

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE2717

Romano, Bruna

(1942 - 2009)

Born	19421118, Motticella Reggio Calabria Italy
Died	20091227, Canberra Australian Capital Territory Australia
Occupation	Barrister, Lawyer, Solicitor

Summary

Bruna Romano migrated to Australia from Italy with her family in 1956. In 1967 she was awarded a Council of Legal Education Certificate from the Legal Education Committee of Victoria and was admitted as a solicitor and barrister of the Supreme Court of Victoria in May 1968. In mid-1968 she became the first woman to establish a law practice in the ACT, and remained head of the firm Romano & Co. until 2003. She was active in a number of community organisations in Canberra until the 1990s and continued to practise as a family law consultant.

Details

The fifth of nine children of Giuseppina Raco and Bartolo Verduci, Bruna Romano migrated with her family to Melbourne at the age of 13 and completed the Higher School Certificate at McRobertson Girls High, Melbourne, in 1961. In 1967 she was awarded a Council of Legal Education Certificate from the Legal Education Committee of Victoria, and became a solicitor and barrister of the Supreme Court of Victoria in May 1968. She married a Public Servant, Domenico Romano in December 1967 and became the first woman to establish a legal firm in the ACT in mid-1968 when she established the firm of Romano-Verduci, the ACT's first non Anglo-Celtic law firm in the Canberra region. Her husband completed a law degree at the Australian National University and joined the firm in the mid-1970s. Bruna remained head of the firm Romano and Co. until 2003. In 1986 she was appointed Honorary lawyer for the Embassy of Italy, and in 1999 graduated from the University of Adelaide and the Australian National University with an Advanced Certificate of Arbitration and Mediation. From 1968 until the 1990s she was an active member of a number of community organisations such as the Good Neighbour Council (1968-80), the Council of Social Security, the Italo-Australian Women's Committee, the Business and Professional Women's Club, the Law Society's Free Legal Service, the Women's Legal Service and she was a founding member of the organising committee of Villaggio Italiano (San Antonio Retirement Village), Page, ACT. She and Domenico have two children, one of whom is now a partner in the firm.

Bruna Romano died in December 2009, after being diagnosed with an aggressive brain tumour about 14 months earlier.

In 2023 the ACT Government named a street after Bruna in Denman Prospect, a new suburb where the street names commemorate people associated with activism and reform.

Published resources

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Site Exhibition

Australian Women Lawyers as Active Citizens, Trailblazing Women Lawyers Project Team, 2016,
<http://www.womenaustralia.info/lawyers>

Archival resources

National Library of Australia, Oral History and Folklore Collection

Domenico Romano interviewed by Ann-Mari Jordens [sound recording]

Author Details

Ann-Mari Jordens

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