

TASMANIAN **WOMEN** IN AGRICULTURE



Bluegum

Spring 2025

CONNECTING, SUPPORTING & CELEBRATING
TASMANIAN RURAL WOMEN

Chair Report

by Sue Hinton



Hello and welcome to my first report as Chair of the Executive. I would like to thank the outgoing members of our executive for their great contributions, and I would also like to welcome our new executive members and look forward to working with you all as we continue the fantastic work of the Tasmanian Women in Agriculture organisation.

The role of Chair is one I take on proudly. When I started out as a young professional in agriculture, we women were a bit of a rarity. In 1979 when I started my agricultural training, we had the largest intake of females ever in the Horticultural Technology course at 5. I graduated at the end of 1982 and worked in south-east Queensland as an agronomist with fresh market vegetable growers, some avocados, berries, stone fruit, cut flowers and a few other bits and pieces.

In mid-1986 I moved to Tasmania to get a little cool temperate agriculture experience. Maybe two or three years I thought. I have had 39 wonderful years working in Tasmanian agriculture. I am retired from fulltime work, but I am still very actively involved in the industry that I feel so connected to. I am keen to continue to support and mentor women in agriculture.

I came down to Tassie to work on the very early pyrethrum industry. I was involved with the early trials across the State and was involved with the first plantings on the north-west coast, that were done in early 1987. This was done with vegetative material, prior to the development of the ability to grow pyrethrum commercially from seed. Unfortunately, I am allergic to pyrethrum, so I needed to find something else to do.

This started another first for women and a great chapter for me personally. I became a poppy field officer for Tasmanian Alkaloids in early 1988. I was the first female poppy field officer ever. I worked with a terrific field team and built some good farmer networks. Related to poppies, a bit later I worked for GSK as the first female field officer they had. Another first. No-one else had been a field officer for both companies. I am now contributing in a different way, as an independent member of the Poppy Advisory and Control Board.

Many of us as women in agriculture, have just gone about our business of working in agriculture, not giving much thought to the fact that in many ways we have, and indeed in many cases, are still paving the way for the women that follow in our footsteps. I am proud of this personally and of the Tasmanian Women in Agriculture and the role we can play in supporting and enabling women right across agriculture.

I look forward to meeting more of you our members at events. If you have ideas or wish to discuss anything, please get in touch with me via chair@taswomeninag.org

Cheers.

Sue Hinton



2025 Executive Committee



There have been new board appointments at Tasmanian Women in Agriculture which bring a range of diverse skills to your board.



Sue Hinton - Chair

Sue joined Tasmanian Women in Agriculture as Vice-Chair in 2024 and has since stepped into the role of Chair. A retired agronomist and extension specialist, she has dedicated her career to advancing soil and water management, with a strong focus on irrigation. Sue proudly serves as an independent member of the Poppy Advisory and Control Board (PACB). Passionate about mentoring and empowering women, she is committed to fostering a supportive community where stories and experiences can be shared. As Chair, Sue looks forward to continuing to inspire and encourage women across agriculture.



Deb Morice - Emeritus Chair

After three years of dedicated service as Chair, Deb has transitioned into the role of Emeritus Chair. She brings a wealth of knowledge and deep respect within the agriculture industry. Alongside her husband, she manages a successful beef property running 100 breeding Angus cows and co-operates an agricultural contracting business with their son, Marcus. Deb also works off-farm as an Area Manager for Fonterra Australia, further broadening her contribution to the sector. Passionate about mentoring the next generation and fostering collaboration, Deb continues to play an important role in supporting Tasmanian agriculture and empowering rural communities.



Jeanette Reader – Treasurer

Jeanette first joined Tasmanian Women in Agriculture in 1985 and has once again taken on the role of Treasurer. While her son and daughter-in-law now manage the family's Angus cattle farm, she enjoys staying closely connected with their progress and the farming community. Jeanette values building relationships with new and long-standing members and is passionate about mentoring rural women. She is dedicated to supporting women in agriculture to pursue their aspirations and reach their fullest potential.



Amanda Bond – Secretary

Amanda joined the Executive team in 2024 as Secretary, bringing with her a wealth of diverse experience reflecting her ability to connect with others and a strong commitment to supporting women in agriculture. With a working career spans across legal practice, local government, bookkeeping and a family mixed farming operation Amanda embodies the multifaceted spirit of women in agriculture. Passionate about advocating for women in Tasmania's agricultural industry, she is dedicated to creating opportunities for women to grow, connect, and thrive within their communities.



Caitlin Johnston – Scholarships Officer

Caitlin joined the TWiA Executive Committee in 2024, bringing her love for agriculture and animals to the forefront. Living and working on her partner's farm, she thrives on the daily connection to rural life and the opportunities it provides. Continuing in the role of Scholarships Officer, Caitlin is dedicated to supporting and empowering women in the agricultural sector. She enjoys encouraging others to embrace their true selves and to pursue rewarding careers in agriculture.



Melissa Edwards - Public Officer

Melissa joined the Executive team in 2024 as Public Officer and brings with her a strong foundation in HR and Workplace Health and Safety. Raised on a cattle farm in rural Victoria, she developed a strong connection to agriculture and an enduring commitment to rural communities. With a career focused on advocating for diversity and equal opportunity, Melissa brings meaningfulness and impact to the role. She is committed to promoting the vital role of women in agriculture and looks forward to building valuable connections through TWiA.



Rosalie Rayner - Communications Officer

Rosalie brings more than 20 years of experience in agriculture as a field officer, farmer and small business owner. Growing up on a mixed farm on the northwest coast, she now runs a beef cattle farm and trucking business with her husband and their three daughters. She joined the Executive Committee in 2024 and continues this year in the role of Communications Officer. Rosalie values connecting with fellow women in agriculture and is dedicated to providing the support and encouragement needed to thrive in a challenging industry.



Anne Cresswell - Committee Member

Anne Cresswell has been a member of TWiA since 2000, when she attended her first Gathering. Anne has a family farming business in Deloraine, focusing on cropping, beef and berry canes. In 2024, Anne attended the Marcus Oldham Leadership Program, which gave her renewed confidence and enthusiasm to contribute more deeply. She treasures the friendships and support she has found through TWiA and values the opportunities for growth the organisation provides.

Sarah O'Grady - Committee Member

Sarah joined TWiA in 2025 and is based in Cressy, where she works on her partner's family cropping and vegetable farm while also helping to grow their seed cleaning business. She grew up on a boutique beef stud in Railton and brings a broad background that includes thoroughbred breeding and aquaculture factory work. Sarah recently completed her Certificate III in Agriculture and hopes to continue on to a diploma in the future. She sees TWiA as a vital resource for connection, learning, and personal growth, helping to reduce the isolation often felt in agriculture. Sarah values the opportunity to build community and support the sustainability and future of the sector.



Please join us in welcoming both the new and returning members of the TWiA Executive Committee!

Together, this inspiring group of women bring a wealth of experience, passion, a focus on advancing opportunities and building confidence for women in agriculture across Tasmania.

If you too would like to become part of the TWiA Executive Committee and help shape the future of Tasmanian Women in Agriculture, please read on.

Positions Vacant

Tasmanian Women in Agriculture represents rural women and works to connect and support them in their endeavours.

TWIA is seeking expressions of interest from suitably qualified and experienced individuals who are interested in making a strong contribution to this not for profit organisation. We are seeking Executive Members for the Executive Committee. Individuals with lived experience in agriculture, living in a rural area or an interest in the sector are all encouraged to apply.

The Executive Committee is seeking expressions of interest from people with Board/Management Committee, Business, Agriculture and/or Not for Profit skills in governance, secretarial, grant writing and community. People with other skills that they believe are relevant to the organisation are also encouraged to apply, as are people with no previous board experience.

Your commitment:

The Executive Committee meets once a month, usually the second Monday, commencing at 7pm until 9pm on Zoom. Executive committee members are also expected to attend local events and contribute to the running of the organisation. This will include the first executive meeting on the 9th September (2pm-4pm) and an in-person Governance Day for strategic planning on the 11th September (9am-3pm).

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.

The Tasmanian Women in Agriculture (TWiA) Annual General Meeting was held on Thursday, 28 August 2025, bringing together past, present and future members from across the state. The AGM provided an opportunity to reflect on achievements, share future directions and celebrate the ongoing strength of our community.

A highlight was recognising Executive Committee members stepping down through retirement, new directions or completed service. Special thanks to Di Barr, Belinda Hazell and Sue Weedon. Deb Morice finished her three year term as Chair and will continue as Emeritus Chair. Each has contributed greatly to TWiA, leaving a lasting impact and helping ensure it remains a strong voice for women in agriculture.

The meeting also welcomed new and returning members to the Committee, ensuring a blend of fresh energy and experienced leadership to guide the organisation forward. Members expressed gratitude for the strong foundation laid by those departing and enthusiasm for the opportunities ahead.

The AGM reinforced the importance of connection, leadership and representation of women in agriculture, values that will continue to underpin TWiA's work into the future.



Marcus Oldham Leadership Program (MORLP) Review

by Caitlin Johnston

I had the privilege of attending the Marcus Oldham Rural Leadership Program in Geelong. A week that has left me with new perspectives, fresh energy and tools I'll carry forward, both personally and professionally.

The program brought together people from across Australia with a shared connection to agriculture, rural industries and regional communities. What stood out to me most was the diversity of voices in the room. We each came with different backgrounds and stories, yet we shared the common goal of becoming stronger leaders, not only in our workplaces but in our communities.

Over the week, we explored leadership through self-awareness, communication and the ability to truly listen. One of the biggest takeaways for me was the importance of setting aside assumptions and opinions, and instead creating space to understand others' perspectives. This shift in mindset, from speaking to listening, challenged me and will be a practice I continue to build on.

The sessions pushed us outside our comfort zones. From structured workshops to group challenges, every activity encouraged growth in resilience, collaboration and self-reflection. At times it was confronting, but always in the best way, because growth rarely happens when we stay comfortable.

What impressed me most was how the program balanced professional skills with personal development. Leadership, after all, is not just about strategy and decision-making. It's about empathy, authenticity and knowing yourself well enough to lead others with integrity.

I walked away from Marcus Oldham with stronger connections, a renewed sense of purpose, and practical tools I can apply in my role and beyond. Most importantly, I left with the reminder that leadership is not about having all the answers – it’s about being willing to listen, learn and grow alongside others.

To anyone considering this program, I couldn’t recommend it highly enough. It’s not just a leadership course; it’s an investment in yourself, your community and the future of rural Australia.



Pictured L-R: Ella Roper, Caitlyn Badcock, Caitlin Johnston

For enquiries about the Marcus Oldham Leadership Program (MORLP) or scholarships available email: scholarships@taswomeninag.org

Brought to you by Tasmanian Women in Agriculture (TWiA), in collaboration with Simplot Australia and Tas Farm Innovation Hub.



Rural Women's Award

2026

AgriFutures Rural Women's Award 2026 – Applications Now Open

The AgriFutures Rural Women's Award is Australia's premier award empowering rural, regional and remote women to bring their bold ideas and projects to life. Applications for 2026 opened on 10 September 2025 and close 7 November 2025. Finalists also become eligible for the TWiA Encouragement and Development Awards, celebrating local excellence and emerging leadership.

In 2025, Sarah DeJonge of Kingston was named the Tasmanian winner for her 1000 Hearts kindness initiative – a movement that distributes hand-sewn fabric hearts to individuals experiencing illness, hardship, or grief, offering comfort and human connection. As state winner, Sarah will represent Tasmania at the 2025 National Gala Dinner in Canberra on 28 October 2025.

The Award is open to all women aged 18 and over involved in rural industries, rural and regional businesses, or communities. Whether your project is established or emerging, the AgriFutures Rural Women's Award offers financial support, leadership development, national exposure and connection with a vibrant alumni network. If you have a bold idea to benefit rural Australia, now is the time to apply.

Applications close: 7 November 2025 (NT: 30 January 2026)

Apply via: agrifutures.com.au/rwa

“This Award will allow me to expand the project even further, ensuring more people, particularly those experiencing illness, grief or hardship, can receive a heart and feel the warmth of human connection”
Sarah De Jonge ~ 2025 Tasmanian State Winner

Gourley's Sweet Shop Factory Tour

by Libby Taylor

Following the 2025 TWiA Annual General Meeting, a group of members enjoyed a tour of Gourlay's Sweet Shop Factory, located within the Door of Hope Complex. We were also given the opportunity for a brief tour of the former Patons & Baldwins Woollen Mill.

We were told a brief history of the building when it operated as Patons & Baldwins, later as Coat's Paton and now by the Door of Hope.

Gourley's Famous Sweets was established in 1896 by William Gourley and was operated by many generations in the Quadrant, Launceston before it was sold to the present owners, the Wood family.

For many years they made only boiled sweets but now they make their own chocolate and chocolate covered range. We were shown the manufacturing process and given samples to taste.

It was most interesting, and wonderful, that Gourley's Sweet Shop is still operating and part of Launceston's history after nearly 130 years.



Sweet History Facts

- ❁ **Founded 1896:** William Gourlay opened Gourlay's Confectionery Shop (including a factory) on Elizabeth Street, Launceston. There are still items used to manufacture the sweets under the building.
- ❁ **Signature Lollies:** Gourlay's produced Jockey Caps (still made today from the original recipe), Toffee Bars (broken by hammer), Acid Drops, Peach Bon-bons and Milkshake Syrups.
- ❁ **Theatre Shop:** A second shop once operated opposite the Majestic Theatre and would experience hectic rush periods in intervals when patrons rushed to buy sweets during theatre shows.
- ❁ **Family Ownership Until 1970:** The business remained in the Gourlay family until it was sold to the Wood family in 1970; the Woods later purchased the factory in 1978.
- ❁ **Shop Relocation 1980:** After the original Brisbane Street site was demolished, the shop moved to the Quadrant Mall in 1980.
- ❁ **Factory Moves:** Production shifted from the mall to Penny Royal in 1993 and more recently moved to the Door of Hope complex.
- ❁ **Heritage Methods:** Gourlay's continues to use original equipment and traditional techniques in its sweet-making operations.
- ❁ **Retail & Factory Sites Today:** The retail shop is in the Quadrant Mall; the factory is adjacent to Door of Hope in South Launceston.
- ❁ **Chocolate & Lollies:** The range now includes handcrafted chocolates, chewy toffees, boiled sweets, and nostalgic treats.
- ❁ **Heritage Stewardship:** Under the Wood family, Gourlay's retains its iconic name, quality, and connection to Tasmanian confectionery history.

How to Book a Gourlay's Sweet Shop 'Taste of History' Factory Tour

Want to see how Tasmania's most famous sweets are made? Gourlay's Sweet Shop runs guided factory tours at their Door of Hope site in South Launceston. Visitors can learn about the history of the business, see the traditional equipment in action, and taste a sample of freshly made treats. Bookings are essential. Tours can be booked online via events.humanitix.com/gourlay-s-sweet-shop-factory-tour or via their website: www.gourlayssweetshop.com/

How to Book a Door of Hope History Tour

Step back in time and explore the rich history of Launceston's former Patons & Baldwins woollen mill, now the Door of Hope complex. Guided walking tours share the story of the site's industrial past, its transformation into a vibrant community hub, and the people who shaped it. Bookings are essential. Tours run regularly and can be reserved online via: door-of-hope.org/events-courses/tours.



2026 Gathering Save the Date



Save the Date!

2026 Gathering
Thursday 19 March 2026

Wesley Dale
1901 Mole Creek Road
Mole Creek 7304

Meander Valley Tasmanian Women in Agriculture Group are thrilled to extend an invitation to save the date for the 2026 Gathering 'Ladies' Day at Wesley Dale', followed by a sips and nibbles celebration.

Join us at the 17th biennial event to enjoy:

- Interactive exhibits
- Fashion show
- Keynote speakers
- Industry displays
- Sips and nibbles
- Networking opportunities

Mark your calendar now - more details to come!

Gathering 2026

Sponsors

Tasmanian Women in Agriculture and the Meander Valley TWiA Group would like to extend heartfelt thanks to our sponsors. If you would like to become a sponsor please email Deb Morice (Meander Valley TWiA Chair): gathering@taswomeninag.org or call 0408 990 927.

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INTAS
INSURANCE SERVICES



“Kipli Takara” Bush Tucker Tour

TWiA Member Experience

TWiA are proud to partner with palawa kipli to offer our members an exclusive kipli takara tour (bush foods walk). Discounted member only price of \$25.00 p/p.

Date: Friday, 7 November 2025

Location: piyura kitina / Risdon Cove

838 East Derwent Highway, Risdon

This experience is offered on Aboriginal land at piyura kitina/Risdon cove, and invites guests to walk the culturally rich landscape with palawa (Tasmanian Aboriginal) guides across this abundant natural pantry that has been returned to Tasmanian Aboriginal ownership since 1995.

Throughout this experience guests are treated to a guided walk of this unique property, hearing about the history and current story of the area, and get a first-hand glimpse into how palawa (Tasmanian Aboriginal people) continue to enjoy cultural foods and undertake culturally-centered land management across lutruwita/Tasmania.

More information can be found on the palawa kipli website at www.palawakipli.com/kiplitakara-bushtucker-tours.

To register for this exclusive tour visit: www.taswomeninag.org/events.

TASMANIAN
WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE



BUSH TUCKER
TOUR
“KIPLI TAKARA”

Taste the timeless
palate of piyura kitina.



Are you currently a member of TWiA? If not, now is the perfect time to sign up!

Are you a woman involved in Tasmanian agriculture? Whether you're on the farm, behind the scenes, or cheering from the sidelines, Tasmanian Women in Agriculture (TWiA) is your community. And there's never been a better time to join.

TWiA is a volunteer-led powerhouse, built by and for women across Tasmania's agricultural landscape. Membership isn't just a subscription, it's a contribution to a thriving network that champions rural women, strengthens farming families, and builds resilient communities.

As a member, you'll gain access to exclusive communications, practical resources, free and subsidised events, and the right to vote at the AGM or nominate for the board. You'll also be first in line for initiatives and opportunities that support women's leadership, well-being and connection across the state.

Let your membership be more than a checkbox; let it be a statement of support. Whether you're renewing or signing up for the first time, visit www.taswomeninag.org/membership-plans today.

Looking for a thoughtful gift? A TWiA membership makes a meaningful and empowering present. To arrange a gift membership, email us at admin@taswomeninag.org.au.

Now is the perfect time to become part of our community. Join today and connect with women who understand your journey.



**WFI, proud alliance
partner of Tasmanian
Women in Agriculture
(TWiA)**



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To find out more about WFI's products, or to request a quote, contact your local Area Manager by calling 1300 934 934 or simply visit wfi.com.au



For every Tasmanian Women in Agriculture member that takes up insurance with WFI we get a referral fee which we put towards events, sponsorships, and training for our members.