

# ELTHAM AND DISTRICT WINEMAKERS GUILD

ESTABLISHED 1969

**AUGUST 2020**

*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***

***... due to COVID-19 restrictions ... ONLINE – using Zoom ...***

***at 7.30 pm – for 8 pm start***

***Next meeting: Friday 29<sup>th</sup> August, 2020***

***Guests who are interested in finding out more about the Guild are welcome  
to attend any of our regular Guild meetings***

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### **EDWG 2020 Annual General Meeting**

Our AGM will be held as usual at the August Guild Night, with the AGM formalities kept to a minimum. I would like to encourage anyone who would like to make a difference and contribute to the running of the Wine Show and the Guild in general to nominate for the committee – it's not too late to nominate, check out the EDWG AGM 2020 folder in the *Files* area of Samepage for all the information you need. You can also contact myself or Mario Anders if you need any help with your nomination. Even if you aren't nominating for a committee position, we still need as many members as possible to participate in the ZOOM meeting.

As is our tradition for the AGM we will follow up the AGM formalities with drinking and discussion of mulled wines. This year you will have to make it yourself at home, but you won't have to worry about driving home after the meeting. My report on the year since the 2019 AGM is printed later in this newsletter.

### **Eltham Wine Show 2020**

At this stage it's still happening! The Wine Show Committee is committed to the 2020 show going ahead. It may not run the same way as any previous Eltham Wine Show, but we believe it can be done if we follow strict protocols and procedures as per advice current at the time. So, stay tuned for further information.

### **Wine Swaps**

Do you have too much Heathcote Shiraz?

Would you like to swap some of it for some Yarra Valley Chardonnay?

Thinking of making some Sagrantino in 2021 but would like to try a few members' efforts to see what you can expect?

Think about using the Samepage Wine Swap Team to organise your swaps. Obviously, in this Stage 4 Lockdown period you may not be able to get your hands on the bottles for a while, but why not get an order in for what you want now. Trevor Roberts is coordinating this initiative and he can fill you in on the details. Check out the Wine Swap Team on Samepage.

Cheers,

**Wayne Harridge – President**



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## *2020 President's Report for the AGM*

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What a year to take on the Presidency of the Guild! I'll just mention COVID-19 this once, as the effects of this pandemic have had enormous impact on the Guild – as they have had on nearly all aspects of our individual lives. I'd particularly like to thank Mario Fantin for handing over the presidency with the Guild in such a solid position, he set a very high standard for me to meet.

### ***Guild Nights***

Our regular monthly meetings followed the established pattern of guest speakers, wine to savour, fellowship between members and lively discussion on anything vaguely related to Wine – until March of this year when we presented our first ZOOM Guild Night. Quite a dramatic change, but probably about the best we could do under the circumstances. And after a few months we seem to have found a new normal. We all look forward to getting back to the old normal in 2021!

### ***Social Program***

The committee had a priority of injecting more social events into our program for 2020 and, so far, all of those planned have had to be cancelled or postponed. Next year!!

### ***Eltham Wine Show***

As expected, the 2019 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Wine Show was highly successful, and a fitting celebration of 50 years for the Guild and Show. Thanks are due to the Wine Show Committee for the thorough planning, and to many members who contributed to the smooth running of this event. With people like this there is no wonder that ours is the biggest and best amateur wine show in the Southern Hemisphere!

The Committee is committed to staging the Eltham Wine Show 2020 as we realise that the show is a significant event for many amateur winemakers, not just Guild members, to get expert feedback on their wines. The show will not look like it has in the past, but the Committee are planning alternative means of judging wines and providing the necessary feedback and recognition expected.

### ***Workshops***

The Committee had planned to run several workshops this year, but most have had to be cancelled. Due to a great deal of luck, or superb timing, the Pruning Workshop actually took place! While a serious workshop where we all learned a lot, it turned out to be a great social occasion too. Many thanks to Graham Scott for his tutoring and organisation of this event and to David and Margot Pope for hosting this workshop on their property.

### ***Grape Group***

Vintage 2020 saw more members ordering fruit through this scheme. Danny Cappellani has regularly been able to source less common varieties, enabling us to experiment and produce some really interesting wines, and score Gold Medals in the process. For the Vintage 2021 purchase Danny, assisted by his young apprentice Glen van Neuren, have taken orders for what I believe may be a new record (by weight) for the group. Our thanks go to Danny, Glen and the rest of the crew who make this happen for the Guild.

## **Samepage**

Samepage, our online cloud-based team collaboration system, has had a significant boost in usage over the last year. We have added new teams for Grape Purchase, Wine Swap, Advertisements (buy & sell), and are now seeing members taking advantage of this platform's many advantages over our otherwise ad-hoc communications.

## **Committee**

My sincere thanks to all Committee members for their dedication to running the Guild over the last year. Several new initiatives were planned for 2020 but, for obvious reasons, could not be brought to fruition. Since March committee meetings have taken place using ZOOM, which has proven to be a suitable platform for our needs. Due to the long distances some committee members must travel, we plan to continue using ZOOM even when face-to-face meetings are allowed.

This year we have several retirements from the committee: David Chambers, Bill Loughlin – long-time committee member and a past President of the Guild, Gary Campanella – long-time Committee member and Wine Show Director. We thank them for their significant contributions to the Guild as Committee members.

## **Wayne Harridge – President**



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## 2020 Committee & Committee Meeting Dates

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<b>President</b>	Wayne Harridge	<b>General</b>	Trevor Sleep
<b>Vice President</b>	Danny Cappellani	<b>Committee</b>	Bill Loughlin
<b>Secretary</b>	Mario Anders		Graham Scott
<b>Webmaster &amp; Treasurer</b>	Mario Anders		Angela Harridge
<b>Assistant Treasurer</b>	Bill Bussau		Trevor Roberts
<b>Past President</b>	Mario Fantin		
<b>Wine Show Chief Judge</b>	Sandrine Gimon		
<b>Wine Show Director</b>	Mario Fantin		
<b>Membership Co-ordinator</b>	David Chambers		
<b>Newsletter</b>	Angela Harridge		

Members elected to positions on the Guild Management Committee meet every month. Meetings alternate between General Guild and Wine Show business.

### **Committee Members**

Wayne Harridge, Mario Anders, Danny Cappellani, Trevor Sleep, Bill Bussau, Mario Fantin, Bill Loughlin, Graham Scott, Angela Harridge, Trevor Roberts, David Chambers.

### **Guild Business Meetings**

Agenda: Guild Night Program, Membership, Winemaking Education Initiatives, Social Events, Financial, Website, Guild Promotion.

Meeting Dates (Wednesdays): 12 August, 14 October

### **Wine Show Meetings**

Agenda: Marketing, Logistics, Sponsorship, IT, Judging, Financial, Governance  
Committee Members plus Sandrine Gimon (Chief Judge) attend these meetings.

Meeting Dates (Wednesdays): 16 September, 11 November

### **Visitors Welcome**

Members are welcome to attend committee meetings as visitors. New ideas and suggestions for improvement are most welcome. If you would like to attend, please contact the President or Secretary.

## Forward Program for Guild Events



Planned activities have had to be Cancelled or Postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions. We will keep you updated as to what we are able to do via Samepage and the [Website](#).

The Committee will continue presenting Guild Nights online ... so keep  ...

\*More information to come \*

DATE	ACTIVITY
Friday August 28 <sup>th</sup> * 	<b><u>Monthly Guild Night</u></b> * Zoom meeting* <b>AGM</b> – traditionally a night for <i>mulled wine</i> . Make a tippie of your own and settle down in the comfort of your own home to <i>mull</i> over this most unusual year we've had as a Guild, and the candidates for the Committee positions ... ... and share the recipe for your brew!
Friday September 25 <sup>th</sup> * 	<b><u>Monthly Guild Night:</u></b> * Zoom meeting* <b>Muscat Masterclass</b> Jen Pfeiffer, from Pfeiffer Wines, will speak about her passion – Rutherglen Muscat. Members will have the opportunity to taste the full classification of Pfeiffer Rutherglen, Classic Rutherglen, Grand Rutherglen and Rare Rutherglen Muscats during the Zoom session. Jen will also talk more technically on how the wine is made and how these special wines are aged and blended according to the classifications. Details will be listed on Samepage.
October 17 <sup>th</sup> or 18 <sup>th</sup>	<b><u>Nilumbik Open Cellars Lunch</u></b> (hopefully) Choose your own Open Cellars to visit then meet up at a Winery (TBA) for lunch and info sharing.
Saturday October 24 <sup>th</sup>	<b><u>Closing Date: Eltham Wine Show Entries</u></b>
Friday October 30 <sup>th</sup>	<b><u>Monthly Guild Night:</u></b> TBA
November 13 <sup>th</sup>	<b><u>Final delivery date:</u></b> Eltham Wine Show
Saturday November 21 <sup>st</sup> * 	<b><u>Eltham Wine Show:</u></b> Judging Day The plan is for the Wine Show to go ahead – in a modified form. Keep an eye out for more detailed information.
Sunday November 22 <sup>nd</sup> * 	<b><u>Eltham Wine Show:</u></b> <i>Public Open Day</i> 12pm – 4pm
Friday November 27 <sup>th</sup>	<b><u>Monthly Guild Night</u></b> Final meeting of the year and Wine Show debrief.



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## The Grape Group ... update

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*Danny Cappellani & Glen van Neuren*

In the revisiting exercise of the 2021 *Alternative grape selection*, Schioppettino and Malbec are the 2 varieties chosen as favored by most.

The order is now in place with Chalmers' Heathcote (Colbinabbin) vineyard.

2 tonne of Schioppettino and 1 of Malbec.

The Schioppettino is fully taken up, but there is still 100kg of Malbec available.

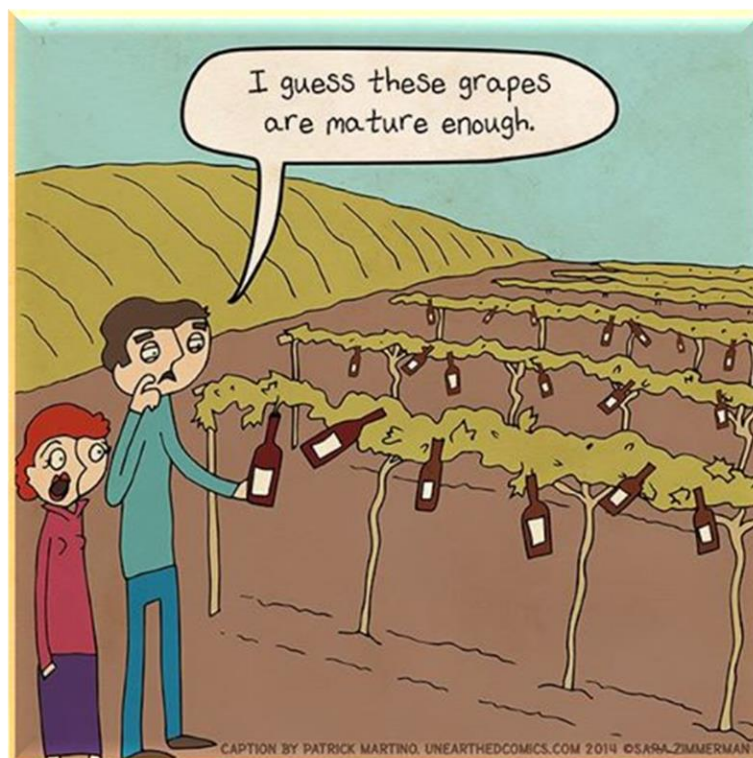
We need to point out that we will not know for sure till early December (when the vintage will be assessed) that we will get what we ordered.

The white grape Arneis still remains on order at the Chalmers' Merbein vineyard as there is still a hope that we may get the grapes, depending on the size of the vintage fruit yield. We need to point out that, at this stage, we have no other white variety on order.

There has been a significant interest shown for the Rutherglen Brown Muscat grape for making Muscat fortified wine. There is a need to make everybody involved aware that, like the Arneis, we have not been assured that the grapes will be available, and it will only happen if the vintage crop is in abundance. David Chambers is scanning Victoria for alternative suppliers, but the variety is not widely grown and we have only one source that is willing to talk to us.

Should any of you know of another possibility please let us know.

So far this year there have been some encouraging rain falls in the Murray Basin region, and we have high hopes for a great 2021 vintage.



### *Acid in Grapes and Wine* Richard Webb

Wine grapes contain acids that give wine crispness and freshness. These acids also contribute to the natural stability of wine and assist in its preservation. Some styles of wine benefit from a higher level of acid. Sparkling wine, for instance, is usually high in acid. Other styles, such as red table wine, benefit from a lower acid level. Some wines with high levels of acidity are renowned for their keeping abilities. But a deficiency of acid causes wine to taste 'fat' and 'flabby', sometimes hot – such wines tend to have poor colour, and often do not keep very well.

#### **Fixed, Volatile and Total Acidity**

We classify wine acids as either Volatile or Fixed, according to whether or not they vaporise along with water and alcohol when the wine is boiled. The sum total of the Fixed and Volatile Acidity of a wine is the Total Acidity.

#### **Major wine acids**

The main acids of grapes are tartaric and malic acids, together representing more than 90% of the total acid content. Neither of these acids break down in the alcoholic fermentation that converts grape sugars to alcohol. Tartaric and malic acid, then, are initially present in the wine. The tartaric acid is relatively stable to further microbiological action, whereas malic acid is not. Certain species of bacteria convert malic acid to lactic acid. The red wine making process usually provides favourable conditions for this bacterial action – warmth, high pH, and low sulphur dioxide levels. The white wine making process usually does not provide these conditions, so this bacterial action does not always occur in whites. Malic acid is common therefore in white wine whereas lactic acid is more common in red.

Succinic acid is not found in grapes but is present in most wines, being a by-product of the fermentation of sugar by yeast. These four acids, tartaric, malic, lactic, and succinic, are Fixed acids.

The Volatile wine acids, formic, acetic, butyric – acetic is the most common - are minor by-products of the yeast fermentation but can also be formed by spoilage organisms. Acetic acid is the sour element of vinegar and, while very low levels of this acid may give some complexity to wine, any significant amount of acetic acid will spoil the wine altogether. Five acids then, tartaric, malic, lactic, succinic and acetic - are the main wine acids, by gross percentage as well as from an organoleptic point of view.

They are relatively weak acids by comparison with inorganic acids such as hydrochloric acid (Spirits of Salts, used for cleaning brickwork). Wine acids will not burn holes in your skin or clothing, but they do produce an environment that is hostile to lower forms of life such as bacteria and mould.

#### **Acid analysis**

Total Acidity and Volatile Acidity are important wine parameters and are routinely determined by analysis. Total Acidity (or TA) is usually measured in units of grams per litre, i.e. grams of acid per litre of wine. Although TA is made up of several different acids as we have seen, the convention in Australia is to calculate TA as if it were all tartaric acid<sup>1</sup>.

Volatile acidity, or VA, is calculated as grams per litre acetic acid. VA is one of the few wine parameters where legal limits exist. In Australia, the legal maximum is 1.5 grams per litre, although table wine is usually considered spoiled by as little as 0.8 grams per litre. It is most unusual for the wine yeast to produce this much VA. However, spoilage organisms will readily produce these and even higher levels.

Returning to TA, most wine needs between four and eight grams per litre of acid depending on style. There needs to be rather more than this much acid in the grapes because the wine making process tends to remove more acid than it creates. Because Australian grapes usually do not have enough acid to provide sufficient in the wine, winemakers routinely add tartaric acid during wine making to ensure that they produce good wine.

You measure the amount of acid in grapes or wine by titration - a procedure that measures how much alkali will neutralise the acid. You add the alkali, usually a solution of sodium hydroxide in water, drop wise from a burette to a measured quantity of juice or wine. Red wine is usually de-colourised before testing. A few drops of an indicator, usually phenolphthalein, are first added to the juice. In the acidic juice/wine, the indicator is colourless. When sufficient alkali has been added to neutralise the acids, the next drop of alkali turns the sample alkaline whereupon the phenolphthalein

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<sup>1</sup> Another (French) convention is to express TA as sulphuric acid. The equivalence between the two methods is that 5g/l (as sulphuric) = 7.5 g/l (as tartaric). Sulphuric acid is a strong mineral acid.



indicator changes colour to pink. When a 10 ml sample of juice/wine is neutralised in this way with sodium hydroxide of 0.1M concentration, the Total Acidity<sup>2</sup> of the sample is computed as follows:

TA = 0.75 x ml sodium hydroxide, where TA is the sum total of all acids present expressed as if 100% tartaric acid.

Another method involves the use of a pH meter rather than the phenolphthalein indicator.

### **Wine making processes cause loss of acid**

Two processes in wine making cause a reduction in TA. The first is contact with the grape skins. This leads to removal of some tartaric acid by a chemical process unique to grape wine. As soon as the berries are broken, potassium salts in the skins start leaching into the juice and react with tartaric acid to form potassium tartrate and potassium hydrogen tartrate (cream of tartar). Cream of tartar, although fairly soluble in water or juice, is much less soluble in the presence of alcohol. Later in the fermentation, when alcohol is present, some cream of tartar forms solid crystals. This process causes some tartaric acid to be lost from the wine. As much as 2-3 grams per litre can be lost in this way from red wine, where there is some skin contact time for colour extraction.

Even in white wine making there will be some loss of acid from this process. Potassium salts in the skins are readily soluble in grape juice, so any skin contact, however brief, will cause some loss of acidity.

The second process that reduces acidity, is the malo-lactic fermentation, where each molecule of malic acid degrades to (only) one molecule of lactic acid. Malic acid, the sharp-tasting acid of green apples, has two acid functional groups in its molecule, whereas lactic acid only has one. Lactic acid is the soft, mild tasting acid of yoghurt and sauerkraut. Another 1-2+ grams per litre TA can be lost in this process.

Grapes grown in cool climates often have too much acid. In this case, these acid reduction processes are vital to reducing the natural acidity of the grapes to the point where the wine produced is palatable. However, most of Australia's grapes grow in hot climates and have too little acid to begin with. As we have seen there are losses of acid during the wine making process. So warm climate winemakers routinely add tartaric acid to make up the deficit. Tartaric acid is used because it is 'natural' and relatively stable. Also, it tends to produce wines with lower pH and less acid taste than other possible acids. Wine quality tartaric acid actually originates from cream of tartar crystals deposited during the wine making process.

### **Natural and synthetic acids**

Large wineries sell their lees to the tartaric acid 'manufacturers', who first recover and purify the potassium hydrogen tartrate crystals, then treat them with lime, then sulphuric acid to regenerate the tartaric acid. Thus, the tartaric acid is 'recovered' rather than 'synthesized,' and clearly the recovered tartaric acid is wine-grape derived. Synthetic tartaric acid on the other hand derives from natural gas, clearly a non-grape source. There is also another, more significant difference between the natural and synthetic acids.

Tartaric acid, in common with malic acid and a host of other organic chemicals, exists in two forms that differ in the way that the molecules are arranged in space. It is rather like the difference between your right and left hands. Although both hands have four fingers and an opposed thumb, there is a difference! Deriving perhaps from the hand analogy, the two forms of tartaric acid are described as d- or l- tartaric acid, d- for the Latin dextro- or right, l- for laevo- or left. The two forms are called 'stereoisomers.' Now natural (grape) tartaric acid is 100% d- form – it's right-handed like the real Spiderman – but the synthetic material is a 50: 50 mixture of the d- and l- forms.<sup>3</sup>

There are subtle differences in the chemistry of the two forms of tartaric acid. Significantly, the difference in solubility of the calcium salt can lead to tartrate instability in wines treated by the synthetic acid. With malic acid, we see another significant difference between stereoisomers. Natural wine malic acid is the l- form. Under appropriate conditions, it undergoes the malo-lactic fermentation. Its stereoisomer, d- malic acid, is however stable to bacterial attack. Synthetic malic acid is once again a 50:50 mixture of the two forms, so if this is added to wine, only half will undergo MLF if conditions allow.

A further article will discuss procedures for adding and removing acid from wines and will also look at acid issues in fruit wines.

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<sup>2</sup> Because we measure Total Acidity by titration, it is more correct to speak of Titratable Acidity. This article sticks to Total Acidity to keep it simple.

<sup>3</sup> An alternative description found in some sources is L+ for d- and L- for l-.

### David & Margot Pope: their journey with wine ...



We began planting our hobby 2-acre vineyard in the late 1990's after completing grape growing and winemaking courses through Croydon TAFE with Denise Millar. Being a hobby, we propagated all our vines from the prunings of neighbouring vineyards, *Bianchet* and *Yarra Edge*.

We started with a few rows of *Chardonnay*, *Verduzzo*, *Pinot*, *Merlot*, *Shiraz* and *Cab Sav*. Our intention was to make a small quantity of wine and sell most of the grapes. However, this was a time when everyone was planting vineyards, so it was hard to sell grapes in such small quantities to vineyards, so Dave's passion for making wine took over!!

His wine making skills have developed over the years through experience and discussing problems and issues with members of the Guild. David Hart and Danny Cappellani have been particularly helpful with knowledge and advice over the last few years.

We maintain the Vineyard mostly by ourselves, with a little extra help from family and friends at vintage, which is always a tiring but exciting time.



Dave spends many hours tinkering in the cellar under the house, maintaining and adjusting his developing wines.

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## My Vintage Year ...

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*An interview series where we interview your fellow EDWG members.*

*Was this their vintage year?*

*by David Chambers*

### Today it's Ken King

Ken needs some nudging – he is busy in this COVID crisis. Indeed, he is going flat out to keep up. When I ring he is in a good space so we talk some more. We discuss his early involvement at the guild. Gushing now and excited to reveal some history, the facts pour out. All the names of those early years now appear on our trophies. Two standouts are Harry Gilham and Jo Ilian. The latter, who encouraged Ken way back when, to join the EDWG. Harry Gilham lived and still lives just down the road. Scotty was around at the time and gets a mention, of course he means our Graham Scott.

They said you should be treasurer, he did, he was, for 13 long years. He wanted the EDWG to become the Amateur Wine Show had the sponsors lined up for it. The vote didn't go his way. These gems of knowledge fall out into the conversation as we discuss the old times. I think our active members are low now, when Ken joined, they only had 6 active members. It was a bit of a closed shop, says he.

He is a bit of an enigma Ken, I find him engaging, I would like to get to know him better. Yes, he is a life member. I am embarrassed to admit I haven't tried Ken Kings wine. Wine grown according to James Halliday in chocolate cake soil at Australia's only Post Office Winery location. I suspect it is very good indeed at his craft. Why? Ken is a passionate person. A passion not un-noticed by the early guild members, the so few. This is confirmed within a few short sentences uttered by him. Interwoven with this passion are the interesting stories of the old guild. The early guild that was populated by just a few individuals. These celebrated and now legendary figures that honour themselves by appearing on The Jo Ilian or the Harry Gilham.

Ken is battling away at keeping the winery going, he is so busy and didn't mean to be so tardy with the return of the Interview. We are a bit pushy, I offer. I make a mental note to ask him later about the vineyards in the guilds care, Rockwood at Kangaroo Ground, Kingston's in Eltham and another across in Yarrambat, during that time. He was a Wine Judge coached under the excellent tutelage of the esteemed Bill Christophersen. He speaks fondly of the Montsalvat Wine Show at the time of his presidency a venue at no cost to the guild. This enabled the show to grow at a considerable pace from the original venue where a lean-to operation started to flourish in those very early years. He is so grateful for the early friendships and mentoring provided by Harry Gilham, Neil and Myrna Johannesen, Bill Christophersen, John Graves, Jo Ilian and others, to mention just a few.

Here now at the end of this process it seems we should find a way to engage Ken more with the guild. He still has so much to offer. Indeed, the skill he learnt from those old timers led him to the vineyard he now so proudly calls his own. I find him very interesting as a person and a wealth of knowledge about the early guild. Something tells me we should preserve this knowledge somehow.

*Dave: Ken, did you ever drink anything other than wine in your early years?*

*Ken: Chocolate malted milks from Stony's Milk Bar, Whitehorse Road, Balwyn. Double choc and double malt of course. Still my favourite drink and my benchmark when it comes to judging a good Cabernet Sauvignon.*

*Dave: Have you ever thought that the path you have been on could have had a different outcome? Or to put it another way, what would you have done differently? Perhaps you would have started the commercial part earlier.*

*Ken: Yes, I'm commercial, but only the next step up from an amateur. 15 tonne crush is hardly commercial but profitable using my business model.*

*Dave: What is your first experience that you remember that led to an interest in wine?*

*Ken: Lunch at Johnny's Green Room Carlton. A lasagne and a beer for me. My work colleagues tempted me to taste a 1972 Brown Brothers Cabernet Shiraz Mondeuse ... instantly hooked.*



*Dave:* Did this lead to making your way in the Wine World and eventually lead to the hobby of making wine?

*Ken:* Being an engineer, I like to know how things work ... had to have a go at making wine in the bathtub.

*Dave:* What is an interesting unknown fact about you that members may find interesting?

*Ken:* Nillumbik Councillor 2008-2016. Mayor 2010, Deputy Mayor 2011, Chair of the Economic Development Committee, Chair Yarra Plenty Library Board ... oh and I told my boss to *get stuffed* in 1982 and haven't had a boss since. Oh, I operate the Kangaroo Ground Post Office out of the winery.

*Dave:* Can you tell us about the wildest party you attended? Probably in your youth but maybe not?

*Ken:* It was the one that I can't remember ... sorry.

*Dave:* What are you making now that is unusual or different to what you have made recently.?

*Ken:* Making *blush* Rose by blending chardonnay with pinot and/or shiraz.

*Dave:* The EDWG attended to grapes in a few areas in the early days. Can you explain that involvement?

*Ken:* The Rockwood vineyard in Kangaroo Ground was my training plot that led me to purchase the current estate block in 1988. Graham Scott (Life Member) referred to the Kangaroo Ground black volcanic soil as *chocolate cake*. Scotty is to be chastised for committing my life to endless toil of the soil.

*A Guest question: Karen Coulston*

*Karen:* Hi Ken, you grow your own Pinot Noir and Chardonnay and buy some fruit to supplement your wine product range. Do you feel a difference in pride / satisfaction / esteem for your home grown and non-estate wines?

*Ken:* There are three distinct phases in the wine journey, the viticulture, the winemaking, the marketing and sales. I love all the components equally, but strangely it's the enjoyment of the finished product with my clients that is the most satisfying.

*Dave:* You have educated yourself with regards to your career in wine. Where did you pick up your wine making skills?

*Ken:* Primarily the old guild members were my instructors. Harry Gilham, Graham Scott, John Graves, Jo Ilian, Neil and Myrna Johannesen and of course Bill Christophersen who trained my palate ... he was a genius. I studied under Graham Morris from Winery Supplies (now *Anpros Boronia*) who ran a course in Basic Scientific Winemaking and Viticulture at Dandenong TAFE.

*Dave:* As a commercial winemaker the technical part of wine making is very important in your journey to the finished wine. How do you approach the intellectual part of the discussion about wine? Wine can be so many things to so many people. But what does it bring to you?

*Ken:* I never forget the winemaking is an artform. The science is important but needs to be in the background. I don't read books on winemaking, I chase high quality inputs and try as much as possible to let the wine make itself. I now realise that I'm not the winemaker, it's the yeast. I simply control the environment to allow the yeast to do its job.

*Dave:* This is probably the wrong question to ask but let's go with it anyway. Are you pedantic fussy wine maker or do you prefer to feel your way along steady as she goes, follow the tried and true methods and it will work out in the end?

*Ken:* The latter. I'm a bucket winemaker ... a bucket of this, a bucket of that, a handful of stalks, a pH meter, aspiration apparatus and a good nose.

*Dave: What is wine making to you? It was just another hobby probably. At what point did you consider making the big leap to commercial? Is it a consuming passion that excites you even now?*

Ken: These days it's not the winemaking but the quality of drinking that I'm passionate about. I'm still in awe of the top winemakers who add a touch of magic to the grape product.

*Dave: What are you excited about for the future of home wine making?*

Ken: I was an amateur that entered a commercial show and won a gold medal, my Kangaroo Ground Pinot. Oops...I better get a license now!

*Dave: What are you excited about for the future of boutique wine making?*

Ken: Traditional winemaking has stood the test of time, makes the best wines and will do into the future. The iconic wines of the world are still made in the traditional manner ... even Grange.

*Dave: What inspires you to make better wine? Do you still enter the Eltham or Frankston Wine Show? Is it the Gold medals or the search for knowledge to improve on your wine making skills that motivates you?*

Ken: I can't enter amateur shows if wines are made in my shed. What comes first in the pursuit is high quality inputs (referred to above) and control of the winemaking environment. Get that right and medals follow.

*Dave: Who or what has been your biggest influence in wine making?*

Ken: Love the natural process. Fruits of the earth converted to wine by the yeast beast ... its magic.

*Dave: I think you are a Life Member of the EDWG. How long have you been a member of EDWG?*

Ken: Yes, Life Member. Off the top of my head, it was c. 1980 when Jo Ilian invited me to a secretive Guild meeting. They saw me coming ... treasurer for 13 years and eventually president.

*Dave: As you have explained to me, when you were first elected President the Guild only had a handful of members. What have been the positive surprises of your membership of EDWG? Do you still have contact with members from those early days?*

Ken: Alluded to previously, I love the hands-on traditions that are imbedded in fine wine. It's not a scary technology product, nor should it be!

*Dave: What were you drinking in your twenties?*

Ken: Beer, wine, chocolate malted milks.

*Dave: If you could tell the young Ken about life, what advice would you give?*

Ken: Have a crack at it, keep going when others give up.

*Dave: I have heard in my short time with the guild some complete disasters while making wine. What is your biggest disaster you can share with us?*

Ken: A strong coffee followed by a good Cabernet, a piece of liquorice followed by a shiraz.

*Dave: I have heard in my short time with the guild some complete disasters while making wine. What is your biggest disaster you can share with us?*

Ken: A factor of ten error in adding tartaric acid to a barrel of shiraz. Thought my pH meter was lying when it read 2.7. Saved that *sherbet bomb* barrel and used it next vintage to top up barrels. Won't talk about the time I pumped finished wine into new season chardonnay juice!

*Dave: Where is your wine available in the wine world? I do like the name Kings of Kangaroo Ground. I'm sure there have been interesting marketing enquiries from around the world. Can you share a couple of those surprises with us?*

Ken: I have shipped wine around the world to private buyers. Yes, lots of enquiries but, unfortunately, they just all want millions of litres at zero to \$2/litre. Go jump! I say, not interested.

And finally ...

**Dave:** *You are going to a desert island to spend some chill time. You are taking with you one piece of music, one bottle of wine, a book and food. What will be placed in your suitcase?*

**Ken:** Gotta be a big suitcase to fit a Nebuchadnezzar of Kings Pinot 2018. Just 15 litres. No room left for a Johnny's Green Room, Carlton, lasagna. Oh well, so be it.



Vintage 2019





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## Jo Ilian Awards – Forward Thinking

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Keep an eye on the Jo Ilian Awards beyond this year and the next few years.

The 2020 Jo Ilian is for Previous Vintage Chardonnay – so have a taste of your 2019 and earlier Chardonnays to see if you think you have a winner! And, if you haven't already, try to source some luscious fruit and start making Berry Wines for 2021.

<b>Show Year</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Winner</b>
2022 (Grape)	Best Previous Vintage Less Common Variety Red – other variety (RLP)	TBA
2021 (Country)	Best Berry Wine	TBA
2020 (Grape)	Best Previous Vintage Chardonnay (WCP)	TBA
2019 (Country)	Best Stone Fruit Wine (CST, Any vintage, Any Style, Includes CSP)	Noel Legg
2018 (Grape)	Best Previous Vintage Cabernet Sauvignon	Geoff Neagle
2017 (Country)	Best Mead Wine (CME, includes JAO)	Trevor Roberts
2016 (Grape)	Best Previous Vintage Pinot Noir (RPP)	David Hart
2015 (Country)	Best Country Wine (excludes Hybrid, Sparkling, Liqueur)	Gary Campanella, Hamish Lucas
2014 (Grape)	Best Current Vintage Dry Grape White wine, Any non-sparkling style, Any Varietal	Danny Cappellani
2013 (Grape)	Best Previous Vintage Red Blend	Danny Cappellani
2012 (Grape)	Best Previous Vintage Shiraz	Gary Campanella, Jid Cosma
2011 (Country)	Best Hybrid	Neil Johannesen
2010 (Country)	Best Herb, Grain, Flower, Veg	Mario and Jean Anders
2009 (Grape)	Best Current Vintage Rose'	Peter Belec
2008 (Country)	Best Sparkling County Wine	David Wood
2007 (Grape)	Best Current Vintage Sauvignon Blanc	NHE Johannesen
2006 (Country)	Best Berry or Current Wine	David Hart
2005 (Country)	Best Other Fruit Wine	Vinko Eterovic
2004 (Grape)	Best Shiraz	K. Furness, D. Markwell
2003 (Country)	Best Mead	Harry Gilham
2002 (Grape)	Best Riesling	Richard Skinner
2001 (Country)	Best Raspberry	Jacques Garnier
2000 (Grape)	Best Pinot Noir	Philip Hellard

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Peter and Gaeyle Fullerton.

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## *The Trading Barrel*

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**Note:** If you want a **FAST** response **Samepage** is the best place to advertise ...  
Samepage is instant, whereas the newsletter only comes out monthly!

The *Trading Barrel* is the place to list ...

- For Sale or Want to Buy items
  - Sponsor special deals
  - Member announcements – give-aways, winemaking Garage Sales etc
  - Availability of wine-related produce – grapes, honey, apples etc
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