

The Cellar Club Inc



Established in 1980

December 2020 Newsletter

THIS MONTH

8pm Wednesday 9^h December

A fun evening with wine

Presented by Simon Bell of CoLab Wine Merchants

Door Price \$13, Guests \$17

What a year 2020 has been and what a way to finish it. Simon is returning to our club to present some wonderful wines in a fun way.

They will be from the selection of wines marketed by CoLab Wine Merchants and they will be able to be ordered at the end of the evening. I would love to tell you more but it's all part of the surprise.

But when you arrive you be able to enjoy a small tasting of Prosecco from our own cellar and then later in the evening match the final wine with a slice of Christmas/birthday cake after all this is our 40th anniversary and Christmas is nearly upon us.

Hopefully we can celebrate both with you on Wednesday night.



CoLab
Wine
Merchants

LAST MONTH - OUR ANNIVERSARY DINNER

Turnout For the 40th Anniversary dinner at Bellamy's by Logan Brown was excellent. The one thing the Committee was unable to organise was the weather on the day. It was wet and windy which cast doubt on the suggested dress code of "summer wedding", but by 6pm the rain had substantially abated and by the time it arrived to go home, it was dry.

The venue proved to be a good choice. Negotiating the security on arrival proved not to be an issue and when guests got to the third floor of the Beehive, Bellamy's reception and dining areas were spacious, allowing for good pre-dinner mixing over a complimentary glass of bubbles. The tables were well spaced and set very nicely.

The food was of a very high standard as would be expected from a restaurant in the Logan Brown stable. The restaurant staff was very efficient and attentive – it was nigh on impossible to fault the service. The manager, Jasper Povey, had been very accommodating in catering to the Club's requirements and was also appreciative of what the Club was able to provide (such as the pre-ordering), which proved a winning combination.

Club President, Murray Jaspers, gave a brief address, looking over the Club's development through the years. He noted how active it is, how its size has been maintained over an extended period and the high regard it enjoys with winemakers and suppliers. He noted too, the contribution of past presidents and committees. Anne Megget proposed a toast to absent friends – those members who are no longer with us and those who were unable to be present on the night.

Through diligent work by Robin Semmens, Gayle Gaukrodger, Anne Megget and Wayne Kennedy a memento gift bag containing a souvenir pen, some souvenir chocolate and a booklet updating the history of the Club was presented to every person present.

Feedback the Committee has received subsequently indicates the evening was much appreciated by all who were there. Good venue, good food, good wine and good company always combine to produce a winner!

Richard Taylor

2021 Events

- **January:** BBQ at Derek's 31 January
- **February:** Coney's for the 13th February 2021 – our postponed 40th anniversary outing to the Wairarapa [*to include visits to Palliser and Grave/Alana*]

Wairarapa trip – Saturday, 13 February

As mentioned in the September newsletter the trip we had to postpone earlier this year is back on for Saturday, 13 February next year and it promises to be a great day.

To enable us to finalise the arrangements and ensure we have a big enough bus, we now need all members to read the following and then email Wayne to confirm your status for the new date.

The club is holding the payments of most of those members who'd committed to going this year (ie, those who didn't request a refund) and of course we welcome other members who are now in a position to join the trip.

So please email Wayne at wayne.kennedy@iaq.co.nz by **Friday, 11 December**, and advise him of one of the following options, along with all applicable names –

- A.** I/we booked and paid for the March trip and will also be coming in February 2021.
- B.** I/we booked and paid for the March trip but are unable to come in February 2021 so would ask you to arrange a refund.
- C.** I/we were not on the list for the March trip but would now like to be added.
- D.** I/we were not on the list for the March trip and will not be attending in February 2021.

Please note that if you are C, you will also need to deposit \$75 into the club's bank account **06 0541 0056031 00** before 24 December.

We plan to follow the same timetable as we'd planned for last March and have attached that to save you searching your inboxes. This document is just to refresh your memory - we'll update it closer to the date when the train times for that period are confirmed. It's also likely that we'll be visiting a different winery to Palliser, as they are now focusing on their new restaurant, rather than tastings. Details to follow.

Come along for a fun day and help wrap up the club's 40th birthday celebrations in style!



GLASSES ROSTER

Thank you to all those who have volunteered to be part of the Glasses Roster.

SCREWCAPS

Screwcaps are still very welcome, please bring these along to any Club meeting and leave them with Anne, remembering that the cause that benefits from this collection is Kidney Kids NZ and their families.

WINE NEWS - to end the year on a good note

How the wine industry went from 'preparing for the worst' to recording record-high export earnings

28 November 2020

When the nationwide lockdown was announced at very the same time as the wine harvest earlier this year, panic rippled across the viticulture sector.

And though it was later deemed an essential service and allowed to continue operating during alert level 4, the industry faced a number of challenges in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Strict conditions meant wineries and vineyards had to change their way of working, adapting to tough new health and safety regulations all the while maintaining productivity.

But not only did the industry survive those trying times, it's also now been revealed that it actually flourished, with the latest figures showing exports for the 12 months to October hit a record high of \$2 billion.

Clive Jones, chair of New Zealand Winegrowers, says reaching the milestone this year came as a surprise for the industry.

"We made a bold prediction 10 years ago that we thought we could double sales from \$1 billion to \$2 billion by the year 2020," Jones told Newshub.

"I guess we always thought we'd get there but at the beginning of the year we really didn't think it would be this year."

He said although sales had been gradually improving over the past year, there was a "big surge" in the last four or five months.

Rabobank's latest Wine Quarterly report, published last month, noted an increase in export sales was related to more people drinking at home during lockdowns around the world, leading to an uptick in retail trade.

Jones said that was good news for New Zealand wine producers, although he acknowledged wine businesses that sell predominantly through on-premise and tourism have been harder hit.

According to the Rabobank report, sauvignon blanc makes up the lion's share of Kiwi wine exports, with year-on-year sales to August up 131 percent. But Jones says there is an increasing appetite for pinot noir, the second most popular export, as well as rosé and pinot gris.

The US, the UK and Australia continue to be our largest markets, and Jones says he believes New Zealand's reputation as being largely virus-free has helped push our brand.

"I think it is a COVID response in that people are looking for something that's reliable that they can bank on. They're not taking risks - and they see New Zealand wine as something that delivers that," he said

"I'm also sure that New Zealand has internationally been seen in a pretty good light in recent times, so there's a positive feeling about New Zealand.

"Perhaps when people pick a bottle of New Zealand wine off the shelf and they take it home to drink they're thinking 'I wish I was there'."

ones said the industry was "preparing for the worse" when the level 4 lockdown was announced but said the sector had really rallied together to face the challenges thrown at it.

"Everyone responded positively and took the issue seriously and the safety of our people and communities was paramount," he said.

"We were determined as an industry not to be the source of a community outbreak so thankfully we got through that ok."

The sector is not out of the woods yet, however, with the country's closed borders meaning there remains a labour shortage for the upcoming harvest.

Border exemptions announced on Friday allowing 2000 recognised seasonal employers (RSE) workers from Pacific countries to come to New Zealand early next year will go some way to relieving that pressure, says Jones, but it won't be a magic fix.

He said although workers were needed for the harvest - which, depending on where in the country a vineyard is, usually takes place around March and April and lasts for six weeks - a more critical time was winter when vines need to be pruned.

The other concern is the weather.

"There's a bit of risk of ex-tropical cyclones, which is something we want to avoid, so hopefully that doesn't happen - we don't want rain during harvest."

For now, Jones and winemakers across the country will be hoping their good luck continues, and that conditions this year are similar to those of the season just passed, which many have said produced the best vintage in decades.

"It was a very kind harvest in terms of weather," Jones said.

"It was one of the best seasons we've had so that was the one thing we didn't have to worry about."

Newshub – James Fyfe

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