

TASMANIAN **WOMEN** IN AGRICULTURE



Bluegum

July 2026

CONNECTING, SUPPORTING & CELEBRATING
TASMANIAN RURAL WOMEN

Chair Report by Sue Hinton



Welcome to this edition of the Bluegum. It has certainly been a busy few months since I last touched base with you all, although I did manage to take a couple of weeks off and head over to Western Australia for a breather.

In recent months I've been representing Tasmanian Women in Agriculture at several key industry activities. One of these is the Industry Supply Group, formed by NRE to keep us informed about Government strategies and developments in fuel and fertiliser supply chains. This work has been time well spent. NRE teams are doing some excellent work to support industry and ensure Government has accurate, timely information.

We are also actively involved in the Forum of Rural Stakeholders, a statewide collaborative network convened by Rural Business Tasmania.

The Forum brings together organisations that work with or support rural communities, providing a space for coordination, information sharing, and collective problem-solving. It's a valuable opportunity to ensure rural voices especially women's voices are heard across agencies and industry bodies.

Another important area of engagement has been the Agriculture Strategy Roundtable discussions. It is encouraging to sit at the table and contribute on behalf of our organisation to a strategy that will shape the future of agriculture in Tasmania. Ensuring women's perspectives are embedded in these conversations is essential for building a resilient, inclusive sector.

We have our AGM coming up in August. Come and join us in Deloraine. We have some small changes we are proposing to our constitution, so come along and have your say. We also have some vacancies on our executive committee.

As a long-time agronomist, I can't help keeping a close eye on the weather. Signs for our east and north-east continue to show dry pressure, with outlooks indicating below-average rainfall and above-average temperatures as we move forward. It's a good time to start planning early and thinking through your options. Reach out to the great networks we have, no one needs to navigate challenging seasons alone.

All the very best for the next couple of months.

Sue Hinton

Results of Photo Competition



Above: 1st Place – Georgia Brown,
Tasmanian Berries

Thank you for your photos!

We extend our thanks to everyone who submitted photos for inclusion in our library of images depicting rural life for Tasmanian women.

We now have lots of images for our library, and encourage you all to continue sharing any photos that depict a day in your life as a Tasmanian woman in agriculture.

Included here are our 3 winners. Congratulations to Georgie Brown, Anna Raff and Alice Lang.



Left: 2nd Place, Anna Raff, King Island

Above: 3rd Place, Alice Lang,
'Walking the next generation'

MORLP Reunion



On the 21st of May, past and future participants of the Tasmania Women in Agriculture Marcus Oldham Rural Leadership Program came together at Camp Clayton for an inspiring evening of connection, reflection, and shared experiences within the agricultural industry.

The dinner provided a valuable opportunity for women involved in the program to network, build relationships, and celebrate the impact MORLP continues to have across Tasmania's agricultural community.

A highlight of the evening was a heartfelt presentation from Caitlyn Badcock, who spoke about her personal experience within the program. Caitlyn shared insights into her journey, the opportunities MORLP has provided, and the confidence and growth she has gained through participating. Her speech was both inspiring and relatable, offering encouragement to future participants preparing to begin their own leadership journeys.

The evening also celebrated the announcement of the 2026 MORLP winners, Olivia Cripps and Libby Cooper. Both women were recognised for their involvement in agriculture and their commitment to leadership, with attendees excited to see them begin their MORLP journey.



The dinner created a welcoming and supportive atmosphere where everyone from different backgrounds within agriculture could come together, learn from one another, and strengthen the growing network of leaders in the Tasmanian agricultural industry and community.

Overall, the evening was a wonderful celebration of community, leadership, and the ongoing success of the Tasmania Women in Agriculture MORLP program.



Proudly supported by
Tasmanian State Government and the Strategic Industry Partnership Program, and
Simplot Autralia.



Representing Tasmania on the Global Agritourism Stage

Wearing my TWiA 'hat', and through collaborative work with the Tasmanian Agritourism Accelerator Project, I had the privilege of travelling through Scotland and England in June and July to participate in the Global Agritourism Network (GAN) Conference in Aberdeen and undertake a study tour of some of the United Kingdom's leading agritourism enterprises. With a background in farming and agritourism development, the opportunity provided valuable insights into global best practice and the chance to bring practical knowledge, ideas and international connections home to benefit Tasmania's growing agritourism sector.

The conference, held in Aberdeen from 23–26 June, attracted more than 550 delegates from over 50 countries, bringing together farmers, tourism operators, researchers and industry leaders to explore how agritourism is strengthening farm businesses, supporting rural communities and creating opportunities for future generations. Tasmania was well represented, with agritourism operators and industry leaders sharing their expertise through presentations, panel discussions and industry showcases. It was also exciting to see Tim Parsons (Curringa Farm) appointed the inaugural Chair of the Australian Agritourism Network, while Allison Clark continues her leadership role with the Global Agritourism Network's Australia and New Zealand Committee. Their appointments recognise the strength of Tasmania's agritourism sector and its growing influence on the national and international stage. The conference was complemented by visits to a diverse range of agritourism enterprises, each demonstrating that there is no single formula for success. Instead, the common thread was creating authentic connections between farming, food, people and place.

Women in Agriculture on the Global Stage

By Belinda Hazell



Scotland is a leader in agritourism. One of the highlights was Glen Clova Hotel, recognised as one of Scotland's oldest agritourism ventures. The family has successfully evolved from a traditional farming enterprise into a destination where hospitality, heritage and the surrounding landscape combine to create memorable visitor experiences. At Westerton Farm, I met Fiona Smith and the Gammie family, the fourth generation to farm the property. The family has diversified while remaining firmly focused on profitable local food production.



Westerton is also a Monitor Farm, bringing farmers, researchers and advisers together through regular on-farm meetings to analyse business performance, trial innovative practices and share practical solutions to production challenges. This collaborative approach supports innovation, resilience and succession, with Fiona playing an important role in the future of the family business.

The visit to Castleton Farm was equally inspiring. Ross and Anna Mitchell have transformed a berry-growing enterprise established in the 1970s into one of Scotland's leading berry producers. Today the business includes 1,481 polytunnels, a thriving farm shop and café, and seasonal visitor experiences that connect consumers with modern agriculture while adding value to the family farming business. At Chevridge Farm, visitors can pitch tents among the orchards and enjoy cider produced through the property's own cider house, while internationally recognised destinations such as Thyme and The Newt showcased how farming, gardens, accommodation, food and hospitality can be seamlessly integrated to create world-class visitor experiences. Other memorable visits included the national agritourism award-winning Forest Farm Organic Dairy, Marshall's Farm Shop and Kitchen, Peel Farm, and Mrs Brown's Organic Cheesery in Cheshire. Although one of the smallest businesses visited, the cheesery demonstrated that agritourism does not require a large-scale operation. Passion, quality products and authentic customer experiences can create a successful and profitable enterprise regardless of size.



Following the conference, I also attended the Groundswell Festival at Lannock Farm, Hertfordshire, one of the United Kingdom's leading regenerative agriculture events. Women in agriculture were prominently represented throughout the program, sharing their experiences as farmers, business leaders, innovators and advocates for change. Their leadership reinforced the important contribution women are making to farming innovation, environmental stewardship, diversification and the future of agriculture.

Across every business and conference session, several common themes emerged. Storytelling is central to successful agritourism, with visitors wanting to understand the people behind the product and the history of the land. Connection with purpose and place creates memorable experiences that cannot be replicated elsewhere. Innovation and diversification are helping farm businesses remain profitable while strengthening resilience, and importantly, creating exciting opportunities for the next generation to return to the family farm.

The study tour reinforced that Tasmania is exceptionally well positioned to capitalise on these global trends. Our premium produce, innovative farmers, spectacular landscapes and strong regional communities provide an outstanding foundation for authentic agritourism experiences that celebrate our farming heritage while supporting profitable and resilient farm businesses. The knowledge, ideas and international relationships developed throughout this study tour will continue to inform agritourism development programs we deliver and support the ongoing growth of Tasmania's agritourism sector. By sharing these experiences through TWiA and across our industry networks, we can continue building a vibrant agritourism sector that showcases the very best of our people, produce and places while creating new opportunities for farming families and regional communities. If you are keen to learn more about what agritourism can do for you, your farm and community, please touch base with Belinda at bhazell@agritourismtas.com.au



AGM

Thursday 27 August 2026

11am

The business of the AGM will be to:

- **receive annual reports from the previous year**
- **appoint an auditor for the coming year**
- **elect new executive committee members**
- **changes to the constitution**

Deloraine Bendigo Bank

Meeting Room

49 Emu Bay Road, Deloraine

Light lunch provided.

Special guest speaker: Susan Bennett, AI specialist

Places are limited, expressions of interest RSVPs are essential.

RSVP by 20 August 2026

via QR Code



The proposed amendments aim to strengthen the sustainability, continuity, and effectiveness of TWIA's governance by modernising term limits, expanding the executive structure, and increasing flexibility in committee composition. These changes respond directly to the challenges volunteer organisations face in attracting and retaining executive members, while ensuring strong leadership and organisational stability.

Current issue:

Volunteer organisations across Australia are struggling to recruit new executive members, making rigid term limits impractical and potentially destabilising.

Proposed change:

- Executive members may serve more than two consecutive terms (a term is 2 years).
- However, the Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary must take a mandatory break from that specific role after two terms.
- They may remain on the Executive Committee in another capacity, ensuring continuity of knowledge and leadership.

This approach balances renewal with stability. It prevents burnout in key officer roles while retaining experienced leaders who are vital to TWIA's ongoing governance and strategic direction.

Proposed change:

- Add a Past Chair role to the Executive Committee.
- The Past Chair will hold full voting rights.

This formalises leadership continuity, supports succession planning, and ensures the incoming Chair has access to institutional knowledge, mentoring, and strategic guidance. It also strengthens governance by keeping experienced leadership embedded within decision-making.

Current issue:

A fixed minimum number of committee members can create unnecessary pressure during recruitment periods and may hinder the organisation's ability to operate efficiently.

Proposed change:

- Remove the required minimum number of Executive Committee members.
- Retain the maximum cap of 13 members.

This gives TWIA flexibility to operate effectively without being constrained by arbitrary minimums. As long as essential officer roles are filled and the organisation can function, the committee can adapt to changing volunteer capacity.

In Memoriam

It is with great sadness that we announce the recent passing of Elizabeth Ranicar and Valerie Cramp, two long-serving members of TWiA.

Elizabeth Ranicar



I grew up in the country during the war, when near self-sufficiency was normal, house cows, fowls, meat, a large vegetable garden and fruit trees. Growing up with animals I developed a fondness for stock. My grandfather bought me a pony which started my love of horses and riding, and an interest in helping, learning how to handle stock.

I had several office jobs after leaving school and worked as a receptionist and then as a dental nurse which was interesting and a far cry from the modern sophisticated surgeries today.

I married a dairy farmer and helped milk cows in a walk-through dairy, the milk being separated cream to the butter factory and the skim milk to the pigs. The farm needed a lot of work, clearing and burning rubbish, logs, blackberries, and ferns. Rabbits were in near plague proportion so lots of poisoning, trapping, shooting and gassing burrows. Gradually with improved pasture, and good crops of barley, and canning peas we progressed to more cows and a herring bone swing over dairy. It is interesting to see huge advances in the dairy industry with rotary and robotic systems and very large herds of cows.

Life became a juggling act with three children; I needed to be very well organised to deal with everyone's needs and interests. We were fairly self-sufficient with milk, vegetables, meat which was killed and cut up for the price of the skin, grain was traded for eggs. We moved to more sheep and cropping and sold our herd of cows which was sad as we had bred and raised them from calves, heifers were in demand especially in Asia. With more sheep I rode regularly checking and moving sheep, I especially loved the lambing season and shearing hectic as it was. New crops were introduced and the start of the poppy industry, so lots to learn in the management of growing them, peas, barley, wheat and new grass varieties. Dams had to be put in for irrigation, from humble beginnings of the sprinkler system, five moves then a main move day and night and refuel the tractor which ran the pump, now travelling irrigators and central pivots and expensive electric pumps.

I attended the Deloraine and Districts Pony Club inaugural meeting and became actively involved for many years. I also love gardening and still maintain a small vegetable garden and more interestingly a plants garden. In 1986 my husband developed cancer and died months later, I was devastated and shattered as we had always discussed everything, and I had huge responsibility for the property. I have seen many advances and lots of changes in every aspect of agriculture, machinery, equipment, management, internet, and more procedures, regulations and O.H & S. I feel for the young generation being overburdened with too much procedure.

I still enjoy working with stock and riding my horse and loyal trusty dogs, I could not have managed without their skills.

The following seems to apply to me. **You can take the girl out of the country, but you can't take the country out of the girl.**

Elizabeth was a original member of the Tasmanian Women in Agriculture, and a founding member of the Meander Valley Women in Ag group. Elizabeth was a very active member within TWiA and was one of our committee members for the Gathering held in 2012 and our most recent Gathering held in March 2026. Elizabeth supplied many of the flowers for our floral arrangements for the gathering. Elizabeth was a welcoming, encouraging and a steady influence to all members both within our Meander Valley group and the wider TWiA family.

Vale Elizabeth, you will be missed by us all.

Valerie Cramp

Long before we were married, Pete and I dreamt of farming together. However as neither of us had the knowledge, experience, financial resources or family connections to make this happen, we set to work. Pete continued his day job with the Bank while we restored and sold residential properties in Hobart. At the same time he was doing correspondence courses in agriculture, reading farm journals and cultivating friendships with farming families.

Meanwhile, I established a small handcraft business, taught delinquent teenagers part-time and enjoyed bringing up three sons.

Our joy knew no bounds when we purchased 240 acres at Margate, including apple orchards, a delightful rivulet and bush with a great variety of native orchids.



The house cow provided us with milk, cream, butter and yoghurt. We learned much about livestock management, fencing, yard construction and barn building. In season I sold apples, blackberries and mushrooms to the Hadley's Hotel Kitchen. More regularly we hosted visits from primary school children, teaching them where their food and fibre comes from. After twelve years of practical experience we felt ready to go into full time farming and start living dangerously!

At this time reliable rainfall was starting to become an issue. So in 1983 we purchased 'Bentley' at Chudleigh, a high rainfall district. Here we set up the intensive beef cross-breeding system we had planned. The property was converted to block-grazing (a new idea at that time). We also ran a flock of wool sheep, primarily as a pasture management tool. We believed everything on the property had to earn its keep, so the 'tired' weatherboard cottage was renovated and 'Bentley Cottage' became one of the districts' first tourist accommodation businesses. We enjoyed meeting both international and interstate visitors.

Our life of bliss came to an abrupt halt when I was diagnosed with a brain tumour, requiring air-ambulance to Hobart, emergency surgery, followed by many weeks of intensive care. Our family greatly appreciated the kindness of so many TWiA members during this time.

Today life is great -- though different.

We moved to a smaller property at Hagley. Limited eye sight has meant changes and adaptation for me, but I am so thankful for life, family and friends. I still enjoy a huge garden and the pleasure of having cattle to tend.

Which reminds me -- I must go and check the calves!

Valerie was a member of TWiA and a member of the Meander Valley Women in Agriculture group for many years. Valerie enjoyed many friendships with members of our TWiA group, providing a warmth and friendly nature to all that crossed her path.

Vale Valerie, you will be missed by us all.



Both stories came from our Meander Valley Book called "Meandering in our Valley" which was written and produced by the Meander Valley Women in Agriculture members where each member gave their own personal history.

Safe driving course



Wednesday 9 September 2026
Driver Training Opportunity
Symmons Plains
8:45am – 4:30pm

TWIA Members: \$200
Non-members \$400

Lunch provided

RSVP by 28 August 2026
admin@taswomeninag.org

Minimum wage increases

By Amanda Bond

Minimum wage increases 2026–2027

The minimum award wage has increased by 4.75% from 1 July 2026. This increase applies from the first full pay period after 1 July 2026. Employers must also pay their employees superannuation contributions at the same time they pay their employees wages from 1 July 2026.

For more information on the minimum wage rates you can visit the Fair Work Ombudsman website by clicking below.



Discover the Fascinating World of Beekeeping



Tasmanian Women in Agriculture (TWIA) is excited to offer members the opportunity to develop new skills through the Northern Branch Tasmanian Beekeepers Association's Introduction to Beekeeping course this September.

TWIA has secured two places in this course, making it more affordable for members to learn the fundamentals of keeping healthy and productive honeybees.

The full course fee is \$250, with TWIA contributing \$150 towards the cost, meaning successful applicants will pay just \$100.

The course provides a comprehensive introduction to beekeeping, covering the biology of bees, different hive types and construction, hive management, common bee diseases, and a practical hands-on session where participants will learn how to safely handle bees.

Course dates are:

Tuesday 15 September, 6:15 pm – 9:00 pm

Saturday 19 September, 8:45 am – 3:00 pm

Tuesday 22 September, 6:30 pm – 9:00 pm

Sunday 27 September, 8:45 am – 3:00 pm

This opportunity is available exclusively to current TWIA members. To register your interest, email **admin@taswomeninag.org**. Places will be allocated on a first in, best dressed basis, so don't delay, only two subsidised positions are available.

Whether you're looking to start a new hobby, support pollinators, or explore the world of beekeeping, this is a fantastic opportunity to learn from experienced beekeepers in a supportive, hands-on environment.

Registrations close 31 August.

Farmsafe Australia Tasmanian State Forum

9:00am – 4:00pm
Wednesday 14 October

The Farmsafe Australia Tasmanian State Forum is a one-day free event bringing together farmers, industry leaders, researchers and safety advocates to explore the real safety challenges facing Australian agriculture. Through honest conversations and powerful storytelling, the forum highlights lived experiences from across the sector; the near misses, hard lessons and practical changes that can make a difference on farm.

Rather than focusing on compliance alone, the event is designed to spark relatable discussions that encourage safer decision-making and stronger safety culture across farming communities.

Attendees will hear from a range of speakers sharing practical insights, innovative ideas and simple ways to improve safety outcomes in everyday agricultural work and life. Click image below to book.

Speaker Line-up Includes;
Marsella and Wiremu Edmonds
Sam Longmore
Glen 'Cookie' Cook
Dom Thurbon



Join us: become a member of TWiA

By Sue Hinton



Tasmanian Women in Agriculture (TWiA) formed in 1994. We are a voluntary organisation that is apolitical, independent and very grass roots. We aim to support and empower women in agriculture to realise their full potential.

Members can be from any profession, and new faces are always welcome. If you are thinking about joining us now might be the time to take that step and sign up. It's easy.

Jump onto our website [Membership Plans](#) | [Tasmanian Women in Agriculture](#) and follow the steps.

We have a range of membership types for different needs, including the recently added Organisational membership to allow organisations and business that support our mission to join us.

We run a number of events and activities during the year including workshops and training, networking events and field days and farm tours. TWiA actively advocates for policies and practices that benefit women in agriculture. We work closely with industry stakeholders and government bodies to address issues affecting our members and the broader agricultural community.

We look forward to seeing you become members of Tasmanian Women in Agriculture.

Meander Valley Women in Agriculture Group Luncheon

Meander Valley Women in Agriculture Group Luncheon was held at Ashgrove Cheese Dairy door on Friday 3/7/26. We were fortunate to have 17 people attend on a reasonably sunny day, considering all the rain that we have had.

A lovely luncheon was enjoyed by all that attended, with Connie Bennett treating us all to a Gelato ice cream for dessert. We thank Ashgrove Cheese and Connie for making our day so enjoyable.

Meander Valley Women in Agriculture's next meeting is in conjunction with the TWiA annual meeting to be held at the Bendigo Bank Meeting room at 11 am on Thursday 27th August 2026, with guest speaker Susan Bennett talking on AI and how it is used



We are inviting expressions of interest for a range of roles to help guide the future of TWiA. This is your chance to have a real say in the future of Tasmanian Women in Agriculture and the direction of programs, events and advocacy that support women across our state.

About the roles:

Chair

The Chair is responsible for chairing meetings of TWiA, representing TWiA at events and act as spokesperson, identify opportunities for TWiA and coordinating strategic planning events, as well as other duties and activities.

Vice Chair

The Vice Chair is responsible for the duties of the Chair in their absence, coordinating member surveys, and supporting funding requirements and reporting.

Treasurer

The Treasurer oversees cash flow reporting, financial records, funds and assets, and funding requirements.

Secretary

The Secretary is responsible for recording meeting minutes, maintaining documentation, various record keeping and coordinating correspondence.

Public Officer

The Public Officer is the 'official link' and point of contact for the Corporate Affairs Office.

Communications Officer

The Communications Officer is responsible for the development and implementation of the communication strategy, assist with promotional events and representing TWiA at industry functions.

Scholarships Officer

The Scholarships Officer identifies sponsorship opportunities, prepares grant applications and submit applications on behalf of the organisation.

Your application:

Interested people, who believe they can make a meaningful contribution to this important not for profit organisation, are asked to request an application form via email from Sue Hinton, the current Chair. chair@taswomeninag.org or download an application form at www.taswomeninag.org/positions-vacant.