

# CHAMBERS

Chambers Rosewood Vineyard, Barkly Street, Rutherglen VIC 3685.

Telephone: 02 6032 8641. Facsimile: 02 6032 8101

email:wchambers@netc.net.au. website: www.rutherglencvic.com

Written & Edited by Roberta Horne

We at Chambers very rarely, if ever, indulge in self promotion but... without blowing our own trumpet, we want to let you know that this is the place to be over the Queen's Birthday long weekend!

Many of our visitors return year after year; probably because they enjoy our relaxed, non pretentious atmosphere and great prices, wine, oh, and of course, our great staff.

Following the resounding success of our inaugural Chambers Challenge we will run another light-hearted micro workshop so you can test your wine savvy or perhaps pick up some tips.

Successful challengers will receive a bottle of our 'Tin shed Red' or 'Decent White Plonk' and everyone will go in the draw to win a fantastic Challenge prize.

As usual we'll have live music for singing, dancing or just listening to as you settle back for a while and freshen your palate with a freshly brewed coffee latte.

The Bull Plain Riders will entertain us from noon right through to 5pm on the Saturday and Sunday.

As we all know, the Lions do a great barby – they'll stoke up their trusty mobile kitchen and offer a range of delicious goodies throughout the weekend.

The local Anglican Church Ladies will be here to tempt you with their delicious homemade cakes and soups.

On Sunday, 12 June between 9am and 11am you can kick off your day with a low-cost, hearty country egg, bacon and sausage breakfast expertly prepared by our friendly Lions boys.

We'll have lots of hot deals both for the serious collector and those looking for some great value, everyday drinking.

See if you can pick up some of our new 'Cardonnay' or 'Cabernet' before all the Kath and Kim fans buy up our stocks!

There will also be a basketball ring for those energetic souls who would like to try their hand and shoot a few hoops.

In short we've got the lot - great wine – food – music and fun – we hope to see you!

This year may well be your last opportunity to buy a Walkabout passport!

For your \$10 investment you collect a specially blended bottle of Collectors Series Muscat once you've had the passport stamped at each of the 19 participating wineries.

It's a pretty good deal as you have a whole year to fill your passport plus a chance to win a \$1,000 prize package which includes accommodation, dinner and two dozen bottles of wine – well worth a thought!

## RUTHERGLEN CELEBRATES 32nd WINERY WALKABOUT FESTIVAL

Queen's Birthday  
Weekend

June 11 to 13

**WALNUT RED LOVERS**

**Your long wait is over  
- still only \$15**

**"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."**

John Cleese (Basil Fawlty)

## LOOKING FOR AN OAK BARREL?

We recommend that you go for a new one so that you know exactly what has been in it.

Mates from my younger days in South Australia always bought a low priced bottle of whiskey or brandy to season their barrels.

A full bottle was emptied in then the barrel gradually rotated until all the spirit had evaporated or been taken up by the wood. If you choose to let the wine season the barrel, the early wine will, of course, be heavily oaked so there is no point using expensive wine. Once you pass that stage though you shouldn't look back.

It is important to remember that only fortified wine should be added to your barrel as it is the spirit which provides the keeping properties.

Barrels are generally started off with either a Ruby or Tawny Port as they are less expensive but other fortified wines such as Sherry, Muscat, Tokay or Mt Carmel, our liqueur port, are also popular choices.

## Taking care of your Oak Barrel

If you have an oak barrel taking pride of place on your bar or at rest in a quiet corner of your cellar, you may find the following useful.

Most people are blissfully unaware that they need to maintain a healthy environment within their barrels. If a bug were to get into your barrel you could lose the lot and have to replace your barrel.

Many people have their own particular recipe for a special blend, which is handed down through the generations while others are just as happy with a little tippie of Tawny or Ruby port

Whatever you choose to do with your barrel, there are some steps you need to take to guard against bacterial spoilage of your precious drop.

Our winemaker, Stephen Chambers, has generously divulged a maintenance routine for you to follow so please jot it down with your cellar notes or some other safe place.

Once a year or when topping up you need to add Potassium Metabisulphite to your barrel at the precise rate of 150mg per litre. You will, of course, also need to be certain of how much your barrel holds.

Look for this product in the home brewing section at your supermarket or ask your local chemist to assist you as he will be able to accurately measure it out for you.

This treatment is rather like 'Yakult' for your barrel and will ensure future generations enjoy your barrel - a very nice family tradition to establish and a lovely year to be remembered!



This is a clothing label from a small American company that sells their product in France. Here's the translation of the French part of the label.

Wash with warm water.

Use mild soap.

Dry flat.

Do not use bleach.

Do not dry in dryer.

Do not iron.

We are sorry that our President is an idiot.

We did not vote for him.

## VINEYARD REPORT

Although the days are shortening and many of the vines have changed colour, we anticipate that picking will not be finished until mid May.

As we look for the highest possible baumé or sugar levels for the production of our fortified wines this fruit is left until last when varying degrees of raisining will add depth of flavour and colour to the wine.

The unusually abundant rain we received in February promoted an extra spurt of vine growth and a denser canopy on some varieties retarding ripening slightly.

Unlike the farmers who want to sow their crops, we do not want rain until vintage has finished as it can encourage fungal problems.

We will just have to cross our fingers, trust that all this lovely autumn sunshine will contribute to yet another great vintage and hope our farming neighbours receive some good rains shortly.

## Wine news...

- In spite of thousands of tonnes of grapes being left on the vine in South Australia (due to oversupply) new plantings of 400 hectares are planned for the famous Barossa Valley alone.
- Only 2.3 billion litres of the 2.87 billion litres produced worldwide last year was consumed
- One of the world's most versatile varieties, Riesling, which originated in Germany, will now become the masthead of the German wine industry.

Did you hear that a certain American film star has amended his tattoo that once read 'Winona Forever' to read 'Wino Forever?'

### Wine Profile: Palomino

Palomino is not a commonly known variety, a name many associate with horses and, as the name suggests, it is of Spanish origin.

It has brought fame to the Jerez region for producing most of the world's finest Sherries.

It is interesting to ponder why King Alfonso decided to name this variety after one of his knights, Fernan Yanez Palomino - perhaps he had a dry sense of humour.

Unlike many other varieties that offer various fruit characteristics, it is the neutral nature of these golden yellow grapes that provide the foundation for a whole range of intense and aromatic fortified wines.

Another variety, Pedro Ximenez, is often added to Palomino to add a little sweetness but it is the careful maturation on flor (yeast) for about three years that allows the aged finesse of the Palomino to shine through.

Nuances of toasted nuts and piquant caramel from the nose slide into the slightly warming after taste making this is a gloriously intense experience.

The wine sparkles in the glass with a distinctive yellow tint and a smooth, pleasant taste.

Makes a fine aperitif - excellent with smoked salmon, antipasto or try it with strongly flavoured dishes.

At Chambers we produce three different styles - Fino, Flor and our ever popular fish and chip wine, Rutherglen White.

### KNOW SOMEONE ELSE WHO MAY ENJOY OUR NEWSLETTER?

All we would need is a brief note from them requesting to go on our mailing list plus their name, address and contact numbers or they can contact us at [wchambers@netc.net.au](mailto:wchambers@netc.net.au) if they would like to receive the electronic version.

Please note: You can now find us on the Winemakers of Rutherglen website at [www.rutherglenc.com](http://www.rutherglenc.com)

## WINTER WINNERS

Expires 31/08/05 unless sold out

### • RED LED REVIVAL

- 3 x '01 Shiraz
- 3 x '01 Cabernet Sauvignon
- 3 x '02 Blue Imperial
- 3 x '03 Anton Ruche (Shiraz Mondeuse)

**\$130 plus freight**

### • THE HIBERNATION PACK

- 3 x '01 Gouais
- 3 x '00 Riesling
- 3 x '01 Cabernet Sauvignon
- 1 x '02 Old Cellar Vintage (Port)
- 1 x Grand Muscat
- 1 x Old Vine Muscadelle

**\$180 plus freight**

### • COSY CRATE

- 6 Bottles x Cleanskin White
- 6 Bottles x Cleanskin Red

**\$55 plus freight**

### • MAKE MINE MELLOW

- 2 x '03 Merlot
- 3 x Rutherglen Muscat
- 3 x Rutherglen Muscadelle
- 2 X '01 Shiraz & Blue Imperial
- 1 x '00 Sparkling Shiraz
- 1 X Old Tawny Port

**\$145 plus freight**

### • A PASSION FOR PORT

- 3 X 1998 Ruby
- 3 X 1993 LBV (Late Bottled Vintage Port)
- 3 X 2002 Old Cellar
- 3 X 2004 Walnut Red

**\$175 plus freight**

"Mr. Mamadou Obotimbe Diabikile was shot by police and arrested after his unsuccessful attempt to rob the Mali Development Bank in Bamako, Mali. He was in part hindered by the nearly seven pounds of magic charms he was wearing to make himself invisible." [South African Press Association-Deutsche Press Agentur, 15 April, 05]

*"Wine is bottled poetry"*  
Robert Louis Stephenson

## A modern fable for you to ponder

In the year 2005, the Lord came unto Noah, who was now living in Australia, and said, "Once again, the earth has become wicked and over-populated and I see the end of all flesh before me.

Build another Ark and save two of every living thing along with a few good humans."

He gave Noah the blueprints, saying, "You have six months to build the Ark before I will start the unending rain for 40 days and 40 nights".

Six months later, the Lord looked down and saw Noah weeping in his yard.... but no ark.

"Noah", He roared, "I'm about to start the rain! Where is the Ark?"

"Forgive me, Lord," begged Noah. "But things have changed. I needed a building permit.

I've been arguing with the inspector about the need for a sprinkler system. My neighbours claim that I've violated the neighbourhood zoning laws by building the Ark in my yard and exceeding the height limitations. We had to go to VCAT for a decision.

Then the electricity companies demanded a bond be posted for the future costs of moving power lines and other overhead obstructions, to clear the passage for the Ark's move to the sea.

I argued that the sea would be coming to us, but they would hear nothing of it.

Getting the wood was another problem.

There's a ban on cutting local trees in order to save the spotted owl.

I tried to convince the environmentalists that I needed the wood to save the owls. But no go!

When I started gathering the animals, I got sued by an animal rights group. They insisted that I was confining wild animals against their will.

As well, they argued the accommodation was too restrictive and it was cruel and inhumane to put so many animals in a confined space.

Then the EPA ruled that I couldn't build the Ark until they'd conducted an environmental impact study on your proposed flood.

I'm still trying to resolve a complaint with the Human Rights Commission on how many minorities I'm supposed to hire for my building crew.

Also, the trade unions say I can't use my sons. They insist I have to hire only Union workers with Ark building experience.

To make matters worse, the Tax Office seized all my assets, claiming I'm trying to leave the country illegally with endangered species.

So, forgive me, Lord, but it would take at least ten years for me to finish this Ark."

Suddenly the skies cleared, the sun began to shine, and a rainbow stretched across the sky.

Noah looked up in wonder and asked, "You mean, you're not going to destroy the world?"

No," said the Lord. "The government has already beaten me to it."

## Virgin - Extra Virgin

According to our supplier, Lyric Olives, 'Extra Virgin' olive oil is the highest possible quality with the best aroma and flavour whereas 'Virgin' oils can contain up to 2% Free Fatty Acid.



**We are anxious to reunite this young lady with her owner – she was left at the cellar door during our Tastes of Rutherglen Festival.**

## People Profile: Kath Landers



Born and bred in Rutherglen, Kath comes from a very large family of fourteen children.

Always the first one to lend a hand, she has kept us entertained with her direct manner and dry sense of humour since joining us seven years ago.

We can always rely on teetotaler Kath's honest evaluation of wines. "It all tastes like possum pee" is one of her classic quips.

Hard working Kath always thinks of others, remembering birthdays and visiting her many friends and family members.

Apart from her dedication to her family, particularly her 2½ year old grandson, Tylan, Kath has found time over the past ten years to be a cub leader with 1st Rutherglen Scouts and help with Meals on Wheels.