

December 2013 Newsletter

Hullo again from Michael & Nancy and the team at Auldstone.

Silver Jubilee Year

This year marks the 25th year of Auldstone Cellars - doesn't time fly! We are planning a dinner at the cellars over Easter next year which marks 25 years of Cellar Door operations. In the mean time we have released a Silver Jubilee Grand Muscat to commemorate the occasion. (See details in New Releases later)

New Releases

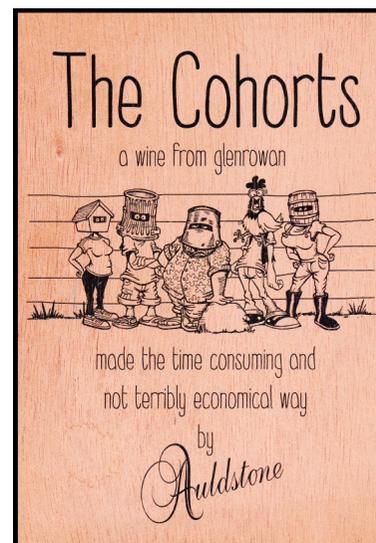
2011 Cohorts This has been a long time coming and was just released last year. It is a culmination of the labours of a group of our son Alex's friends and cohorts, who, as he says, "is a wine made in the time consuming but not very economical way". "Made by cohorts, for cohorts and best enjoyed with cohorts". I think he captures the true "raison d'être" of wine making in those statements. He wanted us to make a slightly more elegant style, aged in French oak, more like a Rhone Valley wine (the 2011 even

has 3% Viognier in it), involve people in the production and market it on facebook. It was a great success and has become our premium wine (despite its funky label!). The price is \$29 at Cellar Door

2011 Kelly Red.

We mentioned this wine in our last newsletter but is worth mentioning again. It is a very economical red and is also available as a clean skin. It is proving very popular as an everyday drinking red and we plan to make more out of the 2012 vintage as well. Normally this wine would be sold through the trade and pop up in a blend somewhere. It is from our selected barrels to show plenty of flavor and character at an economical price. We thought our customers might be interested. This 2011 shows the elegance of the vintage but has lovely aromas and a full and lingering palate. \$12 cellar door - even less by the dozen!

Silver Jubilee Grand Muscat. We carefully selected some of our oldest muscats to make this blend to commemorate our Silver Jubilee year. It is a lot darker than our Liqueur Muscat



(soon to be called Classic Muscat) and shows all those aged and rancio characters typical of the style. \$40 cellar door.

2013 Vintage Summary

In this modern age of climate change every vintage is going to be very different, more so than ever before. 2013 was no exception. It progressed well at first, we only had to rely on irrigation for a few weeks so there was minimal moisture stress. There was very little disease problems so very few sprays were used. Then a hot spell in January brought on the Chardonnay and the Muscat with a rush. This soon cooled down and we were able to pick everything else at a more normal pace. The ripening was otherwise smooth and uneventful resulting in beautifully ripened fruit with lovely depth and complexity. I would rate this an 8/10 vintage across all varieties but bottling is a long way off!

The **2014** Vintage is shaping up well for us but has been a disaster with frosts across most of South East Australia. Our warmer climate and elevation protects us from the frost. We have just finished flowering and fruit set so it is too early to tell how it will proceed.

Let me recap on a few of our last vintages. I have given them a score out of 10 to give you some idea of their "Glenrowan like" attributes.

2012 - Also warm and dry with very little problems. Reds yet to be bottled but should be 8/10 for reds and whites

2011 - Very wet over summer and into the ripening period. A lot of Grey Mould (botrytis) present at vintage. No Riesling picked and some Shiraz not picked. Cool ripening period. Flavours very delicate, very similar to more southern regions. Colour in the reds very light. Reds 5/10 but won many awards for their "elegance" and complexity, Whites 9/10 also won several awards.

2010 - Another warm year but with some rain over summer meaning very little irrigation used. Warm and dry for vintage. Excellent flavours in all varieties. 8/10

2009 - The year of the Black Saturday fires. Extremely hot and dry (5 days of over 48 deg C). No irrigation available due to the ongoing drought (now known as the Millennium Drought) Most of the vineyard over stressed and most fruit lost. 2/10

2008 - Hot and dry most of the season. Very little disease. Warm and slow ripening period. Reds 9/10, whites 6/10

2007 - Hot and dry. Bushfires in the mountains (over 1 mill ha burnt) meant our valleys were smoke filled for weeks on end. All wines made smelt of smoke. None bottled. 0/10

2006 - A wet year. Little or no irrigation needed. Warm dry weather for vintage. Excellent flavor in all varieties 9/10

2005 - A hot year with very little rainfall. Good flavour development in reds. 7/10 Reds, 6/10 whites

2004 - A warm year. Very good flavours. 7/10

2003 - A hot year. Bush fires in the mountains. All our reds affected by smoke taint. Whites OK. 1/10 Reds, 5/10 Whites

As you can see there is a lot of variation. We try to explain to people that wines from single vineyard wineries are really the only wines that reflect the true terroir of a region - with all its vagaries and variances. It is an excellent way for people to renew their connections with the land and be aware of how their food is produced and how variations can arise. It also means that as a small producer we can produce a spectrum of styles over the years but not within that year. As a consumer, you have to appreciate that variations occur and use the wines accordingly - for example, our 2011 reds are much lighter in style than 2010 and should be used accordingly. If on the other hand, you want the same thing every time - buy a cheap Sauvignon Blanc!

New Outlets

Café Fez at Red Ramia Trading in Myrtleford - a wonderland to visit and serves delightful food with a Moroccan twist.



La Maison Restaurant - The Causeway, Wodonga. Situated in the old customs house, it has become an icon in the area with a great menu and a great wine list.



We both look forward to seeing you here again some time soon.

Best wishes,

Michael & Nancy

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