

# Taupo Winetasters Club

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R18

The Official Newsletter of  
The Taupo Winetasters' Club  
Warning: Contains scenes of serious wine tasting!

Taupo Winetasters' Club, PO Box 690, Taupo

November 2005 Issue

R18 Editor: Colin Cockburn: [colin@reap.org.nz](mailto:colin@reap.org.nz)

## A Knees Up at the Nees



Your Hosts, Oliver and Diana Nees, at last year's Knees Up at The Nees.

**The next meeting of the Taupo Winetasters Club is the Knees Up at The Nees in the garden of Diana and Oliver Nees at 6.30pm on Wednesday 23rd November at 39 Harvey Street, Taupo... wet or fine.**

Enjoy some excellent club cellared wine while you play Petanque, Hole in One Golf, Darts, Quoits, and other favourites in the garden. Nibbles are provided and when the sun sets. Tuck into a supper supplied by Indulgence café over coffee in the comfort of Diana and Oliver's spacious lounge and deck area.

The cost is \$20.00 for members and \$25 for non-members.

So come along because Diana will have vacuumed the carpets and Oliver has promised to mow the lawn so everything will be ready for another jolly good Knees up at the Nees!

## Annual General Meeting & Christmas Luncheon

*And it came to pass that we arrive at the last meeting of the year, the Annual General Meeting and Christmas Luncheon, starting at 12.30pm with Pre-AGM drinks on Sunday 4th December 2005 at the Acacia Bay Hall in Besley Park, (Cnr Wakeman and Mapara Roads) Acacia Bay.*

The A.G.M. is traditionally brief. Once it's over you can kick back for a lazy afternoon relaxing over a hearty Christmas lunch and the finest wine from the club cellar.

### The Christmas Menu

Catered by Partyline

**Hot Carvery:** Citrus & Sugar Glazed Ham on the Bone, Rare Roast Beef Rump with Horseradish Cream, and Crispy Roast Chicken with Walnut & Celery Stuffing.

Accompanied by a selection of Baby Potatoes with Pesto, Roast Vegetables, Salad with Balsamic Glaze, Mesclun Greens, Asparagus & Mushroom Salad, and a Fresh Bread Basket.

**Dessert:** Fresh Fruit Salad, Pistachio Meringues & Mascarpone Cream, and Rich Plum Pudding with Rum Custard

**RSVP WITH PAYMENT IN FULL BY MONDAY 28th NOVEMBER**  
Members: \$50.00 Visitors \$55.00.  
Use the RSVP Form on Page 6

### YOUR VOTE COUNTS !

*The Annual General Meeting of the Taupo Winetasters' Club on Sunday 4th December 2005 is your chance to have your say on the way your Club is being run.*

*(Continued on page 2)*

### NEXT 2 MEETINGS

#### A Knees Up at the Nees

Fun 'n' Games in the garden and home of Diana and Oliver Nees

6.30pm

Wednesday

23rd November

39 Harvey Street Taupo

Members: \$20

Non Members: \$25

Includes Supper & Raffle

Annual General Meeting &

#### Christmas Luncheon

12.30pm

Sunday

4th December

Acacia Bay Hall

Besley Park, Acacia Bay

Members: \$50

Non Members: \$55

BOOK A SAFE DRIVER

(Continued from page 1)

**Two, maybe three, long standing committee members will not be seeking re-election for 2006.**

However all positions, including **President, Secretary, Treasurer** and **six committee members**, are open for voting on if there are more candidates than positions.

The successful committee candidates will then be allocated the specific jobs of **Vice President, Cellar Master, Newsletter Editor, and Publicity**, leaving two committee members for general duties.

As all positions on the committee are open, if there is a position you desire or you consider someone else would do the job better than the incumbent member, there will be a vote. But remember the number of committee members for next year will be capped at **eleven**. These committee members will be joined by the **Federation Representative** and, when applicable, the **Immediate Past President**. Our senior honorary member **Cassie Blair**, is on the committee automatically by right of her long service to our club.

**Please use the Nomination Form on Page 6 as nominations will not be accepted verbally.**

**Include nomination with RSVP to AGM Christmas Luncheon and return by Monday 28th November.**

Taupo Winetasters' Club

## COMMITTEE DIRECTORY

**President:** *Alex Harre*

Phone: 07 377 0287

Email: [taupo.harre@xtra.co.nz](mailto:taupo.harre@xtra.co.nz)

**Secretary:** *Betty Sowersby*

Phone: 376 7506

Email: [rosby@clear.net.nz](mailto:rosby@clear.net.nz)

**Newsletter Editor:** *Colin Cockburn*

Phone: 07 378 4873

Email: [colin@reap.org.nz](mailto:colin@reap.org.nz)

**Cellar Mistress:** *Maureen Sando*

Phone: 07 378 6402

Email: [maureen@sando.co.nz](mailto:maureen@sando.co.nz)

**Treasurer:** *Peter Potter*

Phone: 378 0016

**Committee:** Cassie Blair, Robert Johnston, Ley Lewis, Oliver Nees, Janet Shrive, Rosalea Sullivan, Ray Toms, Colleen Watkins

## A LONG BLOODLINE AT NGATARAWA



The 114-year-old racing stables at Ngatarawa now breed classical wines.

**Following a Fine Tradition, the Stables of Ngatarawa Continue to Breed Thoroughbreds.**

**However now days the thoroughbreds being bred at the 114-year-old racing stables by a new generation of non-equine stud master, winemaker Alwyn Corban, are blood red wines and classical whites. The long bloodline of the Corban family is very safe with this fourth generation winemaker as he proudly continues the 100-year family winemaking tradition in the converted racing stables at Ngatarawa in Hawke's Bay.**

**It was a confident Alwyn Corban who spoke with ease about his wines and family history to members of the Taupo Winetasters' Club on the evening of Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> October at Indulgence, the small cosy corner café in Horomatangi Street, Taupo.**

Twenty six attended the meeting including two visitors, **Carol Martin Rogers**. Carol is the Nurse Manager of the Monte Vista

Resthome and Martin looks after the outside care taking duties. As Alwyn talked it was hard to believe that this was the same shy young man many members remembered from the early formative years of Ngatarawa Wines.

In those days the only thing that animated Alwyn as when the talk turned to his trend setting botryised late harvest dessert wines that had rapidly become his trademark style in the early years. James Milton inspired Alwyn to experiment with this style in the mid 1980's and he subsequently released his first botrytis wine in 1987.

Alwyn still takes special pride in his sweet wines, describing them as "magic". In contrast with many producers for whom botrytis grapes are a happy accident, Ngatarawa grows its Riesling with the express purpose of making dessert wines. In 23 years, Alwyn has made only three 'straight' dry Rieslings, and the vines are now so heavily infected with botrytis, the 'noble rot' that shrivels grapes and intensifies their sweetness, that it kicks in automatically. Ngatarawa is situated in the area known as the Bridge Pa Triangle on the southwestern outskirts of Hastings. It began as the shared vision of two very different families, the winemaking Corban family and the farming Glazebrook family.

When Alwyn converted the beautiful character-filled Ngatarawa Racing Stables into a Cellar Door and planted the vineyard in 1981, it was one of New Zealand's earliest boutique wineries. The trademark horses head logo, the Stables label, and the new Silks label, acknowledge this historic association. In 1999, after 18 years of pioneering, the Glazebrook family sold their shareholding to cousins, Alwyn and Brian Corban.

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**HAVE YOUR SAY ON DECEMBER 4**

Use the nomination form on Page 6



The Four Generations portrait. From left, Alwyn, Brian, Alex, and Najib Corban.

## FOUR GENERATIONS

*Alwyn spoke with pride and affection of the four surviving generations of the Corban clan who are depicted in a 'Four Generations' portrait commissioned to mark the Corban family centennial.*

The portrait depicts Alwyn as the fourth generation; his father's cousin and Chairman of Ngatarawa Wines, Brian Corban as the third generation; and Alwyn's father, Alex Corban as the second-generation family member who is recognisable by his trademark taste in jaunty fedoras. The family patriarch, Alwyn's father's uncle Najib, completes the line-up. Now aged 96, Najib is also distinguishable by the absence of the family trademark, spectacles, because he has been blind since he was 16.

Despite his lack of eyesight, Najib was the manager of the family's Henderson vineyards. Alwyn related with some fondness the tale of how he was employed as a teenager by Najib to dig holes for new vines in the vineyard. When it started to rain Najib decided to send his vineyard workers home in the interests of good worker relations but when young Alwyn went to leave with them, he was told in no uncertain terms that he had to stay and finish the job because he was family. To this day Alwyn remembers the character-building task of digging holes in the rain for the next three hours.

Ngatarawa markets four distinct levels of wine. The top tier is marketed under the signature **Alwyn Winemaker's Reserve** label. Handcrafted from the vine to

the bottle, these wines are made only from the best fruit in outstanding vintages. These wines are Alwyn Corban's story, his passion, his heritage and his life and each bottle bears his name, signature and thumbprint. Next is the premium **Glazebrook Regional Reserve** label, which is named after one of the co-founders of Ngatarawa. The Glazebrook range is Alwyn's expression of the best grapes from best regions in New Zealand and is his leading export and restaurant range.

The newly introduced colourful **Silks Premium Varietal** label is designed to display the essential ripe fruit flavours of each grape variety. This new generation label designed by Alwyn's young cousin, Ben, honours Ngatarawa's rich horse racing heritage. Ben actually commissioned real silks to be made then he photographed them for the label, a process that attracted the attention of the Hawke's Bay Jockey Club. The Silks label evokes the fashion, colour, passion, glamour and excitement of race day and draws its inspiration from the racing colours worn by jockeys. The entry level is marketed under the sharply priced **Stables label**. Named to honour the historic racing stables that house the winery, these wines are soft and approachable, inviting conversation, conviviality and hospitality.

Alwyn had just returned from the United States prior to the meeting. Although it is hard to pick trends because long lead in times of up to 5 years are needed to increase production to meet customer demand, these preferences can be fickle and tend to swing to something else before the trend can be met. However Alwyn detected a promising long-term preference for our Pinot Noir in Eastern States while New Zealand Chardonnay was proving popular in California.

Alwyn was shocked by the delays he experienced with the United States Customs Department in

preparation for this trip. He sent two cases of wine samples over two weeks prior to his trip only to have them finally released from Customs two weeks after he had returned home! However as Taupo Winetasters' Club members, Betty and Rob Sowersby used to live next to him, and some aspersions were good humouredly cast back and fourth between Robert and Alwyn about the spread of pests such as grass grub, mealy bugs and other vegetative viral diseases, across their shared boundary fence, it is pretty obvious that Alwyn can cope with anything and even the might of the United States Customs Department will not deter Alwyn from doing a good job in keeping his 100-year winemaking heritage alive.

## A GALLOP THRU THE CHARDONNAYS

**Ngatarawa Stables 2005 East Coast Chardonnay:** A stylish fruit driven Chardonnay. A portion of the wine underwent malo-lactic fermentation to add complexity and softness to the palate. It is a straw coloured wine with lemon hues that lead to a bouquet of nectarines, peach and ripe grapefruit with subtle spicy oak and a biscuity edge. The palate is round and smooth textured with fresh peach, tropical fruits and ripe citrus characters. A hint of vanillin oak adds complexity but does not overpower. Can be enjoyed now but will develop in the bottle up to 5 years from vintage date. Recommended retail is \$15.95.

**Ngatarawa Silks Chardonnay 2004:** This is a colourful contoured wine that shows ripe fruit and subtle oak. Relying on fruit off first pick vines, the emphasis is on ripe fruit flavours and texture in the finished wine. One third of the fruit came from Gisborne and the balance from Hawke's Bay. This wine has been enhanced by partial barrel fermentation. The straw colour

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opens up a bouquet of peaches, pears and nutmeg oak. The palate is lively and full-bodied with ripe peaches and pears. This wine may be enjoyed now or cellared up to four years from vintage date.

Recommended retail is \$19.95.

**Ngatarawa Glazebrook**

**Hawke's Bay Chardonnay**

**2004:** A traditional chardonnay and another step up in concentration from the Silks style. It shows excellent ripe fruit, balance and complexity, with some underlying bottle age characteristics. Barrique fermentation, and maturation on lees have contributed an extra dimension expressed in a full-bodied smooth texture and biscuity oak character. A golden yellow colour opens up a bouquet of ripe nectarines and peach with gentle spicy oak. The lingering palate has persistent stone fruit and ripe citrus flavours. It finishes with lingering fruit supported by sweet oak. This wine may be enjoyed for up to 5 years from vintage date. Recommended retail is \$24.95.

**Ngatarawa Alwyn Chardonnay**

**2004:** This is Ngatarawa's finest Chardonnay and bigger again than the Glazebrook. It's a full-bodied, elegant, complex and textured Chardonnay. Two and a half tonnes per acre of the ripest fruit were hand picked and whole bunch pressed to make this wine. The low yield and consistent ripeness giving exceptional concentration. Barrel fermented and matured on less in the same French oak barriques, this wine shows excellent integration and complexity that will only improve with time. The pale straw colour opens a bouquet of ripe peach and grapefruit with perfumed oak, cinnamon and nutmeg. The palate is full bodied and concentrated with persistent stone fruit and citrus flavours supported by spicy oak. Safe to cellar for at least four years but judging by the way it tastes now, it should cellar for many more years. Recommended retail is \$34.95.



## A QUICK TROT THRU THE FIELD

**Ngatarawa Silks Sauvignon**

**Blanc 2005:** A fruit driven Sauvignon Blanc made from Marlborough grapes. New softer clones have produced a surprising style of wine full of concentrated tropical fruit flavours with out the green grassy asparagus overtones of Marlborough. Pressed in Marlborough from four vineyard blocks then transported to Hawke's Bay for processing the result is a straw coloured wine with green tinges. The bouquet reveals intense ripe tropical fruit with a nettle edge. The palate is lively and full-bodied with ripe stone fruit and citrus. Best enjoyed while it is young and fresh. Recommended retail is \$19.95.

**Ngatarawa Silks Syrah 2004:**

A fruit driven Syrah made from ripe grapes for concentrated flavours and soft supple tannin structure. Enhanced by 12 months maturation in oak, there's great colour extraction with dark red hues. The bouquet yields white pepper and complex berry flavours with vanillin and spicy oak overtones. The medium-bodied, round and smooth palate is laden with dark plums and ripe berries with hints of Cedary oak. Enjoy now or cellar for at least 5 years. Recommended retail is \$19.95.

**Ngatarawa Silks Merlot 2004:**

A contemporary fruit driven Merlot that shows promising ripe fruit and supple tannins that were enhanced by 12 months maturation in oak. The colour is dark red with plum hues. A

leathery bouquet of concentrated dark plum and berry with sweet, spicy oak opened on the palate with ripe plums and spice integrated with sweet oak. The finish was full-bodied with round smooth tannins. Very enjoyable now and will cellar for at least 5 years as its still a bit young and green. Recommended retail is \$19.95.

**Ngatarawa Glazebrook**

**Hawke's Bay Merlot 2004:**

This well balanced and complex Merlot reveals ripe fruit and supple smoky tannins enhanced by 12 months maturation in oak. The colour is dark red with plum hues. The bouquet promises damson plums and fruitcake with leather and cedary oak overtones. The palate fore fills this promise with ripe plums enhanced by star anise and liquorice with smooth textured tannins and a log spicy berry finish. Cellaring this wine will benefit from bottle maturation for 5 to 10 years from vintage date. Recommended retail is \$24.95.

**Ngatarawa Stables Late**

**Harvest 2004:**

Made from Riesling and although it is the least intensive style of the three styles Ngatarawa produces, it still comes across as a full-bodied dessert wine with ripe fruit flavours and botrytis complexity. The colour is pale straw with lemony hues. The ripe citrus bouquet suggests mandarins and marmalade combined with fresh apricots and honey. The rich complex palate reveals ripe apricots, honey, oranges and lemons. Enjoy now or cellar for up to 5 years. Recommended retail is \$16.95 for 375ml bottle.

## THE TRIFECTA

The prizes were split three ways. Robert Sowersby won a souvenir 'Four Generations' cap after correctly answering the question, "what colour did young cousin Ben first use for the Silks label?" Robert put his money on "Black and White by Ben" while Len Watkins and visitor Martin Rogers put their money on "The Raffle by Alwyn" and won a bottle wine each from the Ngatarawa stables.

## BIRTHDAYWATCH

Not to be confused with "Baywatch"!



Maureen Sando came out smelling the roses at her birthday on 4th November.



Ray Toms barely hung on for his Birthday on 15th November.



Two glasses for the price of one meant a very, very happy birthday for Betty Sowersby on 8th November.



Paul Sanderson thinks his birthday on 30th November will be a real laugh.



A glass in the hand was worth two in the cellar at Peter Potter's birthday on 12th November.

All photos of Taupo Winetasters' Club members in this issue supplied by Alex Harré.

## A TOP MODEL



Move over Rachel Hunter..... Cassie Blair is the new name in town! Seen here dining at The Edgewater Restaurant recently between modelling engagements.

*Yes fame and fortune come to all of us if we wait long enough.*

Our very own 93 year old Cassie Blair was the top model recently at the annual Liston Heights Rest Home Summer Fashion Parade. The clothing Cassie modelled is supplied by Ballentynes. She was pictured in the Taupo Times on 4th November elegantly attired in a pink, blue and white striped casual blouse with comfortable loose matching coloured blue slacks and white sneakers.

## DIARY DATES

Wednesday 23rd  
November

A Knees Up at the Nees

Sunday 4th December  
AGM & Christmas  
Luncheon

RSVP with Payment in Full by

Monday 28th November

Members: \$50 Visitors \$55

Use the RSVP Form on page 6

Saturday 28th January

Mrs Sowersby's Sizzling  
Summer Soiree

## IN THE JANUARY ISSUE:

Read all about the  
President's Big Night Out,  
and Mrs Sowersby's Sizzling  
Summer Soiree!

## NEXT 2 COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Friday 16th December

6pm at the Sanderson's  
51 Kaihua Road, Taupo.

End of Year Farewell to outgoing committee and Welcome to for the new!

Bring Pot Luck BBQ food,  
Bad taste present and bottle of wine

Sunday 15th January 2006

6.30pm at the home of  
Colin Cockburn

12 Ngauruhoe Street, Taupo.  
Bring pot luck food and a bottle of wine.

## Contributions Welcome

Contact Colin Cockburn:

[colin@reap.org.nz](mailto:colin@reap.org.nz)

Deadline for next issue:  
Sunday 4th December

# Taupo Winetasters Club

**PO Box 690 Taupo**

**President:** Alex Harre: Phone: 07 377 0287, Email: taupo.harre@xtra.co.nz  
**Secretary:** Betty Sowersby: Phone 376 7506, Fax: 376 7506, Email: rosby@clear.net.nz  
**Newsletter Editor:** Colin Cockburn: Phone: 378 4873, Email: colin@reap.org.nz

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND LUNCHEON**

*Acacia Bay Hall, Besley Park, (Cnr Wakeman and Mapara Roads) Acacia Bay.  
12.30am, Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2005.*

### **RSVP BY MONDAY 28<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2005**

**Yes**, we wish to attend the Annual General Meeting and Luncheon.

Name/s:.....Phone:.....  
Guest's Name/s:.....

Number of members attending: ..... at \$50 per person: \$.....  
Number of non-members attending: ..... at \$55 per person: \$.....  
Total Members & Guests attending: ..... Total of Cheque \$.....

Bookings will only be accepted with payment in full by Monday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2005.

#### **POST WITH CHEQUE ATTACHED TO:**

The Secretary, Taupo Winetasters' Club, PO Box 690, Taupo.

#### **OR DELIVER TO:**

Alex or Margaret Harre at 1<sup>st</sup> Choice Engravers, 33 Heu Heu Street, Taupo.

### **APOLOGIES**

**No**, we cannot attend. Please record our apologies for the Annual General Meeting.

Name/s:.....

### **NOMINATION FORM**

I wish to nominate:.....

For the Position of:.....

*(Positions available: President, Secretary, Treasurer, and six committee members.)*

Nominated by:.....

Seconded by:.....

Accepted by Nominee:.....

All positions must be nominated, seconded in writing, signed by the nominee and handed to the secretary prior to the commencement of the Annual General Meeting at 1pm, Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2005.

Nominations will not be taken verbally once the meeting commences.

Further Nomination Forms are available from Secretary Betty Sowersby.