



MARCH 2005

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A Classic McLaren Vale "Red" 1998 Reserve Cabernet

If you want to see what happened to those marvellous, big 1998 reds after seven years of careful cellaring, look no further than this 1998 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon.

In the absence of any Reserve wines from the 2003 vintage, we have dug deep into the cellar for a few cases of this wine from this celebrated 1998 vintage.

This wine received a Gold Medal at the Royal Perth Wine Show in 1999, was Highly Recommended in Winewise in 2000, received a very high rating of 92+ by the celebrated U.S. Wine Critic, Robert Parker in the 2001 Wine Advocate and was awarded five glasses for quality in the 2000/2001 Penguin Good Australian Wine Guide.

This wine has not been shown since then but our winemakers Chris and Scott had this to say about it recently.

Appearance: Deep cherry red rim with dark brick red core.

Bouquet: Powerful notes of blackberry, mocha, chocolate and spicy cinnamon oak. Licorice aromas with herbal mint adds to a very complex wine, indicative of the 1998 vintage.

Palate: A strong entrance of intense flavours and a typical complexity of spice and chocolate mocha. Licorice and blackcurrant flavours, a sweet

rich palate and soft integrated tannins. Evident oak maturation, a long finish and should cellar well until 2010.

To quote Huon Hooke and Ralph Kyte-Powell in the Penguin Wine Guide 2001/2002 "This formidable wine competes in the how much character can you get in a bottle stakes. Serve with Brontosaurus rib!"



RECENT EXTERNAL RECOGNITION OF FOX CREEK WINES

Wine Spectator is a leading wine journal in the USA. In a review of Australian wines imported into the USA, critic Harvey Steinman recommended the **2002 JSM Shiraz Cabernet Franc** as a good value, well balanced wine from this very good vintage.

2005 SYDNEY INTERNATIONAL WINE COMPETITION

Two Fox Creek wines were awarded Blue Gold Medals and included in the *Top 100 Wines* from an International field.

2002 Reserve Cabernet 2003 Short Row Shiraz

In *Winewise*, a critical Australian wine journal, the following wines received particular acclaim.

2002 Reserve Shiraz	<i>Highly Recommended</i>
2003 Short Row Shiraz	<i>Highly Recommended</i>
2002 Reserve Cabernet	<i>Highly Recommended</i>
2001 Reserve Merlot	<i>Highly Recommended</i>
2002 Duet Cabernet Merlot	<i>Recommended</i>
2003 Duet Cabernet Merlot	<i>Recommended</i>

GREAT AUSTRALIAN SHIRAZ TROPHY 2004

From a field of 268 entrants, both the **2002 Reserve Shiraz** and the **2002 Short Row Shiraz** were included in the top 50 wines. (equal 13th and 8th respectively)

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Vintage 2005 JIM WATTS Manager

What a strange Summer it is with many overcast skies and very little really hot weather. But the grapes are ripening and, at the time of writing (20th of February) we have picked our Sauvignon Blanc, Semillon, Verdelho and some Chardonnay. We have even picked two small blocks of Shiraz, but most of the red grapes are some weeks from ripening.

Many readers will know just how critical it is for the quality of the final wine just when the grapes are picked. Our Head Winemaker, Chris Dix has written a short article which

follows, to explain just how he goes about it.

Apart from our all important winemaking activities, Fox Creek has been fortunate enough to be able to sponsor two important cultural events in Adelaide 2005. They are the biennial Adelaide Film Festival which, unfortunately will be finished by the time you read this newsletter. The other is the annual Cabaret Festival held at the Adelaide Festival Centre and which we first sponsored in 2004. This is a remarkable event of wide appeal and will be held this year from June 10th to June 25th.



How do we know when to pick grapes CHRIS DIX Head Winemaker

Most vineyards have blocks of different grape varieties and these mature at different times. The rate of ripening is influenced by varying climatic conditions, the height of the canopy, the aspect of the vineyard, the size of the crop and soil type. As Vintage approaches we visit each block regularly to assess the best time for harvest. Assessment in the field is by sight and taste.

Some expensive white wines require intense flavour, low phenolics (grip) and exquisite balance. Less expensive white wines require a lighter, more easy-drinking style. Grape parcels are classified accordingly.

Samples are taken back to the winery laboratory to measure grape sugar level and acid by pH and titration. Along with flavour, these measurements will determine the palate structure, balance and alcohol content of the resulting wine. These results allow us to determine which patches and varieties are "physiologically ripe" or are approaching that stage so we are able to plan the harvesting schedule. Influencing these decisions are winery commercial requirements as well.

With red grapes there are further factors to consider. The fine line to tread is to harvest when 'flavour ripeness' is optimal and before too

much sugar accumulates. High sugars produce high alcohol which unbalances the wine and tastes "hot" in the resulting wine.

It is no mean feat to schedule harvesting of many blocks and varieties to fit quality criteria while ensuring a smooth flow of activity in the winery in terms of staff, crushers, presses, tanks and the like.

What a job this winemaking caper turns out to be. And some people thought it was hand picking into cane baskets, stomping on grapes in a vat and having a long lunch with copious amounts of wine!!



Scott Zrna

Our New Winemaker

After the resignation of Tony Walker, we have been very fortunate to recruit Scott Zrna as our new Winemaker. He will work with our Head Winemaker, Chris Dix.

Scott graduated in Wine Science from Charles Sturt University at Wagga in 1997 and had this to say about his previous career.

..."I cut my teeth at Mildara Blass' Merbein Cellars before moving to McWilliams Wines to refine my craft, eventually becoming the company's

Senior White Winemaker. The need for a Seachange, after spending far too long inland, led us back to Adelaide and an opportunity to join the fantastic people at Fox Creek. After a brief introduction and steep learning curve I am busy preparing for vintage and will (hopefully) make plenty of great wine for all to enjoy."

Scott is married to Sharyn and has hair, good teeth, no children and two cats.

New Releases



2004 VERDELHO

This popular wine is ready for drinking but can cellar for up to three years. Its appearance is brilliant with a pale green tint and the bouquet is of tropical fruits and spice. The palate has dominant characters of pineapple and lime. The bottle is closed with a convenient screw cap.

This wine won a Bronze Medal at the recent 2004 Queensland Wine Show.

2003 SEMILLON SAUVIGNON BLANC

A wine for the discerning wine lover which improves with bottle age for up to 3 or 4 years.

The bouquet and palate are characteristically of lemon and lime. The finish is long with crisp acidity. A honey character develops with time, making the wine suitable to accompany full flavoured dishes of fish or chicken .

2003 SHIRAZ GRENACHE

The production of our blend of Shiraz and Grenache has been interrupted for some markets but, now that we have access to very good McLaren Vale Grenache this is unlikely to happen again.

This wine is a particular favourite with staff and the public at Cellar

Door. It is deep red and has a lovely bouquet of blackberry, dark cherry and spice. It tastes of soft rich fruits and blackberries, with a long sweet finish of soft tannins and spice. The bottles are closed with a screw cap. While crafted for immediate appeal, the wine will benefit from 2 to 3 years cellaring.

It has just been awarded a Bronze Medal at the Sydney Royal Wine Show.

2003 "DUET" CABERNET SAUVIGNON MERLOT

The fourth vintage of this very popular red blend from Fox Creek. The bouquet is of lifted blackcurrant with mulberry and savoury chocolate mocha and oak. The palate is soft with rich cassis berry flavours becoming intense on the mid palate. The tannins are soft.

This is a wonderful food wine, particularly with red meats and will benefit from a period of decanting before drinking. Duet 2003 has a convenient screw cap closure.

2003 Duet received three Bronze Medals in 2004 from Royal Wine Shows in Melbourne and Hobart and from Rutherglen and was recently Recommended in Winewise.



A SPORTSMAN'S INJURY TO SHADOW

Like many very good sportsmen, Shadow ruptured the cruciate ligament of his right knee in December. This made the knee unstable and "Shadow's run" rapidly turned into "Shadow's limp".

A surgical repair was carried out by local veterinarian David Gill and poor Shadow was prescribed complete rest for ten weeks.

Imagine the effect on Shadow and all our lives? The winery tours lost their leader, the vineyard workers lost their daily visitor, the Cellar Door lost its silent salesman and Shadow had to remain both indoors and clean all the time!

Physical recovery is proceeding well but his spirit remains a little subdued. He improves with gradually increasing activity.

McLAREN VALE MOTEL

SPECIAL FOR 'FOX CREEK WINE CLUB MEMBERS'

Accommodation Package

2 nights in a Deluxe Studio Apartment with a cooked breakfast each morning and a bottle of 'Vixen' on arrival. \$161.00 per person (normally \$217.00)

These new self-contained apartments offer a fully equipped kitchen, a spa, a washing machine and dryer; luxurious king size beds; a computer with broadband connection, television, video and Foxtel.

The Motel is walking distance from many restaurants and is only 7km from local beaches and about 5km from Fox Creek.

Offer is valid until 31st August 2005 but is not valid on long weekends. Bookings: 08 8323 8265 (mention you are a Fox Creek Wine Club member)

WINE AUSTRALIA 2004 COMPETITION

Congratulations to Sheree Rudinger of Coogee who won a box of our first six vintages of Reserve Shiraz for being the first to select Verdelho and Chardonnay as the two main grape varieties in Shadow's run The White.



Helen Hunter conquering her fears.

What do you do when you're about to turn 40?

HELEN HUNTER *Cellar Door Manager*

Well jump out of a perfectly good plane of course!

Yes, I know call it crazy, call it sad, but we are all pressured into that mind set of having to do "something" to mark the turning of another decade.

So 12,000 feet up, out I went. 50 seconds of free-falling at 200kms an hour. Exhilarating? Awesome? Mind blowing? Terrifying? You bet ya!

When I landed I was so pumped up, I was saying I wanted to go again. Do it again, do it again.

"Push the envelope", a flying expression my father told me, was what I wanted to do, again. Yes, I was hooked, I was Top Gun, I felt the need for speed man!

Next morning, I had had time to reflect, hadn't I. You idiot, not on your life, never ever again.

Well, then again there's another ten years to dwell on the next crazy idea, isn't there! JUST DO IT!



Brenda, Shadow and tourists.

Winery Tours

BRENDA GRATTON *Customer Service Officer*

Ever wondered how we make our lovely wines? From the little bunches of grapes dangling off the vines to the smooth, silky liquid that ends up in your glass?

Come and visit the winery, located 300 metres down the road from our Cellar Door, and let me show you how it's done. I'll walk you through the different areas of our winery and explain in simple terms the different

stages of harvest, processing and distribution.

Join me and learn a bit about the background of our wines and how they're made. Of course an after tour tasting at Cellar Door is compulsory!

Our tours run regularly, are free of charge, and are by appointment only. For more information contact Brenda on (08) 8556 2403.

WINE DISCOUNTS

The Wine Industry is in a rather chaotic state at the moment. There is an oversupply of grapes in some regions and turmoil in the Retail Industry with many changes in ownership. Along with this you may hear of extraordinary discounts which may sometimes involve some of our wines. We have no control over the prices charged for those wines and sometimes they are sold at a price that would lead to little or no profit to the retailer. Our advice to you if our wines are discounted is to take advantage of the opportunity, so long as you want the wine of course.



SEE YOU AT THE CELLAR DOOR SOON!

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

