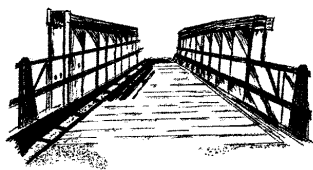


Monahan Estate



OLD BRIDGE BUGLE

Autumn 2005

www.monahanestate.com.au

Another great vintage

Welcome to the Autumn edition of Monahan Estate's Old Bridge Bugle. At this time of year the vines shed their leaves and breathe a sigh of relief after the stresses of harvest. We do something very similar.

Mother Nature was kind to us during the vintage. We were able to harvest all the grapes this year, whereas last year we had to leave fruit on the vines because of inclement weather.

This year, good rain in spring followed by further rain in December and January led to a great harvest and the 2005 wines are showing great promise.

It's true that vigneron always publicly say that every vintage will be a corker, but this year it's a fact.

Our whites were picked at very good baumes (sugar levels) and in excellent condition, while the reds, which were harvested slightly later, showed particularly good quality.

One thing about the lower Hunter Valley is that two-thirds of the rainfall comes during the growing season. And often a lot of that comes in summer storms. But this year we were spared the spectre of grapes being continually doused with rainfall.

SPECIALS

Our 2001 Old Bridge Semillon is on special at \$130 a case. This wine is starting to change to the style that the Hunter is famous for: toasty, buttery flavours with honey on the nose.

James Halliday, who rates our

Semillon very highly as you'll read elsewhere in this Bugle, writes that: "In time, Semillon will be regarded as the great wine of the Lower Hunter. It demands time in bottle, to build from a thin and vaguely grassy youth to a honeyed, nutty, buttery/toasty mouth filling richness at 10-20 years of age."

Well, our various vintages of Semillon have never been "thin" (after all, our 2001 Semillon won three bronze medals as a young wine), but we agree with the remainder of his assessment. Enjoy the rest of the Old Bridge Bugle and please be advised that stocks of our other special, the award-winning 2001 Unwooded Chardonnay, are getting very low. It's a steal at \$95 a case.

To market to market

Our regular customers (and we're chuffed by the number of loyal followers we have out there) may be interested to know that they can find us at a couple of different markets in Sydney.

Monahan Estate has a tasting stall in the Harvey Lowe Pavilion at the Farmers and Gourmet Food Markets held every second Saturday of the month at Castle Hill Showground.

The showground is located on Showground Road and entry is via Carrington Road. Trish will be there from 8am to noon conducting wine tastings.

Then, from April 20 Monahan Estate will be wine tasting at Fox Studios Markets from 10am to 4pm every third Wednesday. The markets are within the Fox Studios precinct, which is the old Sydney Showground.

So next time you're hunting for farm fresh vegies or organic eggs at Castle Hill or Fox Studios Markets, make a point of coming along to say hello and buy some premium boutique wine to match.

HENS ON THE LOOSE



These fun-loving girls visited our cellar door during a hen's party. Apparently the girls regularly visit Hunter wineries as a group, escorted by Daytours owner/driver Ian Cocking.

Trish reckons the girls must have raided the local op shop because they were all wearing bridesmaids dresses. Ian Cocking can be contacted on 02 49521079.



Some youth on our site

One thing about owning a vineyard is that life never gets boring. During February we had an unplanned cultural exchange that started with two backpackers calling in to ask whether it would be safe to stay on the side of the road in their campervan.

Paul Stueber and Felix Eickelbeck (pictured), both students from wine growing areas of Germany, had been travelling around Australia in their old green campervan. We suggested they camp in the vineyard under the big willow tree.

Then John got them jobs picking grapes in the Lovedale area and our "guests" ended up staying for five weeks.

Despite their somewhat dishevelled appearance, both Paul and Felix were polite, interesting and considerate young men and a credit to their nation. We spent many hours discussing the various aspects of German and

Australian cultures over a few glasses of Monahan Estate's wine.

The vineyard seemed to lose a little bit of its pulse when it was time for them to move on.

We wish them and their campervan safe travels during the rest of their stay in Australia. And may their lives be as interesting as ours.



Happy Halliday

We were thrilled to discover that James Halliday has rated Monahan Estate a "four-star vineyard" in Halliday's *Wine Companion 2005*.

The latest edition of Halliday's popular wine guide, which has long been regarded as the definitive guide to wines and wineries in Australia, gave our 2002 Old Bridge Semillon a rating of 90, a drinking life to 2009 and four and a half stars.

The 2003 Old Bridge Semillon rated four stars, an 89 and a drinking life to 2009.

As regular readers of the *Bugle* will recall, Halliday's own ratings are: 98-100 "Perfection which exists only as an idea"; 94-97 "As close to perfection as the real world will allow"; 90-93 "Excellent wine full of character – of gold medal standard"; 85-89 "Very good wine – clear varietal definition/style. Silver verging on gold medal standard".

And this is what Halliday writes about Monahan Estate: "The property is in the Lovedale district, an area noted for its high quality Semillon. The old bridge adjoining the property is displayed on the wine label. The wines themselves have been consistent silver and bronze medal winners at the Hunter Valley Wine Show."

Not bad. If we do say so ourselves.

CELLAR DOOR HOURS

The cellar door is open from 10am to 5pm Wednesday to Sunday. But if you find yourself on Wilderness Road on a Monday or Tuesday and would like to taste our award-winning wines, then please call in. The chances are we'll be at home.

ON THE LIGHT SIDE

A medical faculty lecturer was keen to promote a healthy lifestyle to his undergraduate students so he conducted a simple demonstration to deter his young charges from indulging in alcoholic excess.

In front of a full lecture theatre, he opened a bottle of wine and poured it into a glass. Then he dropped a worm into the glass with a dramatic flourish. The worm shrivelled up and died.

"There," said the lecturer. "Can anyone tell me what this clearly demonstrates?"

"Yes," came a loud voice from the back of the packed forum. "If you drink wine you won't get worms!"

Only a short detour ... yeah right

What some people will do to buy our wine: A group of golfers were travelling from Dapto, south of Wollongong, to Rutherford for a golfing weekend earlier this year. One of the party managed to convince the bus driver to take "a small detour" to Monahan Estate's cellar door.

The reason: One of them had tasted our 2002 Rose at the Gardeners Inn Hotel at Blackheath and enjoyed it so much he just had to drop in to purchase a few more bottles.

Many thanks to B and B Townsend, John and Joy Brewer, Sue and Don Hutchison and the other golf lovers on the bus.

Thanks also to the bus driver for letting himself be talked into going out of the way to visit us.

NEW RELEASES

We're pleased to announce the release our 2004 Rose and 2004 Unwooded Chardonnay.

Needless to say both are excellent wines and have been selling extremely well through the cellar door, which must say something about their quality.

The Rose is light and soft with a hint of sweetness and displays

wild strawberry on the palate followed by a long, dry refreshing finish. The Unwooded Chardonnay is just made for aficionados of this variety. It's full-flavoured and complex yet with fantastic balance. Guava and rockmelon flavours abound. So get along to our cellar door to taste these superb new wines.