

A lifelong activist for women's rights



Kerry Lovering, OAM
Photo: *Penny Stephens*

THE penny dropped for Kerry Lovering when she finished university.

As a young geologist working her first job, she was stunned to learn that, as a woman, she was consigned to earn only 70% of her male colleagues' wages.

"My father always believed I could do anything, just like the boys, and I was astonished that I didn't have equality," she said. The experience pushed Mrs Lovering to march in the streets and lobby the powerful behind closed doors, and through the efforts of people like her, the fight for equal pay for equal work was won in Australia.

Indeed, since the 1970s the mother of three and ardent feminist has devoted herself to furthering the social status of women, serving as a local councillor, academic and equal opportunity officer during her 75 years. The news that she would receive an OAM for pursuing this passion left her feeling "surprised and quite honoured", she said.

As a convener for the Women's Electoral Lobby, her sights are currently focused on having abortion removed from the Crimes

Act in Victoria, and engaging the Rudd Government on the issue of paid maternity leave.

She is thrilled that several senior federal minister are women, a mark of the ground gained by the women's movement. But there is still work to be done and, she said, in some ways feminism could look to technology as its best friend. "You can't run a social revolution without a duplicating machine," she laughed.

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