



# Feints and Foreshots

DECEMBER 2008 FESTIVE SEASON EDITION



## WELCOME TO

Feints and Foreshots #26

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The ever insightful thoughts of our Chairman Mr Craig Daniels

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Australian Gourmet Pages' Franz Scheurer walks us through some great tasting malts

## WHERE CAN I GO FOR A GREAT DRAM?

### Spotlight on Single Malts in...

## Melbourne

**Not more than a few years ago, it would have been impossible to go out for a high quality dram in Melbourne town - especially if your palette strays away from the standard editions - unless you were going to a specific tasting or of course to the MWSOA convention!**

Not so any more, to whisky lovers delight. Melbourne, like a number of Australian cities, has gotten savvy to the awesome taste of a good dram and now there are a few places that thirsty and enquiring minds can go to whet their appetites - and their imaginations. We give you the tour of the town and share our recommendations for when you next visit Melbourne.

#### Massive range of rarities @ Gertrude Street Enoteca

first on our list of recommended visits is the Gertrude Street Enoteca. Packed to the rafters with malts, you're sure to get rarities by the glass there, and a number of non standard editions: Laphoraig Quarter Cask, Ardbeg Almost There, Lagavulin Distillers Edition, also Japanese Whiskies like the Nikka Yoichi, plus a huge range of wines by the bottle or glass. Highly recommended.

229 Gertrude St, Fitzroy

03 9415 8262

Open Tues to Sat

#### Old Favourites amongst a Wine Haven @ Melbourne Wine Store and Supper Club

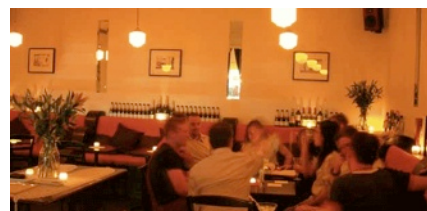
The Melbourne Supper Club is a name which should be very familiar to Melbourne lovers of fine malts and wine. However the Wine Store downstairs is a little newer and definitely more relaxed

an atmosphere than the Chesterfields upstairs. Both have a huge range of wines and a decent whisky list including some surprises. Your Macallans, Glenmorangies etc are joined by obscurities like Ledaig from the Isle of Mull.

161 Spring Street, Melb.

ph. 03 9654 6657

#### New Kid off the Block: Lily Black's



Lily Blacks is only a year old but has the feel of somewhere much older. An Art Deco styled bar tucked away in a warehouse style area of Meyers Place, it's a great late night bar for a cocktail or high quality dram. Stocking the Aberlour A'Bunadh and Ardbeg's 'Lord of The Isles' by the glass amongst other singles and blends.

12-18 Meyers Pl, Melbourne, VIC 3000, Australia

+61 3 9654 6499

Open Mon - Sat

*Agree? Disagree? Have your own favourites?*

*After you've taken a read of our list, email the editor to suggest your own!*

[fnfeditor@mwsos.org.au](mailto:fnfeditor@mwsos.org.au)



**AND NOW FOR SOMETHING  
COMPLETELY DIFFERENT:  
FROM LARK DISTILLERY  
"RUM ISLAND"**

Lark Distillery is proud to announce the release of Australia's newest Spirit "Rum Island" Tasmania's first commercially produced Rum Spirit since 1839.

**RUM ISLAND - A RUM STATE OF  
AFFAIRS AT LARK!**

Made from 100% Australian sugar cane molasses, slow fermented and double distilled in our small batch, 500lt copper pot still-'Miss Jane'. The name 'Rum Island' comes from a small isle located in Tasmania's north eastern Furneaux Group. Historic site of the 1797 shipwreck 'Sydney Cove', and the subsequent tale of survival, adventure, discovery and tragedy. Referred to as "The Greatest Survival Trek in Australian History"-an introduction to Rum Island and the Captain and crew of the ship Sydney Cove can be found on these web links: <http://www.abc.net.au/lateline/content/2003/hc25.htm> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sydney\\_Cove\\_\(ship\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sydney_Cove_(ship))

**ALSO INTRODUCING  
APPLE BRANDY**

Lark Distillery has also released a Calvados style apple brandy. Double distilled from Huon Valley apples then left to quietly mature in an oak barrel for a number of years. It has a soft floral nose with a hint of

warming spice. The taste is crisp with the apples coming through in the middle pallet. It has a long warming finish.

**OLD AND RARE WHISKIES NOW ON  
THE SHELVES AT LARK**

Lark Distillery is now home to some very old and rare whiskies. If you have ever had a whisky from a distillery that is now closed, or a vintage release that you want to re-visit, then chances are it will be on our shelves. Some of the bottles include: Ardbeg 1977, Banff 29yo, Brora 21yo, Glen Albyn 29yo, Glen Grant 36yo, Laphroaig 25yo, Lochside 24yo, Littlemill 17yo, Linkwood 23yo, Mosstowie 25yo, North Port 23yo, Rosebank 15yo, Scapa 25yo, St Magdaline 19yo. There is also a range of old Scottish blend including the Old Glencrinan, which hasn't been seen for a while. If you would like anymore information about any of these whiskies, or to see the full list head online to [www.larkdistillery.com.au](http://www.larkdistillery.com.au), or give us a call on 03 6231 9088 or even better come into the cellar door and indulge in a wee dram while you browse the cabinets full of all the yummy old whisky.

**TAKE THE HIGH ROAD TO WHISKY HEAVEN... SMWS Tour of Scotland 2009**

The *Scotch Malt Whisky Society* (SMWS) has organised two separate but identical first-class, bespoke whisky tours to Scotland next year, with each tour being limited to just 10 people. The first tour, led by Andrew Derbidge, is fully booked, however, there are still places available on the second tour. This second tour, led by Chris Barnes, runs from 4<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> June. The tour will travel across all of Scotland (including Islay and the Orkneys), with in-depth connoisseur's visits to our favourite distilleries, as well as trips to the Speyside Cooperage and other notable attractions. Top class dining and accommodation feature heavily throughout the tour, including a sensational whisky dinner at Mansfield Castle. There's so much more than we can fit in here, so for full itinerary details and pricing, visit [http://www.cousinstt.com/cousins\\_tour.php?tour\\_id=113](http://www.cousinstt.com/cousins_tour.php?tour_id=113) or contact Suzy Tawse on (02) 9974 3046.



## TAUSTING NOTES:

### A GUIDE TO SOME GREAT DRAMS FROM FRANZ SCHEURER

#### Glenmorangie Signet

Unlike anything introduced before in the super premium category, Signet has broken away from the traditional methods of whisky creation by reinventing convention, in some ways, getting back to the (often forgotten or ignored) basics.

Dr Bill Lumsden (Head of Distilling and Whisky Creation) and Rachel Barrie (Whisky Creator and Master Blender) have crafted a single malt whisky that is truly unique.

They have gone back to basics and without revealing all the secrets they are using chocolate malts (Scottish barley, too), some of the oldest and rarest Glenmorangie stocks and exclusive casks in the production of Signet.

#### Tasting notes:

Bottled at: 46% a/v

Colour:

Mahogany brown

Aroma:

Prunes, Maltose, Dark

Chocolate, Treacle, Almond

Kernels, Brazil Nuts, Lemon

Shortbread and a whiff of smoke

Palate:

Soft, gentle and sweet, yet asserting and mouth filling.

Citrus flavours, mixed with shortbread, chlorophyll and Swiss, air-dried Bündnerfleisch.

Roasted almonds and strong white chocolate flavours slowly surface, then persist and become dominant with some underlying rancio characters (unusual for a whisky).

Finish:

Long, sweet, creamy and slowly turning dry and tannic, just like a good cup of tea with sugar and milk.

Comment: A cracker! Try it, it's fantastic!

#### Glenmorangie ASTAR (Gaelic for 'Journey')

Glenmorangie's Master Distiller Dr. Bill Lumsden changed the wood regime for a number of white oak barrels originating from the Ozark Mountains in Missouri. Lengthening the curing time from typically 3 month or kiln-style drying, to two full years' air seasoning and reducing the toasting time from 2 minutes to 30 seconds to ensure that wood sugars in the new barrels are not burnt, imparting a bitter taste to the whisky (sacrificing a little colour in the process). These barrels are first filled with new spirit and matured for 3 years at the Jack Daniel's Distillery, then emptied and shipped to Scotland whole (not broken down which is the general practice) to preserve their integrity, then filled with Glenmorangie new make spirit and matured for 10 years or so. The whisky from these special barrels is then bottled and has just been released. Astar is bottled at cask strength of 57.2% a/v.

#### Tasting Notes:

Colour: light straw, reminiscent of a Sauvignon Blanc

Aroma: Demerara sugar, white chocolate and shortbread aromas mingle with boiled lollies to grab your attention

Taste: Immediately mouth filling, the biscuit aromas are confirmed with a hint of star fruit and a solid flavour of overripe grapefruit. A top note of eucalypt and mint slowly asserts itself

Finish: long, sweet and very moreish!

Comment: This is no doubt one of the best whiskies ever to come from the Glenmorangie stable!

#### Ardbeg Corryvreckan

Corryvreckan is as mythological as it is geographical. The Strait of Corryvreckan is between Jura and Scarba (a small, uninhabited island just north of Jura in Argyll) and its name comes from Gaelic

Coirebhreacain meaning "cauldron of the speckled seas" or "cauldron of the plaid". The first name refers to the prevalent, turbulent undercurrents and the second to the hag goddess of winter, Cailleach Bheur, (in Scottish Mythology) who uses the gulf to wash her great plaid, willing the seasons to change from autumn to winter. Ardbeg's story masters couldn't ignore this wealth of imagery and released the Corryvreckan to its Committee Members.

#### Tasting Notes:

Colour: much darker than we'd expect from an Ardbeg. Sherry casks, here we come!

Aroma: Raisins, plum pudding and old, seaweed-clad ropes

Taste: The second you take your first sip you are transported to another world. No whisky should be this good! Every nook and cranny of your mouth is filled to capacity with this wonderful, sweet, tarry and tangy substance. It is impossible at first to separate the many flavours that assault your palate, but slowly citrus elements move to the upper palate and salt, treacle, peat and smoke linger on the back of your palate. This is at once elegant and powerful, tender and dynamic, reminding us of a coiled up snake basking in the sun.

Finish: Does it every finish?

Comment: A superb dram with a personality. This might be no beginner's drink but it's an Islay fan's idea of heaven.

## A TOUR OF ISLAY:

**Andrew Derbidge toasts the great distilleries of this western isle.**

For the malt whisky enthusiast, it would be fair to describe a trip to **Islay** as being akin to a pilgrimage. And once you're standing on the shores of Lochindaal, breathing in the sweet, peaty smoke blustering from **Bowmore's** pagoda whilst looking across the water to **Bruichladdich**, there's no doubt that you've reached Mecca.

After a few false starts and distractions in recent years, I finally made my first pilgrimage to Islay last September. Having enjoyed Islay's whiskies for many years (my first ever single malt was in fact a **Lagavulin**) and educated audiences about Islay at countless tastings, I'd certainly seen all the photos and knew the history. But something magic and special happens once you step on Islay soil and experience it in the flesh. It's amazing how quickly you feel intrinsically linked to the place – almost as though you had lived there in a former life and were returning home. Yes, there's an element of romance and imagination involved, but I challenge any serious whisky drinker to visit the island and not feel the same.

The first thing that strikes you on Islay is the beauty and how apt all the textbook descriptors for it are – rugged, windswept, scenic, fertile, quaint, and so on. The enormous variety in the landscapes is also quickly evident. Flat farmland transforms to wetlands, which adjoin plains of peat bogs, which abut rocky and unforgiving coastlines, which give way to rich, fertile, green hills and so on. We spent an afternoon simply driving around the island, and every corner we turned introduced a new element or a different environment.

Accommodation is available all over the island, although **Port Ellen** and **Bowmore** are the two main centres with the most options. Bowmore is the central hub to which all roads lead, and we elected to stay

in one of the Bowmore Distillery Cottages. The cottages and buildings that once housed the distillery's workers have been converted into self-contained units & cottages, and they're extremely comfortable and well-appointed. Not to mention convenient – the front door of our cottage opened out onto **Bowmore's** main street, and the distillery itself was immediately adjacent.

There are now eight working distilleries on Islay (**Ardbeg, Lagavulin, Laphroaig, Bowmore, Bruichladdich, Kilchoman, Bunnahabhain and Caol Ila**), plus the very industrial **Port Ellen** maltings and the remains of the Port Ellen distillery, which closed in 1983. A serious distillery visit takes a few hours, particularly if there's a tasting at the end of the tour. So unless you're staying for at least four or five days, you'll have to be selective about which ones you get to. Months before our trip I'd teed up appointments at four of the distilleries, so I took in quite detailed tours of Bowmore, Laphroaig, Ardbeg, and Bruichladdich. And we made a point of at least driving to the other four and wandering around the grounds. The distilleries run tours at set times, and you can't simply turn up and ask to see around. Several (e.g. Lagavulin and Caol Ila) will only take visitors by appointment, so a fair bit of advance planning is necessary if you're to maximise your trip to Islay.

There was something unique and attractive about each of the four distilleries I visited. **Bowmore** and **Laphroaig** are both special in that they are two of just six distilleries that still have their own maltings floor and who kiln their barley on site. (The other four being **Springbank, Highland Park, Balvenie, and Kilchoman**). Bowmore was special for a few reasons, chiefly because of how detailed and involved it was.





## A TOUR OF ISLAY

**continued:** Andrew Derbidge toasts the great distilleries of this western isle.

Sign up to their Craftsman's Tour (£22) and you can turn the barley on the floor by hand; walk into the kiln and breathe in the peat smoke (as long as they're kilning at the time of your visit); and then there's the visit into No. 1 warehouse (below sea level) where you can sample some maturing spirit. The majority of distillery tours throughout Scotland won't take visitors into the actual warehouses, so the opportunity to do so at Bowmore is a rare one.

If you're a 'Friend of **Laphroaig**', your tour of the distillery there ends in the fantastic visitor centre and Friends Lounge, where you can try several drams from the core Laphroaig range. And, if you're feeling up to it, you can trek out to the field and locate your own leased square foot plot. I proudly pushed my little Aussie flag into the ground, and noted that a few other Australians had done likewise in the preceding weeks.

**Ardbeg** was special because....well, because it was Ardbeg. Distillery manager Mickey Heads is a terrific guy and his passion and enthusiasm for his work was quickly evident. He also pointed out something that was clearly a point of pride: For the first time in decades, all of the distillery managers on Islay are actually Ileachs – that is, Islay born and bred. There are dreams of perhaps one day restoring the kilns at Ardbeg and peating the barley on site again, but one suspects that's still a fair way off.

**Bruichladdich** was, for me at least, the real eye-opener and happy surprise packet. I confess to having felt a little tired and "over" the ever-increasing range of bottlings coming out of Bruichladdich. Every month seems to bring with it a new expression or variation, and – as someone else said to me

later in my travels – they've lost the sense of what a Bruichladdich malt actually is.

However, after a few hours wandering around the distillery with Mark Reynier, I'd changed my sentiments and was a fan once more. The distillery houses and uses perhaps some of the most antiquated equipment in the industry – and the resulting product is all the better for it! You also quickly learn that most of the processes they undertake, such as mashing, fermentation, and distillation are carried out using quite slow and uneconomical methods. Even their occasional choice of barley is an expensive and low-yielding variant. But it's all about the final product – and whilst Reynier happily concedes that there are cheaper ways of doing things, they don't want to compromise on quality. Ultimately, the results speak for themselves: The spirit is ridiculously clean and flavoursome, and all of the maturing casks I sampled in the warehouses – from two months up to six years old – tasted far older and more complete than their youthful age entitled them to.

Of course, Islay offers so much more than the distilleries: Hiking and walks across magnificent countryside; sandy beaches; ruined castles and churches; neolithic sites and attractions; celtic interests, etc, to name just a few. **Bowmore** has the indoor heated swimming pool, and there are a few parks and playgrounds around the place to keep the kids happy too. Another magical thing about Islay is the way time seemingly slows down, and – if nothing else – it's a wonderful place to relax and unwind. With a dram in hand, obviously!

**Andrew Derbidge**  
**MWSOA**





## GREAT SOUTHERN DISTILLERY:

### LIFE AT THE FOREFRONT OF WHISKY DISTILLING, PART 2

BY TONY BROWNE



#### YEAST

There is a little backtracking here on the mention of yeast, because it has generally added very early to the cooled wort once the mash tun drain has commenced. We cool the wort exactly the same way as the big boys, by the way, through a water cooled plate wort cooler. Unfortunately we cannot reuse the cooling water here for the next mash as they do in a large malt distillery, simply because we are a small operation doing one maybe two mashes a week, not twelve to seventeen back to back. Our hope is that when we move to our new permanent location some efficiencies can be strived for.

We usually use a strain of yeast known as Danstil C, which originates from Denmark as far as I know. One 500 gram pack of the dried yeast made up into a starter before hand is used. We may get away with using a little less than this, which Cameron and I discussed, but we decided a few bucks not saved is better than a possible poor fermentation. In Scotland a mixture of distilling yeast (cultured on molasses) and second hand brewing yeast is generally used and temperature control of the wort is crucial here. If the fermentation start temperature was over 21 degrees celsius, then there might be a

possibility of the yeast overheating and burning out towards the end of the fermentation, as its' temperature will rise to the mid 30s, with the result being possible loss of yield.

When I first looked at this Danstil stuff which said 'make up a 5 litre water starter at 35 to 38 degrees celsius' I thought it was a misprint! So this I did and ten minutes later this frothing yeast monster was roaring out of the bucket trying to engulf me! So here was the next lesson: instead of wort temperature being 14 to 21 degrees celsius in a Scottish distillery (depending on season) it was now thirty

if this stuff comes from another planet not Denmark, as it goes crazy when you do this!

#### Fermentation

After much clawing about in the dark to start with we have now settled for 7 or even 8 day fermentations, long by the 120 hour maximum fermentations in Scotland, but this seems beneficial in yield, distillate character and in fitting in with production schedules. Such a long fermentation would not even be dreamed off in the traditional lid covered Oregon Pine washbacks in Scotland, especially in Summer, but we have airlocks and stainless steel and if it was a problem I am sure it would have slapped me in the face long ago.

Another noticeable difference here is that our wash does not seem to froth with the same ferocity as that of our Scottish counterparts in the early stages of fermentation: why I don't know. But, again, this is one thing less to

worry about: no rotating blade (or switcher) is required to keep the yeast monster at bay.



nice, but it can get cold down here in Albany so a little variation in temperature goes on here if required.

I have gotten into the habit of grabbing a little wort from the mash 50 or so minutes into the rest and adding it to the starter. This is where I wonder

#### First distillation - Wash distillation

After fermentation has gone as far as it will go, it is now time to pump it to our 1800 litre wash still. Although it holds



## GREAT SOUTHERN DISTILLERY: LIFE AT THE FOREFRONT OF WHISKY DISTILLING, PART 2 CONTINUED

BY TONY BROWNE



1800 litres it is really designed to operate at about 1200 to 1300 litres, above this performance drops drastically, as has been found out the hard way. This still is a 42 kilowatt three phase electric powered still, so no boilers to worry about here either.

At this stage the wash will have hopefully reached 7% ABV, although 7.5 to very occasionally 8.2% ABV might be obtained on a good day. The still is boiled up during the night on timers to about 85 degrees Celsius, this taking about 2 and a half to 3 hours. The distiller will then take over on manual at this point, bringing the temperature up to 91 degrees Celsius where the wash starts to boil.

tension on the frothy head before full power can be applied and serious distilling begins. In 50 still runs here I can only recall seeing this froth in the sight glass once, and even then it did not carry over into the distillate, which can happen if not controlled: it almost certainly will in a Scottish wash still. Possibly our malt is lower in protein, but no complaints from me here!

I can recall horror still runs where this frothing refused to die after three hours, and patience (well mine anyway) can be wearing a bit thin by this time. If serious carry over of wash (or fouling) does occur at this stage, quality may be an issue, formation of ethyl

dropped to 2% ABV the heat is switched off.

### 2nd distillation

Pot stills cannot go from wash to spirit in one go, so the low wines will be pumped to our 580 litre spirit still for the second spirit distillation. Things are a little more complicated here as product from the previous still run (foreshots and feints) is also added to the charge.

This still is a 16 kilowatt three phase electric still, usually operated at 500 to 550 litres, above this running time can get painful. The spirit run is a little more to keep an eye on as it is split into three sections or cuts.

### 1st cut - foreshots

The first distillate to come off at about 84 degrees Celsius is the heads or foreshots, which although strong in ethanol, is not of desired quality due to high methanol levels. Although not collected as spirit it can be redistilled next time round. This will account for approximately 5% of the original charge volume.

### 2nd cut - spirit

After twenty minutes or so potable spirit should now be running, this is collected for later dilution and bottling. A demisting test with water is used to confirm spirit quality has been reached. This will run



For some reason another problem they get in the Scottish stills never seems to happen here: from 91 to about 94 to 95 degrees Celsius the wash in a Scottish distillery froths violently high in the still head, and it may take 40 or more minutes to break the surface

carbamate being a major worry.

All being well after six to seven hours about 350 litres of low wines at about 24% ABV will have been collected, and once the distillate strength has



## **GREAT SOUTHERN DISTILLERY: LIFE AT THE FOREFRONT OF WHISKY DISTILLING, PART 2 CONTINUED**

BY TONY BROWNE



for three to four hours depending on the starting strength. This part will run from about 75 to 65% ABV and is monitored by hydrometer. Depending on original charge volume and strength this will account for 15 to 20% of the original charge volume.

### **3rd cut - feints or tails**

Once the spirit strength gets down to the low 60s some of the undesirable higher boiling point alcohols and oils will start to appear, and although still high in ethanol concentration, this distillate is not of consumable quality. It is distilled down to 2% ABV though as the feints can be added to the next spirit distillation with the foreshots and the next batch of low wines to make the next batch of spirit. The feints will typically be about 40% of the original charge volume.

And so this process goes on for all and eternity, recovering spirit each time, but there is always spirit trapped in these foreshots and feints recirculating round and round till the end of time....

**PART THREE OF THIS ARTICLE WILL  
APPEAR IN THE NEXT EDITION OF  
FEINTS AND FORESHOTS**

**THANKS TO TONY BROWNE AT GREAT  
SOUTHERN DISTILLERY.**

**ANY QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS  
REGARDING THIS ARTICLE CAN BE  
DIRECTED TO THE EDITOR:**

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## **MALT WHISKY SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA ELECTS 2009 COMMITTEE**

**Elected at the November 2008 AGM -  
your 2009 MWSOA Committee Members are:**

**Craig Daniels – Chair and Convention Co-Convenor**  
**Martin Brackman Shaw – Vice Chair and Secretary**  
**Matthew Rosenberg – Treasurer**  
**Peter Johnston – Membership Officer and Convention Co-Convenor**  
**Ben Calcraft – Public Officer**  
**Peter McWhinnie – Web Manager**  
**Roger Gillard – Marketing Officer**  
**Ian Schmidt – Whisky Competition Organiser**  
**Nic Lowrey – Feints and Foreshots Editor & Publisher**  
**Melissa Ware – Committee Member**

**Congratulations to the newly-elected committee!**  
**Next edition: **Committee Snapshots** - we start a series of committee member profiles so you can get to know your MWSOA**





## Musings from the Chair – December 2008 by MWSOA Chairman Craig Daniels



Once every two years, the committee elected at the previous AGM gather for a planning day and revisit our strategic plan and review our Mission Statement, or if that's too reminiscent of bullshit bingo, then our raison d'être or overall rationale. In April this year we decided that we are mainly a network and that we really want both our Website and our Newsletter to become a clearing house or reservoir of whisky related information. One of the things we agreed to do was to put together a ***selected whisky biography*** and I've decided to be democratic and open it up to everyone to help build a recommended reading list.

The following I must stress, is a very personal and probably idiosyncratic take on what is valuable and reflects over 15 years of scouring second hand book shops and libraries for anything remotely related to malt whisky. I've included a comment at the end of the reference as to why I thought the work was worth recommending.

If you read this and reckon I've missed something obvious then please feel free to send suggestions to me at [chair@mwsoa.org.au](mailto:chair@mwsoa.org.au) and to [fnfeditor@mwsoa.org.au](mailto:fnfeditor@mwsoa.org.au) and upon suitable peer review we'll add them to our website.

### So here goes, my **Highly Recommended Whisky Books**

**1** - The first group are the best of the neophyte friendly and are a good general introduction to Scotch malt whisky. I have listed them in order of personal preference and reflects my interests in the chemistry of malts and the technical side of production.

**MacLean, Charles:** The Mitchell Beazley Pocket Whisky Book, Mitchell Beazley 1993 (ISBN 1-85732-171-5) (Packs a lot of information into a small space (hence no pretty pictures) – the explanation of the production process is as good as exists outside much more academic texts.)

**Hills, Phillip,** Appreciating Whisky, Trafalgar Square, 2000 (ISBN 0004724496) (a favourite as it looks at the chemistry of whisky and the origins of aromas and flavours in a readily accessible way)

**Brown, Gordon:** The Whisky Trails, Prion, London, 1993 (Still the best of the travelogue style of whisky book and with lots of good and esoteric research underpinning the coffee table format)

**Jackson, Michael:** Michael Jackson's Malt Whisky Companion, Dorling Kindersley, London, 1989, 1991, 1994, 1999 (ISBN 0-7513-0708-4) (The one that started it for me when I got the Second Edition as a prize for most improved malt taster at the 1994 Malt whisky tasting competition – it was also the first work that actually was game enough to allocate scores, which given the Australian malt scene, was oddly familiar territory. It also provided lots of topics for internet discussions and undoubtedly helped expand the international malt community).

**Lamond, J and Tucek, R:** The Malt Whisky File, Canongate Books Ltd, 1995 (ISBN 086241 525X) (Similar format to Jackson, but with a different evaluation system, based on flavour profile and lots of useful pictures of labels. The book also has a good range of basic information and a list of whisky shops in the UK.)



## Musings from the Chair – December 2008

### by MWSOA Chairman Craig Daniels

**Milroy, Wallace:** Malt Whisky Almanac - A Taster's Guide, Lochar Publishing, Moffat 1986, Neil Wilson Publishing 1992 (ISBN 1 897784 02 3) (Maybe the most idiosyncratic choice and yet the sheer engagement and passion of the author really shines through; a true enthusiast's book – a good book to pack if you're visiting distilleries in Scotland)

**Murray, J:** Jim Murray's Whisky Bible 2008, Dram Good Books 2007 (ISBN 978-0-9554729-2-3) (The first of the Yearbook concepts with Jim tasting a boatload of whiskies for each edition. I don't necessarily trust others tasting notes (and/or their scores) and I don't necessarily agree with Jim or his methodology, but his comments provide lots for discussion.)

**2** - The second group has a much more historical perspective and cover topics broader than malt production; the following are a bout the industry as a whole (with the focus mainly on blends)

**Morrice, Philip:** The Schweppes Guide to Scotch, Alpha Books, Sherbourne, 1983 (pretty hard to track down, but has lots of information on old blends, and was published when blends were still sexy.)

**McDowall, R. J. S.,** revised by William Waugh: The Whiskies of Scotland, John Murray (Publishers) Ltd, London, 1986 & 1991 (A favourite and one of my prizes from book shop expeditions – interesting book as it straddles both blends and malts with the passion evident around malts and the duty showing towards blends.)

**Cooper, Derek:** The Century Companion to Whiskies, Century Publishing, London, 1978 & 1983 (Another that covers blends and malts. Interesting for the historical context. Has some nice observations.)

**Andrews, Allen:** The Whisky Barons, Jupiter Books, London, 1977 (Another of my scavenging expeditions and despite my biases, I thoroughly enjoyed it. If you want something that addresses the economic and social impact of the industry and insights into the key players then it's worth borrowing)

**Daiches, David:** Scotch Whisky: Its past and present. Andre' Deutsch, 1969, 1978: ISBN 0 233 96053 8; republished with Fontana, London, 1983 and Brillinn Ltd, 1995 (ISBN 1 874744 36 X) (Learned tome with usual references to history and production)

**Gunn, Neil M:** Whisky and Scotland. Routledge, London, 1935 (Classic written from a nationalist perspective. Polemic that addresses the central role of scotch in the social, cultural and economic history of Scotland.)

**Jackson, Michael:** The World Guide to Whisky, Dorling Kindersley, London, 1987, 1991, 1993 (More erudite than the coffee table format would lead you to believe)

**3** – and finally, for the more serious malt fanatic

**Moss, Michael S, and Hume, John R:** The Making of Scotch Whisky - A History of the Scotch Whisky Distilling Industry, James & James, Edinburgh, 1981 (probably the most impressive work of scholarship on the history of scotch available)

**Townsend, Brian:** Scotch Missed: The Lost Distilleries of Scotland, Neil Wilson Publishing Ltd, Glasgow, 1993 (Indispensable guide to lost distilleries)

**Barnard, Alfred:** The Whisky Distilleries of the United Kingdom. Newton Abbot, 1969. (Originally Harper, London, 1887.); Extracts reprinted by Lochar Publishing in conjunction with Mainstream Publishing, Edinburgh, 1987 (the book that started it all; Barnard was a journalist and his legacy gives us a snapshot of the operating distilleries in England, Scotland and Ireland in 1887)

If you'd like a more comprehensive bibliography please visit fellow Malt Maniac Ulf Buxrud's website at <http://www.buxrud.se/bibtek.htm>

Another whisky bibliography is available at <http://www.dcs.ed.ac.uk/home/jhb/whisky/books.html>

## 2009 MWSoA 4th Whisky Convention News:

### 'Celebrate the Grain' Tour

For the first time in the history of the premier Whisky events in Australia, the 2009 MWSoA 4<sup>th</sup> Malt Whisky Convention will include a field trip, "The Celebrate the Grain Tour". This will take place on the two days directly preceding the Hobart Convention, on the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> August 2009. Australia has become a major player in the distilling industry, and while production levels are low, we actually have more licensed distilleries here in Australia than exist in Ireland!

The location of Hobart, close to a number of these Australian Whisky producers, allows those participating on the tour to visit some of these active whisky distilleries and other beverage (Brewery and Winery) producers. The tour will be offered in two versions, a two day (Thursday and Friday) and a one day (Friday only) format. The participants will leave the Convention venue in a bus and be returned to the same location, and all admission fees etc will be included in the price. Lunch and teas are also provided and experienced guides will assist in the experience.

So, when planning your trip south to Hobart, come early and allow for this unique Australian Whisky experience, and I look forward to seeing you all there.

Peter Johnston - tour convenor

### Latest Convention News

Convention Co-convenor, Craig Daniels reports:

The Venue has been booked – it's the Old Woolstore Apartment Hotel adjacent to the Hobart waterfront and Constitution Dock.

Sponsor Packs were distributed on 24 & 25 November and we're waiting for responses and four members on the Committee are following up.

Delegate & Tour booking documents for both the "Celebrate the Grain -Inaugural Whisky Tour" and the 4<sup>th</sup> Malt Whisky Convention will be prepared in the next month. I hope to have pdf versions on the Website by New Year.

\*For further information regarding the 2009 MWSoA 4th Whisky Convention or the 'Celebrate the Grain' tour please see [www.mwsoa.org.au](http://www.mwsoa.org.au) or keep checking Feints and Foreshots.

#### **FEINTS AND FORESHOTS: #26 December 2008**

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