



Women leading the way in scrap

To celebrate Women's Month, the Metal Recyclers Association (MRA) is proud to highlight one of our own **Monique de Jager**, owner and Managing Director of Gauteng Metal Recyclers (Pty) Ltd and long-standing MRA Executive Committee member. Monique has been an active voice in the association for eight years, serving as Treasurer for the past four.

For Monique, metal recycling is more than a career, it is a lifelong connection. Growing up in a family involved in smelting aluminium and recycling, she took the leap in 2014 to acquire Gauteng Metal Recyclers, building a business that not only thrives but makes a meaningful environmental impact.

Her days are a careful balance between running operations, managing negotiations, supporting her team, and raising three children. She thrives on problem-solving and leading by example, staying hands-on in a sector often assumed to be male-only territory. Proving her ability, especially during the challenges of COVID-19, and adapting to market shifts have been defining achievements in her journey.

She acknowledges that it is not uncommon for people to be surprised that she owns a scrap metal business. "I have faced having my authority and understanding of the industry questioned, but I stay focused, informed, and hands-on. Empathy and resilience help me lead with strength and shift outdated perceptions."

Monique is passionate about seeing more women join the industry, believing that diversity brings fresh thinking, strong leadership, and emotional intelligence to the table. Her advice to women considering this path is simple: do not let outdated perceptions stop you, be willing to learn, lead with confidence, and know that you belong here.

"The metal recycling sector is key to sustainability and economic growth," Monique says. "Its future depends on innovation and inclusion, and I am proud to be part of shaping a progressive and forward-thinking industry."

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