

DEDICATION

To the Wives and Girl Friends of the
Members who put up with us when we
returned home late from an excellent
day of dining and wining with all the
other Members and their Guests.

Especially to my wife Audrey Ziebell
who has helped me in all matters
relating to the Nital Club over these
many years, and for the assistance given
to me in the compiling, typing
and checking of this Historical Record.

Club Founder

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'M.T. Ziebell', with a stylized flourish at the end.

MERVYN T. ZIEBELL.

NITAL BEEFSTEAK AND BURGUNDY CLUB.

HISTORICAL RECORD of the CLUB.

COMPILED BY

MERVYN ZIEBELL.

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14 June 1991

Friendship, fine food and fine wines.

Which comes first is very much a personal thing. But no matter which it is for you, it is the sharing of each separately or together that is so much a fine thing in life.

This was very much so in the formation of the Beefsteak and Burgundy movement so many years ago and subsequently in "Nital" from May 1967.

As Foundation President I am very proud to have been part of "Nital" and to have shared such moments with the members and their families.

Those actions, fond memories, and sharing are the life blood of any club - it just takes a little gentle stirring, a little malice of fore-thought, and a little "bon homie" and we have "Nital".

No doubt the foundation members have passed this on so much so that we can be very proud to be with them on any and every occasion.

Here's to the next 25th anniversary.

SEAVIEW



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750ml WINE MADE IN AUSTRALIA

K A Y S

JAMES IRVINE

All Saints'



1980
Chablis

A fine crisp dry wine made using cold controlled fermentation from Dourado grapes (formerly Rutherglen Pedro) Grown at Wahgunyah, N.E. Victoria. As portion of this wine was matured in New German Oak for some weeks, the wine shows an interesting complexity of grape and oak flavour with the traditional dry flinty finish.

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1. INTRODUCTION AND COMMENCEMENT OF THE "NITAL" CLUB.

It was on the 18th of November, 1966 that I was dining at the Latin Restaurant, Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, celebrating the 26th birthday of my Customs Agent assistant, Nick Smith. At another table my two brothers, Albert and Stanley Ziebell were also entertaining a business friend, Colin Reaburn. After lunch we naturally joined tables.

From various conversations held between us all that is where I conceived the idea of forming a Beefsteak and Burgundy Club. No doubt, from what I have since learnt, nearly all Clubs have commenced the same way.

During the course of our conversation on this day, Colin Reaburn mentioned that he was now the Winemaster of the "Warrandyte" Club at which my two brothers and myself had been his guests at one of their meetings and I asked Colin if it was possible to join the Club. It is of no doubt an excellent way to make new friends and enjoy good food and good wine (although after 25 years I still have trouble telling the difference between wine varieties.) I suppose it is because I enjoy them all. Colin's reply was "Sorry, you will have to join the waiting list." Being somewhat averse to waiting lists I told him I thought I would start my own. With great gusto Colin agreed and said he would join me providing that he was the first President.

However, this was not to be. Colin did not become the President until 1979 but was one of our most outstanding Winemasters and no doubt that without Colin's enthusiasm of Beefsteak and Burgundy Clubs, which really sparked my idea, I would probably never have thought of even trying to commence a Beefsteak and Burgundy Club and, it is because of this, that Colin was considered the co-founder of the "Nital" Club and rightly so. However, even poor old Colin fell by the wayside for twelve to fifteen months in the years 1972-1973.

Unfortunately, Colin was not able to participate in so many of the excellent functions we have held over the years as he passed away on the 14th February, 1981.

Albert and Stan did not join immediately, but I am pleased to say that Col Reaburn rang me the following week and said that Stan was joining us, Stan therefore being our third member.

Albert declined but later joined the Club in April, 1967, one month before we received our Charter from Adelaide. Nick was unable to join until October, 1986, and has been Beefmaster on two occasions since then.

So, as the Club Founder, I started out looking for members with the same thoughts in relation to Food and Wine and Friendship which is necessary for such a venture.

This help was given to me by David Triaca, the owner of the Latin Restaurant, and I must thank him for his great assistance, as well as time given to introduce to me some of his close friends who would be able, because of their knowledge of wines and food, help get the Club off the ground. Two in particular, Leon Massoni and James Irvine, are mentioned separately in the next chapter.

2. THE FORMATION OF THE CLUB.

During the following week from the original idea, I was again dining at the Latin and mentioned our venture to David Triaca and, as it happened a fellow patronizer of the Latin, Ian Gorrie was also lunching there, as we discovered we did quite frequently. David introduced me to Ian who had not really been long back in Melbourne from Sydney after being there for the past 20 years. Ian was most anxious to join our venture and, as we talked, I realised Ian had sold me an office calculator only some months previously, so in a way, we had already met. Ian thus became our fourth member.

As we intended to meet and dine at the Latin Restaurant, even though at the time we had not chosen a name for our new Club, David Triaca said he would like to help us and decided to join and become our first Beefmaster.

From there David introduced me to a personal friend of his and this was none other than Leon Massoni, well known connoisseur of wines and restaurantor (although Leon failed to identify his own wine some years later). Leon was also keen to join and became our first Winemaster and a most excellent Beefmaster the following year. David Triaca also mentioned to me that I should try to get James Irvine to join us whom he introduced me to at a lunch at the Latin.

Jim was then manager of the Victorian Branch of Thomas Hardy & Sons Pty.Ltd. in Melbourne. Jim's predecessor was Bruce Beasley, a friend of David Triaca, who was very keen on promoting the Beefsteak and Burgundy idea and this was a great help for me to try and convince Jim to join us as our first President. Jim at first was a little reluctant due to business pressures and it took me some days and one night at Mario's Hotel in Exhibition Street, then owned by the Triaca family, at dinner until 1 a.m. in the morning to convince Jim he should be our first President.

Jim finally agreed and was President for two and a half years before returning to Adelaide on behalf of his company.

The Balance of our Inaugural Members in order of joining, being:

Norm Waight,	Director of Rhinecastle Wines Introduced by David Triaca.
Howard Palmer,	Theatre Critic, Sun News Pictorial Introduced by David Triaca.
Ralph Foster,	Personal Friend of and Introduced by Ian Gorrie.
Desmond Lavelle,	Personal Friend of and Introduced by Colin Reaburn.
Neville Willmott,	State Political Reporter, Sun News Pictorial Introduced by Howard Palmer.

At this stage of commencement of writing in 1991 there are only two of the original members still with the Club with continuous membership, that being Ian Gorrie and of course myself, Merv Ziebell. Stan Ziebell resigning for twelve months in 1973/1974.

One other original, Ralph Foster who had to resign in January, 1974 due to the business-world pressures, rejoined us at our 21st Celebrations in February, 1988 and is Club President this year 1990/1991.

A copy of the Minutes of our first meeting held on the 24th of January, 1967 at the Latin Restaurant is enclosed, refer Appendix, and was actually held to form the Club into a Beefsteak and Burgundy Club. Our application was forwarded to Adelaide in April, 1967 and our Charter was granted on the 11th of May, 1967.. Registration No. 72.

3. NAMING THE CLUB.

Ian Gorrie and myself were, once again, dining at the Latin, trying hard to think of a name for the Club. David joined us for a chat and drink and after a while David said that, as we thought of the Club at the Latin and he had a race-horse name registered, but no horse, called "Nital", what about thinking of that for the Club's name. "Nital" being the Latin spelt in reverse.

After a short time of reflection I thought it was quite appropriate and Ian agreed with me. Hence the Club being called "Nital".

4. THE CHARTER.

Our Charter No. 72, dated 11th of May, 1967, was presented to our President, Mr. Jim Irvine, at a special luncheon held at the Latin Restaurant on the 20th of June, 1967. Thanks to David Triaca and his staff the dining room and table were tastefully decorated with artificial grapevines and bunches of the nectar.

The presentation was made by Mr. Bill Hughes, President of the Melbourne Beefsteak and Burgundy Club. A further guest at the luncheon was Mr. Alan Holdsworth, Managing Editor of the Wine Brewing & Spirit Review. There would not be enough room in these pages to tell you of what a great day was had by all and the events that followed, even to poor old Colin Reaburn and his car on the way home.

A copy of the original menu is enclosed with the Appendix but for some unknown reason the names of the wines served were not shown on the menu. The Charter was duly framed and is held in trust by me on behalf of the Club and taken only to some of the monthly luncheons as I usually forget to bring it back home again.

For copy of the Charter refer Appendix.

5. NITAL CLUB RECORDS.

As can be seen from the enclosed Minutes of the 24th of January, 1967 the inaugural Committee consisted of:-

President	Jim Irvine
Vice President	Colin Reaburn
Winemaster	Leon Massoni
Beefmaster	David Triaca
Secretary/Treasurer	Mervyn Ziebell

To conform and in accordance with the Parent Club's Constitution a General Meeting was held on the 21st of February, 1967 to elect a member to the Committee as a Committeeman and that was Mr. Howard Palmer.

Howard Palmer, in conjunction with myself, was asked to compile our Club's Constitution embodying the Parent Club's Constitution and our own By-Laws.

This Constitution was passed at a General Meeting on the 18th April, 1967, and has only been changed on two occasions, these being a Special General Meeting of the 7th of April, 1970 and at the Annual General Meeting on the 23rd of July, 1991. These changes have only been brought about by alteration of various dates in accordance with the Parent Club.

As I have been Secretary/Treasurer for twenty of the past twenty-four years it is a great pleasure to know that I have all the records of the Club in hand which I must say I guard with some degree of jealousy. Unfortunately, the Minutes of the 1970 Annual General Meeting are the only records I have been unable to locate.

6. MEMBERSHIP.

As previously mentioned, the Club started with only twelve. Known by the older members as "The Original Twelve". Of these twelve I was made a Life Member on the 25th of August, 1987, then Stan Ziebell and Ian Gorrie became Life Members on the 24th of May, 1988.

In the following year of 1968 we had another four join us and we then grew year by year but like most Clubs over the past 25 years, a number have come and gone. Some stay a number of years and others just fade away, although a lot is due to business and travel commitments.

I have noticed those who do not stay long seem to get "carried away" on their first time as a guest but as time goes by they find it too hard to abide by the rules which is why I am a great believer of the Constitution Rule 14(b) and numbered in our own as Membership No.6, perhaps two or three times as a guest would be better. After all I have always said or written to all members many times that the real meaning of a Beefsteak and Burgundy Club is:

"Good Fellowship, Good Food, and Good Wine."

During our many years we have gone down to a low of 10 members in 1970 when the Club nearly folded but, thanks to those of us who stuck by each other, the Club survived. Our highest membership was in 1984 when we had the full 30 members plus a waiting list. Our standard membership has been in the range of 24-26 and at the present we have 24 including the 3 Life Members.

As is the practice of the Beefsteak and Burgundy Club I am sure that most members are unaware of the Professional activities of each other and under no circumstances is any business to be discussed at the luncheons. This was tried on two occasions but was stopped before it even got off the ground.

For a list of all members past and present - refer Appendix.

7. MONTHLY MEETINGS.

At our original meeting in 1967 there was great discussion on whether we would have an evening or lunch-time meeting. It was decided that as we were all businessmen perhaps we could not handle an evening meeting as well as our normal business commitments.

The day decided by all was the third Tuesday of each month but, after a short period, this was changed to the fourth Tuesday as per Minutes of the 17th of September, 1968.

Also at the January, 1967 meeting, times were set for "Pre-Dinner Drinks" to the "Close of Official Business". This, we never seem to be able to stick by as we no doubt enjoy ourselves too much, especially when some of the boys start telling stories.

As our name depicts, we originally made our Home Base at the Latin Restaurant. However, at a meeting the members decided that we were not giving ourselves the opportunity to experience the different delights of other restaurant's chefs and at a meeting on the 22nd of May, 1968 it was moved that the Club would visit other restaurants.

For some unknown reason it may be noted we have always called our Foodmaster - "Beefmaster". This error of name has always been about and I can see no reason why it will change, although now it has been brought to everybody's attention, we shall no doubt try hard to correct it.

To begin with, the choice of venue was the responsibility of the Committee but at a Special General Meeting on the 7th of April, 1970 it was written into our Constitution that the sole responsibility would be that of the Beefmaster and I feel this has worked out very well. We have ventured far and wide around the restaurants of Melbourne so much so that our Beefmaster now finds it quite hard to find a venue where we have not already been to although perhaps many years previously.

As in all Clubs it is the responsibility of the Beefmaster to select the Menu and the Winemaster to compliment the various courses with the appropriate wines. Occasionally this does not happen due perhaps to the lack of communication, but nevertheless both are always enjoyed, although there have been some courses I have had when one could argue about that.

Our first meeting was held at the Latin Restaurant on the 24th of January, 1967 with the original twelve all in attendance. For the life of me I could not record here the menu or wines we had as a record of such was not kept. Now, after all this time it is a great pity.

Originally, it was only the Winemaster who called on various members or guests to comment on the wines and nothing was done about the food at all.

The 'Aperitif' and 'Whites' after the entree and the 'Reds' and 'Ports' etc., at the end of the lunch. This happens whether the wines are masked or not and it is very interesting to hear the 'Gaffs' that we all make in trying to identify them.

It is the complete prerogative of the Winemaster to either mask the wines or not or even just some of them. In recent years, approximately 8 years, it was decided that the Beefmaster should also request comments of the menu from members or guests, which is an excellent way of finding out the various palates of the members.

At our normal monthly meetings members are encouraged to bring guests. After all, this is where the new members come from to keep the Club going, but it is interesting to note that this was not the case from the beginning as we only invited guests about every third lunch, the others being "Members Only". As can be appreciated the twelve of us at the first luncheon had only met on one or two occasions and the idea was to get to know each other first before involving ourselves with guests. This practice, I am glad to say, changed early in 1970.

It was at a meeting of the 24th of January, 1989 that a motion was approved by the members to make a toast to the "Queen and the Nital Club". This Toast was to be proposed by the President at the beginning of each function.

At the Annual General Meeting on the 28th of August, 1990, the "Loyal" Toast was dropped and the Toast to the "Nital Club" to be made by the President or, at his discretion, call on a member to do so.

The format of our meeting commences with the Club Toast, introduction of guests, any relevant business - usually not much - and then the Beefmaster and Winemaster are called upon to inform us all what the pleasures of the "Day" will be.

In relation to our Annual General Meetings, these were originally held about two weeks after the close of the year. This proved most unsuccessful as it did not allow the incoming Beef and Wine Masters to arrange our next meeting in proper time nor be able to give due respect to the Wines and Menu.

We also tried several at night and one in particular on the 3rd of July, 1968 with the venue at Thomas Hardy & Sons Pty.Ltd. It was such an excellent evening as we all dined and wine so well there was very little business conducted but now, looking through the Minutes, I am amazed we got so much completed.

It was not until the Annual General Meeting of the 2nd of September, 1977 that enough was enough and a member moved that our Annual General Meetings be held an hour or two before the August monthly meetings and the outgoing Beef and Wine Masters would arrange all details for that month's meeting. This has proved very successful.

At our second meeting, someone hit on the idea of taking the labels off the bottles and all present signing them. Attached are the labels and reverse side showing the signatures. This practice lasted only a short while as it is not possible to easily detach the labels from the bottles and besides, we would need a warehouse to hold them all.

The following are the luncheon details that the wine labels have come from. Copies are enclosed in Appendix.

21st of February, 1967

Meeting of members re confirmation of Committee Member.

18th of April, 1967

Meeting of members re agreement to forward application to Adelaide to apply to become a Beefsteak and Burgundy Branch.

16th of May, 1967

Members only monthly meeting. No signatures taken.

18th of July, 1967

Members first Guest Day.

15th of August, 1967

First 'Nital' Ladies Day. Labels dated by me inadvertently the 14th of August, 1967.

17th of October, 1967

Second members Guest Day.

8. LADIES NIGHTS/DAYS.

Although our Constitution calls for "Ladies Nights" our first such occasion was a Ladies "Day" held at the Latin Restaurant on the 15th of August, 1967. All members were present and most were accompanied by their respective Ladies and, according to the Minutes, everyone enjoyed themselves.

Please refer to the signatures on the reverse side of the wine labels in the Appendix.

Our first Ladies Night was held at the Ritz Restaurant, Lonsdale Street, Melbourne on the 24th of November, 1967 and I would say, thanks to our Beefmaster Mr. Leon Massoni and Winemaster Mr. Norm Waight, it was one of our most memorable Ladies Nights we have had and I must say we have had a number of excellent ones. With the exception of Howard Palmer all members were present and accompanied by their Ladies.

Please refer to the "Anecdotes" from Ralph Foster.

In the first four years of the Club I arranged for the menu and wines to be screen-printed onto silk and these were placed at the setting of all present together with a spray of flowers for the Ladies.

The menus were printed with a different colour each year, with gold lettering and gold tasselled edging. In those days they cost us \$1.00 each.

The venues for these first four Ladies Nights being:-

24th of November 1967	Ritz Cafe
29th of November 1968	Ritz Cafe
21st of November 1969	Gini's Rest.
5th of December 1970	Latin Rest.

For a copy of the Menus please refer to the Appendix.

It was at the November 1968 Ladies Night Dinner that Jim Irvine announced his resignation from the Club because of being posted back to Adelaide by his Company, Thomas Hardy & Sons P/L and, in recognition of the Beefmasters efforts (Ralph Foster) he presented Ralph with a bottle of,

Hardy's St.Thomas Burgundy
Bottled 27. 2.1967

Ralph has since handed the unopened bottle over to me to place in the Club Cellar and, according to a letter I received from Jim Irvine in June, 1991 I quote:-

"As for the St.Thomas Burgundy, I believe it will be fine. They made wines to last in those days, so it is really a matter of how well it has been stored in the meantime."

According to Ralph it has been well stored. So maybe one day we can try it.

The following year I arranged for the Ladies Night to be a Dinner Dance and this was held on the 23rd of November, 1971 at the "Top of the Town" Restaurant on the top floor of the National Mutual Life building in Flinders Lane, Melbourne and was patronised by 42 members and guests. Maybe because this being the first I still feel that it was our best dinner dance evening.

We had only three or four actual dinner dances as venues for small numbers can become very expensive. Two of our other memorable dinner dances which were well patronized were at the Leonda Restaurant, Hawthorn in November 1974, and Montsalvat at Eltham in May, 1976. Although Montsalvat was a great success according to most of the members, some thought quite strongly otherwise, the Club came out very heavily on the wrong side of the ledger.

During the period between November, 1971 and November, 1975 we had a number of excellent Ladies Nights at such restaurants as:-

1973 Legend Restaurant	/	Melbourne
1973 Latin Restaurant	/	Melbourne
1974 Chateau Commodore	/	Melbourne
1975 Shoppingtown Hotel	/	Doncaster

As time went on the Ladies Nights started to falter and we were unable to get a reasonable number to attend maybe because of their young families going to school etc. On the 25th of November, 1977 at Lazars Restaurant, we had only seven members and their ladies plus several guests, from a membership of twenty six at the dinner and even this was spoilt by an over zealous member, not too well on the sober side, who bought drinks for the band and put the amount on the Club account. Naturally the Club did not pay for them.

There were no other Ladies Nights until it was decided to try again at "Allisons" Restaurant in Prahran on the 22nd of April, 1986 with twelve of our twenty eight members attending with their wives. I was informed all enjoyed themselves as unfortunately Audrey and myself were not present due to the distance of driving. Most disappointing for Audrey as this was only the second Ladies function that she has missed.

This was indeed unfortunate for me as it was only the third time that I have missed a 'Nital' meeting in the past sixteen years, one other was when I was Overseas in October, 1978 and I have only missed a few since the beginning of the Club prior to that.

The lack of Ladies Nights have most certainly had no effect on the Ladies Days. These we have in April or May and our Christmas lunch in November and they are well patronized by our ladies who on a number of occasions have shown the men what it's all about on commenting and naming the various wines. These days I trust will always continue.

At one Ladies Day in August, 1969, we were at the "Stagecoach Inn", Melbourne, and our Winemaster Neville Willmott, had gone to a great deal of trouble in arranging a special champagne for the Ladies. Unfortunately, the restaurant served our champagne to their customers by mistake and we were left with a "Bin-Audinere". Neville was not impressed.

It was on the 23rd of January, 1990 that the ladies came to our rescue and joined us at lunch, as most of our members were still away on leave and we would have only had ten in attendance. Many thanks to our ladies for their great assistance.

As mentioned before some of the members like to tell a story at the end of the meeting. However at our November 1990 Ladies Day as Chairman, I asked if any stories were forthcoming and reminded the members that ladies were present. It took some twenty minutes before anyone could think of a suitable story that could be told.

9. BOTTLING DAY

Unfortunately, the Club has had only one 'Bottling Day Event' and what an event it turned out to be.

The Day was not one for raising funds for the Club but a social event with some of the wives joining us for a B.B.Q. lunch. The members who attended obtained good wines at very inexpensive cost and indeed all the wine was sold prior to bottling. The rule was quite simply being, if you assisted in the bottling you obtained the wines and if not, you went without.

The year was 1967 and Norm Waight, our Winemaster, arranged for five hogsheads of 1965 Vintage wine to be delivered to my warehouse in South Melbourne. Two hogsheads came from Tolley & Son, Hope Valley, two came from Kay Bros of McLaren Vale and one came from Walter Reynell & Sons Ltd. All vineyards being situated in South Australia.

Colin Reaburn arranged for the bottling machine, two bottle corks, one being his own, and the corks. The bottles were purchased and sterilized by Leon Massoni at his own wine bottling warehouse. I, myself, arranged the design and printing of the labels with the wine being called 'Zibbin' along with the motif of the ship from my Customs Agents Company stationery. The warehouse store forklift was used to give us gravity flow of the wine while the loading platform was set up in the manner of a conveyor system right up to the packaging of the wines. We managed to complete three of the hogs before lunch, which was an excellent B.B.Q. helped prepared by my wife, Audrey, and two or three of the other ladies present and, most amazingly, we had our first drink for the day.

After lunch we completed the balance of the enterprise but, somewhere along the line, the two members on the packaging of the wines managed to get some bottles past the 'corkers' without them being corked. By the end of the day we were not sure whether they knew if they were packing or unpacking the wines. Naturally I cannot mention names but I'm sure Stan Ziebell and Neville Willmott thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

The cost of the finished product was:-

Hope Valley Hermitage (Blue Seal)	)	Average price
McLaren Vale Cabernet Shiraz (Red Seal)	)	per bottle
Reynella Cabernet Shiraz (Gold Seal)	)	approx. .27 cents

As a most enjoyable day was had by all present and we had the opportunity of obtaining good wines at a reasonable price, it is a great pity we did not continue with the idea. Perhaps it can be resurrected by some of the younger members if it is still possible to buy good wines in bulk.

Refer to Appendix for copy of the labels.

10. CLUB CELLAR

It was not until April, 1987 that the Club decided to establish their own cellar. This was mainly brought about by some of us having thoughts on a cellar after reading the '25' year booklet sent to the Club by the Holdfast Branch in Adelaide who were celebrating their 25th that year. This booklet unfortunately disappeared at the lunch held at the 'Popolare' Restaurant when it was being passed around to all present. However, I was able to obtain a draft copy from their Secretary.

As we had surplus funds in our account, for a change, the Committee recommended to the members that we commence our own cellar. This was done as per the Minutes of the 28th of April, 1987 and an initial sum of \$500.00 was advanced to the Cellar Committee which consisted of Jim Freebairn, Jeff Morgan, and myself to start the Cellar going. Jim Freebairn and Jeff Morgan, being our most wine-knowledgeable members, have chosen a majority of the wines now held in the Cellar. Jeff Morgan has purchased wines for our 25th year and I am sure they will prove worthy for that occasion.

Over the past few years any funds which the Club had invested or held as surplus have been transferred to the Cellar for purchase of stock and at present in the 1990/91 year we are holding approximately thirty four dozen valued at \$3,600. The Cellar stock being covered by an Insurance Policy.

At a Committee meeting of the 15th of June, 1989, certain rules were set down for the use of the Cellar wines at our various monthly meetings. These rules were ratified by the members at the Annual General Meeting of the 22nd of August, 1989, a copy of which is attached in the Appendix. In making the rules for the use of the Cellar wines the Committee set times for the use of same in a practicable way so that the Cellar can be kept restocked and not used for the insatiable thirst of some members. The Committee considered the reason for having a Cellar is to purchase wines at current prices for storage so the members can benefit in years to come and appreciate aged wines which would be no longer available or, if so, at a very expensive price so together with the Cellar Levy this will help to keep future luncheon costs to a minimum and the Cellar stocks up.

I only hope some of we older members can, in a few years time, still enjoy them.

A number of Branches hold cellars and those who do seem to have different ideas of usage, storage and pricing but I feel we at "Nital" have a very workable and manageable system. I am sure that our Cellar Master, Jim Freebairn, will ensure that this will always be the case - as should future Cellar Masters.

The Cellar Levies so far have been:-

1987/1988	\$10.00	1990/1991	\$20.00
1988/1989	\$10.00	1991/1992	\$20.00
1989/1990	\$50.00		

11. TWENTY-FIRST CELEBRATIONS.

Although the Parent Club, Adelaide, only recognize the 25th year of a Branch Club, we at "Nital" felt that we had to do something to celebrate being 21, as we have two dates, the initial meeting to form the Club on the 24th of January, 1967 and our Charter Day, the 11th of May, 1967 and these were the two months special luncheons were arranged. If that is not a good enough reason to celebrate I don't know what would be.

As we, like most Clubs, have had members resign due to various reasons over the number of years, I took it upon myself to write to all the past members to invite them to join in their old Clubs celebrations. Unfortunately only a few replied and eight came to our luncheon on the 2nd of February, 1988, which was held at the "Tolarno Bistro" in St.Kilda.

Three of the "Original Twelve" attended, Leon Massoni, Ralph Foster and Des Lavelle, together with five other past members. Of the past members who attended both Ralph Foster and Ron Watt rejoined the Club. Our first President, James Irvine, apologised for not being able to attend as he would be in New Zealand. It was most disappointing not to have heard from a number of the other past members especially the balance of the "Original Twelve". However I shall try again for our 25th Charter Year and maybe obtain a better result.

2nd of February, 1988

"Tolarno Bistro", St.Kilda

There were 41 members and guests present and I can assure you all enjoyed themselves. A copy of the menu and wines are enclosed in the Appendix and the Birthday Cake was cut by six of the original members being:-
Myself, Stan Ziebell, Ian Gorrie, Leon Massoni, Ralph Foster and Des Lavelle. As Fred Villiers said at the time, it was a pity someone didn't have a camera, maybe next time.

24th of May, 1988"Kew's Restaurant, Kew.

This being our Charter celebration we endeavoured to hold a Ladies Night, but again without success and it was changed early in the month to a normal members and guests luncheon with 31 in all attending and again a great day. A copy of the menu and wines are enclosed in the Appendix.

12. FINANCE.

As with all Clubs we required an Auditor for preparation of our Balance Sheet and, with this in mind, I approached my friend, Mr. Bruce Candy who was Public Accountant for my Company. When I approached Bruce and asked him would he do me the favour, he thought it would last only a couple of years and to encourage him to say "Yes" I offered to take Bruce to the Club luncheons once a year as Club Guest for his effort. However, after 24 years Bruce is still the Club's Auditor and he has only collected about four or five of his "Free" luncheons as he always insists on paying.

In appreciation for his efforts over all these years, Bruce was made a "Permanent Guest" of the Club at our meeting on the 26th of February, 1991 at the Hawthorn Football Club. This has been duly recorded in our Minutes and I would also like to record my own personal thanks to Bruce for his efforts, and keep him up to his promise of remaining Club Auditor while I am the Honorary Secretary, Treasurer.

The following are the fees that have been charged over the past 25 years.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NOMINATION</u>	<u>SUBSCRIPTION</u>	<u>LUNCHEON</u>
January- June 1967	\$ 10.00	\$ 4.00	\$ 10.00
August 1969	10.00	5.00	10.00
August 1973	10.00	5.00	12.50 Guest
August 1976	10.00	5.00	15.00 \$12.50
February 1977	10.00	5.00	20.00
August 1982	10.00	5.00	25.00
August 1986	10.00	5.00	30.00
August 1988	10.00	10.00	35.00
August 1990	25.00	20.00	35.00
August 1991	25.00	20.00	40.00 *

*Including the \$2.00 Compulsory raffle that has been running over the past number of years. It is interesting to note that our guests came off better than the members in 1976. Glad to say it only lasted one year. There were also several levies during the early stages of the Club to cover losses on luncheon and wine expenses.

13. BRANCH OFFICIALS.

Although it is not written into our Constitution it has been the practice of the Club to elect the Vice President as President for the ensuing year. This has occurred from about 1970 and has continued with the exception of two or three times when the member has left the Club during the year or taken on another position, and I trust that this practice will always continue. For six years, from 1968 to 1974, we elected an Assistant Beefmaster and a Committee member, but from 1980 we elected two Committee members in order to assist both Beef and Wine Masters.

A list of the Branch Officials is enclosed with the Appendix.

14. TWENTY-FIFTH YEAR.

Well, our 25th year is now up and running and I am pleased to say I was elected President for this most important year, with an excellent Beefmaster and Winemaster, Ralph Foster and Jim Freebairn respectively.

Ralph is most anxious to go back to our old idea of serving big beef luncheons, maybe that's why we always call our Foodmaster "Beefmaster", and with Jim to compliment them with wines. I am sure that we will all be in for a great year.

Our first luncheon for the 25th year was held at Kew's Restaurant on the 23rd of July, 1991 and the menu for this luncheon, as usual, was arranged by the outgoing Beefmaster, Ross Barry. The wines are detailed in the Venue Section of the Book and our luncheon menu was an Aperitif of Spicy Avocado Dip on Fairy Bread followed by an Entree of Chicken Shasliks with a Satay Sauce on a bed of Rice. Our main course was Braised Lamb Shanks with Tomato and Basil Glaze served with soft Noodles and a selection of vegetables. The sweets being Creme Brulee (poached cream custard glazed with sugar) and the lunch being completed with coffee and Kew's own chocolates.



As I have said before the lack of Ladies Nights has in no way affected our Ladies Days and for our final Luncheon of the year we visited Perrins Restaurant at Glen Iris where eleven ladies joined us from a total attendance of thirty four. A most enjoyable day was had by all present.

After the Luncheon a few of us were still imbibing and I suggested that it would be great for our 25th to try and have a special Barbeque Lunch at my home in Menzies Creek. All agreed so I sent out notices for our first ever December Lunch for a "Special Christmas Feast" and it most certainly turned out to be that as further detailed on the Venue pages 1991/1992. It was held on Monday 16th of December.

Unfortunately, a few of our Members being involved in the retail trade, and professions dealing with the usual Xmas panic, a number could not attend but we finished up with a total of 19 with 10 guests including 7 ladies.

From the comments and the consumption of Good Food and Good Wines and the fact that most did not leave until 5.30 p.m. in the afternoon I could only say that it was indeed a great day. Perhaps we can have more of them as a "Xmas Special" in the future.

Before I mention our 25th Inaugural Luncheon a sad note must be recorded. Unfortunately, Jeff Morgan, who purchased a number of wines for our 25th year, passed away on the 18th of December, 1991. Jeff will be missed for his knowledge of wines and friendship. A toast to Jeff's memory was made by his friend and Club member, Jim Freebairn.

Our 25th Inaugural Luncheon Celebration was held at Kew's Restaurant in Kew, with 26 Members and Guests in attendance on the 28th of January, 1992.

Again, as I did for our 21st Celebrations, I wrote to a number of past Members and invited them to join us in our celebrations, but, like the last results I must say how disappointed I was in not hearing from a number of the original Members, so I will not waste my time on them for our 25th Charter Lunch due to be held on the 28th of April, 1992, as I consider an invitation should always be replied to.



However I was pleased, as President, to welcome the following past Members who did attend, Messrs. Des Lavelle, Frank de Marchis, Keith Hooper, Bill Morcom and Reg Broad and I trust that they shall be with us in April. Also I received apologies from several other past Members who may be able to attend our 25th Charter Luncheon.

As I did for our first four Ladies Nights way back in the 1967-1970 period, I arranged for the menu and wines to be printed on silk. Not many companies were interested to do the printing so I checked on the name of the company who printed the original ones, not really thinking that they would still be in business, but however on ringing them, the lass Sue, whom I spoke to said she remembered doing the original ones and would be happy to print the 25th Year menus. On collecting them, Sue commented on how surprised she was that we were all still alive and well after eating such fine foods and drinking such excellent wines for so long a period.

Our member, Fred Villiers, arranged with one of his photographer friends to be present when the "Bombe Alaska" was due to be cut but unfortunately he was a few minutes late and it was being devoured by all when he arrived. However photos of the Members and Guests were taken.

The menu and wines, as enclosed, speak for themselves and it must have been a most enjoyable day, as most of us did not finish lunch until about 5 o'clock, and Kew's were ready to sweep us out with the rest of the cleaning up so as to reset the restaurant for the evening patrons.

Our February Luncheon was held at the Cantonese Garden Restaurant, Balwyn. I mention this briefly only to say that our poor Beefmaster came under a lot of flak, after stating earlier in the year that we were going to revert to our traditional beef lunches. Ralph mentioned to me some months prior to the lunch that he would like to try a Chinese meal and I suggested that he go for it, although I always prefer beef, but I still think it was a good idea and an enjoyable day. It was funny to see our previous Beefmaster come out with a grin from ear to ear and say quite jokingly that it was nice to see some other poor Beefmaster cop it for a change. Knowing Ralph, he can handle any jovial flak that may come his way.

After all, isn't that part of what it is supposed to be all about.

PREMIER	CUVÉE
BALGOWNIE	
PETIT BLANC	
This wine is a blend of sauvignon blanc from the Robinson's vineyard in Coonawarra and semillon from the Lower Hunter Valley.	
It shows full fruit flavour on the palate enhanced by background oak, finishing firm and dry.	
<i>Shiraz Anderson</i> WINEMAKER	

M^{rs} WILLIAM'S
MOUNT PLEASANT
ELIZABETH 1983

This unique wine is a classic example of the traditional Hunter Valley dry white wine style. Made from Semillon grapes it exhibits the rich toasty bottle aged character and clean fresh Semillon fruit flavour for which the Hunter Region has become renowned worldwide.

The wine aged for 6 years, before release, is ready to enjoy now, with potential for future cellaring.

Phil Ryan
WINEMAKER

Our 25th Charter Luncheon was held at The Windsor Hotel on the 28th of April, 1992 with forty-two members and guests in attendance. Only two members were absent for this most auspicious occasion, one being overseas and the other just not coming for personal reasons which does not, to me, follow the Beefsteak and Burgundy Club code of "Goodfellowship".

As I mentioned before I was hoping that some of our past members would be able to attend our Celebrations but unfortunately none were in attendance.

Ralph Foster, our Beefmaster, certainly gave us his best with a magnificent banquet and Jim Freebairn, our Winemaster, also did us proud with a great selection of wines from our Club Cellar. The menu and wines are enclosed in the venue section.

Mr. Keith Gramp, President of the Adelaide Club, was good enough to be with us and presented to me, as President of "Nital", our Club's Silver Medallion.

The Windsor Hotel with their presentation were excellent and they had our Black Forest Celebration Cake displayed as we entered the banquet room. It looked so good I am surprised that someone did not try it on their arrival.

Jim Freebairn and myself took a number of photographs of the presentation, members, guests and surrounds and several of these are included in the venue section. Copies of the photos and details of the luncheon were forwarded to Rod Martindale, editor of the B & B Bulletin, for inclusion in the June issue and I would strongly urge all our members to save their copy as further Club memorabilia.

We had been running a raffle for some months for one dozen wines to supplement the cost of the banquet, the wines being supplied from Ralph's stock, with the idea of drawing the raffle at our 25th. When it was time for the raffle to be drawn our Guest, Keith Gramp, was asked to draw the lucky number and guess what, Yes!!! Keith drew his own number and I must say a fitting winner. However, Keith was kind enough to donate the wines back to the Club for a further raffle. Thank you Keith.

Our May Luncheon was a Ladies Day held at the Cafe Alma in Abbotsford, but one can only apologise to our ladies as I would say without any hesitation that what was placed before us did in no way resemble a "Luncheon". I felt sorry for our Beefmaster because the restaurant let him down badly, because the choice of courses sounded quite good.

The Curried Prawns had about one prawn cut into pieces and mixed with the heap of rice per serve and the individual serves of Beef Wellington contained, I am sure, only stewing steak, and un-eatable. To finish off one of our members held up his Camembert Cheese and described it as a "hard piece of something but wasn't too sure". It was voted the worst luncheon in the history of the Club.

As a result, I am sure that our Beefmasters, now and present, will not be influenced by anyone to change his mind on a venue that he has already chosen as it is his entire prerogative to choose both the venue and the menu. I have only tried once and asked a Beefmaster to change his main course for a Ladies Day to a beef course instead of lamb or white meat as our ladies all seem to prefer a beef course, and very rarely get it. I was promptly told it was his choice, not mine, and rightly so Ross. Even though I still like beef best.

To make up to our ladies for such a disappointing day it was decided to invite them to our June Luncheon to be held at Kew's Restaurant, which I believe was the original choice for ladies day.

The Ladies Day luncheon at Kew's Restaurant on the 23rd June was a great success, unfortunately not all the ladies that were present at the May lunch could make it, but those that did enjoyed themselves as did all the members. Nuri, the proprietor of Kew's, certainly gave us an excellent luncheon as depicted by the menu attached to the venue section together with the wines.

Well that finishes our 25th Year and what a great one it has been, together with all the others from the beginning. With the exception of a few odd spots, spoilt by an odd member or two, but I suppose that happens in all clubs.

A motion was passed by the members that the History Book be priced at \$20.00 with the balance, after costs, going to the Club Cellar and that it would not be compulsory for members to purchase a copy. However I must say that I would be very disappointed with members who did not purchase one as it would appear to me they could have no interest in their Club, and therefore not worthy of even being a member.

Although Vern Barnett has been thanked previously in the book for his great assistance in the photocopying of a vast number of the pages, I would again like to pass on my personal thanks for his assistance.

I also asked our member Jim Freebairn to write up some details of the Beefsteak and Burgundy Club's Biennial Conventions which he and his wife Jill have attended, especially the Mt. Gambier one that Audrey and I also attended. Jim's notations follow after the Anecdotes.

On the lighter side of the Club I have noticed that the wine receipts, even the very old ones, have always had that delightful "amber liquid" called "Beer" on them, and I've also noticed that if the poor Winemaster does not have some Crown Lager, as an aperitif, I can assure you he is in trouble.

If you are wondering why there is a 16b and 16c I took a guess on the pages for the Index and missed by two, "STIFF".

15. CLUB VENUES.

The following depicts a majority of the Restaurants where we have met at over the past 25 years.

I have included some menus that I have saved together with wines served on that day, their costs, and the number of members and guests present at the meetings. Also I have made appropriate notations of interest where applicable.

As I have stated early in the book, I do not profess to be an expert in wines, more to the opposite, as I am a Member who enjoys all of them so I make no apology for any slight misinterpretation of the name of a wine taken from hand written invoices dated so many years ago, although I am sure that they are correct.

It is most interesting to note how reasonable everything used to be, especially the luncheon costs.

I have referred to most of the venues as "Restaurants" even though some of them were called "Cafe" at various times of their existence.

The copies of the wine labels on the pages do not indicate that that particular wine refers to any of the venues mentioned in that year but are from various bottles, the contents of which we have all enjoyed, that I have acquired over the "Nital" years.

16. REFLECTIONS and ANECDOTES.

When the idea came to me to compile a "History Book" of the Nital Club, I wrote to all the members on the 31st of October, 1990 with a reminder on the 23rd of September, 1991 and asked them for any Reflections or Anecdotes which may have been interesting or something funny that may have happened to them during their membership over our 25 years. The idea was that all members would have made some contribution, even if small, to the Club's records and history.

Unfortunately, only a few put "pen to paper" and these are now recorded permanently in our Club history. To the others I just say "Bad Luck", you have missed out on being included in something important of your Club.

17. CONCLUSION with ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

In relation to acknowledgments, I would like to thank my daughter, Glenda, for her time and effort in placing the entire book on computer disc and giving me the first print out to copy and work from.

For the time and photocopying of a number of the pages of the book and numerous draft copies by member Nick Smith and also a special thanks to member Vern Barnett who arranged the colour photocopying, together with a thanks to member Harry Markby for arranging the scroll writing on the front page.

In relation to the Conclusion; who said anything about the CONCLUSION of the Nital Beefsteak and Burgundy Club. We "Oldies" I feel have kept the Club going with great assistance from the newer members and it is up to them to keep the Club going for another 25 years, as I am sure they will.

If they don't they had better look very closely at their glass of "Red" because they might see some "Smoke" coming out of it and it might just be me.

HERE IS TO OUR GREAT CLUB

1967

Nital

1992

FOR THE FAR DISTANCE FUTURE OF OUR CLUB



Claret
Vintage 1967

This regional wine is made from a blend of 30% Cabernet Sauvignon grapes and 70% Shiraz grapes grown at All Saints Vineyard, Wahgunyah, North East Victoria. It is a medium bodied, well balanced wine matured in Nevers Oak Hogsheads, with a predominant Claret finish (from the Cabernet grape) which will continue to improve in bottle for many years.

PRODUCE OF AUSTRALIA

G. SUTHERLAND SMITH & SONS

All Saints Vineyard, Wahgunyah, and Melbourne

Sydney Agents: H. G. Brown & Sons Pty. Ltd., Chalmers, Sydney

CONTENTS 26 FL OZ

Rosewood Vineyards



1967

VINTAGE PORT

MADE & BOTTLED BY

W. H. CHAMBERS & SON

RUTHERGLEN, VICTORIA

NET 1 PINT 6 FL OZ

PRODUCE OF AUSTRALIA