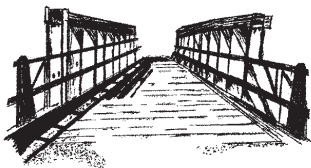


Monahan Estate



OLD BRIDGE BUGLE

SUMMER 2006

www.monahanestate.com.au

GOLD FOR 2005 SEMILLON

Any large winery would be happy to have a “full podium” finish in a regional wine show. But when a small boutique vineyard achieves gold, silver and bronze from just three entries it’s a remarkable achievement.

Such was the case with Monahan Estate, a six-hectare vineyard on Wilderness Road, Lovedale, which entered three semillons for three medals at the August 2006 Hunter Valley Wine Show.

Monahan scored a gold medal for its 2005 Old Bridge semillon, a silver for the 2001 Old Bridge semillon and bronze for the 1998 semillon from its museum selection – all from single entries in classes 13, 28 and 38.

John and Patricia Graham, were delighted with the three medals garnered from Australia’s most prestigious regional wine show.

“We didn’t know how the judging would go this year,” said Patricia. “With someone as famous and influential as Jancis Robinson as a guest judge there was an element of uncertainty.”

As it turned out, Jancis Robinson OBE was delighted with the quality of the semillons under scrutiny. And the Hunter Valley Wine Show was the esteemed British Wine Master’s only wine judging engagement in Australia.

Interestingly, the vast majority of white wines judged were under non-cork seals, especially the more recent vintages. Monahan Estate’s 2005 Old Bridge semillon, which won gold, was one of the many screw-capped wines in the 2005 class.

“A great class of young semillons from a great vintage,” the judging panel wrote. “This class vividly shows that screw caps do not unduly inhibit development of young semillon.”

But it was the silver medal for Monahan Estate’s 2001 Old Bridge semillon that held a special thrill for John and Patricia Graham.

“It’s possibly the biggest bargain of all the medal-winners,” said John. “To be able to buy a silver medal winning wine for \$11 a bottle, or \$8.33 by the case, just shows that high quality doesn’t always come at a high price.”

So were they disappointed that their more expensive museum selection 1998 semillon only won bronze?

“No,” said Patricia, “and I wouldn’t say ‘only bronze’. The 1998 [semillon] is an investment in the future. It hasn’t reached its peak yet, so it would have been almost a disappointment if it had scored more than a bronze medal.”

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Fit to be bussed



The group of happy campers pictured at left make an annual pilgrimage to the Hunter Valley for the Lovedale Long Lunch.

The group stays at Abernethy Cottages and always makes a point of calling in to Monahan Estate. We just couldn’t resist photographing the team in front of the old double-decker bus outside the cellar door.

It’s one of the biggest vehicles we’ve had do the long turnaround by the coolroom and shed.

DON’T MISS THIS ONE

Trish & John will be attending the Food & Wine Festival Taste of the Bay on the Nelson Bay foreshore on the November 11 and 12.

If you’ve never been to one of these festivals, then the Nelson Bay one is a good starter. It’s a very pleasant location to kick back and relax.



NOW HERE'S A GIGGLE

These two lovely Japanese girls are part of a delightful trio who turn up to the cellar door about every six months.

The funny thing is they always ask for John. On their most recent visit he was away "fiddling with something" as Trish says. So she had to phone him on the mobile and get him back to entertain the girls.

I'm sure they won't mind us revealing (they're remaining anonymous after all) that in his presence the girls go quite weak in the knees, giggling at anything he says.

Those of us who know John can't see the attraction, but he must have some animal magnetism not apparent to the rest of us.

Anyway, we enjoy the girls' semi-annual trips. And if it needs John at the helm for their visit, then that's fine with all the rest of us. And the girls do have impeccable taste.

BELIEVE IT OR...

There was a grape grower around the Lovedale area of the Hunter Valley. Like all grape growers these days, he was having a bit of a hard time.

One day a Department of Agriculture rep came to his front door.

"I need a list of your employees and how much you pay them," the official demanded.

The bureaucrat had received a report that the farmer hadn't been paying his workers their full wage entitlements.

"Well," the grape grower replies, "here's the list of my hired hands. One has been with me four years; the other for three. I pay each \$600 a week, plus free room and board.

"The cook has been here 18 months, and I pay her \$500 a months plus free room and board."

The grape grower hesitates then goes on: "Then there's the halfwit that works here about 18 hours a day. He takes home \$10 a week and I buy him a bottle of bourbon every week".

"That's the bloke I want to talk to, the halfwit," says the official.

"That," the grape grower says, "would be me."

A bargain at any price

The recently released 2006 Old Bridge Unwooded Chardonnay is proving popular at the cellar door. And with good reason.

It's only \$15 a bottle or \$168 by the case. And even these days that's a bargain, certainly half its drinking value.

All chardonnays of this quality are very good, but this unwooded style highlighting grapes from a remarkably good vintage, is purely fruit-driven. Of course it will cellar, being screw-capped, but it also screams "drink now".

Don't forget the Rosé

Speaking of "drink now" wines, and really good ones at that, what would a summer be without a lovely rosé on a sunny afternoon?

Our new release 2006 Old Bridge Rose is the perfect warm-weather "verandah wine".

Made from small parcels of specially selected merlot and semillon grapes, the new Old Bridge Rose is one of the best we've made so far.

But get in quick. We always run out of the Rose very smartly. If you want to get your hands on

a few bottles or a case, get your order in now. It, too, is only \$15 a bottle and \$168 for a case. Even our freight prices are rock bottom, so you have no excuse.

Or the picnic area

Great to see familiar faces taking advantage of our picnic area by Black Creek.

It was at less than its best until recently when five inches of rain flushed the creek and greened the lawns somewhat. It also watered the vines in the way only rain can.

We could do with more rain, but it will come in its own good time. Meanwhile, the trickle irrigation waters the vines.

Where were we? Oh, yes, the picnic area by the creek. It's still green (no trickle irrigation down there), so get in and enjoy it while you can.

Finally, the bargains

Remember, the 2004 unwooded chardonnay and 2001 semillon are only \$100 a case, while the 2002 semillon (90 points by James Halliday) is only \$95 a case.

Phone, fax, email today.

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