

the dirt

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VINTAGE 2009 ISSUE 33



**BROKENWOOD**

AUSTRALIAN CRAFT AT ITS FINEST

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

# vintage report

Iain Riggs

**M**id January in the Hunter Valley always brings out a slight nervousness in winemakers. Having been battered in both previous years – drought in 2007 and pouring rain in 2008 - it is no wonder. Black cats are certainly not wanted and ladders given a wide berth. The tragedies here in the Hunter of 12 months ago are slowly fading but still tug at the heart.

The bushfire devastation in the Yarra Valley and surrounds brings a certain sombre note to the usual boisterous nature of harvest and crushing. Vineyards and wineries were destroyed but thankfully our industry colleagues were safe.

Vintage 2009 is the task at hand. The rain that plagued the 2008 vintage finally eased up at the end of April and there were no rain days in May. The middle three winter months, normally dry for us, saw a welcome 250mm (10 inches) and the odd rain day through to the year's end. Fruit set was not as complete as hoped but resulted in long loose bunches especially in Shiraz - a good result.

The Southern Oscillation Index had remained in positive territory since August 07, apart from a negative blip in June 08, so the Hunter was expecting the current patterns to hold. Medium term forecasts had no abnormal rain events. The year 2008 ended at 957mm, well above average.

Early reports on the Verdelho, Semillon and Chardonnay wines are of very high quality.

Vines tend to shut down during extreme heat and the few 40°C+ days we had saw some foliage burn in the reds. Anyone who ignored the damp winter and kept the water up in spring was rewarded with good foliage capable of giving optimum ripeness. The harvesting of the red grapes was interrupted by a week of wet weather, but most wineries, including Brokenwood, managed to pick the remaining red grapes in quick time the following week.

Vintage 2009 will continue a run of excellent white vintages as witnessed by the 2009 Royal Sydney Wine Show results. Hunter Valley Semillon returned in a big way to the winners circle snaring all the dry white Semillon golds awarded. The 18 gold medals were shared between 11 Hunter wineries including Brokenwood with gold for the 2007 ILR Semillon.

Of our other regions, Beechworth provided some good parcels of wine and Cowra showed good quality, but reduced quantity owing to the prolonged hot spell. McLaren Vale also had a heat wave, but this was early enough to avoid much damage and our two growers managed their vineyards better than most. The Orange district looks like turning in some excellent grapes.

We have a large and diverse winery crew this year with cellar rats from France, New Zealand and even Japan. As usual, they're well led by PJ and Sarah. Vintage 2009 is number 10 here at Brokenwood for winemaker PJ Charteris, so well earned "congratulations!" from all of us here at 'The Wood'.



Iain Riggs (R) and Cru

# harvest

harvest

get your hands dirty 2009



# brokenwood 1998 HBA what's on



**T**he HBA Shiraz, acknowledging our founders James Halliday, John Beeston and Tony Albert, is our tribute to the great red blends of the '40s and '50s, specifically the Reserve Burgundy reds of Thomas Hardy. Usually blends of Hunter Valley and McLaren Vale Shiraz, these wines encapsulated the very best of regional blending. We release HBA only after it reaches 10 years of age and then only if we think the vintage is worthy.

At 11 years, and with 10 years' bottle age, this wine is drinking superbly but will go on for many years more. Just as importantly, the quality of the corks we have seen in the Graveyard Shiraz, Rayner Shiraz and HBA from this vintage have been consistently good.

The colour is yet to show any real signs of development and has vibrancy and deep red hues. There's great complexity on the nose, with some bottle-age aromas of leather and earth, but still also sweet dark fruits and spice. Hints of vanilla from the oak add to the background.

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For more info [sales@brokenwood.com.au](mailto:sales@brokenwood.com.au)

## Brokenwood Wine Dinners

- Bistro Molines, Hunter Valley 17th April
- Epping RSL 14th May
- Silo Restaurant 11th June

## Bar-Be-School

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

Bar-Be -School offers a BBQ cooking course designed to help you get the most out of cooking more confidently on your BBQ. So why not join us and learn some great new recipes to amaze your family and friends.



BBQ Seafood & Semillon  
(St Leonard's) Sunday 19th April

Theme TBC  
(Brokenwood Winery) Saturday 2nd May

## Accoutrement Cooking School

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

Accoutrement Cooking School, situated in Sydney, has a regular program of cooking classes with celebrity chefs and cookbook authors. Join Brokenwood's Grant Radford at the following classes to match our wines with the guest chef's food.

Sean Connolly – Astral, Star City 28-29th April  
Jared Ingersoll – 4th May  
Martin Boetz – Long Grain, Surry Hills 15th April

## Graveyard Launch Luncheon

Saturday 30th May



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# new releases

## new releases

### OUT NOW

#### 2005 Brycefield Belford Vineyards Semillon

Perfect colour at 4 years of age on release - an excellent, luminous green/yellow colour. Lifted zesty, lemongrass aromas with some sweet apple-blossom characters. Fruit dominant on the palate but typical tight structure with citrus acid finish. Initial lime plus cut grass flavours. Perfect balance of fruit, alcohol and acid. An impressive drink now or leave for more 'toasty' development.



#### 2008 Pinot Noir (Beechworth)

A mid-weight Pinot Noir. Good depth of colour and youthful purple tints evident. Great complexity to the aromas. Lifted red over sweet earthy, savoury characters with a touch of oak sweetness. The balance is aided by ripe tannins giving a lingering finish. This will mature further, although enjoyable as a fresh, zippy young Pinot Noir.



#### 2008 Indigo Vineyard Pinot Noir

A robust Pinot Noir. Lifted dark cherry, dark chocolate over sweet earthy characters. Some vanillin oak in the background. As expected at 14% alcohol a full-bodied palate but the richness of the fruit more than compensates. Dark fruit and brandied pudding flavours. This will mature further, although enjoyable as a rich young Pinot Noir.



### COMING UP

#### 2007 Mistress Block Vineyard Shiraz – RELEASED APRIL 09

Excellent deep, dense red with purple tints. Very attractive aromas of dark chocolate, earth and dark cherry. Some oak vanillin contribution. A medium to full bodied palate with the highish alcohol adding weight to the palate flavours and structure. Briar/char and 'pepper' Shiraz characters along with the ripe berry fruits. Wood and fruit tannins give a balanced finish and gives length. A very good example of a young Hunter Valley red that can be consumed now right through to long term bottle age, as it will reward over time.



#### 2007 Graveyard Vineyard Shiraz – RELEASED JUNE 09

Excellent deep colour and youthful tints. Drought years often bring a different set of challenges, especially in maintaining finesse. There was no drama with this wine as there is no sign of over ripeness at all. Strong lifted aromas of sweet earth and dark cherry. The oak (nearly all French) is obvious in this as a young wine but it will soften and integrate, giving a slight cedar edge. Initial flavours of dark chocolate and ripe plums. These are supported by beautifully ripe tannins. There is mocha/vanillin from the oak but this is in balance with the fruit characters. Perhaps a 'substantial' Graveyard Shiraz as opposed to a 'big' wine, but a skilfully made Hunter from a hot, dry year.



# guest chef

## David Cartwright

**Silo Restaurant & Bar**

Honey Suckle Drive, Newcastle

p: 02 4926 2828

[www.silolounge.co.au](http://www.silolounge.co.au)



### seared sea scallops with braised pork belly, carrot purée and pickled shimeji mushrooms

Serves 4

#### Ingredients

12 large Japanese scallops, roe off

#### Brine

200g caster sugar

300g sea salt

3 cloves

6 black peppercorns

3 bay leaves

2 litres water

#### Carrot Purée

25g butter

3 shallots, peeled

6 carrots, peeled

2 garlic cloves

250ml chicken stock

#### Pork Belly

200g pork belly

3 bay leaves

1 onion

500ml chicken stock

1 celery stick

1 garlic clove

1/2 bunch of thyme

#### Pickled Shimeji Mushrooms

250ml mirin

1 chilli, chopped

1cm ginger, chopped

25g caster sugar

35ml white vinegar

1 punnet of shimeji mushrooms

#### Method

For the brine bring all the ingredients to a boil, cool and place pork belly in brine solution for 12 hours. For the carrot purée sweat shallots and garlic in butter, add carrot and cook for 10 minutes. Add chicken stock and cook carrots until soft. Purée and pass mixture through a sieve.

Drain pork belly from brine solution. Sweat vegetables in saucepan for 10 minutes. Add both stocks and bring to a boil. Add pork belly and cover with grease-proof paper and simmer for one and a half hours or until belly becomes soft to touch. Remove from stock and cool, ready to be portioned.

For the pickle, heat all the ingredients except mushrooms, adding the mushrooms once mixture has cooked.

To serve, place portioned pork belly skin side down in a pan to crisp skin. Heat carrot purée, season scallops and sear in pan for 30 seconds both sides. Place scallops on plate and spoon purée in the middle. Arrange pork belly and shimeji mushrooms and garnish with the herbs.

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