



Profile of Eva Scheerlinck

Gold Coast Girls Are Hip...

It takes a bit of courage to leave behind your house, your job, your career, your friends and move cities but that is exactly what Eva has done in taking up the Public Affairs Manager's job with APLA in Sydney.

It's not the first time this nomadic young woman has packed up and moved on. Less than 30 years ago Eva migrated from Belgium with her parents to Queensland where she completed her education in the schools, malls and beaches of the Gold Coast. She graduated from the Queensland University of Technology, and a short while later started work with APLA as National Media Officer. She moved on to take up her Articles of Clerkship with Ron Pearce at Ryan Carlisle Thomas in Dandenong, Victoria. Ron was, during the time of her articles, the Treasurer of the National branch of APLA, so Eva not only got a thorough grounding in personal injury law but also the intricacies of APLA's national agenda.

At Ryan Carlisle Thomas Eva completed her Articles and then practiced as a lawyer with great enthusiasm. She was also involved in the firm's marketing, preparing its newsletter and developing their web presence. It was obvious that Eva had a great enjoyment for these non-legal parts of her duties.

I recall talking with Eva one evening at last year's national conference. Eva told me that she wasn't sure if she want-

ed to continue being a lawyer. I have heard many practitioners say this over the years but to her great credit Eva has done something about her feelings and applied for the job as APLA's Public Affairs Manager when it became vacant.

The job is not an easy one. As the title itself describes, it involves managing APLA's public face and lobbying profile, developing policy, and being active in campaigns in which APLA is involved. I once described the job as being like a fireman without a fire engine and large numbers of spot fires breaking out all over the place. You can easily get lost dashing from fire to fire. Eva's job really has to be to recruit and train the volunteer fire brigade that is APLA's membership.

I asked Eva how she saw her job and she said that her priorities were to "...Establish better alliances with other organisations so that APLA has established networks when problems arise..." She also hopes to encourage the enthusiasm of APLA's members to volunteer in the important jobs of making contacts with individuals and associations that can assist or co-operate with APLA, to encourage them to be involved in the policy development of APLA, to contact her with ideas, to participate in the media work that is

essential to APLA's profile, to help with research, and to contribute any special skills that they have.

Eva recently organised and attended at the Victorian Branch's Strategic Planning Meeting. Those that have participated in strategic planning meetings realise how important they are in focusing the organisation and harnessing the skills of APLA's members to deliver APLA's policy objectives.

Eva tells me there will be national strategic planning initiatives at the forthcoming National Conference.

Those that have worked with Eva know her to be a happy, energetic, enthusiastic and extremely gregarious person.

APLA is indeed fortunate to have her on board

One further thing. Like most Gold Coast residents I've met, she loves a party. **PL**



Eva with Geoff Coates and Brendan Sydes at APLA National Conference 2000 Young Lawyers Party.