

## **Silver Wings Newsletter No. 12 Oct 2014**

Yes, another newsletter full of interesting and informative stuff so please read on!. Just when you settle into a routine, something happens to alter plans. As it is with my winemaking/ management role with Mt Monument, having parted company at end of June I continue to wait for payment for many months of work. Sadly it seems the only way I will be paid is at Court directive. So, back on the road again I am redesigning my logos and will be launching some new products soon with a whole new label, so please plan to come to my open weekend tasting. I have always collected wines and antiquities and so too some of my own produce has been stowed away so long it became lost. So whilst doing an extensive stock take last June, to my amazement I discovered 17 doz. '97 Brut on cork and a bulk bin of 1996 vintage sparkling Macedon still on lees – 18 years no less! Quite a discovery considering the ageing process, and it produced one of the greatest Macedon's I have made and certainly the rarest! Unique rarities such as this are uncommon anywhere in the wine world so come along & enjoy the 'lost wine' experience for yourself.

During the past decade I have produced some exceptional quality Rieslings both for export and Mt Monument labels, most if not all achieving Gold medal status in national & international shows so it is a natural progression for me to think of continuing production of this exciting variety. So, new ventures are afoot with me contracting to purchase fruit from Australia's highest altitude (780m) Riesling vineyard at Whitlands, so stay tuned for it's release around July next year. Looking forward to seeing you in October.

Cheers, Keith

### **The Lost Wine OPEN WEEKEND**

**at 28 Munster Terrace.**

**Sat. 25th Oct. and Sun. 26th Oct. 2014**

**10 a.m til 5 p.m.**

Taste the new release of the '96 X.O. Brut plus some recently discovered '97 Brut and many other exclusive table wines, both aged and current release, plus clearance sale wines make this a weekend not to miss!

Cheese and bread will be available with tastings, so please bring some friends and enjoy our hospitality.

Melways 2A. E10 - Ph: 9329 8161— M: 0407 291 449



## Mclaren Vale Adventures

P.3

The most recent tour for \*the 'ashes' took place in Mclaren Vale last July. Departing Adelaide airport we headed first to Angaston staying in a restored stone cottage dating from the 1860's and the wood fire was greatly appreciated in what turned out to be a week of cold wintry weather. Angaston proved to be a delightful village nestled into the top end of the Barossa, just before entering the Eden Valley and has retained its historic charm whilst offering some exiting wine tasting and gourmet food outlets. Our pick of the options was the Eden Valley Wines outlet that offered excellent tasting facilities with very knowledgeable staff and some first class wines on taste, my preference being the beautiful Rieslings. Here, a refreshing story was told of the salvation of the 'Quartz Garden' vineyard from corporate control. Recognised as the oldest surviving vineyard in the Eden Valley a band of 12 local winemakers combined to buy it when it came on the market some years ago. To their dismay Southcorp also expressed interest and charged a 'corp. executive' to buy it at auction.

On the fateful day the local cooperative were on site dreading the bottomless corporate cheque book when they realised the 'corp', being far too important to waste time driving from Adelaide, relied upon bidding by mobile phone. As the auction proceeded the bidding became more intense then suddenly stopped, the mobile connection had dropped out and couldn't be reinstated before the hammer fell and the twelve regional winemakers were the victors! Look for it in store as the rewards are palpable.

Departing Angaston we drove through the Adelaide Hills and descended into Mclaren Vale after enjoying some lovely sights and gourmet stops along the way. Our accommodation was a delightful 1850's daub and plaster cottage recently restored and in the middle of vineyards, Peppermint Farm Cottage – our loose interpretation of heaven for a week.

It's been 30 years since I spent time in the valley and much has changed, however the delightful stone buildings in the villages have not only survived but become the haven for tourist enterprises offering all sorts of hand crafted delights of the highest quality. Quality is the enduring theme of most businesses through the Vales and it shows in the response by their visitors.

Cont. P4

(\*Our group play the 500 a card game, competing for a small urn of burned cards 'the ashes'.)

There is a marked absence of the low quality mass produced rubbish that pervades most shops and markets throughout Australia, and what is being offered is refreshingly original from clothes, food, smallgoods to wines. There are of course the mammoth corporate players but overall not intimidating with so many smaller wineries more than competing with their cellar doors offering responsive, friendly and educational wine tasting experiences.

Our tasting highlights were a degustation lunch on Darry's Verandah and a premier taste sequence at Geoff Hardy's K1 cellar door, both offering must do experiences. The people of McLaren Vale believe in themselves, their history and culture, so much to my surprise, I enjoyed the Vales far more than had been anticipated and heartily recommend it as a destination.

### **Langhorn Creek** – the forgotten region.

After departing the Vales we stayed at Longview Vineyard near the delightful village of Macclesfield in the Adelaide Hills for several days. Their accommodation and dining facilities are excellent as is their Nebbiolo! However, having never visited Langhorn Creek I insisted we journey to one of Australia's oldest but rarely publicised regions. One of my reasons was that I believed the last of Australia's historic wine presses resided there, and I was right!

With the impressions of the gigantic oak presses of Clos de Veugeot in mind we ventured to the 1860's Potts family winery 'Bleasdale' near lake Alexandrina. Upon entering the tasting room I asked, and to my delight were taken on a personal tour by a fifth generation Potts girl no less! Not belittled at all by my memories of Burgundy this massive Red Gum mechanical monster will remain a life-time memory, and it still functions! This 'wow' experience was followed by an excellent tasting session by our host and afterward, we ventured forth enriched by the experience and loaded with some unique wines, one being a 16 y.o. liqueur Verdellho that we savoured by fireside over the following cold evenings.





After much searching my brother & I  
Finally find a bottle we can't finish!



## **The Lost Wines:-**

P.6

### **‘97 Brut Macedon (cleanskin)**

(\$20/\*\$216) ...../...../.....

#### **Notes:**

**Bouquet:** Aged complex Chardonnay fruit underpins strong yeast characters.

**Colour:** Deep green gold with fine but persistent bubbles.

**Palate:** A fine effervescence sprinkles the tongue and allows the complex Chardonnay fruit to dominate the long palate to a remarkably fresh finish given it's 14 years on cork.

### **1996 Late Disgorged Brut X.O. Grand Reserve**

(\$45/\*\$270 x six pack) ...../...../.....

#### **Notes:**

**Cleveland Estate** fruit, 18 years on lees, disgorged October 2014 and liquered with X.O. Cognac.

**Bouquet:** Strong yeastiness dominates the elegant fruit characters retaining a finely balanced intensity.

**Colour:** Deep golden green with fine and vigorous effervescence.

**Palate:** Explosive effervescence supports the intense, complex fruit flavours filling the palate in a powerful display of great balance of yeast and fruit supported by a fresh and clean acidity.

#### **Winemakers comments:**

A remarkable example of the art of fine aged sparkling wine production. This wine offers the greatest yeast complexities achievable in winemaking, complimented by its balanced acidity offering the most complex and rewarding Australian sparkling wine I've ever tasted. This release will not be overshadowed in the company of Bollinger and Krug Champagnes.

Enjoy! Keith

~ORDER FORM ~

P.7

**Keith Brien Premium Wines**

Dozen (mixed or straight) lots only delivered

(Price: single bottle/dozen) Bottles Dozens Total \$

N.V. '99 Brut Rose <i>Macedon Noir</i> (\$27/ *\$300)	...../...../.....
2006 <i>Vincenzo's Old Vines Mataro/ Shiraz</i> (\$27/*\$300)	...../...../.....
2008 <i>Old Vines Mataro</i> \$22/*\$240)	...../...../.....
2008 <i>Old Vines Shiraz</i> (\$22/*\$240)	...../...../.....
1999 Pinot Noir <i>The Winemakers Alms</i> (\$35/*\$380)	...../...../.....
1998 Cab. /Merlot <i>Minus Five</i> (\$23/*\$240)	...../...../.....

The Lost Wines: see order P 6. .... / ..... / .....

*Plus delivery cost (see window) \$.....*

*Optional insurance (see window) \$.....*

**Total** \$.....

**PAYMENT ENCLOSED: CHQ//MC/VISA**

Credit Card No

exp.date...../.....

NAME.....

Address.....

..... Postcode.....

Phone (BH).....(AH).....

Email:.....

Special Delivery Instructions:

.....

**Mail to: Silver Wings 28 Munster Tce Nth Melb. 3051**

**Tel: (03) 9329 8161 or M: 040729 1449 Fax: (03) 9329 6879**

**e-mail : [keith@siverwingswines.com](mailto:keith@siverwingswines.com)**

**FREIGHT RATES (Free for 2+ cases to same address Victoria)**

MELBOURNE \$5.00 per case VIC COUNTRY \$12.00 per case

INTERSTATE \$15.00 per case PERTH, WA \$25.00 per case

**\*INSURANCE:** Victoria \$7.00 All other States \$10.00

(Covers any breakages during transit. Silver Wings takes no responsibility for breakages during transit of uninsured wine)

## The Tale of Two Rieslings

The Australian Wine Industry has been a boom and bust business throughout its long history. In early days the inevitability of a lot of cultivatable land and a small population and no coordinated market place. However after a long period of stabilisation it changed dramatically within my lifetime through actions and responses by various governments and individuals too varied to include within my newsletter, but one issue remains constant. When Australian Rural Industries gear up for export, it usually results in oversupply for the domestic market place. Though never before in our history has it been so contrived as it is today resulting in foreign ownership and management of our domestic supply and demand cycles through manipulation of Australia's own wine industries' established authorities.

One of the saddest results is our cultural decline and so, in this context the grape variety Riesling has relativity.

When I first began drinking wine (under age) Riesling was the king of all whites, no-one had even heard of Chardonnay or Sauvignon Blanc! Riesling was labelled two ways, the pure variety being 'Rhine Riesling' and 'Riesling' being anything made in a similar style with the exception of 'Hunter Valley Riesling' being Semillon. Generic Riesling rarely contained Riesling grapes at all and consisted of any number of bulk white grapes and often quite sweet and mostly purchased in flagons. There had been a history of great Riesling produced by stoic German migrants in the cooler areas of otherwise unsuitable climates in Sth Australia. Through perseverance they developed a clean dry wine that drank superbly with our fresh seafood being the staple diet of most of the coastal populations and perfect after a hot summer day.

This style was eventually perfected by Leo Buring's legendary winemaker John Vickery in the 1960's, sadly this all began to change through a fashionable tendency to copy Germanic styles plus the appointment of Brian Croser to the head of the Adelaide Show Judging team in the late 70's to early 80's, who loved and rewarded the residual sugar styles. Within a few short years a majority of Rieslings had become sweet and unsuitable to consume with most seafood dishes of the era and when other varieties offered an alternative, its appeal collapsed altogether.

This cultural icon of dry Australian white wine is finally making a comeback. The clean crispness of well made Rieslings presents beautifully with most fine foods and its low alcohol elegance complements the fine dining experience to perfection.

Continued next page

The  
Whitfield  
vineyard in  
wintry  
weather, it  
had been  
snowing  
the day  
before!



During the last decade I have produced some outstanding dry Riesling wines in small batches, although I have never been more excited than now by the prospect of making a commercial volume of what has always been my favourite style for seafood and lighter meals. Vintage 2015 may be my 30th but I'm abuzz with anticipation once again!  
Stay tuned,  
Keith

## Thoughts of the day!

If people from Poland are called Poles, then why aren't people from Holland called Holes? If a pig loses its voice, is it disgruntled? Why is a person who plays the piano called a pianist, but a person who drives a racecar is not called a racist? If it's true that we are here to help others, then what exactly are the others here for? If lawyers are disbarred and clergymen defrocked, then doesn't it follow that electricians can be delighted, musicians denoted, cowboys deranged, models deposed, tree surgeons debarked, and dry cleaners depressed? If Fed Ex and UPS were to merge, would they call it Fed UP? And do Lipton Tea employees take 'coffee breaks?'



The old (lost wine) '96 vintage on the riddling racks.

## Hey Waiter ... my water's corked!

Much has been communicated about 'corked' wine but sadly, it remains little understood. Cork taint in relation to wine is caused by a chemical reaction between chlorine based compounds and phenolic substances of which wine has a multitude, creating Chloranisole compounds detectable to the human smell and taste receptors at microscopic levels. The most pungent of which is a tri-chloranisole TH7 that renders wine undrinkable, but it is not only present in wine.

Yes, water can also be corked! The over use of chlorine as a sterilising agent throughout our domestic and Industrial lives during the last 100 years has left no water on earth that does not have traceable levels of chlorine as a contaminant. Sadly even rain, clouds and subterranean water is effected to some level, but it is still used widely in our town water supply systems and becomes particularly noticeable in some suburbs of Melbourne. When staying in Carnegie several years ago I was amazed when tap water reeked of tri-chloranisole and I couldn't drink it. Later that year I met some friends in a Malvern Hotel and was astounded when the tap beer was 'corked'! I quickly realised that, as in many pubs, the beer was being watered down, however using the local tainted supply, it was highly noticeable. Reverting to bottled beer solved the problem but the underlying issue is unacceptable.

This incident reminded me of a story told by a highly respected hospitality industry/ hotel owner when they renovated and restored a famous Richmond pub in the 1980's. Restoring the cellars, they removed all the old beer and interconnected water lines and replaced them with new plumbing, minus the water input. The change to pure unadulterated tap beer caused all their old regular drinkers to complain. Apparently they had grown used to the watered down beer and missed it! Ironically they thought the new owner was duping them and many never returned.

I have witnessed similar incidents where extremely expensive wines have been opened only to reveal they are corked, but the owner manages to convince himself and others that the flavours are typical of that wine and they drink it!

So, good luck to all my readers in not having contaminates in their chosen beverage or drinking water, and just another reason to drink my wines!

Cheers, Keith

