

# Decanter Club

## February 2004

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2004. Munslow's aims to continue bringing you the best range of wines available in the South Island as well as innovative and interesting tastings. We look forward to seeing many of you both instore and at the tastings themselves. We also look forward to maintaining correspondence with our out-of-town clients. Certainly our business sending wines via an excellent and cheap courier service continues to grow, as does our free delivery service within the Dunedin area. If you are looking for a special wine that you are searching for, don't hesitate to contact us and we will do our best to track it down for you.

### Coming Events:

**Sam Kerr: Sam's choice** Thursday 12th February *cost: \$15.00*

This is the first of a series of tastings that Munslow's is planning on holding throughout the year. We will be asking Decanter Club members to select wines and host the tasting themselves. This will allow members can choose for themselves what wines they are particularly interested in. If you are keen to participate in these, please let us know. Sam is a keen wine drinker, and has recently completed the University of Otago Summer School Wine Course.

**Tony Montgomery: Rosemount and blended reds** *cost: \$15.00*

The summer hasn't precluded us from drinking and enjoying reds, and I have to admit that Rosemount wines have been a favourite for at least 15 years now. Australia is now intriguing the wine-drinking public with blending many grape varieties like Grenache/Mouvedre/Shiraz and the Southcorp portfolio is leading the way. Interesting wines at this tasting.

**James Healy: Dog Point Winery** Tuesday 24th February *cost: \$15.00*

Munslow's has the pleasure of the New Zealand launch from one of Marlborough's latest boutique winery. Many of you will know James. He has worked as oenologist and winemaker for Cloudy Bay winery for years (too many to remember). He is also a senior judge at the air New Zealand and other wineshows. Although I have yet to try these wines, James has made some really striking wines in the past and I have every confidence in his ability. Because Dog Point has only a limited range, these will be complemented with some Australian wines

**James McPhedran: Mills Reef** Thursday 4th February *cost: \$15.00*

Mills Reef has been around for years and is one of Bay of Plenty's top producers. Although the winery is in Tauranga and well known for it's fruit wines (kiwifruit predominantly), the grapes are from Hawkes Bay. They produce super premiums, as well as the Moffatt Selection; a range of very well priced wines.

### **New wines in-store**

**Benfield and Delaware Cab Franc '01 42.25**

One of NZ's top producers of Bordeaux style reds. Supple and very elegant wine with concentrated cassis and red berry flavours. Has a long finish and promises to cellar for several years, but is approachable now.

**Carchelo 2003 13.45**

Still great value Spanish red that blends Mouvedre and Tempranillo varietals. Lots of berry flavours with lovely earthy undertones. Great with lamb.

**Charles Wiffen Merlot 2002 26.95**

An excellent example of Marlborough merlot. Fresh and crammed with fruit. It's a full coloured wine with vibrant, plummy, spicy flavours and a long finish.

**Charles Wiffen Riesling 2003 17.05**

Another fine riesling from the Charles Wiffen stable. Made in an off-dry style, it has refreshing lemon and lime flavours with a touch of honeysuckle and clean, crisp acidity. Perfect summer drinking.

**Clocher Cote de Rhone Villages 2002 17.95**

French Rhone wines offer great value and a change from big Australian shiraz's. Great food wine with hints of plums and white pepper. Try with beef casserole.

**Commissioners Block Shiraz 2002 12.55**

This is a new label made at the Roberts Estate winery in Victoria. They have managed to produce a shiraz with plenty of blackberry and spicy pepper flavours and a touch of soft plummy fruit. It is pretty easy going and very drinkable and represents excellent value for money.

**Daniel Schuster Twin Vineyards Pinot Noir 2002 24.25**

A great buy for under \$30! Plum, berryish and savoury notes are all evident. A fine example of a Daniel Schuster wine, with depth and character yet with the hallmark elegance of a classical food wine.

**Grant Burge Shiraz 2002 15.25**

A very good Barossa shiraz at this price. This vintage is the best yet from the Burge house. Full of American oak and chocolate, cherry fruit.

**Greiner Gewurztraminer 2000 35.05**

When you are looking for something completely different, then look no further. I realise that this is getting up in price for a Gewurztraminer, but it is worth every cent. This is what NZ gewurz producers are trying to achieve. Classic Alsatian style. Fantastic with food, but great on it's own.

**Hunters Sauvignon Blanc 2003 18.85**

This is the style of wine that put NZ on the world wine map. Typically herbaceous Marlborough sav blanc full of gooseberry, passionfruit and tropical flavours. One of the best!

**Irvine Zinfandel 2001 26.95**

The vanillin oak is the first thing that strikes you when trying this wine. This is soon followed by the spice and pepper and share power from the fruit

**Josef Haupt St Michael Riesling Spatlese 2001 13.45**

I love German Rieslings and this is a steal! Lovely ripe peachy flavours in a medium style and, as with most German wines, is balanced by great acidity. Great lunch wine with low alcohol.

**Kawarau Estate Pinot Noir 2002 34.15**

2 gold medals to its name. A gorgeous wine packed with dark plum and berry fruit that explodes on the palate with very fine oak tannins. 20% whole cluster and 50% whole berry fermentation, with 10 months in oak.

**Margan Semillon 2002 17.95**

If you have been reading about Hunter valley Semillon, and have been too frightened to try them, then this is an excellent wine to start with. Once tried, you'll either be a Hunter Semillon fan and hunt them out, or not! We fit into the former category. It's typical straw colour and pungent nose gives the quality away from the beginning. The palate is viscous, with honey, lemon–lime flavours. Gorgeous stuff.

**Novel Malbec Bonarda 2002 14.35**

Another wine from Argentina that is new to Munslow's. A blend of Malbec and Bonarda, it has a vibrant nose of mature berry fruit leading to an intensely fruity palate with smoky overtones.

**Packspur Pinot Noir 2002 28.75**

Another Central gold at a good price. Well structured wine with grip and power, and wonderfully balanced by full rich fruit. Lots of Dawson Black cherry (and we have had heaps over the summer), and savoury herbs and pepper.

**Pegasus Bay Chardonnay 2002 33.25**

This is one of NZ's top Chardonnay's. Fully barrel fermented, it is very Burgundian in style with crisp, biscuity complex flavours with great concentration and length.

**Richmond Grove Limited Release Cabernet Sauvignon 2000 17.95**

Made from 100% Coonawarra cabernet fruit from the excellent 2000 vintage. This wine is packed full of ripe berry fruit flavours with hints of chocolate and mint, balanced by the soft tannins. Drinking well now but will keep for some time yet.

**Rosemount Balmoral 1998 70.15**

We managed to obtain a few more bottles of this classic Aussi shiraz. This is a monster! Exceptionally chunky, rich and powerful. Very spicy with overtones of pepper and coffee. An absolute treat!

**Sacred Hill Whitecliff Est. Pinot Gris '03 14.35**

This great Pinot Gris is now back in stock. Skilfully blended from premium Italian and New Zealand grapes this wine delivers classic spicy

**Santa Isabel Chard/Viognier '02 20.65**

Argentina is now producing and exporting wines of high quality and is a region that is gaining greater popularity throughout the world, and this Chardonnay/Viognier blend is a good example of why. Fresh mandarin and peach aromas lead to a palate of apricot and peach fruit flavours with a touch of nuttiness. Made in an off-dry style, well worth a punt.

**Santa Isabel Bonarda 2002 20.65**

Bonarda originates from Piedmont, Italy and is a variety that is widely planted in Argentina. This is a reasonably full-bodied red with black cherry and plummy fruit flavours that combine nicely with the soft tannins. Try it with some lamb or game dishes.

**Te Whare Ra Gewurztraminer 2003 25.15**

Trophy winner at Air New Zealand Show last year. It is a strikingly powerful, rich wine that crams more flavour into the glass than most other NZ gewurt's. Will cellar for several years.

**Thyme Hill Merlot 2002 31.45**

Yes Merlot from central Otago, and it's the only wine they make and serious stuff it is. Excellent concentration of blackcurrants and plums and beautifully structured.

**Super deals!!**

**Morris Shiraz 13.45**

This was excellent wine at \$21.00, but it's a steal at under \$15. Full of spice and currants. Buy a case or 2.

**Morris Sparkling Shiraz Durif 14.35**

One of my favourites, ripe blackberry flavours and a lovely ripe palate, balanced by good tannins. Great with yum characteristics!

**Martin Laurent Champagne 35.95**

Excellent value for the real deal! Very similar to Pol Roger with a lovely yeasty finish.

**Riverside Reserve Chardonnay 2000 17.95**

Was \$29.95. The last shipment sold out in 1 day. Big, bold style with rolls royce oak.

## Chatsford Wine and Food Festival – 15th February

Ensure you buy your tickets to the inaugural Wine and Food Festival at Chatsford in Mosgiel. There is a great line-up planned of entertainers and 18 wine and food stalls and artwork displayed by the Peter Rae Gallery. Jud Arthur is flying in from Sydney, the Oxo Cubans, St Kilda Brass and City Slickers Jazz will provide continuous entertainment throughout the day. A stage has been erected in a focal point in a park-like venue surrounded by the Mangatua Hills!

All is in place for an outstanding day to raise money for a worthy charity, Neighbourhood Support! However, as usual, Dunedin is holding off buying their tickets, and with Dunedin's notoriety when it comes to leaving ticket sales to the last minute the event managers can not have door sales, as they require certainty as they have secured entertainment. There is a limit of 1800 people on the day. However if you want to leave it to chance, gate sales may be available only if all tickets have not been sold prior to the event. Therefore people should pre-purchase to avoid disappointment.

Tickets sales: Available from Munslow's Fine Wines.

Home deliveries available for convenience. Phone the events manager Anne Dunlop cell phone 021 1457708 or Chatsford 0800 222 455 and she will deliver tickets to the door.

or Send cheque to Chatsford Development Ltd. C/o wine and food P.O. Box 259 Mosgiel

A bus will be available from The Exchange leaving 10am, returning 4.30 to the event. Cost of bus \$5

Cost: adult \$20.00; 12–18 year \$10.00; under 12 years free. Cost includes complimentary wineglass and holder

## Mutterings from Mark

With both Australia and New Zealand poised for bigger things in world export markets, it is interesting to compare what is grown in Australia to the situation at home. While there are several hundred different wine grapes grown around the world, the N.Z industry has settled for the most part on a very tight band of about 15 predominantly French grape types, with naturally, a number of curious and innovative winemakers working with small plots of lesser known varieties. Australia historically has also had a strong French influence in its grape stocks, with people such as Busby bringing in a huge mix of cuttings from almost every French vineyard region, however, a combination of climate, cultural and travelling winemaker factors (amongst others) has seen a much broader mix of grape types grown successfully.

Muscat has a long history in Australia (though is in decline in N.Z), but in recent years the drier Alsatian style has fallen out of favour. Along with the white Bordeaux variety Muscadelle though, it has reached its apogee in the fortified styles of Rutherglen and Glenrowan, producing the wonderfully unctuous Liqueur Muscats and Tokays respectively, which are of world class.

Another Bordeaux variety Semillon has also found a home in Australia, producing the tight Hunter Valley wines which are unyielding in their youth yet honeyed with bottle age; the richer, rounder Barossa Valley styles, and in blends with Sauvignon Blanc in W.A, a crisp, zesty, fresh and fruity style.

The white grapes Verdelho, Chenin Blanc, and Marsanne have also long had a toehold in Australia.

## Decanter Club Newsletter

Verdelho would undoubtedly have been picked up as cuttings in Madeira by vessels stopping off for water and supplies on their journey to the Southern Hemisphere. In Australia it produces a range of styles from the lemony, grassy (almost Sav Blanc like) through to the oily and slightly sweet, but as a grape its key strength is its naturally high acidity, a huge bonus in the hot climates in which it is grown. Chenin Blanc may have been sourced from either the Loire, or South Africa (where under its commonly known name Steen, it has had a long history), but like Verdelho shares the same high natural acidity which is so useful in hot climate grape growing. It has found a home in the west of Australia, where it often adds zest to a blend, and for the last 67 years has been an unsung hero in (the now mass produced) Houghton's White Burgundy. Marsanne hails from the Northern Rhone, and by some quirk of fate ended up in Victoria's Goulburn Valley where Chateau Tahbilk's plantings were for several decades the largest in the world. While still commonly seen as a varietal, a number of producers are blending it in some combination with its Rhone stablemates; the fashionable Viognier and the ultra fashionable Roussanne.

Viognier has been an "in" grape for a few years now (as it is in N.Z), as many producers search for the right combination of perfume and texture that sets this variety apart, however, a proliferation in Rhone style (read Cote Rotie) Shiraz Viognier blends is giving the variety a new prominence. Its grainy tannins give added backbone to the Shiraz while co-fermentation adds a silky viscosity to the palate, and a marvellous lift of perfume. This may be a little of the "what's old is new again" adage as the legendary Maurice O'Shea used to re-ferment red grapes on top of now obscure white varieties such as auerrot, montils and blanquette in the '30s and '40s in order to lengthen the palate. Similarly, Peter Lehmann has just released his Mudflat Shiraz, a Shiraz Muscadelle blend based on the old Saltram Burgundies of the '60s which had up to 30% Muscadelle in the blend.

### **Exciting new arrivals:**

Dopff and Irion from Alsace, Ferreira ports, Barbadillo Sherries, Martin Laurent Champagne

Please support the Chatsford Wine and Food Festival

Reminder that there are carparks available while shopping at Munslow's. Parks are numbered 12-16 and are behind the store (down the alleyway between John Bezett Jeweller and Charlotte's Bakery). Please be considerate to other customers and limit your use of parks to the time that you are shopping with us. Thank you.

We also deliver free of charge throughout Dunedin

Cheers, Peter, Alistair, Chris and the crew at Munslow's