked for several firms in the Hunter prior to commencing her CLC roles.



SUZANNE DELBRIDGE

Director, Delbridge Forensic

Suzanne is a Director of Delbridge Forensic Accounting, and is a Fellow of Chartered Accountants, Australia and New Zealand.

Suzanne specialises in the valuation of equity and businesses of all sizes, the investigation of transactions and quantification of losses, and the structuring of settlements to achieve effective outcomes.

The Newcastle based practice headed by Suzanne completes work all over Australia, primarily for the purpose of litigation, with a particular interest in the Family Law jurisdiction.

Suzanne is regularly retained as an expert witness in property proceedings before the Federal Circuit Court and Family Court of Australia and the Family Court of Western Australia. Suzanne has been retained as a single expert witness since the introduction of those rules in the Family Law jurisdiction in Australia in 2004. Suzanne is also retained for the purpose of commercial proceedings before the NSW Supreme and District Courts and other dispute resolution forums.

Suzanne is a regular writer and presenter of education on topics relevant to lawyers and accountants, particularly in the areas of business valuation and forensic accounting generally.



SENIOR JUDICIAL REGISTRAR TRACY FLINTOFF

Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia, Newcastle Registry

In 2001 Tracy was admitted to practice in Australia and New Zealand. She practised in New Zealand until 2004 when she moved to Port Macquarie, NSW to take up a position as solicitor with Stacks the Law Firm.

In 2007 Tracy established Flintoff Lawyers, based in Port Macquarie and later expanded to Newcastle. Tracy sold her practice in 2013 when she was called to the Bar.

As a solicitor Tracy was an accredited specialist in family law, ICL, appeared as solicitor advocate and on a variety of legal aid panels including family, care and protection, domestic violence, mental health and crime. She was appointed an external panel practitioner for Department of Communities and Justice NSW. Tracy was the President of the Mid North Coast Law Society from 2005 – 2007.

In 2013 Tracy was called to the Bar and practiced predominately in family law and complex care and protection, with rooms in Newcastle Chambers and Frederick Jordan Chambers. After a brief stint back in NZ at the Christchurch Bar for 2020, Tracy moved to the Northern Rivers, NSW.

In August 2021 Tracy was appointed Senior Judicial Registrar with the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia at Lismore.



HALEY MCEWEN

Senior Solicitor, Mid North Coast Community Legal Centre

Haley McEwen is a Senior Solicitor with the Mid North Coast Legal Centre and Senior Lecturer and Head of Discipline in Law for Charles Sturt University.

Haley has a passion for social justice and bridging the gap between academic theory and legal practice. Her areas of interest include reflective practice, clinical legal education, regional, rural and remote access to justice and mental health.

Haley is Co-Chair of the National 4Rs Community Legal Network and in her downtime loves to enjoy the beautiful beaches and coffee spots Port Macquarie has to offer.



HEATHER MCKINNON

Partner, Bryant McKinnon Lawyers | Accredited Family Law Specialist

Heather McKinnon is the founder and senior partner at Bryant McKinnon Lawyers in Coffs Harbour, NSW. She has built a formidable reputation over three decades practising family law in the Mid North Coast region. She has become one of the leading Family Law authorities in the country, but her focus has always remained on helping people in her own community to achieve the best possible outcomes in often difficult and traumatic times.

Exceptionally qualified, Heather not only has a Specialist Family Lawyer accreditation, she is also one of the region's only private sector qualified Independent Children's Lawyers and has qualified as an Arbitrator under the Family Law Act Regulations.

Heather's style is frank and solutions-focused. Not one to put people on a process-driven treadmill, she works to understand her client's individual circumstances and guide them through complex family transitions.

A believer in the value of community, Heather is active in both her professional and local spheres. Over the years she has participated in a number of advisory legal committees and has worked tirelessly on local development projects including the National Marine Science Centre, Warina Women's Refuge, the Mid North Coast Development Board and the Friends of the Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery.



MICHELLE MEARES

Barrister and President NSW Regional Women Lawyers

Michelle is a barrister at Second Floor Selborne Chambers and previously the owner and principal lawyer of Central Coast firm Meares Law at Terrigal. Michelle practices in equity and property, commercial law (building and construction), insurance disputes and family law.

Michelle is a member of the NSW Bar Association Legal Aid Committee and the Media & Information Law & Technology Committee. She was the Secretary of the Central Coast Regional Law Society from 2019-2022 and has enjoyed mentoring young lawyers.

In 2019, she was a Finalist for WLANSW Regional Lawyer of the Year. She has published in Lawyers Weekly, Journal of Internet Law and Law Society Journal and is a regular presenter at legal conferences including the NSW Bar Association Women Barrister's Forum and the Law Society of NSW Specialist Accreditation Conference.



SUZY MILLER

Leadership Development Specialist

Suzy Miller is a leadership development specialist who champions for regional women and youth from diverse backgrounds, working to empower them to become the next generation of leaders. For over a decade Suzy has run her executive coaching and bespoke leadership development business. Prior to that she was a Senior Executive with NAB bank leading teams of up to 250 people.

Throughout her career, Suzy has been passionate about taking her skills and translating them into Leadership Mentoring programs and presentations that lift the aspiration and performance of underrepresented groups. This has been recognised with the following accolades:

- 2021 Australian Business Journal Top 20 Leadership Specialist in Australia
- 2019 AFR/Qantas Australia “100 Women of Influence” recognising her contribution to Australian society and the commitment to increasing the visibility of women’s leadership in Australia.
- 2019 NSW Business Chamber Regional Winner and State Finalist Social Enterprise Category
- 2018 NSW Business Woman of the Year award Top 4 State Finalist
- 2018 NSW Business Chamber Regional Winner and State Finalist Start Up Category
- 2016 Winner Gosford Australia Day Outstanding Achievement Award

Suzy is also a proud Director on the Board for not for profit organisation Central Coast Basketball. This supports her focus on the community and for the advancement of women in sport.



EMMA SMALLWOOD

Solicitor in Charge of Legal Aid Port Macquarie

Emma Smallwood is the Solicitor in Charge of Legal Aid Port Macquarie office. Emma grew up in Port Macquarie and after living away for almost 20 years relocated back to Regional NSW with her husband and children to practice law in her hometown and give her children a regional upbringing.

Emma came back to Regional NSW with many years in the Victorian legal assistance sector including as Associate Director of Family Law Services at Victoria Legal Aid (VLA), Family Violence Program Manager at VLA and Policy and Projects Manager at Women’s Legal Service Victoria (WLSV). Emma has well respected technical family law expertise, and a specialised knowledge in relation to family and domestic violence. For her family law work Emma was a finalist for the 2015 Women in Law, Young Gun of the year award and winner of the 2016 Victorian Community Lawyer of the year award.

Emma has worked closely with Rosie Batty and other advocates and was a witness for both the Royal Commission into Family Violence hearings in Victoria and the public hearings for the Commonwealth Parliamentary Inquiry into a better family law system. Emma has offered consultancy services to Government including a project developing the plain English guide - Separating with Debt: A guide to your legal options for the Commonwealth Attorney General Department.



CICELY SYLOW

General Counsel Birdon Group

Cicely is an experienced, commercially focussed lawyer with over 15 years of private practice and in-house experience. Cicely’s background spans a broad industry base, having advised organisations driving industry-wide change in the areas of technology, aviation and ports, resources and energy, retail, financial services and manufacturing. As Birdon’s General Counsel, Cicely is responsible for the legal team that advises Birdon’s global operations and all facets of Birdon’s diverse business. She guides the Birdon team in managing risk while facilitating innovation, creative solutions, and driving business growth. Cicely and her husband also own and operate several mixed-use caravan parks on the mid-north coast. This has given Cicely a holistic appreciation for the law and regulation and ensures her days are always full and interesting.

Cicely holds a combined Bachelor of Laws/Arts and a Masters of Laws from the University of Sydney. She is admitted to the Supreme Court of NSW and High Court of Australia.



JANE TITTERINGTON

Principal, Mid North Coast Community Legal Centre

Jane Titterington is the Principal Solicitor at the Mid North Coast Legal Centre. Jane has been working at the legal centre since late 2013 and has been the Principal Solicitor since August 2014. Prior to that Jane worked in an advisory role for a member of parliament and in private practice in Sydney and Port Macquarie. Jane has practiced as a lawyer for over 25 years.

The Mid North Coast Legal Centre is a generalist civil service that covers 6 local government areas on the Mid North Coast of New South Wales and has an office in Port Macquarie and Coffs Harbour.

PROGRAM

- 12.00pm** **Registration & Buffet Lunch**
- 1.00pm** **FROM THE BAR TO THE BENCH FOR REGIONAL WOMEN LAWYERS**
Senior Judicial Registrar Tracy Flintoff, Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia
- 1.45pm** **BECOMING A PARTNER IN A REGIONAL LAW FIRM
AND RUNNING YOUR OWN REGIONAL LAW FIRM - THE FINANCIALS**
Suzanne Delbridge, Director, Delbridge Forensic
Heather McKinnon, Partner, Bryant McKinnon Lawyers
- 2.30pm** **Afternoon Tea & Networking**
- 3.00pm** **LEADERSHIP LIFT - PROGRESSING IN LEADERSHIP - WHAT WILL I DO TO
LIFT MYSELF? WHAT WILL I DO TO LIFT OTHER WOMEN?**
Suzy Miller, Leadership Development Specialist
- 4.00pm** **COMMUNITY LAWYERING FOR REGIONAL WOMEN LAWYERS**
Emma Smallwood, Solicitor in Charge of Legal Aid Port Macquarie
Jane Titterington, Principal, Mid North Coast Community Legal Centre
Bronwyn Ambrogetti, Principal, Hunter Community Legal Centre
Hayley McEwen, Senior Solicitor, Mid North Coast Community Legal Centre
- 5.00pm** **CLOSE AND NETWORKING**
Michelle Meares, Barrister & President NSW Regional Women Lawyers
- 5.30pm** **Networking Drinks at Rydges Port Macquarie**
- 7.00pm** **NETWORKING DINNER AT RYDGES PORT MACQUARIE**
2-Course Dinner - Bookings essential



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Cicely Sylow, General Counsel at the Birdon Group

NRWL acknowledges and thanks our major sponsors for their substantial contributions and support.



**NSW REGIONAL
WOMEN LAWYERS**

If you share our goal of working to ensure that women lawyers practising in regional, rural and remote NSW have the same benefits and opportunities as their city colleagues, become a member via our website.

Lawyers \$55, Students/Associates \$22 valid to 30 June 2024

Diversity | Inclusion | Support | Empowerment
...for women lawyers right across NSW

www.nrwl.org.au | secretary@nrwl.org.au