

# FRIENDSHIP FORCE INTERNATIONAL

## AUSSIE WINE TESTING DIARY NOTES 22ND MARCH - 6<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2014

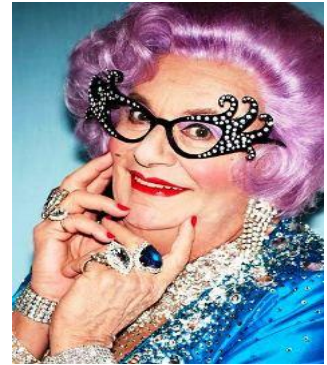
### WITH AMBASSADORS FROM:



AMERICA



GERMANY



AUSTRALIA

Dave & Rosalie Bentzin (ED)

Silke Mahlstedt-Hölker

Yvonne Shakes (ED)

Bill & Janet McGehean

Ina Bornheim

Amparo Moya-Knox

Sharri McIntosh

John & Linda Giles

Bob Montgomery & Barb Bentzin

Scott & Luree Miller

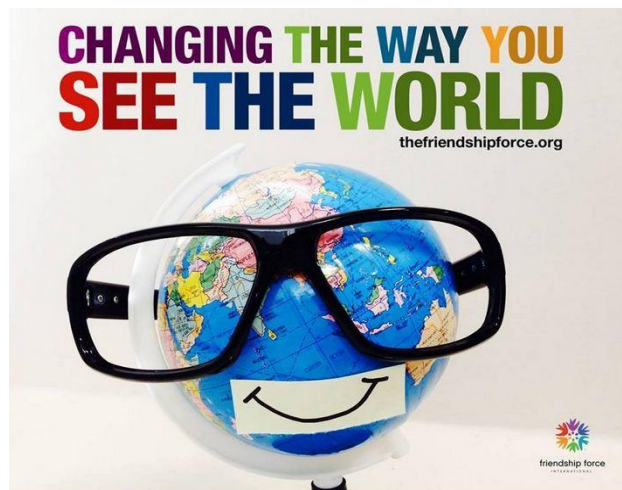
Ron & Melody MacKenzie

Bob Matzen & Marilyn Larkin

Phoebe & Bob McFarlane

Patty Niemeyer

Joanne Johnson & Craig Fagerness



## Saturday March 22, 2014 – Dave Bentzin



Welcome to Melbourne and the FFI Aussie Wine-tasting theme Exchange. The long-awaited adventure is about to begin for Rosalie and me following a 3-day stay-over in Sydney with Bob and Phoebe McFarlane. We walked many miles as we explored the historic Rocks district, the iconic Sydney Opera House, the expansive Royal Botanic Garden, and the Art Gallery of New South Wales. – All conveniently located near the Circular Quay, the transportation hub for the amazingly large Sydney Harbor. A highlight of our visit was meeting our Lübeck Ambassadors, Silke Mahlstedt-Hölker and Ina Bornheim, for lunch at the Garden. Another delight was to taste the Taylor's Reserve 2013 Shiraz from the Clare Valley.

Arrival in Melbourne by plane went smoothly for everyone. Even though the Ambassadors were on various flights, each "transportation group" met at their appointed Traveler's Assistance desk and traveled by taxi to the host meeting point arranged by Liz and Alan Cawsey, the Melbourne Exchange Directors. Rosalie and I were particularly delighted to be greeted in the terminal by our Adelaide friends, Amparo Moya and Yvonne Shakes, whom we hadn't seen since our Vietnam FFI experience together in 2011.

Liz and Alan live in a suburb SE of the Central Business District (CBD, in popular usage) near a light-rail line. Two elements of their nicely updated home were of particular interest. The toilet room is separate from the bath room, as we saw in our subsequent host homes. And, Alan has a rain water collection system that is used to extend the life of garden plants during seasonal dry periods.

An evening Welcome Party at the home of Graeme & Shelley Wilson was a well-organized festive affair that made it easy for hosts and Ambassadors to mingle. We enjoyed the abundant light food while club President Nola Fletcher greeted us and Margaret Fleming briefed us on the history of Melbourne with great historical photos. And, did I mention the tasty wines including varietals that were not familiar to us? A great beginning for this Wine-tasting Theme Exchange.

## Pre-trip daily journal March 18-21: Experiences in Sydney

Reaching Sydney at night after a 24-hour flight from Hamburg, Germany, Silke and I loved our well-equipped and brand new apartment on the edge of CBD and Chinatown.



Day 1: We started with a wonderful breakfast sitting outside in the sun. Being used to early spring temperatures at home, Sydney welcomed us with sunshine and summer feeling. We felt ready to discover the city. And we did. A walk in the Botanical Garden, passing the spectacular Opera House, wandering through the oldest part called “The Rocks”, walking across the Harbour Bridge and going back with the ferry boat made a great day. We spent the evening drinking a bottle of wine on our balcony and listened to the sounds of that big city.

Day 2: Our first contact with members of the group! Dave Bentzin called us and we got the chance to meet him and Rosalie and Phoebe and Bob McFarlane in a cafe. We were warmly welcomed and enjoyed the lunch and our first reunion. When we parted we were looking forward to meeting again in a few days. During the afternoon we discovered other parts (Darling Harbour, Chinatown) of this wonderful and vivid city. In the evening we saw “Carmen” at the Opera House. It was exciting to be in this famous building. But to be honest for me it’s even more exciting to see it from outside.

Day 3: This was our beach day. We took the bus to Bondi Beach. After leaving CBD the character of the city changed. Everything seemed to slow down; the houses were only one or two stories high and quite old. At the beach we watched the surfers and went swimming. It was great! On a very scenic coastal walk we passed an old cemetery which reached right up to the cliffs. We found many names of German and Italian origin. In the evening (Friday night) the streets of Chinatown were crowded. People enjoyed Asian food, listened to street music and watched artists perform on a warm night. We were sad that we already had to leave the next morning.

Conclusion: Sydney is a great place to go. Three days aren’t enough for all the things we could or should have discovered. We didn’t go to any museum or Art gallery. Nevertheless it was a wonderful start into our first Aussie-adventure.

We were happy to be in Australia, so far!

Ina Bornheim - FF of Lübeck

## March 23rd 2014. Scott Miller Australia Exchange – Melbourne

After a great night's sleep and a quick breakfast we are out the door with Mary Wallace-Smith for our first full day – the opportunity to see Melbourne up close.

We drive to the train a few blocks away and hop on the train the 30 or so minute ride to downtown Melbourne to explore the city in small walking groups. The previous evening's party had included a great history lesson about the establishment of the city of Melbourne; its 19<sup>th</sup> century founding in 1835, followed quickly by the discovery of gold near by in the early of 1850s. The small village quickly changed into an important and growing city as people arrived to seek their fortune in a new world. (Sounds familiar doesn't it.)

Melbourne, a city of more than 4 million people, is located on the banks of the Yarra River and is the second largest city in Australia, the Capital of Victoria State. The overall first impression is of a vibrant, creative and very modern city. The CBD –Central Business District is an architectural history lesson stretching from Victorian to the very modern. And the jumble of 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century styles send a message of a new city very much engaged in expressing itself as one of the cutting edge cities of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Our first destination was to the Church of England cathedral on the corner of St. Kilda Road and Flinders Street. But we detour briefly to see an alley street that is a free form art venue for the creative residents to express themselves with the most amazing graffiti (see photo attached). Much like other major cities, the graffiti artists express themselves through the medium of spray paint – but here, the narrow streets and ancient stone buildings are covered with the most amazing array of graphic images, with the full blessing of the City Fathers. It was amazingly whimsical and refreshing.



Turning back to St. Paul's, we stepped inside the sanctuary, itself a marvel of change as it had originally opened onto St. Kilda Street, but had been reoriented and expanded so as to open on Flinders Street. The service was in progress so we entered quietly and did not stay long, but the historic church was marvellously contemporary and at the same time reached back into its history spanning the time from the establishment of the city.

Exiting the church, we walked up St. Kilda Street into the shopping district of Melbourne. And again the overall sense of the city is of a very modern and creative environment that blends both cutting edge creativity and a sense of its history. We were led through a maze of shopping arcades, narrow streets, and major thoroughfares. Past tearooms, and upscale shops of every description.

Melbourne is a city of great civic pride expressed in public space, public buildings for the arts, theatres and performance spaces, and grand sports venues including cricket, rugby, Australian rules football. We ended the day with a walk through the botanical gardens, past massive ancient trees and beautiful flowering plants. And we see the first of many memorials and remembrances of ANZAC Day.

A final highlight for me is coming across a street artist playing the didgeridoo. The rhythmic and haunting sounds stamp a seal of approval on the day as we head out to catch our train home.

During the evening we gather around the dinner table and talk about the AFL-Australian Football League. Mary's team has moved to Brisbane and changed its name, but it is still her team. Australian Rules football is an amazing game. But that is another story.

**Monday March 24**  
***Mornington Peninsula Bay in Melbourne***  
**Linda Giles**

***Highlights – Montalto Winery, Red Hill Estate, Sorrento, Fish and chips at Dormana***

The **Mornington Peninsula** is a peninsula located south-east of Melbourne. It is surrounded by Port Phillip to the west, Western Port, to the east and Bass Strait to the south, and is connected to the mainland in the north. Geographically, the peninsula begins its protrusion from the mainland in the area between Pearcedale and Franston.

The peninsula is primarily a local tourist region, with popular natural attractions such as the variety of beaches both sheltered and open-sea and many scenic sights and views. Other popular attractions include the various wineries, mazes and the diverse array of water sports made available by the diversity of beaches and calm waters of Port Phillip and Western Port. Most visitors to the peninsula are residents of Melbourne who camp, rent villas and share houses or stay in **private beach houses**. It is known simply as "The Peninsula" to locals and Melbournians alike, giving rise to the expression "going down the peninsula".

**First Kangaroo Sighting!** We had a picnic lunch at Seawinds at the top of Arthur's Seat. The time gave us a chance to see our first wild Kangaroos and Wallabies in the wild. We learned that Kangaroos populations can usually be found around areas where grass, bushes are abundant, in forest glades, on the coasts covered with heath and arid areas too. Their body allows them to fit in different environments and hopping helps a lot to cross the dessert plains of Australia. The wallaby is a resident of remote areas in Australia. This animal is suited to warm climate, but not extreme dry environments



Young kangaroos/wallabies are known as “joeys”, like many other marsupials. Adult males are referred to as “bucks”, “boomers”, or “jacks”. An adult female is known as a “doe”, flyer”, or “Jill”. A group is called a “court”, “mob”, or “troupe”. Although members of most wallaby species are small, some can grow up to six feet in length (from head to tail).

The Mornington Peninsula is a notable wine region, producing small quantities of high quality wine from around 60 wineries. While most varieties are grown, the cool, maritime climate of the Peninsula is particularly noted for pinot noir. We visited both the Montalto and Red Hill Estate winery to share this theory. The pinots were excellent.

Highlight of the evening was an authentic meal of “Fish and Chips” on the beach at Dromana. The fish (flaked shark) was served at a Beach house of one of Melbourne Friendship Force members. These small structures (300 square feet) face the bay and contain all the ingredients for a great time on the beach.

## Yarra Valley Day Tuesday, March 25. Patty Niemeyer

This sunny, cool morning our group was joined by Bill and Janet McGehean, Friendship Force members of the Southern New Jersey club.

Our day began with an interesting “demonstration” of big Coach driving as our driver had difficulty maneuvering in the parking lot. Once accomplished, we all boarded the coach for the Healesville Australian Wildlife Sanctuary.



The sanctuary is home to many small (Wallaby, Wombat and Platypus and Tasmanian Devil) and not so small (Kangaroo and Emu) animals which are unique to Australia. Here breeding and conservation programs are ongoing for wallabies and the Tasmanian Devil. The tour ended with a bird show including Raptors, Barking Owls (only 50 breeding pairs remain) and a Cockatoo. It was amazing to watch them swoop low over our heads yet not touch us!

Next on our agenda for the day were two Wine Tastings in the Yarra Valley. The Yarra Valley produces primarily Chardonnay and Pinot Noir grapes.

Our first stop was the De Bortoli Winery and Cellar Door at Dixon Creek for a quick tasting and then lunch outside on a great covered patio. The second tasting was at Yering Station at Yarra Glen. Yering Station was the first vineyard planted in Victoria in 1838 by Scottish brothers. The tasting included a 2010 Estate Chardonnay aged 11 months and I don't recall whether it was oak aged or not. During this tasting we were instructed as how to tell the difference in oak-aged chardonnay and non-oak aged. You identify by the color...if the wine is rather yellow, it is oak-aged. Our second wine was a 2010 Estate Pinot Noir. We were instructed the lighter color of red wines meant the skins had been removed in the wine making process. The Pinot Noir was said to be difficult to grow as it was apt to get diseases. Our third wine was a Viognier/Shiraz (3 ½% Viognier - added to 'help balance the structure').

We then returned 'home' and changed for our Farewell Dinner at the Domaine Retirement Village where we had a great meal of either fish or chicken.

Patty Niemeyer

## Wednesday, March 26, 2014 Melbourne to Apollo Bay

We all said goodbye to our new friends in Melbourne and hit the road for Apollo Bay and The Great Ocean Road. But first, what else? A 10:30 AM stop at a winery en route, of course!

The tasting at The Hill Winery was the tasting that almost didn't happen until none other than our own John Giles intervened on our behalf. Although Yvonne had thoroughly scheduled and recently reconfirmed our tour, one can't anticipate a winery changing ownership the very week we arrive to visit.

After we disembarked our bus at this beautiful venue, we found no staff working or tasting tour expected. John discovered the new owner toiling in his office and asked him if we could please taste their wine. The new owner said that he'd never facilitated a tasting. John assured him that he would assist and so the tasting was a go. Together they made a fabulous wine tasting facilitation team as evidenced by the smiles on the ambassadors' faces! Thanks, John!



Further down the road, our quick lunch was at the tiny little seaside town of Lorne. Our driver Dave had to park on a little side street to let us off, and then he removed the bus to safe parking and came back one hour later same spot to pick us up.



The drive along the Southern Ocean was stunning. One stop was at Bells Beach which hosts the annual, world-famous Rip Curl surfing competition. The weather was overcast and damp so we didn't mind having driving time on the bus as we viewed the Southern Ocean.

We arrived in Apollo Bay and took over the entire waterfront hotel. Rooms were clean and showers were hot. Loved the free wifi. Dinner was on our own as we stayed along the "Ship Wreck Coast" on a foggy evening.

**Melody MacKenzie.**

## Apollo Bay to Mt. Gambier – Amparo’s report, 27<sup>th</sup> March

And what a wet, cold and miserable day it is! We left Apollo Bay at 9 a.m., with driver (Dave) as usually on time.

Going through the Great Ocean Road Rainforest it reminds me -of the very much like- Queensland’s Rainforest only this Southern one is much cooler... and no cassowaries about, nor any other wildlife for that matter; too cold and wet for them to be about, I would imagine.

On arrival at 12 Apostles most of us braved the “British” type weather to make it to see the once upon a time 12 Apostles now...? I counted just 7, others 8 and even 3 etc. I asked some of the school children attending on a school day outing and they all had different numbers to give themselves, -and they were ever so eager to get back into their own bus and out of the wet and cold!



Spot where Dave parked his bus



Dave speaking with 'friendly' policeman

A short cold and wet lunch break at Port Campbell’s Cairns St. where our driver Dave, having parked his bus on a wrong parking space (on the spot where those two cars in picture are parked) almost got finned by the police! Only our ‘elderly’ pleading to the policeman telling him we would have to dig into our pockets to pay, saved our driver a heavy fine and Dave got away with just a warning.

We continued on our way for a very short lookout of the now ‘fallen’ *London Bridge* and the Grotto.

Weather still drizzles but not as cold as in the morning (1.45pm now).

Lots of cattle about are seen near Warrnambool. Coffee break time at Port Fairy where we had some fig cake to eat - too rich for me-, but good enough for the little birds around us.

As we are crossing into South Australia the sun is shining: what a contrast and welcoming weather!!

Soon we arrived at Mount Gambier and we meet our hosts and hostesses and taken to the welcome dinner prepared for us.

After dinner Beth, my kind hostess, took me to her out of town home, a huge and very old property, -with much *character*- surrounded by acres of land. I got lost during the night trying to find the bathroom (the one and only in the house and within the laundry) amongst so many doors and the structure of the internal house same for front and back entrances. 😊

Beth’s son, who lives nearby with his own family, looks after the property.

**Amparo Moya 27<sup>th</sup> March 2014**

## Friday 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2014 Mt. Gambier, South Australia

The group met at the Lady Nelson Visitor and Discovery Centre at 8:45. Our first look at the full scale replica of the HMS Lady Nelson ship occurred the previous evening, as this was our meeting place to connect with our hosts. It's hard to imagine exploring unknown territory in a ship that size, but its unique design of a center keel that could be raised, changing the draft from 12 feet to 6 feet, allowed the exploration of the shallow waters south of Australia. Mt. Gambier was sighted and named by Lt. Grant during these explorations.

The Discovery Centre explains the shallow sea limestone origins of the region, which make it a great place for caves, fossils, and a good draining foundation for the terra rossa soil upon which grape vines thrive. In the Centre, a recreated cave with a glass floor shows fossils in a cave and Aboriginal art on the walls. The Christina Smith holograph was an intriguing presentation of life of the early white settlers and their interaction with Aborigines.

At 10, we were hosted at the Civic Centre for the traditional planting of a rose in the Friendship Force rose garden to commemorate this exchange. This tradition was started in 1984, with the first exchange from Phoenix, and has continued with each subsequent exchange. I was impressed that this community has a Friendship Force plaque on the Discovery Centre and a dedicated FF garden, that the city maintains. One of our FF hosts, Merv White, is also on the council and served as our host representing Mt. Gambier. A morning tea was served including small sandwiches, fruit, lamingtons\* and tim tams\* outside the Council chamber.

The Civic Centre is an impressive new building. We enjoyed seeing the library; especially the children's section that has a ceiling complete with snorkeler to give the feeling of being underwater. There is also a cave to crawl through, so naturally, Bob did. The library has a "Cave Club" with different levels to encourage reading and use of the library. The group toured the auditorium while we took a detour.

Our host, Graham, is also a caver. He took us to see the sink hole next to the Civic Centre, that was originally the water source for Mt. Gambier, now it is called Cave Garden. In the adjacent building, Main Corner, which was the old city hall, we saw the cave art that was reproduced by making impressions of the original art.

At noon we arrived at the boutique winery of Caroline Hills. Terry provided the wine tasting; Helen gave tours of her lovely garden. Lunch was provided for all of us, mainly with produce from her garden and eggs from her "chooks". Doreen Kennedy explained ANZAC eggless, oatmeal cookies to me. The Australia and New Zealand Army Corp. received these "biscuits" in care packages during WWI.



No visit to Mt. Gambier is complete without seeing the Blue Lake, one of several crater lakes. It's hard to believe that it is even a more vibrant blue in the summer. It appears gray in winter. Many of us toured the Pumping Station which supplies Mt. Gambier's drinking water. We were entertained by the story of Adam Lindsay Gordon leaping on horseback over a fence onto a ledge overlooking the lake and then jumping back again in 1864. There is an obelisk that marks the spot. In 1936, John Dutton was forced off the road by a drunk driver at 2:40 AM. He was thrown from the car and caught by a thorn bush, seriously injured, while he watched the car descend into the Blue Lake with the headlights casting an eerie glow. The drunk driver went to another pub, had a few and then mentioned the incident. Dutton may have been one of the first air medical evacs as he was flown to Adelaide for medical

care. The car was salvaged a year later and was restored to racing form.

Herbert Vineyard with the maze out front and on the wine labels provided us with delicious cheese plates in addition to wine tasting.

We were hosted by Rosemary and Graham Carter who live just below the Blue Lake. Rosemary walked with me up to the Blue Lake, so I could go for a run around it. Graham was enthusiastic about hosting fellow cavers, so he and Bob swapped stories. ED Neville and his wife Kay hosted us for dinner. They hosted the entire group the next evening!

I don't know how the Australians match the hosts and ambassadors so well. We really enjoyed our stay with Rosemary and Graham. They were so generous in sharing great wine from their collection, fresh figs and quince from their garden, mixing up food for the birds so we could be entertained by the honeyeaters; Graham served as barista whipping up excellent cappuccinos daily. Rosemary did a lot of cooking for all the dinners and worked all the next day with Kay for dinner that night. Best of all, we shared a lot of laughs.

Definitions:

Morning tea – tea, of course, and more food!

Lamingtons – a traditional Australian dessert of sponge cake coated with a chocolate sauce and dipped in grated coconut.

Tim tams – chocolate cookie (or biscuit if you're not American).

**Barb Bentzin.**

## Saturday, March 29 - Port Mac Donnell day

After a healthy breakfast with Julienne we drove to Princess Margaret Rose Caves. The group visited the cave and came back talking about the stalagmites and stalactites, but I preferred to go for a little walk and admired spider webs, little ant hills and Glenelg River beautifully hidden behind mist. We heard the horrible story of Piccaninnie Ponds and Julienne showed us Ewens Pond as well and all the places she had played at in her childhood, because her grandparents had lived here. We then were welcomed in Lis Rickkett's house right at the beach and had a very delicious lunch and "Mother of Pearl" wines from Patrick's of Coonawarra. While we enjoyed ourselves, Ron and Noel caught Tuna's and other fish. We then visited the newly opened Maritime Museum. It showed a wide range of remnants from some of more than 100 ships wrecked at this coastline. The South Australian Register reported first on 6th of November 1844 about the finding of the hull of "Isabella" in the neighborhood of Cape Northumberland. But already in 1836 two shipwrecked sailors discovered parts of a mahogany ship between Warrnambool and Port Fairy. It was of Portuguese origin and was wrecked in 1522! The last reported wrecks were from 1940. To make the passage of this coastline safer, the community built a lighthouse on Cape Northumberland in 1859, which lasted until 1981, when the new lighthouse took over, erected a bit further inland. The first lighthouse keeper Benjamin Germaine was first to reach the "Admella", who stranded on 6th of August 1859 (on her regular trip from Adelaide to Melbourne) with his rowing boat. He managed to rescue 4 people, it lasted 8 days, until more passengers could be rescued and only 24 of 113 survived. In 1957 two frogmen recovered 250 tons of the copper cargo!

People installed coast guards and one of the life savers named in the museum was one of Juliennes ancestors! Unfortunately Benjamin Germaine found a sad end. Standing on the cliff I could very well imagine the navigational problems although the weather was very friendly and not much wind that day. The penguins had nevertheless hidden themselves.

After the official program Julienne showed me the ancient cemetery and very nice spots and viewing points she used to go to as a young girl. For Dinner we all were invited to Neville's house and had a fabulous meal. As a starter before everything else Ron offered the fresh caught Tuna, which was nothing like the Tuna's I had tasted so far! Then the Dinner started with Crayfish as a special delicacy, followed by pork or lamb. The owner of Brand's winery, whom we should visit next day, was a guest as well and had sponsored very nice wines for the night. Their label was very suitable for this area! The three national anthems were sung and Ina and I did as good as we could only being two singers!



When we came home to Glenrosa that night, Julienne showed me the Southern Cross and a beautiful milky way was on display as well!

**Silke Mahlstedt-Hölker**

## 29 March - Ron MacKenzie Big Fishing Day in the Southern Ocean

Noel, of Noel and Margaret, our hosts in Mount Gambier, was nice enough to invite me along on a fishing trip with his mate, Eric. I have been saltwater fishing all my life, but only rarely have I fished for big game fish. We left the house at 7am. 45 minutes later we were at the boat ramp in **Port McDonnell**. This ramp has a resident full size dolphin. It appears to swim in 4-6 inch water. The locals feel he is licking the tires of all the boat trailers.

This is the only place I know where you might run over a dolphin with your back tire.

Soon we headed off shore. At the impressively fast boat speed of 30 miles per hour, we traveled for over an hour. The water depth varied greatly because we were over the continental shelf. Boats seem to be fishing from 400 to 1000 meters in depth (about 3300 feet). Once on location we put out 4 trolling lines. The artificial lures were traveling behind the boat at about the 1 to 3 foot depth. Why a fish that may be 400 feet down would go to the surface for a 6" piece of plastic is mind boggling.



Lots of tuna

Soon after we arrived, the first line was hit by a large tuna followed by two more in less than 1 minute. I was able to get mine to the boat as did the captain. Not to brag but mine was the largest fish of the day. It was a 40 pound blue fin tuna. Once boarded, its fate was sealed. It became sashimi in the shed when we got home. It also became a raw gourmet appetizer for our FF group tea that evening.

12 fish were hooked up, 8 were boated. Three were blue fin tuna, one was a silver "stripey", the remainder were albacore. A group of ambassadors who were having lunch nearby met us at the dock for pictures and to take a peek at the catch. This day will always be one of the most memorable fishing experiences for me. Thanks, Noel and Friendship Force.



Host Noel, Ron and Noel's mate Eric

Later, the "tea" was held at the beautiful country residence of Neville and Kay Gilberton, the ED for our Mount Gambier exchange. Nibbles included several Australian cheeses, fruit and roasted macadamia nuts and, of course, the blue fin tuna sashimi. We had more wine and an organized wine tasting. What a surprise! It was presented by Brands Laira Winery. We visited that same winery the next day.

We had Entrees (what we call appetizers), included crayfish salad and crayfish cocktail. What the Aussies call crayfish is what we Yanks call southern rock lobster. It is similar to American spiny lobster. We were also served a chicken roulade.

The "main" was a choice of either pork or lamb back strap that was marinated with olive oil, wine, and lemon. The homemade lamb sauce was made from a recipe of Maggie Beer, who is a famous Australian TV chef. We visited her shop later on our trip when we were in the Barossa Valley.

Tasty desserts included the famous pavlova, a sweet made of baked meringue topped with fresh fruit.

## Sunday March 30 - Coonawarra Day

Today we visited the Coonawarra area which is one of Australia's finest wine regions and particularly known for their Cabernet Sauvignon which is grown in the rich Terra Rossa soil and influenced by the limestone and pure spring water.

It was foggy early in the morning but cleared and warmed up in the later part of morning and turned out to be a beautiful day. We met at the visitor center at 8 am and boarded our bus for the Coonawarra area. We passed by a large lumber mill and large tree farms soon after leaving Mt. Gambier.

Our first stop was the town of Penola, founded in 1857. We viewed the Mary Mackillop Center named for an early Nun who was influential in the development of Australian education in the early years. The historical exhibits in the Catholic Center were quite interesting as well as the historical homes and structures on nearby Petticoat Lane. We enjoyed the Sharam Cottage from 1850 and the Natural Heritage Herb Garden in the back of the house.

Soon after leaving Penola we started seeing a large number of vineyards along both sides of the road. Our first winery stop was at Wynn's Coonawarra Estate Winery. They talked about the special features of the Terra Rosa soil and indicated that the name can only be used in selected parts of the Coonawarra Valley where the good soil is in an area only 12 x 2 kilometers. We enjoyed the wine tasting at Wynn's which featured a full range of their wine types. They are a very large winery that exports about 20% of their production to the US.

Mt. Gambier FF ladies prepared a great lunch of rolls, cold beef, ham and chicken sandwiches with vine ripened tomatoes which we ate in a lovely park under large Pepper trees - a perfect setting and weather marked only slightly by a sprinkler coming on during the middle of the meal.

After lunch we visited two more wineries before heading back. One was Brands' Laira, a large winery which exports to the states. We enjoyed the tasting and learning about their process and methods of aging the wine in oak. We saw that at the end of each row of vines they had planted roses which when they started to mildew was the signal for the growers to spray their vines.

The third and last winery we visited was the Rymill Winery - a smaller one fairly close to Brand's Laira. After the large lunch, wine tasting at Brand's, coupled with the beautiful day only a few stalwarts (I wouldn't say winos) decided to taste the nice wines that were offered.

It was pretty quiet on the way back to our hosts' and later we took our hosts, Marie and Robin Conboy out for dinner in a nice downtown restaurant with good food and conversation and all went to sleep pretty early after a wonderful day.



Bob, Robin, Phoebe, and Marie

**Bob McFarlane**

## Monday March 31, 2014 – Trip to Adelaide – Naracoorte Caves

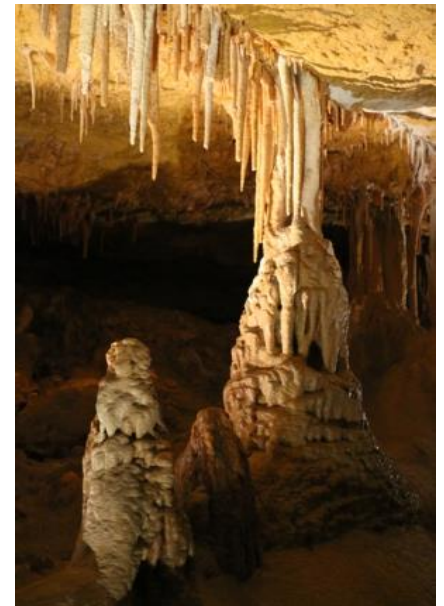
Barb and I left our hosts Graham and Rosemary Carter in Mount Gambier after a lovely visit. We awoke on this day to a beautiful red streaked sky outside our bedroom window. We had spent the evening before showing them photos of caves in the US and Wyoming, that Barb and I have been to. Graham told us of his early explorations in Naracoorte Caves, especially in the Victoria Fossil Cave. He was a part of the group that discovered the main fossil area. We were delivered to the Lady Nelson Visitor center where we boarded a bus for the trip north to Naracoorte Caves National Park and then on to Adelaide. We waved a fond farewell to our hosts as we drove off out of Mount Gambier.

We traveled north from Mount Gambier back through the Coonawarra wine area, that we had visited the day before, and on to Naracoorte Caves National Park. Naracoorte Caves National Park is a World Heritage Site, due primarily to the amazing fossil assemblages found in the caves within the park. The caves in the park have acted as pitfall traps and predator dens for over 500,000 years preserving a rich fossil record of ancient animals that roamed the area of the caves. The Reverend Tenison-Woods, who we were introduced to in Penola the day before, was the first to describe Pleistocene fossil bones found at Blanche Cave in Naracoorte Caves National Park in 1859.

Within the park is the Wonambi Fossil Centre, where we experienced a walk through a forest ruled by Australia's long lost Megafauna. Walking through the forest we saw animatronic versions of these long ago marsupials, reptiles, and birds. Under the forest is a cave. As we entered the cave we experienced what life and death in the caves brought us to what has been discovered in the caves of Naracoorte Caves National Park.

The next portion of our journey, through this subterranean world, took us to Victoria Fossil Cave. After a brief introduction to the Park and the Cave, we looked at the original entrance, which required crawling under a ledge of rock to gain access to the cave. When this entrance was discovered, only two chambers were explored. In 1969 cave explorers dug through tight sediment filled passages to discover chambers beyond filled with beautiful cave formations and the bones of many animals that had fallen into the caves over many thousands of years.

Our group entered the cave through a manmade entrance, so we didn't have to crawl into the cave like the original explorers. We wandered through rooms decorated with beautiful calcite formations of a variety of colors. In the main fossil chamber the group saw mounted skeletons of a marsupial lion and a large leaf eating kangaroo, along with the bones of many other animals that had fallen or washed into the cave. The majority of these fossils are of now extinct species. Fossils in this chamber have been dated from 500,000 years ago to 200,000 years ago. In other caves in the Park, fossils have been found of animals as young as 50,000 years old, and even some unlucky modern day animals, but no humans.



After we exited the cave we traveled on the town of Naracoorte, where we had lunch. The group then boarded the bus for a 335 km trip to Adelaide. This route took us inland through farm lands and vineyards along the way. There were no stops at wineries this day and as such it was a "dry day," as Yvonne Shakes would call it.

In Adelaide our hosts met us at a pot luck "tea\*" at the Colonel Light Uniting Church. Barb and I met our host Margaret "Marg" Lucas and our co-host Annette "Ann" Lenon. After the tea we were taken to Marg's lovely home with a beautiful panoramic view overlooking the city of Adelaide.

\*During our travels we discovered that "afternoon tea" does not mean just tea and nibbles\*. It actually means a full meal including entrée, main course, desert, and coffee or tea.

\*Nibbles refers to snacks, including crackers, cheese, fruit, meats, and etc.

**Bob Montgomery**

## McLaren Vale – Tuesday, April 1

It was another beautiful Aussie day as we were driven to the McLaren Vale Visitor Center. After viewing the art exhibit and buying a few souvenirs, we headed to d’Arenberg Winery for our first tasting of the day. This 102 year old family owned winery traces its logo’s distinctive red slash to the stripe on the Adelaide Roseworthy College tie proudly worn by its 4<sup>th</sup> generation heir.

Our tasting was one of the most informative of our Australian tours and the Stables setting complete with table

seating and souvenir notepads made this winery quite memorable. We learned that Australia was the first to name wines by the variety of grape as opposed to the French method of naming wines by the region where grapes are grown. We tasted d’Arenberg’s most well-known wine, The Dead Arm Shiraz, named after the vine disease which reduces one half of established vines to dead wood. Additionally notable we learned of d’Arenberg’s dedication to maintaining its 400 acres as organic vineyards.



Our next stop was a wine tasting with wonderful cheese accompaniment at the Cellar Door of Wirra Wirra Winery. We could have lingered longer in this

nice setting, but a yummy picnic lunch with fresh fruits awaited us on the Wirra Wirra lawn. An informative walking tour of the winery’s production area followed our picnic.

Itineraries for the day deviated at this point as our host, Rob Polain, drove us to the town of McLaren Vale for a walking tour of the town. We enjoyed numerous shops in McLaren Vale. The Almond Train, a shop housed in a train car provided almonds snacks; and we tasted our way through Blessed Cheese, Robern Menz chocolate shop, and the Olive Oil shop as well. We headed back to Adelaide for cold drinks and a visit with Lynda Polain next; but we understand that others in our group drove along the Onkaparinga River to Port Noarlunga and on to Hallett Cove. It was a busy day enjoyed by all!

Dinner was served in small group settings. We enjoyed a lovely meal at the home of Pat McElroy. After dinner, the men chatted about many things while the women of the group enjoyed seeing Pat’s huge and inspired collection of her personally designed quilts. It was a fun evening and a nice close to a busy day!

**Marilyn Larkin**

## Wednesday, April 2, Adelaide Hills Day

Caroline Shepard picked us up at 8:45 and we traveled up to Mount Lofty which provided us with a great panoramic view of Adelaide even though it was a bit hazy.

On the way down we stopped at Mount Lofty House, a beautifully restored hotel with lovely gardens. After the drive down the hill, we traveled over to the Cedars, Hans Heysen home and studio. Heysen was the first well-known Australian landscape artist who was financially successful during his lifetime. He worked in oil, watercolor, charcoal and ink. His home was very nice but his studio was fantastic. We saw his in-progress works, his tools, and the special glass that he installed on the South wall. Hans also did some fine etchings which we saw in his studio.



After the tour, the Adelaide club provided a delicious lunch on an outdoor patio at the Cedars.

After lunch, we visited the Hahndorf Hill winery for a tasting supplemented with chocolate matched to the wine. We were greeted by the owner and wine master, Larry Jacobs, who provided great fun during his lecture. Hahndorf winery is unique in that all their wine is produced organically. Next, we visited

the Nepenthe winery for a tasting. The wines were okay but not special.

After this tasting, some our group went to Melba's chocolates. Our host took us to Hahndorf where we looked at the shops and Caroline took Janet to a quilt shop. Next we went to Oakbank to look at the racetrack and old homes. The racetrack is used once per year for 3 days, after Easter, drawing around 250,000 spectators. After Oakbank our day hostess took us home via Cleland on a twisty road with great views of Adelaide and the surrounding countryside. When we arrived back at our home hosts Jocie and George provided us with lovely evening meal and great conversation. All in all a very nice day.

**Bill and Janet McGehean**

### 3<sup>rd</sup> APRIL ADELAIDE CITY DAY - SHARRI McINSTOSH

My day to report and a fine day it was! My host, Marg Sargent, drove me downtown Adelaide to the National Wine Center located at the intersection of Hackney and Botanic Rds. to meet the group for a walking tour. The weather was a pleasant 22' c., overcast, but no wind

The National Wine Centre of Australia was over the top and I could have easily spent the day there. It was the complete wine experience--explained, described, and visualized. The center was built in 2000 and replicates the shape of a very large wine barrel. This facility in conjunction with the University of Adelaide does extensive research into the growing of grapes and the processing of the wines. The collection here contains 38,000 wines. Six (6) venues are available for group use and both a lecture series and live music concerts are offered to the public.

Adjacent to the Wine Center are the beautiful Botanical Gardens. We walked through the Southern end of the gardens in route to the South Australia Museum and saw a 1500 year old gum log and the lovely dahlia garden in passing.

South Australia Museum is a natural history museum and research institution. We were scheduled for a special tour through the Aboriginal section. The largest collection of Aboriginal artifacts are on exhibit here. We were told much controversy\_\_ (the Australians pronounce this word very different from the Americans)\_\_ exists among the Aboriginal people because some of them believe certain artifacts are sacred and should not be displayed.

Southeast Australia had many Aboriginal tribes because of the many lakes, rivers, and water. Much of Australia is desert.

After the museum, we continued our walk with Pat Ellis as guide. Pat walks fast! Down North Terrace, past the Governor's House; turned into King William Street, passed through Rundle Mall, and then the Market! Oh My Gosh! So much and so crowded. Not sure what I had for lunch here but it was very Asian.

Our walking tour ended after lunch and we were returned to our Australian research project: a visit to Penfold's Winery, started in 1844 and now 170 years old. The first winemaker here was a physician and he made the wine for medicinal purposes. The prescription was for three (3) x glasses daily. Our doctors today just aren't as good as they use to be! The wine cellars here were dug out by the gold miners.

Patty Niemeyer and I fell in love with Penfold's Bin 136. We discovered much too late that the price was much better at the winery than in Sydney!

Poster's at the winery: 1) Be Never Without Penfold's Within; 2) Be Wine Wise Within, Penfold's; 3) From 1844 to Evermore. Penfold's.

Following the winery we "called" at Jacquie's house for "tea". Patty and I were with Marg S., Terri, Barb and Bob, Annette, Silke, Ina, Craig and Joann.

And still more! An Aussie dinner at Helen Kite's with meat pies and SURPRISE! Another wine tasting with Gordon Grant, a local wine expert. Bobbie M. made "pea soup" so we enjoyed "pie floaters", salad, and wine. Will not mention the dessert-- Pavlova!

All in a day in Adelaide!

**Sharri McIntosh**



## April 4 - Barossa Valley Day John Giles

*Highlights: Bus trip to Jacobs Creek, Lunch at Seppeltsfields, Maggie Beer's farm shop, discovery Camp Park, BBQ meal at Marg Kimbers.*

“On the road again...” after picking up final members on the bus we were headed to the Barossa Valley. We had a brief stop at Whispering Wall. The dam is notable for its parabola effect, where a voice can be heard clearly from one side to the other — over 140 meters, end to end. This unusual acoustic phenomenon is a popular tourist attraction, and has earned the dam the title "Whispering Wall". The next stop was the “Barossa Valley”.

The region is renowned for its Shiraz, winning accolades around the globe, but the **Barossa** is much more than Shiraz. Cabernet Sauvignon, Grenache, Mataro (also known as Mourvedre) and Merlot are in plentiful supply and wine styles include the famous GSM Rhone style blends.

In recent years, Barossa winemakers have successfully introduced new varieties to regional line-up. Viognier has become a Barossa specialty, both as a stand-alone variety and, uniquely, blended with Shiraz. Other new varieties include Tempranillo, Zinfandel and Marsanne.

Our first stop in Barossa was a wine tasting at Jacob's Creek. In 1847, a young Bavarian immigrant called Johann Gramp missed the wine he used to drink in his home land. Instead of changing his habits, he decided to start growing grapes and attempt to make the wine himself. It was a way of adapting to a new country, but still staying true to his character. What he didn't know was that when he planted the Barossa Valley's first commercial vineyard along the banks of Jacob's Creek, he was also planting the seeds of one of the most popular wine brands in the world that would be named after the waterway. Today, Jacob's Creek is one of the most well-known and enjoyed Australian wines around the world. It delivers fresh, elegant and great tasting wines that show true varietal character.

Next stop- outdoor lunch at **Seppeltsfield**...with a proud and priceless legacy dating back to 1851, Seppeltsfield is one of Australia's iconic wine estates. Seppeltsfield is famed for the Centennial Collection - an irreplaceable and unbroken lineage of Tawny of every vintage from 1878 to current year. They remain the only winery in the world to release a 100 year old, single vintage wine each year.

The Seppeltsfield story begins with Joseph Ernst Seppelt, a merchant, who migrated to Australia with his family in 1849, from Silesia, in what is now Poland. The Seppelt family settled in the Barossa Valley in 1851, and purchased the property now known as Seppeltsfield. The Seppeltsfield area is warm and dry, with only a 500 mm Rainfall, while the soils are heavy and red brown. The Seppelt family vines flourished in this fertile valley and Joseph also encouraged his neighbor's to plant vines. Soon the landscape was transformed to lush fields of green and gold vines.

“On the road again...” It has been an hour since we ate. Let's drive on over to Maggie Beer's farm shop. Maggie Beer - cook, writer and founder of 'Maggie Beer Products', offers tastings and sales of her full product range including limited edition seasonal produce. Customers can browse amongst her personally selected regional specialty goods, purchase one of her signed books or simply sit back and take in the view.



We enjoyed a verjuice cooking demonstrations (mushrooms, onion and squash) using Maggie's wonderful products for take home ideas.

Our resting stop for the day was at the discovery camp park. Today we all had a great time of bus touring, wine tasting, eating, bus touring, wine tasting, and eating again at a wonderful BBQ dinner at Marg Kimbers home and private vineyard. Great day with old and new friends!

## Clare Valley Day Saturday, April 5, 2014

### By Joanne Johnson

Our day began at the Discovery Camping Park near Clare. After a comfortable night's sleep in our cabins, the Friendship Force members from the Clare area prepared a breakfast of eggs and bacon, a variety of cereals, yogurt, strawberries, juice, coffee and tea. Some members of our group enjoyed a walk along the Riesling trail after their breakfast.

By 9:45 everyone was ready to continue our bus adventure. After a short bus ride, we arrived at Sevenhill Winery. Sevenhill was established in 1851 by Austrian Jesuits who came to South Australia as chaplains. They fled Europe to escape political and religious oppression. This is the oldest existing winery in Clare Valley and it was originally set up to produce altar wine. Now there are 18 varieties of grapes produced to make wines.

Our visit to Sevenhill was divided into three parts: viewing a video on the history of the winery, tasting wine, and walking the trail around the grounds to see the Church, shrines, and other landmarks.

Our next stop was at the boutique vineyard, Heaslip Wines, in Clare Valley. Friendship Force member, Marie Heaslip and her son, Anthony conducted a wine tasting of four of their wines. We were then treated to a wonderful lunch hosted by the Friendship Force members. After a relaxing stroll around their vineyard/farm, we boarded the bus and onto the next stop.



We arrived at Medika Gallery, a local country gallery owned by Ian Roberts. His mission is to paint all the species of eucalyptus there are. We had the opportunity to go to Ian's studio to see the paintings and sketches he was working on. We also had a chance to buy various items with his nature paintings on them. These items are a wonderful way to remember what we had seen in Australia.

Our return bus ride to Adelaide was a great time for quiet reflection, not only of the past two days in Barossa Valley and Clare Valley, but of the last 15 days in Australia. Everyone will truly have fond memories of beautiful Australia and its gracious people.

After our arrival in Adelaide, everyone went their separate way for an evening with their host.

One unexpected treat for all our group was the fact that Saturday night the clocks would be turned back one hour because of daylight savings time in most of Australia. Within a month, most people in our group would "spring forward" on one continent and "fall back" on another continent.

## OVERVIEW OF ADELAIDE AREA by Craig Fagerness

My assignment was to give an overview of the wines and area around Adelaide.



There are 4 wine growing regions around Adelaide. They are McLaren Vale, Adelaide Hills, Barossa Valley and Clare. We visited all four. In McLaren Vale we went to d'Arenberg and Wirra Wirra wineries. In Adelaide Hills we went to Hahndorf Hill Winery and Nepenthe Winery. In Barossa Valley it was Jacob's Creek and Seppeltsfield Winery. In Clare Valley Sevenhill and Heaslip Wines. In the city we went to Penfolds. The areas were all rolling hills with many trees and of course the miles of vineyards. The small towns were picturesque. Words cannot describe the scenic beauty around Adelaide. Each vineyard was special. The following is a short description of each:

The 11<sup>th</sup> wine tasting was at d'Arenberg in the McLaren Vale near Adelaide. They have 400 acres in vines and are all organic. They buy 10% of their grapes. They will produce 2000 tons in 2014. Most vineyards have rose bushes planted on the end of the vine rows to provide an early warning for the fungus Downy Mildew. We found our favorite white here which was a Riesling, the Dry Dam 2013. Their wine is sold in the US.

The 12<sup>th</sup> tasting was at Wirra Wirra in McLaren Vale south of Adelaide. They buy 300 barrels a year and have 5000 in use at all times. They use all rotary fermenters. We found the 2011 Woodhenge Shiraz exceptional.

The 13<sup>th</sup> wine tasting was at Hahndorf Hill Winery southeast of Adelaide near the German village of Hahndorf. They sell the brand HHW. There we were entertained by a story about how you must get the vineyard aligned with the cosmos in order to grow good wine. We all thought the story was a fairy tale but later our hosts insisted there was something to it. The story told how to produce a substance called Preparation 500. The buildings and grounds were very scenic.

Our 14<sup>th</sup> wine tasting was at Nepenthe Winery also near Hahndorf. The Winery was located on a hill with a scenic view highlighted by a large gum tree. Most grapes are picked by machine. The grape picking machine shakes the grapes off the vines.

Our 15<sup>th</sup> wine tasting was at Penfolds Magill Estate Winery in Adelaide. It is the most expensive and famous wine of our wine tastings. They had 4800 liter barrels as part of their tour. They no longer use barrels that large. Penfolds fermentation process only drains off the liquid after fermentation and does not press the grapes at that point as most wineries do. They take what is left and have it distilled into brandy with 95% alcohol to be used in making fortified wines (port). We found Bin 28 Shiraz Kalimna 2011 fantastic. It is sold in the US.

The 16<sup>th</sup> wine tasting was at Jacobs Creek at Barossa Valley. They had 14 rows of grape vines each row a different variety. They also had the most spectacular wine tasting room with a totally surrounding window view of the vineyard.

The 17<sup>th</sup> wine tasting was at the winery with many palm trees, Seppeltsfield Winery, also in Barossa Valley. We saw the wine making process in the most detailed way of all the wineries we visited. We saw a stem removing machine. When picked by hand the stems must be removed.

The 18<sup>th</sup> wine tasting was at Sevenhill Cellars in Clare Valley. It is run by Catholic Jesuit priests. They specialized in fortified wines which are used in religious services. A fortified wine is the sweet Port wine. To make "Tawny" (Aussie for Port) they interrupt the fermentation process after only a couple days by adding the brandy. By stopping the process early the wine retains much of the sugar content. We found the Port labeled "fine Old Tawny" worth purchasing.

The 19<sup>th</sup> wine tasting was at a small family owned vineyard, Heaslip Wines also in Clare Valley. They only grew grapes and had another winery make their wine. Everyone felt their wine was unusually good. The winemaker showed us how they test for sugar. They use a Refractometer to know when to pick. The grapes are ready with a test of 24 or better.

The city of Adelaide had a new sports stadium which was very impressive. The city is located on the ocean and the beaches were beautiful. Australia does not allow private ownership of their beaches so it is possible to walk along the beach everywhere. The city had a high mountain that gives a great view of the city.

We left the Adelaide area with the impression that this is one of the most beautiful areas in the entire world. The development of the wineries has brought immense wealth to the area. The people have used this money to plan and create a world paradise.

## Australia Journal for Colorado FF Sunday April 6, 2014 - Make A Wish Day

On our last day in Adelaide, Australia, we called it "Make A Wish Day". My request was to sleep in for an extra hour or two. Everyone like that idea, and enjoyed the quiet morning.

Most mornings we were out the door for the day's activities by 8:00 or 8:30 AM. Dave and I did some packing to prepare for our very early morning departure to the US on Monday morning.

We realized our suitcases would be stuffed with our gifts and purchases from our three host cities, and certainly much heavier!

Dave and I were hosted at the home of the incredible energetic lady, Exchange Director, Yvonne Shakes. We would arrive home each evening around 10 or 11 PM after a day of great activities and many wine tastings, and while Dave and I were preparing for bed, Yvonne could always be heard working in the kitchen, packing and preparing everything for our next dynamic day. She is an amazing lady.

Dave's wish for this morning was that we visit the Art Museum (Art Gallery) of Adelaide, so off we went to the downtown area, and found it already packed with people. The museum has some excellent art in their collection, and after walking around the galleries, we decided to stay for lunch and enjoy the outside patio scene. Children were playing and climbing in a special area, and a 3-piece band was setting up their instruments for afternoon entertainment.

After lunch, we had some errands to do that included a stop at a grocery store. Yvonne chose a very nice mall that was also very busy on this Sunday afternoon. Dave and I walked around and eventually made a small purchase.

From there, Yvonne took us to see Henley Beach, a beautiful place full of people enjoying a perfect sunny day, bordered by beautiful and expensive homes looking out at the South Australia Ocean. Unfortunately, we didn't have time to linger on the beach. Yvonne's daughter lives nearby, so we stopped there to meet the family: Lee Ann and her hubby John, who works for British Aerospace, and her granddaughter and grandson. They are a busy young family. Grandson Jackson, 8 years old, loves football or "footy as it is called, and shared his collection of various team jerseys with us.

From there, we returned home to shower and get ready for our gala farewell dinner, to be held at the ~~Marriott~~ **Marion\*** at 6:30 PM. The lobby of the Marion was filled with busy slot machines, called "pokey's." Everyone in our group looked great, and they were pleased with the results of a wonderful Australian experience and wonderful families. We had met so many wonderful people, tasted so much excellent wine, and enjoyed the energetic and vibrant cities. Our dinner was excellent, and entertainment followed with a presentation by a "didgeridoo" music expert.

Everyone had the opportunity to thank the Adelaide FF club for the wonderful activities they had planned for us, and each of us received pictures of our host families. Perhaps Adelaide will be coming to Denver in the near future? The consensus was; that was an excellent idea! As the party ended, there were many hugs and sad goodbyes, with hopes of seeing our new friends again in Denver in the near future. And maybe we'll return, because Australia is an easy place to enjoy!



**Rosalie Bentzin Summers.** Denver, Colorado Friendship Force

\*Marion Hotel, on Marion Road, Mitchell Park- suburb of Adelaide which does not, as yet have a *Marriot*. ☺ (Amparo)

## Special Topics Bob Matzen - Wine regions of South Australia

G'day fellow Australian travelers.

My assignment was to compare the various wine regions we visited. I claim no expertise but only to share my impression of our Cellar Door visits. I think the best way to start would be suggest there are two primary factors which impact the grapes grown in any particular area.

1. The dirt. The French refer to this as *terroir* (taste of the earth).

2. The climate. With an emphasis on how much the yearly weather can impact both the quality and quantity of the annual crop. As you may recall in one area we visited a season of grapes was lost to smoke from the bush fires. It ruined the taste of the grapes even though the grapes were not destroyed by the fires. Too much rain seems to be another harmful factor.

We heard several times about cool weather grapes (Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Riesling and Sauvignon Blanc) and warm weather grapes (Shiraz, and Cabernet Sauvignon). I mention only these grapes because they were by far the primary grapes grown in the regions of our visit.

### **The Mornington Peninsula:**

Surrounded by ocean, noted for producing cool climate wines. Lots of Pinot Noirs and Chardonnays.

Visited Montalto Vineyard and Red Hill Estate.

### **Yarra Valley:**

50km (30 miles) east of Melbourne. Beautiful rolling hills, noted for cool climate wines, Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and sparkling. Visited De Bortoli and Yering Station.

### **Mt Gambier and the Limestone Coast:**

Red earth on top of ancient limestone. (Coonawarra Region)

A cut out of the soil of Coonawarra.

Visited, Rymill/Wynns/Brands Laira.

A warmer and dryer climate. The area is noted as the best Cabernet Sauvignon region in Australia. We were now tasting high quality Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon from all the Cellar Doors visited.



(cont. next page)

**McLaren Vale:**

35 km south of Adelaide.

Probably the most versatile of the regions we visited. The area claims a Mediterranean climate. Producing; high quality warm climate wines of Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon, while still able to produce quality Chardonnays and many Italian grapes such as Barbera and Sangiovese. We had a wonderful Cellar Door experience D'Arenberg's Cellar Door.

**Adelaide Hills:**

A few km out of Adelaide. Beautiful rolling hills, and a few degrees cooler than Adelaide. Reminded me of the Oregon wine region. Well suited for cool climate wines. We had a very enjoyable presentation at the Hahndorf Hills Winery.

**Barossa Valley:**

A wide expansive area of low rolling hills with many acres' of vines. We visited the Cellar Door of Jacobs Creek winery. The Barossa Valley is growing many varieties of grapes with high quality Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon. Penfolds Cellar Door visit might also be included in this region were we were shown 10 million dollars worth of the world famous Grange Shiraz. Both Jacobs Creek and Penfolds have vineyards in several Australian regions and are very major producers of exported wines.

**Clare Valley:**

Located north of Adelaide and is one of Australia's oldest wine regions. The region is noted for outstanding Riesling wines. It has the Riesling Trail where one can travel from vineyard to vineyard on a beautiful well maintained nature trail. We visited Seven Hills Cellar Door and were able to take a walking tour around the grounds.

I hope everyone enjoyed the wine regions as much as I did. We were privileged to visit wineries from the mom and pop operation to the major importers of Australian wines. Harvest was in progress and the smell of yeast was in the air as the sugar was converted to alcohol and the resulting wine was moved to barrels for ageing.

I hope to see everyone at a later time and thank you all for making the trip so enjoyable because in the end it is always about the people.

**Bob Matzen.**

## SOUTHERN AUSTRALIA HOST AND FAMILIES

BY NEW MEMBER PHOEBE McFARLANE

As new members of Friendship Force the trip to Southern Australia was Bob's and my first trip with the group. It was fantastic. More than we had ever hoped. We were a bit apprehensive about staying with folks we had never met and knew nothing about. Carmel and Alleyn in Melbourne, Marie and Robin in Mount Gambier and June and Jerry in Adelaide were all special people. We felt so at home with them all. I wonder if the person that matched us with our hosts and hostesses knew how well we would get along with them and how much we had in common. Maybe it was just good fortune. Or, maybe, Friendship Force members are nice people. We felt that having a day host in Adelaide was a good idea. It took some of the burden off of June and Jerry and we also got to be with and share with another fine Aussie, Ivan Woller. Upon our return home to Colorado one of the first things we mentioned when asked about our trip was that we felt we got to know Australia and its people so much more by staying in the homes of its citizens. We realize that's what Friendship Force and cultural exchange are all about.

A special experience was late afternoon on the beach at Dromana on the Mornington Peninsula in front of the beach shacks belonging to Heather's family. The shacks made a three-sided plaza. The wine and munchies set up on the plaza were fun. We sat on chairs facing the water watching the ships go past and enjoying the beautiful sky. We were served fish and chips which were hot and delicious. The fish was flake or gummy shark which we learned was the best.



Our fellow travelers were a congenial group. They were always smiling and ready to take on the next adventure. We all laughed a lot, even at corny jokes. Friendship travelers are the best.

## APRIL 7 THROUGH APRIL 13...Brisbane Week by Luree Miller

After sad farewells to our fellow ambassadors whose plans would take them either to the far reaches of Australia or back home, Scott and I began our own journey further into our friendship fever with the Aussies. We joined Allan and Olive Roff, members of the North Moreton FF club in Brisbane, for a further week of camaraderie, adventure and laughter (Scott and Allan are a deadly combination when it comes to livewire quick wit). Allan and Olive have been friends since we first met them when they and their club went to San Francisco on an exchange in 2008. We were brand-new members of FF at the time and didn't even know what hosting was all about, so we neither home nor day hosted them. But we settled into a friendship that has, thanks to email and some fortuitous meetings in New York City for breakfast one morning and a surprise greeting upon their arrival at the Sacramento airport one afternoon, grown deeper with time.

Brisbane is Queensland's capital, settled originally in 1824 as a convict outpost. Today it is an oasis of commerce, river and ocean traffic, sun, grand architecture (old and new), and culture. And Brisbaners don't mind being called "banana benders" by their neighbours in regions to the south. It all seems to be part of Australia's love of jokes.

We did so much during our weeklong visit that it would be impossible to share everything. But a few highlights – Cruising the Brisbane River on the City Cat ferry and attending a free Andrews Sisters retrospective concert at the old City Hall.

Visiting D'Aguilar National Park, checking out a very busy platypus and an alert wombat (Scott's favorite animal) at Walk-About Creek, and listening to an ethereal but loud choir of bellbirds in the subtropical gum forests of Boombana on Mt. Nebo Road.

Discovering Pie and Peas in Brisbane (peas *inside* the pie as opposed to the Pie Floaters in Adelaide), eating giant prawns fresh off a shrimping boat, and discovering custard apples (ugly on the outside, creamy custard-like on the inside)

Keeping a close eye on Cyclone Ita, because of the threat to the town where some of Allan and Olive's family live. Commiserating with Allan and Olive when their Brisbane Broncos rugby team lost to the Gold Coast Titans.

Getting a demonstration by Allan on his own personally designed lagerphone. He has made several through his years of outbound exchanges, and some "Roff lagerphones" now even reside in places like Iowa, South Africa and Norway.

Reuniting with other members of the North Moreton FF club at a picnic lunch overlooking the Great Dividing Range, and especially Glynness Kelly, who we had the privilege of spending time touring Alcatraz with in San Francisco and who we have stayed in touch with via old fashioned letters since Glynness is not yet ready to take on computers or email.



Friendship is the heart of Friendship Force, and this week with former strangers that quickly grew into new friends and then leaped, through the years, into dear old friends is, for us, a wonderful reminder of that. So we know when we said farewell to Allan and Olive at the end of the week that this was not the last time we would see each other.

## TASMANIA by Craig Fagerness & Joanne Johnson

Tasmania is an island state of Australia and has a population of 500,000. The island is 210 miles by 180 miles in size. It has two population centers, Hobart and Launceston. The rest of Tasmania is very rural and has large areas of wilderness. The weather is cooler than the mainland and it even snows in the higher elevations in the winter. But Tasmania is temperate enough that they have winter gardens. We started out our visit by driving the coast on A3 from Hobart to where our cousin lives in St. Helens. Below is a coast line view at Moulton Lagoon which is along that 120 mile route. This photo shows the extreme



dryness they were experiencing this summer. As you can see there is a green area which is a vineyard. Most of the island we saw was brown from drought. We did not see many vineyards.

We stopped along the way at the Wildlife Experience hoping to see a Tasmanian Devil. We did but he was curled up asleep. We stopped again along the way at a berry farm. They sold pies made from boysenberries, raspberries and blackberries. For one slice and a scoop of ice cream they wanted \$14.

In St. Helens we visited our cousin Delaine and her husband Rossel. We also ran into Ron and Melody. It was an amazing coincidence. From St. Helens we started the 80 mile drive to Maramoosa Cave. The road was narrow and very winding. There were many small kangaroos that were run over along all the roads. We were told that the Tasmanian Devils in the past would clean them up but there is now a face cancer killing the Devils. They went from an estimated 200,000 to 17,000 and now face extinction.



We stopped along the way and hiked Weldborough Pass Rainforest Walk. The rainforests were sparse. The forests were mostly Eucalyptus (Gum). The drive was going so slow we got to the cave just in time to catch the last tour. It was the most scenic cave of the 4 caves we saw on this trip. The cave tour required another rainforest walk on a trail called Fernglade

Track. It was like walking in a tunnel as the vegetation surrounded the trail.

The next day going south we drove by the Great Lake. The trees along the way were mostly Gum trees that showed signs of having survived fire. The open areas were all brown and any farming was just grazing animals—sheep or cattle. As we got further south it started to rain hard and we cancelled our plans to visit another National Park and continued on to Hobart.

One thing we really enjoyed in Tasmania were the fish dinners. We had three fish dinners and they were fantastic. All the fish is fresh caught and the best. Tasmania is a neat place to visit!

## Outback Experience – Alice Spring

Well, this part of our journey turned out to be a bit different from what we had expected and what people had predicted, it didn't influence the magnificence though.

After we had arrived in Alice Springs I first bought a brimmed hat and fly net. The second buy was a rain poncho for each of us! While it poured down we found shelter in a very nice shop for fabrics with aboriginal prints, so the time wasn't lost at all!

The next morning we were picked up early in our hotel and the guide- a very nice and petite looking young woman- drove us to Uluru. The first stop at a camel farm was drowned and none of the camels wanted to go for a ride, neither the one's with four legs nor the one's with two legs.

At Uluru Airport the group was completed with 5 more guests, who left again after 3 days, whereas we two and 6 others stayed on for 5 days. First we visited the Cultural Centre and had a very good impression of the habits and beliefs of the Aboriginal people, having seen the exhibition in Adelaide helped to understand and rounded up this exhibition, because Adelaide had shown many objects from other areas as well. Afterwards we went on parts of the base walk and luckily found the two honeymooners, who had gone lost. The sunset was fabulous- for a short moment the clouds cleared, Uluru glowed up and in the back we saw Kata Tjuta (the Olga's). The heavy rain stopped right in time for getting up and the tents had been waterproof!



We now belong to the 4% of tourists, who have had the chance to see Uluru in rain and all the waterfalls with water, and having seen the Todd River in Alice Springs with water once, makes us 1/3 a "Local" already!



The nature was overwhelming, next to Uluru and Kata Tjuta we enjoyed the walk around King's Canyon. Our guide then had to change the route, because some of the roads were closed due to flooding and so we reached the planned stop at Glen Helen's with a detour. On the following day Ina and I had a swim in Ellery Creek Big Hole- little heads among high rocks! The last night we camped on a Camp Ground of an Aboriginal Community, as the planned place in a river bed was flooded.

Because of that we had toilets to our disposal, everybody slept in swags in the open except the weakling Silke. The next morning we went on a guided walk into a valley with rock paintings and traces of temporary settlement and had the opportunity to try out dot painting. Now we cherish the traditional paintings even more!

The tour has given us an intense experience and impression of the mysticism of Uluru and the area around, the amazing nature, plants and animals, who survive under these conditions and - last but not least - of the Aboriginal Culture.

**Ina Bornheim and Silke Mahlstedt-Hölker**

## CAIRNS & GREAT BARRIER REEF



We got an early flight from Adelaide to Cairns and stayed there (4) nights. We were both exhausted and decided to go slow. My hand was giving me problems. We booked one day on the Great Barrier Reef. The ferry took us out in about one and a half hours. Patty snorkelled and I took a glass bottom boat tour to actually see the reef and the marine life surrounding. The hour and a half back was a little rough since the cyclone was coming in.

We also booked a day at the Kuranda Village in the Rainforest. We were to take the train up to the village and come back on the tram. The train hit a car that morning and was out of commission. We scrambled to change our tickets and took the tram up and back. The village was the traditional home of the Djabugay people who maintained settlements there for thousands of years making use of the permanent water and abundance of bush food.

Our last five days were spent in Sydney, one of the most beautiful cities I have ever visited. The opera house, Sydney Harbour, the fish market, Manly beach, the food and the wine! Tried to see it all. We did not get to the Blue Mountains because of rain on the day we planned.



Still processing all that we did, all that we saw, the bonds of friendship all over this world and the peace we seek! Thank you Friendship Force!

**Sharri and Patty.**

## **Yvonne Shakes. The Southern Australian Wine Experience.**

As ED how could I have hoped for a better group of people to join me on this adventure. What a fantastic bunch of ambassadors they all were. Thanks must go to our Ambassador ED Dave Bentzin for recruiting these people. Some were experiencing their first Friendship Force exchange and many were unknown to each other before the first evening in Melbourne, but immediately I sensed that we were going to have a fun time together.

The many hours of careful planning, selection of wineries and other activities proved very worthwhile as it did result in a group of very happy participants who enjoyed every minute of what was offered. The level of interest and cooperation among the group was exceptional, so the job of was extremely rewarding and I would like to thank Alan Cawsey and the Melbourne Club for setting the stage during the first 3 days and Neville Gilbertson and the Mt Gambier Club for certainly keeping the momentum going while we were in the Coonawarra area.

By the time we reached Adelaide we were all seasoned “wine tasters” but still eager to learn more and to ask many more questions. After a total of 19 wineries and the odd extra tasting here and there, we had sampled a wide variety of whites and reds and anything else that was on offer. Copious notes were taken and comparisons made and I am sure we all have a new appreciation of many of the great wines that are available in Australia.

Supply will never be a problem for Amparo and myself as we have all of these fantastic wineries at our doorstep but I am worried about how our exporters are going to meet the increased demand in USA and Germany. However I can propose one solution for the other 22 of you and that is that you will just have to make another trip “down under” to enjoy and taste again for yourself. We have several 100 others that I didn’t take you to as yet.

For fear that anyone reading this might jump to a wrong conclusion, we did include many other activities in our program in addition to visiting wineries. Each of the clubs in Melbourne, Mt Gambier and Adelaide gave the ambassadors a taste of the other highlights of their own particular city, including tasting many of our favourite Aussie foods. Other visits included Art Galleries, Glass blowers, Limestone and World Heritage Fossil caves at Naracoorte, local museums, Aboriginal Culture, Australian Native Fauna Park, the wonderful scenery of the Great Ocean Road and the Shipwreck Coast.

To me, most important of all are the new friendships that have been forged between the ambassadors and the members of three Australian clubs. Hopefully these friendships will grow over the next few years and some of us will be able to meet again somewhere in the future through our Friendship Force adventures and the opportunities of being in the Friendship Force family.

*Yvonne Shakes.*



**Mt Gambier Farewell Dinner**



**Two very capable EDs. - Well done mates! (Amparo).**