



June 2024

www.fawg.org.au

What's on at this months FAWG Meeting:

For our June meeting we have Tim Elphick coming in to give a presentation on his wines and tell us about his journey in the industry. Stilvi Wines is producing innovative, minimal intervention drops with a cross-generational connection. Tim and his daughter Kalypso are excited to show their wares to us.



Also, we have the Gordon Evans White Wine mini competition to be judged, quite a busy and interesting night so don't miss out, like I will on account I am away overseas for a break.

Cheers for now, Glen!

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Coming Up

Friday 7th- Monday 10th June
Winter Wine Weekend includes a festival at the Red Hill Showgrounds as well as truffle dinners and cassoulet lunches. from \$80
morningtonpeninsulawine.com.au/

Saturday 8th-Sunday 9th June
King Valley's "Fit for a King" weekend including Sangiovese Celebration at Pizzini.
www.pizzini.com.au/blogs/events/june-wffk-long-weekend-2024

Sunday 9th June noon-?
Wine Makers Lunch and quiz.
175 Cranbourne Road Frankston.
Bring a plate and drink to share.
rsvp to daveskiss@gmail.com

Sunday 9th June 10am-3pm
Loch Food and Wine Festival \$20
www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1171073

53rd Frankston and South-Eastern Winemaking Competition by FAWG

Friday 2nd August- Closing date for entries
Friday 9th August- Labels to entrants
Monday 16th August- contact wine show director if labels not received -0488331001
Friday 23rd August- final delivery for entries
Friday 30th August- wine show judging

Saturday 31st August 10:30am-2:30pm
FAWG Wine Show Public Tasting Day
Balnarring Community Hall, 3035 Frankston-
Flinders Road Balnarring \$15.00

CORDON CORNER

By Mike Payne

June is here and for us vine growers, which means it's time to get outside in the fresh air and start pruning once again.

By now the leaves should have fallen, translocation has all but ceased and it's a good opportunity to conduct a bit of housework and cleaning up before pruning commences. I generally clean up the excess weed growth followed by a



herbicide application and then run the flail mower through the rows to clean up. A walk through the vineyard is also a good idea to check for any maintenance issues and to tag and record any vines that may need additional attention. Make a basic pruning plan and don't be afraid to include a little bit of experimentation or to try something a little different to the norm.

Well, that's it for the Cordon Corner segment for the winter season and hopefully we will be back in the Spring to do it all again.

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 early and advise Kevin Murphy that you require your wine analysed.

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

Costs are: Members - Free SO₂ \$6.00 and Malic Acid \$15.00 Non-members - \$10 and \$20
FAWG Calendar

FAWG Calendar

Meeting Date	Club night Activity	Competition	Tasting Talk	Industry/Event	Committee Date
June 11 th 2024		Gordon Evans white wine mini comp	Presentation of Stilvi Wines	Winters winemakers Lunch Sunday 9th June rsvp daveskiss@gmail.com	Tues 4th Zoom 7pm
July 9 th 2024	AGM meeting Homemade night				Tues 2nd zoom 7pm
August 13 th 2024	Cellar dwellers Unusual, Old and mulled wines		Presentation by Tanya from Hanna instruments	2024 Guild Show at Balnarring Hall Friday 30 th Judging Sat 31 st public day	Tues 6 th Zoom 7pm
Sept 10th	FAWG Show wrap up, trophy presentation and Gold Medal Tasting		The good, the bad and the ugly from our Show	Spring Winemakers Lunch	Tues 3 rd Zoom 7pm
Oct 8th	Spanish Night Food & Wine				Tues 1 st Zoom 7pm

Social outing to Nazaaray Winery

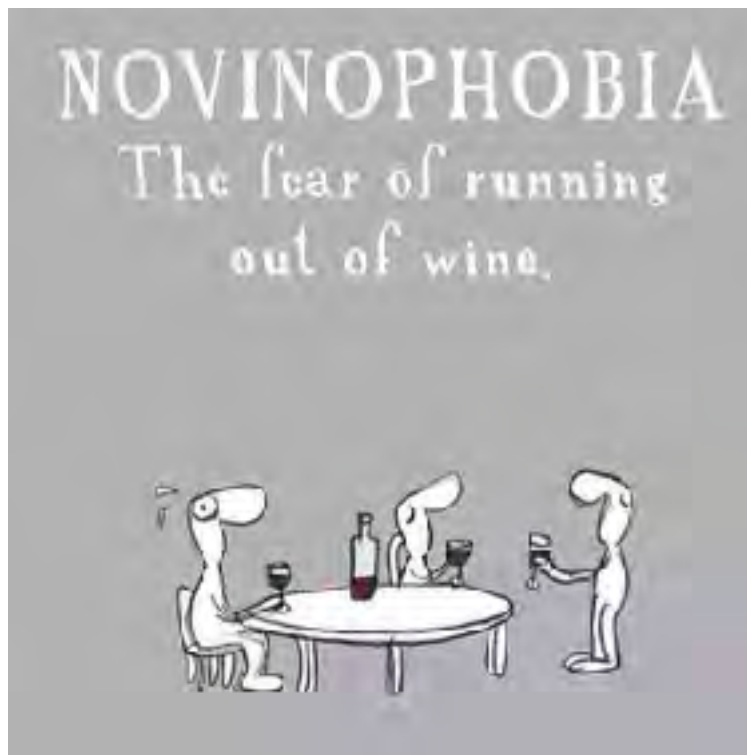
The team at Nazaaray welcomed our group from Frankston and Eltham Guilds with great food, delicious wines and lively conversation at their beautiful Mornington Peninsula Vineyard and Cellar Door.

Hearing about how the owner, Paramdeep Ghuman's twin passions of tiger conservation and winemaking have come together in Australia was inspiring. Consulting winemaker Justin Purser's knowledgeable presentation was extended with him joining us for a long chat.

I hope everyone enjoyed it as much as I did-Jodi



Funnies



Letters From the Permafrost

www.mammothwines.com.au M: 0459 547 273

I first became intrigued by the concept of whole bunch pinot noir making when I read Remington Norman's book "The Great Domaines of Burgundy" in the early nineties. In Norman's book he referred to 'stalk inclusion' by certain Burgundian producers rather than the term whole bunches. This difference in description and emphasis on the term 'stalk' rather than 'bunch' meant that my first experimental foray into this style in 2000 was a complete disaster. I destemmed a batch of Hunter Valley Shiraz and then added back a percentage of stalks. The resultant wine was ...'stalky'! It scared me back into conformity. Then my sister-in-law returned enlightened from a vintage with whole bunch exponent Jean-Pierre de Smet at Domaine de l'Arlot in 2002 and rekindled my desire to pursue this style of winemaking.

By this time, I had learned more about Burgundian whole bunch winemaking thanks to friends and associates returning from both Domaine de l'Arlot and Domaine Dujac. These were two quite rare Burgundian producers who were both open and receptive to New World helpers for vintage. On top of that they were ardent whole bunch producers who were happy to spread the word of whole bunch. Jean-Pierre de Smet was the winemaker at de l'Arlot who himself had been a protegee of Jacques Seysses of Domaine Dujac. Seysses was deeply influenced by his friend Aubert de Villaine of Domaine de la Romanée-Conti, arguably the most famous practitioner of whole bunch pinot noir making.

I tried using whole bunches again whilst at Moorilla Estate in Tasmania in 2004 and discovered the enormous complexity that could be gained by using whole bunches. However, my light bulb / turning point moment came during my first vintage at Bannockburn in Geelong in 2006.

In my first vintage at Bannockburn, I separated the oldest pinot noir block called Olive Tree Hill into four components – 0% whole bunch; 25% whole bunch; 50% whole bunch and 100% whole bunch. I kept them separate for a full 2 years in wood. I then had to decide which I preferred. The batch with no whole bunches looked muscular, robust and without charm. The 25% was better but still lacked finesse. The wine that stood out in the blind line-up was the 50% wine. It had perfume, power, and poise. If I had to score the wines then the 50% would have won on points...BUT... the wine that was the most thought provoking, the most difficult to define, and the most enigmatic and mercurial was the 100% whole bunch batch. I had to keep going back to the glass – it was beyond points – it was an entire philosophy sitting in the glass! It was totally its own unique beast.

So, just what is whole bunch?

Well, the answer is exactly that – the entire (whole) bunch of grapes are placed in a fermenter. The de-stemmer and crushing equipment are not used at all. Of course, this method necessitates picking by hand rather than machine and demands the fruit to be in perfect condition. The stem is necessary to keep the berry entirely intact. This means that little or no juice is liberated from the berry and available to wild yeast to begin fermentation. This allows an enzymatic process to begin inside the berry called 'carbonic maceration'.

In general, carbonic maceration wines have more perfume, more glycerol (which contributes a more rounded mouthfeel) less colour and often, less alcohol, due to losing some sugar to enzyme activity rather than yeasts. Aromas of five-spice, cinnamon, rose and one of my favourites – SOS cough lollies (for those that remember them) are evident in carbonic wines. There can also be a Campari like character as well.

It is important to understand that when a winemaker declares that their pinot noir (or any other variety) is 'whole bunch' it only means that the de-stemmer / crusher has been removed from the process. There remains a myriad of directions that the winemaker may take that will have a



significant impact on the resultant wine and perceived style. There are many hazards with this winemaking, and it is not for the faint of heart. To succeed with this style of winemaking you must walk the tight rope between the desirable carbonic aromas that come after a week and the unpleasant green, stalky stem aromas that can slowly build as the increasing alcohol levels increase extraction. When the wine Gods abandon you completely, you can also find yourself at the mercy of undesirable microbial activity leading to acetic acid production. When it goes wrong, it can go very wrong and often, there is no escape.

My experience

My 2011 vintage at Chateau De La Tour in Clos Vougeot built on my understanding from the Domaine de L'Arlot, Domaine Dujac and early Bannockburn wines. This style used either remontage (pumping over) or pigéage (getting into the vat with your feet) to wet the cap, break berries and submerge the surface cap. I did this process over many years gradually reducing the inputs or 'events' as I call them to about four pigéage 'events' over 3 weeks. I learned that the process of pigéage was not so much to break up and submerge all the cap but to break bunches sporadically and release sugar to hungry yeasts. This allowed for a potentially longer ferment and increased glycerol production which results in a rounder, fuller mouthfeel.



In my last year or two at Bannockburn and beginning with my 2015 Mammoth 'Untouched' Pinot Noir I stopped doing any pigéage or remontage entirely. This process was nicknamed by colleagues as 'Magic Mikey' whereby the whole bunches were left in tank for 3 weeks without any winemaker input at all! It is solely up to wild yeasts, enzymes, and the fruit itself to express the season. I watch over vigilantly and am ready to intercede if necessary but I rarely, if ever, need to. Knowing 'how' to do nothing is the art. To me, there is a purity in this approach. I am in the background, and nothing is forced or contrived. It is as simple as a vat full of bunches and a winemaker – the way it has been since ancient times. It is sustainable. No three phase electric sockets driving whirring de-stemmers and rolling crushers. No winemaking decisions about pumping over and plunging the cap. It is a remarkably peaceful and poetic process. It is also as free as one can be of the 'ego' and hype of winemaking. I like this approach and it is my own contribution to an evolving style - it comes from decades of personal experience and is not following anyone. This is important to me.

The Evolution of 'Magic Mikey'

I also began applying the whole bunch fermentation style to Sauvignon Blanc in 2008 – naming the process 'Carbo-Blanc'. Conversely, this winemaking applied to whites, creates structure, complexity, texture, new flavours, and a wild dynamism that suits a 'brave' new world rather than a restrained old-world classicism. My 'Carbo-Blanc' process, and indeed the name itself, is now copied and adopted by others. I will leave discussions on white whole bunch fermentation to another day.

Over the last 20 years or so I have met and talked to other practitioners of whole bunch winemaking. Most, if not all, pursue this style because they believe it is the right thing to do. By this I mean they deliberately ignore fashion, points, scores, certain critics and do it, not because of what the market machinery may desire, but because they believe it is the way it should be done. A common language is used to describe the direction: classical, cerebral, long lived and restrained. It is about walking in the opposite direction of the extraction and muscularity of the fashionable 'impact style' and creating a pure and true expression without regard to the business of the endeavour.

For me, there is no debate that when done well, whole bunch wines are more complex, more profound, longer lived and a purer expression of a place.

My new release, the Mammoth 2022 Variations Pinot Noir, is a triumphant example of what I consider to be 'whole bunch' and a process I have evolved over many years. It is Mammoth's whole bunch style! It is floral, powerful and, importantly, delicious.
Michael



Shared by Dave Chambers

Can I make a sulfite-free wine? James Pell — Rochester, New York asks Wine Wizard,

I am a beginning winemaker. I have yet to make my first batch, but I just got a kit that contains Pinot Noir juice. I want to make a sulfite-free wine because I am allergic to sulfites. How is this done and what should I be aware of?

Wine Wizard replies: It is impossible to make a sulfite-free wine, because wine yeast produce sulfur dioxide (SO₂) during the fermentation process. Wines with no added sulfite contain from 6 to 40 ppm of sulfite, according to most experts. Furthermore, it's likely that the concentrate in your Pinot kit already got a healthy dose of sulfur dioxide at the processing plant.

Before you toss out your kit, check with your physician to make sure that you really are allergic to sulfites. Only a small percentage of the population (approximately 0.01%) is truly allergic to sulfites. These people lack the digestive enzyme sulfite oxidase and therefore can't metabolize sulfites. This small percentage of the population is also asthmatic, so many doctors test their patients for sulfite allergies when a diagnosis of asthma is made. These individuals typically know they're allergic from childhood and so know to avoid all foods and beverages that contain sulfites including, but not limited to, lunchmeats, processed salami, processed fruit juices, packaged seafood and dried fruits, as well as wine. Sulfur dioxide gets a bad rap because of the government warning label plastered on wine bottles that is only targeted to this select group of consumers. Furthermore, many people blame sulfites for the group of symptoms commonly called the "wine headache." These symptoms are often simply caused by the alcohol in the product. There has been some speculation in the medical community that histamines — a naturally occurring

substance found in foods like canned tuna and wine — are a possible culprit of this “red wine malaise,” but there has been no conclusive evidence so far. Ironically, many consumers drink white wine, thinking red wines have more sulfites, when actually white wines typically do. If you want to lessen the amount of sulfites you use in your wine, keep the following things in mind. Sulfur dioxide is used for two reasons: its anti-microbial ability and its antioxidant capacity. Therefore, if you want to use less of it, minimize the amount of microbes and oxygen that contact your wine in every stage of its life. Cleaning and sanitizing effectively is one of the easiest ways to knock down populations of spoilage bugs. Make sure your incoming fruit, juice or concentrate is clean and free of visible mold or bacterial colonies before inoculation. Use a strongly-fermenting commercial yeast for your primary fermentation in order to out-compete spoilage organisms in the first few weeks of a wine’s life. Make sure your wines are fermented to dryness so there is no residual sugar left as a carbon source for spoilage bacteria. Gas your empty containers with carbon dioxide during transfers and rackings so that there is minimal contact with oxygen.

Natural wine components that inhibit organisms are alcohol and acid. High pH (low acid) wines are more prone to microbial attack, so keeping the pH lower than 3.5 will help retard infection. The lower the pH, the more unhappy most sorts of spoilage bacteria will be. Similarly, the higher the alcohol, the more unhappy the organisms. Alcohol levels over 14% can help to keep bugs at bay.

At the end of the day, using sulfites in winemaking is usually not a health issue. Judicious use of sulfite can significantly increase the quality of your wine. International regulatory boards usually set legal levels at around 350 ppm total sulfur dioxide and most commercial wines are bottled with totals between 50-100 ppm. A little bit of SO₂, used wisely, goes a long way and won’t hurt 9,999 out of 10,000 of us.

Shared by David Hart

Winemaker Update - more from Nathan Ueda in Japan

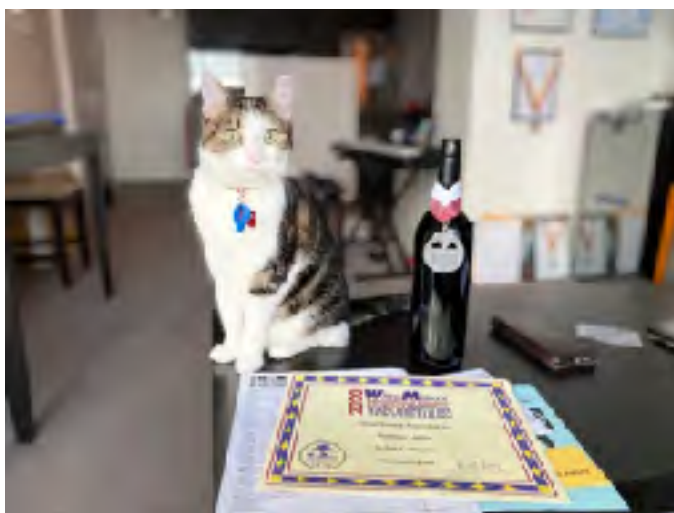
By Dave Chambers

Dave: Tell me about yourself for people who don’t know you.

Nathan: I spent eight years in Melbourne, from 2013 to 2021, representing my Japanese consumer packaging company in Australia. In 2017, when I was 33, I had a chance to visit the FAWG Wine Show and fell in love with the kind and gentle wines made by amateur winemakers. I realized the beauty of artisan and enrolled in their classes in 2018. I produced various wines annually, starting with Heathcote Shiraz and later exploring 2020 organic Cabernet Sauvignon, 2021 Skin Contact Gisborne Chardonnay, and 2021 carbonic macerated Shiraz. My efforts were recognized with 9 medals and the 2021 FAWG Novice Winemaker Trophy. David Hart kindly shared his knowledge and supported me tremendously.

Dave: What precipitated your leaving Australia to go back to Japan?

Nathan: Despite my love for Melbourne's natural beauty, my time was very tough. Legal battles with our Australian subsidiary, a divorce in 2019, and the hardships of the COVID-19 lockdown made my life too difficult. Ultimately, in 2021, I decided to close our Australian office and return to Japan with my Australian daughter (the cute kitten that I adopted from RSPCA) and started a new journey.



Dave: You recently remarried. Where did you meet your new wife?

Nathan: Since I like to stay fit, I joined a running club in 2022. I noticed there was a very cute girl in my running team, but because I am shy, I couldn't talk to her. I made sure to attend the weekly running meets, rain or shine, to see her and try to know her more. After a few months, I noticed she only showed up when the weather was good. Luckily, she reached out to me on Facebook, and we started going out. We got married in February 2024. I am hoping to visit Melbourne with her someday to show her how wonderful the city is.

Dave: Are you planning to make wine in Japan?

Nathan: Possibly. I brought all of my winemaking equipment back to Japan. Since apartments in Japan are tiny, my wife complains that if I have no use, I should get rid of them. Amateur winemaking is prohibited in Japan, so if I can source good Japanese indigenous grapes such as Koshu or MBA, I will make grape juice. However, I must be cautious so they don't ferment!!

Dave: Tell us about your new job, and what a typical day may be.

Nathan: From January 2024, I've been working for a boutique but market-leading barrel-distributing company based in Japan. Our mission is to source top-notch new and used Western barrels for Japanese wineries and whisky distilleries. For wineries, we import new French barrels. For whisky distilleries, we source used Bourbon, Cognac, Sherry, and Wine barrels. I have visited the United States (Kentucky and Napa Valley) and France (Bordeaux, Cognac, and Bourne) and will visit Spain (Jerez). If you are interested in alcohol, travel, and culture, this would be a perfect job. Additionally, my income has increased by more than 50%.



Dave: That sounds interesting. How did you land this job?

Nathan: My experience in FAWG has led me. In November 2021, a month before I moved back to Japan, I attended the Heathcote Wine Show Dinner. The gala was for winemakers and suppliers, but I was able to smuggle in because my senior friend who, for me, is an Australian father, asked the host of the show if I could attend. At our round dining table, there was a kind lady who was sitting next to me. I told her that I was thinking about distributing Heathcote wine in Japan. She was a barrel merchant and suggested contacting her Japanese counterpart, Masami, for advice. A year after I went back to Japan, in January 2023, I met Masami to seek his advice. He is the pioneer of the barrel business in Japan and was looking for a successor. He was impressed with my overseas experience and winemaking background and offered me a job. All the experiences in Melbourne have paid off and connected the dots. So I want to show appreciation for FAWG.

Dave: Share with us some interesting things about the barrel.

Nathan: Barrels are so interesting. For example, wine barrels are made from staves that have been seasoned (or air-dried) outside for two to five years. Seasoning is the process of removing unwanted flavors and excessive tannins from stave with the usage of sun, rain, and natural microbes. I visited a few stave yards and every yard is different. It seems like each yard has its own terroir, like a vineyard. Another interesting thing I learned is about "sherry casked matured" whisky. You would think that these whiskies were matured in used sherry barrels which are taken

from the Solera system. But in reality, Spanish bodegas (or wineries) fill new sherry into new oak barrels and after one to two years sherries are emptied and exported as "sherry seasoned barrels". This is due to the whisky industry's demand surpassing the supply of barrels by bodegas. These sherry are never consumed as sherry. It will turn into sherry brandy or vinegar.

Dave: Describe how life is different in Japan compared to life here on the Mornington Peninsula

Nathan: Japan is a monoethnic country, with only 2% of the population born overseas, compared to Australia, where 30% of the population is born overseas. Therefore, Japan has developed by adopting and digesting foreign cultures in their way. As you walk across Tokyo, despite each area being only a few kilometers apart, you'll notice that the culture—especially people's appearance, outfits, and even the music, food, and architecture—gradually changes like a rainbow. I must also mention about Tokyo's infamous rush hour train which turns commuters into cans of sardines.

Dave: Are you coming back to Australia, perhaps to set up a branch of the company here?

Nathan: We will not set up a branch or office, but I am considering to import used barrels from Australia. While our Japanese clients prefer French-used wine barrels, importing Penfolds barrels from Australia is a good way to reduce the multiple risks. Apart from business considerations, I have a personal interest in living in England. I lived in the United States (Dallas, Texas) and Australia for 8 years in each country. To live in England, the roots of these two countries are something I aspire to do.

Dave: Do you miss anything from your time in Australia?

Nathan: Nature and winery! I used to walk or run at the Botanic Gardens in South Yarra and cycle at the Yarra Boulevard and Grampians National Park. I really miss the nature. Another thing I miss is Australian wineries. Japanese wineries are very different—not picturesque and some even store their red wines in the fridge and serve them in small plastic tasting cups! Yikes!

Dave: Last question if members of the FAWG wanted to go to Japan for their first visit. What would you suggest?

Nathan: The best season is between March to May or October to December. Try to avoid the hot and humid summer (June to September). Now is the best time to visit because AUD has been strongest against JPY in the last fifteen years (1AUD = 100JPY). Additionally, Japan's inflation has been slow since 1990's, which makes Japan the most economical developed country to visit. However, famous sightseeing spots are packed with foreign tourists, so I suggest going to the countryside. For example, Kamakura, 90 minutes away from Tokyo, was Japan's ancient capital in the 12th century and Enkakuji Zen Temple, where my ancestors are resting is very quiet and calm. I am more than happy to show you around our beautiful country. Please contact me, even if you don't know me when you visit Tokyo. (nathan.ueda@gmail.com)

Wine Enthusiast Magazines's Best Australian Wines drinking now list:

[https://www.wineenthusiast.com/ratings/wine-ratings/best-australian-wines/?utm_source=dotmailer&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=3375585_WEM 05/18 Weekend Reads&utm_content=best-australian-wines&bxid=616316961&dm_i=219S,20CM9,A6XT7L,77GHD,1](https://www.wineenthusiast.com/ratings/wine-ratings/best-australian-wines/?utm_source=dotmailer&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=3375585_WEM%2005/18%20Weekend%20Reads&utm_content=best-australian-wines&bxid=616316961&dm_i=219S,20CM9,A6XT7L,77GHD,1)

Shared by Dave Chalmers

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