



Oct 2005

No. 08

Curly Flat

VINE To WINE

Time to release the 2003 Chardonnay – our best yet – but drought and hungry birds mean very limited and small allocations!

Summer 2003 was one of the hottest, and driest, on record - resulting in a very early vintage and, sadly, demoralizing attacks from hungry hoards of crows, starlings, mynahs and silver eyes. The sky darkening flocks of pecking pests hit us just days before the protective nets went on – the result was a 50% loss of the already drought diminished Chardonnay crop – overall, our Chardonnay production was down 70% - 280 dozen produced. Fortunately we got the nets on before the Pinot Noir was similarly reduced.

This means the availability of 2003 Curly Flat Chardonnay is severely limited – with an allocation of just three bottles for existing clients; there will be a small allocation for a handful of new clients who will be limited to one bottle of 2003, as part of a three bottle Chardonnay History Pack. There are many reasons to bewail this situation – perhaps the strongest being the disappointment for the lack of opportunity to provide to our loyal clients a meaningful allocation of what we consider to be our best Chardonnay release. We ask for your patience. We are doing what we can, including retaining all the 2003 Chardonnay for domestic clients, with none going for export.

The good news is that 2004 saw a return to normal production levels, and at the same time, quality went up a notch. We are looking at bringing forward release of the 2004 Chardonnay to overcome the disappointingly small allocations of 2003.

What people are saying about the 2003 Chardonnay.....

The strongest words come from Colin Climo, Deputy Editor and Wine Writer for The Bulletin in his Curly Flat feature article of August 2004. “Simply outstanding; 98+ points” This is the highest score Colin gave to an Australian Chardonnay.



James Halliday, in his Australian Wine Companion 2006 “A powerful wine, with good intensity, line and length. Will develop further. Rating 93”

Sally Gudgeon in The Age Sunday Life “Another cool-climate stunner. Complex nose has stonefruit and citrus with hints of vanilla and nuts. The palate is long and fine with a creamy texture which is cut with a zing of citrus. Aging within 7 years”. Five stars

Sadly Colin passed away in November 2004 – we remember his professionalism, his enthusiasm for life, and his passion for wine (and thoroughbreds). His memory, like that of our viticultural mentor Laurie Williams, remains a compass in our pursuit to grow the very best wines from our naturally blessed vineyard site.

Winewise in recording results of the 2005 Small Vignerons Awards where the 2003 Curly Flat Chardonnay was awarded Gold “Very much a cool climate style, offering melony fruit on both nose and palate, but it’s fully ripe flavour with intensity and persistence. The finish is

Macedon Ranges Wine Exhibition 2005
2003 Curly Flat Chardonnay- Gold Medal and placed second only to the 2002 Curly Flat Chardonnay with 2001 Curly Flat completing the trifecta in third place

2003 Curly Flat Chardonnay was awarded the Peoples’ Choice of Best Chardonnay and the Glen Erin Trophy for Peoples’ Choice of Best Wine of the Show.

2002 Curly Flat Chardonnay won the Lawrie Williams Perpetual Trophy for the Judges Selection as Best Wine of Show – the first time this award has been won by a

Curly Flat wines fly Qantas International

Qantas has been making some big changes in its in-flight offerings of food and wines. The aim of the Qantas wine program is to ensure travellers are offered wines that reflect the very best that Australia produces, including exciting new producers. Qantas identified Curly Flat wines, both Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, for service in International First and Business Class. We are delighted to establish a relationship with Qantas - the world's leading long distance airline.

Qantas will not be serving the 2003 Chardonnay due to the limited supply explained previously

The Nicholas Dattner Table

A magnificent 8 metre 'Samuel Pepys' refectory table now graces Vintage Hall – it was designed and made by Australia's greatest table-maker (and our good friend), Nicholas Dattner. It is made from two single planks (8 metre each) of Messmate Stringybark (*Eucalyptus obliqua*), an Australian native hardwood timber – these planks sit on ten turned legs. To learn more of Nicholas Dattner tables and other furniture see www.nicholasdattner.com. Join us at the table for the special Curly Flat Budbust dinner on Saturday, November 12th – see details below.

Australia's Biggest Bottle of Pinot Noir

Curly Flat produced a special bottle for the 7th Annual wine of the Decade Charity Auction to support The Deafblind Association. It was a Nebuchadnezzar (15 litre – 20 normal bottles) of a special blend – the 2003 Sommeliers Selection Pinot Noir. It was the most expensive wine of the auction raising \$3,000 for The Deafblind Association.

Williams Crossing 2004 Chardonnay Release

Williams Crossing is our junior label – the wine is very good but does not quite make the Curly Flat benchmark.

The Nov '04 edition of Winefront Monthly, Campbell Mattinson said about Williams Crossing 2000 Chardonnay "...the value here is nothing less than phenomenal. BUY AS MUCH AS YOU CAN AFFORD". We think the 2004 Williams Crossing Chardonnay is a step up on the 2000 vintage. It's young and will improve with time in the bottle but is drinking very well now.

2003 Vintage Conditions

Very hot and dry year – rainfall for the twelve months to March 2003 was down 51%, with no individual month reaching the long term average. Spring was unseasonably warm and December particularly hot with little reprieve in the balance of summer and autumn. The vines set a below average crop that ripened surprisingly quickly – this caught us off guard and the birds attacked before the nets were on. Harvest was March 31 – three to four weeks early – with flavour ripeness coming at moderate sugars of 13 Bé. The natural acidity achieved in the vineyard is again a feature of this Chardonnay – and enables traditional, minimal intrusion winemaking.

Vintage tensions cause hair loss

The genesis for this 'adventure' arose during vintage 2005 when Phillip and Lak Quak (formerly the Sommelier at Langtons Restaurant) were exchanging insults on hair styles while working late into the night, tending Curly Flat Pinot ferments. Lak volunteered to cut off his hair (which Phillip described as a "poorly constructed bird's nest, posing as casual cool") if Phillip would cut off what Lak considered to be a "mullet".

Other Macedon producers joined the cause to raise funds for CanTeen - the organisation for young people living with cancer. The clipping and shaving was skilfully 'executed' by renowned hairologist Ollie O'Donnell of VoVo Salon in South Yarra. Overall we raised over \$15,000 and our thanks go all who supported us.

Vintage 2005 – the Vintage of Luck & Hope

Vintage 2005 was a great success – quality and yields right on target. To Robert and his Vineyard Team, many thanks for a great effort. To Mother Nature, thank you for the surprisingly calm warm autumn with perfect ripening conditions.

It will be remembered as the Vintage of Luck and Hope – named after two of the Vintage Team. Lak Quak formerly of Langtons Restaurant - 'Lak' (meaning 6th in Cambodian, as he is the sixth son) is pronounced 'Luck'.

Hope Metcalf, a young winemaker from W.A. who we first encountered in Oregon, in 2002 when Phillip was working the vintage at Ponzi Wines.

Our thanks to Jillian, Lak, Hope and all those who helped out in what was a very exciting vintage. The wines of 2005 could well be the best yet – for Chardonnay, we are confident it is; while for the Pinot Noir, it will be difficult to reach the heights of the 2004 – but it is early days.

History Packs

A reminder that History Packs are available, for both Pinot Noir and for Chardonnay – History Packs contain three bottles; the current release plus a bottle from each of the two prior vintages. It is a very good option for those just discovering Curly Flat. In the case of the 2003 Chardonnay, it will be the only option for new clients.

2003 Curly Flat Chardonnay Tasting Note

Pale/light straw with sparkling clarity. Strong varietal bouquet, rich yet restrained showing white peach, nectarine and lime/grapefruit – signs of cool climate balanced ripeness. There are further complex tones of orange peel/blossom, toast, honey, cashew and lees. It has good palate weight and soft, creamy texture – showing restrained fruit generosity up front that builds across the mid palate where the acidity melds in and builds to a long lingering finish, with recurring waves. Hints of spice and earth, together with top quality oak reside quietly in the background, supporting the intensity and persistence of a wine that will age for 8 plus years.

Coming Events - Spring 2005



Curly Flat Dinner at Lotus Bistro – Tuesday night, 8th November 2005 - \$120 for a four course dinner with wines from our museum stock and some yet to be released samples. For booking phone Frank at Lotus on 02 9326 9000. Lotus is at 22 Challis Avenue, Potts Point.

Curly Flat

Budburst - Macedon Ranges Budburst Festival – to be held on the weekend of November 12 & 13.



The wineries of the Macedon Ranges – 32 of them – will open their cellar doors, and have meals and entertainment – as well as special wine events. Curly Flat will be open, and Darren Langdon (formerly Executive Chef at Bankers Trust and owner/chef of Langers) will be preparing appetising lunches on both days – and also creating a special dinner on the Saturday night – bookings are essential for this dinner that will take place around the 8 metre Nicholas Dattner table (hence places are limited to 26) and will feature museum stock and unreleased Curly Flat wines. Also, on both days there will be a vertical tasting of all eight vintages of both Chardonnay and Pinot Noir – again bookings are essential.

Langers Budburst Lunch Menu (Sat & Sun)

Baked oysters en crouete, mild curried scallops & calamari on lemon rice pilaff

Vanilla spiced pork belly on bok choy with accompaniments

Tuscany chicken salad with mustard fruits and baby cos

Lamb shanks in red wine, garlic & rosemary, chat potatoes, snap peas, spanish onion, tomato confit

Poussin semi boned in African spices on potato & corn fritter, fresh asparagus & apple scented jus

Fillet of fish on raft of teriyaki green beans with rosti potatoes

Macedon Ranges restaurants will be having dinners celebrating Budburst:

11 November - **Campaspe House** in Woodend showcases 'The Best of the Region'. Head Chef, Brad Lobb, will prepare a fabulous five course menu consisting of a range of inspired regional, seasonal produce which will be carefully matched to the 2005 Macedon Ranges Wine Exhibition Trophy Winners. Wines include Midhill Macedon (Sparkling), Granite Hills Riesling, **Curly Flat Chardonnay**, Chanters Ridge Pinot Noir and Forty Acre Metcalfe Shiraz. \$95 per person (including a 5 course gourmet feast and wines). ☎ 5427 2273 or see details on www.campaspehouse.com.au.

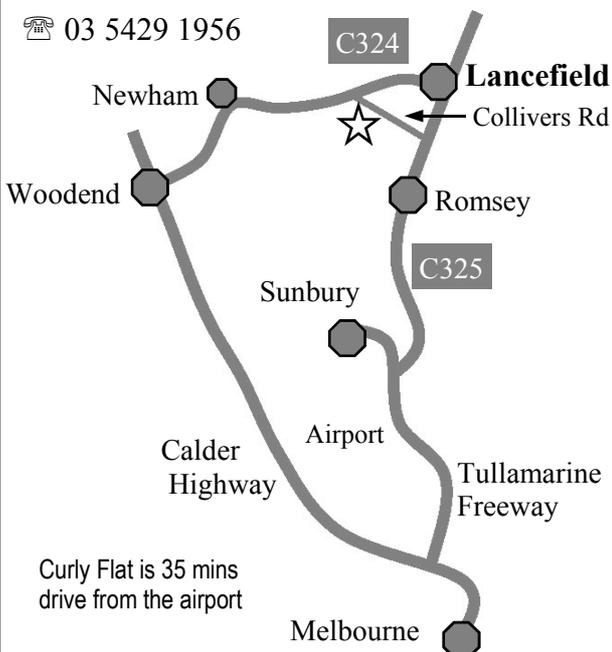
12 November - **Sequoia Restaurant** in Woodend - Chef, Damian Sandercock presents an Italian influenced Degustation Feast - 7 Wines, 7 Winemakers featuring **Curly Flat** (Pinot Noir), Hanging Rock, Cobaw Ridge, Straws Lane, Farrowell and Braewattie. ☎ 5427 4414

12 & 13 November is a huge weekend in the Macedon Ranges. Mount Macedon Horticultural Society presents Open Gardens for Spring and Paul Bangay opens his private garden at Woodend.

For details on Budburst visit www.budburst.com

263 Collivers Road Lancefield Victoria

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Curly Flat is 35 mins drive from the airport

How to get to Curly Flat Vineyard

From Melbourne—take the Tullamarine Freeway and proceed past the Airport.

Before Sunbury, turn right onto C325 to Romsey/Lancefield.

Proceed through Romsey and when entering Lancefield, turn left onto C324 towards Woodend.

Travel 4 km, and just before Glen Erin Vineyard Retreat turn left into Collivers Road.

Curly Flat Vineyard is 600 metres along on the right.

Tastings and functions are usually held in Vintage Hall, next to the winery.

Our cellar door is open for tastings and sales between 1pm and 5pm on Sundays and the 4th Saturday of the month (after the Lancefield Farmers Market). We are open at other times by appointment.