



COFIELD WINES

• RUTHERGLEN •

CELLAR CIRCLE NEWS

BUDBURST 2005



MAX'S MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

Greetings!

What a huge difference a good bit of rain makes to our confidence in the vineyard! For the time being, at least, we seem to be free from irrigation worries - the uncertainty of irrigation water, the anxious anticipation of timely rain, and always being aware of the importance of producing top quality grapes. So, after some decent rain, it is with renewed enthusiasm that we approach the new vintage.

and Melanie, along with our wonderful staff, who have created not only a successful business but also a great work environment. It is a pleasure to be part of this culture.

We recently had a little get-together to celebrate the end of pruning, and it was a lovely night. Andrew was in charge of getting the bonfire going, but of course everyone else pitched in, offering their advice from the comfort of a haybale while relaxing with a drink. Ahhh, teamwork!

Keep well, and hope to see you at Cellar Door soon.

Cheers, Max

I have been reflecting lately on the progress of our little winery and want to take this opportunity to recognise the huge input of Karen, Damien, Andrew

A FEW WORDS FROM



KAREN

Early spring brings a spate of Cofield birthdays. This year it was Damien who received particular attention, with a birthday bash to celebrate his 30th. His wife, Melanie, put in a lot of effort and ensured the evening was a huge success. A bus picked us up at our door, with friendly greetings from the driver (Mel's father) and the guests already on the bus. A glass of bubbles in hand, we set off to pick up the Rutherglen contingent and then it was off to the venue - the Vine Hotel, near Wangaratta.

Entertainment was provided by Paul Hicks, and this added to the good atmosphere. Paul provided music at Cofield Wines during Winery Walkabout this year so some of you might even remember him. A tender steak and plenty of wine ensured a wonderful evening. I only feel 30 myself, so how my children can be that age I don't know!

Max has learnt the importance of keeping a mobile phone handy, but that's his story. Ask him about it when you next visit our cellar door.

Bye for now,
Karen



The team celebrate the end of pruning with a bonfire at the winery.

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NEWSFLASH...
The Cellar Circle Newsletter is going live!
See page 4 for details

IT'S A HAPPENING THING

We finally have a website!!!!!!!

Yes, it is actually up and running. So why not grab a glass (or bottle) of wine (Cofield's of course), jump on your PC and go to www.cofieldwines.com.au. Have a wander around the site and check out your Cellar Circle Exclusive Offer page. The member login section isn't quite functional yet, but when it becomes available you'll be able to download yummy recipes and check and change your membership details online.

Our very first Cellar Circle dinner in Melbourne!!!

To celebrate the tenth anniversary of our Cellar Circle (can you believe it's been ten years?!!!) we are heading to Melbourne to have a dinner for our Cellar Circle members. We are really excited about this dinner and hope you will be able to join us.

Mel and Damien will be attending the dinner and, unless Max and Karen choof off in the caravan, they'll be there too. It will be a typical Cofield evening - lots of Cofield wines, fabulous food and a fun night for all.

We are still in the process of finalising details, however we can confirm that it will be on Wednesday 23rd November at the fabulous Hotel Metropolitan in North Melbourne. Since its recent refurbishment, this now upmarket bistro has received rave reviews.

You are more than welcome to bring along friends and introduce them to the wonderful world of Cofield Wines. Bookings are essential and places are limited, so if you would like to join us please give us a call at the winery on 02 6033 3798 or send us an email to topdrop@cofieldwines.com.au. We will keep you posted as more details are available and look forward to catching up with you in November.

New Staff Appointment Plonk the cat

Plonk joined us around the middle of July, quite unexpectedly. We have named him Plonk because he has plonked himself here at the winery, and of course there's the obvious reference to wine! Plonk has made himself quite comfortable around the winery (as you can see) and enjoys the company of people immensely. He greets our

customers at cellar door and, in typical cat style, graciously allows them to pick him up and give him a cuddle.

Having quite a high opinion of himself, Plonk has taken over Max's desk and regards himself as topcat at Cofield Wines.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why are wines like port and tokay being renamed?

Some wines are named after the varieties of grape they are made from, such as Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay or Shiraz. Sometimes, a wine will have a personal name that means something to the producer, like Cofield's Jess and Max's Blend. Other wines, though, are named for their "style", which often stems from wherever that type of wine originated, and it is the naming of these wines that is the issue of contention.

Probably the best known case of this is "Champagne". The famous sparkling wine style got its name from the Champagne region in France, and other countries adopted the name for wines of a similar style (ie. sparkling white wine) because of the recognition factor - people knew what Champagne was! France, being very proud of its wines and heritage, successfully fought for ownership of the word Champagne, which is why an Australian bubbly white is now more likely to be called Sparkling White (or Sparkling Chenin Blanc, Sparkling Pinot Noir Chardonnay, etc).

The same thing happened to Burgundy, Bordeaux, Hermitage, Graves and so on. While an Australian winery might make a wine to a burgundy style, for example, or from a traditional Bordeaux variety, the wines can't be called Burgundy or Bordeaux.

And it isn't just French styles that are being affected.

Tokay, a style of fortified wine commonly made in Rutherglen from the muscadelle

NEWS FROM OUR REGIONAL PARTNERS

Now that our new website is up and running, you can find out all about our Regional Partner benefits online.

We will keep you posted on any changes or additions to the program via the website and in the quarterly newsletters.

Have you taken advantage of any of the Regional Partner benefits yet? We welcome any feedback or comments you have on this initiative.

Planning to visit Rutherglen at some stage soon? Check out the benefits currently available and make the most of your membership.

grape, has its naming origins in Hungary (a region and wine style called Tokaj). So, much of what has been known as Tokay in the past is now being called by the variety name, Muscadelle.

Port, a fortified wine that can actually be made from a range of different grape varieties, has been named for a wine style that happens to have originated in Portugal. Generally, people have a reasonable idea of what is in the bottle when the label says Port, Tawny Port or Vintage Port. With the use of the word Port now going the way of Champagne, producers are having to find new ways of labelling their products. Which is why the first ever vintage port style wine made by Cofield Wines has been called QVP Shiraz.

Rutherglen winemakers can at least relax in the knowledge that Muscat (made from the Muscat a Petit Grains grape) is safe!



SWIRL, SNIFF, SIP & SPIT

Following on from the last newsletter, here are some techniques for increasing your wine appreciation & tasting enjoyment.

Tasting Wine

The front & back of the tongue contain taste buds, with some of these more sensitive to particular taste sensations than others. So that you get the most out of your taste buds when wine tasting, swish the wine around your mouth as this will allow all of your taste buds to participate in the detection of flavours.

Smell & Taste

Have you ever tried to detect flavour from wine when you had a cold? You probably tasted very little, if anything at all. Research indicates that 70 to 75% of what we taste is actually due to our sense of smell. While the tongue can identify basic tastes like sweet, sour, bitter & salty, our sense of smell enables us to identify more subtle flavours in wine, such as chocolate, fruits, herbs or spice.

Wine Tasting Techniques

Wine tasting is a fundamentally subjective experience, but there are some general "guidelines", used by critics & judges, that help to achieve a more objective understanding of wine. If you already enjoy wine, developing a greater understanding of tasting techniques will provide even greater pleasure.

The three steps in wine tasting are Look, Smell, & Taste:

Look - Pour the wine into a clear glass & hold it in front of a white background (a tablecloth or piece of paper will work) so that you can examine the colour & clarity. The colour of wine varies tremendously, even in the same type of wine. For example, white wines are not actually white; they range from transparent to green to yellow to brown. More colour in a white wine usually indicates more flavour, oak contact or bottle age, although a brown wine may have gone bad (oxidized). Red wines are not just red; they range from pale red to deep brown red, usually becoming lighter in colour as they age. **Rim colour:** The rim, or edge, of a red wine can be an indication of age. Tilt the glass slightly & look at the edge of the wine. A purple tint may indicate youth while orange to brown indicates maturity. **Body** - Swirling the wine in the glass allows you to observe the body of the wine. "Good legs" may indicate a thicker body & a higher alcohol content &/or sweetness level.

Sniff - Swirling your wine also releases molecules in the wine allowing you to smell the aroma. After you've smelt the wine, contemplate the aroma. Don't try to "taste" the wine yet, concentrate only on what you smell. If you are new to this, what you smell may be difficult to describe in words,

but you will begin to notice similarities & differences with practice. Sometimes one smell will be very strong with underlying hints of other smells. Take your time. Labelling an aroma can help you remember it better.

Sip & Spit - The most important quality of a wine is its balance between sweetness, acidity, tannins, alcohol & mouth-feel. To get the full taste of a wine there are three steps: **Initial taste** (or first impression): The wine will awaken your senses (as your taste buds respond to the sensations). **Taste:** Slosh the wine around in your mouth. Examine the feel of the wine. Is it light or rich? Smooth or harsh? **Aftertaste:** When you've swallowed the wine, does a taste remain? How long does the taste last? Is it pleasant?

The more different wines you try, & the more attention you pay to each wine, the better you will become at identifying & describing each wine's characteristics.

I hope that you will find this & upcoming editions of Swirl, Sniff, Sip & Spit of some use to you in unravelling wines little mysteries. Any feedback, questions, comments or queries or suggestions for future editions please email me at scott@cofieldwines.com.au

Hope to see you soon at the Cellar Door

Cheers & happy sipping,
Scott

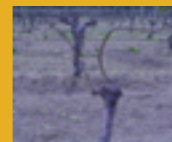


VIEW FROM THE VINEYARD

Pruning is over - finally. The end of winter proved to be as mild as the start, and we didn't lose too many days due

to excessive rain. Winter was kind in other ways too. Some winters we are pruning in the middle of the day with ice still around from the frost, but that didn't happen this year ~ what a bonus!

We are revamping the cabernet sauvignon vines, which means removing the 14 year old arms (above right) and replacing them with new arms from last year's growth (below right). This is very awkward



because the growth from last year is still wrapped in the trellis wire. Dad has made a "chomper" that cuts through both the vine arms and wires and this makes the job a bit easier. Unfortunately, the chomper didn't guarantee a smooth run, and I managed to break the ute's windscreen when one of the vines was caught by a gust of wind as I tried to transfer it to the ute. Oops! You may wonder how a vine can break a window, so I've included a photo of the culprit ~ what a beast!



We are currently awaiting delivery of a cane rake, which sweeps the post-pruning canes into the middle of the row where the mulcher can more easily chop them up. The benefit of this is that it removes the pruning debris which can get caught in the bird netting, closer to harvest.

So, Spring has sprung, the damn grass is growing and I need to mow, but the rain we had over the winter has made the ground a bit too wet, so I can't get started.

Budburst has arrived and this means always having to be out in the vineyard, looking out for abnormalities and disease, and days on the tractor spraying for moulds, mildews or mites. It's a busy time.

Cheers
Andrew



COMING EVENTS

Cofield Wines Cellar Circle Dinner

Our first ever, exclusive Cellar Circle dinner in Melbourne. See It's a Happening Thing for details.

Cofield Wines Celebration of Wine Dinner 29th October, 7pm, at Cofield Wines.

Enjoy a 5 course dinner at the winery, catered by The Pickled Sisters café. All courses are matched to specially selected wines.

Cost \$85 pp. Bookings are essential. Call the winery on 02 6033 3798.

Young Bloods & Bloody Legends Weekend:

Young Bloods Wine Adventure Saturday 12th November, 4-6pm, at Cofield Wines cellar door.

The Young Bloods will lead you on a tasting adventure through Rutherglen's "raunchy" reds. Discover the unique Rutherglen Durif and some fine Rutherglen Shiraz, plus other varieties Rutherglen does so well.

Cost \$45 pp.
For bookings phone 1300 787 929.

YB&BL Twilight Dinner on Pfeiffer's Bridge

Saturday 12th November,
6.30pm - late, at Pfeiffer Wines.

Three course meal and wines, live band and stories from both the Young Bloods and Bloody Legends.

Cost \$85 pp.
For bookings phone 1300 787 929.

Attend both the Wine Adventure and Dinner for \$110 pp. Shuttle bus available for \$8 pp.

Producers' Picnic and Market Sunday 13th November, 11am - 5pm. At Rutherglen Wine Experience.

STAFF PROFILE



**Melanie
(Mel) Cofield**

If you haven't guessed by the name, Mel is Damien's better half (wife, that is) and mother of Mitchell and Ava.

Mel joined Cofield Wines in 1999, not long after Damien popped the question (one of the better decisions he has made in his life!!). Mel is the company's financial controller, which means she's the one who stops us spending money too extravagantly. (Thanks Mel!)

Being a busy mother and looking after three children (oops - 2 children plus Damien), Mel is in the office twice a week and links in from home on other days (thanks to the amazing things computers can do these days).

Mel grew up in Albury and her Dad's family come from Rutherglen, so she was considered to be "almost local" before moving here.

Anyone who has met Mel knows that she has a vibrant personality, gorgeous smile, enjoys a good joke and, of course, loves a glass or two of wine (especially Sauvignon Blanc).

SPECIAL RELEASES

2005 Riesling

Released exclusively through Cellar Circle, the 2005 Riesling will not be available anywhere else.

2003 The Fifth Son

This wine won't be released at Cellar Door until later this year but it is looking so good we can't resist giving you a sneak peek!

Affectionately called BDX by assistant winemaker Dave (to which the rest of us say "what the bleeding heck are you talking about?!"), The Fifth Son is a blend of 5 classic Bordeaux varieties - Malbec, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cab Franc, Petit Verdot and Merlot.

See the tasting notes for more details.



WHAT'S NEW IN WINEMAKING?

Currently in the cellar work is being done on preparing wooded and lees-aged white wines for bottling. These wines are being stabilised, blended and fined. The 2004 reds are being blended and fined and will be bottled in October. We have gone for a new look for the 2004 reds, as they will be put into a different bottle. The 2005 reds are about to be racked (see How It Happens) and those not already oaked will be put to barrel. I am stoked at how everything is going. By having another set of hands (our cellar rat, Dinga) everything is progressing on time. Cheers, Damien.

HOW IT HAPPENS

Racking

You might have heard of winemakers "racking" their wines, but what exactly does it mean? Racking is the process of clarifying the wine by removing the heavy settlings (the gunk that falls out of solution in the wine over time).

The settlings are extracted by removing the clear wine at the top into another vessel. This can be done by syphoning or pumping, but either way it takes great skill and practice to perform the racking correctly. Many an hour is spent by the winemaker and/or the cellar staff, up on top of tanks, carefully monitoring the racking to ensure that all the clear wine is pumped away and the heavy settlings

stay behind. For some cellar staff this is a great time to catch up on the cricket scores in the paper!

Unfortunately, as with nearly all jobs in the cellar, there is cleaning to be done at the end. Our cellar rat, Dinga (Damien Langdon) reckons his job is a good 70% clean-up and only about 30% real work. Sometimes even I think that a degree in winemaking is really just a degree in cleaning! But back to racking... With racking, once the clear wine is decanted, the settlings are pumped to a distillation tank where the alcohol is distilled out of it, and then the tank gets rinsed and cleaned. When you consider that we do this about 4 times for each wine, this is actually a lot of work. Keeps us out of trouble at least!

Cheers, Damien

THE CC NEWSLETTER IS GOING LIVE!!

Now that we have moved into the world of websites, back ends and other things technical, this will be the final newsletter to be sent by snail-mail.

The next Newsletter will be distributed via email (where an email address is provided) and Members will also be able to download it from the members' area of the website.

See the Freight Free Opportunity/Change Your Details insert to update your email information.

