



# MISTLETOE WINERY



HUNTER VALLEY AUSTRALIA

## WELCOME TO THE MISTLETOE WINERY VINTAGE AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2017



*Mistletoe Vineyard Autumn morning 2017*

**Mistletoe's  
25<sup>th</sup> Vintage!**

### **Who know's where the time goes / went? Vintage 2017—25 VINTAGES—WOW!**

We were very surprised when this came up in a family discussion just prior to Christmas 2016. My, how the time has flown and so many precious memories created over those years as well as so many memorable wines, and many, many hundreds of awards and accolades.

At the start it was my dream to grow grapes and make wine.

I convinced my wife Gwen that is what we should do and now that dream is shared by our children and grandchildren who just love Mistletoe for the special place it holds in all our hearts. With three generations now actively involved in the day to day running of the vineyard, cellar door and winery, it is indeed a very unique wine business. We think that there would be very few small family wineries in Australia that have three generations working together as we do.

### **VINTAGE 2017 REPORT — MARCH 1<sup>ST</sup> 2017**

After slow, quite cool and moist start to Spring 2016 the vines eventually fired up a few weeks later than normal. This late start to the growing season pushed harvest dates back by a week or more except for the Verdelho which was harvested in the third week of January. We experienced very mild weather, with limited rain falling, just as it was needed, until the New Year.

Mother Nature then flicked the switch to very hot and very dry conditions mid January.

Whilst this type of weather can be a pain in the neck it does help to grow excellent disease free grapes, perfect for making very good wine.



*First Day of Autumn*



*Mistletoe Home Vineyard Shiraz 2017*



*Harvest Sunrise 2017*



*Mistletoe Shiraz Pigeage 2017*

We experienced quite a few very hot days but these generally only lasted 2 to 4 days at a time and then we would get a cooler change which would then revitalise us and the vines.

We then commenced the main part of the harvest on January 31<sup>st</sup>. The hottest day we had was Saturday February 11<sup>th</sup> when the temperature got up to 46 degrees. We put the sprinklers on to water some trees near the house and by mid- afternoon we had at least 50 different birds enjoying the sprays. There were magpies, peewees, Aussie mynas, lorikeets (which we have never seen here before or since) Currawongs and butcher birds and a trio of Tawny frogmouths. All of them were playing around like kids under a sprinkler. Later that afternoon, just before dusk a family of butcher birds, that had enjoyed the sprinklers, chorussed us for nearly 30 minutes.

We think it was their way of saying thank you. It was just lovely to see and hear!

We harvested our final block of Hunter Shiraz on February 22<sup>nd</sup> which is the latest we have harvested Shiraz in over 20 years! This was the final batch of Hunter fruit into the winery.

It is early days as yet, and our winemaker Scott Stephens is very conservative when it comes to making early comments about the quality of the vintage. However, let us tell you at this stage we are very, very pleased with the overall quality of both red and white wines we have produced this year. We shall make a more definitive call later in the year but at this time would rate the vintage as very good to excellent.

The Mistletoe Family are excited to have such potentially good wines to celebrate Mistletoe's 25<sup>th</sup> vintage.

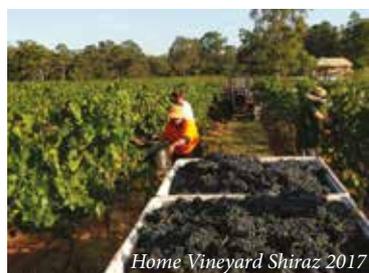
Our grapegrowers in the Hilltops region (surrounding Young in SW NSW) also experienced a cool, moist and late start to the growing season. This has meant that their harvest dates will be late as well. We are now expecting our first delivery from Hilltops around the end of the first week in March.

After numerous requests we shall be making a Viognier table wine again this year, not the usual late harvest style we produce.

The Hilltops reds are looking fantastic and are not expected into the winery until late March.

We predict that the quality of the grapes from this vintage, combined with our winemaker's expertise and substantial investment in some beautiful new French oak barrels will result in some beautiful wines to savour in future years.

Keep an eye out for Mistletoe's 2017 vintage wines when we release them to you, our very much valued mail list members.



Home Vineyard Shiraz 2017



2017 Hunter Shiraz ferment



Scott Stephens  
Mistletoe Winemaker



Mozcato in grape form!

## EVENTS

Mistletoe will be attending quite a few events and promotions during 2017. Listed below are the Venues and Dates for the ones we have confirmed so far. If you have any queries regarding attending these events please email the Mistletoe Cellar Door [sales@mistletoewines.com.au](mailto:sales@mistletoewines.com.au) or call 1800-055-080.

*We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at these events. Come along and try our latest release wines and bring your friends.*

### HUNTER UNCORKED AVALON

The Village Green Dunbar Park Avalon [www.winecountry.com.au](http://www.winecountry.com.au)

**Sunday April 23<sup>rd</sup>**

*One day only*

### BYRON BAY FINE FOOD & BEVERAGE FESTIVAL

<https://www.eventbrite.com>

**Friday June 2<sup>nd</sup> & Saturday June 3<sup>rd</sup>**

### JUNE LONG WEEKEND

Long weekend – end of financial year specials at Mistletoe

**Friday June 9<sup>th</sup> to Monday June 12<sup>th</sup>**

### FIRESIDE LUNCH - HUNTER RESORT

[www.HunterResort.com.au](http://www.HunterResort.com.au)

**Sunday June 18<sup>th</sup>**

*One day only*

Hunter Resort Hermitage Road Pokolbin. (On the corner of Mistletoe Lane about 1km from Mistletoe. Limited numbers).

### SYDNEY WINE FESTIVAL

Rosehill Gardens

[www.sydneywinefestival.com](http://www.sydneywinefestival.com)

**Saturday October 14<sup>th</sup> & Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> October**

*As well as giving tastings of Mistletoe's latest releases, at most venues we shall be able to sell wine by the glass or by the bottle (unopened- for consumption off the event site).*

# Hermitage Road reveries



Pictures can convey thousands of words, bring to mind memories, both good and bad, and remind us of former days, friends, family, and the times we have lived through. The image of the old Daihatsu 4 x 4 shown above rekindles a lot of good memories for me. During our nearly 29 years here in the Hunter Valley we have gotten to know many of the old local identities and our lives are much richer because of that.

At Mistletoe, depending on the season, we grow somewhere between 30 and 40% of the grapes we use each year to make wine. The remainder we purchase from growers predominantly based in the Hunter and also a couple more in Young ( Hilltops NSW wine region).

Amongst others, we purchase Semillon and Chardonnay from the Trevena Family Vineyards which are located in Hermitage Road not very far from Mistletoe.

We dealt with Hector Trevena who grew up on the family farm in Hermitage Road and remained there all of his life. He attended the Mistletoe Farm School which was located on the corner of Mistletoe Lane opposite what is now known as the Hunter Valley Resort. Amongst his fellow students was Murray Tyrrell and Doug Elliot the founding winemaker of Oakvale Wines. After the school closed (due to feuding among the parents) he went to Rothbury school over on Wilderness Road.

The original owner of the vineyard was Hec's Dad, Will, who received the original farm as a Soldiers Settlement block after he returned from overseas service in World war 1. The blocks were quite small, and hard to earn a living from. As the other settlers moved on Will bought them out and ended up with a fairly substantial property. There were vineyards on the property when Will acquired the land but the variety was unknown.

The Semillon was planted by Will in 1920 and the remainder of the farm was turned over to dairying and cropping until Chardonnay was planted in 1976. The main areas of the current vineyard are planted on alluvial creek bed flats which are composed of lighter, sandier soils. These soil types are well recognised in the Hunter as being the best producers of high quality Semillon and Chardonnay. There is also a large underground spring that runs under a substantial part of the vineyard and this assists in growing great grapes especially in the drier years. Some wonderful multi award winning wines have been made from Trevena grapes over a long period of time. Hec was born in 1928 in Cessnock and passed way during vintage in 2015.

We were purchasing some Chardonnay off Hec in 2015. We did a final inspection of the vineyard on the Friday morning. I was talking to Hec regarding the harvest and when I was about to leave I said that we should sit down and get some history of the area from him recorded for posterity. He said to me matter of factly " Don't leave it too long there aren't too many of us around any more" Hec was up early the next morning to oversee our Chardonnay harvest and returned home for lunch. After lunch he went to sit inside for a bit of rest and that was when he passed away. It was quite a shock to all of us who had seen him earlier that day.

With his passing the Hunter Valley Wine Industry lost a decent, hardworking genuine Aussie farmer from the Old School. A really lovely gentleman. I used to see him driving his Daihatsu around his numerous properties along Hermitage Road checking on the cattle or his grapevines. Hec wasn't a university graduate but he was an observer of what went on around him on the farm and ran the vineyard and farm accordingly. We used to call him (privately) the Weather Man as he knew before anyone else when it was going to rain. He would finish ploughing up his block on the corner of Hermitage and Deasy's Roads and within days we would get rain to germinate the crop he had sown. This happened over nearly every year since we arrived on Hermitage Road.

One of Hec's old sayings was "that there hasn't been a drought that wasn't broken by rain"

Hector's only child, his daughter Trudy is a trained viticulturist who has worked with one of the larger Australian wine companies in both Victoria and South Australia. She returned home a few years ago and now looks after the farm and vineyard and continues her late father's legacy . With 65 acres under vine this not a job for the fainthearted and we wish her well.

Hermitage Road was a goat track when we bought Mistletoe in 1989 and is now being transformed into a fully sealed upgraded and beautified road which will include 12 kms of dedicated cycle track. We wonder what Old Hec would make of that?

The work on Hermitage Road will be completed by July 2017 and will make Hermitage Road one of the best entrances into the Hunter and offer great and safe cycling for young and old.

Come up and have a look later this year.