

President	Spencer Field	9710 1928	Treasurer	David Pryor	9439 4933
Past President	George Wright	9712 0318	Communications	Marcel Theunissen	5962 5153
Secretary	Zenon Kolacz	9879 0379	Newsletter	Richard Bortko	9811 8219

The Guild encourages the responsible consumption of alcohol

The Guild meets on the last Friday of each month
at the Eltham Living & Learning Centre at 8 pm
Next meeting: 29th August 2008

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Next Meeting

Bring along your spice wines and winter warmers for sharing. Also please bring along a good red wine. Mario Fantin will champion a WOTY evaluation of members' red wines.

Bill Laughlin will report on the features of a weekender at Rutherglen.

Rutherglen Winery Weekender 4, 5 Oct:

We have little time left to plan this. Members should confirm their participation as soon as possible. If you can't attend this meeting, email: secretary@amateurwine.org.au with names and contact details.

This promises to be the "best of the best" of our weekenders. Rutherglen is an old established wine growing region (over 100 years) with lots of character, heavy porty reds including Durif, and stunning fortifieds. We want 40 plus to come along to join in the comradery and merriment.

President's Press

Spencer Field

Well, I'm looking forward to another great year with great people in a great wine Guild. I actually believe my job is an easy one, and like George, I look for lots of fun, and also wine education. After all, previous executives combined with a very supportive and committed membership have put the Guild in great shape, and all are to be truly congratulated for a lot of hard work and the many successes including the show, weekenders, WOTY's, tastings with expert guidance, international nights with live, member-inspired entertainment, more committed and supportive sponsors, etc, etc - the list is infinite!

This is not to say the new executive is going to rest on its laurels - not by any measure! We have lots of ideas but I will come to that later.

I was delighted with the number of members raising their hands at the July meeting to volunteer to take on tasks. The Show Committee has some new blood with young Darko and young Mick Scott coming on board, besides quite a few other long time workers also signing up. We have Geoff Neagle to add a new approach to sourcing grape suppliers for Guild members - and I think we might see a broader varietal range be an outcome here! We have Bill Loughlin for a second year (with some assistance from Mr Bus Co-ordinator (Hon Treasurer David) co-ordinating a winery weekender - this year at Rutherglen!! Fortifieds, here we come!

Now it's important to mention a few of the less visible hard workers - ones we rarely see at meetings - yet they are working their behinds off for the good of the Guild. People who take their tasks seriously, have unending commitment to the Guild, and who are very talented and professional. These include:

- John and Roma O'Callaghan - our show directing team (while John directs, Roma makes everything happen).
- Marcel Theunissen - our webmaster (watch this space for future announcements arising from a lot of Marcel's work over the past year!)
- Tim Ross & Andrew Gillam - without their commitment and IT skills, we would never be able to professionally document the show successes of 700 plus entries. Theirs is an unenviable task, but very astute programming is their (and our) success. The software is a valuable Guild asset.

- And then many of our partners who give time and skills to supporting the show with keyboarding, food preparation and serving, etc, etc. This also applies to International Night.

Thank you sincerely, to all above and to anyone that I may negligently have omitted (please advise me of any) - always a risk when mentioning names.

There's one other up and comer I must also mention, and that is Stan Gower, who is a very enthusiastic winemaker and who has been bombarding George and me with ideas for the Guild (and getting us to more critically assess our own winemaking skills!). Stan has also been working at getting me off my backside for us jointly to prepare an article for our website setting out the basics of how to make wine. Yes, Stan, we will start right away! This will be something with Stan's photos that can be added to or changed depending on technology or perhaps whims of the Guild (maybe a wine making Wikipedia!??). As you are aware, Stan has added some innovative ideas to the Newsletter (including this one) and with good humour - just what is needed! Thank you Stan!!

Your new Executive:

Three old hands, Zenon (Secretary), David (Treasurer) and George (Past President) are working at keeping Spencer (greenhorn President) under control. We have also 'hired' (well, he gets our good company) Management Consultant, Mario Fantin to assist us using his four years experience on the executive and vast array of skills.

We welcome and encourage member contact with us - we are interested in your feedback and your ideas - speak to us at meetings or email us at:

president@amateurwine.org.au; secretary@amateurwine.org.au; and treasurer@amateurwine.org.au

What's in store for the future ?

The executive supports a principle of continuous improvement, something that was strongly put forward (and has since been in place) with the strategic planning framework done 3-4 years ago under the Executive when Mario Fantin was President (other exec members included Ken King, David Pryor and (I think) Tim Ross).

The current executive, at its first meeting last week, came up with a number of themes to put forward to members. A key theme is more education for members aimed at lifting the number of Gold medals won at our Annual Wine Show.

These are the themes for which your feedback, comments, suggestions and support are now sought:

More Member Golds:

We want to offer educational initiatives aimed at helping members improve their winemaking skills and in so doing, lift the number of member Golds in the Eltham show by 20% or a figure to be determined once the research on number of medals in past shows has been done. (Currently about 8-10 Golds overall are won by members and non-members collectively). Accurate data will be presented at the August meeting. We support more educationally focussed meetings which include professionally trained persons championing blind tastings or other presentations - eg, fining trial demonstrations. Other initiatives are possible and include web links to good sources of technical information, promoting TAFE short courses, field trips to meet winemakers, and other ones to be identified.

Suggestions please!!!

Wider Varietal Appreciation:

Flowing on from the last meeting of southern European varietals championed by Danny and Zenon, it's clear that there are many tasty, beautiful varietals out there that few of us appreciate. This includes Italian, Spanish, Croatian, etc. and the list is endless. So we would like to sponsor greater appreciation and this can be done by further such tastings as held last meeting, seeking sources of supply for members of some alternative grape varieties, and possibly a new Mediterranean class at our annual show, in which a range of varietals are judged on the basis of style rather than variety. (This idea is being tried at the forthcoming Melbourne Show). Members with varietal suggestions and knowledge of sourcing ones, such as tempranillo, pinot grigio, albarnino (which we tasted last meeting), mourvedre, etc, etc, should advise Zenon.

Country wine appreciation - revival:

We want to ensure members do not neglect the possibilities in making stunning and diverse country wines. We are looking at a special country wine making event/course, and seeking advice from an apparently successful approach to this in discussions with members of the Frankston Guild. **Members with suggestions should talk to Mario.**

Ladies wine evaluation:

The Guild has a majority of male winemakers, most of whom are strongly supported by female partners who play a quiet but nonetheless vital role in the home winemaking activities. It's an unfortunate fact for us males that females have a better palate for wine evaluation, and I suspect a lot of us take advantage of this by asking the advice of our partners on tasting samples.

We believe the Guild needs to both acknowledge and use the important role of our partners, and encourage the more active involvement of ones who have the interest, to take up winemaking. So we will specially invite (special only because they are welcome at any time) to a wine evaluation meeting, and encourage them as a group to taste our wines and give some helpful opinions. Any suggestions in support of such an activity are welcomed, and speak to Spencer.

Social activities:

The Executive is keen to ensure that members' social expectations continue to be met, and welcomes any suggestions for improvements to the existing program.

(Not a bad effort for his first President's Press article - Ed)

Eltham & District Amateur Winemakers Guild Inc.

**39th ANNUAL ELTHAM AMATEUR
WINE SHOW**

***N.B. Wine entries close Wednesday 15th October
2008!***

Check your winemaking and tastings against the judges' comments
at the show on

Sunday 23rd November, 2008

**11 am - 3 pm Eltham Community Centre
801 Main Rd (opposite the Eltham Hotel)**



Around 700 entries annually !!!

***Back by demand! Winemaking / Matching short classes:
Midday: Country Wine Making
1 pm: Sparkling Wine Making
1.30 pm: Wine & Food Matching***

GOURMET DELIGHTS AVAILABLE OR BYO PICNIC

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Costante Imports	www.costanteimports.com.au	Ph: 9484 7948
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La Trobe University	Viticulture & Wine Production	Ph: 9479 2191
Vinivicta Products	www.vinivicta.com.au	Ph: 1300 360353

***Pick up an entry form from one of our sponsors,
or from our Website www.amateurwine.org***

For Further Information: 03 9437 0053 or Email: cheers@amateurwine.org

Famous Quotations

"I would like to express the hope that the production and the acceptance of Grange Hermitage as a great Australian wine has proved that we in Australia are capable of producing wines equal to the best in the world. But we must not be afraid to put into effect the strength of our own convictions, continue to use our imagination in wine-making generally, and be prepared to experiment in order to gain something extra, different and unique in the world of wine."

- Max Schubert (Wine-maker Grange Hermitage) (submitted by Mario Fantin)

"A man who could sit under the shade of his own vine with his wife and children about him and ripe clusters hanging within their reach in such a climate as this and not feel the highest enjoyment, is incapable of happiness."

James Busby, *Manual for Australian Winemakers*, 1830 (submitted by Neil Johannesen)

"Wine can of their wits the wise beguile,
Make the sage frolic and the serious smile."

Alexander Pope (submitted by Neil Johannesen)

Mundane Tips for Winemaking Beginners – Part 2

Stan Gower

You will recall earlier this year Stan Gower wrote a series of articles for the Guild Newsletter about his home made wine making equipment. Remember those clever inventions? Stan is back with some handy tips to share with you. Here is his second tip.

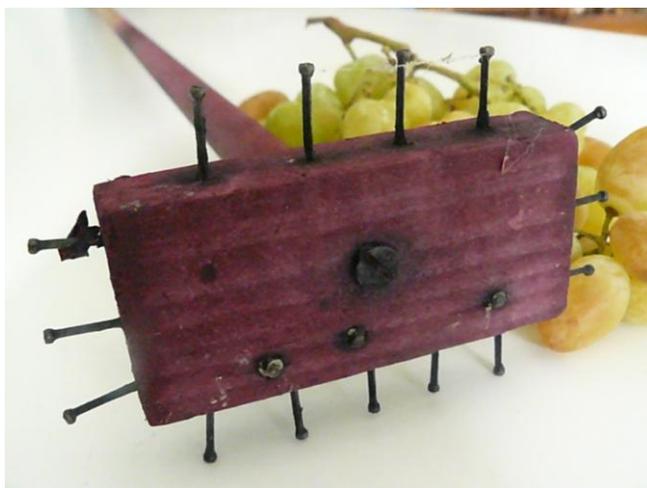
Breaking more skins AFTER pressing. (Reds only)

The photo below has some table grapes included only for *size comparison purposes*. I ferment my grapes in 30 litre plastic beer fermenters.

After I crushed my Cab Sauv this year into a sterilized wheelie bin, I found only about 200mm of free juice at the bottom of the crush, compared to about 350mm in previous years. Perhaps the stems were thicker than usual, because the manual crusher handle was pretty hard to turn.

I contemplated how I could easily break more grapes *without* re-crushing.

Then an *inspired* idea came into my mind. (I think my brilliance is inherited). I bashed in 25mm nails all around the head of my plunging tool, and filed the lower edge of each nail to a knife



edge. Hey Presto! Every time I plunged, some more grapes got ripped open, and the fermenting wine became noticeably more liquid.

Sadly I will have to think up another brilliant idea for white wine grapes which of course don't need plunging. Drat!!

I believe I bought my crusher from George, so perhaps he nobbled the mechanism to reduce the competition. But, come to think of it, who needs to hinder the competition when you have kangaroos, foxes and birds? This makes George's viticulture and wine making a breeze, or should I say, a freeze?

(At first I thought it was some sort of medieval torture device which would certainly break skins and bones - but it was another handy tool from Stan the gadget man - Ed)

Australian National Amateur Wine and Beer Show

Mario Fantin

Members should consider entering their wines in the Australian National Amateur Wine and Beer Show. Although the show is held in Adelaide, members are able to drop off their wines at Winequip in Coburg (for location details refer advertisement in newsletter).

Note that entries must be submitted by 19 September 2008. For more details, refer to www.anawbs.org.au

Trading Barrel

BUY / SELL SERVICE FOR MEMBERS - Ads need to be lodged with the editor by the 15th of the month to be included in the next Newsletter.

Wine Equipment for Sale – Camberwell

1 x 700 Ltr open plastic fermenter, with lid, white
1 x 200 Ltr open plastic fermenter, white
1 x 100 Ltr closed plastic fermenter, white
1 x 50 Ltr closed plastic fermenter, white
1 x 45 Ltr glass storage
1 x 15 Ltr glass storage
Sundry other storage, air-locks, bungs, etc. etc.

All clean and in excellent condition – used for one vintage only.

Sell for half of new price.

Rob Francis
Camberwell
T: 9809 0077
M: 0419 936 970

Three red wine barrels for sale. Price \$150 each.

They have wine in them currently but can be emptied now or in due course. As you know the best way to look after a barrel is to keep it full of wine, topped up and with sulphur and acid levels maintained. Wines and barrels are sound. You are welcome to taste the wines.

1 Heritage rebuild 3 years ago, 1 Seguin Moreau shaved three years ago, 1 Dargaud & Jaeglé (French) shaved three years ago. All could be shaved again and were purchased from Heritage Coopers. Without shaving they would still provide subtle oaking.

Alan Blackman
To enquire call or email.
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Enquiries welcome
