

## Silver Wings Newsletter No. 10 Aug. 2013

Vintage 2013 was very interesting—that's a discreet way of saying difficult! For the first time ever in Macedon, acids were dropping away very quickly almost before the grapes were ripe (I guess in other regions of Australia that's normal, but in Macedon it's worrying). After such a warm & sunny summer I suppose I should be grateful, however never having seen this in 30 years of viticulture it's just another indicator of the global weather changes now being experienced. So an early harvest was organised and all varieties came into the winery in excellent condition to let the fun begin. The result is some delightful wines being made with a balance and depth of flavours that are very exciting indeed, I can't wait to have them in a bottle so you can taste them! Then, once they were all tucked neatly into oak, I had a short break.

So how do winemakers spend their holidays? ... visiting other wineries of course! I'm just back from riding bicycles along the Clare Valley Riesling Trail and what a great time it was! It runs along an old disused railway track and is one of the most enjoyable things I've done in a good while. The wineries and wines along the way were wonderful; mostly Rieslings of course! On a recommendation we stayed at Rose Cottage in Auburn at the southern end of the Clare which was advice well received. It is a beautiful village of old stone buildings at the beginning of the Riesling Trail with a steady gradient upward towards the wineries. It gets a bit hard occasionally but knowing it's all downhill on the way home after a good lunch, makes it very rewarding. I thoroughly recommend it as a Autumn, Winter or Spring getaway. Cheers, Keith.



### **OPEN WEEKEND at 28 Munster Terrace.**

**Sat. 31st Aug. and Sun. 1st Sept.. 2013**

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

The final few dozen of ex-Cleveland Sparkling '98 Brut & '99 Brut Rose will be available to taste & purchase. All good things must come to an end , so please ensure you stock up with these amazing wines before they are gone forever. Plus many other exclusive table wines, both aged and current release plus clearance sale wines & special tasting of Mt Monument wines, make this a weekend not to miss!

Cheese & bread will be available with tastings,  
so please bring some friends to join the fun  
Melways 2A. E10 - Ph: 9329 8161— M: 0407 291 449

## A SILENT REVOLUTION.

### (It's up to you to find the smoking gun)

The news you won't read in the mainstream newspapers or Industry journals becomes the more interesting for it.

Australia's wine Industry has been in absolute disarray for years with grape growers receiving less than their costs of producing fruit, manufacturing production costs steadily increasing and the market for their produce, steadily shrinking, so winemakers are in the same dilemma. Farmers of several generations have given up hope and are leaving their land or selling to rich city dwellers to run as tax losses. So why hasn't something been done? Or at least been featured as news?

That is because it suits the wine Corporations just fine, in most ways they created the scenario, have accelerated their domestic market share and spread their interests overseas to compensate. Many are owned by foreign wineries or importing businesses that are profiteering at the expense of local producers, so one may think there is no future for our industry any longer, but there is a sharp ray of sunshine appearing just over the horizon.

Outside of the publicly marketed segments of the wine business and far from the glare of our wine journalists, there are some young winemakers venturing outside the tried and true formulas of their competitors and making very exciting wines.

You won't find these in Dan's nor most corporate controlled wine outlets, but they are beginning to see the light of day in some of the independent retailers and better restaurant wine lists. I have long been an advocate of individualism and expression of site in the style of wine I make and accordingly, the lack of commercial success has cut deeply over a long career. But my spirits are uplifted by the sense of adventure and experimentation of some of the current generation of young independent winemakers.

They are revisiting 'old world' winemaking techniques armed with the technical knowledge from a good education and an excellent understanding of the wines of the world, and results are inspiring.

Sometimes their efforts are frustrated and unrewarding but occasionally offer sensational expressions of character and 'terror'. These include lower alcohols than the corporate 'jam' styles with greater finesse and their wines are much higher in delightful tannins than commercial producers.

There are good reasons for this, once you leave the over refined over filtered 'comfyness' of the majority of Australian wine styles, you enter the discomfort zone for the 'punters'. They largely desire everything to have the same depleted flavours and lack of structure that is the equivalent of sucking on processed raw chicken and pretending it is interesting or good for you. Wine journalists often refer to it as 'finely flavoured'.

In a medical sense the statement 'Wine is Good for you' has deeper connotations here. The highly processed commercial wines of today **do not** contain most of the antioxidants or proanthocyanidins that have provided the major health benefits associated with wine consumption for thousands of years. In associated findings, so effective are these extracts from fermented wine marc, they are at the forefront of world medical research, in the hope of treating heart disease and cancer prevention. The new wave of winemakers practicing long cycles of primary fermentation and long term grape skin contact with minimal or no filtration. Their wines contain all or most of the important ingredients, meaning their wines are effectively health tonics. Most of the stuff I have always done – but I don't feel so lonely now! It's all good. It's good for you and perhaps the Aussie wine Industry's long term survival, so hopefully they can prove there is a sensitive and discerning market of consumers in Australia with a sustainable and healthy future for such talented young people.

Cheers, Keith.

## End of a Sparkling Era

All things change over time and so it has with wine production in Australia.

The cost of production and sales support has outstripped profitability at all but icon status level and is compounded by a relentless onslaught of taxation and regulations. No more evident than the making of high quality Sparkling wine, it became unprofitable for my scale of 1,000 doz per annum, around 1998 so I stopped production and gradually withdrew from the market, finally reaching the point where my stocks are entirely depleted

*.... other than .....*

***7 doz Brut '98 and around 25 doz Rose Brut'99.***

So if you wish to drink a little bit of 'Macedon' history, please come to our open weekend on the

***Sat.31st. & Sun.1st*** when I expect the last will be sold or consumed!

Cheers, Keith.

## \*SPECIAL DISCOUNT OFFER

**FOR ORDERS OF ONE DOZEN OR MORE!**

**\$2 per bottle OFF cellar door price of mixed or whole dozens!**

*\*Asterisk denotes doz prices*

## SPECIAL Pinot Noir vs Burgundy Tasting

**Fri. 30th. Aug. 2013 3: 30 p.m. til 6:30 p.m.**

At my tasting room **28 Munster Tce.**

A unique opportunity to compare wines from different

Hemispheres & makers from the **famous 1999 vintage.**

**1/ Yarra Yering, Yarra Valley, Bailey Carodus**

**2/ Cleveland Estate, Macedon Ranges, Keith Brien**

**3/ Chambolle Musigny 'Aux Echeseaux' Dom. B. Amiot**

**4/ Gevrey Chambertin 'Les Czetiars' Dom. Magnien Michel**

**5/ Nuits St. Georges 'Les Poirets' Faively**

**6/ Nuits St. Georges 'Les Hauts Poirets' Marchand de Gramont**

Plus perhaps a few other morsels should we get excited.

Limited to the first 15 people to register for a cost of **\$50 P.P.**

\*Mt. Monument Order Form now on website [www.mountmonumentwines.com](http://www.mountmonumentwines.com)

~ORDER FORM ~

**Silver Wings Premium Wines**

Dozen (mixed or straight) lots only delivered

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

'98er Brut **Macedon**                      (\$29/ \*\$324)    ...../...../.....

N.V. Brut Rose **Macedon Noir** (\$27/ \*\$300) ...../...../.....

2006 *Vincenzo's Old Vines*

**Mataro/ Shiraz** (\$27/\$\*300) ...../...../.....

1999 Pinot Noir

**The Winemakers Alms** (\$45/\$\*516) ...../...../.....

1998 Cab. /Merlot **Minus Five** (\$25/\$\*276) ...../...../.....

2009 Cab. /Shiraz S.A. Organic cleanskin

(\$15/\*\$156) ...../...../.....

\*3 bott. x tasting pack (see page 6) .....                      \$ 85.00

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

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

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

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

Credit Card No

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

NAME.....

Address.....

..... Postcode.....

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

Email:.....

Special Delivery Instructions:

.....

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

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)

**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)**

**[www.silverwingswines.com](http://www.silverwingswines.com)**

## GOOD NEWS FOR WINE ENTHUSIASTS

An introductory **3 x 750ml bottle Taste Pack** of my premium wines available for you to sample.

### Each 3 pack will contain:-

1 x 2006 Old Vines Mataro/ Shiraz

1 x 4th and final release '98 *Macedon* Brut

1 x 3rd and final release '99 *Macedon* Brut Rose

Detailed tasting notes for each wine and recommended food matches.

Price: \$83 plus postage \$12 (Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide) plus \$10 insurance

Total Value **\$105 - Special offer \$85 delivered, fully insured.**

Refer to Order Form P.4.

## STOP PRESS

Recently two of the wines I make for Mt. Monument were Gold medal winners and eligible for the final judging for the years 'Best of the Best' awards at the Fed. Square Regional showcase.

The Mt. Monument 2011 Pinot Noir won the Trophy for 'Best Pinot Noir'.

It is a beautiful wine showing all the hallmarks of great quality fruit and single site 'Terroir' with a wonderful cellaring future.

Perhaps I may open a bottle over the weekend!



Judging the Pressings cut



1st for the day.....

## When is a tainted wine not a tainted wine?

**Answer:** When it is under a screw cap - or so it seems.

When it comes to integrity and honesty the cork industry runs a sorry second behind the used car business in Australia. But that aside, it does not excuse the Australian wine industry from concealing the obvious shortfalls of the much vaunted 'screw cap' solution to the 'cork' problem. Despite the fact that almost all Australian wine is bottled utilising the stelvin (screw cap) seal, we are a tiny minority in the world of wine and there are some glaring faults that are a consequence of doing so.

For many years the Australian Wine Research Institute has recommended screw cap closures as the most effective seal for some quality parameters for bottle aging wine – but not for all parameters or all wines! The problem lies in the formation of disulfides when there is an absence of air in the ullage (head-space) between what was traditionally the cork and the wine. Cork type seals progressively allow a minute ingress of air during storage, offering different chemical pathways for the gradual oxidative process that takes place in a wine after bottling, "aging" as it has been known for hundreds of years. The problem for modern anaerobic seals is that they are just that! They allow no air exchange, and in some wines this creates an obvious 'struck flint' (stone) and 'struck match stick' aroma that is at best off-putting and sometimes acrid. Many wines seem not to have this character develop but the worst examples are regularly found in white wines and worst of all in the Chardonnay variety, particularly those with around 4–6 years bottle age. Why this is so remains an industry mystery. However, the AWRI is hot on the trail of being able to detect the pre-cursors in a wine so it can be checked before it's bottled, but the results are not yet commercially available.

All this means little to the consuming public who despite enjoying a social drink may not be able to tell a 'corked' or 'screwed' wine from one that is sound. However, when an Industry actually promotes this manufactured fault as an attribute to enhance wine quality it becomes something quite different and perhaps sinister. The Royal Melbourne Wine Show is such an example, where unless a Chardonnay exhibits some 'struck flint' character it is unlikely to win a medal. The reasons behind this may be many. However the media remain silent on the issue and I think it should be questioned, because if Corporate influence has morphed into enforced reality, it is corruption in practice. The reason I say this, is that one of Australia's biggest wine corporations is the world's largest producer of screw cap seals and in the words of Kath & Kim "like an octopus, their testicles are everywhere!"

Many so called 'independent producers' are in fact bank-rolled or have close working relationships with their previous corporate employers and they are at large among us unsuspecting wine folk. It's difficult to know where this piece of string may lead, but unfettered corporate domination in Australian markets is so complete it resembles a modern form of industrial feudalism.

Suffice to say that if your wine smells like the acrid scent of burnt match stick sulphur – don't be screwed. Send it back as tainted, and ask for a different wine.

Cheers, Keith



**Ben & Liz in their Sunday best**

## Facts 2013:-

Treasury wines is Australia's largest, and also the world's largest wine corporation. Including Premium Wine Estates Pty Ltd and Accolade Pty Ltd ( they control approx. 80% of Australia's wine production capacity and ship approx. 95% of Australia's wine exports of which nearly 55% is bulk, to be bottled overseas at approx. \$1 per ltr. 'Wine Australia' previously the A.W.B.C. oversees the Australian wine industry and has a corporate structure of 5 board members elected by a gerrymander of 1 by Govt appointment, 3 from the biggest 5 Corporations (3 of which are foreign owned) and 1 x Industry representative for the remaining 1,100 wineries. Current Australian Bureau of Statistics Census 2012 data reveals 75% of Australia's population was born in a foreign country with in excess of 50% of those born in Asia, making Australia's migrant population base unique in the world. The game playing of hypothetical political and business scenarios is well developed but to my knowledge it has never been applied to the Australian wine industry – so here goes!

## Wine Industry High-Pathetical

**2014:** The world's largest drinks company, Suntory Corporation, has a majority shareholding acquired through stock markets by 'China Wine' a relatively new entry in the global wine and drinks trade. The following year sees C.W. purchase 20% of available shares in Pepsi, the second largest global drinks company. Treasury Wines announces that Penfolds is re-branding its premium labels and has commenced diluting the Australian component of their branded wines in Australia with imported produce from Argentina, mirroring their successful 'world brand' of Lindemans Bin 65 Chardonnay. This they say will maintain their price structure in a depressed Australian economy and combat the high A\$ within their export destinations by blending & bottling their brands utilising wines in those foreign countries. Their brand sales do not diminish because of the 'international' tone of the wines & in fact gain market ground in the multi-cultural Australian society over more expensive, purely local produce.

**2015:** The year sees Pepsi acquires a majority of shares in Treasury Wines after it notifies ASIC of financial difficulties due to high local operating costs and an internal rationalisation for their U.S. and world market. Accolade P/L announces a hostile take-over by C.W. but reaches a shareholder agreement launching a new wine corporation 'Hardy Chinese Wines' commencing trade locally as a joint venture between Accolade, Pepsi and C.W. This leaves the other three major wine corporations in Australia uncompetitive in the shrinking global market for Australian wine and they continue to divest themselves of various Australian wine industry holdings.

**2016:** The Penfolds Brand has retained an international appeal and is viewed as one of its tradeable commodities by Treasury, which commences negotiations for a merger with H.C.W. Treasury successfully divests itself of the Brand to 'Hardy Chinese' which adds much needed volumes for the C.W./ Pepsi massive joint venture growth in the consumption of wine and alcoholic drinks to a rapidly modernising Chinese palate. The A.W.R.I. completes its 10 year joint research project with Penfolds, finally succeeding in separating the thousands of phenolic substrates in the major Australian variety Shiraz, and through ground-breaking technology they can be isolated and freeze dried, allowing extraction of all phenolic & colour elements in wine, leaving only neutral alcoholic fluid.

**2017:** Pepsi launches a major export push of their new Penfolds and 'Hardy Chinese' brands into the Chinese market, now labelled "PenfoldsC" and "HardyC" utilising the vast plantings of mature vineyards in China to replace the previous Argentinian component in the local and Australian domestic market. This results in a very successful blend, but diminishes the prices achievable in both domestic markets in comparison to competition by the traditional and purely regional, French brands.

The last independent (non-corporate) grape-grower of large acreage in Australia announces its vineyard removal in line with 'Wine Australia's' vine rationalisation plan.

Pepsi pioneers the introduction of the new A.W.R.I. technology first, with wine vending machines released into the Japanese market through Suntory dispensing into speciality P.E.T recyclable 600ml bottles or cups. This vending machine stores neutral alcohol base and reconstitutes freeze-dried extracts with water, offering two varieties of red and white wine at the touch of a button. Sweetness to taste is a further option with ice and Pepsi mixes available. This new friendly wine image is enormously successful and the machines are introduced into the Chinese market the following season.

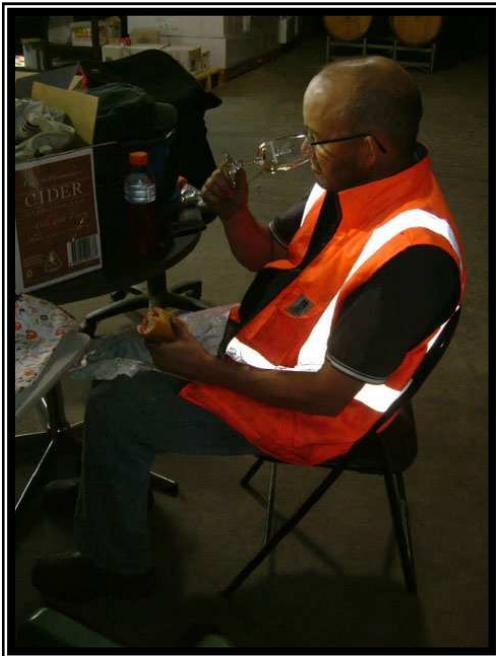
Cont...

**2019:** A joint statement from the three remaining corporate Australian vineyard owners, announces a vine reduction program of their Australian holdings with intent to offer for sale, the bare land. 'Wine Australia' is embarrassed but defiant when publicly revealed that at board level, it has been under the control of foreign corporate interests for many years.

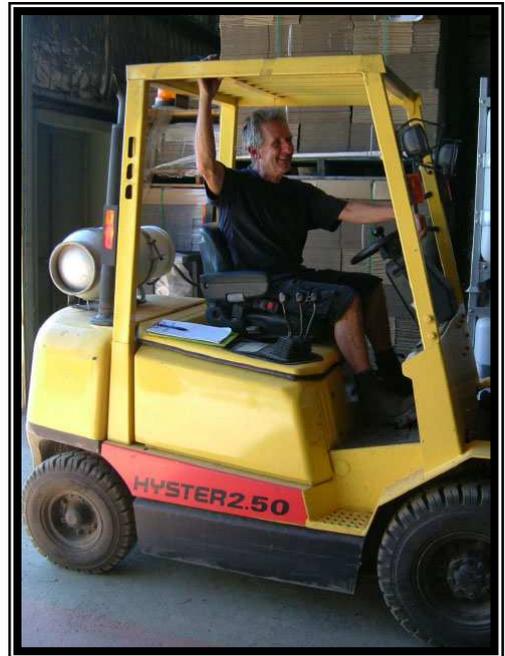
**2020:** 'PenfoldsC' introduces a premium wine vending machine into the U.S. market and also Australian hotels and clubs, offering their top five Bin numbers including Grange, all have adjustable sweetness options, ice and Pepsi blends available. These machines utilise extracted isolates of Chinese wine and grapes worldwide, without Australian content.

'Wine Australia' in conjunction with the Federal Government offer a financial incentive of 'land value' to pull the remaining eligible vineyards in excess of 100 ha, effectively subsidising the removal from the corporate sites. Also announced is a corresponding increase of the Grape Vine & research levy on any smaller Australian vine holdings to \$350 per tonne plus a Vineyard license fee of \$500 per h.a. per annum under a 'user pays' rationale ~

Goodnight folks!  
Keith.



Matt lunching French style.....



Pete, still helping me make wine after 25 years!



## ODD SPOTS

- \*She was only a whiskey maker, but he loved her still.
- \*Work is the curse of the drinking class.
- \*Atheism is a non-prophet organization.
- \*The main reason Santa is so jolly is because he knows where all the bad girls live.
- \*Automatic doors linked to adolescent sense of entitlement.

## Frightful Images.

When travelling overseas toilets are a constant source of anguish, and hoping for hygienic facilities is sometimes ambitious. So it was with some amazement that whilst dining recently in Melbourne I was rendered momentarily speechless – before bursting out with laughter. In an extremely good restaurant with the spectacular views that come with modern architecture & CBD settings, I excused myself from the dining table & trotted off to the loo. Ultra modern fittings & tiny white mosaic tiles impressed me as I headed to the male urinal, standing there surveying my surrounds, I glanced downwards to the most frightening site. The centre of the bowl was a convex mirrored dome that magnified the closest object, and my eyes peering over the edge looked like an obscene version of

**“Foo Was Here”!**

In my youth it may have flattered my ego, but at my age I found the scenario quite hysterical and was still chuckling heartily by the time I returned to my table of friends.

Cheers, Keith

### Please help improve my e-Newsletter

Please register... update ..... or ..... remove  
my name from the Silver Wings Newsletter list:

Name:.....

Address:.....

.....Ph.....

Email: .....

**Return this form to: [keith@silverwingswines.com](mailto:keith@silverwingswines.com) OR**

Silver Wings Winemaking 28 Munster Terrace. Nth. Melbourne. Vic 3051

Ph: 03 9329 8161 M: 0407 291449 **Fax: 03 9329 6879**