



The Cellar Club Inc

Established in 1980

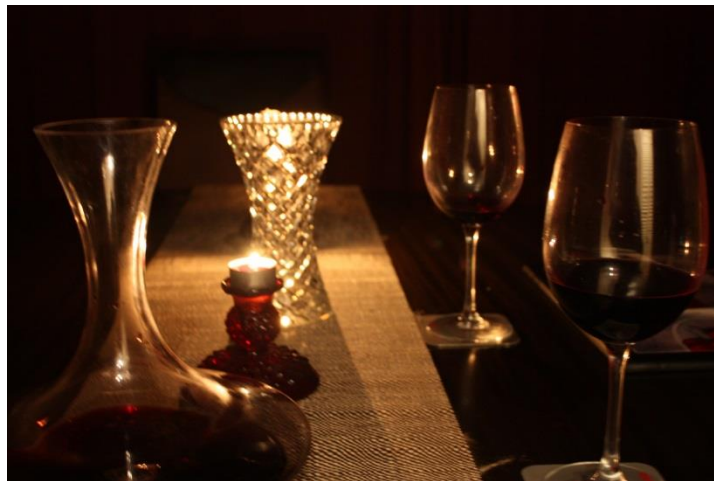
Newsletter - March 2015

Next Event: Journey to the Cellar and a quiet night with friends.

**Wednesday 11 March 2015, 7.45 for 8.00pm start,
Johnsonville Community Centre Hall, 3 Frankmoore Avenue,
Johnsonville**

Members: No charge, Guests: \$10.

Hosts: Your committee.



"The best laid schemes o' mice and men gang aft agley" - Robert Burns

Indeed, as Robbie was well aware, the best laid plans often go astray and they have gone astray again for us this month. Unfortunately, because of changes at Auburn, they are unable to attend. Other options have been pursued but we have been unable to get a suitable replacement.

This does however give us an opportunity to use the Club's cellar for the purpose it was designed. We are after all a cellar club and when the opportunity arises we are able to cellar some nice wines. This coming Wednesday we will have an informal gathering where we will be able to sample some of the cellar offerings. Not all are in multi bottle lots but there will be enough choice for all tastes. There will be no formal presentation as such but we welcome information, advice and/or anecdotes from anyone who wishes to contribute.

From the Editor

March Tasting – Sorry, but we are at it again. A last minute change has had to be made to the programme. This is an awkward time of year for many producers and as we are all aware the landscape in the industry can change rapidly. Fortunately these problems only arise occasionally. We are sure however that you will enjoy a chance to test the wares in the cellar.

Knife – Anne is in possession of a knife that was left at the BBQ. If anyone is missing their favourite knife, check with Anne. After all, we don't want her running amok at next week's meeting.

Cheers

Robin Semmens, Editor

Looking Forward - April 2015 - Waipara Valley

We have been working with Georges Road Winery in the Waipara Valley but have been looking for a broader taste of the features of this region. We have only had one winery from Waipara in the past. The North Canterbury Winegrowers Assn is looking to see if there is a prospect of a broader view of the region.

North Canterbury is just 40 minutes north of Christchurch and is fast establishing itself as one of the premium wine producing regions of New Zealand, particularly in Pinot Noir and Riesling. According to Bob Campbell, the region is "one of the unsung heroes of the wine industry".

The programme for the evening is still being developed.

Looking Back - February 2015



The evening was excellent and the presenter was superb. Simon Bell's style of presenting a tasting was the right balance showing that he knew about wine and was enthusiastic about what they were doing at Ash Ridge. We were rapt with the turnout and the response to orders. In addition a number of members joined up to the Ash Ridge Wine Club. A great evening, and a bonus at such short notice.

Simon presented Ash Ridge's Sauvignon Blanc 2014, Chardonnay 2013, Viognier 2013, Vintners Reserve Chardonnay 2013, Rose 2014, Syrah 2013 and the Vintners Reserve "The Blend" 2013 (a bottle of which landed on the floor when one of the tables collapsed. Fortunately no-one went without.)

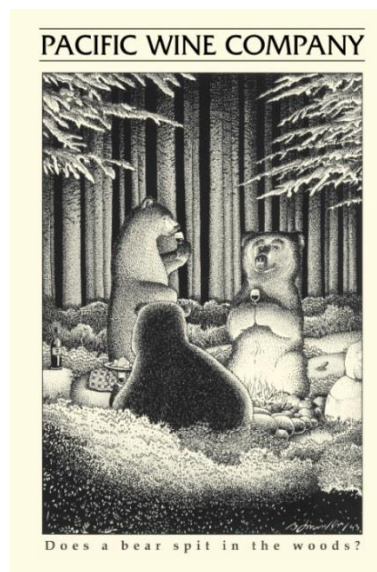
General Information

Screwcaps - Anne collects screwcaps at meetings. As mentioned she gives them to the Lions organised Kidney Kids Support Group. No food lids or beer tops please.

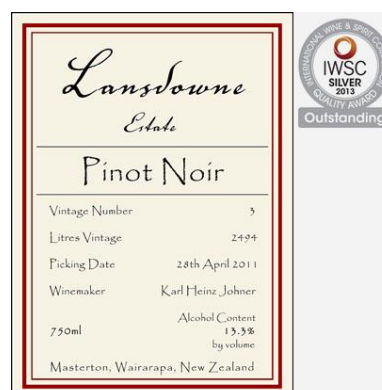
Drinking and Driving - Members will be aware that the drink/drive limits have now been lowered. We ask members to always be conscious of the new limits and to take care when attending Club events.

Members Draw - There is a members prize draw at each meeting, you must be present to win, and it must be won each meeting.

Have you Heard



In the News - Little-known Kiwi wine labels worth seeking out (John Baker – Stuff.co.nz)



We know for sure that there are about 700 wineries in New Zealand, but no-one would have a clue as to how many different brands there are out there. Thousands probably, many completely unknown to you and me. Not that it really matters. Labels are sometimes nothing more than commercial punts with a butterfly's life span. Big companies will create a new brand at the merest whiff of a new market segment, then just as quickly snuff it out if expectations aren't met.

Those New Zealand brands you discover for the first time when you visit an Aussie supermarket are another example of pop-up labels. They are usually the result of bulk wine purchases that are bottled across the ditch. Then there are the personal, limited-release labels you'll never see in shops and only at the right parties – the Prime Minister's annual 'JK' Central Otago pinot noir comes to mind.

But also hovering under the radar are some wonderful surprises – off-off-Broadway labels with wines that are lovingly made and every bit as authentic as the best of their mainstream cousins. Often they're from tiny estates that haven't tried very hard to broaden distribution. Or maybe they're just starting out. Here are three whose wines are worth tracking down:

Lansdowne Estate

Despite the fact it came from nowhere to win the coveted Bouchard Finlayson Trophy for its 2010 pinot noir at last year's IWSC (International Wine and Spirit Competition) in London >

This Wairarapa label has remained enigmatically incognito. (*Ed - Not to Cellar Club members, you will recall that Lansdowne presented to us in March 2013*)

The grapes are grown near Masterton on the site of the region's very first vineyard, planted by William Beetham in the late 19th century. The vineyard is not irrigated, yields are kept low and a non-interventionist winemaking approach is taken.

The 2010 pinot noir is no longer available but the 2011 pinot noir is delightful and fine-boned, while the panna-cotta-infused 2011 pinot gris has real depth and sophistication.

Easthope Family Winegrowers

After leaving Craggy Range, talented winemaker Rod Easthope embarked on a solo career that has seen him make wines for a UK-based online retailer as well as establish his own local label with his wife Emma. The first wine they produced is an outstanding Wairarapa-made pinot (see below), but also look out for a soon-to-be released 2014 Hawke's Bay syrah.

Mangaorapa Estate

The Mouat family founded the magnificent Mangaorapa Station in southern Hawke's Bay in the mid-20th century. The recent decision to grow grapes has paid off. Conditions more often identified with the Wairarapa than Hawke's Bay have helped produce beautifully scented pinot noir, wild honey-laced sauvignons and enticing pinot gris. The wines are all made off-site by Warren Gibson at Trinity Hill.

Try these:

- Easthope Family Winegrowers Pinot Noir Te Muna Road 2013, \$65. Pure sweet berry flavours harmonise with brown tea and minerally savoury elements, against a fine, taut structure. Lovely, lengthy pinot worth cellaring. Buy at easthope.co.nz

- Mangaorapa Estate Southern Hawke's Bay Pinot Gris 2011, \$30. The central triumph of this pinot gris is its mouth-coating, caressing texture. Off-dry in style, with mellowing apple and pear notes, it is aging beautifully. Buy at mangaorapa.co.nz

Club Contacts

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Coming Events

Wednesday 8 April 2015
A Waipara evening

Wednesday 13 May 2015
AGM

Wednesday 10 June 2015
Akarua, Central Otago

Wednesday 8 July 2015
Mid-Year Dinner TBA

Wednesday 12 August 2015
Gladstone, Wairarapa

Wednesday 9 September 2015
Craggy Range, Hawkes Bay
