

The Cellar Club President's Report for 2022 -2023

10 May 2023

Good Evening and welcome to the AGM for the Cellar Club. It is my pleasure to present the annual report.

The club like so many organisations has been through some harrowing times as we have come out of Covid in the last three years. It is easy to forget but also understandable how many of our members have had some severe restrictions and limitations imposed on them both in terms of health and travel, employment and mandates and just the general enjoyment we had all previously taken a little for granted.

Twelve months ago we were coming to an end of sorts, still a little unsure, but it is a pleasure to acknowledge that **the club has continued to function well with your valued support and involvement**. This has included winemaker tastings, where the need arose tasting presented by committee members and some last minute scrambling to ensure a tasting went ahead. There were challenges but your attending monthly was the key.

The essence of an annual report is being thorough but succinct, and that is my aim tonight.

Much about the club is in fine heart. Membership is holding well. For the few who have left the club we have had more new members and a good number of guests for our tasting programme. Current membership is 62 with a committee of 8, plus 5 life members. In those terms we are always keen to grow that membership for viability, to encourage regular attendance and sociability, that being a club strength. Our target is always your friends and younger enthusiasts as members, with a chance to mix and mingle and to welcome guests.

To remind everyone, the **annual 12 event programme** (in 2022 and 2023) has included a diversity of events

- **Two club dinners** in the city (at Field and Green , Istana Malaysia) and our club's annual BBQ (at Derek Thompson's superb venue in January each year) - these have seen consistent numbers attending
- **The Eight structured tastings** at the Community Centre have included wineries such as Te Mata, Esk Valley, Brookfields, Forrest Estate, and wines from Victoria, the eclectic 'Fun with Bubbles' evening, the 2021 Wine Awards evening, and a NZ Rose tasting.
- Twelfth meeting is tonight's **AGM** for 2022 – 2023, and a chance to enjoy wines from the club cellar.

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It was a revelation that when we surveyed the meetings that we had 303 attend actual tastings (including 18 guests) during this last year and over the previous 5 years the total numbers had ranged between 257 & 297 !!

We have met our **liquor licensing obligations** and it is pleasing to report the licensing process for the coming year is now completed thank you Richard, but not without its challenges. Equally we have fulfilled our **website licensing requirement** and **the website** remains one of our main windows to the membership and for the interested public to peruse. My thanks are extended to Steve Eades. After spending some years on the committee, Steve continues to oversee our website, negotiating with our web providers and updating information from the committee and we are grateful for your support.

Equally, our further window on the world, though primarily it is to our members, is our **monthly emailed newsletter** that looks both back and forward and conveys something of the issues the committee has grappled with as well as wine news. My thanks are to **Evelyn** for your expertise, your turn of phrase and diligence in addressing the club's need to communicate widely, effectively and well.

Our **club finances** remain sound, with modest capital accumulation, balanced books, obligations fully met, and the completion of a monthly balance sheet allowing the committee to regularly monitor our financial situation. My thanks are extended to **Wayne** for his ongoing diligence and finely crafted forward planning, cost containment and monthly budgeting, all to keep us in the black and able to keep subscriptions modest and to ensure the club provides the customary subsidisation and maintains a modest cellar for benefit of members.

Ours is certainly a reliable working committee with an array of tasks assigned and fulfilled. I want to sincerely thank the committee as a whole and individually for the work that has been undertaken - *sometimes* under duress, - *sometimes* in the immediate days before a tasting when some wineries were forced to withdraw, - *sometimes* when the routine organising of a tasting presented a challenge, - *sometimes* from initiatives within the committee, but always with good grace and reliability.

This year I actually think some on the committee genuinely thrived on being the source of some wine wisdom on the night with support from those members attending and your forbearance and participation. We did have **several such member-fronted evenings** and they ensured the programme continued, but we will strive to ensure that this is the *exception rather than the norm*, as there was at times something of a challenge of timing and making it happen.

The **committee's tasks and responsibilities** have involved the secretarial role, the treasurer, handling membership matters, communications and the newsletter promos, licensing, logistics and venue booking, several rosters to manage, the catering and suppers, and organising tastings and dinners, along with wine deliveries and liaison with the wine industry in general.

To all on the committee may I reiterate my considerable and appreciative thanks. You continue to be a pleasure to work with, co-operatively meeting many obligations and ensuring it all ticks over seamlessly. A functioning committee is what lies behind any successful club and as members we are indebted to you all. I look forward to this continuing, with thanks.

This year we are recognising extended service to the club. Two of our long serving committee members, one a past president and one an invaluable secretary, are standing down after a number of years of involvement. **Anne** as a past president, current vice president, our membership convenor, often the point of contact, front of house, organiser of many valued tasks and often the face of the committee, we are indebted to you for your constancy and ability to adapt and respond to the club's needs. Yours has been invaluable work, certainly appreciated and it has ensured much has worked smoothly. And please everyone keep those screw caps rolling in. Our indebtedness and sincere thanks to you, Anne. Certainly our rose champion.

In turn Jenny has been a prime continuity person for the club, accurate and timely, as secretary the source of reminders and ensuring we get everything done, a champion of rostering and someone for whom the tasks at times must have felt endless. And thank you Richard for so much that you have assisted with. **Jenny**, you have been tireless behind the scenes as well as contributing above and beyond organisationally. We know you both, Anne and Jenny, enjoy your wine so I am sure this has had something to do with keeping commitments going with enthusiasm. Thanks for your enduring assistance with such distinction for these many years in these committee roles. We look forward to your continuing membership involvement, support and advice.

As a result, we are **contemplating then some resultant change on the committee**. We look forward to planning for the next 12 months with some subtle adaption but continuity. We thank members for your assistance at the venue and with rosters. We will strive to respond to feedback and manage challenges such as those for the last 3 years, to keep the club vibrant, relevant and successful. Some support matters will see us looking beyond the committee and some ex officio involvement. I look forward to that eventuating.

May I conclude by stressing it is your supportive membership and interest and commitment that has ensured the club's longevity. In *vino* there is a social bond of wonderful people. We thank you all for that. Beyond 40 years, in fact 42. Thank you for your attendance tonight. We invite you to enjoy tonight's supper and the wines from your club's cellar. Some of these wines you will know I am sure. There are some superb wines to try, there is plenty, but modest pours please to ensure we share the single bottles do go round.

Murray Jaspers

President, *The Cellar Club Inc.*