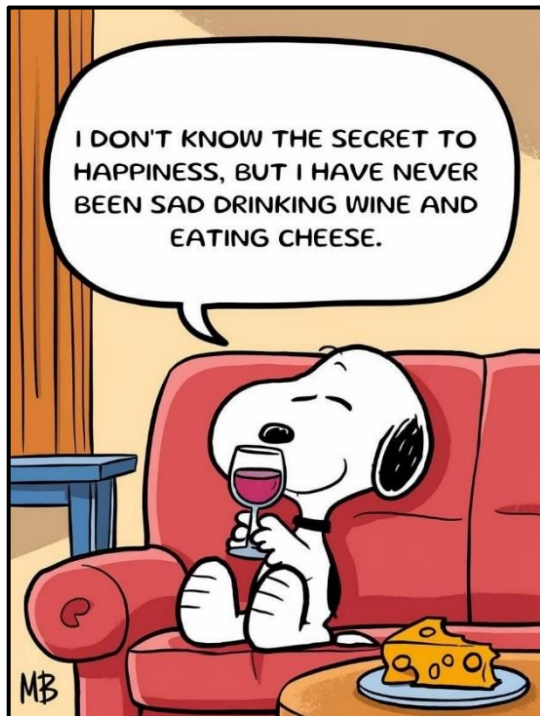




## The Newsletter of the Metropolitan Wine and Food Society of Sydney Inc.

*Published for the information of the members and friends of the Metropolitan Wine and Food Society of Sydney Inc.*

**Vol 12 No 1—April 2025**



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Metropolitan Wine and Food Society of Sydney Inc  
Registered No. Y13780.23  
Founded: 22 July 1977

Website: <http://mwfss.com> Facebook: Metropolitan Wine and Food Society of Sydney Inc.

## Society Program Functions and Meetings

### Dates for your Diary 2025

<b>Sunday 25th May</b>	AGM at the Yeomans home at 11.30am
<b>Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July</b>	Ian Arnold Dinner La Chouette Restaurant Hunters Hill
<b>Sunday 21st September</b>	Spring Luncheon At the Mills home
<b>Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> December</b>	Christmas Lunch At Quoi Norwest TBA

### Office Bearers and Committee

**2024—2025**

President and FWFSa Councilor:

**Murray Mills**

Vice President Wine Master:

**Trevor Gibson**

Vice President Food Master: **Jim Rolls**

Secretary: **David Yeomans**

Treasurer: **Carole Yeomans**

Committee Member Wine: **David Cameron**

Committee Member Food: **Carolyn Smalls**

Wine Scribe: **Alan Broom**

Food Scribe: **Kerrie Sims**

Cellar Master: **Trevor Gibson**

Federation of Wine and Food Societies of

Australia Councilor: **Trevor Gibson**

Public Officer: **Lorraine Plues**

### A note from the Editor

With return visits to Soya Restaurant and Strangers Restaurant at Parliament House as well as the FWFSa convention at Bendigo we have enjoyed some excellent culinary experiences this year.

We will have new venue for the Spring Lunch in September as Jim is contemplating a new residence. Many thanks to Jim for offering his home for the luncheon over many years.

We welcome new members to the club Ruth Dexter and Elizabeth and Maurice Matta, who joined us at Soya and Strangers Restaurants

Our next event is the AGM at the home of Carole and David Yeomans.

Kerrie Sims

# The Federation of Wine & Food Societies of Australia

## Convention 2025 – Bendigo Victoria

### 28<sup>th</sup> -31st March 2025

With Bendigo recently designated as Australia’s first UNESCO Creative City and Region Of Gastronomy, it proved to be an excellent centre to hold the FWFSa Convention 2025 and to showcase the region’s diverse food and wine culture.

The convention, held from 28<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> March, included optional activities, in addition to the main dinner on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> and lunch on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup>.

### ***Optional Welcome Function on Friday evening 28<sup>th</sup> at the Black Swan Hotel***

A guided wine tasting of 11 wines, providing an overview of the Heathcote and Bendigo wine regions, accompanied by a generous selection of finger food.

#### **Wines Tasted**

- Balgowie Premium Cuvee Sparkling Brut NV
- Tellurian Fiano 2024
- Mandurang Valley Chardonnay 2024
- Chambers Falanghina 2023
- Sutton Grange Rose 2023
- Sandhurst Ridge Nebbiolo 2021
- Munari Schoolhouse Red 2020
- Peregrine Ridge Shiraz 2014 (American Oak)
- Peregrine Ridge Shiraz 2014 (French Oak)
- Anstead Osicka 1970 Block Cabernet Sauvignon 2024
- Turners Crossing NV Picolit

#### Oysters

Salmon Tartare with avocardo puree, marinated mango salsa, black caviar

Beetroot cured wild salmon with orange yuzu dressing

Duck a la Lorange, seasonal vegetables, crusty potato

Moroccan lamb , trasamalata couscous, egg plant

Black Angus Beef tataski, shredded cabbage, potato straw

24 Carot French macarons

#### **Finger Food**

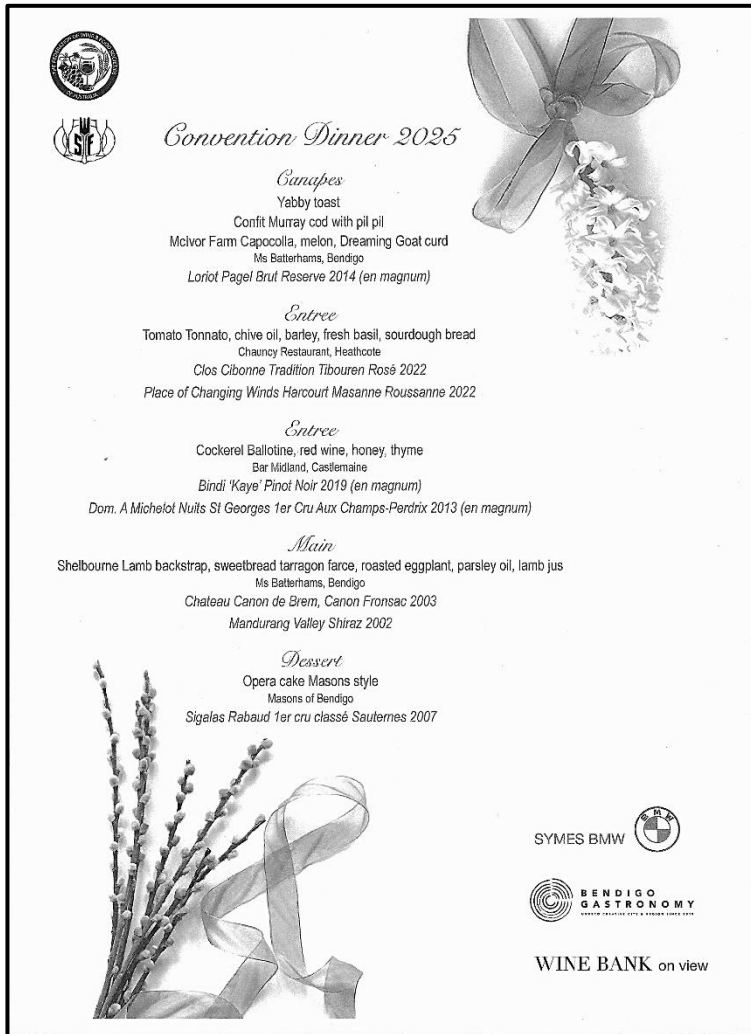


# The Federation of Wine & Food Societies of Australia

## Convention 2025 – Bendigo Victoria

### Convention Dinner on Saturday Evening 29<sup>th</sup> at Makenzie Quarters

The Gala Dinner featured 4 chefs over 5 courses, matched with wines from SWFS and WFWSA Cellars. 104 guests attended



**Convention Dinner 2025**

*Canapes*  
Yabby toast  
Confit Murray cod with pil pil  
McIvor Fam Capocola, melon, Dreaming Goat curd  
Ms Batterhams, Bendigo  
Loriot Pagel Brut Reserve 2014 (en magnum)

*Entree*  
Tomato Tonnato, chive oil, barley, fresh basil, sourdough bread  
Chauncy Restaurant, Heathcote  
Clos Cibonne Tradition Tibouren Rosé 2022  
Place of Changing Winds Harcourt Masanne Roussanne 2022

*Entree*  
Cockerel Ballotine, red wine, honey, thyme  
Bar Midland, Castlemaine  
Bindi 'Kaye' Pinot Noir 2019 (en magnum)  
Dom. A Michelot Nuits St Georges 1er Cru Aux Champs-Pentrix 2013 (en magnum)

*Main*  
Shelbourne Lamb backstrap, sweetbread tarragon farce, roasted eggplant, parsley oil, lamb jus  
Ms Batterhams, Bendigo  
Chateau Canon de Brem, Canon Fronsac 2003  
Mandurang Valley Shiraz 2002

*Dessert*  
Opera cake Masons style  
Masons of Bendigo  
Sigalas Rabaud 1er cru classé Sauternes 2007

Logos: SYMES BMW, BENDIGO GASTRONOMY, WINE BANK on view





# The Federation of Wine & Food Societies of Australia

## Convention 2025 – Bendigo Victoria

### Convention Lunch on Sunday Lunch 31st at Terrae Restaurant

A four-course lunch in Bendigo's oldest bank building (1864) with wines from the Bendigo and Macedon Ranges regions





## Sunday Lunch

Terrae, Bendigo

**CANAPES**

Garden Crudites, baba ganoush (GF, NF, DF\*, V)  
Long Paddock Cheese Gougeres (NF, V)  
Smoked Tutl Trout Rillettes, crumpets, dill (NF)

Parkside Estate 'Fils de Galileo' Brut 2017

**ENTREE**

Crab Ravioli,  
corn, bisque, roe, chives (NF)

Lome Roussanne 2022  
Louis Moreau Chablis Grand Cru 'Les Clos' 2008

**MAIN**

Rare roasted Macedon Ranges Venison Denver leg  
petite pie of shoulder & mushroom, parsnip, beetroot,  
kale (GF\*, NF)

Granite Hills 'The Gordon' 2017  
Blackjack Block 6 Shiraz 2016

**DESSERT**

Apple, brown butter & hazelnut tart,  
crème fraiche, rhubarb, hazelnut praline (GF, V)

Dhillon Botrytis Chardonnay 2022



**MWFSS Annual Picnic**  
**At the home of Corinne and Murray Mills Castle Hill**  
**5<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

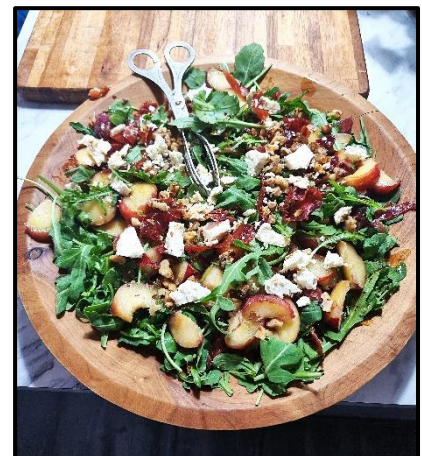


It was decided that MWFSS Annual Picnic, traditionally held at Balmain, would be moved to Heritage Park at Castle Hill in 2025. However, with temperatures predicted to rise to the high 30s and be followed by afternoon thunderstorms, there was a change in plans. Hence a small group gathered at the home of Corinne and Murray Mills to share a wonderful picnic spread and favourite wines.

The considerable culinary talent within the group was yet again exposed, in the range of wonderful salads, tarts and slices. They included -



Dip with crackers and vegetable crudites



Rocket with peach, prosciutto and goats cheese

# MWFSS Annual Picnic

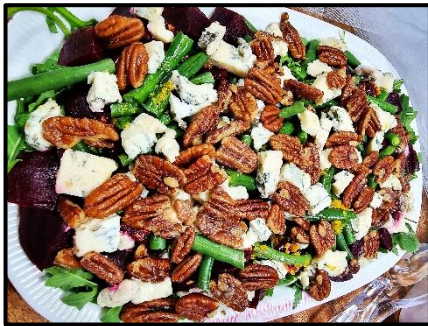
Carrot and Coconut



Vegetable Couscous



Radish, Potato and Dill



Beetroot, bean, blue  
Cheese and pecan salad

Zucchini slice



Caramelised onion and feta cheese tart



Leek and ricotta cheese tart



Salami and  
prosciutto



Fresh roast chicken

## Asian Lunch - Soya Restaurant

### Thursday 20th February 2025

A return visit to Soya Restaurant in Balmain did not disappoint. Named after the humble soybean, Soya is a Thai based fusion street destination. Western cuisine typically focusses on sweet or savoury flavours, with associated wine cultures of countries such as France and Italy. Thai cuisine is a more complex blend of sweet, salty, sour and spicy flavours without a wine culture. Non-alcoholic beverages such as tea and coconut water are more common accompaniments. Beer and spirits are the more popular alcoholic beverages.

Matching wines to the various courses that incorporate a blend of these flavours present a challenge, particularly as is common with Asian cuisine, several courses are presented at once. Traditionally we solved this difficulty by choosing one wine for all courses. Remember Gewürztraminer of the 1970s?

Rather than choosing this simple approach, a range of wines from the Cellar were selected for members to try with several courses to enable personal preferences on what worked and what did not.

#### **NV Marc Chauvet Brut Rose de Saignee**

**Region:** France Montagne de Reims

**Grape varietal:** Pinot Noir

#### **About the Maker**

Based in Rilly-la-Montagne, in between Reims and Epernay, Champagne Marc Chauvet is an old family business with 13 hectares of vines in the Montagne de Reims area. Work here is divided between brother and sister team Nicolas (vineyards) and Clotilde (winemaking) Chauvet.

'The style of the house is no malolactic fermentation 1,' says Clotilde.

'This gives a lot of freshness to the wine, so we can age for longer on the lees.' (<http://wineanorak.com/champagne/marcchauvet.htm>)



#### **Tasting Note**

Intense and quite structured with loads of cherry and berry fruits because of extended fermentation with skins (the wine is 100% Pinot Noir), with notes of dry spice. These simple red berry flavours tended to overpower the qualities that you expect from a French champagne. There are little or no bread yeast characters despite the extended ageing on lees. Still a very pleasant wine for consumption with food such as salmon, rather than as an aperitif.

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1 During alcoholic fermentation, yeast turns the musts into wine by consuming the natural grape sugars and producing alcohol as well as floral and fruity aromas, which are typical of young wines. During malolactic fermentation, malic acid is broken down into lactic acid by bacteria. Its primary aim is to lower the apparent acidity in the wine. It also introduces fragrant notes of brioche and butter.

## Asian Lunch - Soya Restaurant



### STEAMED DUMPLING OF PRAWN WITH SHIITAKE MUSHROOM & WATER CHESTNUTS

With none of the components dominant in flavour the three are a good combination for a steamed dumpling. Shiitake mushrooms are a brown mushroom with a rich, savory flavour and many health benefits. Water chestnuts are from a tuberous plant which grows in marshes and also have health benefits.

### PEKING DUCK PANCAKE W/HOUSE MADE HOI SIN SAUCE

Thin, soft pliable wraps containing strips of barbequed duck, cucumber and spring onion with hoisin sauce. The hoisin sauce is a thick dark and fragrant sauce commonly used in Cantonese cooking. It is made with fermented soybean paste as well as additional seasonings such as garlic chilli and sesame. It adds an Asian flavour and umami to any dish



### FRIED EGGPLANT STUFFED WITH PRAWN & PORK SERVED WITH BLACK VINEGAR, GARLIC & SOY SAUCE

The standout dish of the event. Eggplant fried with oil is unctuous and mouthwatering, and it readily absorbs the flavours of additives. The pork and prawn added body to the eggplant and married well with its flavour and texture. Nicely presented with contrasting colours of green and red shallot and chilli garnishes

### SALT & PEPPER SQUID W/TOM YUM AIOLI (GF)

An all-time favourite with tender squid strips in a crispy batter seasoned with salt pepper and fried to perfection. The iconic flavour of Tom Yum is derived from a combination of lemon grass, galangal and lime leaves and when infused into the aioli made from olive oil and garlic produces a spicy dipping sauce to compliment the squid.



## Asian Lunch - Soya Restaurant

### 2019 Arnaud Lambert Saumur Les Perriers

**Region:** France, Loire Valley

**Grape varietal:** Chenin Blanc

#### About the Maker

Arnaud Lambert established his eponymous Domaine in 2017 with the merger of his family's Domaine de Saint-Just and rented parcels from Château de Brézé. He farms more than 40 hectares of organic vineyards in Saumur's continental climate with unusually dry conditions due to the rain shadow effect of the Massif Armoricain. In this part of the "Anjou Blanc," the vineyards are on tuffeau limestone bedrock with topsoil variations of clay and sand.

(<https://thesourceimports.com/producers/arnaud-lambert/>)

#### Tasting Note

Very mouthwatering aroma of lime, sea spray and pear. On the palate fresh lime and then a

cooler taste of apple and pears with a crisp but persistent finish. A classic French Chenin Blanc from the Loire Valley, not to be confused with Australian Chenin Blanc that have a completely different flavour profile. Certainly, a wine to try as an alternative to Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay or Pinot Grigio.



### 2015 Leo Buring Leonay Riesling

**Region:** Australia Clare Valley, Watervale

**Grape varietal:** Riesling

#### About the Maker

The Leo Buring Riesling legend began in 1945 when he bought his first vineyard and began building what became Chateau Leonay at Tanunda in the Barossa Valley. In 1955 John Vickery joined Leo Buring as winemaker. Vickery was pivotal in creating the great name for Riesling that Leo Buring still enjoys.

Today Leo Buring is part of Treasury Wine Group, the winemaker is Peter Munro, and since 1999 Leo Buring has made only Riesling.

There are four wines: the entry-level wines are Clare Valley Dry Riesling and Eden Valley Dry Riesling. Then there is the newest addition to the range, a Tasmanian Riesling named Leopold. At the top of the list is Leonay, which is the reserve-style Riesling, named after Leo Buring's Chateau Leonay winery.

(<https://www.therealreview.com>).

#### Tasting Note

A traditional Australian Riesling of high quality, a hint of kerosene 2 on the palate, and with a medium acid finish (grapefruit, rather than lemon or lime), with good structure. While the citrus fruit flavours are generous, they balance the acidity, providing palate volume and a long clean finish.



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2 The kerosene flavour noted on some Rieslings is a unique characteristic of Australian Riesling caused by direct exposure to the intense Australian sun.

## Asian Lunch - Soya Restaurant

### **FRIED SALMON SALAD W/ GREEN PAPAYA, VIETNAMESE MINT, FRIED GARLIC & CASHEW NUTS (GF)**

Vietnamese green papaya is light, refreshing, and packed with flavour. The crisp green papaya soaks up the flavours of the ingredients it is combined with. Fresh herbs like Thai mint add freshness and aroma, while crunchy cashew nuts bring texture. A delicious way to present salmon with Asian umami flavour.



### **SHAKING ANGUS BEEF FILLET W/ GARLIC, ONION BLACK PEPPER SAUCE, ICEBERG LETTUCE SALAD**

Garlic and onion add a strong flavour that goes well with the natural taste of beef, making it even more delicious. Black pepper adds a bit of heat and has a unique flavour that makes the beef more interesting. The combination of these ingredients with tender beef pieces, result in a delightful dish and perfect with a refreshing salad

### **STEAMED WILD BARRAMUNDI FILLETS W/ GINGER, SOY SAUCE & STEAMED WOMBOK (GFO) WOK-TOSSED WATER SPINACH W/ OYSTER SAUCE, SOYBEAN (GFO)**

The barramundi with a beautiful flavour enhanced with the flavours of ginger and soy sauce - A perfect combination. The oyster sauce adds moisture as well as flavour and the greens are an attractive garnish.



### **2017 Sidewood Estate Pinot Noir 777**

**Region:** Australia South Australia Mount Lofty

**Grape varietal:** Pinot Noir 777 clone

#### **About the Maker**

Sidewood Estate is a family-owned winery producing elegant, award-winning, cool climate wines in the Adelaide Hills. It all started with the 120-hectare Mappinga estate, near Oakbank, with its premium Sauvignon and Chardonnay vines. Sidewood Estate now also runs vineyards at Nairne and Echunga. Each site offers unique characteristics in its grapes.



## Asian Lunch - Soya Restaurant

Mappinga is the coolest and Nairne the warmest, while Echunga is a specialist Shiraz site. Sidewood Estate also owns its own winery and bottling facilities at Nairne, which means the team at Sidewood has complete control over the making of its wines from the cultivating of vines in the vineyard to final bottling at the winery. ([www.sidewood.com.au](http://www.sidewood.com.au))

### Tasting Note

An incredibly light red in the glass verging on a rosé, though the palate features generous raspberry fruit flavours that persist to the finish. A wine of excellent balance between fruit, acid and gentle powdery tannins. A touch of savoury and spice flavours that add interest and enjoyment. Something not all Australian Pinot Noir achieve. A lovely, elegant wine.

### NV Peter Lehman Black Queen Sparkling Shiraz

**Region:** Australia Barossa Valley

**Grape varietal:** Shiraz

### About the Maker

In 1977, Saltram instructed then winemaker/manager Peter Lehmann to buy fewer grapes from their Barossa growers. Since Peter had given the growers his word to buy the grapes, he refused. So began Peter Lehmann's status in the Barossa. Led by Peter, the Barossa community pulled together during the tough times, not just to make great wine but to preserve the future of the land and the Barossa region. Today these longstanding relationships with the same community of family growers gives the Peter Lehmann winemakers unrivalled access to the very best grapes across the length and breadth of the Barossa.



### Tasting Note

One of the better Sparkling Shiraz's in Australia. A beautiful deep colour with a mouth filling fine bead. The bouquet showed hints of satsuma plum and black cherry, leading to an explosion of dark exotic fruits on the palate. A lovely generous wine with fruit sweetness and power, but with a dry finish, that went well with the Angus beef dish (there was some disagreement here. Some considered the wine too big for the menu offerings, though an excellent wine in its own right).

### BLACK STICKY RICE PUDDING W/ GROUND PEANUT, COCONUT SAUCE SERVED WITH COCONUT ICE CREAM

The rice pudding prepared from glutinous black rice. When cooked, it is unctuous with a striking glossy appearance. It readily absorbs the luscious coconut flavour and is complimented perfectly with the crunchy peanut texture.



## Asian Lunch - Soya Restaurant

### 2016 Lillypilly Noble Harvest

**Region:** Australia Riverina

**Grape varietal:** Vermentino and Muscat

### About the Maker

The Fiumara family's story in Australia began like so many of Italian origin in the Riverina, when Italian migrants came to Australia seeking a better life following the second world war.

One of the Riverina's great sweet wine producers began not as a vineyard or a winery but as a family vegetable growing business, that expanded into a highly successful supermarket evolving into a estate winery. Following the De Bortoli success in 1982 with its first Botrytis Semillon 'Sauternes' (later marketed as Noble One), Rob Fiumara experimented with several alternative grape varieties to semillon. He's had great success with botrytised sauvignon blanc, muscat, gewürztraminer, riesling and vermentino, sometimes blended, other times as single variety. In 1982—his first vintage at home—Rob created a blend of gewürztraminer and semillon that he named Tramillon, which won a gold medal and trophy at the 1983 Sydney Royal Wine Show. Vegetables soon become secondary to the family business.

### Tasting Note

The wine was wonderful, almost exhibiting savoury French characteristics. No cloying sweetness you often see in Australian stickies. This is achieved through the generous palate, balanced by the acidity that cleans up the back palate. An unusual combination of grapes which is the signature of Lillypilly. Ripe pineapple and apricot, orange skin and vanilla feature on the palate. A wonderful match with the dessert that followed the rule of matching a wine that is sweeter than the accompanying food.

### AFTER TASTE

Overall, a brilliant tasting experience, with wines such as the Riesling changing their flavour depending on the accompanying dish. All the wines proved excellent though, as expected members had their favourites.

Perhaps the most challenging wine was the Sparkling Shiraz, its fruit sweetness matched some dishes, but its sheer voluptuousness tended to overwhelm the food. This wine style has been around since 1893 when it was known as sparkling Burgundy. Edmund Mazure from Auldana winery near Adelaide and French Champagne maker Charles Pierlot engaged by Seppelt Great Western both claim to have developed the style. Partially this was due to necessity as the traditional sparkling white wine grapes (Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier) were not available in either region. Either way a unique Australian product was born, some say one of Australia's gifts to the winemaking world (joining Hunter Semillon and Rutherglen Muscat and Topaque).

Alan Broom, Wine Scribe



## Lunch at Strangers Restaurant – Parliament House Friday 11th April 2025

We visited Strangers' Restaurant again this year, enjoying the elegant atmosphere of Parliament House and the beautiful vista of the Domain viewed through large glass windows.

The experience was excellent with Executive Chef, Vanessa Harcourt designing a seasonal menu that showcases the wonderful delicacies and unique regions of New South Wales. The Restaurant supports local farmers who practise ethical and sustainable farming methods.

We chose the A la Carte Menu which provides for a selection of options in all courses with matching wines.

### *Entrée*

***Sydney Rock Oysters with finger lime  
& green apple dressing.***

2023 Nick O'Leary Reisling, Yass Valley Applewood



***Smoked Kangaroo loin, onion puree, miso wattle seed  
eggplant***

2021 Nick Spencer Pinot, Sangiovese Shiraz, Tumbarumba

***Homemade gnocchi, beurre noisette, olive, goats' cheese,  
asparagus***

2022 Printhe Chardonnay, Orange



***Lightly fried Squid, Celeriac,  
fennel, capers, preserved lemon aioli***

2024 See Saw Organic Sauvignon  
Blanc, Orange



## Lunch at Strangers Restaurant – Parliament House

### Mains



***Lamb rack, parsnip puree, smoked almond preserved apple olive herb salsa***

2018 Coppabella Sirius Pinot Noir, Tumbarumba



***Three cheese Spanner crab Risoni, saffron, white wine & chives***

2021 Montrose Stoney Creek Chardonnay, Mudgee



***120day grain fed sirloin 300gm confit of garlic mash, Dutch carrots & hollandaise***

2019 Ballinaclash 'Tom' Cabernet Sauvignon Orange

***Barramundi with King Edward potatoes, baby radish, turnip & sauce vierge***

2023 First Creek Vermentino, Hunter Valley



***Mussett honey glazed pumpkin, chestnut mushrooms, smoked almonds, puffed rice & chives mascarpone, fresh figs***

2019 Peppergreen Merlot, Berrima

## Lunch at Strangers Restaurant – Parliament House

**Sides** Chips | Musset farm salad | Seasonal vegetables

### *Dessert*

**Sticky fig pudding with caramel sauce & honeycomb ice-cream**

NV De Bortoli Old Boys 21yrs, Riverina



**Vanilla pannacotta with local rhubarb**

De Bortoli Noble One, Riverina

**Waratah honey cheesecake layered with blueberry compote;  
native lemon anise & white chocolate crunch**

2021 Hope Estate Opening Act Semillon Verdelho, Hunter Valley



**Alpine cheese - Tete De Moine cheese with Waratah honey &  
homemade cape gooseberry chutney**

2022 Shaw Vineyard Estate Shiraz, Yass Valley

**Cheese plate - Willow Brie, Stilton blue, Maffra aged  
cheddar, quince & lavosh**

2023 Clonakilla Hilltops Shiraz, Young



## Lunch at Strangers Restaurant – Parliament House Wine Report

### *OVERVIEW*

Strangers Restaurant located in Parliament House Sydney is a special treat, particularly when we can enjoy a three course meal with matching wines. Each course had five options to choose from with fifteen wines on offer. While their sommelier did match a dish with a specific wine, some members discovered to their enjoyment that they could tailor their own match.

### *AFTER TASTE*

As expected, Strangers showcased NSW wines from a broad range of makers and regions. Some like the Hunter Valley and Orange are well known while others such as Young and Berrima less so. Given the nature of the menu Members focus was more on the choice of food rather than the wine. While not really the focus of a wine report it was still interesting to see people's choices. The top two choices of the 27 members attending by course were:

<b>Entree</b>	<b>Dish</b>	<b>Wine</b>	<b>No.</b>
	<b>Oysters</b>	<b>Riesling</b>	<b>10</b>
	<b>Kangaroo</b>	<b>Pinot Noir, Sangiovese, Shiraz</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Main</b>			
	<b>Lamb Cutlet</b>	<b>Pinot Noir</b>	<b>11</b>
	<b>Sirloin</b>	<b>Cabinet Sauvignon</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Dessert</b>			
	<b>Cheese</b>	<b>Shiraz</b>	<b>7</b>
	<b>Pannacotta</b>	<b>Botrytis Semillon</b>	<b>7</b>

## Lunch at Strangers Restaurant – Parliament House Guests



New Members –

Elizabeth and Maurice Matta



## Member's Contribution

### The Bendigo Experience – Kerrie Sims

This year, along with eight other members of the MWFSS, I attended the FWFSa Convention held in Bendigo. Apart from the excellent food and wine experience, I discovered that Bendigo has another face. Many of us stayed at Alexandra Place which was within walking distance from the centre and so enabled us to discover what the city had to offer.

Following the discovery of gold on Bendigo Creek in 1851, the area was transformed the area from a sheep station into one of colonial Australia's largest boomtowns. The legacy of the Gold Rush is that Bendigo, is today a large vibrant city, displaying it's former wealth in the city's Victorian architectural heritage and a unique cultural heritage.



Charing Cross and the Alexandra Fountain mark the centre of the city and stand at one of Bendigo's busiest and most prominent intersections. Nearby is the main entrance to Rosalind Park, a 60-acre area of grassy open spaces, lush leafy trees, a fabulous playground, ornate statues, an historic conservatory, a fernery and beautiful old gardens



Bendigo Creek where gold was discovered runs through Rosalind Park and a trail for walking or cycling passes by Lake Weeroona and Bendigo Pottery

## The Bendigo Experience



Evidence of a rich cultural heritage can be found at the **Bendigo Art Gallery** which is one of Australia's oldest and largest regional galleries with a focus on 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century art. During the FWFA Convention, the **Freida Kahlo – In Her Own Image** exhibition from Museo in Mexico was displayed.

It is a challenging presentation of Freida's development as an artist following a near fatal accident at the age of 18, which left her with permanent disabilities. It featured her vibrant clothing, dramatic use of make-up and adornment, and richly decorated medical prostheses. She created a public image, with symbolic reflections in her paintings of herself and often of animals.

Many retail outlets embraced the spirit of 'Freida' with products and colourful displays of her art style. We enjoyed Mexican food and drinks at The Wine Bank, a charming wine bar and restaurant housed in a former bank building.



## The Golden Dragon Museum

Chinese heritage constitutes a significant part of the town of Bendigo's cultural identity following the migration of thousands of Chinese people in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Golden Dragon Museum opened in 1991, to document, interpret and preserve the Chinese heritage in Australia

The Bendigo Easter Festival is an annual event held in Bendigo since 1871. The festival includes the Easter procession which today sees *Dai Gum Loong*, the world's longest imperial dragon, at 125 m, dance through the streets. *Loong, Sun Loong and Dai Gum Loong* are on display at the Golden Dragon Museum in Bendigo.



# The Bendigo Experience

Sculptures at the Golden Dragon Museum



Coinciding with the Convention Weekend was the **Bendigo Pride Festival**, billed as a community-initiated and run event that celebrates, explores and promotes LGBTIQ+ communities and people, the festival will include theatre, music, art, performance, exhibitions and community meet-up events.



Celebrations of Bendigo Pride Festival in Rosalind Park

## The Bendigo Experience

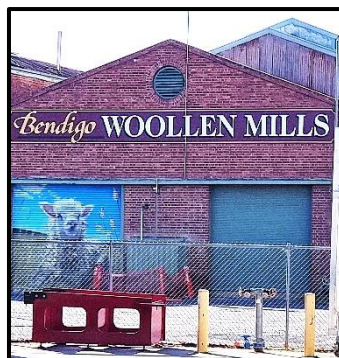
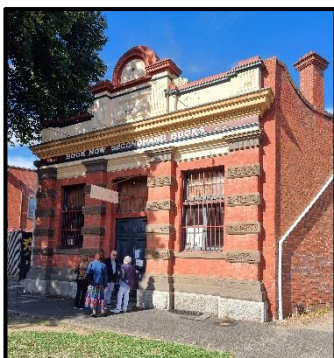
Trams in Bendigo have operated since 1890 when they began to transport passengers in an ever-expanding city. Initially they were battery operated, then steam and finally electric trams were introduced in 1903, operating until 1972. The Bendigo Trust purchased the trams, and they have been running as a tourist Hop On Hop Off system since then. The service operates from North Bendigo through the city centre to the **Central Deborah Gold Mine**. A delightful café has opened at the **Tram Museum**



Many of Bendigo's beautiful Historic buildings can be viewed on the tram route and there is a commentary to enjoy as they are passed by.



Bendigo is famous for its pottery, but unfortunately we discovered it is closed on Tuesdays. However, we managed a visit to the Woollen Mills and a second-hand bookshop.



It was a great weekend in Bendigo and worth another visit!