

Grapevine

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M A Y 2 0 0 6

From the President

Members will probably have noticed that they have just received their annual subscription accounts from Treasurer Ken Lilley. This occurs as our financial year is drawing to a close at the end of June. All will no doubt be pleased to note that the charges have not been increased. The Committee certainly hopes that all members appreciate the benefits available through Guild membership. Clearly as we are a non-profit voluntary type organisation, the benefits that accrue to members would not come about without the efforts of Committee members and volunteers. It is probably not too early to mention that our AGM will be held at the beginning of September and members will have an opportunity then to consider joining other Committee members in contributing to the activities of the Guild.

This edition of Grapevine has been collaborated by a Committee member Peter Schofield. Lindsay Thomas, who has been our Editor up until the last edition, offered to continue receiving members' contributions and pass them on. A new contact email for contributions is Peter Schofield as noted above. To assist in continuing with Grapevine in the manner enjoyed by all of us reading Lindsay's production, we would very much appreciate receiving members' contribution with brief or otherwise notes of their wine adventures with photos if available. We would be delighted to include these in future editions.

Coming events include June club night Friday 2nd with hosts Peter and Jenny Schofield will feature NSW wines excluding wines of the Hunter Valley and coastal regions, Brisbane Wine Festival on 30th June to 2nd July, plans for a Guild lunch on 2nd July at a popular Clayfield restaurant, a food and wine function featuring Travis O'Callaghan (of the Rockford family) on 26th July. Also of note 15th June for Andrew Corrigan's Shiraz and Rhone red blends masterclass followed by a cabernet etc masterclass in July. All these details are to be found on the back page of the Grapevine.

We have had some progress in collecting members email addresses. It does appear that as a group we are below the community average in email access. The recent fortified tasting reminder by email was only able to go to less than half our membership. To assist us in improving this facility, if members did not receive that email message it will be helpful if they advise us by email at this address – wine-guild@hotmail.com.

Until next time,

Ian McLeod

President - Wine Guild



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Club Night 5 May 2006 — Southern Rhone Hosts: Peter Ryan & Lyn Foran

22 members attended and wines presented on the night were a good mix of (principally) Southern Rhone wines and Australian wines made in the "Rhone" style. Grenache was the main grape variety present. Wines included the following.

Wine	Points
1 Paraillele "45" Cote du Rhone 2003	4
2 Veritas "Christa Rolfe" Shiraz Grenache 2002	3.5
3 Bioreann MSG 2004	3.5
4 Gigondas Clos du Joncuas 1998	4
5 Chateaneuf du Pape 2003	3.5
6 Chateau Casadais Corberes 2000	3.5
7 John Loxton Viognier 2004	3.5
8 Charles Melton Granache 1999	4.5
9 D'Ainy Original Shiraz Grenache 2002	4.5
10 Chateau Bonreyre Haut Medoc	4
11 Chablis La Carme D'Or 2002	4
12 Cote du Rhone Les Cranilles 2004	4
13 Cote du Rhone Domaine Charrin 2003	3.5
14 Resenvale Grenache 2004	3.5
15 Lionnet St Pesay 1999	3.5
16 Yeringberg M/R 1994	3.5
17 Peter Lehman Shiraz / Grenache 2003	3
18 Viognier Domaine de Terre Megere 1999	4

To evaluate the wines tasted, the WGA's highly technical 1 to 5 quick points scoring system was used: 5 indicating "wow" and 1 "yuk". Peter and Lyn provided their usual superior food loosely based on the Rhone theme, including some very good cheeses – Roquefort and an Italian Taleggio. Thanks

Verdelho is a sweet white variety that originates around Portugal and is now grown all around the world. The earliest recorded planting of Verdelho is from Portugal in the 15th century.

Verdelho is mainly used to produce medium-sweet white wines, but that's not all. Modern winemaking techniques such as controlled pellicular macerations or *bâtonnage* (the skins bubble together for 24 hours before the pressing) have unlocked some surprising characters from this grape. The resulting wines are aromatic, herbaceous revealing laurel leaf and fresh hay and citrus. They have a full middle palate and with good oak treatment, develop nutty characteristics normally only found in rich Chardonnays.

* Reproduced with permission from Peter Svans at The Gurdies Winery



KWIZ KORNER

QUESTIONS

1. Name the patron saint of Russia and of German children.
2. Over what distance is the Sydney-Hobart Yacht Race sailed?
3. The official World Bank definition of ethyl alcohol is a "colourless flammable liquid used to preserve fish" True or false?
4. What is the chief chemical ingredient of mothballs?
5. What is a hornpipe?

Answers on page 4

Statistics from ABS (Calendar Year 2004)

Next month in grapevine: Australia's

Region	Wine Bearing Hectares
Riverland	21,394
Murray Darling (Vic)	16,360
Riverina	13,718
Barossa Valley	8,409
Murray Darling (NSW)	6,869
McLaren Vale	6,201
Langhorne Creek	5,093
Swan Hill (Vic)	4,418
Coonawarra	4,391

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Note: From 1994-2004, an average of 95 new wineries opened every year in Australia.

Challenging the tongue taste map ©Richard Gawel



I recall, attending my first lecture as a winemaking student in the subject Sensory I, an OHP boldly showing areas of maximum sensitivity to the basic tastes. I found the concept of

the "tongue map" appealing in its simplicity. Everything seemed to tidily fit. There were different types of papillae located, broadly speaking, on different areas of the tongue, and there were four taste primaries. Surely each type of papillae contained different receptors tuned to detect one of the four basic tastes.

A corollary to this was that the tongue must therefore contain regions that are sensitive to one of the four taste primaries. Although this was never stated in lecture, this fact was implied, and in any case we all left the lecture thinking that this was the case.

That map was the only diagram given in the entire lecture program that was not sourced to published work. Why should it be? Like the Mona Lisa everyone knew it and had seen it (many in primary school science class). Why clutter the argument with issues such as where it came from! I recall the lecturer stating that it arose from some work "around the turn of the century". Well if it's been around that long it must be correct I thought. However I did feel ill at ease when I noticed that the tongue map was not included in important and respected sensory works such as the classic "Principles of the Sensory Evaluation of Food" by Amerine, Roessler and the highly respected sensory scientist Rose Marie Pangborn. Nor was it in the then sensory blockbuster and now modern classic "Sensory Evaluation Practices" by Stone and Sidel. But like most students I answered the inevitable question about the tongue map that arose in the exam, stored the facts in memory and moved on.

As a wine and general sensory educator I believe that this issue gets far more attention than it deserves.

Many years later I were to read a paper by Virginia Collings (Collings, 1974) describing the variations across the tongue and soft palate in both detection threshold and in the ability to discriminate between realistic taste intensities. Collings found that there were variations in detection threshold around the perimeter of the tongue for sweet, sour and salty but these variations were small and of no practical signifi-

cance. The bitter stimuli studied were more easily detected, not on the back of the tongue, but on the soft palate which resides on the roof of the mouth above the back of the tongue (yes there are taste buds there). She also reported that differences in suprathreshold concentrations of the bitter substances studied were more easily resolved on the back of the tongue. The suprathreshold sensitivity to the other basic tastes, like absolute sensitivity, varied little across the other parts of the tongue.

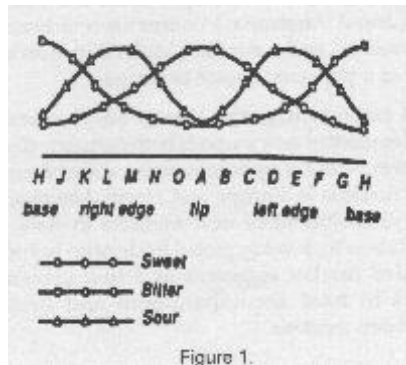


Figure 1.

So why the contradiction with the earlier work? Well as it turns out the contradiction was only an apparent one. The "work from the turn of the century" turns out to be a PhD thesis written in German by Hanig and published in Philosophische Studien in 1901. This paper includes a diagram (Fig 5) and reproduced here in Figure 1.

The y axis represents the reciprocal of detection threshold, a measure of sensitivity. Note however that the diagram is purely qualitative in that the y axis is scale-less. The figure was purely impressionistic. Later in 1942, Boring took Hanigs threshold data and summarised it as a percentage of maximum sensitivity (reproduced in Figure 2). A cursory glance at both these figures would lead you to believe that there is substantial sensitivity variation across the tongue. However neither diagram clearly shows the actual absolute differences in threshold. In fact the differences observed by Hanig were quite small and of no practical significance. The interested reader can consult Bartoshuk(1993) for a more detailed account of the origins of the taste map.

Electrophysical studies, whereby electrical activity of taste receptors is measured in the presence of taste stimuli, also support these interpretations. They show that the vast majority of taste receptors fire electrical signals, and hence elicit a taste sensation, in the presence of all the basic tastes. So much for receptor specificity, the cornerstone concept underling the taste map.

As a wine and general sensory educator I believe that this issue gets far more attention than it deserves. If one steps back and considers how the taste map (whether correct or not) helps us to assess wines, the only conclusion that can be drawn is that it is of little practical use. Firstly, the ability to detect tastes at threshold has been shown to be poorly correlated with suprathreshold sensitivity. As the majority of the compounds resulting in the basic tastes in wines are found in concentrations well above threshold, the practical worth of knowing variation in detection thresholds is questionable. Secondly, we can only apply the taste map if we can effectively localise tastes on the tongue. But can we do this? If you take a cotton wool bud and soak it with a strong salt solution and run it from the tip of your tongue, where receptors are plentiful, to the middle where they are very scarce, you will notice that the taste intensity does not diminish as you might expect. As this simple illustration of a common taste illusion is analogous to wine moving across the tongue whilst tasting, it is unlikely that we as humans can easily localise tastes in realistic tasting situations.

(Continued on page 4)

KWIZ KORNER

ANSWERS to Q's on page 2

1. St Nicholas.
2. 628 nautical miles.
3. True.
4. Naphthalene.
5. A traditional dance.



WINE TRIVIA

1. A labeorphilist is a collector of beer bottles.
2. Shakespeare referred (in Love's Labour Lost, Act 5, Scent 1) to a game called "flap-dragon," in which the players snatched raisins from a dish of burning brandy and extinguished them in their mouths before eating them.
3. Letters from "drink to your health" can be used to spell "ideal heart diet." Drinking alcohol in moderation reduces the risk of heart disease by an average of about 40%.
4. Abraham Lincoln, the sixteenth president of the US, stated that "It has long been recognized that the problems with alcohol relate not to the use of a bad thing, but to the abuse of a good thing."
5. In Bangladesh, \$5 will buy a beer or a first-class train ticket for a cross-country trip.

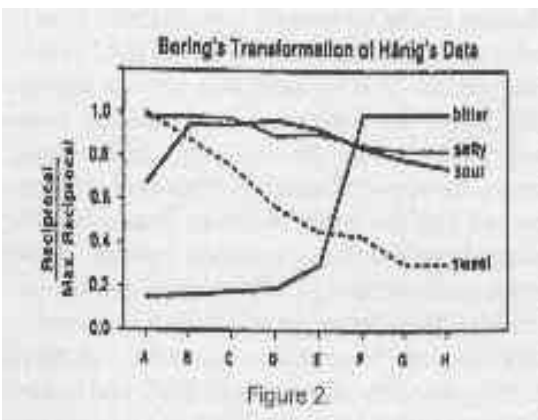
Challenging the tongue taste map ©Richard Gawel

(Continued from page 3)

Our perception of a complex product such as wine is determined by the interaction of tastes, aromas and tactile sensations produced by the various wine components.

Perhaps as wine educators we should tell our students about things that really affect our ability as wine tasters. Examples are, the enormous variability between individuals (many hundred fold) in the number and distribution of taste receptors, which has been shown to directly affect how strongly we perceive tastes. Secondly individuals differ markedly in the amount and rate of saliva they produce, and this in turn has enormous implications for our perception of bitterness, sweetness, saltiness, astringency and particularly sourness.

Lastly and more fundamentally, our perception of a complex product such as wine is determined by the interaction of tastes, aromas and tactile sensations produced by the various wine components. Knowledge of the nature of these interactions is where I believe the real focus of wine tasting education should lie.



Discover Italian reds (Part 2)

Adapted From: Italian Wine For Dummies

As previously reported, 21 red grape varieties compose Italy's major varieties for red wine.

Four of these are especially important, either for the quality of wine they produce or for their dissemination throughout the country.

The "Fab Four" of Italian red wine are:

(Continued on page 5)

Discover Italian reds Cont'd from page 4

“Fab Four” #1 - Sangiovese

The indigenous Sangiovese (*san joe VAE sae*) is the most planted red variety in Italy's vineyards. It's the lifeblood of red wine production in the central Italian regions of Tuscany and Umbria; it also grows in several other regions.

“Fab Four” #2 - Nebbiolo

The Nebbiolo (*nehb be OH loh*) variety is a specialty of the Piedmont region. This native Italian grape makes two of Italy's very greatest red wines, Barolo and Barbaresco, as well as several less exalted wines.

“Fab Four” #3 - Barbera

Until Sangiovese dethroned Barbera sometime in the past 20 years, Barbera (*bar BAE rah*) was the most planted red variety in all of Italy. It still grows in many parts of the Italian peninsula, but its finest wines come from Piedmont, Barbera's home turf.

“Fab Four” #4 - Aglianico

This unsung native variety is the pride of the Campania and Basilicata regions, in Southern Italy, where it makes Taurasi and Aglianico del Vulture (*ahl YAHN ee co del VUL too rae*), respectively.

The other 17 varieties are:

Cabernet Franc (*cab er nay frahnc*): This French variety has grown in Italy's northeastern regions for more than a century; today, its use is declining somewhat in favour of Cabernet Sauvignon (with which it is often blended)

Cabernet Sauvignon (*cab er nay soh vee n'yon*): Some Italian wines based on Cabernet Sauvignon show the dark colour, firm tannin, and blackcurrant flavours typical of the variety, but many others are lighter in colour, body, and tannin, and have vegetal flavours — all indicative of high crop yields and under-ripe grapes.

Cannanou (*cahn nah NOW*): This Sardinian variety is actually Grenache (as it's known in France) or Garnacha (as it's known in its native Spain). In Sardinia, it's the island's main red variety, making light- and/or full-bodied wines as well as rosés.

Corvina (*cor VEE nah*): Most Corvina-based wines have light to medium body, high acidity, medium tannin, and flavours of red cherries. It has great potential as a stand-alone variety for fine wine.

Dolcetto (*dohl CHET toh*): A variety that's quite important in Piedmont, where it's valued not only for its deep colour and spicy, berry character, but also for its early-ripening tendency.

Lagrein (*lah GRYNE*): Technically Lagrein Scuro, or Lagrein Dunkel (dark Lagrein), an historic variety in Alto Adige, where it makes perfumed, medium-bodied reds and light roses, as well as some rich, dark, characterful red wines. Lesser clones of Lagrein also exist.

Lambrusco (*lam BREWS coh*): An ancient, native variety that's critical to the health of the wine economy in Emilia-Romagna, thanks to the success of Lambrusco wines in the U.S. This grape has delicious flavours of red fruits and spice, medium tannin, and fairly high acidity.

Merlot (*mair loh*): In Italy, this variety typically makes medium-bodied wines, at best, with medium colour intensity and flavours that are vegetal and herbal (symptomatic of overly high crop yields or inappropriately cool climates).

Montepulciano (*mon tae pull chee AH noh*): It produces medium-bodied wines with unusual smoky, red-fruity, and vegetal flavours; these wines range from seriously good to quaffable in quality.

Negroamaro (*NAE grow ah MAH roh*): Literally, "black and bitter," a native variety that's widely planted in the South, especially Puglia; it makes flavourful, high-alcohol wines.

Nero d'Avola (*NAE roh DAHV oh lah*): This high quality variety — known as Calabrese in its native Calabria — is important mainly in Sicily. It makes deeply coloured, age-worthy wines that are full-bodied and moderate in tannin, with heady flavours of ripe fruit and herbs.

Pinot Nero (*pee noh NAIR oh*): This variety is significant throughout north-eastern Italy and in Lombardy, in the Northwest, for both still and sparkling wines. Because it's one of the world's major red varieties, winemakers in various other regions, including Piedmont and Tuscany, are trying their hands with it.

Zinfandel / Primitivo (*prim ih TEE voh*): Primitivo makes deeply coloured wines with spicy, ripe berry character, full body, and high alcohol.

Refosco (*reh FOES coh*): A specialty of the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region, this variety makes velvety-textured, medium- and full-bodied wines with ripe plum flavours — many of which are quite good.



Merlot

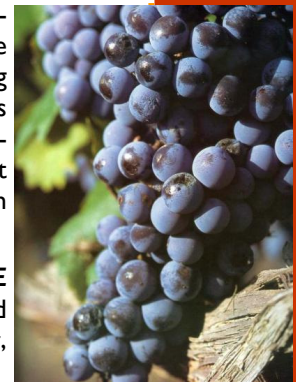
The “Fab Four”

Sangiovese *

Nebbiolo *

Barbera *

Aglianico *



Cabernet Sauvignon

(Continued on page 7)

Improving wine quality through fining ©Richard Gawel

A common theme in many of this series of articles is that making wine is a business, and as such winemakers are obliged to maximise the return on investment. One approach to achieving this, is making sure that all the precious grape juice is turned into a wine of some type with an appropriate market value. Let us look at one way in which this is done. Consider the first stages of how white wine is made. The grapes are crushed and the juice is quickly drained off the skins. This juice is called 'free run' and when fermented, produces the highest quality finished wine. The quality is high because the free run juice contains low levels of phenolic substances. Phenolics are found in the skins and seeds of grapes and are responsible for the browning of white wines, and for the production of 'hard' bitter aftertastes. Free run juice typically contains very low levels of phenolics as it has not been in contact with skins or seeds for any length of time, and as such has not had the ability to pick up any of the undesirable phenolic substances.

Most winemakers would dearly love to work exclusively with free run juices when making white wines. However, after draining the juice, the winemaker is left with a sloppy bunch of skins, still rich in juice. Commercial reality dictates that this juice (which can make up 20% of the total volume) is extracted and made into wine. And so it is! The juice is pressed from the skins using a variety of mechanical means. However, this 'press fraction' of juice is phenolic rich and will typically make a lower quality wine. When compared to the wine made from free run juice, wines made from the press fraction are less appealing as they are typically harder, sometimes more bitter, and will age far more quickly. In fact, these wines are pretty unpalatable, and even the most unsophisticated wine drinker would feel dupped if they purchased one.

So what is done to make them acceptable wines? In some cases, the press wines are simply combined with the free run wine (or the two juices are mixed and fermented together). This is done when the press fraction consists of only lightly pressed material, which is low in phenolics anyway. More typically though, the press juices or finished wines made from them, are subjected to processes that



strip the phenolics out of them. This process is called fining, and consists of adding a 'fining agent' to the wine and mixing them together. Fining agents are typically naturally occurring proteins or substances that have been synthesised to mimic the action of proteins. Why proteins? Phenolic substances have a strong natural chemical affinity

for proteins. So when they come in contact with each other, they react, and precipitate out of the wine or juice. So in effect, protein fining agents are used to strip out the phenolics from wine and juices.

A number of different fining agents are used depending on the type of wine to which they are being applied. Brace yourself because some are downright weird. A common fining agent is gelatin. It is most commonly used to reduce the level of astringency and bitterness in the press fraction

of red wines. Another agent used for this purpose is egg whites. Yes, egg whites which contain the protein albumen can be directly added to the wine through the inlet of a circulating pump, but more typically the egg whites come as commercial preparations in a powdered form. Skim milk is a fining agent that is used to remove the bitterness and hardness of white wines and sherries. The active protein in skim milk is called casein. Other casein products are also used to fine the bitterness out of white wines. Two other agents are worth mentioning. Isinglass which is prepared from the swim bladders of certain fish is perhaps the 'Rolls Royce' of fining agents. The primary protein found in this agent is collagen. It is used to fine white wines, but unlike casein does not strip the wine of colour. It also produces small amounts of lees (the bits that fall to the bottom when the fining agent and phenolic precipitate) than other fining agents which means that there is more finished wine and less waste. Lastly, a commonly used agent used to fine white juices and wines is polyvinyl-pyrrolidone or PVPP. This agent is a synthesised long chain polymer that acts like a natural protein. It is insoluble in wine and as such is mixed in, 'does its job', after which it falls to the bottom of the wine tank. In bigger wineries and breweries (where it is also used), it is often recovered and used again.

Other non proteinaceous fining agents exist, and are used for very specific purposes. For example activated carbon is sometimes used to strip the colour out of Pinot noir juices that are used for sparkling wine production. In an ideal world, the Pinot grapes should be so carefully pressed that the resulting juice contains so little colour that the juice can be fermented directly into base wine. However, in cases where the production of an inexpensive sparkling wine is the winemaking objective, one strategy that can be used is to press for quantity, which typically results in an overly coloured juice. Carbon is then used to decolourise the juice so that the resulting sparkling wine does not have a pink hue. Sure, wines made in this way are of lower quality, but then, there is a market demand for reasonable quality budget priced sparklers.

However no fining agent is 100% specific in what it does. As well as fining out phenolics they also typically take out some aroma and flavour. Some fining agents are more flavour hungry than others, and factors such as this will determine a winemakers choice of agent. As a general principle though, regardless of agent selected, winemakers will use as little as they need to produce the quality of wine that is required. And in case you are wondering if that wine you are drinking contains bits of fish swim bladder or the like, well I suppose technically it does. But the quantities are minute, and the use of the natural clay bentonite (see the previous issue of the Wine Tutor) further assists in the removal of any traces of these fining agents.

Discover Italian reds

(Continued from page 5)

Sagrantino (*sag rahn TEE noh*): This variety is fairly limited in its production zone, but is responsible for the dark, intense, ageworthy red called Montefalco Sagrantino, from Umbria.

Schiava (*skee AH vah*): The most common variety in Alto Adige, where it generally makes light- to medium-bodied, easy-drinking red wines. German-speaking locals call it Vernatsch. Several sub-varieties exist.

Teroldego (*teh ROHL dae go*): A major, native variety in the Trentino sub-region, in northern Italy, where it produces fresh-tasting, fruity reds with good colour; similar to Lagrein.

Cabernet Franc



© Greek Vitis Database

Zinfandel



© Tim Ramey



Next Club Meeting - 2 June 2006

Theme night: NSW wines (not Hunter or coastal regions)

On Friday 2 June our Club Night will be hosted by Peter and Jenny Schofield.

The theme for the night will be NSW wines but not Hunter or Coast. This provides you with regions such as: *Tenterfield, Orange, Mudgee, Young, Cowra, Tumbarumba, Wagga, Griffith, Yenda and Canberra* to name a few. The wine options game will be worth bottling and the mystery wine will come from one of the regions so there's a hint for the first question.

Some of the wineries providing wines from the regions include: *Barwang, Rothbury, De Bortoli's, Hilltops, Bimbadgen Estate, Lillypilly, Petersons, Beelgara, Lowe Family, Canobolas-Smith, Longrail Gully.*

Larger liquor stores should be able to assist with wines from the regions, as the above listing includes for only a few makers. A great interactive web site to gain some knowledge on the wine you select is www.nswwine.org.au, so log on and do some surfing before buying and imbibing.

TRIVIA

How Much is That?

- 1 grape cluster = 1 glass
- 75 grapes = 1 cluster
- 4 clusters = 1 bottle
- 40 clusters = 1 vine
- 1 vine = 10 bottles

Note to Grapevine Readers

Closing date for you to send in your contribution to the July edition of the Grapevine is close-of-business Tuesday 13 June.

Wine trivia, a short story about your last wine-related holiday or experience, whatever you think will make the Grapevine more interesting – just send it in by email! And how about telling us what you like or don't like about the Grapevine? Feedback can be on or off the record. Remember, contributions from all members are welcome, whether you come to the Club nights or not!

Acting Editor: Peter Schofield (33114645)

CLUB NIGHT PROGRAM – 2006

VENUE: BLACK PEARL EPICURE, 36 BAXTER STREET, FORTITUDE VALLEY
(UPSTAIRS AT SIDE ENTRANCE DOOR AT THE END OF THE DRIVEWAY 5:30PM TO 7:30PM)

Friday	Hosts	Theme
2 nd June	Peter & Jenny Schofield	NSW wines, not Hunter or coastal regions
7 th July	John Tuttle, Jennifer Chadwick & Lyn Foran	Christmas in July ??
4 th August	Sue Henderson & Rod Wellings	South American Wine (Brazil, Paraguay, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Peru, Ecuador, Columbia, Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname or French Guyana)
1 st September	Laura Steinke, Jordan McCallum & Lyn Foran	Any Pinot - noir, meunier, gris, grigio, chardonnay, etc
6 th October	Kirk Knipmeyer	Coonawarra Reds
4 th November	Ross & Maree, Lindsay & Margie	Victorian Wines
2 nd December	Michael & Madonna Flynn	Christmas Bubbles & Stickies

ENTRY EACH PERSON PER NIGHT::

EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE, ENTRY IS \$5.00 EACH PLUS A BOTTLE OF THE THEME EACH. (VISITORS ARE \$10.00 EACH PLUS A BOTTLE EACH)



MASTERCLASSES, TASTINGS & OTHER EVENTS

FOR ALL ENQUIRIES, CONTACT JOHN TUTTLE ON 3262 5937

Date	Hosts	Venue
Sunday 25 th June	Lunch (Date to be confirmed at next meeting)	Viale Canova at Clayfield
Wednesday 26 th July	Travis O'Callagan food and wine function	tba
Thursday 10 th August	Pinot Noir & Burgundy Masterclass	tba
mid-October	Food and wine function	tba
Thursday 26 th October	Pinot Noir & Burgundy Masterclass	
November tba	Restaurant dinner	

OTHER ANDREW CORRIGAN MASTERCLASSES

Date	Hosts Venue
Thursday 15 th June	Shiraz & Rhone Red Blends
Thursday 27 th July	Cabernet Sauvignon, Bordeaux Blends and Varietals
Thursday 28 th September	German and Alsace style – Riesling, Gewurztraminer, Pinot Gris

OTHER

Date	Hosts Venue
Thursday 15 th June	Shiraz & Rhone Red Blends