

ELTHAM AND DISTRICT WINEMAKERS GUILD

ESTABLISHED 1969

JANUARY 2021

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 ... ONLINE – using Zoom ...

at 7.30 pm – for 8 pm start

Next meeting: Friday 29th January, 2021

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

In This Newsletter:

<i>President's Press.....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>2021 Committee & Committee Meeting Dates.....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Forward Program for Guild Events.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Social Activities.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Other Dates for Your Diary</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Members Share</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Great Memories</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>My Vintage Year</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Jo Ilian Awards – Forward Thinking</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Sponsors.....</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>The Trading Barrel.....</i>	<i>22</i>



Welcome

Like most of you I'm happy to see the end of 2020 and I'm quietly optimistic about what we can do as a guild in 2021. Welcome back for the start of our activities for this year!

Guild Nights

At the last Committee meeting it was agreed that we would continue with ZOOM Guild Nights for the foreseeable future. At this time, we have no indication from Nillumbik Council as to when the Eltham Living and Learning Centre will be available to groups such as ours and, with COVID numbers and restrictions being unpredictable, we decided to remain with ZOOM for continuity. This, of course, is open to change should we be permitted to have our normal meetings return to the Centre.

Program of Events for 2021

The Committee have had some discussion of events we might organise for the coming year. There will be the usual monthly Guild Nights – we're thinking of how we might incorporate some wine tastings into them, some workshops – delivered via ZOOM and some visits to local wineries.

Our first social outing will be to the Panton Hill Winery in February – see the details below and keep an eye on Samepage for updates.

Any suggestions for the coming year's program will be gratefully received.

What do you want to know about?

What would you like to tell everyone about?

January Guild Night

Our next Guild Night, on 29th January, will be presented by Robin Querre from Laffort and Victoria Hughes from The Wine Clinic on the topic Preparing for Vintage 2021. Make sure to ZOOM into this meeting to hear their recommendations and have plenty of questions for the both of them to answer. Keep an eye on SAMEPAGE for the ZOOM link and other info for this meeting.

Cheers,

Wayne Harridge – President



“I can certainly see that you know your wine. Most of the guests who stay here wouldn't know the difference between Bordeaux and Claret.”

— Basil Fawlty, “Fawlty Towers”

2021 Committee & Committee Meeting Dates

President	Wayne Harridge	General	Danny Cappellani
Secretary	Mario Anders	Committee	Trevor Sleep
Treasurer	Mario Anders		Graham Scott
Assistant Treasurer	Bill Bussau		Angela Harridge
Past President	Mario Fantin		Trevor Roberts
Wine Show Chief Judge	Sandrine Gimon		Glen van Neuren
Wine Show Director	Mario Fantin		Richard Martignetti
Webmaster	Mario Anders		
Membership Co-ordinator	David Chambers		
Newsletter	Angela Harridge		

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

Guild Business Meetings

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

Meeting Dates (Wednesdays): March 10, May 12, July 14, September 8, December 8

Wine Show Meetings

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

Meeting Dates (Wednesdays): February 10, April 14, June 9, August 11, October 13, November 10

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










Guild Nights will continue via ZOOM for the foreseeable future.


Social Activities & Workshops will take place according to COVID guidelines.

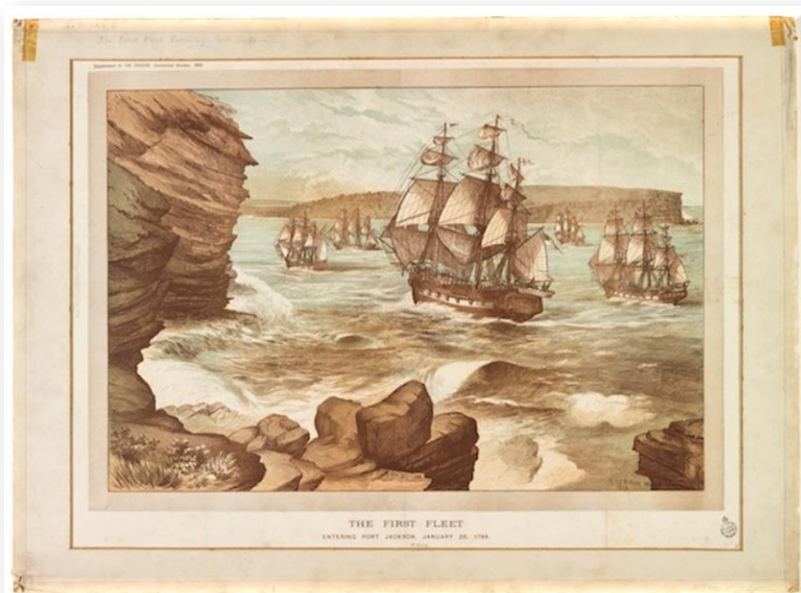
We will keep you updated as to what we are able to do via Samepage and the [Website](#).

... so keep  ...

*More information to come *

DATE	ACTIVITY
Friday January 29 th * 	<u>Monthly Guild Night:</u> * ZOOM meeting* <i>Preparing for Vintage 2021</i> Robin Querre from Laffort and Victoria Hughes from The Wine Clinic will talk about products and services that Laffort and The Wine Clinic provide – particularly at the time of vintage. There will be opportunity for members to ask questions. Wine Tasting Trial: 2 specified wines from ALDI (details on Samepage)
Sunday February 21 st * 	<u>Social Activity:</u> <i>Welcome Back Lunch @ Panton Hill Winery</i>
Friday February 26 th * 	<u>Monthly Guild Night:</u> * ZOOM meeting* TBA
Friday March 26 th * 	<u>Monthly Guild Night:</u> * ZOOM meeting* <i>Pruning workshop vineyard update + making sparkling wine</i> TBA
Sunday April 11 th * 	<u>Local Wineries Tour: St. Andrews</u> Tour, tasting and lunch at Shaw's Road Winery before moving on to a tour and tasting at Buttermann's Track Winery.
Friday April 30 th * 	<u>Monthly Guild Night:</u> * ZOOM meeting* TBA
Saturday May 15 th * 	<u>Gold Medal Dinner</u> TBA
Friday May 28 th * 	<u>Monthly Guild Night:</u> * ZOOM meeting* TBA

Friday June 25th * 	<u>Monthly Guild Night:</u> TBA * ZOOM meeting*
Friday July 30th *	<u>Monthly Guild Night:</u> TBA
Friday August 27th *	<u>Monthly Guild Night:</u> AGM – bring along your mulled wine for tasting and sharing
Friday September 24th *	<u>Monthly Guild Night:</u> TBA
Saturday October 24th	<u>Eltham Wine Show:</u> Closing Date for Entries
Friday October 29th *	<u>Monthly Guild Night:</u> TBA
Friday November 12th	<u>Eltham Wine Show:</u> Final Delivery Date
Saturday November 20th	<u>Eltham Wine Show:</u> Judging Day
Sunday November 21st	<u>Eltham Wine Show:</u> Public Open Day
Friday November 26th *	<u>Monthly Guild Night:</u> Final meeting of the year & Chief Judge review of the 2021 Wine Show



Grapes & Grains
Australian Wine Regions & History
Rodolfo Morais, March 8, 2018
<https://www.grapesandgrains.org/2018/03/australian-wine-regions-and-history.html>



Panton Hill Winery



Sunday February 21st Welcome Back Lunch @ Panton Hill Winery

<https://pantonhillwinery.com.au>

After almost a year of not being able to meet face-to-face let's celebrate by meeting up for an informal lunch and tasting at Panton Hill Winery on February 21st.

Panton Hill Winery is a family founded and run Boutique Winery. The winemaker and viticulturist is Teunis Kwak, who runs the winery with his wife Dorothy. Teunis was born in Holland and raised in Canada, before coming to Australia. He bought the land in Panton Hill in 1973 where he built the buildings from sandstone found on the property, convict mined Grampians sandstone, recycled timbers and stonework, and Welsh slate (originally early ships' ballast).

Teunis made his first wine as a teenager. He planted the vines in Panton Hill from 1977 to 1988. The rocky, dry slopes produced tough vines with low yields of high-quality grapes that are handpicked and aged in French and American oak. They produce both classic styles of wine and rarer innovative fortifieds.

We are heading there on a Sunday, which is a PANTON HILL PICNIC SUNDAY.

It's BYO food, they have ample sheltered seating, and we can do a tasting and purchase their wines (or beer or soft drinks) to sustain us as we eat and chat.

➤ Put **February 21st** in your diary ... and check out Samepage for the details to be included in the booking.



Butter
mans
Track



Sunday April 11th Local Wineries Tour: St. Andrews

<https://www.shawsroad.com.au> <https://buttermanstrack.squarespace.com>

After COVID lockdown saw us having to cancel our Local Wineries Tour to these two St. Andrews wineries last year, **Shaw's Road** and **Buttermans Track** Wineries are ready to welcome us in 2021.

The essence of the day is ...

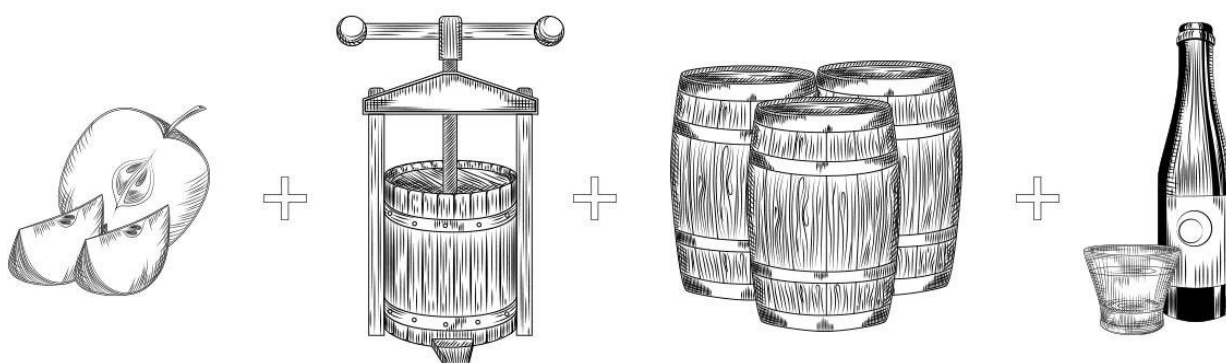
We'll meet at *Shaw's Road Winery* for a tour, chat and tasting with *George Apted*, before stepping into their café for some lunch (and more wine!).

We'll then head to *Buttermans Track Winery* where *Gary Trist* will take us on a tour of his state-of-the-art Gravity Flow Winery, and we'll sample some of their wines.

➤ Also put **Sunday April 11th** into your diary ... and keep an eye here and on SAMEPAGE for more details.

Other Dates for Your Diary

DATE	ACTIVITY
Monday February 15 th	Red Hill Cider Show: Closing Date for Entries & Delivery of Entries https://www.redhillshow.com.au/cider-show
Tuesday February 23 rd	Red Hill Cider Show: Judging Day
Friday February 26 th	Red Hill Mead Show: Final Delivery Date https://www.redhillshow.com.au/mead-show
Sunday February 28 th	Red Hill Mead Show: Judging Day
Saturday March 6 th	Red Hill Mead Show: Mead MeetUp for entrants
Sunday August 29 th	Frankston & South Eastern Wine Show: Public Open Day



YOU'RE INVITED TO
THE 5TH



THE
**RED
HILL**
CIDER
SHOW

HOSTED BY THE
RED HILL A & H SOCIETY

JUDGING 23RD FEBRUARY 2021

ENTRIES ARE OPEN FOR
NON-COMMERCIAL &
COMMERCIAL CIDER
PRODUCERS




ENTRIES NOW OPEN

5th Red Hill Cider Show

All craft cider makers are invited to enter and benchmark their product against that of their peers. Classes will reflect both new world and traditional styles of cider and perry. Cider blends are also welcome.

Head judge: Warwick Billings – LOBO Cider, SA & President Cider Australia

- Trophies will be awarded to overall "Best Cider", "Best Perry" and "Best Amateur", with certificates & ribbons in all classes. An awards event TBA.
- Results will be posted on the Red Hill Show website and winners will be promoted via our Social Media channels.
- All entries will receive judging comments.



Red Hill A & H Society Exhibitor Guide

To enter: www.redhillshow.com.au/cider-show

Entries Close: Monday 15th February 2021

– No late entries accepted

Exhibits Due: Between Friday 29th January 2021 to

Monday 15th February 2021

Entry Fee: Commercial -\$30 per entry

Non-Commercial (Enthusiasts) -\$10 per entry



For more details visit:

www.redhillshow.com.au or

email: info@redhillshow.com.au



**Feb
28th
2021**



THE
**RED
HILL**
MEAD
SHOW

Recognized qualified and experienced judges
Comprehensive feedback on all entries.

- Benchmark your meads against the best!
- Trophies for "Best in Class" and "Best in Show"
- Entries judged to a standard, not 1st 2nd or 3rd.

"Mead MeetUp"
for entrants.

Red Hill Show Grounds
11am 6th March

\$10 entry

All details of classes and delivery will
be on the website
www.redhillshow.com.au

Website opening 1st week in January.

We know it's late !!! Blame it on Covid.

- Mark Hibberd: BJCP Mead Judge: VicBrew
- Steve Kirby: BJCP Mead Judge: Stone Dog Meadery
- Andy Coates: Amrita Park Meadery Judge Eltham Wine Show
- Nicola Coates: Amrita Park Meadery Mead devotee.
- Hamish Lucas: Judge Eltham Wine Show experienced and successful mead producer
- Anne Shea: Winner VicBrew Mead section, avid mead writer and blogger.

The largest mead competition in Australia

Open to all lovers of Mead: Commercial and Enthusiast



Entries NOW Open

for all enthusiast and commercial
mead makers.

www.redhillshow.com.au/mead-show

\$10 entry ■ Judging 28th Feb.

register, then enter.

Richard Webb: *2019 Lagrein – a tale of three barrels*

The story begins

It all came out of our Street Drinks one week in 2018. My neighbour Frank opined that the only good red I ever made was a 2008 Lagrein. So, I asked my mate Ian to ask his mate to look around for some Lagrein for next year (his mate has a huge vineyard near Mildura). Ian promptly forgot. I didn't, and pestered him, but nothing seemed to come of it.

Meanwhile, I heard about Danny organising a grape buy and ordered some Lagrein from Chalmers. 'Maybe 200 kg,' they said. I figured that would be better than nothing if Mildura fizzled out.

Christmas came and went. My mate Ian holidayed with Sam on his Mildura vineyard and when he returned to Hawthorn announced that Sam had found half a tonne of Lagrein and was I still interested? Yes - fortunately another neighbour Denis enters the action: he, Ian and I will share the barrel of Lagrein.

Grapes arrive

The Chalmers Lagrein duly appears in February, 140 kg. Fermenting, it doesn't smell like I remember Lagrein, but we have a busy vintage with 300 litres of sparkling and some Yarra Sav Blanc all requiring whole bunch pressing. (If you have never done this it's tedious in the extreme.) And half a tonne more Lagrein coming.

Time passes

I set up the garage with a borrowed 1000 litre vat – better to be sure than sorry – and a 'torpedo'. Mildura has 40 consecutive days of +40C, surely the Lagrein is imminent – but all I hear from the grower is 'Lagrein no good, you should have got Saperavi'. Finally comes the 'phone call: they are machine harvesting Lagrein Monday, so we tee up Pickering's Transport for a half tonne of Lagrein on a pallet and a trailer to pick it up from their Melbourne Depot. What could go wrong?

Half a tonne – Not

Come Monday morning, the phone call: Lagrein all picked and transported to Pickering's Mildura Depot, went really well. Oh, and by the way, there is One Tonne. Bugger.

We didn't have a trailer strong enough nor a suitable car to tow One Tonne. So, Nick – did I say that Nick is another partner in this operation? – rounds up suitable transport at the 11th hour and we head out to West Footscray to the Pickering's depot rather late in the day. Interesting drive home in peak hour traffic with a tonne of grapes on board. Dark by the time we get to my place and the problem of getting the trailer of grapes into my garage via our narrow bluestone cobbled back lane. Yet another neighbour steps into the breach and the five of us struggle the trailer into the garage. Fortunately, it fits. Now we have to empty the 1 tonne Pallecon into the fermentation vat. With buckets of course.

Denis – remember Denis? – steps up, strips to jocks and jumps into the Pallecon like a true champion to empty the bottom half. Now it's time for the laboratory work. Baume is 11.7, pH 4.0.

Oh.

Bugger.

The Cold Soak

The fruit was well sulphured in the Pallecon so we left it overnight, the Baume always comes up overnight and with all that hot weather there will be some raisins.

The Baume didn't come up overnight. So, allowing for one baume from the raisins, we sugared the must for an extra ½ % alcohol and went in with the good Clos yeast and seemingly vast amounts of tartaric acid.

The Ferment

It was a wonderful ferment, I have to say. After a good pump over the Lagrein aroma filled the garage. DAP went in ½ on day two and another ½ at 6 Baume and every time I pumped it over it smelt good. We got to 30C and it smelt divine. Came time to press off and Nick brought his press over, so we had two on the job. So much fun. We pressed hard to ensure that the raisins all were squeezed out. The Chalmers Lagrein went in too and with pumping over the blend also smelt like proper Lagrein. The Laffort bacteria zipped through the malolactic fermentation in no time at all.

Another friend loaned us a barrel so that was One. Then Nick emptied two of his barrels so there were Three (just).

The Trials ...

Then we got the % alcohol analysis back from the lab. 12.4%. Didn't seem like enough and the wine tasted pretty thin. Should have added more C.S.R. Bugger. So much for the raisins.

There was also the matter of the 3.9 pH. Oh, and I forgot to mention the insipid colour.

So here began the saga of trying to get more body into the wine so that as well as smelling like proper Lagrein it might also taste like the real thing, and also doing something about the awful pH and lack of colour.

The acid addition trial showed that even 0.05 g/l extra tartaric acid made the wine taste too sour.

The alcohol addition trial (using a very clean, neutral grappa) had interesting results: it improved the wine's body, mouthfeel and overall balance, but totally overwhelmed the Lagrein character. We could have a nice wine if we didn't want it to taste like a Lagrein it seemed.

What to do?

... Travels ...

I had to go to Europe, so the wine went into wood. When I came back home, with the time in wood, the wine had become darker and tasted better. So much that, come the 2019 Wine Show, we had One Barrel that tasted almost like real Lagrein, so we entered it with great hope and the 'normal' amount of SO₂ for a Show sample.

...Tribulations ...

Remember that pH? Mr Rankine suggests that a wine of pH 3.6 needs 50 ppm free SO₂ to prevent spoilage. Our wine was pH 3.9: we entered it with insufficient SO₂. By the time it came before the judges it was oxidised: they gave it a raspberry.

Having learnt this lesson we bottled that barrel with significantly more SO₂. It kept well but didn't taste like Lagrein to me. However, it did pay back all the kind people who loaned vats, barrels and torpedos, thanked the grower and the grappa man, and became a down payment for Nick, Ian and Denis. They all seemed happy with the wine. I got two dozen I think out of the 24 dozen, but there were still Two Barrels, one for me and one for Nick.

... and Tannin

Nick is a tannin freak, so we explored the wonders of packet tannin. Lagrein is notorious for its tannin so they say, but at that stage ours certainly wasn't. So, yet another tasting trial, this time for the best of three tannins.

Can you believe we did five tasting trials with this wine trying to get it to taste like proper Lagrein? Acid adjustment, alcohol adjustment, another acid adjustment, another alcohol adjustment and finally a tannin trial.

Have we succeeded? Hopefully, you can try it yourself at the Wine Show and see what you think. I'm still not happy with the wine. It does not taste like I remember Lagrein tasting.

Real Lagrein

Shortly after Vintage my wife and I headed over to Europe to see our son who was in Zurich for one semester of study for his Masters. So, amongst other things we slipped over the border into Italy and went Lagrein tasting in the Alto Adige.

Those wines had 14.5% alcohol, deep colour, strong varietal characteristics and big tannin. All the nice ones were four years old.

Does the strong varietal character only emerge after time in the bottle?

I hope. And as My Barrel of Lagrein ages in my cellar it does seem to be slowly getting darker and richer. There is enough for some to be left at 4 years of age. See it at the 2023 Show!



Lagrein ...

- Some claim that it came from the Vallagarina Valley – the most southern part of Val d’Adige in Italy.
- Others favour Greece, coming from Lagaria, in the northern Alps.
- Others believe it originated in France, in Burgundy.
- Today, most believe it comes from the Lagarina Valley in Trentino, south of Alto Adige.
- DNA testing suggests it’s related to Pinot Noir, Shiraz (Syrah), Dureza and Teroldego.
- Even though it’s mainly grown in the cooler northern region of Italy, in Australia it’s being grown in the warmer regions of the Murray Darling and the Riverland.
- Some say that Lagrein was first mentioned in print in the 17th Century, but others claim it was mentioned in official documents in 1379.
- Lagrein was originally served at the tables of the nobles and ecclesiastics – it was nectar reserved for a select few.
- Tasting notes:
 - Well connected, distinctively fruity but sometimes rustic.
 - Sour plums with a touch of grass and bitter cherries some dark chocolate and a deep dark colour.
 - Tannic, spicy, tobacco, black plums, grassy herbaceous, earthy, fragrant.

Graham Scott: *Guild trip to Gippsland ('Scotts'land?') ... 2005*

These were taken when the Guild made its trip to Gippsland in 2005.

Spencer Field was a member of the Guild and, as he had come to see me a number of times when we both worked on a State Viticultural Committee, he knew we could give the Guild a GOOD TIME.

As we did.

We met at a winery in Drouin (I think) and they set the tone for tastings. I took them to Ada River Winery in Neerim South, where we had lunch out under the huge shade trees beside this old house they used for tastings and gatherings. Somehow, the steam ran out of everyone there – I think it was the Merlot that did it! We just sat blissfully in the dappled sunlight and I thought 'This is the life!'

We had a magnificent dinner at Century Inn, of which I can recall very little.

Mario Fantin was there – I think Mario was President – because, after we had the tour of my vineyard ...



I am pointing down to my vineyard



The vines



... and I showed them the first EDWG press – by Jo Ilian ...

... Mario presented me with Life Membership ... and I fell in a heap. I never recovered.



*Me with the new badge and the press
in my workshop at Moe South*

It was a lovely group occasion, and I'll rat around the files
for other photos.



Mario Anders: *Kom-Butcher or just a Scoby Dooby Doo*

‘So, let’s have a Kombucha Class,’ they said. ‘A what?’ I said. Let’s try Kombucha as a Class as it is fermented (apparently).

Wiki tells me ‘*Kombucha is a fermented, lightly effervescent, sweetened black or green tea drink commonly consumed for its supposed health benefits.*’

So, we have a friendly judge lined up, so ‘Maybe,’ I thought, ‘Maybe I should try to make some, so we have some entries’.

So, first you need a SCOBY – what is it and where do you get it?

Well, you will see as you progress, the SCOBY duplicate themselves every couple of weeks, so people keep them in a *SCOBY Hotel*. Yes, they do, I am not kidding. And you can purchase a SCOBY on the internet and have one mail ordered to you. So, I did that.

Next off to Target to purchase a 3 litre vessel with a tap on the bottom and three one litre swing top bottles. They look thick glass but ... (all will be revealed later).

And now we need tea which we ferment as stage 1 or ferment 1.

So, I have tried green tea, red tea, black tea, white tea (who knew?).

The best combination seems to be half black tea and half green tea for the taste and the health benefits. If we have to drink the stuff, we should try to make it healthy as well.

So, with pyrex jugs, I make 1.5l black tea and 1.5l green tea, 200grams of sugar and ACV.

Sugar – yes white. I tried all types of sugar, white, caster, raw, cubed, brown (who knew?).

Best is plain old white sugar as it dissolves easily and does not affect the taste.

And you need a tablespoon of apple cider vinegar? Why? I am yet to find out, but I just do it.

Apparently, the mixture needs some encouragement to guide it on its way.

OK, so now, how long is the first ferment? Well, I tried everything from 7 days up to 14 days. 7 days was going ok as I did it every Wednesday but got better results with longer. 14 days? Not as *fresh* as I would like and the SCOBY goes darker, so I hit on 10 days as my best cycle with my method and ingredients.

Now the second cycle is where you *flavour* the product and wait for a second period. If you taste the Kombucha at this point it is like a mild *Braggs* and not at all unpleasant. Drinkable, if you really needed to for health reasons. There is no sugar left nor could I detect any alcohol.

So, what flavour, I wonder. I wanted to make some drinks that were healthily flavoured and where I could increase the benefits. And I wanted to steer clear of pretentious flavourings such as *Mint Lime Mojito* or *Pumpkin Spice* and no way I am doing a *Chia Seed* – not likely. You can try the *Pineapple Basil* combination if you like, *Ginger and Lemongrass* is exotic enough for me.

So, I chose some healthy ingredients. Blackcurrants, Raspberries, Mango, Mint. Coffee. The trick at this stage is to have enough flavour without overpowering the tea. And let’s make it fizzy, sure, add a little sugar to the second ferment.

Now, I started doing this in winter – house cold, pantry even colder. I added sugar according to what I tasted the fruits were, sweet or otherwise, between half a teaspoon to a full one. I now decant 1 litre from the Stage 1, into the fruit-stuffed bottle, and close it for another period. And you can do three different ones at a time. And then I make another three litres of mixed tea, sugar and ACV, for the next round of

first ferment. You also need to keep a little of the first product with your SCOBY for next cycle so as not to shock it.

Again, second ferment varying between 7 days, 10 days, 14 days. I find 10 days is best. Now after that time I just drink what I want from the bottle and clean up in a couple of days after it is empty. All well and good until Spring is in the air and the weather is warming.

BANG!

Oh my, the pantry is warmer than before and I now have blue Kombucha over the ceiling, down the walls, over the groceries and I now have blue grout on the floor from the blueberries.

And not to learn the lesson the first time, BANG! a second bottle goes, this time pink everywhere.

So now the wine show is close, my practise is all over the place and my stock is low.

Still, I now learn, during ferment 2, only use quarter to half teaspoon of sugar, release the pressure on the swing top every couple of days. Then, decant the contents and store them in the fridge. They don't seem to explode in the fridge or at least none of the ones for the show did.

And I have tried a number of ingredients. Mango ended up a sticky mushy goo, which would not decant properly but tasted great on my cornflakes.

I have used fruit and I have used cordial. The best one in my opinion (never mind the judge) was with elderflower cordial from *Ashbolt* (100ml cordial to 1litre), very popular with all my lady friends. Serve with a tiny sprig of rosemary and a slice of cucumber.

I also extracted some Polish Juniper berries and made a *Jee and Tea* (sorry).

Ashbolt elderberry makes a lovely drink and, of course, wards off the flu in winter. And *Ashbolt* has a Wattle cordial which was nutty on its own but nice with a little vanilla (when you split the vanilla bean don't scrape the seeds and you won't get little black bits everywhere, just need to strain out the seeds).

I have now branched into Jun, which is a Kombucha using honey instead of sugar, but flavourings are a challenge due to the cloying honey in the final product. Still working out this one.

For Kombucha you can make flavours from your garden or pantry. The lemon I made from my tree - lemon juice and boiled lemon skin – and it was a treat (the same as I make for ice cream). Also, in a similar way, strong espresso coffee, boiled with sugar and reduced, make a great coffee flavouring, and add chocolate to this for a mocha. See, it is not too hard.

I tried garden mint but could not get rid of that compost taste, need to find a better way. My ginger and lemongrass is Asian red ginger and real lemon grass, and is so fragrant. Had lots of success with berries but less with other fruits but I will keep trying and will leave the spices for the Christmas pudding.



My Vintage Year ...

An interview series where we interview your fellow EDWG members or significant others in the Wine Industry.

Was this their vintage year?

by David Chambers

Today it's **Stephen Chambers**



FAMILY OWNED & RUN SINCE 1858

A Barrel Room, it's what I want for Xmas. Have you, like me, been fortunate enough to tour Chambers' Barrel Room at Rutherglen? A treat for all the senses, the walls whitewashed old, quaint farmhouse old. The building is a large structure. Massive oak barrels are lined up like soldiers throughout the space. There is a delicious bouquet of blended smells pervading your senses as you walk quietly amongst the massive casks. Many of these barrels go back to another century, another time when life at the vineyard was easier and simple. Indeed, a slower time, when tradition dictated how wine was made, a tradition passed down from father to son through several generations. The Chambers family has been in Rutherglen for as many generations as wine has been made in Australia. Chambers Rosewood is one of those old family run wineries that live and breath history from the walls to the old barrels. Some of those barrels built by a Smithwick long days gone by. And George Smithwick is the Great Grandson of the builder of some of those barrels. And George built my Muscat Barrel for me, twelve months ago. Just saying.



Stephen Chambers now has the reins at Rosewood and is a willing Interviewee and as you will see below is keen to forge a name for himself in the famous old winery. There are wine families in Australia that are national treasures and we as a nation do not celebrate that enough. The Chambers family is near the top of that list if not on the top.



- Dave:** *You would have had an ideal childhood being raised at a property located on a vineyard in such an historic spot. Also not far from the most iconic river in Australia the mighty Murray. What are your earliest fond memories of growing up in that time and place?*
- Stephen:** There are so many memories not just about wine though as we do have a farm as well. Winery wise some of the earliest memories was helping out in the winery with the transfers of wine by manning the pump, pushing the on and off buttons on the old impeller pumps with brass housing, and listening for the shouts of go and whoa. On the farm it was helping moving the sheep from paddock to paddock with the occasional day off school when it took longer to move the sheep than expected.
- Dave:** *I understand there is a closeness, a bond if you like with others of your generation from wine families, raised amongst the old river gums of Wahgunyah and Rutherglen. Jen Pfeiffer had fond memories of this time. Do you also find this is true?*
- Stephen:** Yes, though I must admit as the youngest of the family I was always hanging around with older members of other winemaking families like the Gehrigs'. Spent a lot of time with my older cousins at Lakeside, another Chambers property now operated as Lake Moodemere Estate by my cousin Michael, his wife Belinda, and their son Joel.
- Dave:** *What is your first experience that you remember that led to an interest in wine?*
- Stephen:** Quite possibly it is also related to my first couple of attempts at making wine. I made my first micro batch of wine at the age of 12 from Muscat grapes with a wild ferment at home. I then tried it with red wine with skin contact in an ice cream container; unfortunately, here it turned to a haven for vinegar flies and turned acetic. The following year I tried again using yeast provided by my father, but in this case, I think I was heavy handed on the yeast addition as I lost the varietal characters and it as dominated by the yeast.
- Dave:** *At what age did your parents allow you to make your first batches of wine.*
- Stephen:** See above.
- Dave:** *What did the impact of Parker's 100 points for your Rare Rutherglen Muscat have on the winery in terms of pride in your product and acknowledgement that your family had made something really special in the world of wine? Not to put too fine a point to this, but he claimed this was a national treasure. An incredible honour for your effort. Did this change anything in your day to day running of the vineyard. I notice Jen Pfeiffer's question is in a similar vein.*
- Stephen:** There were a few things that resulted from this recognition. Firstly, it precipitated a major planting program to increase our area under Muscat. It also resulted in a change in the blending of the Rutherglen Muscat. Prior to our success in the US we had been using a solera for the Rutherglen however with such large volumes being sold (well, for us large) using a solera was creating work for works sake without the benefits of what running this system has in the final product. We are still dealing with the impacts of this 20 years later. It must be noted though that we did go to great lengths to protect the Rare Muscat and were clear from the beginning that there would be times it would not be available to the market.
- Dave:** *There are many occasions to party when your parents own a vineyard. Can you tell us about the wildest party you attended? Probably in your youth but maybe not.*
- Stephen:** Can't remember ... maybe it was too wild.
- Dave:** What are you making now that excites you?
- Stephen:** There are a few things that we are tinkering with. Be it the Shiraz Mondeuse or the Tempranillo we are always fine tuning. Also, currently been cleaning off decades of ingrained dirt off the old casks in the winery as well as replacing the old iron coach bolts with stainless steel ones.

Jen: Stephen, you have been very lucky to become the custodian of one of the great fortified houses in Rutherglen and inherit a history of around 150 years of continuous wine production. Please describe what that responsibility means to you, and what you think you might change in your fortified winemaking approach if you were starting from scratch?

Stephen: It puts a lot of pressure on you to ensure you make the right choice when selecting the single vintage wines to top the older soleras. Potentially, some of this pressure is self-imposed on oneself striving to maintain the high standard set by previous generations. Not sure whether I can do justice to the latter part of the question as it will be biased by experience. I am however willing to explore tinkering with some techniques as things have obviously changed from when my father started making wines and the same could be said of the other generations. I would most likely transfer some the table wine techniques into fortified wine making such as temperature control, soaks and yeast selection.

Dave: *How much of your wine making skills do you attribute to your early years growing up in the vineyard? Do you think this has helped you make more interesting wine?*

Stephen: It is a combination of things. Most of the philosophy applied to the fortified winemaking is derived from growing up around the winery and drawing on the experiences of my father. Table wine wise not so much though. We tend to make wine styles we like to drink and hope there are enough people out there who share similar tastes. Of course, at times you have to make wine that, while they are commercially successful, that you wouldn't drink much of.

Dave: *Are you into 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?*

Stephen: Hmm, interesting question. Some of the intellectual discussions about wine interest me while others do not enthrall me at all and I tune out.

Dave: *Are you a pedantic, fussy wine maker, or do you prefer to feel your way along steady as she goes, it will work out in the end?*

Stephen: Bit of both really. Pedantic about some of the aspects of table wine making such as ensuring tanks are not left on ullage for too long. Though with fortified wines it is about the long game so a little bit more relaxed there.

Dave: *What is wine making to you? I suspect it is not just a job. But a consuming passion that excites you. Is this true?*

Stephen: It varies, it is a constant challenge and is very rewarding when things work out for the better though deflating when they don't despite everything you may do. It is the challenge that makes it appealing. Though I must say that the last year or so we have probably had a few too many challenges thrown our way.

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

Stephen: Experimenting with new varieties (well not new per se just new to us). Also developments in technology allowing us to move away from some of the winemaking techniques currently undertaken which have unintended impacts on the wine, i.e. every time you use a fining agent to remove an undesired character you can also have an impact on a beneficial attribute.

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

Stephen: There is not one particular thing or person rather a whole combination which have influenced my winemaking.

- Dave:** *What inspires you to make better wine? Is it the Gold medals or the knowledge that you are ever improving on your skills from those acquired accolades?*
- Stephen:** All of the above. It's always nice to get third party endorsement regardless of whether it comes from your customers, wine critics or competitions.
- Dave:** *What wine that you have made recently are you most proud of?*
- Stephen:** 2016 Anton Ruch (Shiraz Mondeuse) and 2015 Roussanne.
- Dave:** *What have been the positive surprises of becoming aware you were part of such a famous family of Wine Makers?*
- Stephen:** I honestly don't think we are that famous as a family rather we have had members of the family who are well recognised. I used to think the family was famous when I first went to university; but came to the realisation over time that I was no better than the next person or winemaker and it up to me to create my own reputation.
- Dave:** *What were you drinking in your twenties?*
- Stephen:** Beer ... economic reasons and being a University student.
- Dave:** *If you could tell the young Stephen about life, what advice would you give?*
- Stephen:** Don't drink so much beer and drink more wine. Don't be so arrogant.
- Dave:** *Enlighten us with a couple of your favourites wine tweaks?*
- Stephen:** I don't really have any favourite wine tweaks, though during ferment oxygen is good.
- Dave:** *I have heard in my short time with the guild some complete disasters while making home-made wine. What is your biggest disaster you can share with us that happened in your winery?*
- Stephen:** Not putting a hose on the press tray with the result of the wine going on the floor. Not having the doors on the press on properly; result all the must ending in the press tray rather than the press. Leaking cask doors can also be a disaster, it's never nice walking in the front door of the winery to be confronted by a lake of wine on the floor.
- Dave:** *I have asked this question of everyone and so far a hundred percent have said making wine was never a financial consideration. What was the motivation and still is for you after so many years in family wine making?*
- Stephen:** If winemaking was a financial consideration, we wouldn't be doing it or at the very least not running our own winery. For me in part it was to continue the family legacy.
- 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?*
- Stephen:** Hmm hard to nail down.
Wine: A Coonawarra Cabernet – maybe a Majella or Bowen Estate.
With that in mind a Beef Ragu to pair.
Bit hard to nail down the music though.
Book: Seven Pillars of Wisdom - have started to read it but didn't finish it, or maybe 1984 by George Orwell.



Jo Ilian Awards – Forward Thinking

Keep an eye on the Jo Ilian Awards beyond this year and the next few years. The 2021 Jo Ilian is for Best Berry Wine – so try to source some luscious fruit over the summer and start making Berry Wines ... and see if you can come up with a winner!

Show Year	Class	Winner
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)	Danny Cappellani
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 Currant 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

**— THE —
ARTISAN'S
BOTTEGA**

**EQUIPMENT TO
FEED YOUR PASSION**

Address: 317 Victoria St, West Melbourne
Ph: 03 9328 1843
218 Cooper Street, Epping
Ph: 03 9422 1711
<https://artisansbottega.com.au>

COSTANTE
imports

**For all your
winemaking
equipment.**

Presses
Storage Tanks
Fermentation Tanks
Bottle Fillers
Filters
Screw Capping Machines -
Yeasts
Labelling Machines
Chemicals
Semi Automatic Corkers
Corks
Fittings
Pumps

Ph: (03) 9484 7948 - Fax: (03) 9484 7940
577-579 Bell St, Preston VIC 3072
Email: sales@costanteimports.com.au

www.costanteimports.com.au

AUSTCURE
SMOKERS & ACCESSORIES

**MEAT SMOKING
KITS & BUNDLE OFFERS
FERMENTATION EQUIPMENT
CIDER**

Steve Director
Phone: 0490025711
Email: steve@austcure-mail.com
Website: www.austcure.com
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Austcure>

Proudly sponsored by
Eltham and District
Community Bank® Branch

Bendigo Bank

**Greensborough
Home Brewing Supplies**

Your local homebrew shop carrying a complete range of Wine & Beer making supplies

Books	Nutrients	Glassware	Acids
5L Stills	Oak Barrels	Corks	Yeasts

Winemaking equipment hire – including motorised crusher / de-stemmer (750kg / hr), basket press, corker and more.

Call Dave for all your needs ...
29 Beewar Street Greensborough 3087 Greensborough
Tel: 9432 0283
Email: brewwithdave@greensboroughhomebrew.com.au

Home Make it™

~ Specialists in homemade food & beverage equipment, supplies & courses ~

PASTA/PIZZA	SALAMI	WINE	CHEESE	SPIRITS
TOMATO PASSATA	OLIVE OIL/VINEGAR	SAUSAGES	BEER	KITCHENWARE

www.homemakeit.com.au | info@homemakeit.com.au

-CLAYTON- Shop 4/158 Wellington Rd, Clayton VIC 3168 ph: (03) 9457-8222
-RESERVOIR- 261 Spring Street, Reservoir VIC 3079 ph: (03) 9487-1139
-PRESTON WAREHOUSE- 95 Chifley Drive, Preston VIC 3072 ph: (03) 9487 1105
OPEN - Mon to Fri 9am-5pm, Sat 9am-1pm (9am-3pm March-July) & Sun 10am-2pm (March-April)

Panton Hill Estate

The Panton Hill Estate olive grove is a family owned and run farm which is nestled in the western hills of the famous Yarra Valley

Phone: +61 3 9719 7260
Email: info@pantonhillestate.com.au
Sales: sales@pantonhillestate.com.au
Peter and Gaeyle Fullerton.

The Trading Barrel

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
-