

TASMANIAN WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE



In 1994 a gathering of rural women from around the state met in Scottsdale. From this event **Tasmanian Women in Agriculture** was formed.

These three panels depict what the organisation aims to do for rural Tasmanian women.

Designed and made by Karin and Michael Gethin, Gravelly Beach Metalworks.

TASMANIAN
WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

Connecting



Supporting



Celebrating



Bluegum

December 2022

CONNECTING, SUPPORTING & CELEBRATING
TASMANIAN RURAL WOMEN

Chair Report Deb Morice



A little about me and my history with TWiA...

As I write this as incoming Chair of Tasmanian Women in Agriculture for 2022/2023 I am still feeling very humble and overwhelmed, firstly because of the wonderful Panel Unveiling celebration we had at Scottsdale on the 21st and 22nd October and secondly because of recognition bestowed on me with the Outstanding Contribution Award. This award means I am privileged to join an outstanding group of women who have contributed immensely to the organisation. We must not forget there are a lot of members in this organisation who are the quiet achievers and deserve recognition for all their contributions to TWiA. It's a great village to belong to.

With my husband Greig, and one of our sons Marcus and his wife Rachel, we run a beef farm with 100 breeders, and also have a contracting business making silage, hay, doing ground preparation and carrying out lots of contract fencing mainly to keep the wildlife out of pastures. Our other children, Karelle and partner Clayton, and our other son Jason help when called upon. Both reside at Scottsdale with our four grandchildren.

We have Dairy-share farmed at Montana, Derby and Rushy Lagoon before purchasing Greig's family farm in 2002. I worked at Ashgrove, Premium Fresh, Electorate office for Guy Barnett and then Area Manager for Fonterra Australia and Tasfoods. Based at home now but the book work never stops, and I care for my parents at Shearwater.

I am looking forward to my term as chair and I hope I can fulfil the role as admirably as the women who have chaired this organisation before me.

Recent events and news...

Our AGM was held at the Villaret Gardens, a fitting setting for meeting, and a lovely meal was enjoyed by 35 ladies on the day. Our guest speaker was Stephanie Trethewey, National 2022 AgriFutures Rural Women's Award winner, and she spoke about moving to Tasmania, the challenges, and her program Motherland which she won the award for.

The new Executive voted in at our first executive meeting after the AGM is as follows:

Chair and Northern Hub contact: **Deb Morice**
Vice Chair and Southern Hub contact: **Chris Bishop**
Secretary: **Sasha Brightman**
Treasurer: **Jeanette Reader**
Public Officer and Membership Office: **Di Barr**
Scholarships: **Hannah de Bomford**
Executive member and Northwest Hub contact: **Laurie Krauss**
Executive member and Photo Comp Coordinator: **Lesley Pyecroft**
Liaison Officer: **Mandy Cooper**
Emeritus Member: **Belinda Hazell**

Thank you ladies for putting your hand up for a role on the Executive. I look forward to working with the new Executive and am excited about the vision and projects we have planned.

Our Panel Unveiling celebration weekend was a great success and a big thank you to the small committee that helped organise this, Tania Rattray MP, Sigrid Nelson, Cheryl McCartie, Deanna Scott and Mel Partridge and Janine Walker.

Di Barr and I met with the Federal Agricultural Minister the Hon. Murray Watt for a breakfast, organised by Janie Finlay with other agricultural stakeholders. It was interesting to listen to everyone and most attendees brought up the same issues for every commodity and I believe the Minister was listening to all of our concerns.

We have been busy applying for funding to roll out some innovative and interesting programs for women over the next four years. Thank you to Di, Chris and Belinda for the enormous amount of work in a short timeframe to get the application in, as well as then five days later submitting a budget Consultation submission.

I also attended a number of events recently including the Rural Business Tasmania AGM. It was a great opportunity to catch up with familiar faces and government representatives. On the 29th of November I went to the Rural Alive and Well launch of Friends of RAW and on the 30th of November I attended the Seedlab Event back near my first home at Montana. Again, great to hear about the work these organisations are doing, the people they are supporting and opportunities they are providing for female entrepreneurs.

We also travelled to Richmond for our Strategic Planning meeting as we received funding to help with a facilitator for the day, which was very productive and set the scene for us going forward. We will be sharing the new Strategic Plan with TWiA members in the next few months.

I wish everyone and their families a Merry Christmas, a great harvest season and New Year and look forward to celebrating, supporting and connecting with you in 2023.

AGM Outgoing Chair Report

by
**Rebekah
Frankcombe**



In early 2019, I received a call from TWiA member Andy Jackman, suggesting that if I wasn't a member of TWiA, it should be something I considered. I looked online and at the Facebook page and thought, why not?

I only had a little to lose at \$25 per year with posts on socials, varying contextual learning to networking. If anything, I may meet some people that, like me, had small children on the land or that I could learn from that they may have faced some struggles or triumphs like myself.

I was our dairy manager, or in layperson's terms, the cups on cups off girl; I'd feed the calves, set up the paddock for the cows, and organise staff. While I made no significant financial investment, I was, and still am, emotionally, mentally and physically invested in our fully certified organic family farm. We are a third-generation farm at Mt Hicks. I am a solo mum of three, one girl, Matilda, 11 and two boys, Hurley, 9 and Elliott, just over 4.

Hand on heart, it was one of the best life choices I have made. TWiA announced a scholarship to Marcus Oldham in Rural leadership. I applied and was accepted. In July 2019, I attended MORLP.

I returned home with a skip in my step. I had gained so much and, in turn, had given to participants. To quote "John Quincy Adams, "If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader". I had been encouraged to allow myself creativity and freedom to explore new ways of thinking. I aspired to coordinate, support and hold networking catchups that would begin conversations around emotional wellbeing and living in rural and isolated communities. Through education in leadership comes inspiration. MORLP has been an excellent foundation for that. I gained knowledge and skills and learned that when the opportunity presents itself, I could encourage others and create an environment that inspires personal and professional development. Something that is often overlooked in a rural farm setting.

Being local to the Northwest Coast, the hub of the Tasmanian dairy industry, I understand that we are chronically under-serviced both up here and possibly state-wide. I know that people are reluctant to ask for help, be it that they're too proud or, in my case, didn't know who or where to go to find resources and support.

For me, it's a journey of education and learning. I am developing confidence within myself, and I am seeing the industry differently and the opportunities that are around me. The agriculture sector requires a balance of male and female, and not everyone will be a tertiary scholar. And not everyone should be. Some of the smartest people have failed at education in the school-based learning environment. We need dairy hands, machine operators, pickers, graders, and sorters. Please never let anyone compare your pay packet to that of the next.

As custodians of this land, what will our legacy be if we don't encourage others to pursue a career in the foundation of the industry? We need to make it inviting, informative, thriving and exciting. A job you love will always be worth getting out of bed for, regardless of the pay packet. A job you despise will have you constantly searching for more.

During my time on the TWiA executive, I have had the pleasure of participating in several grassroots gatherings. In 2020, the pandemic hit us, not just on a regional basis but nationally and globally. As we know it, life was fundamentally turned on its ear.

During that time, TWiA changed format, and we hosted seminars online, including in the cloud podcasts. We adapted. In late 2020 TWiA held the first gathering following the pandemic, "All together in the paddock", at Mt Gnomon farm behind Penguin. The vision was to gather people together and:

1. Provide an opportunity for women (including their partners, families, and friends) to network and support each other following the event Covid19, and
2. Encourage, empower, and celebrate together. Although we have been through this trauma, shock, ordeal, and stress, we have survived. We have been placed under mental, physical, and emotional stresses that have never been present. However, this pandemic was no less traumatic than the fire, flood, drought, and price crashes we have seen across the industry in the past, and we survived.

This event was the first of its kind in the state post Covid19. There were over 160 adults in attendance and umpteen children. (I'm pretty sure Zoe won't ever say yes to volunteer face painting the 20-odd kids that RSVP'd, it was more like 60, hahaha!) We partnered with Rotary Community Care, Rural Alive and Well and formed Boots on the Ground. Mary Obrien attended Tasmania and spoke about wellbeing and mental health in rural communities.

2020 and 2021 have seen events on King Island facilitated and organised by Anita Poulsen. We have supported industry-related programs, including MORLP, Sprout Tasmania scholarships and Rural Women's Agrifutures. Our TWiA member, Steph Threthewey, winner of this year's Rural Women's Agrifutures, is with us today.

The Meander group organised, and hosted events facilitated by the inspiring Deb Morice, our Vice Chair. The unveiling of the first bench seat was held in late May 2022 in Scottsdale to acknowledge and pay respect to the first gathering of women in the northeast. Deb has also worked tirelessly to have a home for the organization's history which will be held at Pearn's in Westbury. And the gathering in Scottsdale is to be held in October.

Belinda Hazell is working with Stu and Phil from Safe Farming Tasmania, delivering podcasts and discussions online monthly. Drought Hub resilience project, Sprout Tasmania, Seedlab and various other NGOs to have us at the forefront and at the table of these discussions around funding for our industries in Tasmania.

Sigi, I have no words; you are truly amazing! There is nothing that you cannot do. Sometimes you have even read my mind. You are exceptional and so very valued.

Early in 2022, a survey was sent to our members, asking what they would like from the organization. There were several things flagged, climate, training, and gender equality. However, the resounding and most profound were support, networking, and connection, three of the founding attributes from when the organisation commenced.

As we move forward as an organization, please reach out to any executive, express your interest in what you would like to happen and suggest how we can work together to achieve that.

For the past 3 years, the TWiA executive has been a constant in my life. We have held Zoom meetings that have only sometimes been at the kitchen bench. They have often been in my ear, with the phone down the front of my bib and brace, as I milked cows. They have heard the kisses and "I love you, mum" from my children Matilda, Hurley, and Elliott as they have gone to bed, or the sneaky "Can I have 10 more minutes up while you're in your meeting?"

I'm sure there's not been an executive with whom we haven't had a heart-to-heart conversation; the need to deliberate, have a laugh, a cry and occasionally "f" bomb.

My \$25 annual investment 3 years ago was what I would call winning the lotto. When I came to TWiA, I was a third-generation farmer in a male-dominated industry. I lacked confidence and struggled to find my purpose. Still, I had a lot to contribute. I was a woman and a solo mum to three children.

The irony is that I can't show you physically what I have received; it doesn't come wrapped, you can't search for it online, and you most definitely won't find it in a textbook. It has been an absolute privilege and extremely humbling to be the TWiA chair for the past 12 months and to be part of the executive for the last 3 years. Thank you for supporting me, believing in me, inspiring me, and celebrating with me.





Annual General Meeting Report September 2022

by
Hannah de Bomford



Thursday 22nd of September saw Tasmanian Women in Agriculture join together for the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Villarett Gardens were a picturesque setting for the gathering and meal.

Rebekah Frankcombe, the outgoing Chair, spoke passionately about her time on the Executive Committee and the personal growth she has achieved through this outstanding network of women in agriculture. A touching tribute was also given to Queen Elizabeth II and her connection to rural life.

Other topics of the meeting included the Tas Leaders Program, hearing from the two August Marcus Oldham Rural Leadership Program scholarship recipients and discussions around the upcoming Scottsdale celebration and Art Installation weekend.

Stephanie Trethewey, recent winner of the National AgriFutures Rural Women's Award and founder and CEO of Motherland, was the guest speaker on the day. She spoke passionately about her work in creating the Motherland community for rural mothers, after experiencing isolation as a rural mother herself.

The atmosphere was vibrant for the 2022 AGM with many like-minded women networking and sharing their passion for agriculture and desire to improve the industry for all ages and stages of those involved.

Art Installation Panel Unveiling Scottsdale

21st & 22nd October 2022

by
Maureen Cameron

Well, what a weekend!

It started on Friday evening with the unveiling of the Art Panels at McLennan Park with Aunty Patsy Cameron's 'Welcome to Country' and as a symbol of welcome she put an ochre mark of a half moon and stars on the hands of the ladies and the fingers of the men.

The Panels were unveiled by the OCA's and some of the first gathering committee. We then adjourned to the Mechanics Hall for finger food (grazing platters) and drinks for which we thank Tania Rattray MLC for her hospitality. Deb Morice and Tania Rattray gave an address on the history of TWiA, the reason behind the Panels and an update on what projects TWiA is involved in or hoping to achieve in the coming months.



The next day we all met at the recreation ground at 9am for the bus tours. Allan and I went on the tour of Scottsdale, Military Museum and Distillery ably driven by Rod, our bus driver and tour host. As it turned out it was an ideal tour as the weather wasn't the best and we were under cover most of the time. Rod took us around the recreation ground and explained the history of it and the old Band Rotunda which was moved up to the sideling and now has to be taken down to make way for the widening of the road.

This was followed by a tour of local old house and the school. We then went out to McLennan's Reserve again where Mr Peter McLennan and his wife Phyllis gave a very interesting insight to his family's farm of yesteryear when they grew flowers and vegetables seeds for Yates.



Next off to Springfield where significant landmarks were pointed out, and the Amish people who still use horse and cart to do their shopping, have their stall on the roadside for their excess produce. Then onto the farm that used to have a large apple orchard and where we were met by the owners, Kerri and Howard Shank, who made us most welcome and showed us around their garden, in particular their 200-year-old redwood trees, which are in the Guinness Book of Records as the tallest Redwood trees in the southern hemisphere. They decorate them at Christmas time with lights and a star on top. They employ a special man who has to climb up on ropes to decorate them. They are very popular with the sightseers along with the decorated homes of other people in the district. We were then privileged to see Howard Shanks' restored Pontiac before boarding the bus for morning tea at the Art Gallery and later lunch. What an interesting place. Our many thanks to Shirley and Rod for their hospitality. Can really recommend this gallery for a coffee and snack!



Then off to Anzac Park to view the tree carvings and the Military Museum to see "Huey" the helicopter which was used in the Vietnam war and lots of memorabilia from all the different wars. Our thanks to Bruce Scott (Vietnam Veteran) for his interesting commentary and tour of this excellent exhibition.

Next, we moved on to the Distillery where they specialise in Gin but also make Whiskey and Vodka. They relocated to Scottsdale from Kelso on the West Tamar. Again, another very interesting tour and talk about their distillery.



The weekend finished off with a Gala Dinner which was held at the Scottsdale Football Club Rooms. A wonderful night was had with a very nice meal, good company and many happy reunions made.

A good time was had by all. A good finish to an excellent and a most enjoyable weekend.

Thank you Deb and your team for a very memorable weekend.

Art Installation Celebration Weekend Scottsdale

by
Bev Phelan

The weekend began on Friday evening with a **Welcome to Country** followed by the unveiling of our Art Installation created by Karin and Michael Gethin from Gravelly Beach Metalworks.

Their four Corten steel panels superbly depict what TWiA aims to do for rural women in Tasmania: connect, support and celebrate. With the success of our book about TWiA “A Place in the Stockyard” by Fiona Stocker, the Book committee decided some of the profits should fund an art installation to celebrate the history of TWiA.

Attendees at the unveiling included founding members, and everyone present was delighted with the panels and their setting.

The hospitality of Scottsdale was evident when we arrived at the Mechanics Hall for sumptuous grazing platters and bubbly, courtesy of Tania Rattray M.P. and her support team. As always when TWiA women get together there were hugs, reminiscing, empathy, and laughter. In the background photos of past events reminded me of many happy times and that I once had dark brown hair!

Saturday dawned with the promise of inclement weather, but this did not dampen our enthusiasm for the bus tours which for me are the highlight of our get-togethers. First stop of the Bridport bus tour was Clovelly Dairy, owned by Ingleby Farms a family company with agricultural enterprises around the world. General Manager Mark Miers gave us an informative and insightful introduction to their philosophy, systems and practices. He stressed the focus on their people, “one of the main aims is to develop a family friendly environment for the farm’s staff, relevant training and personal development, and to be active members of the community”. As a retired dairy farmer, I was impressed with the QR codes on plant and equipment which when read by an iPhone gave the user relevant instructions, diagrams and photos.



Our next stop was Cleone's Secret Garden, a boutique nursery with terrariums, kokedamas, indoor and outdoor plants, and garden accessories. Created by a woman with a vision, the nursery is set in a garden which soothes the soul. Many of us plan to return with an empty boot! Lunch was with Bridport CWA at their historical hall. As usual the CWA ladies provided us with a feast of delicious homemade food – who was it who had 3 helpings of the sponge cake? The Gin distillery across the road was frequented by a few of us – why not! Next stop was a Rhubarb and Lemon Tree farm. Jerrod Nichols has been growing rhubarb under his Razz Rhubarb label for a number of years, beginning after the local vegetable processing plant closed in north-east Tasmania. Jerrod was passionate about farming his land and determined to find a way to make things happen. Suffice to say if you buy rhubarb from Woollies – it will be Jerrod's! The bunch of rhubarb we received still makes my mouth water. The day was typical of Tasmania – 4 seasons in a day, and our bus driver excelled himself in trying conditions.

Back to Scottsdale for a nap, or for my lot wine and nibbles at our cosy cottage before venturing up to the Gala dinner that evening. Yet again the room was abuzz with the camaraderie of TWiA. MC was Jo Palmer, State Minister for Primary Industries and Minister for Women. Guest Speaker was Felicity Richards, Chairperson of Farmsafe Australia, who shared her story. Sharing stories is the heart of our organisation, and hopefully each of us took something away from Felicity's story. For me the highlight of the night was Libby Taylor's tribute to her friend Jenny French who received a post humous OCA – Outstanding Contribution Award. Libby would be the first to admit she is not a public speaker, and it took all her inner strength to walk up to the podium. Complete with tiara, she spoke from the heart yet with the timing and content of a seasoned speaker. As well as Jenny, other worthy O.C.A. recipients were Rae Wardlaw and Deb Morice. Expect a separate report that will address the OCA's.

The night and weekend ended with extended partings at the door (i.e., still talking), and a sense of having been "with our tribe". I am sure each and every one of the attendees over the weekend sincerely thank all involved in the planning, actions and "behind the scenes" tasks (that would be you Greig) of this get-together.





Outstanding Contribution Awards 2022

Tasmanian Women in Agriculture (TWiA) is a volunteer organisation, and our success is a direct reflection of the time, ideas and enthusiasm our volunteer members contribute.

There are always a few individuals who contribute more time, better ideas and greater levels of enthusiasm over a number of years, (or even decades).

TWiA recognises these committed individuals through its Outstanding Contribution Award (OCA). The first OCAs were awarded in 2012 and there have been a total of 17 award recipients.

OCA SELECTION CRITERIA

The OCA should be given to those who have gone above and beyond the call of volunteerism and have been overwhelmingly generous with their time, input and/or talents.

- OCA nominations are only accepted in writing
- The OCA Nomination needs to be supported by the TWiA Executive committee
- Nominations will be reviewed by the TWiA Executive at the meeting after the due date
- Nominations are accepted from any current financial member of TWiA

The OCA bestows those recognised with this tribute:

- Lifetime membership
- Personal invites to all official TWiA events
- Name is listed on the TWiA OCA Members Honor Board on display at <https://www.taswomeninag.org/honour-roll>
- Public acknowledgement in the Bluegum, website and social media
- Framed OCA certificate and badge

**PAST MEMBERS AWARDED OCA'S
2012**

**Joan Field
Ruth Patterson
Jan Richardson
Sheryl Rockcliff**

2014

**Belinda Hazell
Maureen Holland
Cheryl McCartie**

2018

**Bev Phelan
Rosie McKinnon
Annette Reed**

2021

**Ella Anderson
Mandy Cooper
Larna Pittiglio
Samantha Sullivan**

2022

**Jenny French (posthumously)
Deb Morice
Rae Wardlaw**

TWiA acknowledges that other individuals have also made outstanding contributions, which may have gone unrecognised. If you want to nominate an outstanding contributor, please contact one of the Executive members through the website for a nomination form.



JENNY FRENCH

Nominated for posthumous OCA by Libby Taylor, Jeanette Reader and Annette Reed [1]



Jenny contributed at all levels, especially at the grassroots, her favourite place to be. She was the leader of Quamby Regional Group for many years. She was always available to help with collation and distribution of the Bluegum. She regularly volunteered for Agfest and took part in the Fair Dinkum Food Campaign, exchange tours. Jenny was an enthusiastic organiser of gatherings, dinners, Beyond Farm Gate tours, regular Regional Group events - bringing people together, was a particular strength of hers. Jenny could talk and she had contacts and her involvement in any project meant things got done. She was a do-er, or as she put it a go-fer. Jenny was also one of the original Executive members, Quamby regional group leader and took active roles in organising a number of Gatherings. Jenny was one of the first women to join the newly formed TWiA when the invitations were first issued back in the mid-1990s. Jenny organised the TWiA dinner held on each year on the Thursday night of Agfest, where the MORLP awards were presented for many years. She remained an active member throughout her life until other commitments and ill-health forced her to step back. Jenny passed away on 26th June 2021.

Jenny possessed Integrity and Honour – she was well known and well-loved throughout the Tasmanian rural community, including TWiA. She displayed dedication, commitment and determination to make a difference to the community she loved. While always one to speak her mind, she was nevertheless kind-hearted, committed, empathetic, loyal and passionate about anyone and anything she knew. She gave in a big way because she felt for others in a big way and she loved to have fun and bring joy to those around her. She was a leader who shepherded others with less confidence than herself.

While she never held major leadership roles, (this was not her thing) she was a leader in every way – encouraging others, walking alongside them, putting her hand up to help, doing the grunt work. She did all of this in a range of settings – privately amongst local members and her community in general, state-wide through TWiA projects and gatherings, nationally through representative activities and internationally through the networks she helped foster and continue through various exchanges.

[1] See the tribute to Jenny French in the Bluegum edition of January 2022

DEBORAH (DEB) MORICE

Nominated by Sigrid Nelson and Maureen Holland



Deb is from the Meander Valley born into a dairying family. She helped in the dairy from the time she was a child at school. It was dairying for her 7 days a week, with the only holidays being when the cows were dry...Deb stated that "she was never going to be a dairy farmer once she finished her schooling". Yeah, well that didn't happen did it! Deb and her amazing husband, Greig, took on share-farming in Montana, Derby and then Rushy Lagoon in the Northeast, of Tasmania, before purchasing the family farm at Parkham near Deloraine.

Deb has been part of TWiA since its first days and was on the organising committee for the first Women on Farms Gathering at Scottsdale in 1994. After her move to Parkham she became an integral part of the Meander Valley Group. Deb was on the TWiA executive committee for many years as well as being a Board member of Australian Women in Agriculture. After a break from the executive team Deb re-joined as Vice-Chair in 2021 and this year agreed to take on the busy role of Chair.

Deb has worked continually for TWiA, while being a busy farmer, raising a family (including twin boys), studying for University credits, and holding down a busy off farm position within Tasmania's Dairy industry. How she managed to do all this is testament to her tenacity and determination to succeed.

In 2013, TWiA awarded Deb a Marcus Oldham Rural Leadership Program (MORLP) scholarship. Deb said MORLP was a turning point in her life and she now wants to give back to TWiA, share some of the skills she learned and support agricultural women in all their endeavours. Deb has certainly done that! Deb's Meander Valley Group is TWiA's most active regional group with regular meetings, informal catchups, talks by guest speakers, farm and business visits, and most are arranged by Deb.

She is incredibly generous with the time and commitment she gives to TWiA and reaches out and welcomes new members and contributes enormously to TWiA's vision of building a connected, strong and vibrant rural community.

RAE WARDLAW

Nominated by Jan Richardson



Rae is why we have our Tasmanian Women in Agriculture organisation today.

Rae was a dairy farmer from Ringarooma in the Northeast of Tasmania. In 1993 she and 3 other women attended a “Women on Farms Gathering” at Tallangatta in Victoria. They were so inspired by this Gathering that they came home determined to bring something similar to agricultural women in Tasmania.

With an enthusiastic group of Northeast women, they formed a committee and, in 1994, organised the very first Women on Farms Gathering in Scottsdale. Over 140 rural women attended, an overwhelming response to a concept never seen or heard of before in Tasmania.

That first event was an outstanding success, with a hall full of like-minded women across all agricultural diversities. It was, for many, the first time they could share their personal journey and hear, learn, and discuss with a range of speakers telling incredible stories. Not one person who attended wanted to let this enthusiasm wane. From that Gathering, a committee was formed, and Tasmanian Women in Agriculture began.

Rae was undoubtedly a driving force behind all this and determined to see the formation of an organisation to benefit Tasmanian rural women. In the early 1990s, times were tough on farms, with interest rates at an all-time high coupled with low commodity prices. Rae recognised the benefit of getting together and having a support network where women could socialise, get advice, and learn from one another. As a farm woman, she understood from personal experience what it took to pay for a farm and support a growing family.

Rae represented and drove the concept with the State Government. She lobbied the government on our behalf to obtain much-needed financial support. She also represented us at meetings interstate, often at her own expense.

Rae is a true driving force and has remained involved with the TWiA since its inception. She has been a mentor and sounding board to young women in her area at the family and industry levels. Her vision, hard work, knowledge, experience, and determination represent the foundation that has created the organisation we all love and enjoy.

Tasmanian Women in Agriculture began its strategic planning on Friday, 9 December 2022.

Chair, Mrs Deb Morice, stated that the organisation is at a critical juncture with the need to grow membership and continue to be responsive to members' expressed concerns and needs. Work commitments and COVID-19 prevented some executive members from attending, and further refinement of initial discussions will occur in January 2023.

The opportunity to meet face-to-face to build relationships with new executive members and collaborate while discussing strategic directions to create a shared vision for future activities was appreciated by those attending.

Strategic Planning Day - Update

by
**Chris
Bishop**



Marcus Oldham Rural Leadership Program

by
Joanna Jones



I wish to thank Tasmanian Women in Agriculture for giving me a wonderful experience at the Marcus Oldham Rural Leadership Program (MORLP) in August.

I met many people including participants, presenters, staff and guest speakers. We were given many ways to interact during presentations and many challenges. We explored the topic of leadership and were given opportunities to apply it to our own lives. Through presentations we were shown how others with varied backgrounds from many places around Australia plan to make a difference after the course.

We had activities in teams and to succeed we had to modify our individual competitive spirit and learn to trust each other to get to a successful outcome. This was cleverly done by the organisers and reinforced by our guest speakers at social events.

We learned to practice being a leader every day, how this will make a difference, to look for innovative ways to improve, experiment, take risks, be positive and persistent, the importance of do what you say you will do and to aim to make a difference.

My greatest challenge was public speaking. I was given tools and opportunities to help me overcome this fear. We were shown how leadership is ultimately a relationship, a choice to make a difference and an opportunity for growth.

Thank you, I really appreciate being given this opportunity, it has enabled me to find opportunities, to add to and use what I learned at Marcus Oldham College.

I encourage TWiA to continue their involvement in this program as it gives great strength and direction to the organisation, to agriculture and to the women who have been involved. I also encourage anyone who is interested to participate in this course, it could be as I was told and as I have experienced a life changing decision.

Marcus Oldham Rural Leadership Program

by
Hannah de Bomford



In August 2022 I embarked on the life-changing week that was the Marcus Oldham Rural Leadership Program.

I arrived in Geelong very nervous and lost. The week before I had resigned from my professional role and felt ill-qualified to be at a course alongside station hands, harvest operators, veterinarians and agronomists from all over Australia.

It was a week of deep reflection and confronting conversations. I learnt that if you are anywhere in life where the individuals' or company's values and beliefs do not align with your own then everything in your life will feel off balance and 'wrong' - something I needed to hear at this pivotal point in my journey.

Public speaking exercises, mental health workshops, formal dinners and, above all, living alongside 33 strangers and cultivating a strong network and trust with each one of them were core features of the week.

The atmosphere throughout all aspects of the week was radiating positivity and encouragement.

I learnt that all good leaders do what they say they will do. I said I would give back to the Tasmanian Agriculture sector if I were provided with this life-changing opportunity, so I jumped at the opportunity to be a member of the TWiA Executive on my return as the Scholarships Officer.

No matter your age, status or involvement in the Tasmanian Agriculture Sector, I cannot recommend attending this program highly enough.

A perspective of TWiA from a new member

by
Hannah de Bomford



I had been contemplating joining Tasmanian Women in Agriculture for quite some time, but felt I wasn't enough of a participant in the agricultural way of life.

I had 'married the farmer' and do my fair share on the property, yet still stood back from joining in due to lack of confidence in myself. With some encouragement, I took the plunge and applied for the TWiA scholarships to the Marcus Oldham Rural Leadership Program and was successful. This week of self-discovery and confidence and leadership skill building was exactly what I needed. I jumped online and paid my \$25 membership fee not long after returning, wanting to contribute to this amazing network of women in agriculture.

Sitting at the AGM in 2022, the idea was put forward of joining the Executive Committee. I had never been on a committee in my life, but current and past committee members spoke highly of their time on the Executive. I threw my hat in the ring for that too and became the Scholarships Officer – right up my alleyway as I want nothing more than to see other women have the same life-changing experience through the MORLP like I did.

I have only been a member of TWiA for a short 2 months now, but I can see this membership is going to hold a place in my life for a long time. The atmosphere when a group of the extensively diverse members gets together is something else. It is vibrant, supportive and encouraging and to hear and read about what TWiA has already achieved in its lifetime gives me excitement as to what we can achieve in the future.

Sprout 2022 Growing Good Dinner

by
**Sasha
Brightman**

On Monday the 5th of December we ascended to the rooftop bar, AURA, in the centre of nipaluna/Hobart. Surround views and a sleek outlay greeted us, guests mingled who had come from around the state for the annual Sprout Growing Good dinner. Sprout Tasmania is a non-profit, volunteer supported organisation that focuses on promoting and supporting Tasmanian small-scale producers. Growing Good is Sprout's summer celebration of Tasmanian produce and the folks involved in the Sprout community. Tasmanian Women in Agriculture contributes to the Sprout Producer Program every year and Chris Bishop and myself were delighted to be able to represent TWiA at this event.

The night began with some general mingling and canapes. The food for the night was cooked by some of Tasmania's best chefs (Stephen Peak, Lilly Trewartha, Massimo Mele and Analiese Gregory) and utilised Tasmania's beautiful fresh produce.



Tim Cox, MC, ushered us to our tables and Janice Ross delivered an enthralling and goose-bump rising Welcome to Country. She talked about the importance of the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community working with the farming community and that there are opportunities for collaboration to be explored.

We heard an entertaining keynote speech from Ashley Huntington from Two Metre Tall Brewery in the Derwent Valley. He and his wife, Jane, operate one of the worlds only on-farm breweries. Later in the night the Small Producer of the Year Award and 2023 recipients of the Sprout Producer Program were presented. The three producers that received scholarships with support from TWiA were Abbey Howard from Tassie Seeds, Bridgenorth; Andrea Scott from Hamley Pty Ltd, Northdown; and Bronwyn Douglas from Dandelion Tasmania, Mt Hicks.

We're very excited to see how these producers learn and grow over the coming year and are proud that TWiA are able to provide support to such a wonderful organisation.

PRODUCE AND PI

Kohlrabi + hemp seed
Mushrooms + garum
Rye tostada, curdy + lovage

Vegetables, zucchini miso + garlic
Raw lamb, kefir cream + seaweed
Salted fish fritter, kosho + meyer lemon

Pork shoulder, broad beans + green sauce
Braised wheat, greens + shoyu
Pink eyes, olive oil + spring onion
SPP2022 leaves + red wine vinegar

Celeriac bundt cake
Cultured cream
Milk de leche
Raspberries

Pearns Steamworld: Women on the Land and TWiA Memorabilia

by
Ruth Patterson



Last October, just prior to International Rural Women’s Day, Minister Jo Palmer opened the revamped Women on the Land display at Pearn’s Steam World, Westbury.

Contained in those very striking and unusual big green sheds is a treasure trove of Tasmanian agricultural history. Pearn’s Steam World and the three Pearn Brothers, Jack, Verdun and Zenith, were all well-known for their large and world-renowned collection of steam traction engines held within this wonderful complex. Their vision and foresight in saving all these magnificent engines is to be congratulated. Pages in history record these men and their big machines, yet as with most successful ventures, it takes a partnership between husband and wife to be really successful; those ‘Invisible farmers’.

The Women on the Land Exhibition showcases the role four generations of Pearn women have made not only to the success of this museum, but the industry of their birth. When the majority of exhibitions domesticate farm women’s roles without the recognition they truly deserved, Pearn’s Steam World does the opposite.

Starting with Edith Pearn, who following the death of her husband in 1901, operated the families agricultural harvesting business – a business which had continued success for the following 80 years. Or her daughter in-law, Eliza Pearn, who was a trained nurse and provided much needed bush nursing care to her local community. More recently the very strong and determined Jessie Pearn; a woman who played a key role in the development of Pearn’s Steam World. Jessie was married to Jack Pearn and despite working on her father’s farm prior to her marriage, her 1950 certificate of marriage lists her occupation as Home Duties. When Jessie passed away in 2011 it was important to her daughters that her death certificate corrected any ‘misinterpretations’ by listing her occupation as farmer. They also felt that her hard work and strength of character which helped to bring Pearn’s Steam World to Westbury should not go unrecognised.

So, the idea for the Women on the Land Exhibition was developed. This exhibition not only showcases Jessie's life story and that of previous generations, but also key innovations in farming that we now all take for granted such as fertilisation, advances in animal health, and the introduction of irrigation. It concludes with the fourth generation – the three Pearn daughters, Jean Weeding, Anne Heazlewood and Ruth Patterson – all farmers in their own right, who have encouraged and trained the fifth and sixth generation of farm women to come up the straight!

In recent years you may remember that TWiA put the call out for any memorabilia or historical documents dispersed in the back of cupboards or draws with past and present members throughout the State. Now collected, decisions had to be made on where this material could be seen. So, a partnership with Pearn's Steam World and TWiA was established and together an archive and display of this historical material for all to see was developed. It fits in very nicely with the features on the Australian Women's Land Army and the Country Women's Association.

The Women on the Land Exhibition is just one feature of this museum that is well worth a visit. The Exhibition tells the true story of farm women and their roles in developing and nurturing their farms, families and rural communities in which they are based.

Pictured below: Honourable Jo Palmer, MLC and the Pearn sisters



Tasmanian Natural Garlic & Tomatoes Farm Tour & Lone Goose Farm Tour 12 October 2022 by Sigrid Nelson

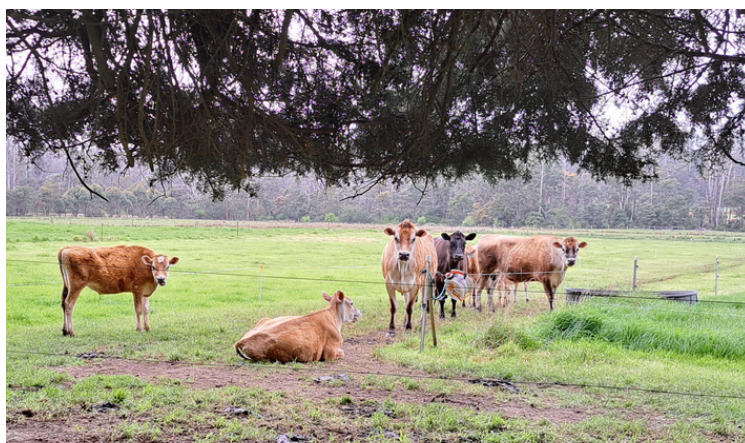
Annette and Nevil Reed welcomed TWiA members to their property. A fascinating talk described how the farm adapted to various challenges to become the enterprise they are today.

The farm produces a wide range of wonderful things...not just tomatoes and garlic...and we browsed the rows of plants and seedlings. Nevil then took us around the property, showed us the polytunnels, and explained how they were installed & how they are used. After a delicious lunch, we could browse the seedlings again and make purchases.



A small group then headed to Lone Goose Farm and met by Bec and Paul Rumble. Bec walked us around their property...we met the Lone Goose, saw the chickens, cows, and ducks they have and heard how the farm developed into what it is now. Again, much talk about learning from mistakes and challenges, adapting and moving on.

A thoroughly enjoyable and informative day...huge thanks to the Reeds and Rumbles.



Meander Valley Meeting

by
Maureen Holland



Twelve members attended our September meeting, with guests, Rose Grant (ABC) and guest speaker, Sally McCreath. Both Sally and Rose gave us interesting updates on their past careers and what they are doing now.

We also welcomed two TWiA members from East Coast WiA to our meeting, Mhari Tucker and Vanessa Douglas. Thank you to them for travelling a long distance to meet some of our members and listen to our speakers. We are happy to announce that a Meander Valley Council grant to have a seat installed in the main street of Deloraine (similar to the established TWiA seat in Scottsdale) has been successful. We are looking forward to having this commemorative seat in our municipality

Many of our members attended the TWiA AGM at Villarett Gardens on 22nd September and enjoyed the company, friendship and speakers at this meeting. Australian Rural Woman of the Year, Stephanie Trethewey of Dunorlan (pictured left), Tasmania, was our guest speaker and her presentation was excellent.

Many of our members also attended the Scottsdale “mini” gathering in October to celebrate the unveiling of the history panel all had a great time over the whole weekend. Congratulations to all who worked so hard to enable this gathering to take place. The tours, food, slide show, and friendship were excellent and we thank all for their input to make this a success.

Congratulations to Outstanding Contribution Award (OCA) winners, Jenny French (dec) and Deb Morice who were presented with their awards at the Saturday night function. These two women have been part of TWiA over many years and their outstanding contribution was recognised. Sadly, Jenny had passed away earlier this year and her award was accepted tearfully by her daughter, Anne Batterham. Jenny was a stalwart of TWiA and her contribution will be long remembered including her sense of fun, and determination to make things succeed. Deb is now President of TWiA and the strength and capabilities she has shown over the years will continue to be extremely beneficial to TWiA. Rae Wardlaw was also recognised for her long-standing contribution to TWiA especially as Chair of the very first gathering in Scottsdale in 1994.

Meander Valley TWiA group will start 2023 with a visit to the business of member Glenda Wootton and her husband Mick and family at Spreyton at 10:30 am on Thursday 9th of February followed by lunch at Anvers 12:30pm. After lunch there will be a visit to the Latrobe Speedway for a tour of the facilities. All welcome, including partners

King Island Field Day by Di Barr

TWiA's King Island group – Brew Day – a day of brewing, learning, connection and fun was held on the 11th of November at King Island Brewery.

Anita Poulsen organised the day and it met the high expectations Anita has previously set for TWiA events on King Island. Brewer and co-owner Sarah Brazendale of King Island Brewery took us through the art and mechanics of brewing from start to finish. Sarah and her husband, Corey, transformed a home brew hobby into a state-of-the-art micro-brewery at 36 Lancaster Road, Pegasus on King Island. We were able to sample a range of brewed varieties including red and pale ales, lager, wheat beer, ginger beer and from a barrel aged stout known as Chef's Kiss

King Island Brewhouse is set amongst rolling farmlands and is particularly family friendly with activities and beverages available for all ages. The day included a farm visit to Janet Fuller's and Peter Gillett's Host Farm at Pegasus. We were introduced to the cattle, ducks and Peter's beautiful pack of Maremma dogs – true gentle giants. Janet showed us through her artist studio and Peter explained his journey from NSW Police Officer to King Island farmer. A tale of recovery and resilience which he has retold in his books – A Step too Far and A Step Back.

Returning to the Brewhouse we were served a beautifully presented morning tea and then at 11:00 the group observed a minute of silence to pay our respect on Remembrance Day. We then observed the next steps in the brewing process. This was followed by an introduction to the meditative art of journaling explained by wife and husband team Jaqui and Shimon, King Island's resident yoga instructors.

Following an excellent lunch we were treated to an in-depth Q&A session on Tasmanian bee keeping, facilitated by Rachel Marshall. Rachel and her husband Mathew Winskill from Winskill's Bees explained challenges and benefits of bee keeping and production of Leatherwood honey in the wilds of Western Tasmania. The Q&A continued with Mick Palmer, Director of Tasmanian Pollination Services explaining his role in managing 7,000 hives to assist the Tasmanian Agriculture sector to pollinate its crops. Of special interest is the considerable focus his business has on production of carrot seeds for the global market. This was a fascinating session which I highly recommend to anyone interested in the important role bees play in Tasmanian Agriculture.

After the Brewhouse sessions we visited Heidi at King Island Distillery and sampled her boutique distilled spirits. The end of a fulfilling day saw a return to the King Island Brewery for a cold ale and excellent wood fired pizzas. It was wonderful to see the number of young families who gathered on a Friday evening for a night out in the close-knit King Island community. Thank you to Anita Poulsen and the King Island Agriculture Community for a lovely visit, which I would recommend to all TWiA members.



Above: Anita Poulsen
Left: Lunch table looking splendid



Above: Winkill Bee products
Left: King Island Brewery's brewer and co-owner Sarah Brazendale

Tasmanian Women in Agriculture celebrated the arrival of spring during the inaugural Southern Hub meeting held at Beaupre Farm on Thursday, 8 September 2022.

Inaugural Southern Hub Meeting September 2022

by
Chris Bishop

Beaupre Farm is a coastal 40-acre Boer goat stud on the confluence of the Huon River and the D'Entrecasteaux Channel with an orchard, vineyard, and accommodation business. Thirteen women from Southern Tasmania's rural academic, business and farming backgrounds attended a farm tour highlighting how the property aimed to strengthen farm resilience through regenerative farming practices. Deb Morice, an active member of the TWiA since its inception in 1994 and a significant and vital member of the TWiA executive team, gave a brief history of TWiA and an honest and meaningful account of her farming background and lifelong learning.

Deb highlighted the importance of connecting with like-minded women to share knowledge and strengthen relationships to foster innovative approaches and connections that sustain our families and communities. Participants wanted future events to focus on farm visits, to meet during the week/evening, possibly on a Wednesday evening, and possible Zoom sessions with guest speakers. Requests for more formal regional gatherings and structured learning on such subjects as chainsaw use and fencing. Participants left empowered and were committed to creating optimism for the future through strengthened support for each other.



Coaldale Walnut Farm Tour & Christmas Lunch

by
Chris Bishop

Ten women from Tasmanian Women in Agriculture's Southern Hub celebrated the end of the year at a farm tour at Coaldale Walnuts in Richmond on the 22nd of November 2022.

Jane Dening and Sophie Milic, two generations of the Coaldale Walnuts family business, lead a farm tour of their walnut orchard and processing facility. Jane and Sophie described how they established their orchard and brand and how the niche product of pickled walnuts is fast becoming a cornerstone of their business. Jane shared difficulties experienced in launching new and scaling up agricultural enterprises. Sophie shared ways of marketing their product and encouraging community engagement. Participants thoroughly enjoyed pickled walnuts on cheese and crackers with freshly cracked walnuts for morning tea. Stunning! Several members purchased cases as Christmas gifts on the day.



Sophie explained how their business production is sustainable by reducing their environmental footprint by focusing on fertilisers from natural sources such as kelp, fish oil, humate, compost tea, molasses and sheep manure. Sheep eat grass and weeds in the orchard laneways and under the trees. Some weeds, like thistles, are manually cut, resulting in almost zero use of herbicides. In addition, walnut shells and all pruned orchard branches are chipped and used as mulch for the trees. Reduced inorganic nitrogen input from switching to organic inputs demonstrated a reduced carbon footprint of 60%. Real-time soil moisture monitoring governs irrigation usage, which uses off-peak electricity. The event ended with a Christmas luncheon at Richmond's Wattlebanks Cafe.

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