

*"Oh, we could give it a try.  
I'll bring the wine and  
you bring the scarred psyche"*  
Chase in *Batman Forever* 1995

January 2007

NEWSLETTER



CAPULEGENDS

## HARVEST UPDATE

The harvest generally started earlier than usual this year, the Cape Legends farms being no exception:



### **Adian Fry on Papkuilsfontein:**

We started harvesting on the 11 January 2007. Up until this recent heat wave we have had a cool summer and so the grape quality was excellent. The heatwave started on 21 January and since then the grape sugar jumped sky high and we've been harvesting like crazy.

### **De Wet Viljoen on Neethingshof:**

We started with a bang, almost 10 days earlier than usual for Neethingshof. We started with Sauvignon Blanc and were lucky to get our premium vineyards in before the heat. First indications are looking good.

We are currently busy harvesting Pinot Noir, Sauvignon Blanc, Gewurztraminer and Chardonnay – and it's not even February yet! I am also looking forward to harvesting our first crop of Malbec which will hopefully add depth and complexity to our Laurentius Blend.

### **Guy Webber, Stellenzicht**

We started harvesting Pinotage on Wednesday, 24 January which is quite a bit earlier than most years. Although this was from a new vineyard, I think that the heat certainly played a role in bringing the date forward. Since then, we have been through quite a bit of stress (should I say panic?) trying to decide what the heatwave was going to do and hurriedly started sampling the different vineyards, even started harvesting some.

Due to the excessive heat, we also concentrated our efforts on trying to put down some extra water in order to keep the vines from withdrawing moisture from the berries and this seems to have helped quite a lot. Now it seems (if the weather plays along for the next few weeks) that we will be getting back to a more normal vintage so there might be a brief respite.

Interestingly, it seems that the pH's of the juice this year are quite low. This can probably be ascribed to the good rains we had during the early part of the season up to the middle of December. Together with comparatively cool conditions for the same period, this resulted in excellent vigour in most of the vineyards and thus very good foliage cover.

We have also been joined by Hendrien Eloff, a final-year Oenology student at Stellenbosch University, who

will be with us for most of the harvest doing the final practical phase of her BSc degree. The enthusiasm of the students is annually a highlight for us as it makes us all realise the privilege we have in being part of the wine world.

#### PROFILE: SAMANTHA DE MORNEY-HUGHES

Our new Assistant Winemaker, Samantha de Morney-Hughes, started with us at the beginning of December and has now taken full control of the lab and is feeling her way through the first few loads of Pinotage.

Samantha grew up in Paarl, starting her career in the hotel industry at the Grande Roche and ending up several years later as manager of the Willowbrook Guest House in Stellenbosch. She was interested in winemaking from a young age, but it took several years for her to decide to take the plunge, give up her job and start her diploma at Elsenburg.

She completed her studies in 2005 and spent last year bringing in the harvest at Rickety Bridge and working in marketing and production at Cru Wines.



*New assistant winemaker Samantha de Morney-Hughes (left) welcomes the first load of grapes into the Stellenzicht cellar along with Guy Webber, Hendrien Eloff, supervisor Pieter Adams, driver Godfrey Wenn and cellar hands Johan Syster and Baron Willemse.*

She sees her appointment at Stellenzicht as a great privilege. "It's one of South Africa's Top 10 wineries, and Guy Webber is a well-known winemaker, so I am looking forward to gaining us much knowledge and experience from both him and the cellar – this is the ideal training ground.

Samantha is married and lives in Gordons Bay, which means she occasionally squeezes in a dip in the ocean on her way to work. How lucky is that!

We wish her lots of success and look forward to her becoming an integral part of the team.

#### STELLENZICHT BURGER BRAAI

On Saturday evening, we also had our annual Stellenzicht Burger Braai with the Stellenzicht and Cape Legends Teams. This year we were also fortunate to have Janåke and Britt Johansson and Anders and Monica Röttorp join us from Sweden. Janåke and Britt do great things for our wines in Sweden and Anders is a very well known and respected wine writer there as well. As seems to have become customary at this occasion, one of the adults ended up in the pool (cell phone, wallet, and all) - this time however to rescue a toddler and not a cricket ball.

#### SOMMELIER

Last week Stellenzicht hosted a touring group of sommelier students from the hotel school Ter Groene Poorte in Brugge (Belgium). This was the second time we have had this group to a formal "lecture", tasting, tour and braai and a great time was had by all. These final-year students are totally passionate about food and wine although being able to view McNaught's comet from the top of the farm seemed almost to be more of a highlight than the wines.



*Sommelier students enjoy a braai Stellenzicht style.*

#### **ADVERTISING AWARD**

We are very proud that our newly launched Neethlingshof ad campaign received third prize in the magazine category of the Creative Circle Awards for November 2006. Look out for this ad in South Africa's consumer magazines.



