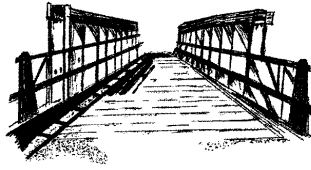


Monahan Estate



OLD BRIDGE BUGLE

SPRING 2007

www.monahanestate.com.au

It's goodbye from us

THERE comes a time in everyone's life when it's time to move on. And John and I reckon that moment has come.

We've achieved what we set out to do with Monahan Estate, namely to produce quality wines at affordable prices, now it's time to hand over to someone else to stamp their own personalities on the vineyard and its produce.

Around mid-November this year we'll be handing over to Frank and Tracey Cooper, who have sold their unit in Sydney and will be making a tree-change to the beautiful lower Hunter Valley to take over the vineyard.

We wish them all the best with their new purchase and urge all our members and friends to continue their association with

Monahan Estate and its wines.

As for John and I: well, we're not getting any younger and both of us are finding new health issues to confront as the years go by. We'll be moving to outer western Sydney to a new property. A property without grape vines!

It has been a long, happy and rewarding eight years developing this old watermelon patch into an established and highly regarded working vineyard. Yes, it has also been a lot of hard work, but there is nothing quite like sitting down after a long day pruning or pulling out canes and sipping on a beautiful chilled semillon or chardonnay from your own vines.

Ah, I'm getting nostalgic already.

No storm in a teacup here...

AFTER five years of drought, major storms during the June long weekend inundated the vineyard.

We had 250mm (10 inches) of rain in just two days and Black Creek, unable to cope with the amounts of water running into it, broke its banks and shed water over the surrounding area.

For a while there it looked as though we were in the middle of an inland sea, not that I got to see it.

You see, on the Friday I'd driven to Sydney to give tastings at the Castle Hill Growers Markets and left John in charge of the vineyard.

Now, I may have hinted at this before, but John is a pretty

sound sleeper. Yet even he was woken by the chaos of the rain pelting down on the roof. He went outside to see the water rising steadily towards the house and cellar door, but then decided there was nothing he could do, so went back to bed. That's so typical of John. Nothing disturbs his equanimity.

The flow of water through Black Creek was sufficient to send the picnic tables floating off under the bridge and on to a neighbouring property. They had to be retrieved later and are back in their rightful position.

The good news is the vineyard got a thorough soaking and has set the new owners up for a fantastic 2008 vintage.



This is what we found after the downpour: the dinghy hanging off one of the vineyard posts. You can imagine how much water there was flowing through. Fortunately, the vines were dormant and they remained undamaged.



More awards this year

THE 2006 Old Bridge Unwooded Chardonnay was one of the few Hunter Valley wines to do well at this year's Cowra Wine Show with a bronze medal to its credit.

The Cowra judges tend to favour cool-climate wines, so we were quite pleased to score a gong for this popular wine.

The same wine won a bronze medal at the Hunter Valley Wine Show held in August this year. In fact, the 2006 Old Bridge Unwooded Chardonnay was just short of winning a silver medal.

Also scoring a bronze medal at the same show was our 2003 Old Bridge Semillon. There were 52 semillons entered in this category, which the judges described as "an excellent class".

And on the subject of praise for our wines, James Halliday's 2008 Wine Companion gives us a four-and-a-half star rating for the 2005 Old Bridge Semillon. He also gave it 91 points.

Halliday is one of Australia's most respected wine writers and one of its most senior wine judges.

Wines that he rates at more than 90 points are "of gold medal standard" so we are pleased to have been acknowledged in his latest wine guide.

The 1998 Monahan Estate semillon was given a four-star rating and a score of 89.

At first this may look disappointing, but the 1998 wine was made to last. It will be at its best in 10 to 20 years. And semillon is renowned for having temporary "flat" spots, which this wine was undoubtedly going through when judged.

A NEW VERDELHO!

THE 2007 Old Bridge Verdelho has just been released and we are quite excited about the new vintage.

The winemaker describes this wine thusly: "A vibrant pale green colour supports a blend of tropical fruit and citrus aromas. A crisp, clean dry finish is balanced by lovely melon and lychee flavours, providing an excellent palate weight finish. This wine enhances the flavours of seafood, antipasta, quiche and Asian cuisine."

We just think it's plain nice to drink.

Interestingly, many people think verdelho is a "new" variety, but it has been around for many centuries, mainly in Portugal, where it was principally used to make Madeira, a fortified wine.

It also has a long history in Australia, being brought here by John Macarthur around 1818.

It's true that verdelho has seen a revival in recent times and it has grown to become one of the top ten white table wine varieties over the past 30 years.

Get in and try some for yourself.

At \$16 a bottle and \$180 per case it's top quality for a middle-range price.

RUN-OUT SPECIALS!

DON'T forget our specials, especially as some of them are now becoming scarce.

Stocks are running low on the 2001 Old Bridge Semillon, which is only \$100 a case. And need I remind you it has won a silver and two bronze medals?

The 2002 Old Bridge Semillon could be an even bigger bargain at just \$80 a case. It boasts silver and bronze medal wins as well.

Third, but not least for those of us who really enjoy chardonnay, is the 2004 Old Bridge Chardonnay, which is being run out the door at \$100 a case. This wine has had two bronze medals awarded in two shows entered.

So get in quick, as they say, while stocks last!

A case for luxury...

WE have a great competition going at the moment and it's open to anyone buying a case of more of wine.

All you have to do is make the purchase and you go in the draw for a two-night stay at Guesthouse Mulla Villa at Wollombi (pictured right).

Mulla Villa is an 1840 convict-built sandstone magistrate's house with four spacious bedrooms, all with private facilities and two with spa-bath on-suites.

If you can't wait to see whether you have won our competition and want to stay there anyway, you can call Mulla Villa direct on 02-4998 3254.

THIS will probably be my last Old Bridge Bugle, so it's an emotional one for me.

We've had a wonderful time as proprietors of the estate. In our time we not only established the vineyard, but we have watched the Old Bridge go from almost falling down through



neglect, to being painted and prissied up like new.

I want to thank everyone who has helped us over the years. All the wonderful people we met in the cellar door and the lovely people of Rothbury and district. We'll miss you.

— Patricia

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