

Good evening everyone. I am grateful for the opportunity to present the Cellar Club's Annual President's Report for 2024.

Certainly after the last three years it is a welcome relief to have pandemics largely behind us. This has enabled us to resume our interest as a club in the finer things that we enjoy. Looking back over several recent Annual Reports it is apparent that the club has had some significant hurdles to overcome, but thankfully and more recently, there has been a return to some normality.

The club has had a more settled year as reflected in attendances and support for the monthly tastings programme. With member's involvement, the club has functioned well and I thank you for that.

As a club we are **well known in and beyond Wellington** for our longevity and valued membership. This I believe contributes to the support we receive from wineries and wine businesses. In those terms I want to acknowledge the significant level of purchases by club members that our presenters continue to receive. This aspect of the club is one that is frequently commented upon when we talk with wineries and agents.

Our **membership numbers** have remained stable with 59 subscribed members, 4 life members with a committee of eight. More notably, it is pleasing to observe that our membership is indeed a very active one, **and recently**, numbers attending tasting events has increased significantly.

The **year's programme** has been varied, illuminating, international and well supported. To remind everyone, the events of 2023 -24, following last years' AGM, were

- **Two dinners** Wellington Club (December) and Le Marche Francais (July)
- **Eight structured tastings** including Askerne (HB), Babich, Clearview (HB), Maison Vauron, celebratory Xmas wines, Riverby (Marlborough), Pegasus Bay (Waipara) and the NZ International trophy award wines (for 2023) – *certainly some iconic wine labels*
- And to conclude the year, tonight is our customary AGM with wines from the club's cellar

We ensure that the club's appreciation as always is extended to the wineries, presenters and agencies that have supported the club and who have been integral to the club's ongoing success and capacity to move forward beyond its current 43 years.

When the committee considered the programme for the last year, we noted the **significant increase in numbers attending**. For the five years prior to 2022-23, our average annual attendance at tastings ranged from 257 – 297. For 2022-23, our attendance increased to 303 averaging 38 (at eight tastings).

Significantly, for this last year (2023-24) the total annual attendance has increased to 330 (an average of 41 with two tastings of 45). Thank you for this level of support. As such attendance numbers are known within the industry, they make arranging tastings easier in approaching vineyards or indeed when they approach us. However, for 2023 our dinner numbers have waned just a little, and we will work on that.

I want to highlight the club's **financial health** and to thank Wayne, our esteemed and long serving treasurer, for the diligence and his astuteness in managing the cash and logistics. His forward planning, cost containment and monthly budgeting has kept us more than solvent, enabling us to maintain the modest subscription that keeps the club thriving, whilst providing subsidies for events and support of our modest cellar for members' benefit. The club cellar has been maintained within our target at 120 bottles with a current value of approximately \$2500.

Within the committee's brief, certain matters remain the cornerstones of our club's operation and contribute to fulfilling our educational (and social) objectives of wine appreciation

- Our **liquor license** is now an annual feature of the club and each year costs a little more. In this regard I want to gratefully acknowledge the diligent licensing work undertaken by **Richard Taylor** over a number of recent years, with the City Council and the licensing authority. Richard's solid and insightful support for the Cellar Club will be sorely missed.
- The **Website** remains superbly overseen by **Steve Eades**, a former committee member, to whom we are indebted for his management and assistance keeping us visible in the internet space, - AND
- The **newsletter** is also our 'window on the world' and is expertly managed for us by **Evelyn** whose appropriate turn of phrase keeps us current and communicating widely and effectively.

It is pleasing for me to report that the **club's committee** collectively has indicated a willingness to continue the fine work they have undertaken for the next year. Their tireless efforts ensure there is experience in facilitating tastings and sound practice when undertaking the club's business.

Therefore, may I conclude this report by reflecting on matters pertaining to this reliable and active committee. The year has been one **with only a little change**. Beyond the invaluable role of **Gayl** as our vice president handling membership matters and the monthly catering, and **Wayne** for his enthusiasm and dedicated organisational support and keeping the 'books' in good shape, the committee has undertaken **many committee tasks** to meet members' expectations & certainly generated a significant flow of emails.

**These responsibilities have involved** the secretarial role (which this year has been shared across three on the committee), all matters related to membership, the managing of rosters and the cellar, organising tasting and venue issues, and such as, wine deliveries and so much more.

It has been a pleasure to work with **Terry, Ken and Tim** bringing new ideas to the fore and contributing in all manner of ways to ensure a functioning and effective club. In so many respects club members are indebted to you as a committee and I look forward to this continuing, with thanks.

Finally, I wish to thank you as **club members** for your regular assistance and setting up at the venue, and with rosters and suggestions. It is this involvement, your collective efforts, and your active membership that ensure the club's success and its longevity.

Thank you for attending the AGM tonight. Very shortly it is time for supper and some wines from the club's cellar. You will know some of these wines, there is plenty but modest pours please will ensure those single and some special bottles will go round. And we do have a few routine AGM matters yet to handle, so we will move rapidly on to the election of officers and any matters of general business.

To all members we welcome and value your continuing involvement with the club, to the committee may I reiterate my appreciative thanks. May I now move that this annual report be accepted, and it will be posted on the club's website. Thank you.

*Murray Jaspers*

President, The Cellar Club Inc