

Winery News

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING IN AND OUT OF THE SHED

Say "Uncle"

Greetings!

Do you remember the front page headline of our November 2013 Newsletter which read **"WillowBend takes a break after 21 Vintages"**?

WillowBend was where we started. Our brand kicked off in 1990 as WillowBend, producing a Chardonnay and a red blend of Shiraz Cabernet and Merlot. Our last vintage of WillowBend Chardonnay was 1998. We continued to produce the red blend until our last in 2011.

We've missed not having our red blend around, but more importantly it seems that many of you too have missed it! Brenda and I have often pulled an old bottle of WillowBend from our rack and enjoyed a glass or two with dinner. It has always been a pleasure to see how the wine matures so well over time. So I guess it's not too surprising to hear that we've decided to bring the blend back for the 2014 vintage, albeit under a different name. Rather than bring it back as WillowBend, we thought for fun we could call the wine "John Farnham" or more subtly "J. F. WillowBend", because of its comeback, but instead we've chosen the more appropriate name of "Uncle".

Uncle Ken and I kicked WillowBend Wines off in 1990 and the red wine produced was always a blend of the three varieties of Shiraz, Cabernet and Merlot. (Except for the 95 vintage - while Ken wasn't looking I produced a straight Shiraz). The Uncle blend uses the same three varieties as before and is also from the same patch of vineyard as we've used to produce the good ol' WillowBend.



Water into wine

Many of you have read about the old concrete water tank we purchased last year in our November 2015 newsletter, or even possibly had seen it on the TV series "People of the Vines".

Those of you who came to The Shed this year while we were open got to see the scale of this tank from the outside (it looks even bigger when you go inside). It has taken over a year to water the garden with the one million litres of water that were still in it when we purchased it. In fact, we are still draining it! As you can see from this photo we are almost there. The water is finally shallow enough to stand in yet still deep enough for a rubber duck to float in. We finally had the opportunity to stand inside the tank and view the actual size of this cylindrical cellar to be. It's quite amazing once inside as there are scratchings on the walls and a bit of graffiti that have been preserved inside the tank from the fellows who have been inside since it was built in the 1940's... sort of modern day hieroglyphics. Once the water is completely out the next step is to work out an easier way to get in other than through the top.

Update: Nathan and Wayne drained the last few litres of water from the tank, just prior to this newsletter going to print.

It's been damp and windy!

From 2016 Vintage and beyond.

Following on from a very hot December 2015, the start of 2016 was dry and warm. It was a similar start to nearly every year here in the Barossa, perhaps just a bit cooler. December gave us a number of days in the 40s, but surprisingly we haven't had a day over 40 degrees since.

A nice bit of rain fell in January giving the vines a handy drink before Vintage and then no significant rain until March the 10th when 24mm fell from the sky, just as if we had ordered it. Our last day of picking grapes for our red wine was the 7th. Perfect timing! Vintage started for us on the 10th February and crushing of our red grapes was complete on the 7th March, as mentioned. This year it was so much more relaxed spreading the intake of grapes over a 4-week period than it was in 2015 when all was crushed in 12 days. Yields this year were up a little on the previous 4 or 5 years, so fortunately it resulted in us having a few more barrels of wine in The Shed.

2016 was off to a dry start. Rainfall was well below average until mid-May, then the rain started and there haven't been too many dry breaks since. It's been a long time since it's been so wet and just fantastic to get water back into the ground and see the creeks flowing again! Each month from May onwards we've received around 100 mm of rain and with the ground already wet, September came along with almost 200mm.

The last few days of September brought most of this extra rain, along with some strong winds and a bit of grief for many across the state of South Australia. Up here on the hill we received 75mm of rain over these 2 days and you may have heard that the winds blew pretty hard with it. There were a couple of tornados north of the Barossa and such severe winds that a number of electricity towers hit the floor, contributing to the "black out" across the whole state. We woke up on the morning of the 29th September to hear that Lyndoch Main Street was under water and at the northern end of the Barossa Valley near Nuriootpa, there were folk rescuing a fellow from the roof of his vehicle.

A week before these excessive rains came to the Barossa (and elsewhere), my brother Brett had already emailed us an update on how wet it has been so far this year. Brett is a meteorologist for Weather Zone and is passionate about numbers and anything weather related. According to the "Book of Brett", Chapter 16, verses 1-4, Lyndoch has had its wettest first 9 months of the year



***Our favourite local eating place, The Lord Lyndoch during the floods.
Be sure to pop in during your next visit for one of the best steaks in the Barossa.***

(Jan to end of Sept) since 1974, and it is the 6th wettest year to the end of September since records have been collected (130 years).

Average rainfall for us here at Lyndoch is around 570mm per annum and so far, we've collected 690mm in our rain gauge. We're just thankful it all came at the right time for us in the wine game.

A quote from Brett on twitter 4th October 2016 **"Adelaide has now exceeded 660mm this year, 220mm more than average and more than the big flood years of 1992, 1983, 1956, 1917, 1889 and 1851 - its wettest year to date in 178 years of records."**

What's new from the house of Dutschke

A good number of you have been hanging out for the release of our 2014 St Jakobi Shiraz. Sorry for the delay! We've been waiting for South Australia's electricity to come back on and our computers working again before letting it go. Just kidding! We're a little later than normal in releasing the new Vintage, but Dutschke reds always taste better with a bit extra time in the bottle. The 2014 GHR Neighbours Shiraz is now also available, along with our blend now called "Uncle".

AVAILABLE NOW



Dutschke 2014 St. Jakobi Shiraz - \$40/bottle

95 points – James Halliday Wine Companion 2017

In the mid-1930s my Grandfather, Oscar Semmler purchased a vineyard and grazing property across the road from where he and his brothers grew up, alongside of the "St. Jakobi" Lutheran church and school. It is in the St Jakobi Church where my great grandparents, grandparents, parents and Brenda and myself have all been married.



Dutschke 2014 GHR Neighbours Shiraz - \$30/bottle

94 points – James Halliday Wine Companion 2017

GHR (God's Hill Road) is produced using Shiraz from the three vineyards we drive past along the 2km stretch of dirt along Gods Hill Road while travelling to the St Jakobi vineyard. Our philosophy is to keep things simple and to only produce wine from grapes grown within the 3km stretch of countryside south of our front gate. Gods Hill Road, a special part of the Barossa!



Dutschke 2014 Uncle Shiraz Cab Merlot - \$25/bottle

Not yet reviewed.

Our beloved "WillowBend" blend is making a comeback rebadged as "Uncle", after our extremely passionate Uncle Ken who knows what it takes to grow good grapes. Uncle Ken and I started producing the WillowBend blend in 1990 and the red wine produced was always a blend of these three varieties. Full and flavoursome, we are pleased to present Uncle!



Dutschke 2013 Sami Cabernet - \$30/bottle

92 points – James Halliday Wine Companion 2016

95 points – Tyson Stelzer, Wine Press

At the age of 6 weeks our daughter Samantha ("Sami") was introduced to winemaking when Brenda and I dipped her feet into a bucket of fermenting Cabernet Sauvignon to make footprints on a sheet of paper for her grandparents in the US. This was of course her first taste of Barossa Cabernet.



Dutschke 2013 80 Block Merlot - \$25/bottle

90+ points – The Wine Advocate

The 2013 Vintage as many would say was a wonderful year for all red varieties here in the Barossa and the 80 Block Merlot from the St Jakobi Vineyard is up there with the best of them.



And of course our beloved fortifieds... some of which have a whole new look!

Old Codger Tawny - \$25/bottle

Bourbon Barrel Tawny - \$40/bottle

The Tokay- \$25/bottle

The Muscat- \$25/bottle

Sun Dried Shiraz - \$35/bottle

The Tawny 22-Year-Old - \$35/bottle

AVAILABLE MAY 2017

Dutschke 2014 Oscar Semmler Shiraz (no scores as yet, still tucked away out of sight)

We've decided to allow Oscar to mature gracefully and benefit from some extra time in bottle before release. Aging is of course an important part of making good wine. Let us know if you'd like us to set aside a 6pk for you.

Dutschke 2014 Sami Cabernet

92 points – James Halliday Wine Companion 2017

This will be our 6th vintage of our Sami Cabernet, named after our daughter after dipping her feet in some Cabernet at the age of 6 weeks. Sami is now 12 years old and still likes to squash Cabernet with her feet during vintage. She will be a teenager when the 2014 is released!



Last month we wrote to you about The Cotton Ball, a fundraising initiative raising money for DEBRA Australia which supports families with Epidermolysis Bullosa (EB). EB is a rare genetic disease that affects children from birth and results in painful blistering and peeling of the skin at the slightest touch. It is likened to living with third degree burns. EB sufferers require constant medical and physical assistance just to live their lives. Dutschke Wines is a sponsor of The Cotton Ball and is helping to raise funds through sales of our 2013 GHR Shiraz.

We received such amazing feedback from so many of you and have so far raised over \$5000 for DEBRA Australia. We plan to continue with the fundraising until the end of November so if you would still like to support this worthy cause, please give us a call or download the order from our website....



2013 GHR Shiraz - \$330/dozen or \$168/6pk

Inclusive of freight (subsidised by Barossa Fastway) to metro areas.

Only available through the Cotton Ball order form on our website or by giving us a call.

\$100 per dozen will be donated to DEBRA Australia

For more information about EB or DEBRA Australia please visit www.debra.org.au

Luxury B&B of the year 2016

Awarded to “Barossa Bed & Breakfast”

Sami’s tennis coach, Rob Filsell is a great bloke. Not only is he a top notch tennis coach and the entertaining bus driver for the kids at St. Jakobi Lutheran School, he is also very handy with his building tools. Rob used his skills last year to help create the vision his nephew, Jason and Jason’s wife Yvette had in restoring an 1880’s ironstone cottage in Tanunda into a B & B.

Jason and Yvette’s “Barossa Bed and Breakfast”, with all their personal touches (including a complimentary bottle of Dutschke Wine) has been so well received they have won within their first year of business the Luxury Travel Guide’s Asia & Australasia “LUXURY NEW BED & BREAKFAST OF THE YEAR 2016” award. Congratulations Jason and Yvette!

Be sure to visit their web site at www.barossabedandbreakfast.com.au and even better, book in for a stay next time you are visiting the Barossa.



Kentucky Dutschkes



Back in 1998 we changed our wine brand from WillowBend to Dutschke. We thought having our name on the label would help identify the winemaker and put some ownership and personality to the brand. Little did we know it would deliver so much more! Dutschke isn’t such a common name. From time to time there has been some confusion with Henschke, but that of course doesn’t bother us. The name has also attracted interest from many other Dutschkes. When we meet a new Dutschke or people who might know a Dutschke or two, there is of course talk about how we could be or are related.

Pablo Dutschke from Portugal sent us an email and told us some of his story.

I met an American Todd Dutschke a few years ago while pouring our wine at a fancy Hotel in Dallas, Texas. I have poured wine and told or story a few times in Munich and have often been reminded of a student activist in Berlin during the 1960’s called Rudi Dutschke. Phyllis Vosgerau turns out to be a “Double Dutschke”, being able to trace Dutschke’s back to both her mothers and fathers side of the family.

This year we have had Ray and Kirsten Webb (nee Dutschke) from Louisville, Kentucky, USA visit us here in the Shed. Kirsten’s parents are Roger and Phyllis Dutschke pictured here proudly wearing Dutschke attire brought back to them by Ray and Kirsten. Ray and Kirsten are also huge Adelaide Crows fans! We of course thought this was a great thing, although this didn’t impress Port supporter Nathan very much...

Having our name on the label has allowed us to meet Dutschkes from Australia and many other corners of the globe over the years. It’s been a good thing! Of course we didn’t know a good number of these folk even existed. When meeting these new Dutschkes it still comes as a bit of a surprise to me that there’s someone else who could be related, but Brenda seems to think that this is now somewhat the norm. Brenda has found since shifting from the US to Australia that it is quite normal to bump into someone here and find out that they are related. A little different to what one would find in Los Angeles.

We hope you enjoyed the read, we have exciting times ahead and look forward to sharing them with you. Cheers!