

# First Aboriginal at the Bar

**SYDNEY.** — Mrs Patricia O'Shane, 34, will make legal history today when she becomes Australia's first Aboriginal barrister.

And to watch the ceremony in the NSW Supreme Court in Sydney will be her "family", most of whom have travelled from North Queensland.

The "family" consists, apart from her two daughters, Lydia, 13, and Marilyn 12, of her father, Mr Pat O'Shane, a white Australian of Irish descent who is a retired waterside worker, her brothers, Dan, an electrician and Terry, a seaman, their wives and her

sister, Margaret, a triple-certificate nurse.

Mrs O'Shane is separated from her husband. Her mother, an Aboriginal, is dead.

Mrs O'Shane was born in North Queensland and went to school in Cairns, where she later taught in a high school.

She said last night she gave up teaching when she became ill.

When she recovered, she decided to take up law.

"I have been involved in the Aboriginal movement one way and an-

other since I was 15," she said.

"Among the things that impressed me was seeing the attitude of police to Aboriginals.

"There was also the attitude of some solicitors in Cairns who were not prepared to take cases of Aboriginals in court.

"I came to the conclusion that we needed some of our own people to become lawyers."

Mrs O'Shane said she got an Aboriginal study grant from the Federal Government.

Sun 6th February 1976