

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Shiraz at Fox Creek – From an oak tree...

More Accolades

Vineyard Snapshot

Win Tickets to WOMADelaide



## Advertiser Hyatt Wine of the Year Consumer Judges Visit Fox Creek



Pictured are (L to R) Leigh Frost, his wife Rowie, Joan Wilkinson (wife of Stuart Wilkinson and mother to Joanne Boyd who were both panel members) and Graham Lough

On Sunday 19th November we enjoyed the company of some of the Advertiser/Hyatt Wine of the Year Consumer Judges at Fox Creek.

Consumer Judges are selected from a competition run in the Advertiser Newspaper. Readers are asked to apply to go on the panel and the Advertiser select 12 members from the applications received.

After our 2004 Reserve Shiraz won both the Consumer and Professional Judge's Shiraz of the Year and the Best Wine in South Australia, we extended an invitation for the Consumer Panel members and their partners to visit the winery for a tour and lunch. After a tour of the winery and vineyards hosted

by winemakers Chris Dix and Scott Zrna panel members were given a sneak preview of some of the 2005 and 2006 Shiraz that will be used to produce upcoming vintages of our award winning Reserve Shiraz. Panel members and winery staff then mingled on the lawns over lunch and a very enjoyable day was had by all.

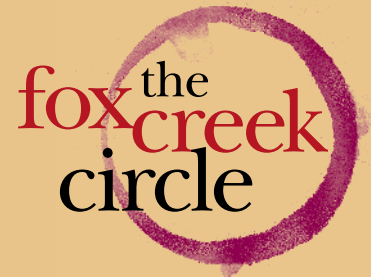
Consumer Panel member Graham Lough summed up the visit by saying...

*"Fox Creek wines have provided us with a magnificent day and we have been shown why they have been so successful. Many thanks for the kind hospitality and we wish you all every success in the future".*

Another panel member Joanne Boyd sent thanks to all...

*"for enlightening and delighting us to the intricacies involved in producing great wine".*

Fox Creek would like to thank the panel for having such discerning palates and welcomes them back to visit any time.



## RESERVE SHIRAZ FOX CREEK CIRCLE MEMBERS GET IN FIRST!

The 2005 Reserve Shiraz is bottled and will be released in April but if you are a Fox Creek Circle Member and have chosen the Reserve Shiraz for your Autumn dispatch, then you will be the first to receive the new vintage. The 2005 vintage will be on tasting at Cellar Door from 1st April for six weeks and will be available for purchase there and by mail order.

This newsletter heralds the Autumn dispatch and the cut off date of the 5th of March for changing your order.

The 2004 Reserve Shiraz just keeps attracting awards with over 25 to date. This is far too many to apply stickers designating each win on the bottle or the label would be hidden behind the accolades! Stocks of this wine are getting low, so get in while you can to enjoy this outstanding wine. For a list of the awards go to [www.foxcreekwines.com](http://www.foxcreekwines.com) 'Our Wines'.



## Shiraz at Fox Creek

Recent awards continue to reinforce the fact that Fox Creek is one of the best Shiraz producers in one of the best Shiraz growing regions in the country if not the world. What makes this remarkable is that these wines (three of pure Shiraz and four of Shiraz blended with other varieties) are produced from no more than eight small McLaren Vale vineyards which produce about 500 tons of grapes at the time of vintage, whereas many of our larger competitors select their Shiraz wines from many thousands of tons. What is so special about Fox Creek Shiraz which has won so many awards, including best Shiraz in South Australia and the Hyatt Advertiser Trophy in 2006 for the best wine from a field of 800 entries? Making wine of this quality does not happen by chance and in future newsletters we will describe just what is involved. One of the essential requirements for outstanding Shiraz and other red wines is the imparting of oak flavours to the wine. In the best wines this is done by both fermenting and maturing the best of the new wine for at least a year in new oak barrels. Winemaker Scott Zrna recently visited Bordeaux, France and observed the felling of a 180 year old giant oak tree to see the method by which barrels are made.

### FROM AN OAK TREE TO A BARREL IN 47 1/2 EASY STEPS

SCOTT ZRNA  
Winemaker

On a recent trip to Europe I was lucky enough to be shown around by the staff at Boutes, one of our best barrel suppliers, visiting some French oak forests and their Cooperage in Bordeaux, France.

For those unfamiliar with barrel production a Cooper is a person who makes barrels and a Cooperage is the building especially set up with the necessary equipment to build and toast the barrels.

First up they took me to see some trees being felled in a forest they bought at auction several months before. The lumberjack sharpened the blade of his (Husqvana) chainsaw, started it up, hung it off his belt then proceeded to scale the trunk of the tree - secured only by a rope and the spikes on the inside edge of his boots. Only the middle section of the trunk is suitable for barrel production so he cut off the top and any branches from the tree, then climbed part-way back down the tree and very carefully felled the centre section. Returning to ground level the lumberjack cuts around the base of the tree and uses wedges and a sledge hammer to fell the remaining section of trunk which is then sold for furniture production. There is something awe-inspiring about the creak of the cut trunk as it starts to move, the whoosh as it plummets earthward, and the ground trembling thump as it crashes into the underbrush. The silence following the impact was eerie - not one sound of any forest creature as some small tribute to the falling of a 180 year old giant.

We then moved from this age old art of felling trees (except for the chainsaw of course being slightly

quicker and less strenuous than an axe) to the cooperage where modern technology has been applied to the other age old art of barrel making. Machines are used to prepare the staves (sticks of oak that are arranged to form the barrel structure), sand the barrels, cut the bung and laser etch the brand and barrel origin onto the barrel's head. The important and complex steps are still done by hand - assembling the staves into a barrel shape, hammering on the metal rings to hold the staves tightly together, toasting the barrels and installing the barrel heads is back breaking work in a hot and sometimes uncomfortable environment. The three things that have the most impact on the oak flavour contributed by a barrel to the wine are the origin of the oak, how long and where that oak has been seasoned by leaving it out in the weather to leach out the harsh bitter tannin and how the barrel is toasted. Toasting is done in the cooperage by placing a headless barrel over a

small brazier fired on oak off-cuts. The idea behind this delicate art is to char the inside surface of the barrel without setting it on fire (in much the same way as you adjust the dial on your pop up toaster at home to get the level of browning just how you like it without incinerating the toast and setting off the smoke alarm). Different levels of toasting impart different flavours to the wine stored in the barrels, and we select the toasting level to match our wine batches and produce the smooth rich, balanced flavours evident in our wines.

My thanks to all at Boutes cooperage for their hospitality and for the insight into how the barrels we love so much are produced.

*ps. Governments do have value! What private company could invest in an oak tree for 180 years. Since Napoleon (who needed oak masts for boats) the French Government has maintained extensive oak forests and auctions small lots of trees when they contain sufficiently mature trees.*



## New Releases



### 2004 Reserve Shiraz Magnums (1.5 Litres)

This wine has attracted over 25 awards including the Advertiser/Hyatt Wine of the Year Award in 2006, and is now available in a 1.5 litre magnum. The wine is a vibrant purple, black colour with complex aromas of berry, cherry, blackcurrant fruit, chocolate and mocha with subtle integrated oak of vanilla and cigar box. The palate has lashings of fruitcake, rum & raisin and chocolate. The structure is very rich, thick and concentrated with a well integrated full palate.

Maturation was completed over an 18 month period in specialised oak from a range of coopers from France, Hungary, USA and Barossa.

Drinking best up to 2012, this wine should ideally be decanted for up to 2 hours prior to consumption. Our Shiraz is an exquisite accompaniment for full flavoured food, but is sufficiently complex and satisfying to be drunk alone.

Magnum labels are etched onto the bottle and each bottle is individually numbered and supplied in a hand crafted wooden box. Limited numbers available.



### 2006 Sauvignon Blanc

This is a rich, round wine that is pale green straw in colour with a lifted herbaceous cut grass, asparagus and green capsicum bouquet. There is a clean entry with a textural palate showing capsicum and tropical gooseberry flavours with a clean zesty finish. It was a warm growing season with an early ripening in late summer with rich flavour development giving generous varietal flavours while retaining natural acidity.

The Fox Creek Cellar Door vineyard contributed intense musky herbaceous characters and our vineyard on the slopes of the Willunga Range gave the intense capsicum flavours. A portion was barrel fermented with native yeasts to add complexity and weight to the blend.

*Made for early drinking to retain fresh fruit characters, drink within 12 months.*



### 2005 Shadow's run Shiraz-Cabernet Sauvignon

This latest Shadow's run red is a great vintage. The wine is a vibrant plum red colour with a dark cherry rim. The nose displays lifted spice with

a hint of leaf, dark berry, and sweet vanillin oak from barrel maturation. Entry is rich with ripe mulberry and dark chocolate flavours on the smooth mid palate, leading to a soft luscious finish of good length. Full, rich ripe and spicy, this wine is full bodied and is suitable for a barbecue, roast dinner or any occasion with good friends.

*This wine is 84% Shiraz and 16% Cabernet Sauvignon and has been crafted for enjoying right now but will keep improving for up to 18 months.*



### 2006 Chardonnay

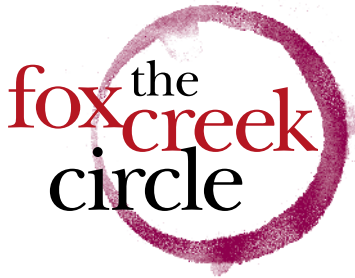
The new vintage of our Chardonnay is a pale straw colour with vibrant green tints. The nose shows lifted lime, citrus blossom and lemongrass aromas with subtle nutty oak undertones enhancing the fruit driven bouquet.

A soft rich palate shows white peach and honeydew melon flavours, framed with a generous creamy texture from barrel fermentation and maturation on yeast lees. The balanced integrated oak coupled with crisp acidity gives zing, persistence and length to the wine.

*The Chardonnay makes for great drinking on release and also benefits from bottle maturation. We would expect the wine to be at its very best from 2007 to 2009.*

## MORE ACCOLADES FOR FOX CREEK!

Since our **2004 Reserve Shiraz** blitzed the field last year winning the Hyatt/Advertiser Wine of the Year Award, the Trophies and Medals for our wines have continued to flow. Here are just a few wins we would like to share with you. The **2004 Reserve Shiraz** won an astounding three Trophies at the 2006 Southern NSW Wine Show and a Blue Gold (Top 100) Medal at the Sydney International Wine Show 2007. Our **2004 Duet Cabernet Merlot** also stood out from the crowd at the Sydney International Wine Show also winning a Blue Gold Medal. This show is unique in that it is the only show in Australia in which the wine is judged alongside food. Both wines are now in the running for a Trophy, which will be announced in the near future. Impressing the judges overseas at the Wine Style For Asia Competition in Singapore were our **2003 JSM Shiraz Cabernet Franc** and **2004 Short Row Shiraz**, each winning Premium Gold Medals. On a local note, we won a number of medals at the McLaren Vale Wine Show including Gold Medals for our sparkling **Vixen Shiraz Cabernet Franc** and **2005 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon**. All of these wonderful wines are currently available, so why not spoil yourself and buy some award winning nectar!



## Autumn 2007 Mixed Dozens

The composition of the Fox Creek Circle Mixed Dozens for Autumn 2007 are listed below. If you require any changes to your mix or would like to add to your order please contact us by Monday 5th March as invoicing and despatch will start on Friday 9th March. Those who have ordered Single Variety Dozens for Autumn will receive them at the same time.

### WHITE DOZEN

- 2006 Verdelho
- 2006 Sauvignon Blanc
- 2006 Shadow's run Chardonnay

Mail Order Price **\$176.00**  
Fox Creek Circle Price **\$150.00** delivered



### RED DOZEN

- 2005 Red Baron Shiraz
- 2005 Shiraz-Grenache
- 2003 Fox & Hounds Shiraz-Cabernet Sauvignon
- 2004 Short Row Shiraz
- 2003 JSM Shiraz-Cabernet Franc
- Vixen Sparkling Shiraz-Cabernet Franc
- 2005 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon
- 2005 Reserve Merlot

Mail Order Price **\$282.00**  
Fox Creek Circle Price **\$240.00** delivered



### MIXED DOZEN

- 2005 Shiraz-Grenache
- 2003 Fox & Hounds Shiraz-Cabernet Sauvignon
- 2004 Short Row Shiraz
- 2005 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon
- 2005 Red Baron Shiraz
- 2005 Shadow's run Shiraz-Cabernet Sauvignon
- Vixen Sparkling Shiraz-Cabernet Franc
- 2006 Sauvignon Blanc
- 2006 Verdelho
- 2006 Chardonnay
- 2006 Shadow's run Chardonnay

Mail Order Price **\$235.00**  
Fox Creek Circle Price **\$201.00** delivered



## *Fox Creek Wines Fleurieu Peninsula Working Sheepdog Trials*

Sheepdog trialling will again be a focus on the Fleurieu Peninsula at Mount Compass on 2nd & 3rd; Yankalilla on 4th & 5th and at Strathalbyn on 24th & 25th of March. Fox Creek Wines is proud to support and sponsor these unique events. These three trials will attract the best dogs and handlers from South Australia together with a number of experienced teams from Victoria.



Bob and Pin at the Sheepdog Trials.

These trials mostly feature Border Collies that are sent by their handlers to gather and hold three sheep on the arena. After this the aim is to calmly and quietly move the sheep through four obstacles which test the skill and ability of the dogs. The obstacles in some way match situations that will be encountered on the "farm". The trial at Mount Compass will feature the dogs working cross-bred sheep and at Yankalilla merino sheep

will be used. This creates different challenges for the workers using the traditional course.

A "field" trial is held at Strathalbyn out in the "farm paddock" where the dogs are cast 300-400 metres to gather the sheep and move through a variety of slightly different obstacles. Spectators who wanted to attend all of the trials would see different challenges and activities at each location.

Trialling will be happening from 8.30am-4.00pm daily at each event. A feature at Mount Compass is the twilight event where people can gather for a meal, enjoy Fox Creek wines and view some special activities with dogs and handlers on the main oval (Shadow will also make a guest appearance!).



Milton and Mick.

For further details and information contact Neil Heath 0417 863 482 or Simone Cross 8537 0235.

## *Vineyard Snapshot*

**NICK WILTSHIRE**  
Vineyard Manager

In late October much of South Australia and Victoria was hit by a black frost resulting in fruit loss of up to 70% in some areas such as the Coonawarra. The majority of Fox Creek vineyards are on the plains of McLaren Vale which fortunately were not affected but vineyards close by at Blewitt Springs, the Range, Kangarilla and Adelaide Hills all experienced significant frost burn to their vines.

Although not affected by frost burn, the McLaren Vale plains have experienced some extremely hot windy weather which left vineyards looking a little stressed after wind

gusts of up to 85kms/hr recorded in the Sellicks foothills near the sea.

With the dry conditions and open canopies of our vines there has been no disease pressure and therefore no spraying has been necessary. Water however has been an issue with soil moisture readings in November indicating it was as dry as in late January of any typical year.

Just as the newsletter was going to press we had 2 inches of rain, sounds wonderful apart from the chance of splitting grapes and fungus infection. Life was not meant to be easy!



## **WIN TICKETS FOR TWO TO WOMADELAIDE 2007**

We are pleased to be able to offer all Fox Creek Circle and Wine Club members the opportunity to win two tickets for a full day and night at WOMADelaide 2007 in the beautiful Botanic Gardens in Adelaide. Accommodation for the evening is offered and if you are travelling from interstate, airfares from your capital city to Adelaide will also be included.

To win this wonderful prize all you need to do is purchase one dozen Fox Creek Red Baron Shiraz, over and above any standing order you may have. Red Baron will be the feature wine at WOMADelaide this year and of course we would love you to try it whether or not you can attend. Orders must be processed no later than the end of February 2007 to go into the draw.



## **FOX CREEK CIRCLE SIGNS 1000TH MEMBER**

Since introducing the Fox Creek Circle just over a year ago we have been signing up more and more people each month who are keen to take advantage of the great prices, free freight and email specials offered to those who make the commitment of purchasing 2 dozen wines each year.

On the 13th of October this year we signed the 1000th member, Mr. Alaric Maude who is pictured with his enrolment form. As the 1000th member, Alaric was delighted to be presented with a bottle of the Fox Creek 2004 award winning Reserve Shiraz and a bottle of our new Shiraz, the Red Baron.

Congratulations Alaric. Just who will be the 2000th member?

## Diary

### 1 March to 30 April

KIM THOMSON'S SUSTAINABLE JEWELLERY EXHIBITION 'ELEMENTAL' AT FOX CREEK CELLAR DOOR

See article below.

### 9 to 11 March

FOX CREEK SOLE WINE SUPPLIER AT WOMADELAIDE 2007

See [www.womadelaide.com.au](http://www.womadelaide.com.au) for more information. We hope to see some of you there. See below for information on discounted tickets for our Circle & Wine Club members.

### 2 & 3, 4 & 5 and 24 & 25 March

FOX CREEK WINES FLEURIEU PENINSULA WORKING SHEEPDOG TRAILS

See separate article in newsletter.

### 31 March & 12th May

FOX CREEK AT WILLUNGA FARMERS MARKET

See [www.willungafarmersmarket.com](http://www.willungafarmersmarket.com) for more information on this delicious market.

### 29th April

THE VINTAGE & CLASSIC CAR DAY

Following the success of the inaugural event in 2006 McLaren Vale is delighted to make this an annual occurrence. Fox Creek will again be host to the Jaguar Car Club so please come and join us and have a look at some beautiful cars and chat with their owners. Twelve McLaren Vale wineries will also host up to 21 vintage or classic car clubs. The day will start at 9.30am with all clubs assembling at McLaren Vale on the Lake before they set off around 11.30am to their designated winery via a parade down the main street of McLaren Vale. Wineries will host the cars from 12pm to 3.30pm. For more information contact Trevor Sharp on [vintageandclassic@hotmail.com](mailto:vintageandclassic@hotmail.com) or ring 0415 820 719

### Throughout 2007

FOX CREEK SPONSORS SYDNEY SEAFOOD SCHOOL

The Sydney Seafood School, located at Sydney Fish Market, conducts seafood cookery classes for all tastes and all degrees of competency. There are a wide range of 2 hour evening classes on various ethnic cuisines and

cooking styles, for example Chilli Crab, Tapas, Paella, and Charring. For the more experienced cooks there are weekend workshops with some of Australia's leading chefs, such as Peter Doyle (Est), Matthew Moran (Aria) & Christine Manfield (author). Classes are designed for all skill levels and involve a demonstration followed by a hands-on cooking session and then a delicious seafood meal (accompanied with wine of course). Priced from \$75/class. For more information (as well as great seafood recipes) see [www.sydneyfishmarket.com.au](http://www.sydneyfishmarket.com.au) You can book online, call 02 9004 1111 or email [sss@sydneyfishmarket.com.au](mailto:sss@sydneyfishmarket.com.au) to request a program, buy a gift certificate or book a class. Upcoming classes Fox Creek have sponsored are with Perry Hill from the Boathouse on Blackwattle Bay on 5th of March, Moroccan on 3rd April and Paella on 11th May.

### Fleurieu Peninsula Art Trail

FOX CREEK IS NOW PART OF THE FLEURIEU PENINSULA ART TRAIL

See [www.fleurieupeninsula.com.au/microsite.asp?ID=568](http://www.fleurieupeninsula.com.au/microsite.asp?ID=568) for more information.

To register your interest in any of the above or for further information please contact Kristin at [kristin@foxcreekwines.com](mailto:kristin@foxcreekwines.com), Brenda at [brenda@foxcreekwines.com](mailto:brenda@foxcreekwines.com) or call us on 08 8556 2403.

**DISCOUNTED TICKETS FOR WOMADELAIDE 2007** We are pleased to be able to offer all Fox Creek Circle and Wine Club members a 20% discount on ticket prices to WOMADELAIDE 2007. To take up this offer you must ring 1300 304 072 to book your tickets and mention the password "Vixen". This offer is limited to 4 passes per person and is available by phone only. For more information on what is on offer see [www.womadelaide.com.au](http://www.womadelaide.com.au)



fox creek

SEE YOU AT THE CELLAR DOOR SOON!

Cellar Door open for tastings between 10am and 5pm seven days a week.

## "Elemental" 1 MARCH TO 30 APRIL

Sustainable jewellery designer Kim Thomson is thrilled to be showing her latest range of jewellery at our Cellar Door from the beginning of March until the end of April. The change of seasons, the lay of the land, natural growth patterns and animals of the region are some of the facets of Kim's work to be enjoyed at this exhibition. The works that have been produced have gone through a rigorous design process, so that they are not only aesthetically pleasing, but spiritually uplifting,

and sustainable. Each piece has been expertly crafted using materials that are often destined for landfill. The use of precious metals is minimised and sourced through a metal refiner rather than coming directly from a mine. As a resident of the Fleurieu Peninsula, Kim has endeavoured to express the ambience of the region that Fox Creek calls home, through the medium of sustainable jewellery. Come and see for yourselves.