



# Frankston Amateur Winemakers Guild

## NEWSLETTER MAY 2021

[www.fawg.org.au](http://www.fawg.org.au)

### President's Message

Well, it's May already, time has flown and this year is almost half gone already.

Most of us who are making wine have pressed by now and hopefully another great drop, or two, is slowly working away.

Hopefully our newer members are caught up in all the excitement and are taking advantage of the information and expertise that is available from our more established members. After all that is the point of our Guild - to improve the standard of amateur winemaking - be sure to be a part of it.

Don't be afraid to ask for help, I do it all the time.

Happy winemaking.

Peter Enness

Please note that where text appears like this [www.facebook.com/TheFAWG](http://www.facebook.com/TheFAWG) hyperlinks are attached in the pdf document that will take you to various web pages if you click on the text (such as the link to our Facebook page above)

**If you have any interesting information, issues you would like brought to the members attention or items for sale/wanted etc., please email the newsletter editor [newsletter@fawg.org.au](mailto:newsletter@fawg.org.au)**

### Coming Up

- **1 - 2 May** - Grampians Grape Escape
- **11 May** - Guild Meeting and White wine mini-comp. Michael from Mammoth Wines to Speak
- **14 - 23 May** - Good Beer Week
- **21 May** - A Day in the Yarra Valley
- **27 May** - All Things Nebbiolo Tasting Belmont
- **28 - 30 May** - Good Food and Wine Show

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**"I can certainly see that you know your wine. Most of the guests who stay here wouldn't know the difference between Bordeaux and Claret." - Basil Fawlty, "Fawlty Towers"**

## COVID - 19 REMINDER



Members are reminded that Covid-19 restrictions on attendance at public events, are still in force. You are reminded that the following is required for our meetings.

- Do not attend meetings if you are unwell.
- Sign in, and/or scan the QR code, so that we have a way of tracking who attended the meeting.
- Social distancing is required.
- Do not pass round bottles of wine. The person that brings the wine should pour it for others.
- Food consumed at meetings should be for your consumption only—please do not share round your food with others, due to potential contamination.



Michael Glover, from Mammoth Wines, is our guest speaker this month. He started his winemaking experience in New Zealand on his parents vineyard. He has, since completing a wine science degree in Australia, worked in Australia, a number of regions in Italy. France and Germany.

Mammoth wines are coaxed into existence with minimal intervention, organically and in Michael's words, 'The less I did, the more the wine seemed to be true, relaxed and itself'

Michael will, no doubt, expand on his philosophy of winemaking with enthusiasm at our May meeting.

### Sentia Update

Universal Biosensors have advised that Malic Acid, Fructose and Glucose test strips should be available in the second half of this year. Malic acid test strips are expected around the end of September, which should be an appropriate time to test your wines for MLF progress. Wines can be checked for free SO<sub>2</sub> at our monthly meetings.

### Wizard of Id by Parker and Hart



"I can certainly see that you know your wine. Most of the guests who stay here wouldn't know the difference between Bordeaux and Claret." - Basil Fawlty, *Fawlty Towers*.

## WINE LABEL OF THE MONTH



### 8 Kangaroos McLaren vale Shiraz 2016

This wine presentation won international packaging awards in 2018 and 2019. Head of the kangaroo shaped bottle lifts off to reveal screw cap.

\$49.95 each at Dan Murphys

## Cordon Corner by Mike Payne

By now for most of us harvest is all done, nets are off, plants have had a feed and leaves are falling. Good time to have a bit of a clean-up and do a bit of maintenance before pruning starts. Anyone who experienced patches of mildew this season should consider a high application rate of sulphur/copper as a clean-up spray before the leaves fall to reduce spore numbers for next season. The jury is out on the effectiveness of such applications, but if you find it helps in your situation, then you should do it.

If anyone is thinking about taking cuttings for planting or grafting, the best time is, as soon as the leaves stop functioning and before they have all dropped. The idea of this is to take the cuttings while the plant food reserves are still in the upper part of the vine before they translocate back down in to the permanent parts of the vine.

More on pruning in next month's cordon corner before we go in to winter break.

## The Briars Vineyard

Some of our members volunteer at The Briars Vineyard, Mount Martha, maintaining approx. 1100 Cabernet Sauvignon vines. A small number of volunteer positions have become available for any interested people.

Please note that a full year's commitment is required and volunteers are expected to be in attendance when certain critical tasks are undertaken (e.g. pruning, net deployment & retrieval, weed removal, etc.). Volunteers are also required to have a working with children check, which can be obtained free of charge.

Please contact David Wood if you'd like to discuss what is involved (0407 183 728, [info@fawg.org.au](mailto:info@fawg.org.au))



"You have only so many bottles in your life, never drink a bad one." - Len Evans

## My Vintage Year

An interview series: Where we interview wine people. They may be your fellow guild members or significant others in the Wine Industry. Was this their vintage year: by Dave Chambers

### Today it is Glen Fortune.

Glen Fortune is a fine wine maker. He has a Gold Medal from the Eltham Wine Show, if any proof was needed. People like Glen are gold to the FAWG. I hope to get to know Glen more over this coming year. I suggest you would improve your life by getting more involved in the FAWG, as Glen has discovered over the years.

I have had a number of conversations with Glen over the last year or two; he is smart and interesting. He and I share ideas of where the Frankston Club should expand socially. David Wood expands on Glen's contribution in his own words below.

Glen has been a significant contributor to FAWG and has been guild secretary for a number of years now. He also filled in compiling the newsletter, organising grape sourcing and delivery and generally volunteering for any duty that other members did not put their hand up for. This interview may give other guild members an insight into Glen's generous nature and an appreciation of Glen's contributions to the guild. Get to know Glen - you will be rewarded for doing so.



Dave: Why wine and not beer.

Don't say that I started off with Beer, then simple spirits and then wine you never know I might go back to beer!!!

Dave: How did Wine Making as a hobby unfold for you. Has this been an easy path. What came first the Wine Guild or Wine Making.

My wife organised me to do the wine making course with the guild way back in 2011 at the Briars Barn, wine how hard can it be, get grapes stand on them in a bucket put in some yeast I have lying around and presto.

Dave: What is your first experience that you remember that led to an interest in wine.

Tasting at the wine classes an orange wine by Chris Myers and I think a port, I remember saying to myself what the hell I never thought to make a wine out of anything but grapes.

Dave: Did that immediately lead to the hobby of making wine.

Yes I guess so, I was so impressed and the fact that a lot of the other members show up to let us students taste their wines they really had a passion

Dave: What is an interesting unknown fact about you that members of Frankston Guild may find interesting.

Gee I dont know, if this is interesting we don't want people to fall asleep while reading this, but I love learning, I love inventing (things) to make things better and I am not afraid to try something ( what ever) to see if its an improvement, that includes my winemaking!!! Ha Ha.

Dave: Can you tell us about the wildest party you attended. Probably in your youth but maybe not.

Sorry Dave, the only one I can remember and that's because I saw a photo, was me jammed in a 44 gallon drum legs and head out, 19 at that stage may be that was my first foray into winemaking, trying to stop the wine from oxidising.

Dave: What are you making now.

OOH very busy shiraz, mataro, merlot, Durif, lemon

## David Wood has a Guest Question for you:

Question: Glen, you run a thriving business, which has become busier over recent months. How do you manage to fit in guild secretarial duties and winemaking into your hectic schedule?

I don't know !! I have not really slowed down since starting the business back in the eighties and at home we were always renovating the house which the one we are in now is No4 but I must say that I have had a very understanding family which has helped a lot and I have really never had any hobbies in the past the guild just struck gold i guess I find it hard to say no to a good cause!!!

Dave: Where did you pick up your wine making skills. Or have you educated yourself to making wine.

Self taught, probably why I have a few 'issues'.

Dave: Are you in to the intellectual part of the discussion about wine. Wine can be so many things to so many people. But what does it bring to you.

No I'm not that clever. I find it a real challenge to make a good wine grape or country And the satisfaction when I do.

Dave: Are you pedantic fussy wine maker or do you prefer to feel your way along steady as she goes. It will work out in the end.

A little bit but there is always the still unless I have spent a lot on grapes. Losing money hurts

Dave: What is wine making to you. I suspect it is not just another hobby. But a consuming passion that excites you. Is this true.

Don't know to be truthful, the guild has sort of consumed me a little, all the different characters of the club. The success of the club being able to help out in everybody, being able to make a good wine, whether it be grape or country.

Dave: What are you excited about for the future of home wine making.

I think country winemaking could be in for a bright future as more people find out that it can be done and done well - that's the trick

Dave: What inspires you to make better wine. Is it the Gold medals or the knowledge that you are ever improving on your skills.

Skills skills skills

Dave: Who or what has been your biggest influence in wine making.

The members of the guild and their partners, the passion is fantastic when we have a speaker they all listen intently. When I taste a gold medal country wine I'm blown away. When somebody gets a bad score they let you know about it. I see it as truly a craft and with all crafts it takes skill and knowledge and that eventually comes from the experience of making wine.

Dave: Can you describe where you make your wine. Is it in your kitchen or do you have a dedicated area for wine making.

I have now a shed which we have set up with a sink, bench and shelving and room for the press and crusher, our last place well lets just say had its flaws when it came to being clean although in saying that, I never had a wine with mouse as a fault.

Dave: What have been the positive surprises of your membership of FAWG

Definitely getting better at making better wine, again the characters of the guild and the growth in membership during covid.

Dave: What were you drinking in your twenties.

Box stuff started sweet then dry oh yes Mateus rose, then spirits with of course coke. Oh yes champagne (sorry cant say that) sparkling wine with chicken kindly supplied by the student union at Swinburne uni for what ever reason they could think of. Ah fun times.

Dave: If you could tell the young Glen about life, what advice would you give.

Believe in Karma. Have a go, if it doesn't work out change your direction and look for the joyful things in life there's plenty of them.

Dave: What wine do you particularly enjoy making. Has the Guild turned out to be an ideal group either socially or for ideas for wine making.

I like them all but have not made a great country wine yet, or a sparkling. But I will !!, can't wait either.!

Yeh the guild has a wealth of knowledge in its members but they don't hand it out on a plate for you until you ask which is OK, because the best way to learn I have found is your mistakes.

I would like to see the guild do more interactive stuff, but we need more members to help out in the running of the place. Same story in every club I guess.

**Dave:** Enlighten us with a couple of your favourites wine tweaks.

It's not a tweak as much as a tool. Paraffin Oil floating on top of the wine to stop it from oxidising. I am a big oxidiser. I found it works, Got a gold medal from Eltham using it. When bottling, the trick is to get it off the wine, I used a syringe and then a paper wick to soak the rest off. The paraffin takes on the smell of the wine, so I wouldn't keep it..

**Dave:** What is your favourite tool in your winery.

My most useful tool in making wine  
The humble milk crate  
A seat at the bench  
A set of steps to get 54lts on the bench



And a great way to clean out the 54lt demijohn without braking your back or the bottle what an invention  
...And it even holds milk, if only the Romans had known about Mike Crates.

**Dave:** I have heard in my short time with the guild some complete disasters while making

wine. What is your biggest disaster you can share with us.

Making a CabSav with my new VC 90 . Lt's gone. I couldn't get the seal to perform on account of a leak/ great oxidation/ massive learning curve/ have not used the VC since but I will soon.

A bad craftsmen always blames his tools.

**Dave:** I have asked this question of everyone and so far a hundred percent have said making wine was never a financial consideration. What was the motivation and still is for you after so many years.

True but I have only been making for 10 years/ I hope ramp up my making in small 5lts demi I am not a big drinker, but I love the experimentation.

### And Finally

**Dave:** You are going to a desert island to spend some chill time. You are taking with you one piece of music, one bottle of wine, a book and food. To be clear, that is a choice of one bottle of wine, one meal and so on. What will be placed in your suitcase.

This is a hard question, I suppose you're saying my last rights and wishes before death (gruesome).

It's gotta be comfort food - a great Lasagne.

Song Bird by Fleetwood Mac. I don't why, but it always pops into my head when I want to chill out

A good vintage port to sip on while reading a book on philosophical phrases and sayings and let the wisdom and my thoughts wash over me.

.....Do I get off the Island???



## Confessions of a Durif Tragic! By Andrew Sutherland Smith

Let's start by saying I'm the worst sort of Durif maker - a convert! Just like the reformed smoker, there's nothing I enjoy more than discussing the benefits of my conversion! What is it that I didn't like, worked through, and ultimately loved about Durif? Easy, its unique tannin structure!

Durif is a pig to grow viticulturally. It's thin skinned, tight bunched, prone to overcropping, prone to second cropping, relatively late, and prone to botrytis. It also has a horrible hard mean tannin structure that doesn't soften till it's well beyond normal maturity.

On the plus side, it has amazing black purple colour, glorious soft tannins when physiologically mature (brown seeds) excellent crushed violet floral tones and a magnificent depth of flavour which doesn't need a great deal of oak. It gets enough tannin from its own seeds to stabilise that awesome colour.



Basically red wine colour comes from the seeds. Usually more seeds, more colour as a general rule of thumb. Durif can have up to 5 seeds per berry. Awesome stuff!

Its grown in California as Petite Sirah (little Shiraz) though there may be nothing too little about the wines (or berries for that matter.) Bunches can be really big, which is another issue when you have bunches touching one another - problem spot for bunch rot. Some of the biggest most colored reds we've had came from big berry size which seems to challenge the deep colored, little berry theory (Surface Area /Volume ratio is higher for a small berry).

What I didn't like about Durif was that in some years it had a hard tough nasty tannin, almost a bit coppery, almost in a metallic fashion. It

makes sense now, no-one could ripen it fully, harvested less ripe to avoid split and rain and made a hard thin wine dominated by minty menthol green herbaceous characters.

As there's not a huge amount of Durif out there, these styles still pop up in the wine show ring from time to time. Perhaps for the uneducated judges these herbaceous styles even look attractive. What can I say, I don't like them.

The other style that can be made is a very soft, sweet, somewhat brown porty style made at a higher pH. This too can have an instant ready to drink appeal to some. Judges included! What I really enjoy is the black phase fruit characters that this variety has in abundance. Dark morello cherries, satsuma plum, dark fine chocolate, huge mouthfeel and soft tannins.

Trouble is to get those you have to go beyond what is considered normally ripe, 15 Beaufort is just the start of these characters. So you're really looking at wines of 15.5 % alc to be any good...more like 16!

Given that Durif constitutes 40% of what we do at Warrabilla, would we recommend it? Absolutely, but only in a

dry hot climate. Cropping levels we keep down to about 2t/acre but I have seen great Durif at 4-5 t/acre in a warmer region. Exposure is important, so think about trellis design. We use a single wire vertically shoot positioned trellis (VSP). Durif loves it. Irrigation has to be pretty carefully controlled or you'll blow the berry size (and potentially get a heap of split!)

Durif has masses of potential in Australia, it's just that until we get some consensus about what is a good style for Durif, we have an absolute plethora of Durif wines all different, all with someone extolling their virtues, and half of them absolute crap!

\*\*\*Andrew Sutherland Smith is a fifth generation winemaker who established [Warrabilla Wines](#) in Rutherglen in 1991. He also grows and makes Marsanne and Zinfandel and other wine varieties.

## Seeing the light: how drinking outdoors affects wine

By Huon Hooke

Reproduced from *The Age*, "the Full Bottle", April 16, 2021



**Q:** I'm interested in your recent comments about "light strike". When I drink white wine outdoors, I've often noticed that after a few minutes it takes on a different characteristic. A young, fresh wine, for instance, can taste like an aged riesling, although less pleasantly. Is this what I'm experiencing?

*C.H., Springwood, NSW* Illustration by Simon Letch.

**A:** You appear, indeed, to be accurately describing the effect of light strike. A toasty, resinous, cardboard-like, almost kerosene dullness besets the wine, not unlike the bouquet of an aged riesling, but not half as appealing. It is, in fact, a sulphide, or disulphide, and is caused by

the action of the ultraviolet light rays on the riboflavin and amino acids in the wine.

White wines and sparkling wines are especially susceptible, much more so if they're actually in a wine glass or a clear-glass bottle. This is part of the reason why winemakers (and brewers – beer is highly sensitive to light strike) tend to favour green or amber bottles. Green is better than clear, but amber is best. These colours protect the contents against the ultra-violet rays. According to *The Oxford Companion to Wine*, red wines are less susceptible to light strike because they contain phenolic compounds (tannins and colour pigments).

I've been with a champagne winemaker at a reception on a sunny Sydney day, around noon, when his champagne was poured indoors. It tasted fine in the room but, after we'd been outdoors on a sunny deck for less than half an hour, the drink was affected by light strike. Some wines, such as Louis Roederer Cristal, come in a clear glass bottle for marketing reasons, but the bottle is wrapped in amber cellophane, which shields the contents from destructive light rays. Never unwrap a bottle of Cristal unless you're well away from a light source and intend to finish it pronto. If you know Cristal, that's not a difficult rule to follow.

**Country Winemakers using clear bottles, as favoured for competition entries, please take note!**





## Cooking with Wine

### Beef in red wine with melting onions



#### Ingredients

- 25g butter
- 2 large onions, sliced into rings
- 6 garlic cloves, halved
- 3 tbsp plain flour
- 600g piece beef skirt or slices of shin, cut into large chunks
- 2 tbsp olive or rapeseed oil
- 3 bay leaves
- 400ml red wine
- 1 tbsp tomato purée 300ml strong beef stock
- 250g mushrooms, halved (we used small Portobello mushrooms)
- chopped parsley, to serve (optional)

#### Method

1. Heat oven to 150C. In a large, heavy-based flameproof casserole dish with a lid, melt the butter over a medium heat. Add the onions and garlic, cook for 10 mins until starting to brown, then transfer to a small plate.
2. Put the flour in a large plastic food bag with plenty of black pepper. Add half the beef, shake to coat, then remove, leaving some flour in the bag. Add the rest of the beef and shake to coat in the remaining flour.
3. Heat the oil in the same casserole dish you cooked the onions in (there's no need to clean it first). Add the beef and bay leaves, and fry until the meat is browned all over. Pour in the wine and return the onions to the dish. Add the tomato purée and stock, stir and return to a simmer. Cover with the lid and put in the oven to stew for 1 hr.
4. After 1 hr, add the mushrooms and return to the oven for another hour. Taste the meat – if it's tender, remove from the oven. If it's still a little firm, cook for 30 mins more and test again.
5. Serve scattered with parsley, if you like.

From BBC GoodFood

### White Wine Cookies— Rollitos de Vino Blanco



#### Ingredients

- 2½ cup Plain Flour (270 grams)
- ½ cup Granulated Sugar / Caster Sugar (100 grams)
- 5½ tablespoons Extra Virgin Olive Oil (80 ml)
- 5½ tablespoons White Wine (80 ml)
- ½ teaspoon Sea Salt
- ¼ teaspoon Baking Powder
- 5 tablespoons Icing Sugar

#### Instructions

1. In a mixing bowl combine all the dry ingredients (except for the icing sugar) and mix. Now add the oil and wine. Combine. Form into dough (this can be done in the mixing bowl or you can knead the dough on you work top).
2. Roll the dough into a sausage and cut equal size pieces. You should get about 20 pieces. Form these into balls. Using your finger or the end of a wooden spoon, make a hole in the middle of each ball and stretch the hole more.
3. Place them onto a baking tray lined with baking paper/silicone mat. Bake at 180°C for 25 minutes or until the bottoms are golden brown.
4. Let them cool down a bit before coating them in icing sugar.
5. Keep in an air-tight container!

From happyfoodstube.com

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## Activity Calendar

Meeting Date	Proposed Activity	Competitions/Other
11 May 2021	Michael from Mammoth Wines to talk	Gordon Evans White Wine mini-comp*
8 June 2021	TBA	Sheila Lee Liqueur & Fortified wine mini-comp*
13 July 2020	TBA	Homemade night
11 August 2021	AGM Old, Unusual and Mulled Wine night Wine Auction?	Frankston & South Eastern Wineshow Open Day Sunday 29 August Balnarring Hall
14 September 2021	TBA Chris Myers talk re specific wine for John Lee Trophy	Wineshow De-brief demonstration & discussion of wine faults from show
12 October 2021	TBA	Chris Myers Red Wine mini-comp* Winemaking Classes
9 November 2021	TBA	Eltham Wineshow Mansfield Show
December 2021	No formal meeting or activity this month – Christmas Party Instead	Possible Christmas Lunch and Annual Auction Moorooduc Hall 12 noon (Price and date to be advised)
11 January 2022	TBA	TBA
8 February 2022	TBA	Sparkling Wine Mini-comp*
8 March 2022	TBA	Members Comp to be judged Red Hill Show Wine & Cider Competitions
13 April 2022	TBA	TBA Red Hill Show Wine, Mead & Cider Competitions

\* Any country or grape wine of appropriate hue may be entered, one entry per member.