

Dear,

It seems like years since the last Newsletter. It's amazing what 3 weeks holiday does to the memory. Yes we have had our first real holiday since arriving in Porongurup in 1998. A quick tour of England and the Germany Riesling area, with Doug and Jane who come to WA each year to stay with their Daughter (Kate) and Griff (our son) and their two little girls. We thought it was time we reciprocated. We were well cared for and except for adding several kilos from good beer, German sausage and lots of good Rieslings. We thoroughly enjoyed the trip. Now it is back to reality with pruning (for 100 days) starting in the first week of June.

### **10 VINTAGES AT DUKES, CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?**

The many friends who farewelled us when we left the city nearly 12 years ago could not have imagined that we would eventually reach this milestone. We have won gold medals for each of the three varieties we grow and our enthusiastic new Winemaker, Martin Cooper thinks our new vintages are **the best yet** and promises us more success to come. We have survived three droughts, a flood and a bushfire that went perilously close to wiping us out. We have accumulated a huge amount of knowledge about our particular block and its idiosyncrasies. We have retained a lot of wonderful old friends and have made a lot of new ones as well. We have put together a flock of top quality Suffolk sheep and gathered a menagerie of animals that populate the farm.

We have built our unusual but workable cellar door and stocked it with wines. We have watched the wine industry suffer from the biggest oversupply in history, the controlling influence of supermarket chains and the cheap under \$5 wines that producers are trying to sell. We have seen the emergence of the small Porongurup Region as one of Australia's outstanding Boutique wine Regions.

We are now looking forward to some more exciting years and some more exciting wines. We also look forward to the continued support from all our Newsletter customers who have helped us survive some very tough years.

When our 10<sup>th</sup> vintage wines are released we hope to offer you some superb wines to help us celebrate.

### **A NEW OFFER FOR OLD (& YOUNG?) CUSTOMERS.**

Put your name down for automatic delivery of your favourite variety or varieties with each new release. We will automatically send the wine to your nominated address and bill you at our special "First 500" rate of 10% off normal cellar door price. The enclosed list gives you the choices and if you want a mix of a couple of wines, that is OK.

\* \* \* \* SEE ENCLOSED ORDER FORM FOR THIS OFFER \* \* \* \*

There were only 500 "First 500" members, so this is our opportunity to offer something special to our newer regular purchasers.

Of course if you wish to discontinue your automatic order just let us know and we will remove you from the list.

## LE TOUR DE BRUSSELS.

The ferry left from Dover on a flat and calm North Sea  
For the 2 hour trip to Dunkirk as smooth as it could be.

The touring map was simple from Dunkirk to Trier  
Straight through Brussels, in two hours we'd be there.

Now the Belgians are a casual lot and leave some things to chance.  
The omissions on their road maps led us a merry dance.  
The motorway went straight to town; the ring road was quite plain.  
A ten minute drive round Brussels, then the Motorway again.

With the first sign on the outskirts the details disappeared,  
The second sign made it obvious that all was as we feared.  
But four confident travellers with experience to burn  
We all were very certain there would be no wrong turn.

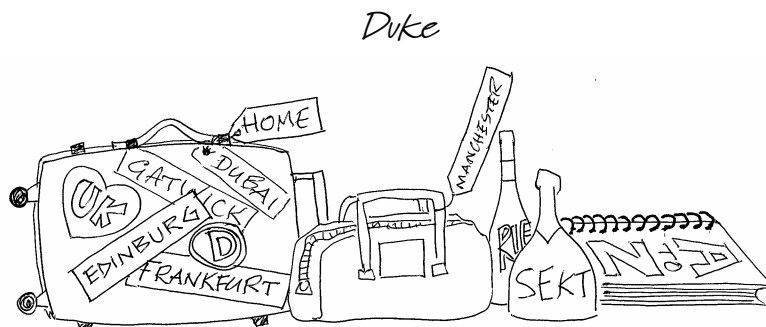
The suburbs grew more dense as the ring road ran round town  
But when we reached the city square we all began to frown  
The tunnels are a feature as they dip beneath the ground  
But we found that they looked just the same the second time around

The third time after two long hours of driving that familiar track  
The same tunnels convinced us to take ourselves right back  
We stopped and asked instructions on which way we should go  
From a Pakistani gentleman who really didn't know.

His advice was "ask a policeman" their English is OK  
Don't ask a Belgian because they won't know the way  
The Africans just speak French and wouldn't know where to go  
But I'm from Pakistan a British colony you know".

His English may have been spot on but directions weren't so good  
So carefully and slowly we went the way we thought we should.  
Eventually with great delight the Motorway was found  
"What did we do in Brussels?" We just drove round and round.

So if you're bound for Europe and short cuts are your thing  
Just try a run through Brussels it's just a simple ring  
Tackle it with confidence, there's no need at all to fear  
But it really is quite possible you'll still be there next year.



## THE WINES.

NEW RELEASES: Cab Sav 2008 ....Medal at the Sydney wine Show

Shiraz 2008 .... Medal at the Sydney Wine Show.

Rose 2010 .... Dry and crisp with strawberry nose. Due July 10th.

SOLD OUT SINCE LAST NEWSLETTER *Magpie Hill Shiraz 2007 and Rose 2009*

RUNNING LOW... Magpie Hill Cab Sav... (In Gourmet Traveller's top 100)

Cab. Sav AND Shiraz 2006

IN THE WINERY 2010 Riesling...crisp and dry.

2010 Magpie Hill Riesling...say no more

2009 and 2010 Reds....all looking very good.

2008 Sparkling Riesling and Shiraz...ready for Xmas.

2009 Magpie Hill Riesling for Sept. release. Fantastic!!

## SOME OF OUR RECENT VERY SPECIAL CELLAR DOOR CUSTOMERS.

- The nice couple who rang from a cruise ship in Albany on the way from Adelaide and who thought so highly of our wines that they hired a car and then drove to see us to get some wine to take on board. We must be doing something right.
- The retired Doctor (and ex Wallaby) from Queensland who called in to try our latest Riesling.  
After exchanging letters for many years it was nice to meet in person.
- The couple from Vancouver Island who dropped in for their second visit ...."We just had to come back and try your latest wines."
- The lovely retired couple from Camberwell who call in every year to sit and enjoy the wines and the views (and the conversation we hope).
- While it is great to sell some wine to people who enjoy it, the real pleasure comes from meeting those people and putting a face to the names. (Even if we have forgotten their names by the next visit)

## SWEET OR DRY RIESLING????

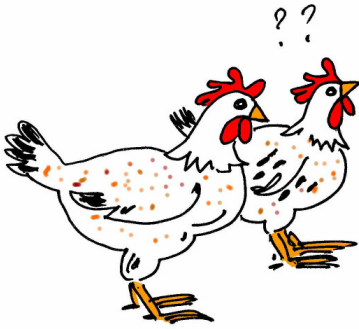
How often have you pondered over a bottle of Riesling, read the label, looked at the area of origin and still been wrong??? An organisation called "THE INTERNATIONAL RIESLING FOUNDATION" has finally come up with an accurate measure that winemakers can use to illustrate the relative sweetness of Rieslings. The end result is a scale that is simple for the consumer to use and gives a very accurate measure to the terms "sweet" or "dry". We will be one of the first wineries in Australia to include the measure on our labels this year. The little arrow on the scale shows you exactly what you can expect. We applaud the work done to establish what will be a simple solution to one of the wine world's dilemmas.



## PERTH, SYDNEY AND BRISBANE TASTINGS

With regular tastings in both Perth and Sydney (and we hope soon in Brisbane) we welcome ideas for new and exciting locations. If you think you have a great venue in mind, please let us know. We hope to have a Perth tasting at the end of spring and be in Sydney again in October.

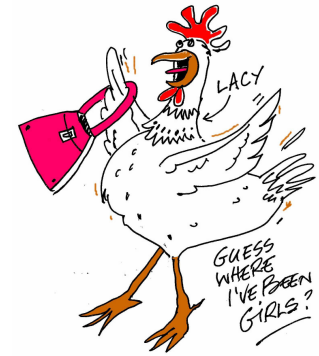
Because at this stage we don't have an agent in Melbourne, Brisbane or Adelaide we are not familiar with possible venues. Your advice would be helpful. We could also do with a good agent there too.



### "LACY" THE TRAVELLING CHOOK

(a true story)

"Lacy" was having a great day  
When curiosity got in the way  
She saw our neighbour's red ute  
And thought that this looks beaut  
And finished five miles away.



You'll be very pleased to know that the neighbour's wife recognised our travelling chook and returned her, wrapped up in a towel, the next day. (not quite 5 miles away, poetic license - more like 5Ks)

Lacy was pecking away,  
When a visitor popped in for a short stay.  
He parked his ute, she hopped on inside.  
Lacy thought, "you beaut!", and went for a ride  
And had to be returned the next day.

*This little ditty was Hilde's attempt at a newsletter poem. She hasn't managed to get Duke to draw the chook of the story. Watch this space??*

Hope you like our "New Releases" option!  
Regards  
Duke  
HILDE