

Editor's note



Photo: James Alcock / Fairfaxphotos

2014 came to a bleak and shocking end.

This journal is the Bar Association's journal of record, so some account of what occurred should be included here.

On 15 December 2014 an armed man took over the Lindt Café on Phillip Street.

He took a number of hostages, including three barristers: Katrina Dawson and Julie Taylor of the 8th Floor of Selborne Chambers, and Stefan Balafoutis of Tenth Floor chambers.

A siege ensued. Many chambers were evacuated. The courts were closed.

The siege ended in the early hours of 16 December 2014. Katrina Dawson lost her life, as did the manager of the café, Tori Johnson. All the other hostages survived.

The president's column on the next pages recounts the steps taken by the Bar Association in the immediate aftermath of the siege.

The loss of Katrina Dawson was a terrible blow for all barristers.

Katrina was quite simply one of the

finest young barristers at the bar. Not just in the sense of her legal skills, although these were exceptional – Katrina had an instinct for justice. She always did the right thing.

Katrina's legal connections ran deep – her husband Paul Smith is a partner at King & Wood Mallesons and her brother Sandy is at Banco Chambers. Everyone knew her, everyone liked her. She was fun to be around. Most of all, she was a loving and deeply attentive mother to her three young children.

Jason Potts, also of the 8th Floor, has written an obituary which we publish in these pages. Jason has managed to capture what Katrina was like to have in chambers and how much we have lost.

Katrina's death resonated with people everywhere, whether they knew her or not. The 8th Floor received messages, flowers and gifts from people across Sydney and indeed across the world.

I myself received many emails and letters – from colleagues at the bar, solicitors, judges, former staff on the 8th Floor. Reading over these letters now one can sense the great wave of shock and horror

that swept through the legal community when the news broke.

Katrina's family and friends have established the Katrina Dawson Foundation, to preserve and honour her memory by providing support for the education of exceptional young women.

Bar News does not overlook in any of this that Katrina's was not the only loss of life. We send our deepest condolences to Tori Johnson's partner and family.

The other hostages in the siege were all traumatised and are still suffering – we offer them our support and sympathy also.

Most of all we send our thoughts and support to Katrina's family – to her brothers, Sandy and Angus, her parents Jane and Sandy, and to Paul, Chloe, Oliver and Sasha.

Jeremy Stoljar SC

8th Floor Selborne Chambers