

## ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

NEW RELEASES  
AVAILABLE

**12 SEPTEMBER 2015**

Cellar Door open every day  
(except for Tuesdays)  
from 11 am to 5 pm

MJ & AB WAUGH  
VIGNERONS

*Greenock Creek*  
VINEYARD & CELLARS  
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SEPTEMBER 2015

NEW RELEASE WINE  
**2013 CASEY'S BLOCK  
SHIRAZ**

The first release of this new  
Shiraz – don't forget to add a  
couple bottles to your order!

Dear Friends,

*"All great changes are preceded by chaos", said Deepak Chopra.* Well we are here to tell you he was spot on! Nevertheless we have some very exciting news for our wine friends, but it is certainly being preceded by a huge amount of work and much chaos – which will no doubt continue for some time to come. However we are very excited to let you know that we are opening **a new cellar door** in the heart of the township of Marananga – just over the hill from our current location. The premises are much larger for both our cellar door and office staff, and the building next door will keep Alicia out of mischief as it contains three delightful bed and breakfast suites (more about that further along in the newsletter!). We hope to have the cellar door relocated by the end of this year. Therefore, if you are planning a visit later in the year, please give us a call (or visit the website) to check whether we have relocated to the new address – which will be **450 Seppeltsfield Road, Marananga**. We look forward to welcoming you all to the new location for a taste of the wines and an inspection of the new home of Greenock Creek Wines!

### New Wine Release – Casey's Block Shiraz

It seems to be the year for exciting news! New premises and a new wine! This one is named after Annabelle's father, whose nickname was Casey.

In keeping with all the Greenock Creek Shirazes, this one is another big, bold and beautiful red. The cuttings for the vines were taken from five of the existing vineyards, including the Roennfeldt Road block. Consequently this combination of cuttings has produced characteristics and complex flavours.

We trust you will enjoy this new Shiraz!



### Staff Update

This year we also have some new staff members to introduce, so it is definitely the year of change – particularly for Jarrod, who has left us to further his wine sales career, but will be sorely missed by everyone! We wish him all the very best in his new endeavour.

Alicia, Kerry and Karen continue to wade through the mountain of office work, handle the telephone calls and emails, and Debbie is doing a great job in cellar door. This year she has now been joined by Amanda and Sarah who assist on weekends – so you might get to meet all of these lovely ladies if you come for a visit to the Cellar Door in the future!

Peter continues to oversee the vineyard and winery work but has now been joined by Andrew and Liam, who commenced just in time to help out with vintage and the pruning. They are doing a great job and we do think of them out there on those frosty mornings during the pruning season.

### 2013 Vintage

A few people have already asked why the 2013 vintage was such a 'light' one in the Barossa. There are a number of reasons, but basically it started with it being the 5<sup>th</sup> driest season on record, followed by a poor set in spring caused by violent lightning storms damaging the emerging inflorescences. Then followed variable weather conditions with record hot days in October, November and February, all resulting in an early and quick vintage with yields well below average – and especially so in dry grown vineyards such as those here at Greenock Creek Wines. The upside is that the red wines are showing excellent flavours, colours and tannins – but there just isn't much of it!

**Unfortunately this has meant that we are being forced to go back to the days of placing quite strict limits on the number of bottles available to each customer. Should there be any stock remaining at the end of October, customers are welcome to contact us to place a follow-up order.**

### Cellar Door Prize Winners!

Two years ago we started our highly successful cellar door competition for those people who visited us each month. This year the prize has been a magnum of Alices Shiraz, and it has been an absolute delight making that phone call each month to advise the lucky winner! Below are the people who have won since our last newsletter:

August – Christopher, from Wamberal, New South Wales  
September – David, from Hillbank, South Australia  
October – Kendall, from Roseville, New South Wales  
November – Hazel, from Willunga, South Australia  
December – Michael, from Middle Park, Victoria  
January – Marcus, from Crafers, South Australia  
February – Ian, from Brighton, Victoria  
March – Paul, from Marcoola, Queensland  
April – Sherie, from Margaret River, Western Australia  
May – Owen, from Sinnamon Park, Queensland  
June – Anna, from Bonogin, Queensland  
July – Scott, from Cremorne, New South Wales

Congratulations to all these lucky winners! Thank you to everyone who has visited our cellar door during the past year and entered the competition, and we look forward to seeing you all in the new location in the future!



Miriam's Cottage, Tanunda



Marananga Cottage, Seppeltsfield

## Miriam's Cottage and Marananga Cottage

With the future relocation of the cellar door to Marananga (which is on the road to Seppeltsfield), we have also acquired 3 new B & B suites – which will be known as Oscar's, Molly's and Kate's. As you can imagine this expansion has taken Alicia a little time to adjust to, but she has done a terrific job getting the new suites furnished and renovated and is already being overwhelmed with bookings! So now if you are coming to the Barossa for a visit, you can keep both Miriam's Cottage and the Marananga suites in mind – we just love keeping Alicia on her toes! (You can have a look at the Marananga suites on [www.maranangacottages.com.au](http://www.maranangacottages.com.au).)

As usual it is always a pleasure to share our news with you, and this time there seems to be a lot of it! Thank you so much for your past support, and we look forward to catching up on all your news in the coming months.

Wishing you good health and happiness.

Kindest regards and best wishes,

**Michael & Annabelle**

## 2015 WINE RELEASES TASTING NOTES BY PHILIP WHITE

Once again our special thanks to Philip for his comments and tasting notes

Welcome back. The 2015 release of the Greenock Creek reds gives us three quite disparate vintages.

It's a bit early to fully comprehend how 2014 will shape up, but if that Cornerstone Grenache is any indicator, that's a vintage which will give us some true wonder.

The four 2013 Shiraz wines - yes, there's a new vineyard in the suite - offer not quite the majesty of the mighty 2012s, but they are all wines which seem a little more approachable in this their brash youth. Which is never to say these wines will not gradually bloom into greater glory with sensible cellaring. Same goes for the 2013 Cabernet - at this early stage, it looks like '13 was the Cabernet's year.

And then comes the incredible 2010 Roennfeldt's Road vintage - a pair of wines which render me silent, then verbose, then silent again as their weight and glory settles into my baffled gastronomic intelligence. All those years of effort Michael has put into the rejuvenation of that precious ancient block is finally ready to ring your biggest bells sweeter and louder than ever before. They are such individualistic wines that they stretch my capacity to award points. It seems, well, pointless.

So much left to learn. Bring it on!

### THE WINES

#### Greenock Creek Cornerstone Grenache 2014

*14.5% alcohol; cork; 95+ points*

Even Michael, who doesn't much like Grenache, bregudgingly thinks this is a good version. I'll go further, and suggest that while it ideally needs a year or ten, it's certainly amongst the best of the formidable Greenock Creek Grenache wines in 25 years.

Grenache has come a long way in South Australia in the last fifteen years, as both growers and winemakers learn to address it with the careful attention it deserves. Michael's wine has always been amongst the front of the pack, even in years when those alcohols have been well above the sorts of numbers my prejudice prefers. If it's grown and made respectfully, and the natural acids are high enough to balance its alcohol, and there's not too much jam, Grenache has the potential to be this state's replacement for Pinot noir, which doesn't grow very well in our heat.

This is no grand Cru Burgundy, but beneath its gorgeous ripe fruit it does have the sort of tannin/acid structure that the bigger Pinots of the Côte-d'Or show in warm years,

which are becoming much more frequent in France. It's getting hot here, of course, but with this climate change, the gap is closing.

From the first sniff, this is a complete Grenache, and dead serious. The bouquet is broody and almost sullen upon opening, but slowly the Morello cherries poke their drowsy heads up through the pretty, ethereal marshmallow and musky confectioner's sugar that emerge first in the topnote. In counterpoint, there's just the right pinch of acrid summer dust, and that split schist/bluestone edge that we see in the best years from its home in the tough stone of Hopeless Hill at Roennfeldt's.

Also slow to emerge is that distinctive regional waft of freshly-dressed leather, melding smoothly into the whole effect, adding luxurious flesh.

While it has ample cushion, the texture is more slender than the bouquet indicates, with those slightly bitter pickled cherries taking the form of a lozenge that seems to melt slowly in the middle of your tongue.

While that proceeds with all due success, the acid works the cheeks and smacks the lips and entwined with the finest drying tannins, draws the whole thing out to a sweet/savoury seesaw that triggers immediate hunger upon first pour, but gradually softens and assimilates over a few days' air.

This is masterful red wine regardless of its variety. It goes magically with tea-smoked duck, served with the right crusty skin, but just a little pink in the middle so the juice is running.

It's a lovely gastronomic adventure now, but it'll be singing as sweet as Pavarotti in five years.

#### Greenock Creek Cabernet Sauvignon 2013

*13.5% alcohol; cork; 94+++ points*

This is drop-dead gorgeous. Like most of the 2013 wines, it's not as tight and reluctant as the 2012s, with their extreme longevity obvious at release. Which quite simply makes it a more stunning wonder from the start.

It's another in a vibrant line of Cabernets from the small creekside flat by the Waugh household, and perhaps the best of them in this its infancy.

Once again, I risk my credibility by comparing it to France, in this case warm year Bordeaux.

All the usual confectioner's topnotes are here in abundance, adding their lacy frill to the bouquet. But the fruit, the blackberries, mulberries and blackcurrants are pushing their way to the fore on the first pour ... it's a heady, tantalising delight.

Drink. The palate is dense and compressed, with a hint of ironstone, which is unusual from this block. Maybe the roots have gotten themselves another foot or two into whatever rocks lie below that rich alluvial loam and clay. They never stop reaching deeper.

It confounds me, this sheer, unyielding tightness and density - the pretty cuteness of the fragrance had me expecting a more frivolous drink. Uh-huh. This is very serious, even mighty Cabernet for the cellar, and seems determined to be even more so a day after opening. It's remarkable in the manner in which it follows that impenetrable opening palate with steely acid and juniper/bay leaf tannin that seems to dumbfound the mouth with its quiet determined force. It's rare to enjoy being conquered so completely.

Long after swallowing, the wine teases and sucks at the sensories, drawing blood to the thin skin behind the lips, leaving me hanging out for dribbling lamb or saltimbocca of the quality Enzo's, Chianti or Amalfi consistently serve.

Ten years should do it. Stunning.

### **Greenock Creek Casey's Block Shiraz 2013**

*13.5% alcohol; cork; 88+++ points*

This is the first wine from Casey's Block, which, after a great deal of thought, expenditure and work, eventually replaced the giant chook farm Michael and Annabelle purchased from a neighbour, directly across the creek from their homestead. Casey's is beside Alices Block, on the same westward slope.

To the eye, and the nose, that sweet new vineyard sure is an improvement, and adds a great deal of proper Barossa country back into the entire priceless Seppeltsfield/Marananga/Roennfeldt's/Greenock Creek vignoble.

I recall how the first crop from Seven Acre, all those years ago, sucked up whatever meagre oak Michael gave it. Casey's is obviously on different ground, but it's played the same trick, letting its oak run ahead of its fruit as it kicks off into what I know will be a very long and productive life.

Below lies the baby fruit, intense and glowering. But there's something freaky about it. It's not really a baby at all. There's a certain edge of vampire or infant werewolf about it ... something from a thriller movie. It stares at you from its pram with a "so whatter you lookin' at big fella? Whatter you expect?" Shameless, innocent, sightly sinister audacity.

It has some leaf amongst its blackberries. Juniper. And, like the Cabernet, iron. The palate is the same, amplified and hammered into a foundry ingot. The baby suddenly turns into a rock-solid, unyielding hunk of thing: not fat or huge, but muscly, tight and unyielding. A bull terrier with a spiky collar and tiny eyes. Heavy metal. The tannins are very fine and dusty, the acid firm and resilient, the fruit rebound mean but sinuous.

While I don't recall any other recent wine from anywhere that's much like it, apart from some meanies from the hard dry country north of Greenock, I reckon this tough infant wonder will astonish us all in a decade. Even two. It reminds me of something grand from Penfolds at the stage very few of us get to see them: far too young to trouble.

I suspect that in a decade, I'll rue those meagre-looking points, even if they do indicate well over eight out of ten. Then, decades later, when the collectors take over, I'll feel really damn stupid.

### **Greenock Creek Alices Shiraz 2013**

*16.5% alcohol; cork; 90+++ points*

Here's a rich old-style fruitcake; a plum pudding wine oozing grandma's cooking and the sort of generous heartfelt wholesomeness this old world seems to be losing. It's nothing at all like the audacious infant above. It's very hard to believe they're neighbours with only a fence between them.

I suppose, given the years, there's actually a generation between them. Look at the wines, and it's an entire lifetime. Wine's like that.

Here we smell the panforte character this little vignoble has become famous for across several producers, that Italian nuts-and-fruit delight with the coriander, nutmeg, cloves and honey, and sometime diced dried figs. While it's common to eat this cake with sweet but acidic *vin santo* wine and coffee, it's perfectly suitable to have with Etruscan/Tuscan reds, especially if they're fully ripe and of the more rustic style. Forget the modern super-Tuscans. This is from a previous era.

While this wine has plenty of those soft old country kitchen nuts-and-berries characters, it's built on a solid acidity, reminding me of the candied citrus that also goes into panforte.

In fact, to confuse the issue terribly, but quite sensibly, this wine bears a resemblance to some of the Valpolicella *Ripasso Superiore* of Veneto, which is over the other side of Italy's thigh. One could be forgiven for thinking it has some dried grapes in it.

Which is even further from Michael's original plan for Alices: when he planted it, he thought he'd prune it to maximise yields and make a bigger-volume, easy-drinking Greenock Creek. Never happened. I don't think he could bear people looking at the vineyard if it was pruned like that. And I know he couldn't possibly bear drinking the wine.

So. *Cin cin. Saluti.* Pass the panforte, please. Bewdy, cobber. Clink!

### **Greenock Creek Apricot Block Shiraz 2013**

*16.5% alcohol; cork; 92++ points*

2013 is very different to 2012, but once again, the deep loam of Apricot Block has given a more supple, delicate, perfumed wine than the Alice's, which is just a kilometre over the hill but in different geology.

As is often the case, like on most nights, it's what we used to be able to call feminine. And I suppose we still can, provided that has no gender connotation.

This wine has little of the Viognier-like apricot which appeared in the early vintages. But it has all the milk chocolate of the more recent years, and the blueberry yoghurt and well-soused trifle that ruled the 2012. And I reckon it has a whiff of *Soir de Paris* perfume about it ... a complex, heady scent which, come to think of it, is pretty rich with apricot and peach, just to refute my earlier claim.

That fragrance, which you get all up and down the footpaths of the Madelaide and the fashion quarter of Paris, has all that, plus ylang-ylang and lily-of-the-valley, with sandalwood and solid vanilla. This wine is indeed a smooth and delicious thing to inhale. To drink, it's a tad more butch. (Here we go: gender again - forgive my indulgence!)

It's silky and scarily slick, like its predecessors, like those girls on the Madelaide, teetering on their Manolos and Jimmy Choos and Ferragamos or whatever thousand-dollar stilts they use these days, but it has a rise of velvet tannin brushing against its lithe acid and it's not the sort of lass

you'd want to be slapped by. So behave and drink. And eat your cassoulet. Which will accompany this perfectly. And here we are, back in cassoulet country in the south of France, where the Shiraz often includes a dash of Viognier, which frequently tastes of apricot.

*Bon temps roulez.*

### **Greenock Creek Seven Acre Shiraz 2013**

*14.5% alcohol; cork; 93+++ points*

While a sliver more gentle and perhaps even more refined than the 2012, this is a more approachable wine than that, without losing one skerrick of its long-term charm or allure. It's complex but perfectly assimilated and harmonious fruit aside, this one has a comfy whiff of sourdough about it. It's a bit like a scone full of raisins in one way, a lot like a blackcurrant/blackberry/mulberry gel in another.

Then, with all due respects to the Barossa, it reminds me of the aroma of a prune or damson *streusel kuchen*.

Which is not to say it's a dessert thing. Nope. Once you're past sniffing, this is blacksmithed iron to taste: 2013 seems to exaggerate the ferruginous without being bigger or more clunky or confounding.

To drink, the wine is snaky and silky, shiny and lithe. It's intense, but not as big and dense as the 2012. It slithers around your sensories at its leisure, and eventually leaves without leaving: once its very fine velvety tannins replace its silky sheen and you think you'd better begin planning another glass, the fruits come back, the serpent writhes again and the tannins rise once more without you so much as reaching toward the bottle. Perpetual motion, see. Especially when you do manage to regain control of your arm and get some more.

These 2013s being a bit more open and approachable, and perhaps a tad more simple than their predecessors, Seven Acre is this year slightly closer to ideal upon release, but fear not. If you like your cellar, you'll never be disappointed to find some of this down there.

Consider the '12 along the lines of the legendary '61 or '78 Rhône Hermitage; this one more along the lines of a Côtes Rôtie from those same years. Meaning it's lighter, but you won't have to wait so long. Nevertheless, a few hours in a ship's decanter or big jug will set it up to win races. It'll certainly win your heart in a decade.

Lentils in pork stock with truffles; juicy steak; beef wellington ... you get my drift.

### **Greenock Creek Roennfeldt Road Shiraz 2010**

*14.5% alcohol; cork; 96+ points*

Holy hell. Mama mia. Sheesh. By Bacchus and Pan this is a stunning wine.

It has some of the chocolate crème caramel of the 2012 Apricot block, but a lot more of the regional panforte aroma, over a profound iron basement. It has that acrid split bluestone edge of the 2014 Grenache, and it has a gradually blooming well of all the darkest, blackest fruits simmering away below.

When I first opened this bottle, days ago, I couldn't resist pouring it into four differently-shaped glasses just to marvel at the many facets of that bouquet. After a whole day sniffing, the Riedel Australian Shiraz glass did the best job of projecting this gastronomic thriller onto the big screen, so I poured the others back into the bottle and finally set about applying the wine to my mouth. A risky, reckless act which I have committed daily for nearly a week. More sheesh. It has the huge weight of the Cabernet, and then some. Miraculously, it already has perfect operatic baritone pitch, but that individual voice - I

nearly wrote vice - is sure to be joined by your full choir as the years progress.

Its tannins are a little more dusty and drying than the Cabernet; its acidity more prominent; its force and authority unmatched. I reckon Lehmann could have poured five or ten per cent of this into any of his Shiraz tanks and won a championship. But neat like this, straight, the wine is unlike any other. It's a thing unto itself, a rugged, rustic roughie on one hand; the beginnings of that mighty choir on the other. In a sense, it's more Roennfeldt's than your actual Shiraz. Or maybe it's the secret deep dark heart that all sensible Shiraz strives to attain in the next life.

Put simply, it's the best Roennfeldt yet. It makes me shiver to anticipate these wines in the future.

### **Greenock Creek Roennfeldt Road**

#### **Cabernet Sauvignon 2010**

*13% alcohol; cork; 95-96++ points*

Just as the 2013 reds are not quite as dense and mighty as the 2012s, the Roennfeldts go the other way: 2010 is more dense and mighty than the 2009 offerings, and will probably live longer. Which is saying something, considering the force of last year's release.

I doubt that I'll last to see these two at their majestic peak. Damn!

The panforte aromas are here again: nutmeg and ground coriander seed with all the nuts and dried fruits and cooked honey; an analogy that even includes the dusting of icing sugar that decorates that lovely Siena cake. It's a deeply satisfying sensation, and one that leads me to suggest, as I did with the 2009, that it's one of those glories that tempts the drinker to sneak off for a few days and selfishly savour the wine alone.

But that could be risky. The flavours and form of the wine are so complex, yet harmonious and smooth, that one could sink the entire bottle in the one session, and swoon dangerously.

While the wine is of modest alcohol, this is not to suggest it's light. On the contrary, it seems heavy in weight as much as dense. It's almost leaden in its mass: it feels heavy in the mouth ... once it moves in it just sits there, gradually letting its fine velvety tannins and firm acid build til it weighs the tongue down, setting the brain a-dancing in awe.

If you've followed other Roennfeldt Cabernets through their maturation and understand how they bloom, that awe soon becomes a different type of wonderment as you dream of what this great wine will become with the years.

Perhaps more than any other Roennfeldt's, this vintage reminds me of Peter Lehmann on his weighbridge, drawing on his B&H Special, schlucking a red, and gurgling "Whitey I hear your bronzed ANZAC mate's stolen all my trophies." He referred to Michael and Annabelle's purchase of the vineyard at auction, and the raw fact that he would no longer be relying on its input to jack the quality of his own reds up into the realms of gold medals and beyond.

But it goes one step further in the reminiscence department. While this is a different style of wine to the wonders Max Schubert wrought, it reminds me of the way he would remove the cork of his selected vintage, leave the bottle overnight, double-decant it, and gurgle with glee as he savoured his glass with a ripe Stilton, spooned straight onto his simple toast.

So here's a toast to everything and everyone: good health, more tomorrow, and many more tomorrows!

