

STEELS CREEK ESTATE

# NEWSLETTER



*Steels Creek Estate*

June 2011

## Welcome

Hello again to all the friends of Steels Creek Estate – this Newsletter captures the happenings to date in our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary year and also looks at some of the events to come. Our Email friends have been receiving monthly updates including advice of “specials” at cellar door to celebrate our 30<sup>th</sup> year. We encourage all Newsletter recipients to move to receiving our news via this very efficient electronic means. You can drop us an email requesting electronic communication or go online to our web site and subscribe to our email newsletters. Or of course when you next visit let us know your email address.

## At the Cellar door

Despite moving into the winter months you are always welcome to visit us at cellar door where the welcome will be warm. Pop in and have a chat whilst trying our wines – the reds are sure to also warm you up!

## Recent release at Cellar Door

The **Cabernet Sauvignon 2003** is just about sold out and will be very shortly making way for the **2004**. We have been labelling this wine in readiness for its release and also trying the odd bottle to see how it has developed. It has been extremely satisfying to see that this wine is looking exceptional and living up to its 93 point rating from James Halliday – “plenty of depth to the texture and structure, the blackcurrant fruit with just a touch of earth, good length and finish”.

Current wines on tasting are; the 2003 Shiraz, from a low yielding year, this is a concentrated and powerful wine which reflects cool climate berry, spice and pepper characteristics and has a hint of licorice; the 2005 Chardonnay, luscious fruit elegantly integrated with subtle French oak and great length; and 2008 Colombard, delicate lychee bouquet with a crisp zesty lemon finish.

**All our wines may be ordered online at [www.steelsckestate.com.au](http://www.steelsckestate.com.au)** or you can simply call us to place your order. Remember, we offer discounts for six pack and twelve pack purchases and free freight to the Melbourne metro area and excellent freight rates, courtesy of Australia Post, elsewhere in Australia.

## In the vineyard

We have progressed through another growing season and now the vines are just about in their dormancy. It has been another challenging year with abundant rains through spring and well into summer. And yes,

this rain presented its fair share of problems ranging from the dreaded downy and powdery mildews to excessive vigour and large berry size. The latter issue culminated in the odd botrytis break out at harvest in both the whites and reds. We managed to combat the majority of these issues with judicious crop and foliage thinning, additional protective sprays and very selective picking.

We will be commencing pruning soon and also all the other “off season” chores of trellis repairs and planning the fertiliser program. We may also get the chance to replant some of vines that died as a consequence of Black Saturday in 2009.

It is anticipated that all the rain in 2010/11 will set us up for a great start to the 2012 season as the sub soil water has been fully replenished. And hence the cycle continues.

## In the Winery

Despite the challenges in the vineyard we achieved both good yields and quality of fruit. Yields were pretty well back to our normal levels. Colombard was a little difficult to get to full ripeness but should still give us that customary zesty and refreshing style of wine. Chardonnay suffered from some botrytis but selective picking resulted in good quality fruit. The Shiraz being a “thinner” skin variety also experienced some botrytis but with the ferment almost complete is looking typical with the customary pepper and spice and mouth filling palate. The Cabernet Sauvignon was an enigma this season. We expected larger berries due to the rainfall but to our surprise the berries remained small. This is also nearing completion of fermentation and it is showing all the signs of a very concentrated and complex wine.

If you are visiting cellar door soon, a barrel sample of these wines may be available.

We have bottled both the 2010 Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon and whilst we only have small quantities of each they both will be well worth the wait for release.

## Gardens and Landscaping

All the rain this year may have caused some challenges in the vineyard but not so for the replanted and repaired gardens. The new velvet ash trees for the driveway have each grown by 1 metre since being planted in September without ever needing to be watered. The autumn colours in the vineyard have now finished with last week’s gusty northerly winds picking up the remaining leaves on the cabernet and tossing them across the paddocks. The velvet ashes still boldly hold on to most of their bright yellow

foliage but not for much longer with winter only days away.

Planting of the circular succulent garden in front of cellar door is now finally complete and the plants are thriving. The rabbits and wombats are providing their own challenges to the growth of this garden and keep us busy replanting for what they eat or dig up.

Most of our fruit trees have now recovered sufficiently from the fire so we have again been able to enjoy home grown fruit and jams, though the lemon tree does nothing but grow green leaves so it is up for replacement.



## Environmental recovery

Regrowth in the bush areas of our land have been vigorous however it does come with a lot of weeds and an unsustainable number of new trees. In the space of an 8 inch circle you can easily have 5 or more new gum trees all racing upwards to a height of over 2 metres. Left on their own I guess the strongest trees will eventually push over or shade out the weaker ones though the result will be a lot of tall skinny trees. In order to have our forest areas filled with larger trees we have now begun a program to thin out some of the weaker gum trees. This also enables us access to clean out the weeds.

## Shortest Lunch

We will be participating in the Shortest Lunch again this year over the weekend of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> June. Stephen from Red Kitchen is serving a choice of braised lamb with winter root vegetables and a mushroom ragout or a vegetarian and gluten free dish of braised, spiced brassicas and root vegetables with toasted almonds and roast onion pilaf, both served with dressed greens.

Come along and enjoy some great food accompanied by our wines to take away those winter chills. Even if the weather is cold and wet you know you will be warm and snug inside our winery at Steels Creek Estate. As always Simon will be on the tasting bench to answer any of your wine making questions.

Further details of the event may be obtained at [www.shortestlunch.com.au](http://www.shortestlunch.com.au) or where you are receiving this Newsletter in the mail, the attached brochure.



## Facebook

Do you fb? Steels Creek Estate now has its own fb page. Become our fb friend by clicking the Like button on our page and keep up-to-date with all the happenings in the vineyard, winery, cellar door and our garden. Lots of new pictures too from the 2011 vintage!

## 2011 – Our 30th year – June special

Our anniversary special for the month of June is a 20% discount on case purchases (mixed or straight dozen) for our Newsletter recipients. If you cannot make it to cellar door in June for this offer just order online at [www.steelsckestate.com.au](http://www.steelsckestate.com.au) and we will apply the extra discount to your purchase.

Hope you enjoyed our brief summary of events at Steels Creek Estate. We are always willing to elaborate further the next time you visit. We look forward to seeing you at our biggest weekend of the year, the shortest lunch on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of June or sometime in the near future.

Regards,

Simon and Joanne



*Steels Creek Estate*

1 Sewell Road Steels Creek VIC  
PO Box 282 Yarra Glen VIC 3775  
Phone (03) 5965 2448

Email: [scemail@steelsckestate.com.au](mailto:scemail@steelsckestate.com.au)  
Web: [www.steelsckestate.com.au](http://www.steelsckestate.com.au)