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Past President	George Wright	9712 0318	Communications	Marcel Theunissen	5962 5153
Secretary	Gary Campanella	0409 198 884	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 7.45 pm
Next meeting: 30 April 2010

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Next Meeting

Next meeting 30 April - 7:45 pm start: **Featuring:**

Making Super Shiraz - presenter Lindsay Corby Making Shiraz wine is a popular favourite of many Guild members and we have some excellent exponents of the art. This meeting will focus on the anatomy of a Super Shiraz; how you select top Shiraz grapes, how you make it, how you set the scene to make it Super.	Shiraz WOTY - Please bring a Shiraz for this Meeting Medal for the best wine in the Super Shiraz challenge
Harry's Corner: The Second of a regular 10 minute discussion segment for each meeting focusing on Jo Illian show entries (grain, flower, herb of vegetable wine) or other country wines being made NOW. A question and answer session where members put Harry, George, Vinko and Greg on the spot with any issues arising in their making of these country wines.	No time for tastings of these wines but members are invited to bring along small samples for private assessments by Harry and the others.

Please note a special award will (really this time!!) be presented to the member whose wine, as judged by general acclamation of the meeting, is the best home brew shiraz.

President's Press

Spencer Field

March Meeting review: Harry's Corner:

Harry in his usual entertaining fashion suggested a new innovation for the show: that show entrants be given the opportunity to include with each entry in 25 words or less something that they would like to draw to the attention of the judges about the entry. This could be for example that the wine "*was awarded a Gold medal at the Frankston Show*" or "*Please comment on the tannin structure of this wine*" or other such comment. This proposal is to be considered by the Country Wine Review Committee in regard to country wine.

There was only one question raised by members - **hopefully members will raise more country wine issues at Harry's Corner at the April meeting** - I asked what was the best way of getting maximum flavour out of carrots in the making of my carrot wine - I had indicated that I had simply cut up the carrots in small pieces before boiling in water. The ensuing discussion was most educational for not just me but many in attendance. The answer given initially was to grate the carrots to maximise the surface area of boiled carrots, then others suggested why not juice the carrots and use only the juice!! No one in attendance had tried this - until now **I have started all over making a carrot wine from juiced carrots!!** And I'm not boiling the carrot juice. Jo Illian here I come!!

This certainly is evidence of the value of sharing within the Guild!

March Meeting review: Develop your Palate - Karen Coulston:

34 members and guests soaked up a very educational and practical session from **Karen Coulston** in which palates were attuned for detection of water, sugar, tartaric acid, alcohol and blends of these. This was followed by tasting real wine and identifying each of the components in each wine. We learned about balance, or imbalance created by too much or not enough of one or more of the main components and how small additions of

acid or other component could impact on the balance. For example, the addition of a small amount of tartaric acid to a fruit wine could bring an otherwise too sweet wine into balance and remarkably improve the overall palate. Alternatively, adding a little sugar could assist in balancing a very acid wine. We were given tips such as using small amounts of tannins (grape seed or oak tannins) - doing fining tests to determine the amount - to assist in boosting the palate (increasing complexity and improving balance) of cool climate wines which are often low in natural tannins. ***Editor's note: Stay tuned - we will have a session on tannins coming up soon!!***

Then followed the tasting of several faulty wines and so our palates became more sensitised to faults, including different types of oxidised wines (ones that could and could not be fixed), stinky wine (hydrogen sulphide) and several others.

Finally, a great relief! Our by then jarred palates were treated to four refreshingly good members' wines - two from **Zenon, Danny and Geoff**, one each from **Frank Galati** and **Chris Kearney** - all great efforts, but I was pleased that the membership was quick in identifying high alcohol in one of them - a good indication of the value of **Karen's** session.

2010 Winery Weekender - who, when and where???

Members please think about and be prepared to indicate what wine region you would like to visit for a weekender, held usually over the first or second weekend in October. Those of us who joined the bus had a fantastic time at King Valley last year. A close second in choice last year was the Grampians which is known for good reds and offers some unique regional character in the reds produced there, but that's only one option. What about Mornington Peninsula (Chardonnays and Pinots shine), Goulburn Valley (good reds and whites), Henty in the far South West (crispy cool whites), Macedon Ranges or Mansfield (two real cool climate areas), Heathcote (great shirazes), etc, etc and the list goes on!!

Wine Show Committee 2010 - More volunteers needed

Volunteers for this year's wine Show Committee so far are John and Roma O'Callaghan (Show Directors), Greg Martin, Michael Scott, Darko, Mario Fantin, Andrew Gillam, Tim Ross, George, David Pryor, Gary Campanella, Spencer, and Chris Kearney. A few more members are needed and so please consider volunteering. The Show Committee is a working committee meeting once monthly from May and members will have work allocated. It's not hard work and no one is thrown into the deep end. Any new volunteers will have a wealth of experience and the support of other members to draw upon.

For the PC proficient members, please help our website development:

If you are even just a little proficient in the use of a computer and the internet, the Executive seeks your assistance for what is a simple task that will assist in the development of our website.

The work of Webmaster **Marcel** and Secretary **Gary** on website development is clearly providing some real opportunities to attract more funding to the Guild from sponsorship. A need is seen to widen the level of sponsorship with a view to use any new funds secured to directly benefit members, for example, by supplementing the funding of the Wine Show or other existing or new Guild activity.

The current website strategy is to build in features that make the website increasingly popular with not only members, but also non-members, as measured by 'hits' onto the site

daily. More and more hits make advertising by sponsors more and more attractive, particularly if there are links from our website to those of our sponsors.

You can assist this strategy by going to our home page at www.amateurwine.org.au, find and register on **Twitter** (in centre of home page) by clicking on [amateurwine](#) and then following the prompts. After registering, you can then look for other Twitter users to follow and you should find [amateurwine](#) in the “other” category of Twitter users. If you click on ‘followers’, you will find and see some familiar faces and names including [spenceresquire](#) (that’s me!! I am following that wine Journalist and Master of Wine, Jancis Robinson, in addition to amateurwine!)

You should also go to www.youtube.com/user/amateurwine where you will find two Youtube videos featuring **Vinko** and **Vasili’s Garden**, and **Harry** spruiking up country wine. You should take the opportunity with each of these to rate the videos and please give them 5 star ratings.

You will then have contributed very usefully to the continuing development of the Guild’s website!! Congratulations!!

Letter to Editor – Upcoming Elections

We are writing this with an eye on the upcoming Guild Executive elections and the unofficial expectation that Spencer will not stand for President again because it is a custom that “presidents usually step down after 2 years”. We think the membership needs to reconsider this custom and expectation. You will all agree that Spencer has been doing a great job as president of EDWG. Over the past 2 years he has been in charge, we have seen many new ideas and initiatives. The improved educational standard of Guild meetings, the country wine course, the drive to encourage female members, the country wine sub-committee, the stronger links with the Frankston Guild, are just a few of Spencer’s initiatives. Our concern is that many initiatives are very much a “work in progress” and a lot of momentum could be lost if there was a change of leadership at this point in time.

If an existing President would like to stand for election and the members are prepared to vote for him, why change for the sake of a custom which does not have any practical basis? Our suggestion and recommendation is that members drop the expectation that a President step down after 2 terms and allow the members to decide by voting who they would like to be President, regardless of how many terms they have already been in office.

This would leave a way open for Spencer or any incumbent President to be re-elected if the membership should so desire.

Please make your feelings known to members of the Guild Executive.

David Hart & Mario Fantin

Hmmm – What's this?

George Wright

This week we purchased a new house. We must move. We must move not only me and Carol, but all our stuff. That means ribbons won at dog shows, things I made from wood and steel that don't work like they ought to and bottles of wine: some good, some probably bad and some definitely reject. I have a vinegar barrel for things that go bang in night, but this is decision-time about rejects and the vinegar barrel is not an option. It's move-it or decant-it.

Today I found a 2001 bottle of lemon wine. My records show that it was an OK wine but nothing special. It was too in acid and highly bitter. I remember thinking that I had not sliced the lemons to Harry's specifications to a maximum if 3mm. Nor did I top and tail the lemons like he said.

The bottle had been lying quietly in a rack under the house for almost a decade without disturbance but an inspection showed that much of the contents had disappeared. In fact, there was only about 700ml left in a 750ml bottle. Before disposing the contents into the septic and the bottle into the yellow recycling bin I pulled the cork and sniffed at the contents. Hey, that's not too bad! The taste confirmed that it was pretty good! I drank it with a chicken dinner and the acid of the wine bit through the fat of the chicken and complimented the vegies, especially the carrots, and made a wonderful addition to the evening meal. I was sorry I had no visitors with whom to share the experience of tasting, if not bragging.

As I neared the end of the bottle I noticed that the previously clear wine had deteriorated into a cloudy mess. The taste retained its flavours but the wine was a visual disaster. I managed to close my eyes for the rest of the meal and savoured the remnants of a pretty good vintage without optical assistance.

And now, late in the evening, in a happy state of mine I reflect on what happened. I think that in the intervening years that the wine developed into a much better wine than I had previously tasted. In fact, my memories are crystal clear... it was a pretty ordinary wine in its original state. The intervening years had given the wine time to mature. Perhaps the acid held it together.

In addition, the fact that there was a cloudy deposit meant that there was probably some residual sugar present and the wine continued to ferment in the bottle to some extent. The cloudiness was the dead yeast cells deposited into the bottle. I was lucky that the cork had not blown out. The carbon dioxide produced by the ferment probably stopped oxidation of the wine while it matured. A combination of a poor cork that let out some pressure but didn't let too much oxygen into the bottle probably allowed me to enjoy a wonderful chicken dish with a superb bottle of wine.

Are there any lessons here? Perhaps we should approach the winemaking task with the expectation that some experiments will not deliver the dreams we anticipate. Not everything will work out, but amateur winemaking can offer some amazing gastronomic experiences. Just be prepared to keep a vinegar barrel for the disappointments you will experience along the way. If you don't have a vinegar barrel, there are other alternatives. As a last resort, there is the sewer. I'm sure you will amaze yourself with what you can achieve, even if it is a surprise after letting the bottle mature. But decant the ones with faults tasting like cardboard, geranium, nail-polish or bakelite (after the light-switch shorts) - they are caused by nasties in the wine and will never improve.

Wine Quotes and News

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.)

Trading Barrel

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.

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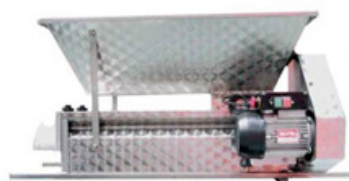
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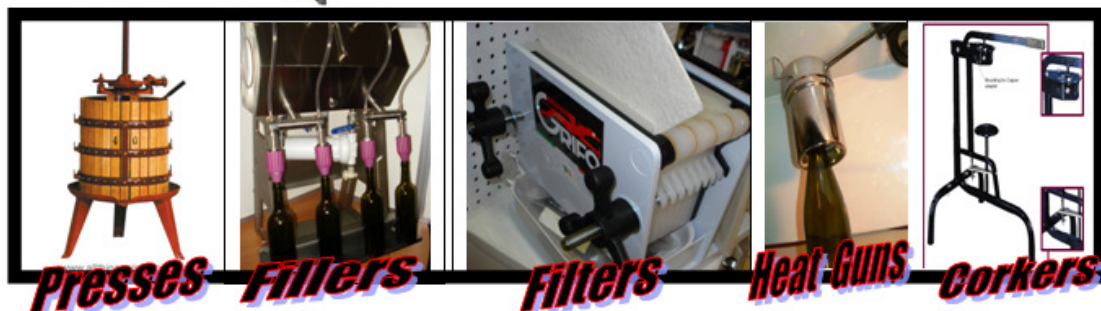


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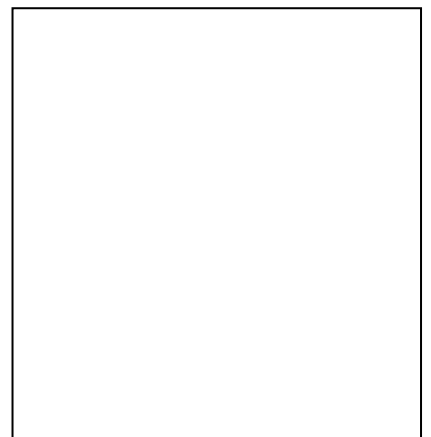
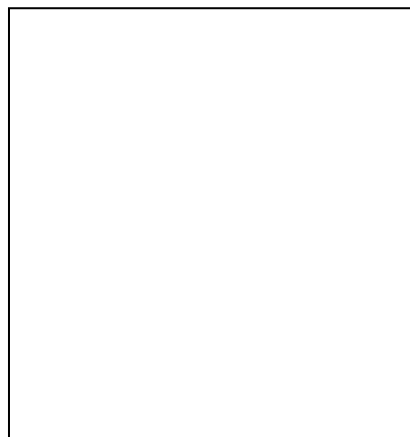
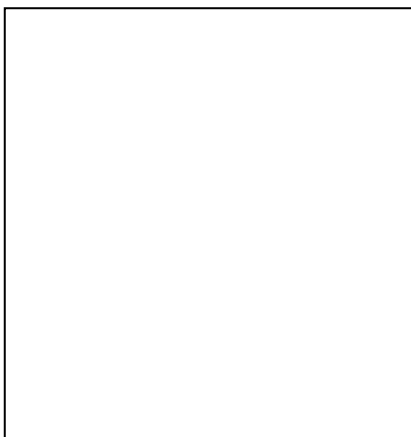


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