



QUEENSLAND WINE AWARDS

Samuel Bassett Award

Honour roll

Queensland Wine Industry Association

20 recipients
2003 to 2026

Current as of the Queensland
Wine Awards 2026

THE MAN BEHIND THE AWARD

Samuel Symons Bassett

1840 to 1912

The story of Samuel Bassett is the story of Queensland wine, which is to say it starts with somebody being told “you can’t make wine in Queensland”.

In 1863 there was no wine industry in Queensland to speak of. The country west of the Great Dividing Range was sheep country, everybody knew it, and everybody knew that serious wine in the colonies came from the south. It’s too hot out there. Too dry, too rough, and generally too far from anywhere. The matter was considered settled.

Bassett, a headstrong 23-year-old Cornishman managing a sheep station out near Roma, didn’t listen. He saw potential in the sandy loam soils along Bungil Creek, took up ground of his own along it, and hauled the first cuttings overland from Toowoomba – a gruelling two-month journey over rough bullock tracks. They told him that the vines wouldn’t even survive the journey. But they did, and that bundle of sticks off the back of a bullock-dray would become the scion of an industry.

The original 270-acre Romavilla Vineyard was established three years later, an enterprise that would eventually comprise 400 acres under vine – more than half the area under vine of the modern-day Granite Belt, in his single, family-owned estate. And it isn’t just the scale of the operation that is impressive. In 1901 his wines took nine of the ten first prizes at the Queensland Exhibition, and he would eventually amass over 650 awards and medals for his wines in an industry that had spent forty years telling him it couldn’t be done.

The Samuel Bassett Award is the Queensland wine industry’s highest mark of tribute for long-term contribution and leadership. It celebrates those who believe in what we do, who aren’t afraid to hold our ground in the face of the doubters, and who leave the industry better placed than they found it.

It carries his name because the argument he took on over 160 years ago is the same one that every Queensland wine producer is still all too familiar with. Every one of us continues the work he started, and answers it with the same quiet confidence that he did, one glass at a time.

HONOUR ROLL

Recipients, 2003 to 2026

Awarded by the Board of the Queensland Wine Industry Association for long-term contribution and leadership

2003	Angelo Puglisi Ballandean Estate	2016	Jim Barnes Winemaker
2004	Peter Scudamore-Smith MW Uncorked & Cultivated	2017	Zanatta Family Industry Pioneers
2005	Bob Grey Rumbalara Estate	2019	Leeanne Puglisi-Gangemi Ballandean Estate
2006	Terry Morris Sirromet Wines	2020	Brett Heading Clovely Estate
2007	Michael Platsis Michael's Riverside Restaurant	2021	Andrea Hayes QWIA
2008	John Robinson Robinsons Family Vineyards	2021	Sam Costanzo Golden Grove Estate
2013	Calvin Winks DPI Research Station	2022	Michael and Ann Bourke Jester Hill Wines
2013	Preben Jacobsen Granite Belt Viticulturist	2024	Tony Hassell Just Red Wines
2014	Mike Hayes Viticulturist and Churchill Fellow	2025	Peter McGlashan Winemaker, Ridgemill Estate
2015	Mary Puglisi Ballandean Estate	2026	Robyn Puglisi-Henderson Ballandean Estate