

The Cellar Club Inc



Established in 1980

JUNE YEAR Newsletter

Margrain

Presented by Kate Throp

<https://margrainvineyard.co.nz>

Wednesday 10th June, 8pm Start

Door Price: Members \$16 / Guests \$20

Kate is Margrain's Cellar Door/Sales/Marketing/Admin extraordinaire. The glue that holds the office together, Kate also manages the Cellar Door. With her quirky sense of humour and fierce loyalty to Margrain wines, she is loved by all that visit our small intimate tasting room. Starting at Margrain in 2005 she has over 20 years' experience in the industry.

Margrain Vineyard is a second-generation family owned and operated vineyard in Martinborough. Established in 1992, born from the passion for fine wine, good food and the rural lifestyle held by husband-and-wife owners Daryl and Graham Margrain. Margrain offers a complete vineyard experience.

The original 4-hectare property combined perfect location with the essential soil type, a fine layer of silty loam over deep river gravels which sits on the edge of the terrace overlooking the Huangarua riverbed. The company then expanded with the purchase of the adjacent vineyard (one of the original 4 in the town). The proximity was perfect, the soil excellent and the site well proven. Set in the heart of the Martinborough vineyard area, the company's aim since the outset has been to grow top quality grapes and produce wines of excellence. In pursuit of this goal no compromise has been made.

Graham's philosophy in branding the company was a simple one, "If it's worth doing, it's worth putting your name on."

- Visit our Cellar Door open 7 days from 11am-3pm Mon-Fri and 11am-4pm Sat/Sun
- Try our wines, and Margrain gins, while overlooking our beautiful vineyard. Our Kitchen is open Wednesday to Sunday - enjoy platters, pizzas or burgers while overlooking the vines. Casual dining in the vines at its best.
- Margrain Vineyard Villas offer unique Martinborough accommodation set in our vineyard with stunning rural views.
- Vineyard Tours are also on offer at Margrain, taking you through the vine to wine process.

Our wines for the evening are:

- 🍷 Margrain La Michelle Methode Traditionelle
- 🍷 Margrain Pinot Gris

- 🍷 Margrain Riesling
- 🍷 Margrain Chenin Blanc
- 🍷 Margrain Chardonnay
- 🍷 Margrain Rivers Edge Pinot
- 🍷 Margrain Home Block Pinot

We look forward to seeing you all for the evening.

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. Unfortunately, due to illness, our numbers were down - get well soon to everyone who couldn't be there.

For those that couldn't attend:

- Financial Report, Presidents Report, and last year's AGM Minutes were already uploaded onto the Club's website for your reading convenience.
- Election of Officers: everyone on the committee is sitting for another year, thanks.
- Subscriptions, to remain at \$25 for the 26/27 financial year.
- General Business:
 - There was a Notice of Motion for Wayne Kennedy to be made a Life member of the Club. This was put forward/nominated by Anne Megget and passed unanimously.

The Supper put on by committee members was enjoyed, as was the socialising too.

Committee Musings

1. **Screwcaps** – this is a repeat from last month's newsletter as we are aware that some people may not have read this at the bottom of that newsletter:
 - With various local supermarkets now collecting aluminium tear tabs, etc, the committee has decided to **stop collecting screwcaps** after the AGM.
 - **If you have a supply at home**, bring them to the June meeting and we will get them to Anne Meggett. Wayne will then liaise with her to collect all the screwcaps that she has been collecting and to turn them into a donation to Kidney Kids NZ.
 - Thanks to Anne for being prepared to do this, and to Sue on the door who has been receiving them.
 - If you need help with whereabouts to drop off your wine bottle caps please look at: <https://www.recyclemap.co.nz/maps/caps-and-lids>, There is a map on this site which shows you a list of locations near where you select, where you can drop off your recyclables.
2. Thanks again to everyone who helps with the tables and chairs at the start of our evenings and taking them down again after the meeting. Also taking the tables contents: spittoons/water jugs/cracker plates back to the kitchen.

Looking Ahead:

- 🍷 **July** - in light of the fuel crisis and supporting local businesses we are proposing to hold our Mid-Winter Dinner at **The Johnsonville Club**, 1 Norman Lane. This will be a night that the restaurant isn't normally open, so we will have the space to ourselves. **An indication of your support/attendance for this venue would be appreciated early, thanks.**
- 🍷 **August** – Margrain, Wairarapa
- 🍷 **September** – **TBC**

Wine News – Canterbury's Bell Hill Named NZ's Winery of The Year

by Stephanie Holmes, NZ Herald Monday 18th May 2026

The top 50 New Zealand wineries for 2026 have been named, with a Canterbury winery taking the top spot.

Online wine critic platform The Real Review has named Bell Hill from Waipara its Winery of the Year, jumping up the list from 12th place in 2025.

"Bell Hill has firmly established itself at the forefront of New Zealand winemaking," Real Review judge Jane Skilton MW said. "The consistency and calibre across the range this year made them a clear standout."

The annual top wineries list recognises excellence across the country, with judging done algorithmically – more than 4000 wines are tasted and reviewed blind over a period of two years, receiving an overall score. The winery with the highest-scored wines is ultimately named winery of the year.

"This award is very gratifying for us. It validates our reason for being here and recognises our long-term devotion to this site," Bell Hill's owners Sherwyn Veldhuizen and Marcel Giesen said. "It's very humbling to be chosen among such great company."

Bell Hill claimed top spot ahead of runner-up Felton Road, which was Winery of the Year for 2024 and 2025.

"We work hard, leave no stone unturned and stay deeply connected to the vineyard from start to finish. We want the vineyard to express itself fully, and in turn, for the wine to reflect that care and intent," Giesen said.

It's been a big year for the winery, gaining acclaim from experts around the world.

"Being included in Eric Asimov's Most Memorable Wines of the Year selection in *The New York Times* was a definite highlight, along with the encouragement and support we've received from wine writers and reviewers along the way," Veldhuizen says. "That understanding and people truly 'getting it' means a great deal."

Central Otago's Prophet's Rock and Quartz Reef were placed third and fifth, respectively, with Hawke's Bay's Bilancia coming in fourth.

Quartz Reef's Rudi Bauer was named Vigneron of the Year, recognising excellence in viticulture.

Best in Class awards went to Cloudy Bay's Pelorus Vintage 2013 (Sparkling Wine of the Year), Neudorf's Home Block Moutere Chardonnay 2024 (White Wine of the Year), Burn Cottage's Sabines Selection Pinot Noir 2022 (Red Wine of the Year) Chateau Garage's Lulu Rosé 2025 (Rosé Wine of the Year), and Greywacke's Botrytis Pinot Gris 2023 (Sweet Wine of the Year).

Vilaura's Jascha Oldham-Selak and Sanne Witteveen were named Rising Stars of the Year.

"This year's selection continues to evolve, spanning both long-established favourites and exciting new entrants," Real Review's Stephen Wong MW said.

“The release of the stellar 2024 vintage across most regions heralds an exciting time for great quality in Aotearoa.”

Enthusiasts can sample 80 of this year’s award-winning wines and meet the winemakers at the Taste the Top Wineries event at Morningside’s Glasshouse on August 15.

You can read the List of the Top 50 NZ Wineries for 2025 at: [Canterbury’s Bell Hill Named NZ’s Winery Of The Year, Full Top 50 Revealed - NZ Herald](#) . They are listed there. As a teaser:

- 🍷 Quartz Reef is no. 5
- 🍷 Te Mata Estate is no.10
- 🍷 Kumeu River is no. 16
- 🍷 Poppies Martinborough is no. 19
- 🍷 Pegasus Bay is no. 21
- 🍷 Elephant Hill Estate is no.30

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