

M.J. & A.B. WAUGH
VIGNERONS

Greenock Creek

VINEYARD & CELLARS

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NEW RELEASES
AVAILABLE

15 SEPTEMBER 2018

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

MAGNUMS

We again have a few magnums
available for purchase.
Please contact us for an order
form if they are of interest.

Dear Friends,

We are sitting here today watching the lovely rain fall on the vineyard in front of the house. After a dry autumn and particularly dry start to winter, this break in the season is most welcome. We just hope that there is much more to come, not only for us here in the Barossa, but all the farmers who depend so much on the weather, especially those who have been suffering drought conditions for so long.

This dependence on the weather got us to talking about our 30 or so years of grape growing – many fabulous seasons, but also the floods, droughts, weeds and disease that are sent to test out farmers everywhere. Over the past few years many of our friends have made a “sea-change”, down-sized their properties, or are just travelling extensively. This has certainly made us seriously consider the “R” word. Perhaps not retirement as such, but at least that we need to look at some R & R for ourselves. The years roll by and you think you can keep doing things exactly the same, until a knee

gives way, you need stronger glasses, teeth need fixing more often, and so it goes on! Therefore with the “R” words in mind, some of you will already have heard that Greenock Creek Wines is on the market. Nothing finalized as yet, but we are looking forward to a new phase in our life – perhaps including visiting some of the wonderful friends we have made over all these years! But enough of this day-dreaming; there's work to be done and a vintage of beautiful new wine to offer our loyal customers. We once again thank our hard-working staff for their support over the year; many of whom you know very well from your emails and telephone calls. And of course a very special thanks to our long-time friend Philip White, who has again provided us with some colourful and descriptive tasting notes for the new vintages.

Wishing you good health, much happiness, and may you continue to enjoy many fine Barossa reds.

With every best wish, Annabelle & Michael.

COMING TO THE BAROSSA? THEN DON'T FORGET TO ENQUIRE ABOUT MIRIAM'S COTTAGE OR THE MARANANGA SUITES



Two beautiful properties; perfect for a visit to the Barossa. Miriam's Cottage, situated in the heart of Tanunda, and the Marananga Suites, in the tiny hamlet of Marananga close to many of the area's famous wineries and restaurants. If you are planning a Barossa getaway, do give Alicia a call to enquire about availability:

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2018 WINE RELEASES: TASTING NOTES BY PHILIP WHITE

GREENOCK CREEK CORNERSTONE GRENACHE 2017

17.0% alcohol

He's done it again. I don't know of other Grenache fermented dry at 17% wickedness yet retaining this much dignity and disarming generosity amongst all that stern authority and finesse. The fruit is rudely brazen at first: it's like peeled black russian tomatoes through raspberries and redcurrants oozing in the press, which together give this bright arterial sweetness to lure you on toward really intense bitter black cherries. It's intrinsically, naturally gelatinous: if you for some reason removed all that generous primary fruit there's a kombu seaweed and wood ear mushroom broth simmering in there, too. White pepper. Mustard seed. Beef. If there is an exemplar of the silky polished sheen some great Grenache can shine at you, it's here. When it wanes, leaving the slimmer image of the wine about six years off, there's a real rakish tango duo squirming and jerking around in there. Then rises the alcohol: after a few days the exhalation is sultry and spiritous, like a fine orujo or grappa seasoned with a cigarillo and a ristretto or two. This astonishing

wine will go well into its second decade. After all that adventure, the lozenge, the jujube of rich cherry and raspberry just sits there cheekily in the centre of the tongue, melting happily to tannin and natural fruit glycerol. Nyah nyah.

GREENOCK CREEK CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2016

14.5% alcohol

Wow. This baby hit an immediate gong from the past: it reminded me of the great Dorrien Cabernet Seppelts made in the 'seventies through the 'eighties. Like vividly. Shouldn't be surprising – although they're five kilometres apart, both vineyards grow in similar recent alluvium following creeklines. Or grew. Those old Dorrien vines grew great wine until after one corporate buyout the new mob thought the yields were too low so in went the bulldozers. No more trophies for those guys. Which memory only serves to make this little vineyard, and this delightful glass of its fruit, all the more especial. It is a treasure. First, it has all those gloomy, moody nightshade glints: angular, granular aromas. Tourmaline; garnet. Second, it follows that straight away with

a basement of slurpy blackcurrant cassis. Like four-X Ribena. There are shades of aniseed balls and blackstrap licorice in there, too, in careful insinuation, then marshmallows. It's amusing as much as authoritative. And those tannins are furry and soft rather than sharp like that glinty aroma suggested. It's all this, plus that juicy underlay that makes the wine magnificent. It rolls on and on, luxurious, regal: a lot more Mark 10 than E-Type on the big cat scale. It's the sort of grand whooshy ride that sticks fondly in the memory. Like a voyage. A luxury cruise.

GREENOCK CREEK MATARO 2016

15.5% alcohol

There's something quite raw and visceral about this wine. Rustic rouge. Sometimes those charcuterie aromas – like all the dark smoked and pickled meats – remind me of something from Calabria; at other times it presents me a smoky barbecue duck in outback China. It's rich too in almost peaty vegetal decay: there's fresh swampy moss on this ferny, mushroomy old earth. Then, after a few days the fruits take over. There was a damn Christmas cake in there all the time! It just ruz right up. As the chubby fats first dominant retreat, which is the next phase, I was surprised at how lithe and wiry is the whiprod acid way down there, drawing the whole thing taut and racy and promising an easy decade of dungeon. After all that there's a threatening little glint of gunmetal blue juniper tannin, as fine and elegant as tannin can get. Raisins, currants and citrus rind hang around with suet, nutmeg and walnuts to tease you into quite serious indulgence. Surrender. Just give in.

GREENOCK CREEK CASEY'S BLOCK SHIRAZ 2016

16.0% alcohol

I can't believe this vineyard is only 8 years old. Sure, this wine has plenty of juvenile cheek, with fleshy teen fruit wrapped in matching brash oak, but it also has the sort of authority you'll find in the soul of great vineyards a century older. This is no nouveau or joven, made to drink young. This is just a baby real old wine. It has the shades that remind me of British racing green and big radiata pine trees, with ravens and juniper. That big chunky bark. You know those smells. Then come the grapes. Extracted, intense, fully skwoze. Dark as. Sinuous. Lissom. Fit. Currants. Coke: not so much the drink, but the stuff blacksmiths fan on the forge. Like that acrid nose-prickling whang-splat of hammer on white hot billet and anvil. Cinnamon and nutmeg; maybe clove. Wrapped in a rich blackberry jam; a blackcurrant jelly. With thick fresh-whipped cream. Toasted raisin bread Sorry to confuse you. But brash, audacious wines of such presumption and promise confuse, and better, bedazzle me. I stare in awe at their tatts.

GREENOCK CREEK ALICES SHIRAZ 2016

16.5% alcohol

Anise. Caraway. Cumin. Somehow this vintage, Alices smells like the grinding of curry spices. Yep, there's your actual curry tree, *Murraya koenigii*, too. It's a piquant, gently acrid smell. Makes me dribble. Below that? Blackberry, blackcurrant, mulberry. Prune. The juiciest, blackest goodies. Maybe with a twist of rind from the Seville orange. A slice of dried apple. Can't be the same variety as the Casey's from next door? Sure is. But this is on the Greenock version of the slatey siltstone of the Yudnamutana sub-group, nearly 750 million years old. Casey's is on a recent profile of soil, not geology, carefully rebuilt by Michael once he bought that adjacent joint and took out the giant chooksheds with all those hundreds of tonnes of old concrete. To plant more Shiraz. So much work. Work smartly, intelligently, determinedly planned and conducted. Work. Another strong drink of unlikely elegance and finesse, this one's perhaps the most slender and racy. The most lithe. It has not one flake of coarse tannin but plenty of shiny, taut acidity. This is the lamb korma wine. It has been like going to the movies, watching Alices evolve and unfold since Michael planted it to be his big-yielding 'commercial' block. I never saw it yield big, mind you: he was very soon pruning it back as hard as the rest. And now it gives me curry. Amazing.

GREENOCK CREEK APRICOT BLOCK SHIRAZ 2016

16.0% alcohol

I can't believe how beneath this thick violet cloak of dense, deep Shiraz, this feeling of apricot rises through the recent red alluvium where the old apricot orchard grew. Is it sometimes like grilled apricot kernels, sometimes like the odd soft-poached kernel left in bright jam or conserve with a twist of citrus rind. Long-time readers of these newsletters may recall my marvelling at how the early wines from this new vineyard smelled like they had a dash of Viognier, which of course they didn't. People say Viognier smells like apricot. Sometimes, I agree. In Condrieu, in the northern part of the Rhône valley, some think Viogner goes best where the Romans grew apricots. I agree. Mystifying. No Romans here. Michael pulled out some apricot trees in the alluvium below Roennfeldt's and grew these vines. I could never imagine him planting Viognier. There's also a

neat whiff of mint in the wine: the eau-de-Cologne or bergamot mint, *Mentha citrata*. How grovellously lucky we are to be sitting here wondering whether this incredible Barossa Shiraz contains bits of apricot or the distinctive flavouring of Earl Grey tea. The tannins, however are blacker and bluer and along the lines of Michael's gunbarrel juniper. I don't want to throw you right off direction, but these tannins are as fine as those that get through the stills into a bottle of good gin. They're blue. It's a colour, not a grain in this instance. As fine as light itself.

GREENOCK CREEK SEVEN ACRE SHIRAZ 2016

14.5% alcohol

I dream that when Edmund Mazure played with his first trials of St Henri Claret at Kanmantoo in the late 1800s, they smelled a bit like this. The same schisty siltstones and quartzites occur below both vineyards. Apart from one small replanting, Kanmantoo is long gone. That was 95 kilometres south, on the other side of the Mount Lofty Ranges. Die-back got it uprooted, nearly a century old, before World War II. If we were still permitted by the EU to use the word "claret", it would sit neat and tidy on here. But this has the meanest gatorback oak toast - which Mazure would not have got from his big oak tanks - lingering way out the back of the slow deep dance of these dried currants and blueberries. Here, that oak fits. It seems like Ella Fitzgerald has picked up a gene or two from Janis Joplin and bottled it. It's easy to think this is ethereal, dancing, light then gone. When you feel the tannin hubs lock way down below somewhere and you realise this is no Peter Pan and Tinkerbelle thing, it changes. This is a mighty, determined, distinctive and slow wine that will hold its own at the front of the Oz Shiraz cohort in 20 years. Maybe 30. It is, for its incredible natural intensity, a most lively and elegant wine. It will not falter. Shivers.

GREENOCK CREEK ROENNFELDT ROAD SHIRAZ 2013

15.0% alcohol

Okay. You get all the above. You gather the spirits of all the old vine Shiraz in this old dried-out floater of prehistoric rocks lost in the Great Southern Ocean and concentrate those ghosts gently, as a great perfumier would. Then you watch nature withhold soil and rain but you get them old bush vines up on a low wire like a walking-stick for a bit of encouragement then you prune them back like you were torturing prima donna seedlings and pray to Bacchus they stay in love with those old rocks which of course they do if you don't expect more than a ton per acre and never give them water. It's pretty brutal. I hear Michael's mantra "This'll hurt me a lot more than it hurts you" as he prunes. I remember the day he learned that Annabelle had bought Roennfeldt's at auction. He wept. First I heard was at PL's weighbridge. "I hear your bronzed ANZAC mate's stolen all my trophies," Peter Lehmann complained. He loved injections of that fruit. This Shiraz, like many of this suite, is from a past era. Top-shelf long-seasoned coffee and cocoa *Quercus alba*, American oak from the master cooper, A. P. John. And hardly any grapes. Maximum two barrels per year. But you already know this. Piquant, appetising, teasing, confounding... go as far as you like. There's a good chance this wine will still be a decade or two ahead of you. This is as pure and impure, as perfectly and imperfectly beautiful and as ruggedly determined as you can get in a glass of the very best and rarest Barossa Shiraz. And it's elegant. At fifteen whole alcohols. I bow.

GREENOCK CREEK ROENNFELDT ROAD CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2013

14.0% alcohol

Sometimes this bouquet is more like something that's ground-up rather than pressed. It's dusty, acrid and prickly like a quarry after a blast. Ancient. Slightly threatening. Then suddenly it smells like it's a living fleshy being about five minutes old. Powdered; fruity; alive. Then it bounces you back to the cordite, and so on, and so forth. Ping... Pong. Eventually this volley stuff flips some visual neural triggers and it all smooths out into something threatening and edgy of temperament, but protective and instructive, too. Avuncular. Chet Baker walks into the room and does Almost Blue. The wall with the big painting falls down flat in the dust and there's Mingus standing in the studio next door with forty crazy hornplayers ripping mad notes loose everywhere like packs of giant swallows on the hunt. This is nuts. In the end, I reckon Chet wins. After a glass a day for nearly a week, I'm amazed that this lovely thing still shows mischievous confections like musky marshmallow sugar atop the stone in that dark quarry, which is now damp and darker in the rain. And then that fresh-hewn French oak with its ginger and roast rind. My goodness. Of modest-to-medium alcohol, this is nevertheless huge, infant wine. In the end, right now, it is bone, sinew, muscle and granite without fat. I should like to have a case from which I would drink a bottle a year, starting in 2040. Or 50. Now, fifteen minutes after I emptied the last glass, I love these cheeky whiffs on my lucky breeze.