

DEAR

What a beautiful Summer we have had. A little rain in Nov/Dec to keep the growth of the vines going and since then, dry, cooler sunny weather to keep the fruit growing and ripening.. Lovely weather for working in the Vineyard, but sunny enough for the vines to thrive. The grapes have set a perfect crop and are lush and green so should produce enough energy to ripen the beautiful fruit that is there. So far ....a perfect season.

### MR. HALLIDAY

We are slowly getting better scores for our red wines and it appears to be a combination of age and vineyard management. Each year we watch the progress and development of the fruit and each year we think of ways that we can help or improve that development. The result is a slow, steady tweaking of the way we look after each variety and when this is combined with the vines ageing and developing their own level of fruiting, the outcome is a steady improvement in flavours. With Riesling, we have developed a pruning system that we think produces the best fruit on three different parts of the block.. Our new Riesling vines will start producing this year and we are excited about the quality we think we will get. Scores in Halliday's 2018 Wine Companion are listed in our price list. The highlights are the scores for Magpie Hill Wines. 2016 Riesling **98**, 2015 Cab Sav **96** points and 2015 Shiraz **97** points. **BOTH** the Shiraz and Riesling have been included in Mr Halliday's TOP 100 wines for the year. Since then we have received a **99** for our 2017 Magpie Hill Riesling. We think this is the first time Halliday has given an Aussie Riesling **99**. And of course it sold out overnight. The 2018 is 6 weeks from picking and hopefully will continue the high standard.



### CELLAR DOOR.

Freddie Batchelor is our main contact at the Cellar and her job is to look after all our Newsletter customers. She is also one of the three brewers who take it in turn to make a "Duke's Brew" for staff consumption on those hot afternoons after we have all finished work. It is nice to catch up on all the days activities with an interesting Lager, Pilsner, Bitter, or Stout .A nice finish to a long hot day when we need to quench our thirsts rather than savour a lovely Porongurup wine. Freddie also maintains the Mailing list and will ring you perhaps once a year (more often if you are on the list for receiving new releases) to check addresses and to ensure that you still wish to get the Newsletter. She is the one who will normally greet you at the Cellar and is also the one who packs and despatches your wine.

## NEW RELEASES

We will release our 2016 Reds in February. We made the decision in 2016 that the fruit looked so good that we would only make Magpie Hill and not produce any Single Vineyard reds. We are delighted with that decision and the 2016 Magpie Hills reflect that. They have a delicate and fragrant character that has Duke excited and the ageing process will produce some really unique wines. There is something very European about the elegance and flavour profile of both wines

MAGPIE HILL 2016 CABERNET SAUVIGNON, \$180 per six pack

MAGPIE HILL 2016 SHIRAZ, \$180 per six-pack. Now available

INVITATION SHIRAZ 2016 was made by Andrew Hoadley (La Violetta) from some fruit that he selected from our vineyard. He is a quirky winemaker who produces wines that are noticed. He has used some whole bunches in the ferment and followed this with some powerful French oak treatment to produce a lovely wine that will age for many years. A beauty to put away.

INVITATION SHIRAZ 2016 \$180 per six-pack.

To pre order any of the wines simply email Freddie and she will put you on the list.

## 2018 VINTAGE

MAGPIE HILL RIESLING.....We have had long discussions about increasing production , but with the hand picking and very slow pressing of the fruit we use it is not possible to get any extra without compromising quality. Naturally our decision is to retain the present production level. Along with the processing, the cost of producing the wine has increased to the point where we need to look at our pricing. The 2018 MAGPIE HILL RIESLING will be \$252 per six-pack. The SINGLE VINEYARD RIESLING will remain at \$260 per dozen for at least the next vintage. We will stop production of the OFF DRY (AUTUMN) RIESLING and instead will step up production of the SPARKLING RIESLING which we keep running out of. We have stocks of both SV RIESLING and SV OFF-DRY RIESLING available, but with a score of 97 the dry 2017 SV RIESLING is going fast.

ROSÉ was a success story for us in 2017. We won a GOLD MEDAL with it. Our Melbourne agent Simon Wills (A European Rosé importer and Distributor) declared it “the best Rosé I have ever sold” and James Halliday gave it the thumbs up. The result was a sell out well before Xmas. We have pruned a section of our reds this year specifically for Rose and we hope to produce the same dry, crisp wine with the same palate appeal and finish as the 2017, BUT A LOT MORE OF IT!!!

Porongurup has some unique accommodation and beautiful walks and wildflowers in season and is home to Cellar doors at 7 wineries (some open by appointment only) Come and see us soon. [www.porongurup.com](http://www.porongurup.com)



## ONE, TWO, THREE

I have just had hernia surgery and so have a few of my friends  
It seems it all catches up with us those years of stretches and bends  
But a good friend recently told me that someone he knew quite well  
Had told him the story of a friend of his .so it's true for me to tell

The surgeon at the pre op told him what to expect  
What suffering was likely to fix the long neglect  
The very slow recovery that inevitably occurred  
And the pain and suffering and the repair that is incurred

He went into detail of the various bits affected  
And the work to be carried out with surgery he'd perfected  
He didn't miss the gory bits of what's chopped out and where  
And then concluded that the mesh will work we hope that it won't tear

By then the prep was done and the patient rose to go  
"But just before we finish", made the man's departure slow  
The surgeon had some final words to end the interview  
There is a chance, although it's rare, I've only known a few

The tone of voice had a subtle change, the lightness disappeared  
The conversation shifted in the direction it was steered  
There is a chance he repeated that a sudden tissue tear  
Could do unexpected damage to the region under there

He pointed south, below the place the surgery was to show  
There is a chance he said again that a testicle may need to go  
It's very rare indeed but in your case can't be dismissed  
The patients' reaction was that it would be sorely missed

The surgeon reassured him that he'd function just as well with one  
And he knew lots of men that had the removal done.  
This was little reassurance for a man at his primal best  
And he wanted some statistics to put the doctor to his test

The surgeon named a website for the patient to explore  
He'd used prosthetic ones numerous times before  
Your wife won't know the difference she won't know it's taken place  
So get onto the website and see what's in the global market place

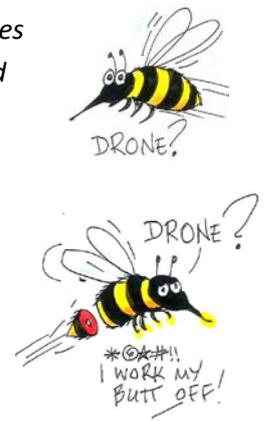
The first thing that confused him before the price they charge  
Was the simple box to tick medium, small or large?  
He skipped that part and went right on to pricing just to see  
\$75 each but special for today; buy two, get one free!

Duke

*"The male of the honeybee species without sting or honey; A drudge; An idle person who lives on the labour of others; A pilotless vessel or aircraft controlled remotely."*



*Freddie has flown aircraft since she was a kid and with great confidence said "I can fly anything" So we have bought her a drone(?????) The aim is to take videos of the vineyard to see where we have any abnormalities and hopefully help us manage the place better. We have yet to assemble the machine for its first test flight....Watch this space.... (duck?)*



## **DEGUSTATION DINNER**

*The dinner which was planned 12 months ago underwent some radical last minute changes. Our Chef failed to turn up to 3 appointments to look at matching the menu with the current wines and eventually we had to make the decision to change chefs. The result was that the dinner planned for The Albany Club was moved to Garrison Restaurant on the top of Mount Clarence in Albany. A stunning location, with some of the best views in town. Chefs John and Leo Saville Wright produced 8 dishes to match the 10 wines. The result was a spectacular dinner. Regular Gourmand Max Beatson declared it the best degustation dinner he had ever eaten (and he has eaten a few). Garrison regularly serves Duke's wines and is a great destination for lunch or dinner for Albany visitors. All at Duke's are grateful for the effort that Garrison went to, to make our dinner a memorable one.*

## **THE FUTURE**

*After some years postponing retirement, Duke and Hilde have decided that perhaps they are mortal and that the onset of old age is a reality that can't be avoided. With no children or grandchildren ever intending to take over the property' they have decided to put the business on the market. With sales increasing rapidly and good agents in 4 states along with a faithful and supportive Newsletter following, the business is viable and dynamic. Perfect for someone who loves good wine and has a creative marketing ability. Duke would love to retain a fatherly interest in the viticultural activity into the future if that fits with new owners. Duke expects to officially have the place listed by Easter and it will hopefully be sold as an ongoing business with stock and plant included. Winning the Best Riesling awards from James Halliday is of course the highlight after Duke's 1999 statement that "I think this site will grow some beautiful Riesling" The award has helped the timing of the decision to sell. As our son Wade said, "mission accomplished".*

CHEERS FROM ALL OF US AT DUKE'S

