

NITAL BEEFSTEAK AND BURGUNDY CLUB
A VISIT TO BALLARAT 12th August 2010

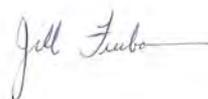
Members will be aware that when Jill and I plan a trip we refer to the B&B Handbook to see whether we can visit another Club during our travels. It so happened that we were on our way to Seppelt for a Master Class followed by a dinner accompanied by sixteen others with the Chief Winemaker and her assistant in the renowned Drives Cellars. We had been on a similar mission in October 2007 and, breaking our journey at Ballarat joined their Club members for a memorable dinner in the Phoenix Brewery. And so we contacted the Club again.

Last time we were made very welcome. This time we were treated like friends returning home after a long absence! The Club has a full membership. The venue was superb, being part of the Sovereign Hill Tourist Area in the theatre adjacent to the United States Hotel. It brought back memories of many years ago when we visited with our five little children and had a poster printed up "Disturbance at the United States Hotel. Freebairn Gang Taken into Custody for Being Drunk and Disorderly and Disturbing the Peace". It still adorns a place under our stairs together with B&B memorabilia.

It is always interesting to observe how other Clubs are administered and we happened to visit the night of their AGM which was carried on during the dinner. Like all well organised clubs the meeting ran smoothly with all prospective position holders having been briefed in advance. Membership fee for the year was set at \$50, Wine Levy \$500 and Dinner Cost \$110. Not surprisingly, the Club has an extensive cellar. The number of bottles at 30th June was 1,110. The number in Nital's cellar was 1,116! Despite the Cellar levy being nine times approx more than ours the value of their wines is only a little less than four times ours. The various vintages of Grange do distort things so!

We enjoyed an excellent dinner with a wide range of contrasting tastes and wines. Jill and I were asked to talk about the Entree. I was reminded of my days on the farm when as a fourteen year old boy I would kill and dress a sheep and dash down to the house with the liver so fresh it was still steaming, for my widowed mother to make lambs fry and bacon. The texture of the liver at this dinner was quite different from lamb and we scored a near miss by guessing goose or duck rather than the chicken that it was. The accompanying wines were light and acidic but a good match to cut through the strong flavours of the liver, bacon and gorgonzola cheese sauce. They turned out to be two versions of Grenache Shiraz Mataro (or as the Wine Police now insist, Mourvedre), the Grant Burge Holy Trinity being most people's preference. The following main course of slow cooked hare was also an inspired dish, as was the dessert for that matter and not to forget the delicious Canapés with which we started.

The Club has planning well underway for their milestone 50th anniversary dinner next month and we wish them well for their celebration dinner with Adelaide President Peter Johnston attending. Thank you, gentlemen of Ballarat for a most pleasant evening. Needless to say, you are always welcome at Nital for lunch on the fourth Tuesday of the month.



Jim and Jill Freebairn



Beefsteak and Burgundy Club of Ballarat Inc.

AGM at Sovereign Hill Ballarat

Theatre retiring room 12th August 2010

Dinner Menu

Canapés:

- (1) Smoked Eel on crisp Bruschetta with beetroot relish, horseradish, and sour cream.
- (2) Seared Tuna with olive and Anchovies, poached Quail Egg, Dressed leaves.
- (3) Beef Tartar

Wine

Deutz Marlborough Cuvee Brut

Entrée:

Pan seared Chicken Livers with Smokey bacon and fried sage leaves & Marsala on toasted bruschetta finished with Marjoram and Gorgonzola Mascarpone.

Wine

Teusner Avatar 2008

Grant Burge "The Holly Trinity" 2005

Main Course:

Slow braised Hare with Rosemary, Vanilla, Plums and sautéed field Mushrooms tossed through fresh Pappardelle finished with Truffle butter, crushed Pistacachios & grano Parmesan

Wine:

Lake's Folly Cabernet Blend 2002

Lindeman's Pyrus 1998

Penfolds Bin 389 Cabernet Shiraz 1998

Desert:

Rich Chocolate & Orange Tart with Double cream

Wine:

Stanton and Killeen Classic Rutherglen Muscat

Freshly Brewed Tea and Coffee

President: Alex Thals. Food Master: Ken Tudball .

Wine Master: Ed van Berkel

**NEXT MEETING...50th Anniversary at Craig's Royal Hotel
Saturday September 18th ...Dress suite**



Jill and Jim with Ballarat President Alex Thals (centre)