

2018 International Beefsteak & Burgundy Convention

Coonawarra, South Australia

FINAL REPORT



Introduction

The 35th International Beefsteak and Burgundy Convention was held between 9-11 November 2018, in the Coonawarra wine region of South Australia. It was only the second Convention to be held in a recognised wine region.

The event was made possible as a result of a collaboration between the three Beefsteak and Burgundy Clubs in the region: Penola, Black Swans, and Coonawarra. Each Club nominated a minimum of two representatives for the Coonawarra Convention Committee.

The success of the three-day 2018 Convention can be put down to:

- three years of preparation and planning
- a cohesive local committee
- strong community engagement and volunteerism
- strong sponsorship support; cash and in-kind.

Like many previous Conventions, the scheduling of the 2018 event followed a tried-and-tested format:

- Registration opportunity, Friday afternoon/evening
- Welcome Dinner, on Friday evening
- Business Session, on Saturday morning
- Gala Dinner, on Saturday evening
- Sunday Brunch

In addition to the above, a series of tourism experiences were made available to enhance the Convention experience for delegates.

The following report provides an overview of the 2018 Convention activities. For further information about the Convention please contact rickpaltridge@bigpond.com

Registration, Friday 9 November, 12noon-5pm

Some delegates attending the 2018 Coonawarra Convention arrived during the week prior to the Convention officially commencing.

Delegates were required to register at Patrick of Coonawarra cellar door, where they were able to receive their lanyard, registration bag, and enjoy a complementary glass of wine and local cheeses.

The registration bag was designed to showcase foods and wines of the region, as well as provide our sponsors with the chance to include discount vouchers and give-aways. The distinctive bag included: a custom-made cheeseboard made of local pine and fashioned by local craftsmen; complimentary local chocolates and lemonade; a piccolo of Coonawarra wine;

a promotional USB showcasing the Limestone Coast and Wattle Range Council; and a voucher book that enabled delegates to gain discounts from purchases of goods at participating wineries and businesses in Penola and Coonawarra.

Terra Rossa Welcome Dinner, Friday 9 November, 6.30-10.30pm

There were 215 delegates from across Australia and one delegate from Singapore. Additionally, there were 110 Beefsteak and Burgundy members from the Limestone Coast who attended many of the weekend's events. Thus, there was a total of 325 participants at the 2018 Coonawarra Convention.

The Terra Rossa Welcome Dinner commenced at the historic Katnook Estate Woolshed where delegates gathered to enjoy preliminary entrees and local sparkling wines. They were then ushered through to the adjoining Katnook Estate Barrel Shed which had been re-imagined as a distinctive and character-full dining space. Long tables were artfully decorated and arranged to make the most of the evening's venue, allowing guests to be surrounded by floor-to-ceiling wine barrels.



Pictured are vehicles provided by major sponsor Jaguar Land Rover, which delegates could view outside the historic Katnook Estate Woolshed.

Both the Friday and Saturday evening events were hosted by Katnook Estate, and exquisitely catered for by Kent Comley and his team from the renowned Barn Steakhouse, Mount Gambier.

The wines for the Welcome Dinner had been carefully selected by the committee and included winners from the 2018 Limestone Coast Wine Show - which had only concluded the week prior.

A special highlight was the recognition of Mount Gambier member Charlie Miller, OAM, with the presentation of the inaugural perpetual trophy to be presented to the longest continuous member of Beefsteak and Burgundy attending each convention in the future. Charlie set the standard of being a member for 61 years!



Pictured is Long-time Mount Gambier member and regular convention attendee Geoff Banks presenting the perpetual trophy to “extra-long time” co-member Charlie Miller. The cup was donated and named in his honour by the Mount Gambier BS&B Club.

Terra Rossa Welcome Dinner MENU

Scallop cured in elderflower with green strawberry
Coffin Bay Oysters with mojito granita Mayura Station Wagyu tataki with crispy garlic and shallots

Majella NV Minuet
2018 Raidis Estate The Kid Riesling
2016 Leconfield Cabernet Merlot

Quail Saltimbocca With truffled polenta and jus lie

2009 Katnook Estate Merlot
2009 Redman Cabernet Sauvignon Merlot

Limestone Coast Lamb Loin, Lamb Shoulder and Olive Pithivier Celeriac puree, shallots, mushrooms & pan juices

2008 Wynns Select Vineyard V&A Lane
2013 Majella Shiraz

Cheese boards to share L'Artisan Mountain Man
Robe Dairy St Clair Brie

Berry's Creek Mossvale Blue Served with Metro Bakery fruit loaf, muscatels and Lavosh

2004 Zema Estate Family Selection Shiraz
2009 The Roy Kidman Wine Co Roy the Cattleman Coonawarra Shiraz

Business Session, Saturday 10 November, 9am-12 noon

Saturday was a big day for all. Delegates were able to choose from a number of options:

- the General Business meeting – was attended by about 100 delegates, and was held at the Coonawarra Soldiers Memorial Community Hall
- a Garden Tour of two local gardens, in Penola
- a History Tour of the historic Victorian mansion “Yallum Park”, combined with a personal tour through the Mary MacKillop Interpretive Centre,
- a visit to the historic township of Penola
- A visit to the Coonawarra wine region cellar doors, for tastings.

The Business Session was well attended and much discussion took place.

The Bus and Garden Tours concluded at the Coonawarra Community Hall and almost 150 delegates shared a light complimentary lunch with an opportunity to also sample some of the wines tabled the night before.

In the afternoon, 60 delegates took the opportunity to attend a sell-out Master Class of Coonawarra wines, conducted by Sarah Pidgeon – winemaker at Wynns Coonawarra Estate, and Peter Weinberg – winemaker at Brand’s Laira Coonawarra, where the class was held - a short walk from the luncheon venue.

A “hop on–hop off” bus service was provided so that delegates could experience the variety of wine companies and cellar door outlets in the Coonawarra wine region. This initiative was well received.

The Classic Coonawarra Gala Dinner, Saturday 11 November, 7pm-11pm

The Classic Coonawarra Gala Dinner was a glamorous “black-tie” event hosted by Katnook Estate in their Barrel Shed, which had been re-set for a more intimate dining experience. Delegates were entertained by a wonderful jazz ensemble from the internationally famous James Morrison Academy of Music, Mount Gambier.

Some of the best classic back vintages from Coonawarra were on offer for the evening, including a 1996 Redman Cabernet Sauvignon Merlot.

A highlight of the evening was an entertaining three-way discussion of amusing Coonawarra anecdotes by Coonawarra Vignerons’ patrons Wendy Hollick and Doug Balnaves, as well as Greg Clayfield – a former International Winemaker of the Year (1998).



Pictured L-R: Doug Balnaves, Wendy Hollick and Greg Clayfield kept the audience entertained with some amusing anecdotes.

Classic Coonawarra Gala Dinner MENU

Katnook Founder's Block Chardonnay Pinot Noir

Italian Seafood Salad Prawns, calamari, scallops and mussels with fennel and a limoncello dressing

*2016 Balnaves of Coonawarra Chardonnay
2017 Bowen Estate Coonawarra Chardonnay*

Duck Breast With vincotto and caramelised shallot

*2004 Zema Estate Cluny
2012 Whistlepost Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve*

The Barn's Prime Eye Fillet Liquorice braised leeks, kale compote, baby root vegetables, Coonawarra Cabernet and thyme jus

*2008 Katnook Estate Cabernet Sauvignon
2008 Balnaves of Coonawarra The Tally Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon
2008 Bellwether Coonawarra Cabernet*

Dark Chocolate and Cherry Tart With pistachio powder, cherry glaze and kirsch cream

*1996 Redman Cabernet Sauvignon Merlot
2008 Wynns Black Label Cabernet Sauvignon*



Delegates from Broadbeach enjoyed the Gala Dinner in the Katnook Estate Barrel Shed



Delegates enjoying the atmosphere in the Katnook Estate Barrel Shed



Band members from the James Morrison Academy of Music setting the high standard of entertainment and activity on the Saturday evening.

Sunday Brunch, Sunday 11 November, 10am-2pm

Sunday on the lawns at Rymill Coonawarra brought the delegates together for yet another showcase of local produce and wine expertly catered for by chef Kirby Shearing and his staff from Soul Projects. In addition, a coffee van provided hot beverages for all delegates.

A solemn ceremony commemorating the 100th anniversary of the signing of the Armistice was conducted by retd. Colonel Bruce Perks at 11.00am - with the support of other past servicemen.

While the Convention weekend started off with unseasonal showers of rain on Friday, by Sunday the day got considerably warmer. Fortunately for everyone, there was comfort to be found in the shade trees at Rymill. This didn't detract from yet another wonderful opportunity for delegates to meet up with old friends and new ones.

Additional comments

Throughout the weekend complimentary buses were made available to delegates - even those travelling to-and-from Mount Gambier.

The majority of delegates found suitable accommodation in Coonawarra and Penola, with about 15-20 staying in Mount Gambier – 50 kms south of Coonawarra.

A number of delegates and their friends continued to stay on in the Limestone Coast region to take the opportunity to explore other destinations such as: Robe, Naracoorte and Mount Gambier.

All three main events had Coonawarra Beefsteak and Burgundy Club member Peter Muller (pictured below) as the Master of Ceremonies; and he held court with distinction.



Sunday Brunch MENU

Capturing the crowd ...

Hand crafted granola, Robe Dairy yoghurt and milk (Soy available)

Rymill Coonawarra Brut Sparkling 2016

Rye wafer, robe dairy fromage blanc, beetroot roasted in Pendleton Estate pear vinegar & EVO

Leconfield Syn Rouge

Salted tartlet, splendid egg, Amblemead braised pork

Shared table fare ...

Activated charcoal bun, Coorong Mullet, mayo

Rymill Gewürztraminer 2018

Smoked Humpy Creek whole chicken in chimichurri, shoots and greens, corn, soft tortilla

Rymill Classic Cabernet 2015

Middle eastern mixed pea falafel wrap, spiced yoghurt, green chilli mayo v gf
Fry up of Amblemead bacon, fried Splendid Eggs, potato hash

Whistlepost Rose

Hot Smoked local snapper, gribiche, herbs from Petticoat lane
'Nose to tail' Amblemead pork with assorted garnishes

Koonara Angels Peak Shiraz 2016

Pick me up ...

Soul Projects Tiramisu – sponge soaked in Mikro Coffee, mascarpone, tia maria and chocolate

Sunday afternoon concluded with another opportunity to visit the two gardens in Penola as well as another visit to the historic home of the founder of Coonawarra John Riddoch's "Yallum Park" and the Mary MacKillop Centre.

An Ambrose golf afternoon – at the Penola Golf Club link (pictured below), was also well supported by delegates who wanted to get every opportunity to experience some more Coonawarra hospitality.



Conclusion

The Coonawarra Convention Committee consisted of members from each of the three local Beefsteak and Burgundy clubs, and every member brought their own special expertise to each meeting. The committee enjoyed the camaraderie of meetings; often enjoyed over a bottle of Coonawarra cabernet.

It was not an easy task holding a convention of this magnitude in a country region but the Coonawarra Convention Committee were extremely fortunate in firstly, having a product that was so easy to "sell"; namely the historic town of Penola and the internationally recognised wine region of Coonawarra. Secondly, the commitment of numerous sub-committee representatives – primarily volunteers, made the executive's role just that much easier. Finally, we can recommend that it is worth considering partnering with another club or two when considering hosting a convention.

As a final comment, the Coonawarra Convention Committee very sincerely thanks all the delegates who attended; all the sponsors who supported the event with cash and in-kind support, and the communities of Coonawarra and Penola who so generously supported the event.

A local photographer was employed to take photographs at the Gala Dinner on Saturday evening. Those photographs have been placed on the main Beefsteak & Burgundy website. They can also be viewed at <https://goo.gl/d7FzpB> with enquiries to Marcus Jones via his website.



Pictured L-R: President Mark Jennings and Gerri Jennings



Past President Bruce Perks



Pictured are members of the 2018 Coonawarra Convention Committee L-R: Tim Kidman, Wendy Hollick, Marie Valenzuela, Rick Paltridge, Dru Reschke, Michelle Stehbens, and Brian Smibert.

This report was presented on 30 November 2018.