



March 2008 Newsletter

Federation of Wine and Food Societies of New Zealand Inc

Editor Kathleen Brooker sandk135@clear.net.nz

Note from the Editor

Thank you to the Societies who have contributed to the Newsletter during the past year. Contributions from other Societies would be appreciated.

Federation Business

The Annual General Meeting

The Federation AGM is usually held at the time of the Convention in New Zealand but as the Convention this year will be in Melbourne, it was held at Ray Toms home in Taupo on Sunday 16 March 2008. It was followed by a lunch hosted by the Taupo Winetasters' Club.

Officers elected:

President: Ray Toms

Imm Past President: Stuart Brooker

Senior Vice President: Philpa Harrison

Junior Vice President: No nomination.

(The Executive has power to appoint but any appointment must be confirmed at the next AGM).

Secretary/Treasurer: Maureen Sando

These Officers together with the Society Representatives (each Society may appoint one representative) form the Executive.

The Society Representatives currently are:

Auckland:

Christchurch: Don MCEwan

Gisborne:

Hamilton: Kenneth Sheldrick

Hawkes Bay: Philpa Harrison

North Shore: David Corlett

Palmerston North: Robyn Anderson

Taupo: Ray Toms

Tauranga:

Wellington: Stuart Brooker

The President's Report

PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE 2008 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT TAUPO ON SUNDAY 16 MARCH 2008

Sadly I have to record the death of a stalwart of the Federation and the death of one very good friend of our Federation who was a member of our Australian equivalent. I know it is not usual to so report, but these two people were special.

Trevor Steiner our Immediate Past President, who worked hard and well for the Federation over many years and was closely involved in the establishment of the Combined Conventions, died just before the 2007 Stanley Harris Dinner. We extend our condolences to Elizabeth.

Harold Wilkes, our great friend from Australia, died just before Christmas. He was a colourful character, always looking on the bright side of things. He was a regular attendee at our conventions. We hope Joyce, to whom we extend our condolences, will continue to cross the Tasman to join us from time to time.

Both will be sadly missed.

The highlights of the last 12 months have been:

- the establishment of a Regular Newsletter
- the magnificent Convention at Palmerston North
- an outstanding Stanley Harris Dinner at Martin Bosley's Yacht Club Restaurant in Wellington

We are however not without our problems:

- The Regular Conventions are too difficult for most member societies to manage. It is increasingly difficult to find locations and host societies and those societies that do the job for us work very hard to make successful conventions and often it is resented by the members

of those societies who are not convention people. We need to make it much easier for societies to host conventions. Some things to consider to help would be:

- (i) to relax the rules about making the wine advance of \$5,000 so that all that was needed was a written request with a promise to repay;
- (ii) to increase the amount available from \$5,000 to say up to \$8,000;
- (iii) to formally appoint two or three experienced convention attendees to help the societies organizing committee;
- (iv) to subsidize the convention or at least to underwrite any loss up to say \$2,000.

- It is difficult for the Newsletter Editor to obtain contributions from most societies. Persistence may improve this over time, or hopefully the Newsletter Editor will just get to accept it as inevitable and make other arrangements for copy.
- The restaurant book is similar. Three societies have sent in copy, one has promised to soon, one has said they don't want to do it, and the others have not responded. I in my capacity as Immediate Past President will continue as we have a printer, a sponsor and I personally think that once it is up and running it will be very worthwhile.
- Wine offers are difficult. Most wines that we want to make available to members of Federated Societies for them to cellar are in high demand. It is difficult to arrange supply let alone to arrange it at a discount.

I don't want my report to be a litany of difficulties that we are having. There are apart from the three highlights above a great many positive things going on in the Federation. In particular:

- The cooperation with Australia goes from strength to strength. This is not without its problems but we are always in touch and supportive, as much as we are able to each other.
- The Executive functions well, and the committee, while it has not had to meet often (only at Palmerston North Convention and at Wellington Stanley Harris Dinner) has functioned well.
- I am in the final throes of a "Working Guidelines" document which hopefully will make the Federations activities and operations more readily understandable to all and better able to be taken full advantage of by the members of Federated Societies.
- The finances continue strong. The reserves are more than adequate and the subscriptions represent very good value for money for the member societies.
- A great deal of work is carried out by Maureen Sando our very efficient and hard working Secretary/Treasurer to whom we should all express a sincere vote of thanks.

The Federation is in good heart and carrying out its work well. I hand it over to my successor in good working order.

Kathleen and I have enjoyed our two years representing the Federation and thank you all for your support.

Stuart Brooker
President
Taupo, 16 March 2008

The President's Report was the first item of business on the Agenda but other items of interest were;

A welcome to Dave Corlett from the newly federated North Shore Wine and Food Society.

The approval of the accounts which show a strong position.

A vote of thanks to the Newsletter Editor.

A vote of thanks for the outgoing President.

A membership report which shows there are eight societies in various stages of considering joining the Federation.

Setting the subscription unchanged at \$3.00 per member of a Federated Society.

Confirming the 2009 Convention as Christchurch (see later item), 2010 investigating Auckland, North Shore and *Titirangi* (if they join the Federation) as the combined hosts, 2011 Hawkes Bay.

Confirming that Taupo was to host the 2008 Stanley Harris Dinner. Future proposals were; 2009, The Chateau, Tongariro, and 2010, Rotorua. These dinners are hosted by The Federation in cooperation with the local society if appropriate.

Future Federation Functions

The 2008 Stanley Harris Dinner

This year this function is to be held at The Millennium Hotel, Taupo on Saturday the 4th October 2008. Arrangements are being made for accommodation at the Millennium Hotel at special rates. Details will be included in our next Newsletter.

2008 Convention

The Second Joint Convention of the Combined Federations of Wine and Food Societies of Australia and New Zealand

Melbourne Victoria

Twenty-two New Zealanders have registered to attend. We are sure they will have a good time. It would be great if I could receive some feedback and a report to include in the next newsletter.

News from Societies

Taupo

The Taupo Wine Tasters' Club regularly send a copy of their newsletter and it provides interesting reading. From the current newsletter:

"Fine weather ensured a good day for The "Sowerby Soiree". The numbers attending were down but the wine and food were up!

The Annual Options game sounded like fun with some tricky questions. 4 whites and 4 reds and they all tasted true to variety."

Two members recently went to Kinloch's newest restaurant. It is called Jack's Bistro and they reported that it was a great experience.

This year Taupo Winetasters' Club celebrate their 30th Anniversary and plans are well underway to ensure a great celebration.

Edited from Taupo Winetasters' Club Newsletter.

Palmerston North

"The Eye of the Grape" is Palmerston North's newsletter which also provides reports of their Society functions. Of note was a recent Waitangi day Tropical Lunch. "On arrival the 49 members, attired in colourful tropical dress, walked over a freshly mown carpet into a flower and palm festooned enclosure to be greeted with a cocktail created with Seleni Chardonnay & De Kuyper Amaretto. The dining area for the banquet was in a large conservatory bedecked with palms and tropical floral/fruit arrangements. The tables, covered with bright yellow tablecloths, were set with colourful flowers. The sumptuous food included pawpaw, pineapple, chilli pepper, platters of cold battered fish bites BBQ king prawns, marinated raw fish and pork. Members of the committee, with the help of their respective partners had prepared the entire luncheon."

The AGM of the Palmerston North Wine & Food Society is to be held on 29th April 2008.

Edited from "The eye of the grape"

Wellington

The Christmas Function for 2007 was held in a private room at the Intercontinental Hotel. One long table extending the length of the room with beautiful glass ware, silver ware and white table cloths contributed to a feeling of formality. The theme of the menu was Spanish to match the wines. Each course was a delight. The chef willingly talked about the various items of the menu and answered questions.

On a lovely summer's day in January 17 members took the train to Featherston in the Wairarapa and they were met by bus that took them on a tour which included a visit to Larry McKenna's vineyard, Escarpment, Te Kairanga Vineyard where they had a pot luck picnic lunch and then on to visit Stone Henge Aotearoa. This was fascinating and we certainly learnt a great deal from a very enthusiastic and knowledgeable expert of "The "Henge". It was then on to Gladstone Vineyard and Fairmont Estate with a presentation and a tasting by the owner and wine maker John McNab. The day ended with a degustation dinner at Salute restaurant in Greytown with wines from the Society Cellar. It was then back to Wellington on the bus.

North Shore

Welcome to the North Shore Wine and Food Society and thank you for your contribution to our newsletter. Their newsletter can be seen on their web site which is www.nswfs.org.nz

Their committee consists of;
President: Dave Corlett
Vice President: Catherine Hitchcock
Secretary: Carolyn Worsley
Treasurer: Peter Chambers
Membership Secretary: Valerie Fearon
Glass Organiser: Sue Tree
Newsletter Editor: Jane Gianoutsos

"In review – Wine options DIY was held on 24 February. The wines came from Germany, South Africa and the Hawkes Bay. They ranged in vintages from 1989 through to 2006. Food accompanying the wines included sun dried tomato tarts, salmon rollups, stuffed tomatoes, Thai fish, a variety of cheeses, cracked pepper pate and chocolate. The food was as interesting as the wines and it was proved that bitter sweet chocolate is the ideal accompaniment to Cabernet Sauvignon".

Upcoming Event – Matakana Trip on Saturday 5 April. An early start to be made to be at the Matakana Farmers Market, then to Omaha Bay Vineyard which is a family owned boutique vineyard and winery and then Ransom Wines with their selection of 5 wine tastes to accompany "The Wine Taster's Platter"
It sounds a most interesting day.

The AGM of the North Shore Wine & Food Society is to be held in March also.
Edited from their newsletter.

Christchurch

A copy of the flyer from the Christchurch Society which is to be distributed at the Convention in Melbourne is also attached with this newsletter. Details are:

The Christchurch Wine & Food Society invites you to:

2009 CONVENTION

FEDERATION OF WINE & FOOD SOCIETIES OF NEW ZEALAND

CHRISTCHURCH

APRIL 18 19 & 20-2009

Come and be part of a FOOD and WINE experience like never before.....

e-mail your interest to

lvnorth@rhodes.co.nz