



Catherine Vale Newsletter
June 2009 Vol 6 No 2

Catherine Vale Wines

Greetings from Bill and Wendy

We returned on the June Long Weekend from the USA and Germany and the reality of pruning our 9000 vines has well and truly set in. Departure for Wendy was accelerated with the serious illness of her Mother Winifred who had a major operation on April 10th. Wendy was there to assist with her rehabilitation and to the surprise of everyone including her doctors she is now home and determined to resume normal activities.

Belinda, Vince and baby Alice also travelled to California from Sydney and we met Kerry and Stephen as well as Gavin and Bec all from Colorado and were together for several days. The opportunity for a 4 generations photograph with Winifred, Wendy, Belinda and Alice was taken and will be treasured for the future.

Gavin and Bec have since returned to Newcastle and are house hunting while Kerry and Stephen followed us to Germany as we visited Jodie and Berten and met our new grandson Timo born to Jodie and Berten on 19th of March. He is the dearest little boy and he and Jodie travelled with us in a motor home down the Romantisher Strasse visiting the beautiful towns and sights of that part of Germany.

Kerry and Stephen rode their bikes and we met at campgrounds each evening. They subsequently continued on to Austria, Italy, and Slovakia and returned to Jodie and Bertens home in Duisburg a month later on their way back to Vail, Colorado. They have had an epic journey which we were able to follow on twitter.

The Vineyard

We are making great progress with the pruning with all the whites attended to and the reds about to be attacked. This has been achieved with the help of Bill's brothers who visited for over a week and were of great assistance. Ron has assisted before but Gordon and his wife Janet made their debut and took to the task with skill and enthusiasm. The nights after work with excellent food and wine and a roaring fire were most enjoyable.

The weeds particularly catheads are being dealt with as we progress and successive frosts are keeping the grasses at bay.

Almost all the Arneis grafts are along the wire and there will likely be sufficient crop to produce the first wine from this noble Italian white variety now to be produced in the Hunter – another first from Catherine Vale!

Events

1. The 2008 wine launch took place on a perfect day on the last Sunday in March and those present rated it best yet. Wendy's brilliant lunch and the music of Sydney Zenith making their first visit to Catherine Vale gave the day that special feeling so much enjoyed by those who attend. Despite the challenging harvest of the 2008 season the wines are superb and we can now announce their availability for your enjoyment.

- 2008 Semillon - This is one of our best ever and already our best selling white – a little more aromatic and flowery whilst retaining the classic Hunter citrus flavours. Don't miss this.
- 2008 Chardonnay – Another beautifully crafted example of our "flagship" wine shows the true Catherine Vale style. This wine exhibits wonderful fruit flavour and complexity but is delicate and classy in its lingering finish. Stock up on this
- 2008 Verdelho – This is a lovely flavoursome wine with all the tropical fruit flavours expected from this variety. This wine will come into it's own for summer drinking.
- 2008 Gabrielle Dolcetto Rose – per amore di Alice (for the love of Alice). This special wine excited all at the launch. The nature of the vintage gave winemaker John Hordern the idea for this unique creation. The addition of a little herbaceous Semillon is a daring first and the wine is being enjoyed by all who try it. It is already attracting restaurant interest. Do try some.
- 2008 Winifred Barbera - Again the nature of the vintage has given us an opportunity to release this wine earlier than anticipated. This means that the 2007 which would normally have been released at this time will enjoy another 12 months of maturity in the winery. The 2008 is rich and luscious and ready to drink with a lesser cellaring potential than usual for this variety. Don't miss this one!

2. A Little Bit of Italy in Broke

We again joined those in the region to stage this event which we pioneered 4 years ago. The day went exactly as planned and described in our last newsletter and was a memorable day for those who attended in record numbers. The experience provided at Catherine Vale was voted by those who came to the region as by far the best planned and most enjoyable – a truly Italian experience. The bleatings of the cynics in the area (and there are a

number) about the veracity and authenticity of the event will not stop it going ahead on the second weekend in April 2010 – even if we have to do it by ourselves.

3. Jazz at Catherine Vale on Sunday July 5th

This was again held on a perfect sunny winter day. The music of our regular Jazz providers the Newcastle based Preservation Jazz Band and some innovative and inexpensive food conjured up by Wendy made for a most enjoyable outing. The new release wines were very popular with those in attendance.

Coming Events

Catherine Vale Spring Affair

Our final event for the year will be the Catherine Vale Spring Affair on Sunday October 5th. Our plan is to have our first early release Semillon from the 2009 vintage available with music and food for your enjoyment. Do come and enjoy the wines and the pleasant surroundings. Updated information will appear on www.catherinevale.com.au in the next couple of weeks.

Broke Fordwich Spirit of the Vine

This event will be run by the Wine and Tourism Association and will be held on October 24th. Presently 12 wine producers in the region will be offering tastings at Margan Family Wines with a dinner in the evening. Final arrangements for this event are also in the planning stages. More info will be available on www.brokefordwich.com.au.

Future Event Dates for your 2010 Calendar

Catherine Vale Wine Launch March 28th

A Little Bit of Italy in Broke April 10th and 11th

Catherine Vale Mail Order Customers

We have a list of close on 700 people who receive our newsletters with the majority by post. Even though we ourselves do prefer to receive hard copies of things we have to consider the costs involved. We have decided to print the order form for the last time with this newsletter and rely on your internet computer skills to retrieve a copy off our web site (www.catherinevale.com.au) in the future. You are always welcome to ring up and place an order at any time. This order will predominately feature the new release wines but back vintages in some varieties are still available. No 2007 Verdelho remains and only limited quantities of the 2007 Chardonnay.

Many wine producers promote "Wine Clubs" with obligatory purchases required to their customers. We have always considered everyone on equal terms with no obligations and have previously offered specials from time to time and we still offer FREE DELIVERY on all case purchases. We would like to make a special offer

to all Mail Order Customers to purchase a half mixed case of the 2008 wines which will also include a 2007 Dolcetto for \$74.00 with no delivery charge. If everyone on our list purchased a half case once a year this would be nearly 300 full cases of wine! A big achievement. Please consider this offer.

Newsletters and other information via Email

If you would like to receive your information via email please send an email to wine@catherinevale.com.au or ring 02 6579 1334

Wine Orders

We are constantly encouraged in these difficult economic times by your loyalty to our product. Nobody could expect a wine drinker to drink the same product on every occasion but we are grateful so many of you have Catherine Vale as your designated first choice wine. As we see vineyards around us being abandoned, mothballed and bulldozed we remain more and more determined to "hang in there" and with your orders and loyalty we will come through these testing times.

The industry is in serious decline with oversupply all over the world being the major problem. Recovery will see some major and minor casualties.

The Winemakers' Federation of Australia released it's 2009 vintage Report in June which shows the Australian crush fell by 7% or about 125,400 tonnes in 2009 but WFA says it is still higher than estimated and greater than required to meet current demand. We produced around 40 tonnes in 2009 so are definitely one of "the little guys"!

Rewards

We are always looking for new customers and market leads. If you can introduce a friend or neighbour to our mail order list or provide us with a market lead we would be happy to provide you with a free 2008 sample 6 pack on receipt of their first order. We will follow up any information you can provide.

Do consider our wines described above and listed on the attached order form. We hope to hear from you.

Yours in Wine

Bill and Wendy