



NEWSLETTER - WINTER 2013

THE ANNUAL HAIRCUT

The **Cape winter** is upon us, and with it the vines are now at rest, regenerating through dormancy. We are midway through the pruning – one of the big jobs each year in the vineyard. Each vine will be cut back to the old wood that resembles a 'T', thus allowing it to re-grow in the spring, with vigour and a new lease of life. The cuttings from this will be collected and mulched, and in time returned to the vineyard for nourishment.

They say pruning dates back to 345 A.D. when St. Martin, a monk, rode his donkey to the vineyard he was working in that day. He tethered the animal and left for several hours work amongst the vines. On his return he found the donkey had freed itself and feasted on several vines. The next year St. Martin and the other monks noticed that not only had those vines grown back stronger and healthier, but more interestingly the grapes from them were definitely of a higher quality. With this, the annual process of pruning was introduced to the viticulture repertoire.



In May we were very pleased that our first released blend – **Rhodium 2010** - received a gold medal at the International Wine Challenge (IWC), in London. This is one of the major competitions on the calendar, so quite exciting indeed. Rhodium joins our Chenin Blanc in taking an IWC gold medal.



We have been very busy on the technology front, with the release of our **new website**. With it we have incorporated our e-commerce ability, for South African orders only. The site gives us a new refreshed look and is packed with useful information. Please take a look at www.oldenburgvineyards.com, and please let us know your thoughts and any ideas for making it even better!

We have also opened our **Wine Club**, which can be found on the new site. Given the difficulty of wine logistics, this will be available for South African deliveries only, however with time we will extend its reach. The club allows members certain exclusivity on new and older wines, access to events, and also **loyalty points** that accumulate and can be used for future purchases. I would encourage anyone interested, to join, and over time we will ensure that membership is well rewarded. We intend to extend the club to international membership, but this will take some time, as it is dependant on having good logistics. – one of the biggest challenges for a boutique winery.

This winter we have turned on our **solar panels**. We are now well on the way to becoming energy independent, with the capacity to generate almost all of our daytime energy requirements. We intend to add to the generating capacity once Eskom allows us to sell excess power to the grid. This power will be sold during the day, allowing us to repurchase it at night.



We have been very much on the road over the last few months. In May, Raymond visited our **Chinese** distributor, Shanghai Lihuang and attended the SIAL show. We will be back in **Hong Kong** later in the year as well. Rob Mackinlay attended various Worlds Leading Wine tastings in the **United States**, as well as stopping in **Toronto** to visit our importer, Winemoves, and present various tastings. Ina has just returned from an extensive trip visiting the wine trade in the **UK**. Raymond also paid a visit to **Angola**, and is currently visiting **Nigeria**, and possibly **Uganda** in the next months. Africa is on the rise and with it so are wine sales. This is something we are clearly happy to see and build on.

In September Simon and Rob will be attending the **German** Generic wine show, in Berlin. They will also travel through northern Germany introducing Oldenburg to clients of our German distributor – Getränke Ahlers GmbH. Later in the month they will be attending The Beautiful South tasting in **London**. This is a first, and combines producers from Chile, Argentina, and South Africa. It is a big show and we look forward to meeting many of our old friends, and hopefully some new ones there.



The **homestead** seems to be on track, with a completion date towards the end of the year. If all goes to plan it will be available for rentals in the New Year. We will provide details on our website soon. If you have any enquiries, please contact us on homestead@oldenburgvineyards.com.



I am now off for my own haircut – but in my case it seems to not have any rejuvenating benefits. It does however make me feel better!

As always, thanks for the ideas, feedback and orders!

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