

The Cellar Club Inc



Established in 1980

JUNE 2025 Newsletter

Bladen Wines

Presented by Blair Macdonald

Wednesday 11^h June, 8pm Start

Door Price: Members \$15 / Guests \$19



[Cellar Door | Bladen Wines](#) - 83 Conders Bend Road, Renwick, Marlborough

In 1989, Christine and Dave Macdonald left their city lives behind to realise their dream of establishing a vineyard and winery. With caravan in tow the family embarked on a national tour to find the ideal winegrowing region and vineyard location.

Settling in Marlborough, they planted their vineyard by hand, initially growing grapes for local wineries before creating their own wines under the Bladen name. Chris and Dave quickly developed a reputation for making exceptional cool climate wines.

The Bladen name refers to Chris and Dave's children - Blair and Deni - who were toddlers when the vineyard was developed.

Chris and Dave Macdonald are proud to be amongst the pioneers of the Marlborough winegrowing region. There were only eight wineries in the Marlborough district in 1989 when they established their vineyard.

Blair will be presenting the following wines at our tasting

- 🍷 Pinot Noir Rosé 2023 – our Welcome Wine
- 🍷 Pinot Gris 2023
- 🍷 Sauvignon Blanc 'Five Barrels' 2023
- 🍷 Riesling 'Eight Rows' 2024
- 🍷 The Sum of Us 2023 *made up of Gertz, Pinot Gris and Riesling*
- 🍷 Gewurztraminer 'Tilly Vineyard' 2024
- 🍷 Pinot Noir



Bladen are currently closed for the Winter, Reopening 25th October 2025

Let's Look Out for Each Other

As always, please if you are feeling unwell, do not attend the evening's presentation. Thanks

Looking Back – May AGM

Thanks to all those that attended the Club's AGM. It was a short and succinct meeting, with all the important matters passed or discussed in a timely matter. For those that couldn't attend:

- Financial Report has been uploaded to the Club website if you wish to review it.
- Presidents Report, a copy of which has also been uploaded to the Club website.
- Election of Officers, everybody on the committee was re-elected to continue in their previous roles.
- Subscriptions, due at 1 July to remain at \$25 for the 25/26 financial year.
- All 3 Notices of Motion from Ken Warren in relation to changes to our Constitution to bring it up to spec with current legislation were unanimously received and accepted.
- General Business: the subject of changing our starting time, especially for the winter months was again raised. It was agreed that our next AGM would start at 7:45, instead of 8pm.

The Supper put on by committee members was enjoyed, as was the socialising that accompanied it.

Committee Musings

1. Following the AGM, the committee received confirmation that the Club website was now up to date with all the AGM reports, as well as the new club rules.
2. Having regard to the AGM general business discussion on starting times, the committee reviewed the start times of our monthly tastings and agreed it should remain at 8pm. The AGM start of 7.45pm was because there is no quaffer before the meeting starts.
3. Thanks to everyone for the help with setting up the tables and chairs at the start of our evenings and taking the same down after the meeting.
4. Appreciation also for taking the tables contents: spittoons/water jugs/cracker plates back to the kitchen.

PLEASE NOTE: We can't arrive to do the setting up activities any earlier than 7:30pm as we interrupt the cleaner(s) schedule, the cleaners are in the hall until 7:30pm.

Looking Ahead:

- 🍷 **July** is your Club's mid-year dinner. This July it is to be held at **Le Bouillon Bel Air Restaurant** in Tory Street, Wellington CBD.
 - The event cost is \$85 per person and there will be Club bubbles on arrival at the restaurant as usual.
 - You are encouraged to bring your partner – even if they are not a Club member, they are more than welcome to come along to both your club's meals.
 - This July's meal is a good time to get out those French wines that you have in your wine cellars to share with friends at the meal.
 - We don't have the menu at this stage, as the restaurant changes its menus every two months, so you get variety and season's pickings all through the year. We won't know the menu until it comes out on 23rd June, but please look at the present menu for a sample of what they offer to patrons.

- There will be a notice sent out separately that will detail the new menu and payment details. This will require a response by July 4th.

Please read an article featured in Cuisine magazine: [Le Bouillon Bel Air - Cuisine Magazine - From New Zealand to the World](#): “Princely dining for Paupers - Entering Le Bouillon Bel Air one finds oneself set down in a fancy Parisian restaurant, circa 1895. A bow-tied, black-waistcoated waiter leads you past mirrors decorated in the same sinuous Art-Nouveau style as the pierced wooden room divide.... The menu, too, is inspired by Chartier, so rather than being subjected to culinary experimentation as a paying lab rat, expect a comforting sense of tradition.”

🍷 **August – Gibbston Valley**, Central Otago

🍷 **September** - TBC

Wine News – On The Up: Felton Road named top winery for 2025, wins second year in a row

Stephanie Holmes NZ Herald

Expert judges have crowned the top 50 wineries for 2025, with a Central Otago winery taking the top spot for the second year running.

Online wine critic platform The Real Review has named Bannockburn’s Felton Road as Winery of the Year.

“In a competitive field, Felton Road continues to lead by example,” says judge Stephen Wong, MW. “Their wines are defined by purity, balance and a deep respect for the land.”

Wong says the second consecutive win [reflects the winery’s](#) “continuous improvement” that “sets a benchmark for the industry”.

The annual top wineries list recognises excellence across the country.

Wong says Kiwi wine-drinkers can use the list to give them “a clear sense of who is leading the way in New Zealand winemaking right now”.

[Waiheke’s Destiny Bay](#) took the runner-up spot this year, with Te Whare Rā and Framingham (both from Marlborough) and [Martinborough’s Dry River](#) rounding out the top five.

This year’s awards introduced a new “Best in Class” category, celebrating excellence across various wine styles. The inaugural winners were [Quartz Reef’s](#) Methode Traditionnelle Blanc de Blancs 2017 for Sparkling Wine of the Year; Prophet’s Rock Cuvée Aux Antipodes Blanc 2022 for White Wine of the Year; Doctors Flat Pinot Noir 2021 for Red Wine of the Year; and Astrolabe’s Wrekin Vineyard Late Harvest Chenin Blanc 2022 for Sweet Wine of the Year.

It is also the first time a Vigneron of the Year award has been presented, recognising excellence in viticulture.

Anna and Jason Flowerday of Marlborough’s certified organic winery, [Te Whare Rā](#), are the inaugural winners.

“Highlighting individual wines and the people behind them allows us to tell a fuller story of New Zealand wine’s journey,” says Wong.

“As our industry matures, it’s vital we recognise not just the wines, but the people and philosophies shaping them.”

Wong says the Flowerdays were recognised because of their “deep connection between vineyard and bottle”, praising their commitment to sustainability while retaining a commitment to striving for excellence.

Rounding out the awards, Simon Sharpe and Lauren Keenan of Marlborough winery A Thousand Gods were awarded the Rising Star of the Year.

Enthusiasts can sample 80 of this year's award-winning wines and meet the winemakers at a tasting event in Auckland on June 7, with tickets available via The Real Review's website.

NZ wineries will be further recognised in August, with [Viva's own Top 50 wine awards](#), judged by Viva Wine Editor Dr Jo Burzynska. The full 2024 list of winners can be found at viva.co.nz.

The Real Review's Top 50 Wineries of New Zealand 2025

1. **Felton Road** - Bannockburn, Central Otago
2. **Destiny Bay** - Waiheke Island, Auckland
3. **Te Whare Rā Wines** - Renwick, Marlborough
4. **Framingham** - Renwick, Marlborough
5. **Dry River Wines** - Martinborough, Wairarapa
6. **Prophet's Rock** - Bendigo, Central Otago
7. **Te Mata Estate** - Havelock North, Hawke's Bay
8. **Rippon** - Wanaka, Central Otago
9. **Ata Rangi** - Martinborough, Wairarapa
10. **Pyramid Valley Vineyards** - Waikari, North Canterbury
11. **Craggy Range** - Havelock North, Hawke's Bay
12. **Bell Hill** - Waikari, North Canterbury
13. **Obsidian** - Waiheke Island, Auckland
14. **Hans Herzog Estate** - Rapaura, Marlborough
15. **Kusuda Wines** - Martinborough, Wairarapa
16. **Church Road** - Napier, Hawke's Bay
17. **Rockburn Wines** - Cromwell, Central Otago
18. **Elephant Hill Estate** - Te Awanga, Hawke's Bay
19. **Villa Maria** - Auckland
20. **Smith & Sheth** - Havelock North, Hawke's Bay
21. **Cloudy Bay** - Blenheim, Marlborough
22. **Fromm Winery** - Blenheim, Marlborough
23. **Bilancia** - Hawke's Bay
24. **Neudorf** - Upper Moutere, Nelson
25. **Gibbston Valley Wines** - Gibbston, Central Otago
26. **Wild Irishman** - Gibbston, Central Otago
27. **Siren Wine** - Marlborough
28. **Corofin** - Blenheim, Marlborough
29. **Terra Sancta** - Bannockburn, Central Otago
30. **Blank Canvas** - Marlborough
31. **A Thousand Gods** - Marlborough
32. **Tantalus Estate** - Waiheke Island, Auckland
33. **Mt Difficulty Wines** - Bannockburn, Central Otago
34. **Puriri Hills** - Clevedon, Auckland
35. **Greystone Wines** - Waipara, North Canterbury
36. **Black Estate** - North Canterbury
37. **Charteris** - Central Otago
38. **Radburnd Cellars** - Hawke's Bay
39. **Doctors Flat** - Central Otago

40. **Isabel Estate** - Marlborough
41. **Dog Point Vineyard** - Marlborough
42. **Batch Winery** - Waiheke Island, Auckland
43. **Giesen Wine Estate** - Marlborough
44. **Forager Wine** - Marlborough
45. **Valli** - Central Otago
46. **Man O' War Vineyards** - Waiheke Island, Auckland
47. **Astrolabe Wines** - Marlborough
48. **Mudbrick** - Waiheke Island, Auckland
49. **Clos Henri** - Marlborough
50. **The Boneline** - North Canterbury

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.

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