



*Celebrating 10 years in 2019*

**Civic Reception - 5.30pm, Wednesday 18<sup>TH</sup> September 2019  
Lord Mayor's Court Room, Town Hall, Hobart.**

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## Lord Mayor hosts Civic Reception for Women in Tourism & Hospitality Tasmania

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**This month a grass roots organisation celebrates 10 years of supporting women in the tourism and hospitality industry and Lord Mayor, Alderman Anna Reynolds, has offered a Civic Reception to mark the occasion.**

Women in Tourism & Hospitality Tas Inc (WITH Tas) was formed in 2009 by tourism operator, Sally Deane. With women making up over 60% of the industry yet under-represented at networking events, she wanted a way to support new and existing operators. In 2010, a northern group was established which is still successfully connecting women from across the North and East Coasts.

Its longevity and 10th anniversary mark a significant milestone for a small, volunteer-run, not-for-profit organisation and show there is still a need for an association aimed at supporting women.

Founding Committee Member and current President, Jill Bannon, says "Our members have told us that by providing a welcoming and non-judgemental atmosphere to connect, they gain confidence through our events and the women they meet. Problems can be solved, mentors found and experiences shared. Sometimes it's just being with like-minded women who understand the industry and have that empathy."

Ten years has seen many successful events including a reception at Government House, tour and Jazz Soiree at Shene Estate, Lark Distillery information and tastings, trade expo at Brookfield and a memorable Nature Be In It experience at Waterworks Reserve. The most recent was a Mid-Town Meet Up which brought two senior guest speakers from the University of Tasmania for an enlightening discussion on the University's vision for the CBD, of particular interest to the tourism sector.

The upcoming Industry Leaders Breakfast in October is the third in this annual series and this year features Kim Seagram, Tracey Leitch and Fiona Weaver. Jill Bannon commented "The feedback on these events has been fantastic and we're finding there is no shortage of amazing women to inspire and make getting out of bed early worthwhile! All have such different backgrounds offering stories and experiences to share, everyone takes home some wisdom and encouragement."

WITH Tas also looks to the future and provides an annual scholarship to assist a young woman undertaking tourism and/or hospitality studies at post-secondary level. Throughout the year mentoring and a ready-made network of industry contacts are also offered. This year's winner is hospitality student, Joy Varahakaporn who is studying for a Certificate IV in Cookery and plans to complete the Advanced Diploma in Hospitality.

Jill Bannon concluded "We're also developing stronger relationships with other industry organisations, in particular Destination Southern Tasmania, and look forward to working with them into the future. We aim to be around for another 10 years or as long as there is the need".

**If you have any questions or would like more information on any aspect, please contact:**

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### Key points

- Women in Tourism & Hospitality Tas Inc (WITH Tas) formed in 2009.
- It connects women working in the tourism and associated industries in a welcoming, supportive environment where they can share experiences, contacts and expertise with those who understand the industry.
- Hosts events for information, education, social interaction and sharing inspiration (non members welcome).
- Figures released by Tourism Research Australia show 8.7% of Tasmania's workforce is directly employed in tourism (highest in the country). With indirect employment, tourism accounts for 17.2% of total state employment. Women are a significant part of the tourism and hospitality sectors occupying a multitude of roles in management, as employees and as owner-operators.
- Industry Leaders Breakfast:: <https://www.withtas.com/events/>

Website: <https://www.withtas.com/> | Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WomenTourismTas/>

*connecting supporting inspiring*