

The

Bloodwood Bible

The gossip according to Stephen and Rhonda Doyle

Issue No. 689

December 1998

STOP PRESS: Please Explain - 10% GST + WET replaces WST ... wine prices up by 3.9%

Encouraging results in our annual report

Yes folks, it's that time of year when Bloodwood Inc. is proud to present its annual report. As a shareholder in this regularly publicised private enterprise, you have shown uncommon good sense and a taste for the extraordinary. For this continued generous support, Rhonda and I remain daily grateful. However, it is with some regret that your directors report that despite a reasonable trading year during which the full impact of the raise-in-prices which will inevitably follow the introduction of a GST has not yet washed over our little company, our politicians have refused to understand that ours is an environmentally sustainable primary industry with a disproportionate contribution to the cultural and social fabric of regional Australia. As an integral player in Bloodwood Wines, it would be in our mutual interest to continue to be vigilant in these matters.

The good news is that the

drought which has stalked us since 1994 has well and truly broken with 1,126 mm (45 inches in the old money) by the end of October, and it is still raining regularly. As we only expect about 750 mm each 12 months, to have such a rainfall in 10 months after only 400 mm during 1997 is reassuringly Australian. The dams are all full and we can't see the young calves in the lush grass. Predictions concerning the 98 vintage in last years bible are on the money with some outstandingly full red and rich white wines produced. The potential for this year's crop looks exceptional, but we still have five months to survive before the mad chickens of vintage hatch.

Bloodwood has had some remarkably generous press during the year and we would like to acknowledge with thanks the local constructive criticism of Peter Bourne, James, Halliday, Huon Hooke, Max Allen and Nick Ryan. Internationally, we

remain indebted to the patiently graceful Jancis Robinson, and the brilliantly insane Sir Richard "The Tallboy" Neill of Decanter. Ian Cook of Five Way Cellars has managed to keep a straight face in dealing with us during 98, and for his encouragement and support we remain strangely amused. And what would Bloodwood be without the invaluable advice and empathetic winemaking skills of Jon Reynolds of Reynolds Yarraman and Kirsten Munro of C.S.U.

To our family, customers, friends and supporters, may you and your loved ones enjoy a peaceful and human festive season this year.

Cheers.

Notice of Motion: The Chairman moves that any volunteers willing to refill a rather large hole which has recently appeared in row 15 of the Blend Block take one step forward!

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The Bloodwood Bible is a revelation produced each week and distributed to friends and patients of Bloodwood Enterprises, no liability.

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Stephen hawks a Short History of Wine

Alcohol, of course, has long been a part of politics in Australia. Remember the rum rebellion? Seems those particular colonial autocrats had some difficulty in telling the difference between booze and the currency of the realm; indeed, our military-minded politicians of the not so dim and distant, decreed, from the safe end of a brace of muzzle loaders, that on account (sic) of the scarcity of pretend paper money and the abundance of very real guns, we lesser persons were freely encouraged to embrace alcohol as wholly legal and acceptable tender.

Yes folks in those demonized days, your swanky pack of fully imported, Maldon Sea Salt (where the hell else does it come from anyway?)

could either cost you a couple of florins or a bucket of rum and as the coinage supply was in a bad way, your pre-historic Bundy usually won out. In effect, the distillery was the bank, and your handy hip flask but a putative EFTPOS. Talk about drinking the profits!

Those happy social funsters a.k.a. the American prohibitionists, (and may each and every narrow-mouthed one of them forever rest in peace), also used the odd firearm to frustrate the free flow of firewater; while in the garage around the corner, their dark suited and spat-encrusted opponents gave a new meaning to the thoroughly honourable concept of

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direct selling. Ever since, Saint Valentines Day has been a blessing or a curse depending which end of the smoking gun you're caressing at the time.

In the recent history of the gloriously ancient beverage then, both Church and State have expressed their opinions, and even if they loudly decry alcohol's very existence in the liquor barn of life, their soap boxes and pulpits are usually within cosy reach of the collection plate. When the evil alcohol is the subject of debate, however, the cultural lessons underpinning golden eggs and sacrificial geese remain in the domain of political fantasy.

And so to wine. We're often told how well we must be doing when someone spots a humble bottle of Bloodwood appearing on some swanky restaurant wine list for, say, \$30 or more. The allied question is usually along the lines of "and how many bottles do you produce each year?" After the usual seasonal qualifications and the odd "if" and "but" has had its day, a number is produced. "Let's see, we grow around 80 tonnes of grapes, and a tonne will yield about 700 litres which will make, say 800 bottles".

"800 bottles, eh?, 800 bottles, nudge nudge, wink wink!"... The eyes of the interrogator glaze over as the quick calculation follows, and brows knit as the dollar signs replace the pupils. Is it any wonder your friendly winemaker can afford to live life in the lap of luxury, spending long summer days beach combing on a private island and all winter hibernating with a case or 10 of vintage port? Hows about a discount then? (Obviously, the full-time job outside the vineyard and spraying all night is just an indulgence to keep the mind active, and living in a tin shed is a pretty clever, rustic marketing ploy, used to bring out the empathy of the romantic and cashed up wine buyer).

Not so dear reader, not so! The slim line, cost efficient bottle that sets bravely out from Bloodwood into the big, bad world of retail is quickly transformed into a cross between a mobile random Australian Taxation Office and a short-term Commonwealth deficit reduction strategy. And it is not often that the humble restaurant patron realises that it's not all Sauvignon and skittles back at the winery.

So how does a bottle of wine

which leaves the winery at a wholesale price of, say a modest \$10, magically increase in value to over \$30 on your up-market restaurant table? Well, there's the freight of about a dollar, the current wholesale sales tax of 41% on that combined figure, presentation costs in employing a wine waiter complete with attitude, superannuation guarantee levy and corkscrew, appropriate glasses which need to be bought and washed, wine lists which need to be updated and opportunity costs on capital of holding a wine in stock each 30th June of about \$4.50 per litre and so on and on ... (Did I hear someone mention a 10% GST?)

Oh, yes, and because of the naughtiness associated with alcohol which says consumers can consume provided they give the till a pretty good tickle, there is the normal profit margin to the restaurateur of between 50 and 200%. And all this after the winemaker has scratched a small living out of the base \$10 wholesale price.

You see, nowadays that the autocratic colonial types are in bed with the neo-prohibitionists and both of them have more than a finger-hold on the till, there's really no further need for dark glasses, spats or Tommy guns. It's enough to drive you to drink.

Stephen hawks A Short History of Wine Taxation in Australia based on a \$10 bottle

1929	Considered primary industry	No tax
1930	WST of 2.5%	\$10.12
1931	WST removed	\$10.00
Australian Government changed		
1970	Excise of 50 cents/gallon	\$10.08
1971	Excise halved to 25 cents/gallon	\$10.04
1972	Excise removed	\$10.00
Australian Government changed		
1984	WST of 10%	\$10.50
1986	WST of 20%	\$11.00
1993	WST of 31% (August)	\$11.55
1993	WST of 22% (October)	\$11.10
1994	WST of 24%	\$11.20
1995	WST of 26%	\$11.30
Australian Government changed		
1997	WST of 41%	\$12.05
2000	GST of 10% retail + Wine Equalization Tax	\$12.52
2001	Australian Government elections due	

Legend

WST = Wholesale Sales Tax applying to the wholesale price: (ie 50% of retail)

Excise = tax in this case on the quantity produced

GST = Addition to the total price at the retail end

WET = DRYS introduce WET tax. The Wine Equalization Tax which may be based on volume or price. The intent here is to make sure that the Government doesn't lose any taxation from wine following the introduction of the GST and bottled wine is expected to rise in price by 3.9% as a consequence. Or did you miss this particular point during the recent Federal election?

Stud Kelpie Sales Hint No 1

If your working dog insists on racing through the flock and scattering it to the four corners of the paddock instead of rounding them up and

bringing them back to you, it never fails to impress a prospective purchaser if you shout out the command "Split Em" just as he is about to jaw up on the first straggler in the flock.

The "Is This For Real" Page

The inscription on the metal bands used by American (who else) wildlife officials to tag migratory birds has apparently been changed.

The bands used to bear the address of the Washington Biological Survey, abbreviated to "Wash. Biol. Surv.". That was until the agency received a letter from a camper in Arkansas.

It said, "Dear Sirs, While camping last week I shot one of your birds. I think it was a crow. I followed the cooking instructions on the leg tag and I want to tell you it was horrible." The bands are now marked "Fish and Wildlife Service."

SHOCK HORROR

Wine judges smile (or why you should never brush your teeth)

According to research conducted by Z. Zid et.al. reported in The Australian Dental Journal, 1996, 41:4, p277. plaque is good for your teeth, particularly if you are about to indulge in a round or two with a brace of young Australian wines.

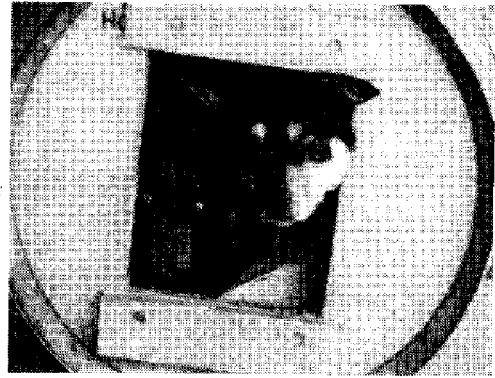
You see it's all to do with pH. On a scale of 1 to 14, the pH of wine comes in between an acidic 3.0 (young racy Rieslings and dry sparkling whites) and 4.0 (some of the more aged sweet Muscats and Tokays).

Now this acid in wine after prolonged exposure can cause enamel erosion and dentinal hypersensitivity. ... (OUCH!) Could this be the reason some young wine judges are always smiling? Could this also be the reason most older wine judges don't?

But all is not lost dear Bloodwood drinker ... According to M/S Z. Zid and the team, it takes about 22 hours of continual immersion in wine to allow for a measureable depth of enamel erosion of 2 microns, and you can avoid damage through the topical application of APF (flouride) gel and "not brushing your teeth the evening prior to a prolonged tasting period".

Following those instructions, I for one will have no future need for tooth brushes!

For Sale: The AMAZING 300 litre Seguin Moreau Burgundy Blend Executive Kelp-O-Kennel. These ideal kelpie dual accommodation hogshead condominiums feature the innovative anti-flea sub floor chock enhanced ventilation support mechanism and the ALL NEW ceiling combination bung hole dog fart extractor and executive chain displacement controller. Tired of buying useless expensive designer kennels with no real dog appeal? This is the answer in low cost canine friendly digs for your kelpie! Just six easy monthly payments on your Bloodwood



Express Credit Card of \$ 149.95 plus postage and packaging and see the flies fly by! (N.B. Honeymoon Penthouse Deluxe Unit shown)

The holiday file

After last year's edition, religious readers of *The Bloodwood Bible* will be aware of the personal dangers which attend even the most innocent visit to the precincts good looney bergs of The Hamilton Island Wine Appreciation Society.

Or in the words of their steaming President His Excellency Sir Ray Johnson IQ and bar, "you are not here for a long time so you may as well put your feet up and relax". What follows is a note to HIWAS members preparing me for this year's casual visit.

Noted vigneron to return

The Bloodwood vineyard in the high country around Orange holds a special place in the memory of our club, as members will recall the remarkable Stephen Doyle, who graced us with his presence and his wines last year. Well, due to pruning in the snow, his fingers (and other parts) are well and truly frozen, and in order to thaw out, he will again grace our shores over the weekend of August 15th. As he appeared to have too much time to himself last time, members were asked to co-ordinate gatherings to host Stephen. As well the formal reception at the Beach House on Saturday night, other items on the programme to date are:

- Saturday 5.30am: Welcome to the Day at Passage Peak hosted by the Dentist.
- Saturday 10am: Poetry Reading by Sir James Alward at Bella Vista (does anyone have a pelican they can loan Sir James?)
- Saturday 1 pm: Masterclass in cold region wines at the Manta Ray Cafe hosted by Stephen and Len Evans.
- Saturday 2 pm: Lunch at Toucan

Caution: Classified R (Ridiculous).

This sealed section contains dental references, nudity and animal acts.

It will not offend those less fortified than yourself.

Tango with wine appreciation discussion led by Stephen.

- Saturday 3.30pm: "Wines to serve with tea and scones" at the Turtle residence hosted by Stephen.
- Saturday 4.30pm: Fishing with Peter Cherry with discussion led by Stephen on "Wines to serve whilst at sea".
- Saturday 4.45pm: At leisure.
- Saturday 5pm: Pre-dinner drinks with members of the Hamilton Island Wine Appreciation Society.
- Saturday 6.30pm: Formal reception and wine tasting.
- Saturday 11.30pm: Wines worth going to bed with.

Owing to the huge number of offers to entertain Stephen, the President is currently conducting a ballot to arrange the itinerary for Sunday. Successful members will be advised personally.

Editor's note: For those readers who remain skeptical concerning the above, it will aid comprehension if you accept that from the alcohol enhanced perspectives of the good loony bergs of Hammo, Australia is but the largest Island in the Whitsunday Group!

Nude pruning at Bloodwood



• Bloodwood takes organic grape production methods to the extreme.

As many of you are aware, we have a very direct and uncompromising approach when it comes to the production of healthy grapes on our vineyard. Since we first planted vines on Bloodwood in 1983, many things have changed in viticulture.

In those dim dark days when Stephen was still a brunette, the use of insecticides like DDT and Kelthane to remove insects and mites from the vineyards of Australia was commonplace. It was usual for chemically-enhanced grape growers to be invited to barbeques and nocturnal outdoor functions to act as mobile human insect repellents for the remainder of the guests while the overtime your common vineyard spray cart driver earned as casual assistant sheep dip handler was often more than the income derived through his full-time viticultural pursuits.

At Bloodwood, we have never used insecticides of any sort on the vineyard and have an unbending policy of using only non-synthetic elemental sprays to ward off the various fungal blights which are sent to annoy us. This means that we spend a good part of the growing year spraying soft chemicals like copper and sulfur about, but at least we can sleep well at night.

That's why it is SO annoying to have the young people of today turn up at Bloodwood and expect to get a job pruning in our precious vineyard dressed in SYNTHETIC blend apparel. After all the hard work we've done in maintaining the ecological health of the place, there's no way we will let anything synthetic get within cooee of our precious grapes ... and we don't care how difficult it is to find the stone when you need to sharpen your secateurs.

Wine and health (or why teeth aren't that important)

This came to us from the July 1998 newsletter of the legal firm Deacons Graham & James via Ian Wylie our Bloodwood plant in the organization; vis:

According to Professor Dr Klaus Jung of the Deutsche Weinakademie, some of the benefits of drinking wine include "reduction in oxygen needs, increased breathing capacity, thicker bones, feeling of improved muscle performance, better wound healing, stimulation of gonads, increase in general working capacity, increased urinary flow, increased disinfectant function, less ideal conditions for micro-organisms to multiply, prevention of age-related decrease in mental capacity, increased sense of well being, slowing of the aging process, increases appetite for life, enhanced intellectual ability and increased blood supply to the brain."

Phew ... that's a relief ... and we thought it was just good to drink.

Strange but true

During an examination not long ago at Cambridge University, a student raised his hand and asked the proctor to bring him bread and wine. When challenged by the proctor to justify his request the student drew attention to the 400 year old laws of Cambridge, written in Latin still nominally in effect.

The section in question read (rough translation from the Latin): "Gentlemen sitting examinations may request and require bread and ale."

Coke and a hamburger were adjudged to be appropriate modern equivalents, and so were fetched for the student's pleasure. Round one to the student.

Three weeks later, however, he was fined five pounds for not wearing a sword to the examination.

Kelpie Care Hint No 2

On your kelpie's first trip to the vet, remember that even though you may have muzzled him, he is a farm dog who will insist on an appropriate method of marking out his territory. A willingness to sponge down the vet's leg, although seemingly appropriate at the time is still no substitute for a largish donation to the Blind Dog Association in your State.

1998 new release notes

1998 was a particularly warm year for us at Bloodwood (and for most of Australia). These warm and dry conditions led to an early vintage and extraordinarily concentrated flavours in all our wines.

As happens to all of us on the land from time to time, we are reminded that all our technology and best planning is really secondary to what nature bestows upon us. In the middle of the biggest drought for years in our area, Bloodwood had a vicious 20 minute hail storm on March 2nd, the day after we picked our Schubert. This meant that we were obliged to pick both the Riesling and the Malbec Rose earlier than we had planned.

In retrospect, given the very warm conditions which were to bake Australia's vineyards during the rest of March and on into April, and the deleterious effect excessive heat during ripening has on respiration of acids and overall fruit quality, this earlier than planned vintage in such a big year was a good thing.

• 1998 'hail blessed' Riesling 170 cases \$14

At Bloodwood, we pick our Riesling on pH. If the pH is 3.0 or above, then the fruit and acid balance is likely to be right. The 1998 fruit was hand picked and chilled to about 1 degree before being whole bunch pressed under a controlled atmosphere in a Bucher "champagne press". The chilling and gentle pressing meant that there was no sulfur added prior to pressing, and the use of carbon dioxide as a protective blanket against oxidation meant we preserved all the richness of the fruit during the whole winemaking process. The analysis at the crush was 12.6 Baume, 6.55 g/l TA, and a pH of 3.33. A long cool ferment of very clear Riesling juice at about 12 degrees took place using aromatic R9001 yeasts with the wine struggling along slowly until into early August when it had a natural residual sugar reading of 6.3 g/liter. It was then a matter of a polishing filtration and bottling on August 20th.

The first impression of the wine is its fruit richness and its complex Riesling aromas. The overall palate weight of the wine is exceptional for a Riesling and the finish is long and lingering. Spice, floral lime and tropical fruits dominate the nose and

follow through on to the palate which finishes with typical fine limey acids. Although it is a wine which can be appreciated now, it will continue to develop into the rich honey and straw spectrum over the next 10 years or so.

• 1998 Rose of Malbec 288 cases \$11

Similar process to the above with the highly coloured Malbec giving up its outrageous pinkness almost at the crush. Again cool fermented in stainless steel and bottled early to retain freshness.

The 98 "hail blessed" Rose of Malbec, affectionally known as Bloodwood "Big Men In Tights" is the latest in a line of outrageously pink wines which have fascinated bikies and bikies' grandmothers over the last decade. The aroma is lifted, aromatic and packed with sweet berry fruits while the palate is rich and attractively structured. While it should be served lightly chilled, too cool a temperature will close down the wonderful aromatics of this delicious wine.

• 1997 Maurice 106 cases \$25

This wine is named in honour of Maurice O'Shea, the legendary Hunter Valley wine maker who specialized in selecting the best wines from various sources throughout the Lower Hunter and across the State. Maurice was French trained and had a deep appreciation of the importance of delicacy in fruit while surrounded by a sea of fourpenny dark and over extracted, sometimes thunderous dry reds. We have taken the most delicate (even fragile) fruit from the lowest yielding and oldest vines on Bloodwood and tried to capture this delicacy and lifted aromatics for you to share.

The wine is medium red purple in colour with a palate of abundant cinnamon spice cedar and plum flavours which reflect the predominantly Merlot and Cabernet fruit while the small Cabernet Franc component adds lift and floral notes to the bouquet. The palate finishes with fine and soft tannins complementing the overall structure of the wine. Wood used was a mixture of new and two to three-year-old Seguin Moreau hogsheads.

• 1996 Merlot Noir 150 cases \$20

This is first tightly structured Bloodwood Merlot exhibits dense and vibrant fruit and palate textures of some weight which will take some bottle age. The colour is a brilliant

plum red with hints of violet, spice and rich berry fruit in the lifted bouquet. Although the approach is soft and mouth filling, there is enough acid to provide a framework for the fruit and the finish goes on forever.

The wine spent more than a year in wood and 18 months in bottle before release and is a great accompaniment to most rare meats.

• 1996 Chirac 120 cases \$25

This year's version is 100% Pinot Noir which was given the traditional bottle fermentation treatment and maturation on lees for 30 months prior to disgorgement in November 98. It shows a wonderfully complex and savory palate of cracked yeast and vegemite against just a hint of its Pinot origins. The colour has traces of pink and gold with a persistent moose and a clean acid finish on the palate. A notorious aperitif wine of some complexity and distinction which will shock and amaze jaded Christmas palates.

• 1995 Cabernet Sauvignon 250 cases \$18

This elegant medium bodied Cabernet style shows typical spicy capsicum, cassis and olive aromas and an intense deep red colour. Its fine grained tannins and persistently soft tannins are the result of 18 months' careful oak maturation. As with all our Cabernet styles, appropriate cellaring for at least five years will increase the complexity of the wine.

Launch at wharf

On the full moon of Thursday 5th November, over 160 Bloodwood devotees enjoyed the wonderful atmosphere and superb food provided by Dov of the Wharf Restaurant in Walsh Bay Sydney to welcome into the world the 96 Bloodwood Chirac and 7 new Bloodwood wines. It was a superb evening which will be difficult to top next year...so book early and don't miss the boat in 99. Thanks to the highly professional staff of The Wharf and all who took part in this wonderful evening.

Guided tastings

If you as a subscriber to *The Bloodwood Bible* have 10-15 friends who want to know more about wine from the grapevine to the glass, contact us and we'll find a mutually convenient way of introducing you and your friends to the wonderful world of wine.

What's in a temperature?


With the honourable exception of The Hamilton Island Wine Appreciation Society where there is no option, our wines are often served too cold.

With the notorious exception of the Chirac, the delicate fruit and acid balance is destroyed if you serve the whites straight out of the fridge at, say 3 degrees or so.

At some prescriptive risk, we recommend that the following may be close to the mark in allowing you to see your Bloodwood at its best.

If you want to see how effective an anaesthetic "cold" can be, serve one glass of Bloodwood Chardonnay at 4 degrees alongside another at 12 degrees in a blind tasting.

The warmer wine will appear to have more body, bouquet and generous levels of perceived fruit sweetness than the cold glass which will appear to be closed, acidic and "thin" in texture.

<p>Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot Noir</p>		<p>15 to 18 °C</p>
<p>Maurice</p>		<p>13 to 16 °C</p>
<p>Chardonnay</p>		<p>12 to 15 °C</p>
<p>Schubert, Riesling</p>		<p>10 to 13 °C</p>
<p>Rose of Malbec</p>		<p>7 to 10 °C</p>
<p>Ice Riesling</p>		<p>5 to 7 °C</p>
<p>Chirac</p>		<p>3 to 5 °C</p>

For Sale: The amazing Bloodwood Wine-O-Therm custom built cigar shaped wine temperature stratification calibration device ... the ultimate executive accessory for Christmas. Astound your friends and associates through the absolute temperature precision of your holistic approach to wine service. Only three easy payments of \$29.95 on your Bloodwood Credit Card will see you the envy of your corporate circle.

Best writing from the Net for '98

Being the highly educated and technologically advanced discerning group of people that you are, many of you send us examples of the best and most intellectually stimulating writing you've found on the Net. Here's one fine example, but please, please stop!

"It was the last of times, it was the first of times, it was the age of intelligence, it was the age of the intellectually challenged, it was the epoch of reality, it was the epoch of insanity, it was the season of salt, it was the season of pepper, it was the spring of health, it was the winter of the flu, it was a period when a bunch of really opposite things were being compared."

Kelpie Care Hint No 3

If your kelpie is becoming irritated at the attentions of abandoned children when you are conducting a wine tasting, an agitated "Oh no, the baby's got my dingo!" should swiftly resolve matters.



1998 Big Men In Tights Competition

Some people will do anything to hide from their public the embarrassing affection they have for the Bloodwood "Big Men In Tights".

This particular longtime Bloodwood supporter (*pictured above*) and genius in his culinary field has taken to wearing this rather appealing disguise to disguise his obsession for Bloodwood Rose.

This is an unique photograph of an extraordinarily possessed individual as his usual habit is to sneak out with his monthly case of Rose at midnight on the New moon, fling it into the saddle pack of his immaculate Harley Davidson and lounge on home to the Blue Mountains before dawn.

Two Fat Ladies be warned: Your nights are numbered!

The Bloodwood executive hat will be used to make the draw of all correct entries received. This is your chance to win a case of the amazing 98 Bloodwood "Big Men In Tights" which will be discreetly delivered to you in a plain brown paper wrapper. See the order form for details and Win Win WIN!!!

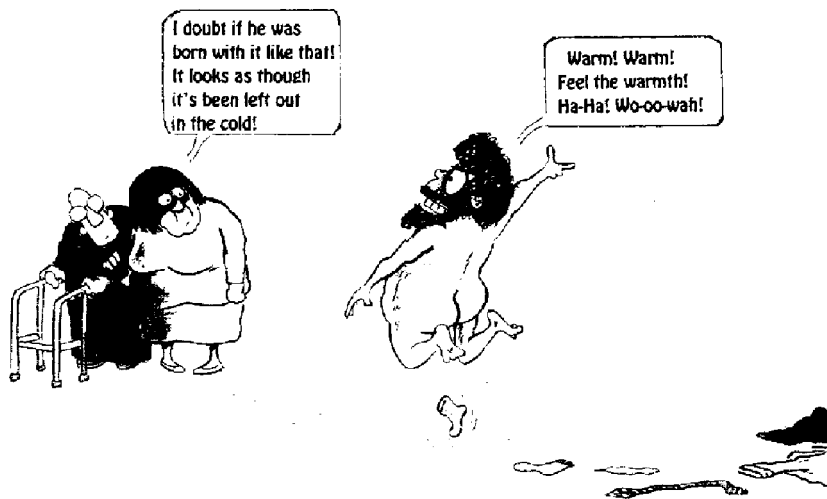
Most refreshing wine review

Most refreshing wine review of the year to Nick Ryan in the November Edition of GQ magazine where Nick was matching wines to Australian cricketers. Says Nick:

"Shane Warne is a player whose fingers, when not spinning a ball, are raised at the Establishment. The Bloodwood Ice Riesling made by Stephen and Rhonda Doyle at Orange's Bloodwood Estate is equally rebellious. Having harvested the vintage's last grapes in frosty June, the quixotic Doyles have delivered a palate-smashing combination of flight and turn."

For the record the remaining ten were:

Don Bradman	Grange Hermitage
Steve Waugh	Hill of Grace
Mark Waugh	Bass Phillip Pinot
Ian Chappell	Seppelt Great Western Show Sparkling Shiraz
Greg Chappell	Riddoch Cabernet Sauvignon
Neil Harvey	Jasper Hill's Georgia Paddock
Merv Hughes	Melton's Nine Popes
Rod Marsh	Lewin Estate's Art Series
Terry Alderman	Grossett's Polish Hill Riesling
Bob Holland	Tyrells Vat 1 Semillon



Bloodwood features in Islanders' annual report

The Annual Report Of the Hamilton Island Wine Appreciation Society Inc., August 1998. And who said the quality of journalism and corporate reporting were in decline?

Bloodwood returns!

Stephen Doyle, noted vigneron from the heights of Orange, arrived on Hamilton Island yesterday, and immediately made his presence felt.

After months of pruning in sub-zero temperatures, Mr Doyle was unable to contain himself upon his descent from the aircraft into the

liquid warmth of the island atmosphere. Divesting himself of his garments, and shouting maniacally "Feel the warmth!", he ran willy nilly across the tarmac, causing disruption of air traffic, and several near heart attacks among a group of Grey Grannies, who thought he had overdosed on Viagra. He had to be physically restrained as the wedding tackle was on display to all and sundry. The President and the Second Lady bundled him into the waiting poorly tuned pink golf buggy and beat a hasty retreat in the direction of the Presidential Palace.

Bloodwood \$60 wine launch dinners for your diary

Here are the dates you have been waiting for. These dinners are all well received and a lot of fun. Be the first on your block to taste our new releases at these extraordinary culinary and vigorously vinous celebrations of the best in Orange.

• Bloodwood Betrothal 7.30pm Saturday 13th February

Become enamored of our new 97 Bloodwood Chardonnay over a sumptuous and romantic mid-summer night's meal reflecting the fecundity of Orange's magnificent local produce.

• Bloodwood Bottle 7.30pm Saturday 10th April

Our full-on wine options competition with incredible prizes for the best palates on the night. This is an autumnal F.O.O.D. week dinner, so book early to reserve your place next to the spittoon and help us celebrate the launch of the stunning 97 Bloodwood Merlot Noir.

• Bloodwood Bonfire 7.30pm Saturday 31st July

In the dark damp and miserable depths of winter, under a bleak and desolate moon, cleanse your soul through the ancient and mysterious Bloodwood fire ritual, and while you are banishing your own personal demons, invigorate your palate with the release of our spiritual 96 Cabernet Sauvignon.

• Bloodwood Budburst 7.30pm Saturday 2nd October

Burst into Spring with "big men in tights" and relish our new Riesling to help us welcome the first new viticultural year for the new Millennium.

• John Walker's Winemakers Luncheon Midday Wednesday 3rd March 1999

Stephen will be hosting a luncheon with John Walker of Angus Restaurant where he will be letting you in on the latest Bloodwood gossip. These dinners have a long and honourable lineage and are fun. For bookings phone John Walker's Angus Restaurant on (02) 9232 6099.

Old vigneron's saying:

"Remember, next to the kelpie, a feral cat moves like molasses."

Rocks in the head

The Chairman is pleased to report that at Bloodwood we like to leave no stone unturned in pursuit of excellence in all we do. He is still of the opinion that the decision taken at an early morning Full Board pep session (in consultation with Mark Cameron) to remove a small lump of stone which has been an occasional problem in row 15 of the Blend Block since 1983 was the right move at the time.

The sub committee notes the use of the word "occasional" is entirely appropriate as the stone really was only noticeable when the company gardener slashed the vineyard grasses in spring to provide a layer of mulch for summer. However, the Vice Chairman observed with some regret that the ensuing titanic struggle wore past Executive morning tea and the Chairman's normal working lunch and perilously close to the closing of the Accountant's ledger before what lay below the tip of the iceberg was fully revealed.

He noted that it appeared that the small rock which had been infrequently slashed all those years was well over a tonne in weight and was laying vertically, vis a vis the putative horizontal expectation, through the



well drained and now very friable profile of the soil. The forklift on the corporate FIAT (Fix It Again Tony) tractor was fully extended in the extraction mission and after the front tyre blew out at the end of an ungracious backwards slide down the vineyard into the dam wall, the Corporate Workplace Bargaining Committee

responsible decided to make Mark's rock a feature of the exit to Bloodwood. All future clients will be pleased to experience the mystery and majesty of Mark's rock when next they visit and your board is thrilled to announce that the company has let a contract for the completion of the new exit detour before the annual meeting of shareholders.

1999 FOOD Week highlights

Every autumn Orange puts on its finest colours and welcomes you to a week which celebrates the fantastic wines and produce of the local area. This year the guest chef will be Serge Dansereau of The Regent Hotel and the highlights will be:

- Friday 9th April: Food, wine and art Opening Function.
- Saturday 10th April: Highland Heritage Jazz Festival with James Morrison.
- Sunday 11th April: Chef's Luncheon.
- Thursday 15th April: Fungi Edible and Otherwise Seminar.
- Friday 16th April: FOOD dinner with Serge Dansereau.
- Saturday 17th April: Marti's Balloon Fiesta and Bloodwood Bottle Wine Options.
- Sunday 18th April: FOOD Affair.

Kelpie Care Hint No 4

Don't concern yourself if your kelpie has to put up with the occasional flea ... it will remind him that he is a dog!

100 wines a day for a week

Over a week in September, Stephen attended an advanced wine assessment course conducted by the Australian Wine Research Institute under the auspices of the Wine Show Committee of the Royal Adelaide Show. The idea was for a group of 30 industry people, including big company winemakers and wine show judges, to sharpen up on their skills in wine judging and provide some statistical analysis of each individuals' palate against the remainder of the group.

Over the period we were required to taste and assess in ever decreasing time slots up to 100 wines of differing styles each day. Individual wines from tastings (unknown to us) were repeated randomly across the week and the scores allocated were compared for statistical drift. Even though we began tasting at 8.30am each day and rarely pulled up before 6pm, it was a very sobering experience. Not only was the physical battle onerous, the levels of concentration to achieve some sort of consistency were mind numbing. For what it is worth, the most heavily supported wines across the tasting were in no particular order:

Wine	Gold	Silver	Bronze	No Medal
1990 Bollinger Grand Annee	7	9	7	9
1994 Yarra Bank Curvee Brut	8	13	5	7
1995 Domaine Roulot Mersault "Ces Vireuils"	9	12	6	5
1998 Knappstein Gerwurtztraminer	12	12	6	3
1986 McWilliams Lovedale Semillon	15	12	5	1
1996 Chain of Ponds Chardonnay	8	12	6	7
1997 Pierro Chardonnay	9	15	7	2
1997 Kingston Estate Chardonnay	8	16	8	1
1994 Wynns John Riddoch Cabernet Sauvignon	15	16	0	0
1996 Tintara Shiraz	19	11	3	0
1994 Henschke Cyril Henschke Cabernet	8	13	7	5
1995 Paracombe Shiraz Cabernet	8	16	7	2
1996 Maxwell Lime Cave Cabernet	11	14	7	1
1994 De Bortoli Noble One	10	11	8	4
NV Seppelt DP59 Museum Tokay	15	16	0	0

• *Editor's note: Bloodwood Wines were not included in the tasting in fairness to the other contestants and to provide a spread of interest in the gold medal categories!*