

100 Women OF INFLUENCE

FINANCIAL REVIEW **Westpac**

Australia should know the women who are changing it

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GOOD REASON TO SAY CHEESE

A total novice when she bought the business, Kris Lloyd became hooked and is now an award-winning cheesemaker, writes Catherine Fox.

The classic combination of wine and cheese had a lot to do with why Kris Lloyd ended up as the owner of Woodside Cheese Wrights in 1999. Having worked for her husband's family winery, Coriole, she was keen to find a new venture that would add value to the core business.

With a corporate development background, Lloyd's grasp of basic cheesemaking skills was limited, to say the least. But she quickly became hooked and despite many mistakes and set-backs, including two years of losses, the small artisan cheesemaker started making headway.

Wrapping cheese in seaweed or covering it with flowers attracted many sceptics, but taking risks and innovating have paid off, she says. And, once a male-dominated sphere, there are now many more women joining her as cheesemakers.

In the last year, she has launched her own brand. Kris Lloyd Artisan, with a Persian-style feta, has branched into new products with a blue vein cultured butter and was the third cheesemaker in Australia to be given approval to make raw milk cheeses, which are soon to be released.

Her ranges are now served on Qantas and Emirates Airlines, and exported to Singapore. She also won funding from the state government for CheeseSA to run cheesemaking courses. Since her 2013 Women of Influence Award, she's also fielding more requests to speak about her career path.

I had never made cheese, it was never my intention to make cheese. I came with corporate skills and I was working with Coriole and we were looking to add value. Woodside in the Adelaide Hills came up for sale. We didn't know how to make cheese so we thought: "We will buy this and work out

100 Women of Influence Awards

The Australian Financial Review and Westpac are proud to call for entries in the annual 100 Women of Influence Awards. Entries close Sunday. In its third year, the Awards are dedicated to identifying and celebrating the bold, energetic women who are changing Australia.

Nominations are open across 10 categories: board/management, innovation, public sector, **business enterprise (this week's stories)**, diversity, young leader, global, social enterprise/not-for-profit, philanthropy, and local/regional.

You can nominate yourself or any other Australian woman you believe deserves recognition.

Entries close: Sunday 10 August 2014

For more information and to nominate now please visit: 100womenofinfluence.com.au
Winners announced Thursday, October 22, 2014, at a gala event in Sydney.

whether we want to do this." I put all of those corporate skills to use and set up systems and business plans.

I never say no. One day, we were very short-staffed and someone at Woodside said: "We need you to make cheese today." They said: "Here's the recipe". I made a 200-litre vat of brie. I was absolutely taken with it. I was so motivated and inspired but the problem was I didn't know how to make cheese. I made a lot of mistakes and in the first two years was losing money.

One day I was sitting across from [cheese specialist] Will Studd and shaking in my shoes. I told him I was becoming a cheese-



maker and he said to me: "You will go broke, go mad or die." It made me more determined I think.

I went to the [South Australian] state government and said: "Winemakers can go somewhere to learn how to make wine, what about cheese?"

Twelve to 15 years ago there was no interest in artisan cheese and no books about it. That taught me about collaboration and the need to talk to people, to be listening and learning. I was unable to make cheese consistently and it was frustrating me. So I travelled a bit more and entered a few competitions and I won a gold medal [at the 2008 World Cheese Awards].

There was a point where the penny dropped. There were a lot of sceptics. When I said in 2006 I would make Monet [a goat cheese covered in herbs and flowers] I was told it wouldn't work. But it's now my most highly awarded and sought after cheese.

I've learnt to grow broad shoulders. We have to ask: "Is it right and is it you?"

In Australia, we are a bit remote and we need to be entrepreneurial. In 2012, we won a super gold medal at the World Cheese Awards, and the Wakame Blue cheese was listed as one of the best 55 cheeses in the world. You must learn what to do with mistakes because I made so many. **W**

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PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES/ MARK METCALFE

In boots and all

Cathie Reid
Managing partner,
APHS

This content is generated in commercial partnership with Westpac Group as part of the 100 Women of Influence Awards

Cathie Reid isn't one to let a pair of crutches and a moon boot put her off adventuring to the Cape York Peninsula. She telephones in from Lockhart River, a remote Aboriginal community where she's with a women's leadership group on a trip to meet with school and community

leaders. "I was trampolining at one of those indoor centres with my son. I should have known better at my age. It just goes to show not every idea is a success."

Reid, who co-founded and runs one of the country's largest specialised pharmacy groups, Australian Pharmaceutical Healthcare Systems, says self-belief is critical to successful entrepreneurship. And it helps to put yourself in what initially appear to be totally random situations.

"This trip is an example of that. If an opportunity presents and you can't identify exactly why you should be engaging with it, but there's just something about it, do it.

"They're the ones that often generate something fantastic. You're out of your comfort zone and out of your normal thought process."

An abrupt end to her marriage in her late 20s made Reid take stock, and opened her eyes to some of her more business savvy traits. "A lot of people



Cathie Reid says self-belief is critical to entrepreneurship. PHOTO: GLENN HUNT

do go through life without having their inner entrepreneur unlocked.

"Often, it's a result of positive leadership, and some challenge to you and your thinking, that makes you look at what you're capable of."

Reid took herself to a pharmacy conference because it sounded like a good excuse for a tax-deductible

holiday that wasn't a singles party. She met her first business partners, and it became the start of her entrepreneurial journey.

"The first business we started was undoubtedly the hardest because you didn't know whether you were capable of running a business."

Targeted women's networks provide ways for women to connect and seek guidance during start-up phase, but also through their career. It's something Australia does particularly well, Reid says, with programs such as the Westpac Ruby Connection, Business Chicks and Women in Focus.

Westpac general manager of retail banking Gai McGrath says female entrepreneurs use networks well and are creative in the way they look at the world, seeing opportunity where others may not. "They're able to translate that into an opportunity to build a business and create value over the long term," she says. Female

entrepreneurs fit into three general categories, McGrath says. Those who want their own business as a lifestyle choice, to be more in control of their work; those pursuing a profession or craft who use the business to further their interests; and those who "truly want to be entrepreneurial", starting small and aiming big.

As the number of female university graduates continues to rise, McGrath expects the number of women starting and running businesses will also increase. Already about 30 per cent of Australian small businesses are led by women.

"The breadth of what women become involved in will also expand and we will see women running businesses in what are non-traditional areas. We're seeing that in the resource sector now [and] I think that we will continue to see more women leading businesses in areas that have been male dominated."

CLAIRE STEWART