

Profile: Jane Staley, APLA Executive Officer

Eva Scheerlink, Dandenong

Jane Staley has become APLA's latest dynamo. As Executive Officer she will steer APLA into the 21st century, after the departure of John Peacock.

Jane's dedication to the not-for-profit sector is self-evident. Before moving to Sydney to join the plight for plaintiffs' access to justice, she was facilitating directional growth for Victoria's Women's Information and Referral Exchange.

Prior to that she was concerned with ensuring the conservation of Australia's birds by managing membership issues and vital fund raising considerations.



Jane is driven in this not-for-profit industry, she says, "because the people involved in such organisations are themselves very enthusiastic. One thing often missing however is proper management of that enthusiasm and management of the skills of individual members." It is the administration and coordination of organisations such as APLA that fulfil Jane's passion for assisting the needs of the community and facilitating justice.

Before leaving her home town Melbourne in 1998, Jane completed a

Graduate Diploma in Public Policy and Management. Since moving to Sydney she has been studying part time for a Masters of Community Management which she describes as an "MBA for the non-profit sector". The course is assisting Jane to upgrade her management skills as well as gain a greater understanding of the non-profit sector, and she finds daily application for her new skills in her role at APLA.

A confident Jane says that her greatest achievements, however, are still ahead of her. "APLA too has its greatest achievements still ahead of it," Jane believes.

"Where APLA will be in five years is a question the organisation really has to ask itself.

All APLA members will need to reflect on why APLA exists and what it should and can achieve."

The first four years of APLA have created many achievements driven for the most part by the enthusiasm of its members. If APLA is to continue and build on those achievements, it will need to take a more strategic approach.

Jane sees her new role as a facilitative one. "Central to my responsibility as Executive Officer of APLA is a day-to-day, structural and planning focus. I hope to meet the objectives of the organisation with the resources that we have, as well as seeking to increase the resources available to us. The job is one of facilitating the achievement of members for the organisation as well as the community as a whole."

"It is an exciting time for APLA," Jane explains. "We are a young organisation

that has come out of a difficult financial time into a period of consolidation and reflection. The work done so far by APLA allows us to have an effective role in Australian policy making. That role will continue and improve."

Little known fact about Jane Staley: She graduated from Miss Lulu's Tap Dancing Academy.

Outside of work Jane enjoys a good meal with a nice bottle of wine. She also enjoys a beer at an AFL match. "In fact," Jane says, "that's one of the things I miss most about Melbourne, the full-on footy culture."

On the subject of culture, Jane also delights in going to the theatre or a symphony. "The Opera House is really one of the great joys of living in Sydney. I love to read, too. At the moment I'm reading *An Anthropologist on Mars* by Oliver Sacks. I read a lot and it doesn't matter what genre. Following current affairs can keep me as entertained as good novel."

But Jane's true passion lies in grass roots community affairs. Helping driven specialists fulfil their passion to make ours a better world to live in, is what Jane is all about.

Members will have the opportunity to meet Jane at State Conferences and also at the National Conference in Sydney later this year. Perhaps those who attend will be fortunate enough to witness APLA's Executive Officer display her tap dancing prowess, while the National Policy Manager and erstwhile DJ, Simon McGregor, plays that funky music. ■

Eva Scheerlink was APLA's Media Officer in 1998, and is now an articled clerk at Ryan Carlisle Thomas in Dandenong