



May 2007 Newsletter

Federation of Wine and Food Societies of New Zealand Inc

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Note from the Editor

After the Federation AGM at the Palmerston North Convention I agreed to take over the Federation Newsletter from Colin Cockburn. I have a hard act to follow but will do my best. We would love to include your information about functions, wine reviews or any other comment relating to wine and food. All contributions will be gratefully accepted.

28th Annual Convention Hosted by Wine and Food Society of Palmerston North

Reviewed by Annette Bridgen, Wellington

Long weekends away with people of like mind are things we all enjoy from time to time. Such weekends are usually spent in pleasant surroundings doing something we all love. They include rituals around clothing, accommodation, food and drinks and most will involve a trip of some kind. This convention weekend in Palmerston North was no exception.

Looking back over the events conjured up by our hosts in the guise of a 'Big Game' weekend and all that term can imply, I can only marvel at the inspiration required and hard work involved. From entering our hotel room on Friday afternoon and finding our feather decorated bag of goodies, to the champagne Curtain Raiser that night and through to the Consolation Plate on Sunday night, many highlights stand out for me.

Meeting in the intimate Novotel foyer for Ayala meant that we all started to talk and introduce ourselves to people we hadn't met before and re-establish old

friendships. It's good to start a convention in such a bright well lit space so that the group who will spend the next couple of days together really begin to bond. With many people having made the effort to come from as far away as Australia it is important to be welcoming. Relaxed and chatting we took a short, refreshing walk to Spostato for dinner.

A sports theme indicates action and the Kick Off dinner was a bright and gregarious affair and great fun. The table decoration with balloons and banners set the standard for the following events. The canapé were most welcome and absolutely delicious. The duck sausage and salsa and creamed turkey and brie were my favourites. It was nice to have a choice of foods for the following courses and I enjoyed the spinach and smoked salmon roulade, a delicate starter. I was offered a taste of the tomato soup which had the true deep flavour of someone who knows how to really make soup. The beef fillet was tender and masterfully cooked to everyone's perfection. The creamy chicken dish was reported to be sublime and the wines were great food match's, fresh, fruity and well balanced. I chose the light dessert option and finished with fresh fruit topped with whipped cream and light pastry triangles. Dessert wine is always welcome but I find is generally very difficult to marry with the foods on offer especially given that one of the desserts was chocolate. I usually skip coffee so as to continue to savour the food and wine flavours.

After a good night's sleep and a cooked breakfast at one of the city's good and many café's, it was aboard the bus for the tour to Pahiatua. I thoroughly enjoyed the trip, an opportunity for more fun as we rummaged in kete and found funny glasses, musical instruments, a quiz to complete and a wind turbine to make. The New Zealand countryside is beautiful and the trip through the gorge as always, interesting. Not being a beer drinker I spent my time at the Tui Brewery trying to get the peacocks across the road to pose for photo's, exploring the historical information

upstairs and of course looking in the shop. The trip into the brewery and production line was interesting and I would like to go back and see it in action.

Originally we were going to have lunch at the brewery so the meal at The Black Stump Café was organised at relatively short notice. I thought my fish filo roll was superb and the chardonnay with it, a happy relationship. The mussels were reported to be tasty as well. Alas the cheese was in short supply and I only got a nibble. The day's finale was a brief stop at the wind farm which really took away the cobwebs. Congratulations to our hosts who worked extremely hard to keep us informed and interested.

Saturday evening's formal dinner at The Gamekeepers Lodge was superb in every way. From the décor and table settings to the quality of the food, wine and service everything was a highlight! Mama Mia! Cast your mind back to the sensuousness of the soft rare beef nestled in equally soft Yorkshire puddings; the moist, sweet and lemony scampi, still just warm; the combination of freshly and intensely but lightly smoked duck breast, salad and dukkah coated labne balls; the textures of perfectly and lightly seared venison with roasted pepper, eggplant roll and beetroot crisps; the balance of blue cheese toasts, succulent pear, crisp candied walnuts and lightly dressed baby spinach; wobbly layers of fruit soaked bread and very berri-ish summer pudding and the final, fabulous but perfectly formed, tiny chocolate macaroons. Wow! A Ruth Pretty masterpiece. Adding to the enjoyment of the meal were the well chosen and stunning examples of New Zealand fruit driven wines with port to complete. I did not want it to end.

At a respectable time on Sunday morning we boarded the bus for a tour around the beautiful Massey University Campus. Choc full of wonderful plantings of trees it must be a tranquil backdrop for students to live and study in. The more formal garden at Wharerata was lovely to walk in even

though the season meant it wasn't at its showiest best. Again, the decoration by Robyn Anderson provided an understated glamour to the venue. I enjoyed the smoked salmon and huge platter of vegetables but it was the wine that stood out for me. The Mount Dotterel Rose was superb, with great structure and a light dryish finish and the Mount Dotterel Pinot Noir was great with the salmon. I also liked the adventurous sparkling Shiraz to end with but the tannin grip meant it was maybe a little dry for the sweetness of the chocolate dessert.

Knowing that some fabulous wines would be opened for the Consolation Plate was a great spur to get the group out in force for the final function on Sunday evening. The Boardroom was a good venue for this casual meal throwing everyone into contact for a last catch-up. The gumbo, bread and salad were a great foil for the various reds and the seafood soup similarly for the whites. Of course I preferred the fruity New Zealand wines to the aged hot climate Australian ones but that is all it is, preference. The only way I could easily slip out of the warm fug into the cool, crisp night air was the promise of another convention next year and this time in Melbourne. Until then, cheers.

Letter to Palmerston North Society from Diana Moorhead, Auckland

One View from Auckland

When I remember this convention the first thing that's going to come into my mind is the amazingly high level of participation and commitment shown by the Palmerston North club members. Before I came, I had visions of a small dedicated group getting together in people's houses, but no - I gather that attendances of 40 - 60 are common at your functions. Some other branches should be so lucky! The commitment was clear, too, at the Saturday night dinner - the transformation of that hall was stupendous.

The next thing I'm going to remember is the excellent matching of wines to food dishes. I told your cellarmaster on Saturday night that to have each pairing working so well over seven courses is a feat I've never experienced before - usually there's at least one that doesn't quite 'go'.

Your programme was varied enough to keep me interested the whole weekend, from a cowshed to the elegance of Wharerata. And the weather did its best not to spoil our party, particularly

on Sunday, so we could see a bit of what the Palmerston North region is all about.

Finally, on a personal note, I turned several acquaintances into new friends, and reinforced my gratitude to the existence of the Federation for giving me the opportunity to meet - and keep up with - such great people from Australia and right around New Zealand. Do please use your contacts - I know that we 'Jafas' would be very happy to meet up when you are next in our area.

Congratulations on a most enjoyable Convention.

Diana Moorhead

Review by Lindsey Alderson, Sydney

Five ladies from Sydney Ladies Wine & Food Society (and one game man from NSW Society) attended this weekend and boy what a time we had!!

The theme for the weekend Convention was "The Big Game" and nothing about the organisation of this weekend was left to chance.

We were greeted on arrival in our rooms by a delightful "goodies" bag of Jonathan's Spices and oil, local wine and chocolates beautifully presented with stunning feathers and information of the local area. What a lovely welcome.

Our "Curtain Raiser" on Friday night hosted by Elaine and Graham Wilton was a great "warm up" for the weekend with a stylish bubbly being served with canapes then a short training walk to Spostato Restaurant for the "Kick Off" which was hosted by Robyn and Robert Anderson and members of the committee. Each table being decorated in Super 14's Rugby team colours and a competition to guess the halftime and fulltime scores of a game being played on the night added to the fun. Did anyone really know the scores by the end? I think some people had been indulging in too much ???Gatorade or such to really know what was going on.

Saturday morning saw us warming up at breakfast before our "Away on Tour" day with Colin Cook and Eric Linklater being our hosts for the day. After the photo shoot requirements were completed by Warwick Marshall we climbed aboard to be greeted by more pressies. Our "Maori made in China bags" were a surprise with lots of fun stuff inside and a quiz to help us get to know our team mates along the way.

One team mate, Yvonne Wallis from Oz really wanted to know everything about her mates including such things as "what time did you go to bed last night?" and "what did you have for breakfast"? Talk about up close and personal!!

We travelled through stunning scenery with great commentary along the way to the Tui Brewery for a beer tasting. 11.00am is too early for a beer. Yeah right. A competition to name the different characteristics of the various beers was in full swing by 11.05 and much laughter and comment was heard. After a very interesting tour of the brewery we were presented with a stein from the Tui Brewery which was much appreciated by all. (Not sure how this came about, I don't think the game was rigged, or was it?)

The Black Stump Cafe in Pahiatua was our watering hole for lunch and a fine meal it was too. Accompanied by great wines of course.

The team were starting to tire but a stop at the fascinating wind farms soon blew the cobwebs away.

The Gamekeepers Lodge on Saturday night for the formal dinner was a sight to behold. As we were instructed, we entered the Lodge in twos. We weren't sure if we were game or not (ha ha get it?) Were we to be shot? no...we were instead presented with a Bloody Mary shot with or without a Bluff oyster. Heaven in a glass.

So much effort had gone into converting what is a local hall into the Gamekeepers Lodge complete with mai-mai. The Lodge was a marvellous sight with a canoe, flying ducks, fish, rabbits, antler chandeliers, peacock feathers and fairy lights and candles to set the scene for a wonderful evening hosted by President Robyn and Members of Palmerston North Wine & Food Society.

A stunning meal was served by the top caterer in New Zealand, Ruth Pretty and the matching wines selected by Cellarmaster, Arron Schroder, complimented the meal to perfection.

Sunday morning saw the team, after a necessary sleep in, on the bus for a Cook's tour of the beautiful gardens of Palmerston North then to Massey University. The tour of the University grounds showed us what diverse plantings are there and..... the charming retired Horticulturalist for Massey University amazed us as the Botanical names of various trees, shrubs etc rolled off his tongue like the all important goal to win flies off the uprights. Some people were heard to say "seems a shame to waste it all on students".

More food and wine!!

The cool down meal was served in the Russell Room of Wharerata, the history of this beautiful building being given to us by President Robyn. A trip to the dairy followed our lunch. How beautiful are cows' big brown eyes. (I must say our view in the dairy was a little different). The information relayed to us by Gareth Evans, Manager, helped to show us the intricacies of farming and the consequences of drought. Whilst at the dairy Warwick presented us all with lovely photos to remember our visit to Palmerston North.

Just when you thought it was safe to go home the Consolation Plate, admirably hosted by Vicki and David Stewart was held on the Sunday evening. Attendees contributed a bottle of wine to the function and many people were seen to be studying labels and tasting perhaps a new wine or two or three. The meal served by Vicki and her trainers looked and smelled fantastic but I'm afraid this little black duck was all tuckered out so didn't stay too long.

President Robyn, the Organising Committee and Members of Palmerston North Society can certainly hold their heads up high on a fantastically organised weekend of fine food, wine, fun and friendship.

The amount of effort and attention to detail did not escape our attention and whoever holds the next Convention sure has a hard act to follow.



Look at all those glasses!

Recipes from Wharerata and Tui Brewery

Raspberry & Chocolate Brownie

250g butter
250g dark chocolate
2 cups sugar
3tsp vanilla essence
1 ½ cups water
½ cup alcohol (whiskey) optional
1/3 cup cocoa
2 cups flour
1 ½ tsp baking powder
Melt and mix together. No lumps.
bake 150 C 40 mins – 1hr
This should be a flat cake. Cool before cutting.
(editors note: no mention of the Raspberry)

Sarah Cook
Wharerata

Monteith's Black Chocolate Cake

¼ cup cocoa pwd to dust baking pans
200g butter or margarine
1 cup Monteith's Black
2/3 cup dark cocoa powder
1 tsp salt
2 cups flour
2 cups sugar
1 ¼ tsp baking soda, sifted
2 extra large eggs
½ cup sour cream

Heat oven to 180 C
In a heavy saucepan or microwave, heat butter, beer and cocoa powder until butter melts
Sift dry ingredients, add the beer – cocoa mixture and beat thoroughly for 1 min on med speed
Pour batter into 2 20cm tins
Bake at 175 C for 24 to 30 mins or until a pick inserted into the middle comes out clean
Place pans on a wire rack, cool 10mins, remove the sides, and cool completely
Use a long serrated knife to even tops of cakes. Using a flexible spatula, spread each layer with a thin coating of chocolate frosting, stack and cover sides with frosting
Tui Brewery

Federation Business

The Annual General Meeting

The Federation AGM was held in Stewart's Electrical Boardroom Palmerston North on Sunday 15 April 2007. The meeting was very constructive. There was no election of officers as all but the second vice president were elected for a two year term at the last AGM in Taupo.

The current Officers are:
President: Stuart Brooker
Imm Past President: Trevor Steiner
1st Vice President: Ray Toms
2nd Vice President: Philpa Harrison
Secretary/Treasurer: Maureen Sando
Philpa was confirmed as 2VP having been co opted by the executive during 2006. All of the Officers together with the Society Representatives (each Society may appoint one representative) form the Executive. The Society Representatives currently are:
Auckland: Trevor Steiner
Christchurch: Don MCEwan
Hamilton: Kenneth Sheldrick
Hawkes Bay: Philpa Harrison
Palmerston North: Robyn Anderson
Taupo: Ray Toms
Wellington: Stuart Brooker

The minutes of the 2007 AGM will be circulated in the next newsletter once the Executive has approved them, however other items of note at the AGM were:

- The approval of the accounts (which are very healthy)
- To continue the Newsletter (editor notes many at the meeting promised to send info "new vineyards"...."wonderful wines" ...etc) so we are looking forward to these items in future newsletters.
- To establish a book listing top restaurants in each Societies area
- Confirm the Convention in Melbourne 2008 (See later)
- Confirm the Stanley Harris Dinner (see later).

General discussion centered around how the Federation could be more helpful to the members of the Federated Societies and to encourage more Societies to join the Federation

The President's Report

The highlights of 2006 have been:

1. The establishment of the Stanley Harris Dinner. This annual event the first of which was held at Brookfields in Napier was attended by 40 people and was an outstanding success. The second dinner is planned for 6 October 2007 in Wellington and will also be outstanding. Hopefully will have even more attendees.
2. The Convention in Taupo which was well managed and most enjoyable. Our thanks to the Taupo Society for their very hard and excellent work.

During 2006 the Federation attempted to establish a worthwhile

newsletter but unfortunately due to Colin Cockburn, our editors inability due to family problems, to complete more than the first edition, the newsletter has not been successful. Your committee is determined to resolve the matter.

Another concern has been the relatively poor uptake of the wine offer from Brookfields following the Inaugural Stanley Harris Dinner. It is the intention of the Federation to offer Members of Federated Societies good wine suitable for cellaring from NZ's best wine makers. However this is not going to work until a regular Newsletter is established.

On a happier note:

1. We have awarded a well deserved Stanley Harris Medal to Maureen Sando who has made a good and long term contribution to our Federation as Secretary/Treasurer especially over recent years.
2. Financially we are in a very good shape. Our major income last year came from levies paid for the Taupo Convention and from Capitation Fees. Our assets increased by \$1,000.00 during the year.
3. The 2008 Australasian Convention in Melbourne is being well planned and obviously will be well worth attending.
4. We have scheduled to publish a restaurant book listing recommended restaurants in the various Federated Societies areas.
5. Titirangi Society are on the point of joining the Federation while Rotorua have resigned. We are hopeful we can have them return. Nelson is another possibility and also Wairarapa.
6. Kathleen and I have been warmly received on our visits to Societies in NZ. Similarly we have been very well received in Brisbane where a dinner replaced the cancelled convention and at the very enjoyable Victor Gibson Dinner in Sydney recently.

This weekend in Palmerston North is so far hugely successful. Our thanks are due to the Palmerston North members who have put in a great deal of effort in planning and arranging this weekend.

My two year term as your President is half over. In this second year I intend to make a greater effort to visit more societies.

Thank you executive committee members for your support during the year.

Stuart Brooker
President
Palmerston North
15 April 2007

Future Federation Functions

The Stanley Harris Dinner

This year this function is to be held at Martin Bosley's Yacht Club Restaurant, Wellington on Saturday 6 October 2007. We are also arranging a special accommodation deal at The Museum Hotel. The menu details and wines are being finalised now. All the details will be available shortly and will be included in our next Newsletter. If you want the details as soon as they are available please contact Stuart Brooker sandk135@clear.net.nz

2008 Convention

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

Melbourne Victoria

Pre Tour April 8 – 10 2008 Convention April 11 – 13 2008

Planning for this function is well underway. Details were distributed at the Convention in Palmerston North and the Programme looks very good. If you are interested in attending and don't have a form contact Mrs K de Pury "Yeringberg" Coldstream Vic 3770 kdepury@bigpond.com or Mrs B Tomkins 30A Glen Street Hawthorn Vic 3122 tomkins@extonholdings.com.au

News from the Societies

Taupo

Members of the Taupo Wine Tasters' Club have a new meeting venue. The Take a Break Café at 38 Heu Heu Street, Taupo.

The Taupo Wine Tasters Club held a "Last Post" meeting at Maureen and Tom Sando's home on ANZAC Day. The tasting commenced at 3pm and all

members had to bring was a plate of food to share over a Pot Luck Dinner after tasting 22 wines from the club cellar. Although Cellar Mistress Maureen Sando selected wines that were remnants of lines left in the cellar, most of her selection surprised even the most judgemental palates with their drinkability. The 13 old whites held up surprisingly well considering their age and most members were impressed with them. Over the Pot Luck Dinner we enjoyed 9 stunning aged New Zealand reds which were followed by 2 stickies which were very enjoyable with a range of desserts and Betty Sowersby's famous Chocolate Eclairs.

From Taupo Winetasters' Club Newsletter.

Taupo's Future Functions

Mid – Winter Luncheon

Sunday 24 June 2007

Guest Speaker: Winner of the top title at the 2007 Royal Easter Wine Show, Winemaker of the Year, Gordon Russell.

Venue: Edgewater Restaurant in the Millennium Hotel and Resort Manuels Taupo Complex with chef Glen Sando. Bookings are now being accepted with payment in full. The luncheon which includes wine, costs \$60 per person for all financial members of Societies affiliated to the Federation of Wine and Food Societies of NZ. Non-members pay \$70. Payments can be posted to "Mid-Winter Luncheon", Taupo Winetasters' Club, P O Box 690, Taupo

Palmerston North

Sawasdee krub and sawasdee kha; - hello! in Thai.

There was much chatter and gaiety when we arrived at the Bangkok Thai restaurant for the first of the international dinners of the year. Such is the high spirits that we have come to expect from fellow members.

Prawns on a kebab stick with Thai spices and a Wonton Money Bag of minced oysters and plum sauce were terrific as was Tod Mun Goong (deep fried prawns) but I adored the fresh herbs and vegetables wrapped in rice paper which had a strong hint of ginger and lime. These flavours lingered long into the meal and I wanted to continue the taste forever.

But, they were only the appetisers. Next to be served was Tom Yung Goong –(prawns in soup!) prawns with lemon grass and kafir lime leaves was absolutely delicious. Roast Duck, Choochee Salmon and Mussamun Chicken Curry were very tasty too but the surprise was the vegetable and fruit salad with Thai style spicy dressing. An unusual combination of flavours and a refreshing foil to the meal.

The high spirits of the group had nothing to do with wine, of course, but I could have sat in a corner all by myself with a couple of bottles of Domains Schlumberger Gewurztraminer. Others enjoyed Te Mata Woodthorpe and Kim Crawford Briant Chardonnay's, Palliser Estate Sav Blanc, Strugglers Flat Pinot Noir and Amor Bendall Gewurztraminer. A great combination of wines with some exciting labels to try.

Bangkok Thai was obviously delighted to host us and their table service was excellent. The most beautiful Thai dance was performed for our pleasure – their hand movements were exquisite.

I expected a lot more 'fire' in the food and I was surprised by the delicacy and variation of flavour. It was an outstanding culinary experience made possible by the multi-ethnic composition of our community.

From the eye of the grape

Wellington

A Gourmet Walking Tour with Heather & Max Beauchamp

It was a damp Saturday morning (but no wind) when 12 members met upstairs at Mojos Coffee cartel & factory. The aroma of freshly roasted coffee was a great start indeed. Steve's (the proprietor) father showed us how coffee is roasted and blended and we were given a coffee treat to set us off on our way. We meandered our way up to Garrett St to Truffles, Cuba St to Simply Paris, Ghuznee St to The Nut store and to Tory St to Schoc Chocolate and Meat on Tory.

I for one did not know that these places existed visiting them for the first time. What impressed me was the selection of goodies in these shops and the enthusiasm and passion for their product the proprietors had. I will certainly be revisiting some if not all. We finished the walk with lunch at The Brewery.

Heather had put such a great deal of thought and effort into organizing this function which was appreciated by those who attended. (*Editor*)

The next Function for the Wellington Society, "A Night in Brittany" at the Bistro Breton has been full subscribed for Wednesday 23 May and there is a waiting list.

Wellington's Future Functions

July 30 : Maria Pia's Trattoria

August : Chapman Tripp Board

Room Dinner chef Tracy Lines

August/ September: AGM venue to be advised

Auckland

By the time this newsletter is distributed the function below will have been

enjoyed by the Auckland Society Members. It illustrates the variety of Wine and Foods and different functions that we can enjoy.

Japanese Restaurant Evening

Nishiki Restaurant is a Robata –Yaki Bar creating Japanese food in a cozy and relaxed atmosphere. Do come and enjoy an authentic Japanese restaurant recommended by New Zealand Japanese. The food is served as a constant stream of dishes rather than as several separate courses. However to accommodate our wines some dishes will be served alone with wine.

The meal is partaken seated at tables; guests are not seated at floor level. There is parking outside.

This promises to be an interesting cultural experience and a good function to introduce friends to the Society.

Menu

Sushi

Melness Riesling 2001

Sashimi Mori -Raw Fish

Monatana Ormand Estate

Chardonnay 2002

Miso Soup

Mushroom Nikuzume – Flat Mushroom stuffed with chicken mince

Miso Dengaku- Deep fried tofu with spring roll and miso sauce.

Unagi – Grilled eel

Ika Murakaki – Grilled whole squid with ginger soy sauce

Saba Shioyaki- Grilled blue mackerel

Negi-Cha – Japanese style BBQ pork.

Japanese rice and Stir fried Vegetables.

Japanese Tea & Sake

Wines

Mt.Riley 17 Valley Pinot Noir 2000

Dry Gully Pinot Noir 2001

Auckland's Future Functions

June 19 President's Dinner at Vinnies Restaurant.

Hawkes Bay

"The 2007 vintage has now been harvested and by all accounts it is a very good one for Hawkes Bay. We can all look forward to some 2007 vintage wines which our cellar man is going to purchase for Society Members, we will let you know in a future "Taste of The bay" what they are.

The night at the Thai Oaks in March gave us a taste of the East but I resisted going for their local wines. The food was excellent, plus the service and ambience made the evening for the 40 members very enjoyable.

In April we had the Wild Game night hosted by Roger & Diane Alexander in

their Springvale Station woolshed, which was decorated to the spirit of the evening. William Rees gave our taste buds a wonderful adventure of game but there were a few of us who could show him how to get the best out of a pheasant. All wines came from the cellar none in my opinion let us down.

Next event is an Italian theme to be held at Estuary Restaurant with two young chef Brady & Dawn".

(From "Taste of The Bay")

Hawkes Bay Future Functions

June 20 Matariki Wine Tasting

July 28 Mid Winter Christmas dinner at Bradshaw with Kent Baddley.

September 15 President's Dinner at Glen Etive Restaurant



If your heart is warm with happiness, you'll need a glass - if sorrow chills your heart, have two!

Hannu Lehmusvuori

(Taste of The Bay)

Tauranga

The Wine & Food Society have just held their AGM with Tony Marshall now the President, Rob Greenfield – Secretary, and Alec Kirkland- Treasurer. The three new committee members are Cherrill Gunn, Anne McKinnon and Richard Prince.

Tauranga Future Function

June 19 To be held at The Palms Restaurant. \$95 for visitors. The menu and wines looks wonderful. For further details contact Tony Marshall at P O Box 627 Tauranga

Thankyou to these Societies who have Contributed. It is interesting reading about the different activities of Societies. Just keep sending in contributions at any time and excerpts will included in future Newsletters.
(Kathleen Brooker)