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**The Guild encourages the responsible consumption of alcohol**

The Guild meets on the last Friday of each month (except December)  
at the Eltham Living & Learning Centre at 7.45 pm  
**Next meeting: 29 April 2011**

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## Next Meeting – 29 April

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7:45 pm start at the Eltham Living & Learning Centre 739 Main Rd Eltham.

### Agenda:

- Welcome, apologies, guests.
- WOTY - tasting of five member grape wines in addition to tastings of country wines within the major presentation.
- Major Presentation: Country Wine Making - Tales of success and woe. Presenters 2010 Joe Illian Trophy winners for best wine made from vegetables, herbs, flowers or grains, Mario and Jeanne Anders. This session will also include a discussion on tips and tricks in making top country wines. This will be a great member interactive session, including tastings of medal wining country wines.

Guests checking out joining the Guild are welcome as always.

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## President's Press

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*Spencer Field*

### Membership fees to rise from July

The Guild's Management Committee has agreed to increase annual subscription starting with the 2010/11 financial year to \$30 single / \$35 family. Whilst this is a \$10 increase, it is the first increase in subscriptions in over 12 years. The decision to increase annual membership was made in light of:

- Much greater value is being delivered to members than ever, taking in the additional features of the Guild, including sophisticated web information, fruit sourcing assistance, enhanced meeting presentations, annual wine and craft weekenders, and more sophisticated activities (eg. workshops) available in the Wine Show.
- Increased costs arising from greater number of meetings needed for organisers to plan and implement activities; increased Show costs - especially the current venue costs.
- Other equivalent community groups having higher subscriptions (eg woodworkers - \$60 annually).

There is little doubt in my mind, given my experience as a member for 12 years, that the average skill levels of members has been very substantially enhanced through the activities offered by the Guild. The Guild offers benefits to members worth much more than the costs of membership.

Please read below the interview of Kevin Furness to see a good example of the value that the Guild can have on aspiring members.

### Guild's Slovenian Night at Slovenian Club

The 2011 International Night will be held for Guild members, spouses, partners and friends on 24 June (in place of a normal meeting) at the Slovenian Club in Research. **Darko Postruzin** and **Trevor Sleep** are the organisers for this event and have negotiated a special deal:

- \$25/head for a several course Slovenian meal catered by the Club;
- BYO wine.

This is a change in format from what has been done in the past. The last International Night was held 3 years ago with members supplying home cooked food and the Guild supplying the wine.  
Stay tuned for further details of this event.

## Quality red grapes still available locally!!

For anyone chasing local sources of good quality red grapes (Sangiovese, Pinot), here are two opportunities, but you need to move fast:

Member **Gary Trist** (tel 03 9710 1605 / 0425 737 839 at St Andrews)  
[Gary.trist@rfsworld.com](mailto:Gary.trist@rfsworld.com) has about 500 kg of Sangiovese as follows:

11.7 Be on Sat 9 April

Good seed ripeness and tannins

Fruit is still in great condition.

Anticipated harvest date 25 - 26 April (weather permitting)

Well known commercial winemaker **Mike Jansz**, from **Naked Range Wines** in Rifle Range Rd Smiths Gully, has about half a tonne of good quality pinot noir grapes available and ready to be picked soon. Mike can be contacted by ringing 9710 1575 or by email [je@nakedrangewines.com](mailto:je@nakedrangewines.com).

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## New Store for Home Make it:

**Steven Lamberto**, Manager of the Home Make It food and wine making specialist shop in Clayton, has announced the opening of a second store at 265 Spring Street Reservoir (tel 9460 2777 / [www.homemakeit.com.au](http://www.homemakeit.com.au).) For opening specials you will need to visit the store. Home Make It is not a sponsor of the Guild's Annual Show. However, **Australian and New Zealand Winemakers**, which trades from the same business as Home Make It, is.

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## Member innovations in winemaking

*Spencer Field*

Here are a couple from **Stan Gower** whom we have heard from several times in the past on his innovative ways.



### Efficient use of a fridge for must/wine storage - STAN GOWER

I bought a good, large second-hand fridge (without freezer compartment) to use for white wine making.

With all of the shelving removed from the door, there is a lot of space, as shown here - a potential to hold 129 ltrs: 4x30 ltr beer fermenters plus 2 one-gallon jugs. I can actually put a 1 gallon glass demijohn behind each of the two forward 30 ltr fermenters, and another 1 gallon glass demijohn in front of the two rearward fermenters. I would need to tie the forward 1 gallon demijohns with cord to the larger fermenter behind it, but it certainly will fit fine. So the fridge has much more capacity than I am using this time.

I had to add a support to the lower and higher shelves, otherwise they just collapsed. Because of the lower shelf support I can only get in one of the two 10 ltr crispers. An empty one is at the bottom left. It will be replaced by a full one.

The strange red glow at top left is the fridge light. The cloth at the bottom of one fermenter is just to protect it from a sharp knock, as the plastic is getting brittle.

So at least now I can control the temperature during fermentation. I am using Anchor Vin 13 yeast that can be brought down to 10°C.

### **REVISED PROCESS to get more juice - STAN GOWER.**



This year I decided to re-crush Riesling grapes a second time. I had noticed sometime after pressing that the pulp (skins) deposited in the wheelbarrow seemed to be floating in juice.



I broke up the pressed blocks of grapes and allowed them to settle overnight, then re-pressed them as shown in the photo above.



From each re-press of a  $\frac{3}{4}$  bucket full, I was getting 3 ltrs +.

I then noticed that even the re-pressed grapes in the barrow were *still* seeping juice. So I saved them, loosened them up, and re-pressed the already

re-pressed skins again the next day. I got about 3ltrs + *again*!!

Karen Coulston said that what I did is similar, in effect, to her bag press, which rotates the grapes between each inflation.

I also have to resolve the question of leaving the juice on the skins for so long, even though PMS was added to the grapes at crush. Perhaps they don't have to be left for so long before re-pressing.

**Overall assessment:** By the re-pressing method, I have got about 23 litres of juice *more* from 198 kg of grapes than I would have in the past. And I did not re-press a second time for most of this lot, so there must have been potentially 10 litres more at least. *That's a lot of extra juice!*

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## **Press Cuttings interviews Kevin Furness**

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**Kevin Furness (wife Jenny),** an active and contributing member for over 10 years, has retired from his commercial wine making venture - **Buskers**. He has sold most of his wine equipment - advertised in the March edition of Press Cuttings. Members should note there

are some remaining demijohns (54ltr x 4, 33ltr x 2, 25ltr x 1, 20ltr x 2, 15ltr x 2 and 10ltr x 2, available for 50% of the retail price of new ones. He also has two plastic fermenting vats – 700 and 500 ltr).

**IF YOU READ THE FOLLOWING INTERVIEW, YOU WILL REALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT THE GUILD IS REALLY ABOUT: LEARNING, SHARING, ENJOYING, HUMOUR AND LOTS OF CAMARADERIE!! AND BE SURE TO READ KEVIN'S TIPS FOR ASPIRING WINEMAKERS.**

**Interview between Press Cuttings (PC) and Kevin Furness.**

*PC. What got you started into winemaking?*

**KF.** I was ripe for the picking when I bumped into John Gaffney at a BYO 25th Wedding Anniversary party, of relatives of theirs who are close friends of ours. I had by this time in early 2000 had more than just a passing interest in wine as a consumer. By this time in my life I could already send a captive audience to sleep, over a dinner party, with my insightful repartee and general BS. I carefully selected two bottles of wine from the 'local' to take along to the Party. I shared the wine around and felt quite pleased with my excellent choices. John then produced this dubious looking clean skin, I thought "here we go, glad I finished ours first". To be polite I extended my glass and said "just a little mate" as I was playing it safe. I tried the wine and was more than just a little bit impressed. The evening was then spent with me in disbelief asking John all sorts of questions about how can you make wine this good in your garage. John invited me to join him and a couple of his Guild mates to the next vintage which was to happen in the next couple of weeks. I paid for 100 Kg of fruit and on the day in question is when I first met Spencer Field and Frank Jiricek.

*PC. Who are the Guild identities and others who have influenced you the most?*

**KF.** This is not an easy question and not because I struggle to think of anyone who has influenced me but the opposite. There are so many who have unknowingly influenced my approach to wine making. First and foremost is the Guild in general and the members who regularly attended the Friday night meetings. This was always an invaluable source of information and inspiration, my thanks go to all those who were regulars during the 2000 to 2004 period. Our move to Bendigo has been great, however the one regret is the inability to regularly attend the monthly meetings. I can't possibly remember everyone but to name a few: **John Gaffney, John Greaves, Alan Blackman, John & Roma O'Callaghan, George Wright, Harry Gilham, Ken King, Mario Fantin, Neil and Myrna Johannesen, Rob Aitken, Vinko Eterovic, Helmut Doerner, Mirro Shimatovich, Con Prousalis, Richard Bortko.** My apologies to those I have missed out.

After making two vintages with John, Frank and Spencer, I decided to go a little bit Solo and in 2002 I very nervously started making up to 400 ltr batches calling my own shots. I didn't stray too far away from the expert tutorage of Johnno and Ken King at this stage. I was using 80 ltr plastic barrels for the ferment, and Jenny and I would love to take it in turns to do the plunging, feeling the warmth of the ferment and mixing it around with our bare hands and arms up to our armpits. I thought all was going well and was feeling a little proud of our achievement for our first solo effort. After the ferment and the first racking, it was time for a little bit of quality control. I excitedly syphoned some off and took a sip, yuk, what was going on? What is with this soapiness? The Guild meeting was on the same week so I asked the question about what could be the problem. John Greaves asked me what the pH was and I couldn't answer him, I had no idea. The general consensus was that the pH was too high and that I should add some more tartaric, which I did. Unfortunately not knowing my starting pH and not understanding at this point what I was aiming for, I added way too much and ended up with all of my red wines with a pH of 2.75 to 2.95, they were not drinkable. Not to be wasted though, I blended these wines into the '03 instead of adding tartaric. It wasn't until the following year in '03 that I found the potential problem of the previous year's soapiness. I just happened to be home when Jen was preparing to plunge the wine. There she was in the laundry with her sleeves

rolled up as far as they could go and like the well trained theatre nurse she was, she was totally lathering up her arms and making them really clean. Now having done this, to rinse off would undo all that hygienic cleaning. Now of course this was my fault because at the very beginning I had said to Jen that the essence of good wine making was 10% good fruit and 90% good hygiene. The real lesson I learnt from this is the importance of a reliable pH meter, pH is something we can all check.

Doing a course with Harry on Country Winemaking was an excellent beginning to wine making and set out the fundamentals for all wine making. And I enjoyed making and learning from several country wines. Alan Blackman presented a discussion on the use of Oak Barriques -v- Oak staves or chips and had samples if I remember correctly of each. For me the difference was too large to ignore and so for the '04 vintage I purchased some second hand and new oak. By teabagging the oak chips into the ferment and then maturing in the old oak barrel, it seemed possible to gain enough oakiness and yet get the silkiness that a barrel can deliver. Being around at Ken King's for vintage was always an education, especially if Neil was lending a hand in the winery, just by watching and asking the occasional question so much was learnt about procedure and good practice. Another great experience was working in the vineyard that the Guild used to look after, great camaraderie and a good chance to ask questions.

The regular wine makers dinners that we have now been having for so many years was started by Gaffney's and comprised Spencer & Annette, John & Caroline, Frank & Janet & Jenny and I. These were probably the biggest influence and whilst I feel a little sorry for our wives listening to us talking about our wine it is through these experiences that I feel I have learnt the most as we shared what we had done and why. Frank's careful choice of oak and his honest opinion of our wines is fantastic because it makes us think. Frank made a comment about the astringency of my Sauv Blanc on the front palate; this caused me to ask around the suppliers and to do a bit of reading and I came across an enzyme to improve aromatics and palate.

The Wine Show has always been an influence in my wine making. In 2003, one of the comments from a Judge was *'well made wine, good colour, nice on the nose but one dimensional'*. Score 15. Off to the Guild meeting the next month with my question about what it meant. I think it was Ken King and John Greaves that took up the conversation about the need for complexity to give the consumer something to think about. I gave this considerable thought and over the next couple of years I always had in the back of my mind what I could do to gain complexity. Things I have tried are combinations of French, American and Hungarian oak, blending fruit from different vineyards or taking fruit from different clones from the same vineyard. David Anderson from Wild Duck Creek told me that his famous Duck Muck Shiraz had a portion of cabernet in it. I have only scratched the surface on the influences over the 10 years of wine making and these are just a few that come to mind.

**PC.** *What awards did you win in Wine Shows?*

**KF.** Not that many. I suppose the one I am most pleased with is the '04 Joe Illian Trophy for Shiraz. I had two shiraz entries in the Show that year; one made entirely from Bendigo fruit from *Two Creeks Vineyard*, the other was 25% Bendigo and 75% Coldstream fruit, both picked up a Gold Medal. These two wines were then judged off with four other gold medal wines for best red wine in the Show. It was a tie between myself and Rob Aitkin who had, I believe, an excellent Cabernet. Other years I have won various Best in Class but the one that eluded me and the one I strived most to achieve was the WOTY, where I would be second placed to Helmut. I feel for the runners up to Vinko and David Hart these days as they seem to take it in turn for this award. I was most pleased with a bronze medal I achieved at the Victorian Wine Show in the open section for an '08 Shiraz. The Judging was done when I was in a coma in Hospital in '09.

*PC. What do you recommend as a pathway to aspiring new members.*

KF. I think this is the easiest question to answer that you have asked me and could be answered best in point form:

- Attend Guild meetings and be prepared to ask questions and contribute to the discussions;
- Enter wines in the Show and learn from the judge's comments;
- Seek out and learn from others that you see are making good wines. This is how I came to meet and share knowledge and experience with Spencer and Frank.
- The Guild should continue to invite knowledgeable people to talk at the Guild meetings on particular topics all with the aim of every member becoming better at what they do. I am blessed here in Bendigo with some very good wine makers I can ask or call on for advice.
- To make better wines, grow your equipment levels within your budget. Start small using plastic and glass, progress as you can afford to Stainless steel and Oak Barrels.
- Join with a syndicate of friends and make wine together in larger quantities;
- Always buy the best fruit possible.
- Ask other wine makers if you can help them on a particular day and then look and listen.

And most of all enjoy the experience of trying many different wines, yes even Pinot Noir, at a cellar door seek out the wine maker and ask questions.

Finally, thank you Richard and Spencer for the opportunity to share some of my experiences and thoughts on my all too brief a journey as a wine maker. It is best for me to finish at this time, however I look forward to being a part of other groups for the occasional bit of dabbling into the fermented grape and country fruit. I have enough wine now stored for Jen and I to drink a bottle of wine per night for the next 15 years. I think we'll manage OK.

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## Old Vine Celebration – with touch of Slovenian

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vineyard in 2009.

A graft from a 400 year old Slovenian grape vine was very planted at McWilliams Wines in 2001, following a very ceremonious occasion at which the Mayor of Maribor, Slovenia gifted the graft to the Shire of Yarra Ranges. Now representatives from Slovenian and the Yarra Ranges Shire combine annually in April to hold a festival in the Yarra Ranges to honour the link between winemakers in the two regions.

The photo shows **Darko Postruzin** and others at the annual festival. Darko was the accredited head picker at the McWilliams

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## Wine Quotes and News

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### Articles wanted

Articles of interest, whether they are quotes or newsworthy, are requested from

members. If you have a draft version or need some assistance, I'm happy to assist for its inclusion.  
(Ed.)

### **Wine Quotes**

*Here's to the corkscrew - a useful key to unlock the storehouse of wit, the treasury of laughter, the front door of fellowship, and the gate of pleasant folly.*

W.E.P. French (From the wine list of Commander's Palace in New Orleans, LA courtesy of John McDonald, Dallas, TX)

*And Noah he often said to his wife when he sat down to dine, 'I don't care where the water goes if it doesn't get into the wine'.*

G.K. Chesterton(1874–1936); *Wine and Water*

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## **Trading Barrel**

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**BUY / SELL SERVICE FOR MEMBERS** - Ads need to be lodged with the editor by the 14th of the month to be included in the next Newsletter.

### **FOR SALE - DEMIJOHNS**

In excellent condition, available for 50% of the retail price of new ones

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Kevin Furness tel: 0408 067 288

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Ideal for country wine making or storing small quantities of grape wine. \$5 per set.

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Total storage capacity of 28 dozen bottles but can be assembled in any dozen combination.

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Arthur Stubbs on 8822 3458

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**Cellar Plus**  
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Cellar Plus also has now in stock Accuvin wine test kits from the USA , which are a low cost way for testing every thing from Free SO<sub>2</sub> sulphur in wine, your pH or malic acid to see MLF ferments are complete. It could be a cheaper and simpler option, for those who are unable to leave samples at the Cellar Plus store, for their more analytical laboratory testing service which is still available with results returned usually within 24-72 hrs.

## Some Helpful Products For you to Consider !

From: **Cellar Plus**

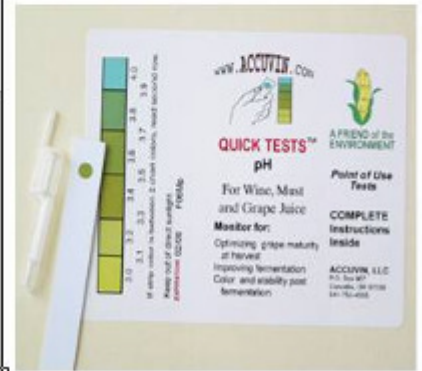
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**Cellar Plus has moved** its Epping retail / trade Showroom from Yale St just around the corner on to the main road at 218 Cooper St (near the Medical Centre), with an expanded display space which allows the wine enthusiast an improved opportunity to roam around the many tanks, pumps, presses on display, and not to mention an internal cool room with ample yeast for all us winemakers and plenty of hops styles to please the advanced brewers.

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