



President's Message

April and back to normal time

Hi Everyone, Well I don't know about all of you but I am glad that daylight savings is over and we are back to a more normal time. I don't mind being honest but I was starting to struggle getting up in the dark and missing out on these beautiful mornings.

April marks the end of our bulk grape purchases for the year and it looks like we have had a win with a new supplier from Heathcote who has supplied us with some beautiful fruit which from all accounts is as we speak making some great wine. I hope that next year we can get together a focus group to try a different variety apart from the usual suspects.

The fruit from Shepparton was just under what would be liked but considering the year we have had with weather, not too bad

On another note the guild is still looking for help when it comes to the running of the club ie: somebody to be newsletter editor, somebody to help with the wineshow ie: show director, it can't always be left to a few to do it all. If you think that you can be of some assistance in helping the guild let me know on my mobile 0488331001. Cheers Glen

NEWSLETTER APRIL 2023

www.fawg.org.au

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Coming Up

Did you know—There is a calendar function in our FAWG forum. This can be used for members to check or list dates of functions or events.

- **11 April - Guild Meeting, Moorooduc Hall**
- **22 April - Pyrenees Unearthed Wine & Food Festival, Avoca**
- **29 April - Tastes of the Goulburn, Seymour**
- **5-7 May - Grampians Grape Escape, Halls Gap**
- **14 May - Mornington Peninsula Winery Walk, Red Hill**

FAWG CALENDAR

Meeting Date	Club night Activity	Competition	Tasting Talk	Industry/Event	Committee Date
January 10 th 2023			Taylors 2020 Shiraz		Tues 17 th zoom 7:15pm
February 14 th 2023		Sparkling wine mini comp		Winemaking Classes at Eco Centre MtMartha Sat 18/25 th	
March 14 th 2023	Robin from Laffort to talk about yeast			Red Hill Mead show Judging 26 th Feb Public day 11 th March	
April 11 th 2023	John lee Trophy 2023 Talk on Ciders with Lisa Creswell				
May 9 th 2023	Sugars in country wines/ Tastings	Sheila Lee Liqueur & Fortified mini comp		Possible wine tour with Eltham month TBA	
June 13 th 2023	TBA				
July 11 th 2023	AGM meeting/ Homemade night				Tues 15 th zoom 7:15 start
August 8 th 2023	Cellar dwellers Unusual, Old and mulled wines			Guild Show 26 and 27 th at Balnarring Hall	
September 12 th 2023	Discussion on Show results and Tastings	Gordon Evans white wine mini comp			Tues 5 th zoom 7:15 start
October 10 th 2023	Italian Wine night start time 7pm			Possible Wine Tour with Eltham monthTBA	
November 14 th 2023	TBA	Chris Myers Red Wine Mini Comp			Tues 7 th zoom 7:15 start
December 3 rd 2023	No Tuesday meeting End of Year			Sunday 3 rd Xmas party at Balnarring Hall	

Please note that the FAWG forum also has a calendar function that can be used by members to list events, social items, etc.



FAWG WEBSITE

Each month one or two tabs of our website will be reviewed to give members an insight into what is available to them.

This month we look at the **'History'** tab.

There are 4 sub-tabs available in **History**, which are:

Short History tab - If you click on the 'History Document' link it will bring up the short history article by Gordon Evans'. This article covers the formation of the guild and early days of the Guild. David Wood has been progressively updated the document to cover recent years. There is also a link to a detailed listing of the committee members over the years on this page.

Life Members tab - lists all of our life members over the years and a brief description of their contributions to the guild.

The Briars tab - Provides a commentary on some of our members association with The Briars Vineyard (Shire/National Trust owned property) as 'volunteers' since 2008. The vineyard is maintained over the year, with the grapes being converted to wine by various groups. Some of the wine is donated back to the Briars for social and promotional purposes.

FAWG Trophies tab—lists all winners of our major awards/trophies over the years

The website will be progressively upgraded and any constructive suggestions will be incorporated into our website.



GUILD COMMUNICATIONS

WhatsApp

The FAWG committee is trialling the use of “WhatsApp” private messaging service, as a replacement for our previous ‘SamePage’ chat facility. At present the committee members and grape purchasing members have been set up as groups to test the functionality of the service.

Feedback so far has been positive.

The app operates in your smart phone, or from your computer or tablet desktop. It is possible to text messages, images and to send audio messages and hold video conferences.

Once the evaluation period is over, the membership will be advised on the outcome.

It may be that the FAWG ‘forum’ will be abandoned, in favour of WhatsApp, any feedback would be appreciated to info@fawg.org.au

What's Happening at the Briars

Quick Answer—not a lot!.

The grapes are slowly ripening, sugar levels being tested weekly. Hoping to pick grapes first or second week after the Easter Break.

At least we get to control when the grapes are

picked as we are in control of the vineyard. Hardest part is to reach consensus with all volunteers as to when the grapes are ready for harvesting!



Should the Guild put in a bulk order for these?

SENTIA WINE TESTING



The guild has a Sentia wine analyser available to members to have wine samples analysed for FreeSO₂ and Malic Acid.

The tests can be carried out prior to guild meetings, starting at 7pm. If you wish to have your wine analysed, please ensure you arrive at the meeting early and advise Kevin Murphy that you require your wine analysed.

Samples should be kept away from air (i.e. in a sealed bottle, or sample vial with minimum air space. Only a very small sample is required for the tests.

**Costs are: FreeSO₂ \$5.00 and Malic Acid \$10.00
(compare to \$25 to \$30 at a wine testing laboratory)**

“Cracker” vintage in north-east Victoria all but certain

From Winetitles media newsletter 28 March

The 2023 wine vintage is shaping up to be one out of the box with perfect climatic conditions forecast to continue for Wangaratta district's winegrape growing region.

Brown Family Wine Group is still realising just how good the vintage could be with the harvest set back 3–4 weeks due to the cooler nights this year off the back of a super wet spring, all paving the way for a slower growing window.

Joel Tilbrook, Brown Brothers Milawa winemaker, has been busy with the harvest of Prosecco, Moscato and Yarra Valley Pinot recently, with the harvest of reds set to begin in the coming days.

“We had quite a cool and wet spring and a late and much slower start to the season, but since December it has almost been perfect weather for grape growing,” he said.

“We’ve had lots of sunshine and generally the absence of rain and good ripening conditions.”

It’s music to the ears of any wine lover out there as these conditions are setting up for succulent flavours based on a premium mix of acidity and sugars.

The history of winemaking shows that some of the best vintages have come when there is a slightly longer ripening period when the flavours develop in the grapes without the sugar level accumulating too quickly.

Tilbrook said particularly with warm nights you can lose the acidity quickly and accumulate sugar really quickly and sometimes the flavour doesn’t get a chance to capture.

“The fruit is ripening up now when we’ve got cooler nights and generally cooler days as well which lends to great flavour and acid accumulation,” Tilbrook said.

It’s one of the latest harvests that Tilbrook has been a part of and this is not just for the Milawa vineyard but all of Brown Brothers’ grape suppliers across Victoria and Tasmania.

“If the season holds out with the weather like we’ve been having over the last couple of months then we’re in for a cracker,” he said.

“If the weather closes out really quickly with an early break and the climate gets really cold in autumn then that might introduce a few challenges for us.”

Yields are looking to be below the long-term average, potentially by about 10–20 per cent with some varieties, but it’s too early to give a definitive appraisal yet.

“You tend to get smaller bunches form and you can have challenges with fruit sets as we’re going through flowering,” he said.

“The berries are forming on the bunch and there can be failed berries, therefore bunches have less berries and they weigh less.

“The yields are variable based on each vineyard and we haven’t picked enough yet to get a crystallised view.”

Pizzini Wines winemaker Joel Pizzini was also thrilled with the beautiful weather and the remarkable conditions for the harvest after having undergone a “fairly challenging” growing season during the spring.

“We’re happy that we’re picking because there are plenty of others who aren’t harvesting much because of the fungal issues due to the excessive rain,” Pizzini said.

“But now all the fruit is in great conditions and we’re really set for quite a good year with pretty high quality wine coming out of the vintage across every variety.

“We don’t need to make any rushed decisions or bring the berries off the vine and we can wait an extra week to make sure they get to full maturity.”

Pizzini likened the climate to that of an Indian summer or that seen in Tuscany and the fine weather conditions are set to continue into April.

The latest temperature outlook by the Bureau of Meteorology has April daytime temperatures “very likely” or a 60 per cent to greater than 80pc chance to be above median temperatures for much of Australia.

Exceptional harvest for alpine wineries in Victoria

From Winetitles media newsletter 28 March

Wineries in Victoria's alpine region are excited about the full potential of the 2023 season, with harvest well underway.

Gapsted Chief Executive Officer Andrew Santarossa said so far the quality has been "exceptional".

"We started harvesting on March 1 which is about a week later than traditional start date but what we've taken in so far in terms of sparkling and white has been exceptional," he said.

"Yields are down but the quality is as good as you can get so we're excited about the potential of harvest.

"The recent rain event last week brought everything to a standstill but we're about to transition into the reds and we're still very hopeful it will be a strong vintage.

"As of Friday last week we'd harvested approximately 50 per cent of the grape intake which is about 1300 tonnes.

"If the reasonably good weather continues we're hopeful that by the end of April or the first week of May we'll have all the reds in and they'll be as high quality as what the white has been.

"

In terms of quantity we're probably 25 per cent down; forecasting to take in three and a half thousand based on where we're sitting at the moment, but the flip side is the quality is there and we're feeling very positive."

Michelini Wines director Dino Michelini said the 2023 season has been "strenuous and costly" but has yielded some quality grapes.

"We've had to do a lot in trying to maintain the grapes to keep them healthy and to make sure we got a crop for this 2023 vintage, with harvest started 10 days later than last year," he said.

"The wet weather was difficult but fortunately from January onwards we had a dry spell and the quality is exceptional this year for Michelini Wines.

"Providing we don't get a lot of rain for our red in the coming weeks, they should be absolutely magnificent.

"Crop yields are average for us, we started picking sparkling in the first week of March and just finished all our whites and there'll probably be two to three weeks before we start on reds.

"So far we've picked around 300 tonnes with 200 to go.

"We're looking forward to having magnificent wines for La Fiera."



PERFECT QUALITY: Gapsted chief executive officer Andrew Santarossa is positive the 2023 harvest will be exceptional. PHOTO: Brodie Everist





Honey, someone shrank the bottles

You've got to love a rebel. With all the talk across the world about lower-alcohol and no-alcohol this and that, yoga and wellness and stuff, what does [VB](#) do? It brings out a new product with *more* alcohol in it – [VX](#), which comes in 250ml bottles with six percent alcohol by volume compared to 4.9 percent for the 'old' stuff. Brand director Sarah Wilcox tells The Shout: "Australians are increasingly moderating their alcohol consumption – with almost 30 percent of Carlton & United Breweries' beer sales now zero, low and mid-strength beers. However, higher-alcohol beers are increasingly popular in the craft segment, and we think there's a market among traditional beer lovers who also want bolder and more intense flavours. It's all about choice." What about that 30 percent figure! Wow, it's changing rapidly. Any rebels in wine? Email info@madiganmedia.com.au. By the way, tiny little 250ml bottles! They're going the way of Liquid Paper. Has anyone ever brought out a super-premium wine available *only* in half bottles?

Members' Contributions

By: Thomas J. Payette,
Winemaking Consultant

"The winemaker is a warrior. He has to fight the vagaries of nature, storms, insects, disease, rot, hail and bad luck. This is why every bottle is worthy of respect and every glass must be drunk with the honor it deserves. That soil, that man, that fight, are embodied [...]"

From David Hart



Characterising yeast strains with links to beverages produced by Australia's Indigenous peoples

From AWRI eNews March 2023



Over the course of human history and in societies across the world, fermented beverages have held both economic and cultural importance. In Australia, *way-a-linah*, an alcoholic beverage produced from the fermented sap of *Eucalyptus gunnii*, and *tuba*, a fermented drink made from the syrup of *Cocos nucifera* fructifying bud, are two of several fermented beverages produced by Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

AWRI researchers and collaborators from the University of Adelaide and ANU isolated yeast strains from two locations in Australia – the Central Plateau in Tasmania and Erub Island in the Torres Strait. Strains were identified using molecular methods and then eight isolates were evaluated for their volatile profile during the fermentation of wort, apple juice and grape must, with diverse volatile profiles observed in the beverages produced. This work was recently published in the journal *Food Microbiology* and presented by Dr Cristian Varela at the Asia Pacific Section Convention of the Institute of Brewing and Distilling in Adelaide, where attendees also had the chance to taste some of the beers made with these isolates.

Australian wine on show at world's biggest trade fair

From WineTitles Media March 2023

Australian wine had its largest-ever stand at ProWein in Germany from 19 to 21 March, featuring 61 producers, six regional booths, an Australian Wine Bar and a suite of master classes.



The three-day event held in Düsseldorf is the world's biggest trade fair for the wine and spirits industry.

The fair attracted 49,000 trade guests from 141 countries – including major buyers from Europe, the United Kingdom (UK), the United States of America (US), Canada and Asia.

Key highlights from this year's Australian wine stand included:

- **61 exhibiting wineries** represented by 147 winemakers, winery owners and winery principals (see the website below for a full list of exhibitors)
- **6 regional booths** – South Australia, Riverland, Victoria, Yarra Valley, New South Wales and Margaret River, which were represented by regional heads including Lyndall Rowe (Executive Officer, Riverland Wine), Stephanie Duboudin (Chief Executive Officer, Wine Victoria), Caroline Evans (Chief Executive Officer, Wine Yarra Valley) and Amanda Whiteland (Chief Executive Officer, Margaret River Wine Association)

- **more than 700 wines from 47 regions** across Australia
- **46 varieties**, from the classics like Chardonnay, Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon to alternatives such as Assyrtiko, Barbera, Saperavi, Vermentino and Zibibbo
- **11 master classes** attended by approximately 500 trade guests and covering topics such as Great Southern Syrah, South Australia's Mediterranean whites, the

Riverland's diverse and experimental wines, Clare Valley Riesling, Margaret River Cabernet Sauvignon, and

- **A special visit from Australian pop icon Kylie Minogue**, who took time out of her busy schedule promoting her wines to visit the stand on Monday 20 March.

Wine Australia Chief Executive Officer Dr Martin Cole said it was great to see Australian wine exhibitors back at ProWein generating so much excitement for the category.

"This year's stand was double the size of previous years with 200 brands hailing from 47 regions across Australia. And the meeting space was buzzing as producers juggled a steady stream of appointments with buyers from around the world, said Dr Cole.

"We also had a fantastic partnership with the states and regions, which saw six regional booths on the stand for the first time celebrating their unique differences and highlighting the quality and diversity from the length and breadth of our continent of wine."

Dave's Trip to Italy:

Barolo, Langhe, Piemonte, Italy.

Italy and Italians have a love of food and wine, eating and drinking is buried within their culture, and they do both very well. Any part of Italy is just as rewarding. But on this occasion my mate Ray and I decided on much more than a whim we would at the end of our ski trip in Northwest Italy, immerse ourselves in that culture to experience the warmth and hospitality of a famous area called Barolo, South of Turin. He like I have a passion for reds of all kinds and the more we discovered about Barolo the keener we were to visit this world-famous wine growing region in Piemonte. We put aside 6 days and suitable accommodation in Monforte d'Alba for this experience. Alan, our other skiing partner of the last three weeks is dropped off at a nearby railway station near Milan and Ray and I commence our wine tour journey.



Barolo is a red wine produced in the Piedmont region of Italy. The area is tiny, only 5.6 square kilometres and is in the north-western portion of Piemonte an area called Langhe. The Langhe area has complex terroir. The structure and composition of sandstone or limestone building wines of different characteristics. The lighter alluvial sand tends towards wines with more elegance and aromatics. The area known as Barolo is eleven kilometres southwest of the city of Alba. A total of 11 communes or villages make up the wine producing region called Barolo. The five most prominent ones are Barolo, La Morra, Castiglione Falletto, Serralunga d'Alba, and Monforte d'Alba.

The wines are made from Nebbiolo a small, thin skinned red grape varietal generally high in acid and tannins. In Piedmont, Nebbiolo is one of the first varietals to undergo budbreak and last to be picked, with harvest generally taking place in late October. Barolo wines must be solely composed of Nebbiolo, no exceptions. It is illegal to irrigate the vines as water is scarce. We arrived after one of the driest Winters on record. The vineyard owners were all wishing, hoping, waiting for that blanket of snow to supply slow released moisture to the soil. Indeed, on our second last day their wish is granted as 10 centimetres of snow blanketed all the higher altitude vineyards with fine powder.

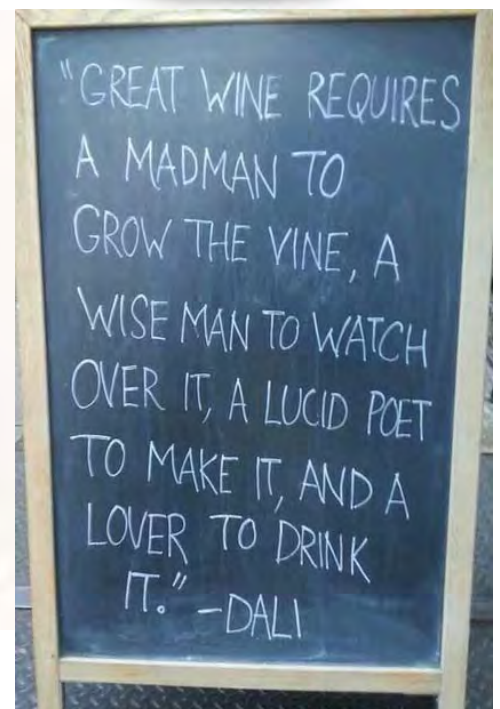
Barolo wines are rich and full-bodied, with a strong presence of acidity and strong tannin. Barolos are often compared to the great Pinot Noirs of Burgundy, due to their light brick-garnet pigments and bright acidity. Rose flower, tar, and dried herbs are aromas frequently associated with Barolo



wines. According to DOCG regulations, the wines must be aged for at least two years in oak and one year in bottle, with five years of age (three in oak) required for Riserva labels, wines must be 13% alcohol minimum, but are often higher. We taste four Barolo's with Pasquale in a Wine Bar near our apartment, all four come from separate vineyards and are all different in style and complexity. Ranging in price from 42 Euro to 47 Euro only. Pasquale takes us on a wine journey explaining each Barolo and where they come from within their respective zones and the complexity of such things as the terroir, elevation, and style of the wine makers on the finished wine. Three wines are made with Nebbiolo, Nebbiolo, Barbaresco and Barolo. Barolo is the king and Barbaresco the prince of wines. Barolo can now only be produced and made within a defined area to be called a Barolo wine. So the wines are expensive and can cost as much as \$150 a bottle in Melbourne, but my advice is stick it on your bucket list and go there, it's cheaper.

Dave Chambers

FUNNIES PAGE



He said his non-alcoholic wine was delicious;

I said he had no proof.

I can't wait for the day when I can drink wine with my kids instead of because of them.

What do you call a redneck that is a wine connoisseur?

2 Buck Chuck.



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