Mornington Peninsula Vignerons Association

Annual Report 2007

Presidents Report
Martin Spedding

Fellow Members,

Introduction

Reflecting back on my report last year and the doom and gloom that was still circulating at the time, you will recall that I pointed to the signs of recovery and what I believed was the beginning of an exciting new era for our industry on the Mornington Peninsula. One year on, I think that it is now very clear that we have good reason to be optimistic, even “exuberant” about our future.

Over the course of 2007 our reputation has continued to grow, with Mornington Peninsula continuing to be widely recognised by many commentators and publications as the outstanding Pinot Noir producing region in Australia. Our Chardonnay also continues to excel and is clearly established as our flagship white variety, being amongst the very best produced anywhere in Australia.

In James Halliday’s recently released 2008 Australian Wine Companion, Mornington Peninsula, once again, had the highest percentage of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay wines rated as “Outstanding” (94 to 100 points) of any region. We also had the highest mean scores of any other region. A tremendous result that illustrates the quality and consistency of wines we are producing (further analysis of this years Companion follows my report).

If we continue to grow the profile of the Mornington Peninsula wine brand outside of our home market of Melbourne and the quality and consistency of our wines, demand will keep growing, as will the prices the market is willing to pay for them. This will provide a stronger and more sustainable economic basis for our industry in the future and make us less venerable to changing economic circumstances in the future in our key markets.

One of the most promising signs of our success over the past year has been the increases in prices for wines and grapes that have been achieved by some producers and the growing number of producers that are unable to adequately supply demand.

2007 Mornington Peninsula International Pinot Noir Celebration

The highlight of the year was undoubtedly the Pinot Celebration and having Aubert de Villaine from Domaine de la Romanée-Conti, as our guest
Burgundy producer. The Pinot Celebration continues to attract some of the most important international media commentators and producers from around the world. This together with the participation of all the leading local media and a number of key producers from around Australia resulted in what is now our single most important wine event that more than any other, is helping to build our regional brand around the world.

In my letter of thanks to Aubert I said:

“The Celebration helps us on many different levels, but most importantly it allows our producers to have the opportunity to taste, enjoy, discuss and learn about so many wines made from many different places using a range of different winemaking techniques. We do not receive any government assistance or large sponsorship, so it is the efforts of our members, the speakers and producers that are kind enough to join us and provide their time that ensures the ongoing success of our Celebration.

There is no doubt that the vast majority of those who attended the Celebration would never have had the opportunity to afford such a magnificent tasting of your wines. This was a once in a lifetime opportunity for most.”

The DRC tasting at our celebration was the largest that has ever been conducted anywhere in the world. It is a great tribute to everybody that has contributed to establishing this event that we have been able to continue to attract the calibre of producers and commentators we have from around the world.

Finally, I was hesitant to “publish” any of Aubert’s response to my letter, as he is a very private man who demonstrated to us all his incredible grace and generosity, when he was here. However, I am sure he would not mind me sharing with our members only, this small extract:

“I keep myself the best memory of my visit to the Mornington Peninsula Pinot Celebration. My greatest satisfaction was to see that this small area of your big country produces very special wines with qualities that are not the expected power, fruit and tannins, but to the contrary grace and finesse. It is a great compliment from a Burgundian!” – Aubert de Villaine 27 June 2007.

Our special thanks and congratulations to everybody on the organising committee for their tremendous efforts and for the outstanding success of this years Celebration.

Media

We had many very influential international and local visitors to our region during the last year. Here are a few that have written about us:

• Matthew Jukes (Writer, Journalist -Sunday Telegraph etc.)

“I have just returned from moderating the Mornington Peninsula Pinot Noir Celebration in Australia. This prestigious event focuses on bottles of Pinot Noir from around the world and the Aussie media royalty, Mornington Peninsula winemakers and keen wine collectors taste, savour and comment on every wine with glee” – (UK Magazine Money Week, 23 February 2007)
Matthew has subsequently included 4 Mornington Peninsula Pinots in his top 100 wines (published in June, 2007) and published reviews of the wines he tasted here.

- Matt Kramer (Wine Spectator) – Who wrote in his column:
  
  “What has Mornington Peninsula got in the way of Pinot Noir? In a word, finesse. A flight of six Mornington Peninsula Pinot Noirs was the second best at the two day event. (The best, as you will see in a moment, was unbeatable). Nearly all of the Mornington Pinots were lovely, even ethereal, wines that traded strongly on deftness with no inadequacy of flavour or depth.” – (Wine Spectator, 30 April, 2007)

- Harvey Steiman (publisher, Wine Spectator)
  
  “Australia has no shortage of appropriate places to grow Pinot Noir. Mornington and Macedon are capable. So is Yarra. There are pockets of cool climate regions all over central and southern Victoria. Now comes the hard work, getting it right. Stay tuned” (Harvey’s Blog on Australian Pinot Noir 26 April, 2007).

- Jane Faulkner – (The Age)
  
  “What a coup for this event to have Burgundy’s most illustrious statesman taking part in all things Pinot Noir. But the Celebration is also about promoting the best of what Mornington has to offer.” – (The Age, 10 March 2007)

The media coverage of our region and our leading producers both here and overseas continues to grow, with some of our producers receiving outstanding reviews recently in the UK, USA and elsewhere around the world.

**MPVA 5 year Strategic Business Plan**

For me, one of the most important achievements of the Committee over the past year has been the completion and adoption of the new 5 year MPVA Strategic Business Plan (SBP). As I reported at our recent 2007/08 MPVA Budget and Business Planning meeting on 30 June 2007, the SBP establishes a strong strategic planning framework that will guide the activities of the MPVA for the next five years.

The plan identifies our key short, medium and long term objectives with a key focus on how we continue to build our regional wine profile and showcase our producer’s credentials as widely as we can. A copy of the plan is available on the Members section of the website.

With new Presidents and Committee members elected every few years or so, it is important that our committee doesn’t lose focus of our longer term objectives as well as those immediate short term objectives which we face each year.

I would like to thank Ian Sutton, Cheryl, the Committee and all our members and industry colleagues who provided their input and contributed to
completing this important work. If we can meet the key objectives we have set for the next five years we will, by then, be well recognised as one of Australia’s leading wine regions and be widely recognised for our outstanding Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and cool climate wines.

**MPVA Committee**

It is critical to our long term success that we continue to attract and retain the best talent available to us on the MPVA Committee. The ongoing strength of the Committee relies on the dedication of time and effort by Committee members to prepare for and attend meetings and various functions throughout the year. This can at times be very challenging with the competing business commitments each of our Committee members have.

I would like to thank all those that have served on the Committee and sub committees over the last year for contributing their time and talents for the benefit of the MPVA, our industry and all our members.

I would also like to congratulate those members who have been nominated for the committee this year and thank them for standing and being prepared to volunteer their time and talents.

**Finance**

Over the past year we achieved a modest surplus of $3,400. Our receipts from events, including promotional activities and the touring map now represent a very important source of funding that allows us to continue to reinvest in our marketing and growing our regional profile.

It is important that we continue to build our reserves, as our activities grow, to support events such as the Pinot Celebration and other activities that at times require upfront outlays. The reduction in our crush this year and our total member levies has resulted in a review of all our expenditures and increased efforts to grow our sponsorship and revenues from other sources.

Many thanks go to Graham Turner who has continued to work very hard as Treasurer and who has provided all the necessary finance and accounting support to the office, the Committee and our auditor. Reconciling our income and expenses across all our projects and tracking future project commitments and cash flows requires much patience and time!

**Technical**

The Technical Committee headed by Tyson Lewis has continued to carry out invaluable work on many important projects throughout the year. Our thanks to the Committee for their quick response to the phylloxera outbreak in the Yarra Valley last year. A special committee was quickly established which redistributed our protocols and reminders to all members, commissioned new signage for our vineyards and organised a DPI information seminar.
The Committee has also overseen the ongoing water quality project (special thanks to Geoff Duke for his coordination of this important ongoing project) and the Pinot benchmarking project which is now in its second year. This project is helping to provide valuable insights into the impact of our vine and vineyard management on the Peninsula on the quality and style of Pinot Noir wines we produce.

**VWIA**

I joined the VWIA board last year and have participated in a process of strategically reviewing the role of the VWIA and how its activities fit with those of regional associations and national bodies, such as, the Winemakers Federation of Australia, the AWBC and the newly formed Wine Grape Growers Association.

The result of this review has been to strengthen the role of the VWIA as our peak representative body, incorporating stronger regional representation within a new constitutional structure and the development of a closer and more aligned relationship with WFA and other national industry bodies.

The VWIA has been renamed as “Wines of Victoria”, with the now Premier, John Brumby, recently launching its new website. The website has extensive new resources and capabilities, including regional information and events provided via both a general public and members section.

A new constitution for the VWIA will be voted on in September, including the new Regional Association Council and Executive Management Committee structure. The changes that have resulted from the strategic review significantly improve the alignment and working relationship with regional associations and our national industry bodies. This will reduce duplication of efforts and provide a much clearer focus for the VWIA. These changes have helped revitalise the organisation which now provides a very strong rationale for all Victorian producers to join.

I encourage all members to visit the new Wines of Victoria website ([www.winesofvictoria.com.au](http://www.winesofvictoria.com.au)) and to consider joining.

**Administration**

Cheryl Lee has continued to manage all the activities of the MPVA and the demanding requirements of running the association, the office and our various events and marketing activities, which this year included the Pinot Celebration. Cheryl also represents our interest on a range of wine industry forums, tourism bodies, local council committees and has ongoing communication with other regional industry organisations, such as MP Gourmet.

It is a demanding role and one that Cheryl continues to manage extremely well. I would like to thank Cheryl for the invaluable assistance she provides to all of us and in continuing to make the MPVA one of the best regional organisations in the country.
Analysis of James Halliday’s 2008 Australian Wine Companion

Introduction

Last year I shared with you an analysis of Mornington Peninsula wines as they had been rated in James Halliday’s 2007 Australian Wine Companion. I would like to thank Chris Hamilton from Ten Minutes By Tractor, for completing this valuable work again this year.

The analysis of James Halliday’s Companion, provides an interesting macro level view of how we are tracking as a region. At a micro level, for each producer, there is either great elation or disappointment and possibly a thing or two to complain about.

However, one thing which I don’t believe can be denied is the monumental nature of this work. There is no other wine review like it in Australia that can compare to its breadth and depth. Nor is there anyone else that has the same credibility to undertake such a task, as James Halliday.

We must all accept the good with the bad, there are some factual inaccuracies that are contained in the Companion (such as ours!) and as we know, each of our wines will perform or be perceived differently on a given day. But as we move away from the micro level and start looking at ratings, over time, of a producer, of a particular wine over a number of vintages or of a region as a whole, there is a more accurate and reliable picture which I think we can be quite confident in.

The purpose of this analysis is to empirically measure how the quality of wines we produce, as a region, rate against other regions and measure the relative strength of our key varieties. The purpose of this analysis is not to create a formal league table or point score against other regions, it is to help us understand how we are tracking and to use the analysis to help confirm or deny our progress.

The analysis can also be used for a range of other purposes and this year Chris and I have looked at how our pricing, for the quality of wine we produce, compares against other wines of the same quality.

It continues to be asserted in some sections of the media that our wines are expensive. Our analysis clearly demonstrates that this is not the case and hopefully this will be useful for all our members to consider when reviewing their prices.

How we rate?

This year’s analysis clearly demonstrated Mornington Peninsula’s strength in Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. The average quality of our Pinot Noir and Chardonnay was the highest of any region in Australia (that has statistical relevance). Although this is, again, an analysis of only one vintage, it clearly
reinforced the credentials of our two flagship varieties and the critical mass of quality that we can now claim. There are no other varieties which we, as a region, can claim to have such quality and critical mass and consistency as Pinot Noir and Chardonnay.

So here are the findings of this year's analysis, together with the comparative figures for last year:

**Pinot Noir**

- Halliday rates 394 Pinot Noirs (last year 416)
- Prices range from $12 to $120 (last year $10 to $200)
- Scoring ranges from 87 to 97 (last year 81 to 96 points)
- Average price of all Pinot Noirs is $32.01 ($30.65)
- The average score is 91.0 (89.9).

According to the Companion, Pinot Noir is grown in 38 regions throughout Australia although 21 of these are only represented by 1 or 2 wines. The distribution of rated wines is as follows (last year's figures in brackets)…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>% (Last Year %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>67% (62%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmania</td>
<td>17% (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td>6% (9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Australia</td>
<td>6% (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>5% (7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Mornington Peninsula has…

- The second highest number of rated Pinot Noir wines – 80 (Yarra Valley 82, Tasmania 65)
- The highest mean score of major regions – 92.0 (Yarra Valley 91.2, Geelong 91.2)
- The highest average price of major regions – $36.84 (Gippsland $35.95, Macedon Ranges $33.26). However, see price analysis below.
- Equal highest rated wine – 97 points
- The highest percentage of wines from a region rated 94-100 (Outstanding) – 43% (34 of a total of 80 rated), Geelong 31%, Yarra Valley 30%.
- 33% of ALL Pinot Noir wines that were rated as Outstanding are from Mornington Peninsula (34 of 102), Yarra Valley 25%, Tasmania 15%.

Versus last year:

- The highest number of rated wines – 79 (Yarra Valley 78, Tasmania 71)
- The highest mean score of major regions – 91.6 (Yarra Valley 90.5, Tasmania 89.0)
- The highest average price of major regions – $33.56 (Yarra Valley $32.06, Tasmania $31.28)
- Equal highest rated wine – 96 points
- 94-100 (Outstanding) – 29% (Yarra Valley 18%, Tasmania 14%)
Pinot Noir - Conclusion

As was the case last year, the highest average quality and number of Outstanding Pinot Noir wines come from Mornington, ie we are doing ok.

Chardonnay

- Halliday rates 650 Chardonnays (last year 797)
- Price range from $9 to $120 (last year $7 to $120)
- Scoring ranges from 87 to 97 points (last year 80 to 97 points);
- Average price of all Chardonnays is $25.48 (Last year $22.72)
- The average score is 91.0 (Last year 89.8).

According to the Companion, Chardonnay is grown in 65 regions although 24 of these are only represented by 1 or 2 wines. The distribution of rated wines is as follows…

- Victoria: 40% (36%)
- New South Wales: 16% (20%)
- Western Australia: 19% (18%)
- South Australia: 16% (17%)
- Tasmania: 8% (6%)
- Queensland: 2% (2%)

The Mornington Peninsula has…

- The 3rd highest number of rated wines – 58 (Yarra Valley 82, Margaret River 71, Tasmania 50)
- The highest mean score of major regions – 92.6 (Margaret River 92.0, Yarra Valley 91.7, Adelaide Hills 91.7)
- The highest average price of major regions – $30.64 (Yarra Valley $27.51, Geelong $28.57, Margaret River $29.18)
- No highest rated wines – 97 points (Yattarna), but MP, Yarra Valley, Margaret River, Tasmania, Adelaide Hills, Geelong all have wines rated 96
- The highest percentage of wines rated 94-100 (Outstanding) – 55% (Margaret River 42%, Yarra Valley 32%, Tasmania 26%); so over half of all MP wines rated are rated as Outstanding
- 18% of ALL Chardonnay wines rated as Outstanding are from MP (Yarra Valley 14%, Margaret River 16%)

Versus last year:

- The 4th highest number of rated wines – 64 (Yarra Valley 80, Hunter Valley 75, Margaret River 71)
- The highest mean score of major regions – 92.1 (Yarra Valley 91.5, Hunter Valley 89.2, Margaret River 91.7)
- The 2nd highest average price of major regions – $28.31 (Yarra Valley $27.89, Hunter Valley $22.65, Margaret River $28.45 – Margaret River and Yarra Valley have much higher maximums)
No highest rated wines – 97 points, but 2 out of 18 rating 96 and 10 out of 41 rating 95

94-100 (Outstanding) – 29% (Yarra Valley 18%, Tasmania 14%)

Percentage of wines rated...
90-93 (Highly recommended) – (4<sup>th</sup>) 9% (Yarra Valley 14%, Hunter Valley 11%, Margaret River 10%)
94-100 (Outstanding) – 2<sup>nd</sup> 16% (Yarra Valley 15%, Hunter Valley 5%, Margaret River 17%)

Chardonnay - Conclusion

As last year, the Mornington Peninsula should certainly be regarded as one of Australia’s leading producers of Chardonnay alongside Margaret River and Yarra Valley.

Prices – How do Mornington Peninsula prices they compare?

Using the trend line created by the scatter chart of price versus score, it is possible to determine the market price for each score. The following is a scatter diagram for both Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, based on the 2008 data.

It is interesting that although they both start at 87 points and $9, Pinot Noir prices increase at a much more rapid rate than Chardonnay.
It is then possible to plot the trend line against the Mornington Peninsula wines, looking at price versus points and compare this against the rest of the market. This then tells us how the average Mornington Peninsula price for quality (points) compares.

As you can see from the above graph, if you are above the line (that is higher points, lower cost), then you are “cheap”, versus the market. If you are below, you are “expensive”.

So what happens when we compare our average, or trend line, against the rest of the market, for Chardonnay and Pinot Noir ??...
On average all Mornington Peninsula Chardonnays are cheaper than the average of all Chardonnays or, more accurately, at any given quality level (score) the average of all our Chardonnays is cheaper than the average of all Chardonnays of the same quality level. Conversely, at any given price point Mornington Peninsula wines are on average better quality.

Likewise for Pinot Noirs above a score of about 90 are “cheap”; below this Mornington Peninsula Pinot Noirs are more expensive.

**Conclusion**

We must remember that this analysis has been carried out in a very good vintage. However, what seems to be generally true is that while our quality and consistency has continued to climb, our prices have generally lagged compared to other producers and regions.

This should provide great incentive and encouragement to all producers to continue to focus on their quality and consistency. As our regional reputation grows, so does our ability to increase our prices, recover our costs, invest in the future and hopefully earn an honorable return for our endeavors.

I hope that you have found this useful and thanks again to Chris.
The Technical Committee continued the “Vineyard Reminders” program which highlights significant issues each season in each MPVA Newsletter and to work towards continual improvements in grape and wine quality. Indications have been that this has been well received by members.

The MPVA Technical Committee has continued to meet with the Yarra Valley Grape Growers Technical Committee twice during the year initiating much discussion on the industry direction and what we provide to our members. With the recent phylloxera developments it has been particularly useful to stay in touch with technical developments in the Yarra Valley and a tour of their facilities and protocol is planned for October.

With the phylloxera outbreak in the Yarra Valley a phylloxera sub committee was quickly formed to amend and distribute protocols to members and develop appropriate signage options. The mid season roundup involved a presentation and forum on phylloxera and reiterated harvest protocols. The sub committee continues to sit and monitor needs.

The water quality project initiated last season has been continued this season to further record sampling of our waterways and extended to studying invertebrate numbers and diversity as direct indicators of water quality.

Other areas of activity in 2006-07 included the following:

- The end of season review was held once again with interesting weather data and anecdotal comment on the season that was.
- The second mid-season roundup was also held to discuss seasonal issues (particularly phylloxera) and was well received.
- The second workshop on prevention of pruning hand injury was recently held and well attended at Ten Minutes By Tractor. Preventative and remedial action was presented by a occupational therapist as well as a tool maintenance demo by James Wright.
- We have continued our healthy relationship with RMIT with several students keen to use our vineyards for environmental studies. Current possible projects are reuse water quality and environmental effect and specific metals present in soil and effect.
SECRETARY’S REPORT FOR YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2007
John Ballis, Honorary Secretary

Membership
At 30 June 2007 membership of the association was 129. The makeup of the membership is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Members</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Members</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Associates</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honorary Life</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A warm welcome is extended to the following new members:

**Members**
- John Rutkowski
- Louise Vidoni
- Paramdeep Ghumman
- Adrian Hennessy
- Kathleen Quealy

**Associates**
- Ian Knox
- John Runting
- Steven Faulkner
- Sally-Anne Hains
- Sam Coverdale

Communication with Members
The method of communication to members has evolved from quarterly Newsletters being posted and emailed, to the recently created and utilised MPVA e-newsletter, which is sent when required and is saving enormous amounts of time and significant costs to the Association. The MPVA Website members Section has been further developed and is updated regularly as well as archiving all e-newsletters sent.

Major MPVA Promotional Events
- Mornington Peninsula International Pinot Noir Celebration February 2007
- Pinots Week 16-26 March 2007
- Peninsula Piers and Pinot 11 March 2007
- Winter Wine Weekend 9-11 June 2007
  WWFest Red Hill Reserve and 48 Wineries
- Mornington Peninsula Wine Touring Map 2007
  100,000 maps distributed Australia wide featuring 61 Cellar Doors/Mail Order category

Members Barbeques and events
25 June 2007 Five Sons Estate

Special Thanks
The Association is sincerely grateful for the assistance of many who have given their time and expertise so freely, and in particular:
- Stephen Stern (Honorary Solicitor) and Nick Balaasz (Friends of the MPV)
Introduction
The MPVA has continued to successfully promote the Mornington Peninsula wine region over the past year. A focus on our flagship strength and position as a region at the forefront of high quality grape and wine production has been key. The brand and strengths of the region are communicated to:

- media – national wine, local, travel and lifestyle (with international wherever possible) to promote strengths and a point of difference
- consumers – to increase visitation to the region and to create an awareness of brand/s when purchasing decisions are made both on and off premise in all markets
- trade - through liaison with events
- and the wine industry itself – Victorian Wine Industry Association, Winemakers Federation of Australia, Australian Wine Research Institute etc
- and to Government and community at all levels – from Greg Hunt MP, Mornington Peninsula Shire, Department of Primary Industry, Tourism Victoria etc to organisations such as Roadsafe

The highlights of the past year have been:

Wine Australia in Sydney in July 2006 – 7 wineries and Mornington Peninsula Tourism attended this event in Sydney and presented a strong regional display to 20,000 visitors, including trade and media

The 2007 Wine Touring Map attracted a record number of participants and 100,000 maps were distributed from December 2006

Peninsula Piers & Pinots 11 March 2007 – 18 wineries participated at Flinders with 300 consumers attending for a 3 hour intimate tasting which attracts locals and Melbourne consumers

Pinot Week 16 – 25 March 2007 – built on the region’s relationship with Melbourne Food & Wine Festival and participating Melbourne trade with some individual local & Melbourne based activities which involved 20 wineries

Winter Wine Weekend – 50 wineries participated with 1300 attending at the launch event at Red Hill, and overall reports from Cellar Doors ranging from 20-100% increase in sales compared to the 2006 weekend. Evaluation is not yet complete but again 70% of visitors to the launch event have indicated they are new visitors to the event

The first MPVA Winter WINE Passport was developed with support from Mornington Peninsula Tourism, with 15 wineries involved and is currently being implemented with a strong promotional program

Mornington Peninsula International Pinot Noir Celebration on 9 & 10 February 2007 was a huge success in attracting national and international media, some trade, producers and consumers. 32 Mornington Peninsula wineries participated with 11 local wines exposed in specific sessions
We have continued to demonstrate that Mornington Peninsula is at the forefront of the highest quality Pinot Noir production in Australia. This was a key event in the past year and attracted leading names from around the world, including:

- Aubert de Villaine (Domaine de la Romanée-Conti)
- Matthew Jukes (UK)
- Matt Kramer (US)
- David Furer (UK), and
- winemakers from Kosta Browne (Sonoma), Cristom (Oregon), Felton Road (New Zealand) as well as Australia (Adelaide Hills, Macedon Ranges, Yarra Valley, Tasmania, Beechworth and of course Mornington Peninsula).

The Mornington Peninsula wines received wide praise from those who attended the event and resulted in significant media coverage and confirmation of our brand positioning.

Matt Kramer wrote an article in Wine Spectator in April 2007:

“..What’s Mornington Peninsula got in the way of Pinot Noir? In a word, finesse. A flight of six Mornington Peninsula Pinot Noirs was the second best at the two day event. (The best you will see in a moment was unbeatable). Nearly all of the Mornington Pinots were lovely, even ethereal, wines that traded strongly on deftness, with no inadequacies of flavour or depth…..”

He refers to the unbeatable wines of Domaine de la Romanée-Conti of course. The value of this article is difficult to quantify, and perhaps invaluable, due to the huge exposure in international markets via Wine Spectator and syndicated connections

Other Promotion
Other promotional activities have included regional events, presentations and tastings such as the Red Hill Long Lunch, the annual regional showcase at Federation Square, the Moonah Links “Ashes Golf Challenge”, wines presented to the Australian Society of Travel writers in Sydney and Brisbane. Media familiarisations have included wine writers from Brisbane and Hawaii and have been followed up with articles showcasing the region.

Media Exposure
Media clippings are retained by the MPVA and evaluated on a monthly basis to assess the general level of national (with some international) written media which relates to Mornington Peninsula wine. The coverage in the last 12 months is estimated at $1.5million and in the last 3 years approximately $4.5 million in publicity

The 2007 MPIPNC attracted $250,000 of media coverage and the three Mornington Peninsula International Pinot Noir Celebrations have generated publicity specifically related to our regional brand and is estimated to be close to $1 million. It is no longer unusual to see reference to the new positioning as shown in the following quotes:

Huon Hooke, Sydney Morning herald 15 July 2006:
“The quality of Mornington Peninsula wines has skyrocketed in the past few years, and no grape variety has done so more than pinot noir. The bad old days of light-brown coloured, weedy smelling, unripe, over-cropped pinots – often selling at prices that reflected the high cost of growing the grapes rather than the wine quality – are well behind us. Several wineries are making great, world class pinot…..”

Ken Gargett, Courier Mail 29 May 2007:
“Although much of what the region likes the outside world to focus on is the pinot, it is worth noting that there is much more…..”

Cooperative brand marketing
Mornington Peninsula Tourism funding support has resulted in a campaign targeted at Australian Gourmet Traveller WINE Magazine readers, including one page in each of four consecutive editions in 2007. Cooperative marketing has also enabled branding and promotional partnerships to be developed and implemented in a page in The Age Epicure in June 2007 for Winter Wine events and in March 2007 for Autumn Pinot related events. Funding provided by Mornington Peninsula Shire and Tourism to support these activities and developments of events has been in excess of $20,000 in 2006/2007.

The 2007 Wine Touring Map
The MPVA published and distributed 100,000 copies with updated information included in the official Mornington Peninsula Official Visitor Guide, also produced annually. Over 35,000 Wine Touring Maps were included as an insert to the Gourmet Traveller Wine subscription data base in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne.

Technical, Research and Development
A strong focus has also been maintained to provide technical information and research for continued high quality viticulture and winemaking through workshops and seminars as well as individual research and government funded projects. The leadership role of the MPVA in the wine and tourism industry has continued through involvement by members and the Executive Officer on various committees and forums.

The provision of technical information by relevant workshops generated by the MPVA have included a Phylloxera Forum, Pruning workshop & season roundups. The Winemakers Federation of Australia have held Marketing workshops for members in November 2006 and May 2007.

The MPVA has been successful in obtaining funding to support the second years of:
- Pinot Noir Benchmarking Project - 16 wineries participating, with $15,000 funding from Grape and Wine Research Development Corporation
- MPVA Water Extension Project – which involves biological and chemical analysis by 10 wineries and 16 vineyards who are participating with $5000 from Mornington Peninsula Shire and support from Waterwatch
- The MPVA Salinity project has been developed in conjunction with the Department of Primary Industry and funding for $180,000 has been applied for

The MPVA Code of Conduct and subsequent provision of a Phylloxera protocols supplement and provision of regional warning and reminder biosecurity signs to members has been well supported by members.

Membership services have included cooperative arrangements being reviewed such as the discontinuation of the supply of MPVA cartons due to lack of continued needs. The re negotiation of regional rates for Australia Post wine distribution has been lengthy but successful, but has been utilised by more than 30 members for the last few years and will again provide access to the e-parcel system at greatly reduced rates for members only.
The MPVA accounts have been managed with a series of project budgets within a well planned administrative system. Projects have been supported by significant sponsorship and funding which has minimised costs to members and developed partnerships which should continue in the future.

2007/2008 MPVA Business Plan

Key objectives for 2007/2008
The MPVA Executive have developed and accepted the Strategic Business Plan for the next five years and the next 12 months will focus on further strengthening our brand position.

During the next 12 twelve months the MPVA will take a stronger leadership role in promoting Australian Pinot Noir and more specifically developing the Mornington Peninsula- Australian Pinot Noir focus, both nationally and internationally to the industry, trade, media, consumers and the local community. The continued provision of technical expertise and communication will support and encourage all members to participate in appropriate activities with subsequent member and regional rewards

Key action plan supporting objectives & timeframes

MPVA 2008 Events
The core annual promotional events to consumers will be Peninsula Piers & Pinots, Red Hill Long Lunch, Winter Wine Weekend and the Winter WINE Passport. In 2008 Pinot Week will be redefined and the focus will be Melbourne based and in conjunction with the Melbourne Food & Wine Festival. Planning is underway for the Mornington Peninsula International Pinot Noir Celebration (MPIPNC09) by the project group which will be lead by Keith Harris

Broader Wine Industry, commercial and trade events and their capacity to reach target markets will be investigated and participation at different levels will be coordinated by the MPVA. Facilitation and support will be given to participants as required. It is planned to establish an activity in the region to bring trade (both on and off premise) from other states to the region at a time which will suit those we are seeking to enlist as supporters of the region at a time which shows the beauty and dynamics of the region and its wines.

Marketing
The 2008 Wine Touring Map will continue to be the main collateral for the wine region. It is planned to produce 120,000 copies to distribute from December 2007 and invitations to participate distributed in July 2007. An incentive program for local restaurants to promote local wines is being developed in conjunction with the 2008 map invitation

Planning to take a Mornington Peninsula Roadshow to other markets will continue and members who have strong links to these other markets, or plan to develop them, will be invited to participate in a very strong promotional activity. An MPVA Pinot Poster will be created in late 2007 and used in conjunction with specific collateral to develop and promote the brand ‘launch’ at subsequent functions and our Regional Roadshows in Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney

Cooperative advertising opportunities will continue to be developed to broaden the reach of the regional brand message to target markets predominantly via The Age
Epicure and the AGT WINE Magazine. Other and local media will be investigated to continue relationships and develop partnerships for increased buying power as opportunities arise.

The brand position for the region will be reinforced through MPVA representation on committee and boards in wider Industry activities such as VWIA, MPT, Green Wedge etc. Partnerships are also being developed with the Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery.

**Media Plan**
The MPVA will produce and distribute media releases to selected wine media targets for selected promotional events, regional branding information & milestones/vintage reports. The database of local, national and international contacts is updated every 6 months, and specific information is targeted to the appropriate sector. Clippings from coverage in media are collected, compiled and evaluated on a monthly basis. Following adoption of the strategic plan, a media plan will be developed to maximise media opportunities.

**Mornington Peninsula Tourism**
MPVA will continue to contribute to developing a regional tourism marketing plan which receives significant funding from Tourism Victoria and the Mornington Peninsula Shire. The brand proposition of the MP wine region will be reinforced through this Mornington Peninsula Tourism (MPT) marketing program.

MPVA has representation on the Board of delegates and at the Executive level of MPT and contributes significantly to programs and planning which is relevant to MPVA members. Forums and networking activities are open to members and supported and attended by MPVA when possible.

**Signage** - although new gateway signs have been approved by local and state government, the progress is frustratingly slow. The MPVA has initiated 2 signage reviews funded by the Mornington Peninsula Shire and is constantly stressing the need for implementation of updated signs and encouraging the re-establishment of the regional signage sub-committee to deal with issues as they arise.

The MPVA has instigated and supported the MPVA Cellar Door Club which will meet five times per year - all Cellar Door staff are invited to participate in wine tastings, short presentations on regional statistics, other Cellar Door wines and collaborate on providing collective complimentary information to enhance the visitors experience.

**Cellar Door Metrics** - the recently workshoped initiative of the Winemakers Federation of Australia to benchmark Cellar Door visitation and sales, nationally and intra and inter regionally, is being trialled with significant national funding support, and should be investigated by all Cellar Doors. Relevant regional information will be obtained for all participants and will be maximised as more Cellar Doors participate.

**Technical & Training**
The MPVA continues to focus on maintaining high quality and a continued increased knowledge base for members. An MPVA members’ vintage tasting & peer assessment will be held in July/August this year for members to look at finished wines and allow “in house” discussion to create greater awareness and understanding.
Following the end of season roundup and Pruning workshop in July 2007, the MPVA has successfully supported an Integrated Pest Management Seminar to be held on 7 August at Knoxfield, and then the MPVA Growing Pinot Noir Seminar will be held on 10 August 2007 in our region. A composting field day and Responsible Service of Alcohol with Food Safety accreditation will be held later in the year. An AWRI roadshow is also planned for October 2007. Funding for the third year of the Pinot Noir Benchmarking Project will be sought.

Ongoing training opportunities will include the Winemakers Federation of Australia Wine Skills III workshop with an Export Market Review and it is planned to include “Strategies for Growth” and the opportunities provided by the *Wine Australia: Directions to 2025*. Continued relationships with Chisholm, RMIT and secondary/tertiary institutions will be utilised to provide training to members, or access for students to learn in the local wine industry environment.

**Website**

www.mpva.com.au continues to be a work in progress and plans are expanded each year to generate greater communication to different sectors. Members have received a quarterly newsletter which has been mailed out. This newsletter has also been emailed via a more efficient system. This e-newsletter to members will continue but e-newsletters to different mailing lists such as the MPVA ‘event notification’ or ‘Pinot Celebration’ lists will be developed more comprehensively to enable prompt and efficient communication. An e-commerce component will be investigated to enable more efficient methods of event registration and participation during the next 12 months.

The longer term plan is to better integrate sponsorship & advertising, to build further knowledge management within the site and to encourage member and customer interaction via bulletin boards with an e-commerce component to cover all aspects of payments including management of member data, subscriptions and fees.

**Administration**

The MPVA staffing will continue to implement the strategic plan and support membership services. The office IT system supports a well functioning network, with an off site backup, laptop and data projector facilities available as needed. Photocopying and laminating services are utilised by many members. Accounting is managed with MYOB and mandatory auditing of the accounts is conducted prior to the Annual General Meeting.

**The following proposed Calendar of MPVA events & activities in 2007/2008 may vary in timing and detail as activities are developed:**

**2007**

- **Cellar Door Club - MPVA**
  - June/July

- **End of Season Roundup**
  - July

- **MPVA members vintage tasting & peer assessment**
  - July/August

- **Pruning & prevention of hand injury Workshop**
  - 3 July

- **Integrated Pest Management Seminar**
  - 7 August

- **Growing Pinot Noir Seminar**
  - 10 August

- **WFA Wineskills 3 “Strategies for Growth”& Target Markets (market opportunities & marketing mix)**
  - September

- **AWRI Roadshow**
  - 11 October

- **Mornington Peninsula Regional vintage launch Brisbane**
  - November

- **2008 Wine Touring Map**
  - December
## Pinot Noir Benchmarking Project Year 2

**2008**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Month</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regional trade showcase activity</td>
<td>January/February</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peninsula Piers &amp; Pinots, Long lunches</td>
<td>March</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pinot Week (incorporated into MF&amp;W Festival)</td>
<td>February/March</td>
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<tr>
<td>WFA Marketing Skills III Workshop</td>
<td>May</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sydney Roadshow</td>
<td>May/June</td>
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<tr>
<td>End of Season Roundup</td>
<td>June</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winter Wine Weekend</td>
<td>July 3 - 9 June</td>
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<tr>
<td>MP WINE Passport</td>
<td>8 June – 31</td>
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<td>August</td>
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<tr>
<td>MPVA members vintage tasting &amp; peer assessment</td>
<td>July 31</td>
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<tr>
<td>MP WINE Newsletter &amp; website expansion</td>
<td>December</td>
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<tr>
<td>Young Sommelier event</td>
<td>August</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pinot Noir Benchmarking Project Year 3</td>
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