

Connections

Looking to our future

India Gary-Martin, CWN's newly elected President, sets out her vision of the influential role CWN can and should be playing



India Gary-Martin

I am both honoured and delighted to have been elected to lead the City Women's Network. I have been a member for a number of years and have really come to appreciate the support that the network has provided me. I've made valuable business contacts, learned many new things and have built some great friendships, many of which I'm certain will be lifelong.

Though my experience with the network has been positive, as the world and environment in which we operate evolves, so must we. Our core values must and will remain the same. However, harnessing the power of the membership to become a more visibly authoritative voice for senior women in business is core to my vision. We have always been sought after for our opinions but I believe that we are more than just opinions. We are influence. Influencing the communities in which we live and work is central to who we are. Increasing our visibility and building our membership is crucial to continuing the journey that our founders began more than thirty years ago.

Over the past several years, a number of networks have emerged for all of the different strata of women in the

business lifecycle. We are supportive of those networks and believe that each of them has a place. Our challenge is to ensure that we are relevant to our constituency; understand and cater to the needs of our membership and have an impactful strategy. This collective vision will firmly position us as the network of choice for senior women.

We all have much work to do. Through the determined leadership of the board and synergy of the collective talent of our membership we will most certainly facilitate change of which we can all be proud. I believe in the power of our members today but also in the power of the future and all that it holds.

In the coming months, we will unveil our strategy; implement some exciting new changes to our website and continue to establish relationships that will be beneficial to our membership. In the interim, I implore you to get involved. Come to an event, volunteer for a committee or even spread the word. This is an exciting time for us. This is your network. Be a part of the change.

India Gary-Martin
President, CWN



Our new board

Pictured left are Ariana Bradford, Santa Orlovska, Bee Lean Chew, new President India Gary-Martin, Simona Composto, Erica Gut, Ellen Cantor and Julia Bond. Also on the board are Natalie Winterfrost, Susannah Nicklin and Jane Keir.

Changing times

At this year's AGM Clare Dobie, after two years as president, handed over the reins to India Gary-Martin. For Clare, the major achievements of the past two years have been the diversity and excellence of events, the substantial increase in the number of members, and the massive contribution made to CWN by volunteer members.

Standing down (left to right): Clare Dobie, vice-president Roz Morris, Kari Hadjivassiliou, chair of marketing, and Sue Sheen, editor, Connections.



For your diaries

- 10 March Why women are under-represented on boards
- 23 March Family law – myths exploded
- 7-8 April LeaderSHE International forum
- 13 April Design thinking: competitive advantage
- 20 April Economic empowerment of women
- 12 May British business – view from the Foreign Office
- 20 May Global summit of women 2010, Beijing

Fuller details and a booking form enclosed.
For more information, see www.citywomen.org

Recent CWN events

Celebrating new members



Some of 2009's 35 new members meeting and networking with CWN's board at an event held at a stylish new restaurant to celebrate their joining. Many of these women have quickly become contributors to CWN and are actively engaged on committees, organising events and writing articles.

The membership committee is now looking for 2010 members to become more involved in ensuring that the new member experience is smooth and welcoming. To find out more, please email Ariana Bradford at abradford@rotman.utoronto.ca.

Online social networking: 'To tweet or not to tweet'

This up-to-the-minute event gave us some invaluable pointers for online activity:

- personal – be circumspect in what you say (nothing is ever deleted from the internet) and use humour with caution; your online profile should be entirely professional and up-to-date as recruiters are increasingly checking candidates on social media
- marketing – no company can afford to ignore the social media; they are good for brand-building, creating followers and ambassadors, and generally connecting with new and existing customers.

Finally, CWN member Barbara Gibson, who has a Twitter following of some 19,000, had a clear message for the well-attended meeting: we should all definitely take courage and get tweeting!

Neeta Patel

Women lead the way

The author of 'Women lead the way – your guide to stepping up to leadership and changing the world', Linda Tarr-Whelan, gave us an inspiring talk on the importance of women taking on more leadership roles.

Why does she think this so essential? Because nothing is happening, in the US certainly, in terms of women's professional progress and our talent and strengths are not being well-used; childcare problems have not changed over 40 years, and the number of women on

boards has stalled. More women are needed in positions of power and influence or nothing much will change.

According to her, 30% is the tipping point, when women's strength in consensus building and teamwork will make a difference. Her tips? 'Too often women say No without trying to negotiate, and they hold themselves back because they won't take chances like men do.'

And a thought to carry with you and give you negotiating power: research now shows that companies with 30% women at the table make higher profits.

Roz Morris

Britt Lintner fashion evening



Four of the lucky CWN members and guests who got the chance to take to the catwalk modelling some of Britt's elegant and highly wearable designs.

Fashion designer Britt Lintner's guiding force was the importance of good clothing in a high flying business environment, combining sartorial confidence with the virtue of practicality.

Her hot tips on business fashion? It has to be minimalist, using lots of black and white, navy and muted colours. You can get away with red, green or purple but only if they are deep hues. Use the rule of seven: count your accessories and once you get to seven take one off. Use clothing with a little bit of Elastane, they will fit better and won't wrinkle as easily. Be feminine, but don't overdo it: low cut tops or skirts too short above the knee may give the wrong impression.

Simona Composto

High flyers

Warm congratulations to Kate Grussing, Managing Director of Sapphire Partners, and former CWN President Mei Sim Lai on winning TIAW's World of Difference Awards, which recognise outstanding women who have made a difference to the economic empowerment of women. Both will be contributing to the joint CWN-TIAW symposium on the economic empowerment of women on 20 April (see the Event form enclosed).

May we recommend...

Six of the best



This issue our contributor is Jenny Patterson, left, who gives us the benefit of her personal choices.

Film: Collision: Hitchens vs. Wilson

My favourite film release of 2009 is a lecture road movie following the outspoken atheist Christopher Hitchens pitted against the evangelical theologian Pastor Douglas Wilson on a debate tour arguing whether religion is good for the world. This fascinating study shows two minds with fundamentally opposing views discovering a personal affinity with each other through a shared love of P. G. Wodehouse.

Book: 'Must You Go?', Lady Antonia Fraser

A very personal account of the relationship between Lady Antonia Fraser and one of England's greatest writers, the Nobel Prize-winning playwright Harold Pinter. This book, based on the diaries that Lady Fraser kept throughout her time with her husband, gives a fascinating insight into the thinking behind his work. A powerful love story and a deeply touching memoir.

Shop: La Fromagerie

I find myself rudely redirecting every dinner party host who has served me a waxy cheddar or tasteless brie towards La Fromagerie. This shop is a must for cheese lovers. You will be served by knowledgeable affineurs, who will guide you in your quest for the perfect cheese board. I ignore the well-stocked but expensive shop and head straight to the temperature-controlled cheese room. A sensory delight, punching



you hard in the nose, while caressing your mouth – they let you taste their delicious cheeses before you buy. I always go to the Marylebone branch, although they have a shop in Highbury too. 2-6 Moxon Street, Marylebone, W1U 4EW

Theatre: Pina Bausch

I first saw Kontakthof danced by a cast of over-65-year-olds in 2000 as part of the bite02 season, and was enchanted. The show returns as it was originally performed, but now paired with a counterpart created eight years later and performed by teenagers. Both performances feature the same choreography. Sadly, Pina Bausch died in June last year and so this is a rare opportunity to see both of these pieces side by side. Barbican Centre, Silk Street, EC2Y 8DS

Must buy: Monmouth Coffee House espresso blend beans

As a complete and utter coffee snob, I only drink coffee from here. Once you taste a cup of their brown nectar you will hard pushed to enjoy an alternative offering. It gets me up and moving every morning, without fail. I even disgracefully took my own beans on a recent holiday in France. And the shop, should you visit, is staffed by lovely people who are knowledgeable and passionate. 27 Monmouth Street, WC2H 9EU



Restaurant: Rochelle School Canteen

This restaurant run by Melanie Arnold and Margot Henderson (wife of Fergus Henderson, who owns St John Bread and Wine) is a hidden gem close by the City housed in a converted bike shed. The canteen provides lunches on a first-come first-served basis, so don't tell too many people. It's always full of interesting characters, eating simply delicious food. Fantastic for corporate events. Rochelle School, Arnold Circus, E2 7ES

The 1-2-3 Luncheon group

This time we chose Corrigan's in Upper Grosvenor Street and old friends and new all agreed the verdict – good lunch, good venue and great company. In the words of Clare Dobie, 'These 1-2-3 lunches make for a nice change of format and pace. The conversation was both interesting and enjoyable. We ranged from banking complaints through bringing up children and health to possible speakers at special CWN events – all part of the fun of CWN.'

Our critique: almost total agreement on our ratings from 1-5 for food, service and ambience.

Food – 4 Delicious and beautifully presented.

Service – 3 The waiters were slow and needed reminding

at times.

Ambience – 4 We liked the round table, plenty of space between tables and no intrusive background music.

We all agreed we would be happy to return; it's an excellent venue for business lunches.

You may be interested to learn that Galvin at Windows at the Hilton in Park Lane, which was reviewed in the last edition of Connections, now has a Michelin Star.

Pat Wright