

WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE AND BUSINESS OF SA INC.



NUMBER 263, July 2026

State President's Message

Hello WAB friends

I have just returned from the very successful State Conference hosted by the Cunliffe branch on the Copper Coast. Every part of the conference was enjoyable and interesting, from the guest speakers on the first day, the dinner speaker, and the tour to learn about the copper mining history and to visit the local newspaper office. It was two days of fun, learning and mingling. Some of us had the added pleasure of staying right on the beach front at the caravan park in Wallaroo. Congratulations and thank you to all Cunliffe members for everything you did to organise and run this event. State and regional conferences give us a valuable opportunity to meet together in person.

During the Annual General Meeting I presented the 2025/2026 Annual Report. This report will be circulated to members along with the AGM Minutes. Members then split into smaller groups to discuss how we can celebrate our 110 year anniversary next year. I then provided a summary of the status of WAB in terms of membership and branch numbers, committee positions and finances.

The Management Team will now work on a plan on how best to consult with members throughout 2026/2027 on the future of WAB. We want to honour our members and everything that WAB has achieved, and we are very aware that every member should have their say. We are always available for input and feedback. We want to make sure that we do the best we can for our wonderful organisation.

Yours in WAB,

Sandra Wischki



LIMESTONE COAST REGION

Lochaber; A special meeting of the Lochaber WAB was held recently to discuss the continuation of the branch in its current format. It was decided that the branch will continue for a further twelve months, with some modifications, until the future direction of WAB becomes clearer. Our AGM was also held, and members were invited to suggest ideas for future program events.

For 2026–27, we will be holding bi-monthly meetings, with an informal gathering in between to allow members to enjoy coffee and conversation at our local plant nursery. Our first informal meeting was held in July and was well attended by members. The 2026-27 diverse program was handed out which includes a tomato competition in memory of Glenice Bourne. We look forward to seeing the progress of seedlings grown from seed (supplied in August) and seedlings (distributed in October), culminating in the final weigh-in in April 2027.

Padthaway; Naracoorte artist Anne Emerson taught Padthaway WAB members how to use charcoal for drawing at the recent annual meeting of the branch.

Members were given two subjects to draw – two stylised duck ornaments and three pears. There were some very interesting results with Maxene Dew showing the most talent especially with her well shaded pear picture.



*Padthaway
members as
artists in residence*

In her annual report Beth Gale summarised a busy and interesting year of WAB meetings and activities. These included a visit to Bourne's Bird room and Rural Stitch Co at Bool Lagoon, Dominic Armoogum speaking about his home country of Mauritius, the WAB Country of Study, and a presentation by a local podiatrist. Other topics covered included the Variety Bash, marathons in Africa and plants. The annual road trip was to Keith to see sheep dogs, clothing and Purple Paddock, the dynamic cooperative business selling local handmade items, plants and cooking,



Gini Gale has become a Life Member of WAB with the completion of 20 years membership. She has followed in the footsteps of her mother, Beth Gale and grandmother, Ronda Vogelsang. She is the current publicity officer for the branch and over the years has undertaken many roles supporting and enhancing branch activities.

Wirrega; No news this newsletter

MALLEE REGION

Coonalpyn; WAB had their July meeting recently. This is always our Planning meeting. There was much discussion about where to go when. Some of our members now live in Murray Bridge, so trips are organized where they don't have to travel excessively. We also have a member living in Port Elliot. Possibly we will visit the Homes of these members for meetings and activities.

Last month, the idea was raised of creating a plaque listing off all members of WAB over the many years our branch has existed. As WAB is winding down, this will be a Historical record of a group who has done a lot for the community. Names have been typed up from our current Roll Call book, which started in 1965. At this month's meeting some members had fun trying to remember what the Women's names were, as many are recorded under their Husband's name, as is the way it was.

With our community getting smaller, groups closing, there is some concern about the Annual Women's Christmas Party. It has been on a 3 year rotational basis as to who organizes it. By the end of next year, there will only be 1 group left. Discussion about how to keep this tradition alive, as many women enjoy it.

Paringa; recently heard guest speaker Tony Guster of Renmark speak on his idyllic childhood growing up on Kangaroo Island. It was an enlightening talk for our members, none of whom realised there had been a large WW2 Soldier Settlement Land Scheme on Kangaroo Island in the late 1940's.

After agricultural training Tony's father took the family to American River in 1950. Each Monday he joined a work gang to prepare the land for settlement. The Guster family were housed in the huts from the former Loveday Internment Camp for 2 years before they took up their cleared land. Tony's father was responsible for his own fencing, building sheepyards, dams, troughs windmills and home improvements.

He bred merino sheep and cropped his land. The former servicemen helped each other, and from 1948 to 1954 the population of Kangaroo Island nearly doubled as 174 families took up 200,000 acres of cleared land.

The settlement comprised young families and there were many children. School was a large hut with one teacher who had control of all grades. In time a secondary school, community centre and sports teams were established by the settlers and led to the emerging new town of Parndana.

Children enjoyed freedom, football, gymkhanas, agricultural shows and truckloads of children were regularly taken to Seal Bay for picnics. Traffic was non-existent and when Tony travelled to the mainland to study at teachers college he experienced a culture shock when confronted with city life and its noise and pressures.



Jenny Curtis, Tony Guster
and Heather Everingham

CENTRAL REGION

Cunliffe; President Yvonne Correll welcomed our Branch Member Rosemary Browning to share her story of the time she and Kevin visited the Island of Mauritius.

Their visit to Mauritius was for one-day only however Rosemary gave a very comprehensive picture of the Island Country in her presentation.

Rosemary began by telling of how she and Kevin left home in Agery in December 2010, and after visiting many wonderful places finally Mauritius – 900 kms east of Madagascar!

Their journey continued into February 2011 when they docked into the Harbour of Port Louis. After a bus trip into the Modern Le Caudan waterfront area, to a shopping and leisure precinct where it seemed they could have been anywhere in France, Singapore or any 19th Century Outpost with colourful buildings and stately homes.

First stop to the North, found them at the Botanic Gardens where magnificent Palms, Spice Trees, Lakes and giant Water Lilys covered ponds. A guide explained all the different trees, plants and spices. *Rosemary said that when she is using various spices now she is “taken back to Mauritius”!* Driving North past many attractive Resorts and Holiday destinations they visited two different beaches – secluded and clean. *(We enjoyed a paddle in beautiful White Sand and clear Turquoise water)!*

Driving back through Port Louis, Rosemary and Kevin were impressed with the large modern businesses & retail areas spaced out with tropical vegetation neatly flourishing in between buildings. A picturesque ridge of lush green forest stood proudly on the island's Eastern side. Sugar Cane & Vegetable Farms were seen along the way.

After going South to the Volcano area their journey took them back to the Le Waterfront, a historical site created around a fossil coral inlet, where Hotels, Heritage and Art Museums, Garden Restaurants, Quays and Markets intertwine. A Dodo exhibition & Local craft also featured. The Observatory was built in 1831-32 – *And Yes! Port Louis does have a China Town.*

It is believed that millions of years ago the island became the home of the Dodo Bird, Flightless with no known predators, until rats, pigs etc were introduced in 1693 – 5 years later was the last sighting of the Dodo which had then become extinct – about 330 years ago.

Rosemary's talk provided a greater awareness and appreciation of what constitutes the Country of Mauritius. *(More than we may have expected it to be .)*

Points of interest:

- **Mauritius** is a Republic in the Indian Ocean 2,000 kms east of Africa - North of the Tropic of Capricorn – think of Queensland – Sugar.
- **Population:** 1.2 million (2022) – slightly more females to men.
- **Ethnic:** Indian 67%, French 28% (Creole-slaves from West Indies/Caribbean), Chinese 3%, and French 2%.
- **Religion:-**Hindu 48%, Christian 32%, Islam 18%
- **Language:** English + French – both Multi/ Bilingual
- **Most developed country in Africa.** Since 1908 British. Agriculturally based economy to a high economy based on tourism, textiles, sugar & financial services high income.

*President Yvonne Correll
proposed the
Vote of Thanks to Rosemary
for sharing & giving members a
view of the Country of
Mauritius through her one-
day visit some years ago.*



WAB State Conference and Annual General Meeting.

“Yesterday – Today – Tomorrow”

Wednesday 22nd July 2026 – Thursday 23rd 2026

On the morning of **Wednesday 22nd** and, after several months of planning the Conference hosted by Cunliffe WAB Branch, it was a pleasure to welcome forty-seven registered participants, with 27 members representing six (6) WAB Branches plus their respective husband/ partner. The new Yorke Peninsula Field Days Function Centre was a centre of attention with its distinctive structure; ideal for setting the scene and atmosphere for the day’s programme which was one of friendship in a perfect place to gather. From beginning to end our range of speakers provided a wealth of information, food for thought, enjoyment, admiration, laughter and knowledge.

In opening the Conference, Copper Coast Deputy Mayor, Neil Sawley made reference to our Conference Theme “Yesterday – Today – Tomorrow” and paid tribute to the people attending the conference as leaders, innovators, creators, growers, business owners, volunteers as mentors and community minded people. He also noted the women who have shaped the future of agriculture and business across South Australia. Today’s celebration of that contribution and as a celebration of women who get things done, who balance enterprise with family, turn ideas into action and strengthen communities through their work, their networks and their leadership. Their legacy continues right here with a chance to celebrate. He also reminded us that the Copper Coast was shaped by our Heritage and that its future is growing with young families with children looking to live here.



Copper Coast Deputy Mayor Neil Sawley.

Representing “Blaze Aid” Guest Speaker Heather Bradley spoke on the experiences she and her husband Bob have had with their volunteer support in working with Blaze Aid which is a volunteer-based organisation that works with families and individuals in rural Australia after natural disasters such as fires and floods. Working alongside the rural families, our volunteers help to rebuild fences and other structures that have been damaged or destroyed. A holiday trip in 2021 initially lead them to become volunteers where they worked rebuilding their first fence in the Great Dividing Range. They have worked with flood and fire damage and recovery, property damage to be cleared

and rebuilt, fence building and even preparing meals for other volunteers. Heather said that community donations of food etc is incredible.

“Good Health through the Power of Plants” Guest speaker, **Caroline Smith**, gave a colourful talk supplemented by the fantastic display of plants, flowers, shrubs of all colours, shapes and size which she provided from her family’s Nursery. The overall beauty of the display, coupled with the accompanying and enthusiastic presentation given by Caroline, was guaranteed to lift both your spirits and good health. While Landscaping is her main occupation where people are looking for gardens which are easily maintained. Sometimes the land is marginal and the character of the plants is essential. Plants require air/water/sunlight/soil/nutrients which provide essential Photosynthesis as the key to the Power of Plants. *“Don’t forget the Black Marvel!”* Caroline has worked for 45 years (and still does) in the family business still owned and run by the Smith Family; “Smiths Nursery”, Kadina which celebrated its 100th year in 2025.



Guest Speaker Leah Holman gave a brief background on her life including her participation as a well-known experienced Driver in Harness Horse racing for over 20 years – now retired from that.

During Covid/lockdown she became aware of addressing and motivating people to maintain and improve their health by offering exercise classes designed to improve strength/balance/mobility and Cardio Health. These have proved to be very successful and she now includes two classes per week designed for (*grumpy old*) men.

Leah loves walking – so much so that she has walked the Kokoda Trail twice and looks forward to doing so again one day. She spoke of the emotions experienced during the walk – reminiscent of the same walk that our Aussie Soldiers endured during World War II. (except now there are no enemies). The track has not changed much since that time. The group in which Leah participated was made up of 30 Trekkers and 20 porters who carried everything for the entire trek. The terrain includes treacherous climbs and in places they are still digging up ammunition left over from World War II. The humidity is immense and only a couple of places to “shower” in cold water each day. They crossed over twenty-two rivers via a narrow plank of wood only over most of them – very daunting! Despite the hardships of the Trail, it is an amazing journey and one which has a very Sacred feeling

Through **“Get-A-Way-Trekking”** Leah recently organised and lead an Aussie Camino from Portland (Vic) to Penola (SA) following the steps of Mary McKillop. Over the 8 days they visited the many places where she had visited, lived and worked during her lifetime. She also worked to establish a number of schools along the way. (Now Saint Mary McKillop)



The group walked along the southern coast for 3 days, and overall averaged 30,000 steps. Eventually reaching Portland the group were able to attend a Church Service for a Pilgrim’s Mass.

Leah concluded her talk with the following quote: *The more women gather; the longer they will live*

After lunch the men left for the “Men’s Tours” to Wallaroo to visit T-Port facilities and the Heritage and Nautical and Agricultural Museum returning to join members for Afternoon Tea.

The day’s programme concluded in time for everyone to journey into Kadina for a very enjoyable evening and 3 Course- Dinner at “The Bellagio Family Restaurant”. Our group was made up of 46 people who complemented the evening with fellowship and lively conversations on both tables.

Guest Speaker, Graham Hancock surprised everyone by entering the room dressed as the legendary “Cap’n Hancock” who is best remembered as Captain Richard Hancock, Mine Superintendent in the early part of the history of Copper Mining at Moonta and Wallaroo. Complete with miner’s hat, (with burning candle) and wearing a white suit, Graham looked quite the part for his informative and entertaining history of the Moonta Mines.

Graham is a former high school teacher and has been associated with the Copper Coast and it’s Cornish heritage for over 40 years and has been heavily involved in running and volunteering at Kernewek Lowenders over many years.

Moonta's copper history began in May 1861 when shepherd Patrick Ryan discovered copper traces in a wombat burrow on pastoralist Walter Hughes' land. This sparked a massive mining boom, drawing thousands of skilled Cornish immigrants and turning Moonta into "Australia's Little Cornwall" and South Australia's largest populated hub outside Adelaide.

Graham Hancock (disguised as Cap’n Hancock!)



The next morning, **Thursday 23rd** found attendees with an early arrival to the historic Moonta Mines Church where they gathered firstly in the Sunday School Hall for a Cornish Pasty Making demonstration and its history. **Guest Speaker Rev June Ladner** told of her childhood watching and learning how to make the correct Cornish Pasty on Saturday Mornings with her Grandmother. Starting with the first step of making the pastry June then showed how the vegetables were “chipped into small pieces”, the meat (skirt steak is best) was also cut finely. Crimping the pasty was demonstrated up close! **Cunliffe Branch member Dulcie Barker** accompanied June by also following the same steps. Both pasties were then cooked on site and the eventual enticing smell permeated the room. June also told the colourful history of the Sunday School in its very early days when Protestant Sunday schools were first set up in the 18th century in England to provide education to working children. The Moonta Mines Sunday School began in 1863 and was the modern and best run in the State. By 1878 there were 649 students led by 120 officer and teachers and more to come.



Rev June Ladner & Cunliffe Branch Member Dulcie Barker.



*Rev June Ladner displaying
The Sunday School
Historical Organisational Chart*



*Guest Speaker Liz Coole
presented an overview of
the history of the Cornish
Bards in Australia.*

Bards are elected by the Gorsedh Council and the honour of Bardship is awarded to people who have given exceptional service to Cornwall and to people who qualify by a high degree of proficiency in the Cornish language and people of distinction. As a Bard of Cornwall Liz participated in the Gathering of Bards Ceremony and guided tours through the Moonta Cemetery during the Kernewek Lowender (Cornish Festival). Liz displayed her Cornish Bardic Gowns but under their rules she was not allowed to wear them other than for a Cornish Bardic Ceremony.

Gathering afterwards in the **Historic Moonta Mines Church** (next to the Sunday School) June Ladner again shared with us her incredible knowledge of the Church and its history. The building was officially opened for worship in November 1865. One of the most significant features of the Church today is its magnificent Pipe Organ which is now only played on rare occasions.



Conference attendees with the Historic Pipe Organ

Bakeries in Moonta were the next stop for lunch and most people managed to find and enjoy a Cornish Pasty in one form or another i.e. traditional with meat and vegetables or with meat and vegetable one end and apple the other! *The latter served with tomato sauce and cream – declared to be delicious.*

Final stop of the day (and Conference) was the visit to the Yorke Peninsula Country Times premises in Kadina where **Owner and Manager, Michael Ellis** welcomed us for an informative tour through the various offices and the impressive printing area. The Yorke Peninsula Country Times, a weekly newspaper serving Yorke Peninsula, has a long history dating back to 1865 through various predecessor publications, including the Kadina, Wallaroo and Moonta Times and the South Australian Farmer. The first newspaper in its current form was first published in 1968.

Together we:-

Experienced Yesterday – Valued today – Imagined the future

EYRE PENINSULA REGION

Charlton; More About Support at Home

The new Commonwealth Government program providing support for older people living at home (Support at Home introduced 1st November 2025) was outlined at the Charlton July meeting. Samorn Stockham is the Transition Co-ordinator of the Eyre and Far North Local Health Network (EFNLHN) explained the new plan which aims to increase client Rights while more clearly defining the various services / packages available: accessing them and the co-contributions paid by clients to these Government funded services.

People eligible for Support at Home must be over 65 (50 for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders) and must become registered with My Aged Care which can be done through Services SA (Centrelink). The advice was that we register from this age to avoid longer waits if our situations change unexpectedly. We were warned of a long wait of around 9 months currently. It is wise to gather support evidence from clinicians (Medical personnel) to help support an application. The cost of the various packages vary. Co-payments charged to clients are calculated by Centrelink (Services SA) and are means tested so will vary considerably depending on individual circumstances.

Samorn gave us an excellent overview of the program. She encouraged us to continue to ask questions of the local service providers if we are unsure about it. We should also appoint a trusted person as our representative to assist us.



*Samorn Stockham, with
Charlton members Liz
Mickan and Yvonne Low*

More about the City Council

Mayor Diana Mislov and Chief Executive Officer Eric Brown addressed the June meeting of Charlton WAB and outlined many of the roles and responsibilities around managing the Port Lincoln city.

They, along with around ninety employees and the elected members of Council aim for financial stability, with consistency and fairness across all the demands placed on them by the community and both State and Federal Governments. Eric outlined the difficulties of managing, for example, road maintenance when some of our streets are owned by the Federal Government, some with shared responsibility, others owned just by the city. And there are many State wide services like power, tele-communication, sewerage and water supply that can 'dig up a road' at their own discretion, do a back fill then leave the later slumping for council to remedy.

Areas of concern for Council are the need for more housing, residential aged care and child care. Child care needs are now progressing well, with statistical information being collected to support the other pressing needs. Hence there is a need for residents to respond to surveys and consultation sessions and 'get involve' to support the needs. 'The squeaky wheel gets the attention'. It is also important for the Council elections due at the end of the year that people nominate for positions on the council, and for everyone to vote thereafter!



CEO of Lincoln Council Eric Brown, Mayor Diana Mislov and WAB member Lyn Siviour

On-Line; Member Barbara Schaefer (AM) Passed away 7th June 2026



Barb Joined Pinkawillinie Branch in February 1955 and chaired the first Regional Meeting that Pinkawillinie Hosted in 1957. Other positions she held in the Pinkawillinie Branch were President for a total of 10 years, Vice President for 4 years, Secretary for 3 years and a Committee Member for nine years. She received Life membership in 1975, 40-year award in 1995, 50-year award in 2006 and 60-year award in 2016. In 2017 she was a member of the organising committee for the 100 Year Celebrations. Pinkawillinie Branch closed in June 2019. Barb then became an online member.

At a state level Barb was a Regional Councillor for Eastern Eyre from 1980 to 1983 during which time she was State President in 1983.

Barb was an inaugural member on the South Australian Rural Advisory Council in 1984 serving until 1987.

She became a life member of ACWW in 1980 and her interest in that organisation led her to becoming the ACWW Area President from 1990 to 1995. During this time she visited many of South Pacific Nations and instigated many projects to help women of the area. She organised workshops for the Island Women who were able to attend ACWW Conferences. Barb led many WAB Delegations to ACWW Area and Triennial Conferences. On relinquishing that position she continued to attend these conferences as the WAB International Officer for ACWW for many years.

WAB

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A REMINDER ALL REPORTS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE NEXT WAB NEWS ARE TO BE SENT DIRECTLY TO **YOUR REGIONAL COORDINATOR** and the **Newsletter Editor** by simply including the Newsletter Editor by cc to LEE at ndhlrussell@bigpond.com when emailing to your Coordinator.

NEXT EDITION OF THE WAB NEWS WILL BE DUE OUT IN SEPTEMBER 2026 – Deadline for articles is SEPTEMBER 20TH 2026

Were you seen at the conference?

