



Newsletter Summer 2009

In the last newsletter I reported that the 2004 Clayfield Grampians Shiraz was successful in 'The 2006 Great Australian Shiraz Challenge' where it received a Gold Medal Award and earned second place overall.

In addition to this fantastic achievement this wine recently performed very well against some very classy competition in the 2008 WINESTATE World's Greatest Shiraz Challenge III. Earning a five star review and Top Award in its Category

The judges commented: **"Lovely spicy mulberry aromas-very vibrant. Impressive palate, still very youthful, showing a degree of elegance and with long, lingering, lively spicy flavours and a silky smooth mouthfeel."**

Importantly our wine was selected in the Judges Top Ten Shiraz wines of the world and also selected in the 10 Best Shiraz from Australia.

I really like the 2004, but the 2005 Shiraz is developing into a real beauty, to my palate it offers fuller and juicier flavour, both have received 96 points from James Halliday. It depends a lot on the type food you choose to accompany these wines or whether you would just like to have a glass of wine. The 2005 is

great on its own; I like the 2004 with a juicy BBQ steak.

The 2006 Massif Shiraz 'Thomas Wills Shiraz' was reviewed by Max Allen in Australian Gourmet Traveller magazine just before Christmas.

Max wrote: **"Simon Clayfield's take on drink now Grampians Shiraz is right on song, lots of black, brambly flavours of soil, toast and oak and ample but supple tannin. Great gear. Drink with steak and mushroom pie."**

The Massif Shiraz has been received very well by visitors to the winery. Recently it received a Silver Medal Award from the Western Districts Wine Challenge. We are very pleased with this result because the Massif Shiraz was selected by the judges amongst the 5 finalist wines from which the Wine Challenge chooses the competition winner.



The Massif Shiraz has been in bottle for almost six months it was released soon after bottling and is now exhibiting spicy pepper and plums with lovely oak and tannin. I expect this wine to cellar well and although it's drinking nicely now it is not my 'take on drink now Shiraz' as described by Max Allen. Massif is our other label and sometimes people think that second labels are wines made as drink now wine types. Massif is made in the same way as our Black Label Shiraz it basically different because of oak type and vineyard composition.

I'm happy to report that the vineyard wasn't affected by the spring frosts. We did experience 6 mornings of severe frost but our use of frost protection measures utilizing overhead water spraying and little bonfires worked effectively, the crop looked to be one of the best we've had but due to proposed crop thinning we harvest a modest crop.

The hot and dry weather is upon us with the last few weeks really pushing temperature extremes to the limits. The hot period has caused some leaves to dehydrate and fall off the vines, the fruit that is on the less vigorous plants will be removed shortly to ensure the vines store carbohydrate in the wood rather than wasting it on fruit which is unlikely to ripen properly.

I sympathize with the grapegrowers in parts of Victoria who have experienced severe damage to their vines ruining a sizeable amount of their crop. Having had several vintages written off by fire and frosts ourselves it not a pleasant experience to endure.

Our next challenge is to manage the little volume of water we have remaining in our dams to ensure the remaining fruit goes through veraison evenly and eventually fully ripens. We usually thin out the bunches anyway, just this year we will remove a bit more.

Vintage should start in mid-March if the weather continues as is. In cooler years we can have the fruit hang on the vine an extra month, but in the last few years the vintage has begun earlier. Last week I noticed the first signs of the fruit beginning to colour.

And now for something completely different....

Many people who visit ask when vintage begins here, often the harvesting date will occur around similar dates, 'early or late' vintage really are relative terms depending on the vineyard site and vineyard management. The bulk of Shiraz in the Grampians region will be harvested within a 'ripeness window' but some fruit may be harvested a fortnight earlier or later than this 'window'. Generally speaking early or late terms refer to a fairly narrow period. In exceptional years the fruit maintains its condition and ripens over a longer period the conditions favourable for this are warm sunny days followed by very cool nights. I clearly remember crushing Shiraz harvested at night time during March back in the early 90's which was a frigid 2 degrees C!

I have heard on several occasions people attributing these variances to global warming and climate change; if you look at the weather records past droughts have been as persistent

as the present one, we have cool years and we have hot ones.

I am not a climate change skeptic but I'm not convinced by the popularly accepted 'cause'. I'm certainly concerned about the health of our planet and believe that we have been mismanaging our resources for far too long. I've been told I've got my head buried in the sand and I'm ignorant on these issues, however my opinion is quite the contrary.

Firstly, the damage that humans have caused to our environment including massive deforestation, excessive pollution of the atmosphere, waterways and land by pesticides and toxins, and the overuse of water in arid regions of this country must stop.



Big old Redgum trees like this great 300 year old example living on our property are survivors, unfortunately in many parts of the country many of these unique trees are dying due to their environment being cleared and poisoned by pesticide residues from careless farming practices.

We cannot continue to plunder the planet and expect it to provide resources at our beck and call forever. We have witnessed the destruction of huge forests throughout the world along with the habitat of thousands of unique flora and fauna, the oxygen producing capability of the planet has been strained to a point where the CO2 concentration is climbing. Presently right in our own back yard western New Guinea's rain forests are being cleared at a rate that will ensure they never recover we sit back and do nothing but give financial aid to the regimes responsible for these atrocities!

We are told daily to reduce our green house gas emissions, change over to energy efficient light globes, use less fuel, drive hybrid cars etc. Governments think they can fix things by introducing Carbon and Energy Trading Schemes, I suspect these are only being considered so the energy producers can make more money by selling inefficient solar panels and other resource hungry devices.

The Government proposes an army of 'green assessors' to measure every home and business on their energy consumption in order to apply an energy tax on all. What we can all do now is save an enormous amount of energy by simply turning things off when not being used.

The other day I went to the bank, it was 44 degrees outside inside the lovely air conditioned bank I suppose the temperature was a cool 15 degrees! What a huge waste of energy! Why do businesses do this? I walked past the open doors of another shop and felt the cool rush of air pouring through the doors, again an enormous waste of energy.

I know people who leave their computers switched on 24/7. Do you know the average computer warms to about 15 degrees above the ambient temperature and even more when games and other complex programs are being used?

The reasoning by some of these people is that the PC is ready to go at an instant and there is no need to switch it off! It happens in big office buildings every day, these same buildings like the banks are temperature controlled 24/7.



Human's contribution to the increasing CO2 concentration is significant we must also consider the contribution of natural phenomenon e.g. volcanic activity, bush fires and the normal decay of organic matter. If we change our energy behaviour collectively we may make a difference, but when along comes one huge volcanic eruption or bushfire we're back to the same position.

Australians are being fooled. It is the morally and earthly correct thing to reduce our energy consumption and eliminate environmental pollution, this goes without saying. But it is

morally wrong to deceive our people and particularly our children and cause them 'climate' anxiety. Australians are on a guilt trip, signing the Kyoto agreement may have made some people feel nice but this is a global problem and at the end of the day whatever we do here will not reign in the excesses, and wastefulness of other countries.



What Aussies need to do now is build for our changing future. I propose the highest priority be securing our nations water supply. This can only be done by if we manage our limited water resources carefully, and by undertaking massive desalination infrastructure development.

Our capital cities and other large cities mostly located close to the oceans should be supplied by coastal desalination works. Here in Western Victoria a pipeline is nearing completion which is designed to replace an open channel system

which supplies water from the Grampians to many communities and properties far to the north. I have been interested in the feasibility of continuing this pipeline southward to Portland, and converting the Alcoa aluminium smelter there into a desalination plant. The water could be transferred along the pipeline to many regional towns and cities. Currently Alcoa at Portland uses about 25% of Victoria's electricity! This consumption would be reduced and in conjunction with renewable energy (primarily wind) further reductions would occur. The advantage of converting industries like these is that other regional industries especially horticulture and tourism would flourish. To me it's a no brainer.



Opposition to desalination is largely based on much misinformation, various opponents quote absurd figures of energy required to desalinate seawater and also grossly exaggerated the waste from the process. Seawater has an average salinity of 35 grams per litre (mostly NaCl) removing this from one megalitre of seawater the amount of salt returned to the ocean is approximately 35 tonnes.

The oceans cover more than 70% of the earth surface any increase in salt concentration even in a small part of the ocean is insignificant. What's more is that run off of storm water via rivers and man made means has a diluting effect which in turn is balanced by evaporation which naturally increases the salt concentration.

The energy required for desalination is high but recent developments have improved the recovery of energy from the process thus making desalination more cost effective.

In fact more energy is required to treat waste water to a potable standard. Treated waste water for horticulture is hazardous with the potential for pathogens to enter the food chain. Grapes grown using waste water contain higher levels of 'salts' and residual chemical contaminants e.g. pesticides, wines made from grapes irrigated with recycled waste water are inferior and exhibit hard flavours. These wines are often 'blended out' with other wines made from other grapes.

Australia continues to abuse the Murray River and the complex catchment further upstream, it is a crime that the resources of this system are captured and wasted on unsustainable agriculture like rice and cotton growing. The correct management strategy should control the water from the ocean back upstream rather than the other way round, this is where the land can sustain agriculture and would follow nature's design as intended.

The idea of rising sea levels may contribute benefits by way of causing vast areas of low lying land to become shallow seas, as a result the increase in surface area causes an increase in evaporation followed by an

increase in precipitation. The idea of flooding Lake Eyre in South Australia permanently was proposed many years ago, it should be done.

Developing on this idea imagine the benefits of constructing a channel a kilometer or more wide reaching from Port Augusta to the Gulf of Carpentaria. Besides changing the climate in a positive way, desalination en route could support communities and villages with horticultural oasis's powered by wind, solar and tidal energy. A major North South sea thoroughfare would allow cheap transportation of goods and could become a major tourist destination.

I read lots of different things. Those that interest me most are those that motivate me, apart from my interests in wine, classic motorcycles and all things of mechanical nature I react to obviously stupid ideas.

One such stupid idea is from some restaurants that only serve food and drink that has been 'grown' within a given radius say for example 160 kilometres. The theory is that this will reduce the 'carbon kilometres' that a product incurs. This is a pathetic and unpractical theory which can only be applied to a handful of products. It is also hypocritical and imposes a regional trade barrier that is akin to protectionism. These restaurants should prohibit patrons from travelling beyond the radius, or doesn't that matter?

I know the idea is very touchy feel good stuff but the proprietors need to do a bit of soul searching and consider where their energy is produced and also the collective carbon kilometres that the management and staff rack up travelling to and from work!

There are many wine producers (albeit a dying breed) who procure their bottles from overseas, many of these bottles particularly from the European Union are 'premium' glass with average weight more than twice that of the locally produced product. One of my vigneron friends recently told me he was changing to the local made bottles, mind you not because of the carbon kilometers but because of the price. It's usually the case that we only change when we see a dollar to be saved.

Ironically as I write this a fax arrives telling me about the 'Carbon Reduction & Trading Expo' being held at the Melbourne Exhibition Centre between March 31 and April 2, 2009. I'll be there to have good look.

The USA is a big player in the ethanol/bio-fuel industry vast tonnages of corn are processed via fermentation and distillation the ethanol is blended with petrol at varying percentages usually 15% for use in vehicles. Have you ever grown corn? Have you noticed how much biomass and water (a function of energy inputs) are needed to produce the cob? Scientists say that ethanol will end up contributing to global warming more than if we used oil, where rainforests are destroyed to produce it.

If we did this in Australia we would be certified and locked away for years. Not only would we be wasting huge volumes of water but ruining a source of food. I like corn however like many things the energy input is far greater than the return. The current Global Financial Crisis is having a huge effect on the American auto industry, perhaps when the big car companies recover enough this shakeup a positive outcome may result with smaller,

lighter more fuel efficient cars being produced, imagine an American made car that uses 50% less fuel, would there be a need to use corn for fuel?

Did you know that for every litre of grape juice fermented there is between 35 and 50 litres of carbon dioxide evolved depending on the initial sugar concentration. The yield of ethanol from a typical grape juice containing 20% of sugar (glucose/fructose) is about 12.2% alcohol by volume, to derive one litre of 95% ethanol you need to distill a little more than 8 litres of wine containing 12.2% alcohol by volume. Now if we blend this ethanol into our petrol at 15% and run the engine what do we achieve? Well not a lot really the combustion of ethanol leaves water and CO2 coming out the exhaust in fact for every molecule of ethanol burnt we get 3 molecules of water and 2 of CO2.



So where does this leave us? We have grown corn, grapes or whatever they all take CO2, water and valuable nutrients from the atmosphere and the earth. We spray the crops with pesticides and then harvest the crop. We mash it all up and ferment the sugars to give

us ethanol we then burn it in our engines which releases the heat, water and CO2 back into to the environment.

What's with bio-fuels anyway, if we converted all the internal combustion engines and jet engines to run on biofuel we would still be emitting CO2 at the same rate as present. What we need is to rejuvenate the forests and create a sink for the CO2, sure switching to green energy production is one helpful step but without the forests and a clean planet we will not succeed.

Renewable energy in particular wind powered generators offer the best solution to provide clean energy. Solar power technology has its applications but the current types of affordable photovoltaic panels offer fairly low energy conversion ratios between 12-18%. Today some high tech solar cells can achieve up to 24% but are fairly expensive to produce.



The most efficient use of solar energy is the heating of water particularly with modern evacuated tube technology. A typical

household can reduce their power bill significantly and at the same time reduce the amount of CO2 released into the atmosphere from the power stations.

Wind generated power offers the best efficiency and one of the cleanest energy sources available today. Unlike photovoltaic solar panels they operated whenever there is sufficient wind day and night.

The claim that wind power cannot supply base load power is a myth and perpetuated by the misinformed advocates of the nuclear energy industry.



Unfortunately, Sweden has reversed their position on energy generation and intends to build the worlds' largest nuclear power plant. France intends to build another nuclear power plant bringing their total to 61. I can't see the sense in this at all and have always been strongly opposed to nuclear energy.

The U.S.A. carried out 1,030 nuclear weapons tests, the Soviet Union 715 tests Britain, 45 tests including several on Australia soil. France 210 tests, China conducted more than 43 tests and in recent years both India and Pakistan have joined the fray.

It is estimated that the total yield of all atmospheric nuclear weapons tests conducted is more than 438 megatons, equivalent to more than 29,200 Hiroshima size bombs. Approximately 3,830 kilograms of plutonium has been left in the ground as a result of all underground nuclear testing and some 4,200 kilograms of plutonium has been discharged into the atmosphere as a result of atmospheric nuclear testing. Is it any wonder that there has been a world wide increase in the rate of humans being diagnosed with cancer?



One of the USA's largest atomic bombs ever detonated near the Marshall Islands resulted in a blast 100 kilometres in diameter, the mushroom cloud rose to over 40 kilometres high and left a crater 1.5 kilometres in diameter. The radioactive fallout caused death and widespread sickness to many inhabitants of the region.

There is no safe solution to the storage of the radioactive waste from nuclear power plants. The energy required to mine and process uranium ore for nuclear fuel is huge, this energy contributes to green house gas emissions contrary to we are led to believe.

The bombs which destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki were powerful enough in theory to crack the earth's crust, repeated nuclear explosions throughout the Pacific region may have caused changes to the 'stability' of the earth's crust. I have not seen any evidence to that effect but I would not dismiss the idea that geological activity along the mid-oceanic ridge has increased, releasing huge amount of energy (heat) which results in the seawater becoming heated to more than 700 degrees C.

Oceans drive the planet's weather and scientists have shown the correlation between regional weather and ocean temperatures.

I'm not saying that this is the cause of 'climate change' but just trying to demonstrate that there are many forces at work, the science is very complex and the simplistic explanation that CO2 is the main cause needs to be considered as part of a broader strategy to repair our planet's health.

Recently I wrote to Max Allen after reading yet again another column he wrote about the quality of wines made from grapes grown using biodynamic practices. He basically said that these wines have 'brighter' colour and 'fresher' flavours. I have read enough about this 'science' and admit that in principle caring for the soil microorganisms and its composition will benefit the vine and lead to optimum fruit health. In my own vineyard I practice safe and environmentally friendly management practices. We do not use any herbicide and technically we produce 'organic' grapes. I wrote to Max saying that although I respect those grape growers who use biodynamic preparations very similar results are obtained where soil building strategy using composting and cover crops without the use of pesticides.

Thank you for taking the time to read my newsletter I would appreciate any feedback.

Here is one practical idea you can use to reduce your CO2 emissions, walk to the wine store and buy a good bottle of wine (Clayfield Shiraz preferably), when you get home don't turn on the TV. Open the bottle and pour yourself a decent glassful, sit down in a relaxing chair and enjoy the wine. If you've got this far reading reflect on what I've written, you may not agree with it all but I hope I've made you think a little.

Cheers,

Simon Clayfield

Clayfield Wines

Mailing Order Price List

Mixed cases are available in either 6 or 12 bottle cartons.

<i>Wine description</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Cellar Door regular</i>	<i>Mailing List price</i>	<i>Total</i>
Clayfield Grampians Shiraz 2005		\$ 45.00	\$ 38.00	
Clayfield Grampians Shiraz 2004		\$ 65.00	\$ 55.00	
Clayfield Pyrenees Shiraz 2004		\$ 55.00	\$ 45.00	
Clayfield Massif Shiraz 2006		\$ 24.00	\$ 20.00	
Clayfield Massif Shiraz 2004		\$ 24.00	\$ 20.00	
Clayfield Massif Sauvignon blanc 2008		\$ 18.00	\$ 15.00	
		<i>Sub-total</i>		
		<i>Postage</i>		\$ 15.00
		<i>Total</i>		

Prices quoted inclusive of GST

<i>Name</i>		
<i>Delivery Address</i>		
<i>Payment details</i>	<i>Card number</i>	<i>Expiry date</i>
<i>Special instructions</i>		

"WARNING

Under the Liquor Control Reform Act 1998 it is an offence

- To supply alcohol to a person under the age of 18 years (Penalty exceeds \$6,000)
- For a person under the age of 18 years to purchase or receive liquor. (Penalty exceeds \$500)"

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Current Releases

Clayfield Grampians Shiraz 2004

by Jeremy Oliver 95 points

A rather hermitage-like Shiraz whose spicy, peppery and floral fragrance of dark-fruited plums, blackberries remains closed and rather brooding. Full to medium in weight, it is sumptuously flavoured but hides its strength behind a tightly knit but firm and fine grained backbone that will become more velvet-like with time. It is well ripened and generously flavoured finishing long and savoury, with lingering fruit brightness and peppery undertones. Drink 2016-2024

Typical analysis :

Alcohol 14.3 % v/v
pH 3.51
acidity 7.1 g/L
bottled March 30, 2006

Clayfield Pyrenees Shiraz 2004

This lovely Shiraz was produced from a very special block of Shiraz vines growing in rugged rocky ground in the Moonambel region. This wine is the second and final wine we will ever produce from this unique site. The first wine we made was the very peppery 2002 Massif. This latest release has all the typical characteristics of a quality Pyrenees red with firm tannin and a lingering dry finish.

Typical analysis :

Alcohol 14.3 % v/v
pH 3.51
acidity 7.1 g/L
bottled March 30, 2006

Clayfield Grampians Shiraz 2003

This wine exhibits the typical aroma and flavours that our Black Label Shiraz is famous for... plus more. Using a particular winemaking technique using grapes that have been partially dried on racks then added to the ferment the wine gains extra dimensions in body and structure. The alcohol content is moderately high but by no means out of balance. Aged in French and American oak for 18 months the tannins are dry and firm, this wine will keep for ages.

Typical analysis :

Alcohol 15.4 % v/v
pH 3.58
acidity 7.5 g/L
bottled March 24, 2005

★ ★ *New Vintage Releases* ★ ★

Clayfield Massif Thomas Wills Shiraz ' 2006

The 2006 Massif has a deep bright ruby red colour with a purple hue. The nose has plenty of black currant, mint and spicy/pepper aromas with attractive oak. The juicy fruit palate exhibits typical Grampians Shiraz ripe plums and spice, medium to full in body finishing dry with nice tannin. Sealed with Stelvin capsules this wine will retain its freshness and also benefit from decanting and patient breathing before drinking during the next six or more years of maturation.

Typical analysis :

Alcohol 14.4 % v/v
pH 3.57
acidity 5.8 g/L
bottled Winter 2008

Clayfield Grampians Shiraz 2005

This wine is sumptuously fruited with its licorice-like aromas of plums, currants, cassis and cloves preceding a long, firmish and peppery palate. The palate has intense flavours of blackberries, dark plums and cherries finishing with lively acidity.

The oak is pleasant and well balanced aged in French and American oak for 18 months the tannins are dry and firm, this wine will cellar well.

Typical analysis :

Alcohol 14.8 % v/v
pH 3.55
acidity 6.5 g/L
bottled May 20, 2005

96 points.

'Life is too short to drink bad wine'