

TURN OVER FOR the essential 2026 *Graziher* Boarding Schools Guide

APRIL/MAY 2026

# graziher

WOMEN ON THE LAND

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GRAZHER

**THE  
GRAZHER  
LIST**

50 women  
transforming  
rural  
Australia

Celebrating our

**NEW GENERATION**

Nuffield Scholarship  
winner **NIKKI GILDER**

*"I believe women are  
one of agriculture's most  
underutilised assets"*

50<sup>th</sup>  
issue

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# CELEBRATE

# 50

To mark our 50th issue, we've gathered a list of extraordinary women who are shaping life on the land.

Words Claire Dunne,  
Emma Mulholland,  
Tom Lazarus



Julie McDonald, ag executive and mentor from Cloncurry, Qld.

SOME WERE BORN into bush life and wouldn't dream of moving; others needed a cosmic nudge to discover their destiny, whether that was in the form of a creaky rural property begging for full-time TLC, an ageing family member who needed a hand on the farm or a torrid love affair with someone who was already married to the land (it happens).

But in the bush, it's said, everyone's an entrepreneur. Living away from economic centres, without 24/7 convenience, people become resourceful, using what they have and banding together to build sustainable new ventures from the ground up. Even those with jobs in corporate agriculture seem to be constantly building: alliances, associations and support networks.

From fields as diverse as beef, tech, wool, retail, community and the creative arts, the 50 innovators and leaders profiled here prove that women are the connective tissue of country life. It follows, then, that so many of these inspirational women have shaped their working lives around supporting others — funding, mentoring, advising, volunteering, counselling, representing simply hosting around the table. In the internet age, the empty kilometres are no barrier to connection. Cases in point: the Queensland mum and three who campaigned for better education and digital services for rural, regional and remote communities from their family's far-flung cattle station; the teacher who leveraged social media to launch a life-saving mental health program that aims to end silent suffering in the woolshed; and the veterinarian who transplanted who started a podcast that grew into a digital platform that connects and gives a voice to isolated rural communities nationwide.

Women's triumphs in agribusiness — the production of food and fibre on a small scale — are rivalled only by the scale of their collective succession plan, which give back through mentoring and philanthropic programs to raise up the next generation of talent, so they can blaze their own paths.

## LAND CARE & LEADERSHIP

### 1. Lucinda Corrigan

DIRECTOR, RENNYLEA PASTORAL  
Murray Valley, NSW  
Lucinda has helped redefine what modern cattle breeding can look like in Australia. At Rennylea Angus, she has built a nationally recognised genetics program while championing innovation and environmental responsibility.

### 2. Natalie Sommerville

DIRECTOR, LANDCARE AND VICE PRESIDENT, AUSTRALIAN WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE  
Ngadjuri country, SA  
Farmer, business owner and proud Torres Strait Islander woman Nat Sommerville is working to strengthen sustainability and inclusion in



“My FIRE was lit: there's so much more to do. We must be there to put our VOICE forward, because otherwise we'd be FORGOTTEN.”

*Louise Martin*

agriculture, while mentoring First Nations students and helping educators share First Nations perspectives.

### 3. Darrylin Gordon

CATTLE STATION MANAGER  
Halls Creek, WA  
This Jaru cattlemaster is a powerful voice for Indigenous leadership in northern Australia's cattle industry. Darrylin, winner of the 2018 Western Australia AgriFutures Rural Women's Award, is committed to empowering young people in the Kimberley region through programs that combine pastoral skills, mentoring and connection to country.

### 4. Pip Job

FOUNDER, AGENDA AG ADVISORY  
Orange, NSW  
Pip is a pastoralist and nationally recognised leader working at the intersection of agricultural innovation and resilience policy, helping research, government and industry translate innovation into practical impact for farmers and rural communities.

### 5. Fiona Simson

VICE PRESIDENT, WORLD FARMERS' ORGANISATION  
Liverpool Plains, NSW  
Having been the first female president of the National Farmers' Federation of Australia, Fiona is now a strong national voice for Australian agriculture on the world stage.

### 6. Steph Brooker-Jones

WOOL MANAGER  
Naracoorte, SA  
A wool industry veteran and trailblazer for women in the sector, Steph has been a district wool manager for Elders in South Australia for the past 22 years. Before that, she spent 15 years in sheds as a rouseabout and wool classer in the US, UK and New Zealand, and did a stint as a wool buyer. In her spare time? More wool. Steph has been volunteer secretary at Sports Shear Australia and has often run the fleece judging at local ag shows. In 2018 she was awarded the Australian Wool Industry medal for services to a sector she describes as “one big family”.

### 7. Pat Anderson

HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATE  
Northern Territory  
Alyawarre leader Patricia Anderson AO has spent decades shaping Indigenous health and social policy and advocating for the wellbeing of First Nations communities. She was made an Officer of the Order of Australia in 2014.

### 8. June Oscar

INDIGENOUS RIGHTS ACTIVIST  
Fitzroy Crossing, WA  
June, a Bunuba woman, champions cultural strength and social justice for

First Nations communities across Australia, including serving as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner until 2024.

## 9. Bianca Heaney

INDUSTRY ADVOCATE

Bacchus Marsh, Victoria

Over her three decade career in wool, Bianca has worked on farms, for a yarn manufacturer and with a suitmaker in Melbourne. She has been instrumental in seven industry associations and in 2016 organised the International Wool Textile Organisation conference in Sydney. In 2020 she founded Women In Wool, dedicated to empowering women across the global wool industry through education, mentorship and networking events. She also lends a hand to Aussie Hay Runners, a non-profit that delivers fodder and mental health resources to producers impacted by natural disasters.

## 10. Nikki Lyons

SHEARER

Good Hope, NSW

When Nikki stepped away from her shearing career to have children, she promised herself she'd be back. The national shearer shortage during the Covid-19 pandemic spurred her to pick up the handpiece again, then this past

October she set a new world record by becoming the first woman to shear more than 500 merino lambs (502, to be exact) in nine hours. The grit of this mother of four both in and out of the shearing shed can't be overstated; having caught the competitive bug, Nikki has now taken up boxing.

## 11. Georgia Beattie

MUSHROOM FARMER

Diggers Rest, Victoria

After years in startups, tech entrepreneur Georgie decided she was ready to realise her dream of being a farmer, and was determined to bring an optimised, data-driven, sustainable approach. Fast-forward to today and she's owner and CEO of Bulla Park, Australia's largest organic mushroom farm, and sits on the Australian Mushroom Growers' Association board, among several others. In 2021, Georgia was awarded a Nuffield scholarship to explore uses for spent mushroom compost, from soil regeneration to mycelium packaging, closing the loop. Watch this space.

## 12. Jo Eady

LEADERSHIP SPECIALIST

South Gippsland, Victoria

Having grown up on her family's dairy farm in Stony Creek, Victoria, Jo knows

the value of effective leadership in agriculture, and in 2000 founded RuralScope to nurture current and emerging leaders through training programs, workshops, mentorship and coaching. Among many other wins, Jo developed the first formal strategic plan for Cotton Australia, facilitated the formation of the National Rural Women's Coalition and has run future leader programs for the cotton, grain, beef, rice and dairy sectors.

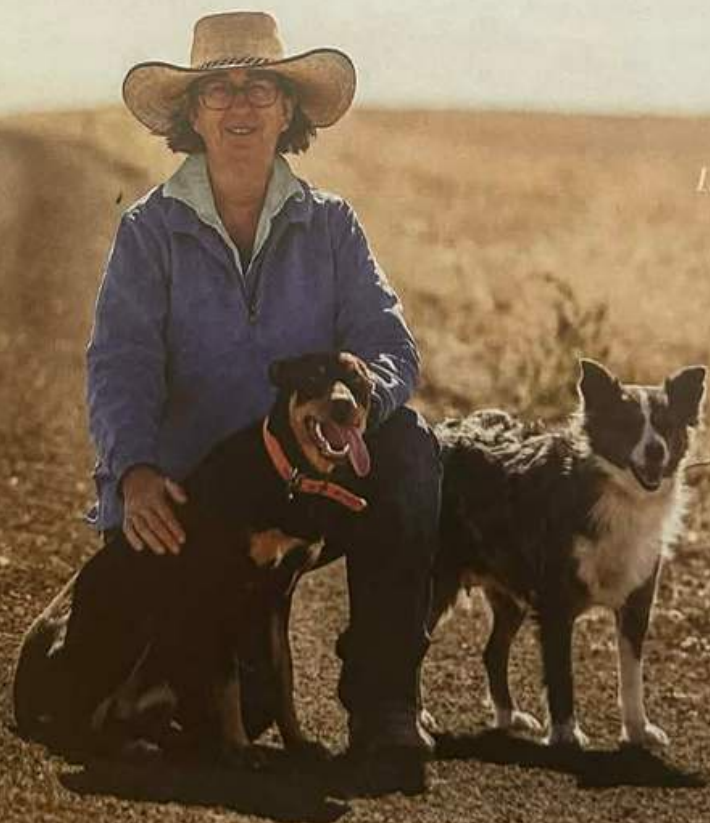
## COMMUNITY BUILDERS

### 13. Louise Martin

FARMER AND EDUCATION ADVOCATE

Macfarlane, Queensland

Profoundly shaped by her upbringing on a stud in Augathella, Queensland, Louise Martin was first a jillaroo, then travelled the world as James Packer's polo groom, before the outback called her homewards. She spent a decade at Lansdowne station in Tambo, studied agribusiness and became regional then Federal president of the ICPA, gaining renown as a fierce advocate for remote children's education. She's also a generous champion of the Central West Queensland region, where she runs a sheep and cattle property, and promotes rural producers as director at AgForce. >



*Louise Martin*