

Good Evening Everyone I am grateful for this opportunity to present to members, the Cellar Club's *Annual President's Report* for 2026, and to welcome you to the club's AGM.

The AGM allows us to be reflective, to remind ourselves of recent activities, and to set the direction for the year ahead. It is the appropriate time to acknowledge the contribution of the club's members and to appreciate the role played by the club's committee in ensuring the club continues to function well, based on your valued involvement. At all times the objective is to keep the club relevant, vibrant, successful and a place to gather socially.

The Treasurer's Report has shown us, through astute management, that the club has had an excellent year financially with our special thanks to Wayne for his efforts and discernment. We have achieved some modest capital accumulation and managed a modest cellar. Through regular periodic management and the balancing of the books, it has been possible to subsidise regular events and keep subscriptions modest.

It is important to acknowledge members support for monthly tasting functions and to observe that these activities have been more normal than in some more previous years.

The committee has been very active and involved in the running of the club. In taking on specific responsibilities, the committee has worked seamlessly often under time pressures on an array of tasks. I wish to thank committee members for the ease of working with you in your roles to ensure the the club has lived up to members' expectations.

The committee has this year **grappled with a copyright issue.** This relates to our newsletters and website and is ongoing.. It has taken significant time and effort to remedy. The legal niceties have been addressed and what remains are the complexities and stance adopted by the copyright agents.

Our wine club is well known and highly regarded in Wellington. For nigh on 45 years, from the early 1980's, members supportive interest and the respective committee's commitment has ensured the club's longevity with the best practice of previous years continuing despite many pressures.

Taking stock and assessing the club's objectives going forward is what the AGM is about. The past year has seen a programme that has been regionally varied with some international focus. Such tastings have been well received by the membership including two club dinners (at La Buillon Bel Air and La Cloche), and **eight structured tastings** at the Community Centre which included

- Bladen (Marlborough)
- Luna Estate (Martinborough)
- Ohua Gravels (Horowhenua - Levin)
- Rockburn (Central Otago)
- Mission (Hawkes Bay) and Mission Festive wines
- Askerne (Hawkes Bay)
- Penfolds (South Australia)
- NZ International Wine Show Trophy and Gold Medal wines

It has been a revelation to observe **when focussing on the club's membership numbers and monthly attendances**, that over 300 members and guests have attended 8 tastings during the last year. This continues a trend apparent from 2024 and 2025. Notably, post Covid, actual attendance numbers have increased significantly relative to membership numbers being more constant indicating the membership has become and continues to become more involved with the club.

Desite this, membership involvement and continuing attendance remains a constant issue for community club's such as ours. The key to success is the nature of the programme and the information that the monthly club newsletter provides by way of encouragement. With close to an average of 30 -35 regularly attending and some tastings close to 40 there has been superb involvement. With subscription membership maintained at over 50 and with 5 life members the committee is grateful for this support. The survey conducted at the end of 2025 provided both confirmation of the club's direction as well as an insight into the membership's priorities.

The club prioritises making sure that our appreciation is extended to all presenters and we continue to benefit from the support of wineries and wine agencies. The level of wine purchases continues to be exceptional and this makes it so much easier when approaching vineyards to present to us when we are compiling the annual programme.

The club's cellar is worthy of special mention. We have sought to maintain 100 – 120 bottles and sustain a value level of around \$2000. This has provided for tastings at club-wide functions and any contingencies that may require urgent attention within our annual tasting programme.

I wish to draw **attention to several features** of the club. The **monthly newsletter** alongside the management of our website and licensing matters is our window on the world. Our newsletter with thanks to Evelyn has kept members well informed on pending tastings and events, committee issues, and articles on the NZ and international scene and club news. The **management of the website** is in the capable hands of Steve with our thanks and our secretarial cover has been superbly handled by Gordon setting up processes and using an “Action log” approach to keep us on track.

My thanks are further extended to Gayl, Terry and Ken making up the **composition of a very reliable committee**. Your perspectives on the club continues to bring new ideas to the fore. The club very much appreciates your active support, attention to details and valued involvement.

There are many tasks that lie behind a club such as ours – administration and banking, membership and secretarial matters, licencing and tastings, setting up of the venue, management of catering, pouring at the tastings, front of house support and critically the oversight of finances. Thanks to all involved. These things do not just happen but require planning and commitment.

Regular assistance from members beyond the committee is appreciated and is of critical importance in the club's longevity and smooth functioning. It is more than the vino that ensures there is a social bond of valuable members. Please enjoy tonight's supper and the wines from **your** club cellar. There are some single special bottles so modest pours to ensure they go around please.

There remains some further **routine matters** for the AGM tonight so it is time for general business and election of officers. It is pleasing to note that the current committee have all indicated a desire to carry on with their involvement with the committee. Thank you for attendance at tonight's AGM.

I ask that this annual report be accepted and it will remain available as posted on the club's website.

Murray Jaspers President, The Cellar Club Inc