

## **11<sup>th</sup> April 2011 THE ADELAIDE CLUB THE ADELAIDE CLUB**

As I have often said, "I never repeat myself!"

On a recent visit to South Australia we took the opportunity to attend a dinner meeting of The Adelaide Beefsteak and Burgundy Club held at the prestigious Adelaide Club on North terrace. The venue was familiar to us as we had been there in 1996 when Alexandra and Christie's Beach Clubs hosted a Convention. One does not just walk in. One rings the bell for admittance. It is that sort of lovely old Club with more than a hint of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century about it but has moved on with the times. The barber's chair remains in the basement but the huge barrels of maturing port have been downsized and the cord telephone exchange upgraded.

Adelaide President Peter Johnston greeted us warmly and figuratively took us under his wing for the evening, seating us on his right and left side at dinner. But first we were served delicious canapés comprising crab meat tarts, mussel soup shots, Asiatic oysters and crab meat toast in the shape of McDonald's hamburgers. All wines were masked and we began with what was later revealed to be 2008 DiGiorgio Family Sparkling Pinot Noir, Coonawarra. The family has taken over the vineyards once owned by the Redman Family who sold out their "Rouge Homme" vineyard to Lindeman's in 1963.

There were other visitors, from Burnside Club and the General Secretary (Craig Thornquest's) uncle, who had helped form several clubs in Queensland. It was mentioned that there were really no guests, but rather visitors from other clubs. We have met many from the Adelaide Club over the years and it was all a bit of a whirl of activity as we caught up with them. A week or so before the meeting one of my second cousins, who is a winemaker on contract at Orlando, took us on a tour of the winery. Among the old photos Keith Gramp featured and it was particularly pleasing to meet him again. Keith was our Club's guest at our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations at the Hotel Windsor in 1992. I remember that he won the raffle prize and then generously re-donated it. I was Winemaster at the time and recalled how he had played me the supreme compliment of buying a dozen of one of the wines I served, Yarra Yering No1 from the Yarra Valley. Not normally one to contradict Keith said, "No Jim, that is not quite right. I bought two dozen!" He certainly knows his wine as this blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Malbec is still drinking superbly 21 years from vintage.

Paul Kershaw, whom we sat opposite at the dinner just as we had done at the Sunday lunch at the Wellington Convention last year, was Winemaster/Foodmaster and treated us to some excellent food and wine befitting the Club's 57<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The entree comprised Traditional Smoked Salmon- egg white and yellow, capers, red onion, sour cream, caviar and lime. The whites, one of which was served in a magnum, provoked much discussion. They turned out to be both Rieslings, and from the same maker but worlds apart in style. The 1993 magnum Paulets The 1<sup>st</sup> Phaewyn was full of toasty rich flavours while the 2005 Polish Hill River was a young, citrus filled crisp wine. I was surprised by its age and would not have been surprised had it been 2010 vintage! A great wine, it was named the world's best Riesling at the 11<sup>th</sup> Canberra International Riesling Challenge, beating 496 other entries.

While preparing for the main course, Adelaide Past President Martin Keith had some reminiscences with us. When Martin was President he made an excellent speech at the Townsville Saturday night dinner based on opening lines of novels. I mentioned that I had used the idea when making a speech to 200 retired bank officers on the sesquicentenary of the

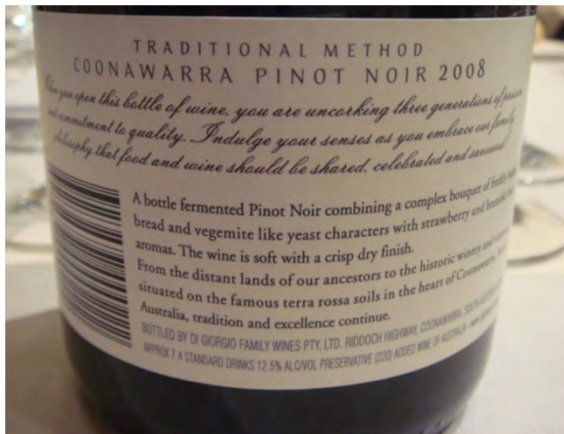
National Australia Bank. I suggested that if some past authors were asked to write a history of the Bank they might start, say, if it were Jane Austen in her book titled "Banking on Pride and Prejudice": "It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a Bank". While Charles Dickens in his book "A Tale of Two Cities": "It was the best of banks, it was the worst of banks.....it was a bank much like the present". Daphne du Maurier in "Rebanker", "Last night I dreamt I went to the Bank again" and so on with a lot more nonsense. As I explained to Martin, Tom Lehrer said "Plagiarise plagiarise but remember always to call it Research!" Earlier in May of 2007 Martin, his wife Julie and General Secretary John Macklin and Rosemary had accepted our Club's invitation to our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary dinner at the QPO (the former Kew Post Office). What an enjoyable night that was.

Tonight our main course was superbly cooked medium rare Chateaubriand served with Chateau Potatoes, button mushrooms and Béarnaise sauce. Once again there was much discussion on the wines, and there being a lectern handy members chosen to comment were soon in full flight. Jill and I were very much impressed by the way the other members listened attentively to their comments. The wines proved to be 2004 Chain of Ponds, The Amadeus Cabernet Sauvignon (Adelaide Hills) and 2002 Tapestry Shiraz, McLaren Vale. We finished with Adelaide Club Mixed Cheese Plate including Blue, Cheddar, Camembert/Brie lavoush biscuits and dried fruits followed by post dinner coffee and chocolates. The port was an old favourite of mine and one familiar to our Club members, the Peter Lehman Fortified, this one being the 1997 The King AD2018 60% Shiraz 40% Touriga Nacional. Menus and tasting notes were distributed.

During the course of the evening I was invited to talk a little about the origins of our Club and its history. Peter Johnston kindly presented me with one of the new B&B Club ties which I am looking forward to wearing at our next luncheon.

After the meeting Martin Keith showed us around the Club premises and escorted us back to our accommodation. It had been a most enjoyable night where we felt very much at ease and I can only reinforce what I have been saying for years and that is when you travel do take the opportunity to visit other clubs. We too welcome visitors, who need only to tap into our website [www.nital.org](http://www.nital.org) for details of our next meeting.

Some photos follow:







Clockwise from above left: Keith Gramp in former days, Keith, Jim, Jill and Martin Keith, Adelaide Vice President Brian Lilley, with Adelaide President Peter Johnston, General Secretary Craig Thornquest.

Jim Freebairn