

FEINTS & FORESHOTS NO 1

January 2005

Hi All,

A new look for the New Year and greetings from all the crew at the MWSOA. The Convention is getting closer and all the bits and pieces are finally falling into place. Our next mail out will contain full details of the show including early bird booking options. So stay tuned.

CALLING ALL BUDDING MALT WHISKY SHOW JUDGES

NOW here's a fantastic chance to put your well trained palate to some serious use as the MWSOA would like to invite any of its members interested in participating in the medal round for the Australian Malt Whisky Awards. All you have to do is contact the Awards organiser Mr Paul Rasmussen...

e-mail: paul.rasmussen@sawater.com.au
phone: 0412 908 633.

This event will be held in Adelaide on the last Saturday in February 2005 and interstate members will need to organise their own transport and accommodation if planning to attend. Places on the judging panel are limited so call Paul today.

PEOPLE, PLACES, & SITES YOU SHOULD MEET...NO 1



FROM time to time we at the MWSOA would like to recommend places, people and in particular web sites we have found both entertaining and interesting. The first surely has to be the amazing Johannes's malt Madness web site. I have never seen so much useful information on the world of malts packed into one website.

I'll let Johannes briefly explain..."So, you're interested in single malt Scotch whisky, eh? What a coincidence! That goes for the other maniacs and myself as well!

On Malt Madness you can find a Beginner's Guide with ten chapters of information about malt whisky for novices, a mAlmanac with loads of nifty stuff like data about all distilleries in Scotland, an interactive map of Scotland and scores for more than 1000 whiskies. You can find the best single malts on my Hit List while the Shit List is reserved for the single malts that... how shall I put this... are not really tonsil teasers. And last but not

least there's my Liquid Log - a diary of all my adventures in the land of single malts".

So how do get there? Visit www.maltmadness.com And for those not on the world wide web, my sincerest apologies.

And guess what, Australia has a marvelous connection to this extraordinary site, our very own Craig Daniels, and you can read Craig's latest missive on the Maniac's site by getting to...www.maltmadness.com/mm12a.html

More Malt Maniac's intrigue on the back page...

YOUTH MUST BE SERVED BY FRANZ SCHEURER

MOST Scottish Single Malts are released at 10 years old or older. Glen Grant is one of the few exceptions with its 5 year old cornering the Italian market. Contrary to Cognac, older is not necessarily better with Single Malts, as many lose much of their fruit with excessive age and become one dimensional.

Due to the loss of the 'angel's share', older whiskies' cask strength is much lower, adding to the 'mellow' and 'smooth' perception of age. Although you can dilute and lower the strength of younger offerings it's precisely that 'kick' or 'burn' of higher alcoholic strength that creates a huge following among the Single Malt aficionados.

Islay and Jura are not known for releasing young whiskies, but that may change with the recent release of Ardbeg's 'Very Young' and the Isle of Jura's 5 year old Single Malts.

The Ardbeg was distilled in 1998 and bottled in 2004, entirely from first-fill casks, non-chill filtered, at a cask strength of 58.3% vol. The Isle of Jura 5 y/o was distilled in 1999 and bottled in 2004, non-chill filtered, at a cask strength of 60.6% vol.

The Ardbeg shows off its signature pale colour and literally reeks of peat as soon as you open the bottle. This is not so unusual as Ardbeg is known for its heavily peated whiskies.

The Isle of Jura however is a surprise. The colour is dark honey, darker than expected for a whisky this young, and again, is heavily peated, which is not usual at all for Jura. In fact I can't recall a single Isle of Jura that ever showed a lot of peat.



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Both are whiskies that simple can't be ignored. They fill your mouth with flavour that extends to every last taste-bud within a nanosecond of your first sip, and due to their strength give you immediate retro-nasal feedback.

The Ardbeg is dry and floral with lots of notes of freshly dried hay, a little gust of salty sea air, with an incredibly long, idodiny, sea-weedy finish and a touch of maple syrup at the very end of the palate.

The Isle of Jura is initially a lot sweeter, with honey, heather and Thai-style caramelised pork flavours, but finishes dry and clean with overtones of smoke and bonito flavoured dashi-custard. Diluted they both show the same, expected impurities; neither of them benefit from water at all.

The Ardbeg loses its complexity and becomes one-dimensionally peaty and dry and the Isle of Jura becomes oily and unattractive. Both whiskies must be tasted at full strength, where they display an unequalled vibrancy.

Neither easy to get nor benign on the hip-pocket nerve, these are both absolutely glorious drams, worth every cent. I scored them both at 8.6/10 and am looking forward to many more encounters.

I think, therefore I dram! To read more of Franz's malt musings, go to ...
www.classic.com.au

MWSOA MEMBER WINS INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

FROM Jim Murray's 2005 Whisky Bible...

Best Small Distillery Whisky Of The Year: *Bakery Hill Peated Cask Strength (cask No.14)*

FEINTS & FORESHOTS got in touch with David Baker and congratulated him on a fine achievement and here's David's reply..."Thanks Graham, yes it was a bit of excitement particularly as Jim rang me on a Thursday to apologise that he had not requested samples for his 2005 Bible and was only going to repeat the 2004 comments unless I could get samples to him in the UK by Monday.

"Always interested in a challenge I quickly knocked the bung out of 5 casks and filled some bottles and rang every express delivery service in the phone book. No company could deliver samples into UK by Monday so I dropped them into good old Australia Post feeling defeated

"And guess what? They got to Jim on Tuesday morning when he literally held the presses. Not bad comments for some random samples that may or may not have even got to press in time".

David B

SAY GOODBYE TO THE WORM

FROM The Houston Chronicle, 2005: Mescal has long been overshadowed by the more trendy tequila, which also is made from the agave plant but without a worm. International beverage giants have invested their money in the agave fields and distilleries of Jalisco, helping to popularize tequila, which can sell for more than \$US300 a bottle.

Mescal, in contrast, is often made by mum-and-dad producers, primarily in the southern state of Oaxaca, where small distilleries line rugged roads. Some of the smallest producers sell mescal in plastic containers.

Hoping to upgrade mescal's image, the Mexican government drafted new standards for the smoky-flavored liquor more than 10 years ago. And beginning Feb. 10, bottlers will no longer be allowed to add worms, fruit or herbs to their mescal. Jenalia Moreno

NEWS!

Only In America...

New York hotel offers \$10,000 martini

DRINKERS might want to keep a clear head when ordering a martini at New York's historic Algonquin Hotel or they might pay \$10,000 for that cold sip. The landmark hotel, where famed wit Dorothy Parker and fellow literary lights at the Round Table imbibed, offers a \$10,000 martini, complete with a loose diamond at the bottom. *Shreveport Times*

Belgium launches first whisky brand...

BRUSSELS - Belgian distillers are on the verge of launching their first whisky, it was reported on Monday. According to distiller Etienne Bouillon, who is based in Grace-Hollogne, the brand will be "a true single malt."

The barley will come from Fexhe-le-Haut-Clocher and the malt from Beloeil, in Hainaut, and its promoters have promised it will tickle the taste buds with perfumed spices and leather.



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The first bottles will only be ready in 2007 after a long distillation process. Source: Expatica Dec 2004

Now This Is Good News...

Young New Yorkers, lured by clever advertising, are turning to malts

NEVER mind Sex and the City-style cosmopolitan cocktails and endless bottles of champagne - that is so last year. Cool New Yorkers have moved out of the vodka bars and into the whisky lounges. Scotch whisky is taking so much of a hold in the United States' capital of cool that firms are being forced to divert their European stocks to keep up with demand. Single malts and blended Scotch are both making their mark in the US - and during the Christmas season, whisky cocktails are particularly popular. The Drinks International Cocktail of the Year 2004 - The Famous Grouse Crimson Crush made with ginger beer and fresh raspberries - is in high demand.

Nicola Garood, an advertising executive based in Manhattan, now orders whisky straight - although only a few months ago she hated the drink and associated it with her grandfather. "It's amazing - everyone I know is drinking whisky in New York," she said. "I used to hate the smell and now I can drink them straight.

"It's so cool to order malts, and especially cool if they are incredibly expensive." The demand for whisky in New York, which is used as a barometer for what the next trends will be across the US and beyond, could be fuelled by smart advertising and the snob factor of knowing your malts. Instead of ordering expensive wine, the younger New Yorkers are calling for shots of Scotch. *Sharon ward, The Scotsman*

From India: Whisky Could Save Lives...

RAVI Goregaonkar (32), the supplier of the spurious liquor in Bhimnagar, J R Boricha Marg that led to the deaths of ten people yesterday, was arrested by the N M Joshi Marg police from his home. The victims consumed the liquor late on Wednesday night at a small open space outside a public urinal in Bhimnagar, and immediately took ill.

Meanwhile, doctors at Nair Hospital are administering whisky, which contains ethyl alcohol (ethanol) to the patients admitted after consuming the illicit liquor. "Postmortem reports state the cause of death was due to consumption of methyl alcohol (methanol)," said Dr N E Borges, dean, Nair Hospital. "Of the 31 people admitted, ten are dead and the rest in a critical condition.

"Methanol breaks down into formic acid and formaldehyde, both of which are toxins and affect different parts

of the body," Dr Borges said. "The administration of ethyl alcohol helps in washing away the poison in the form of urine." According to a doctor attending to the patients, "a minimum of 100 ml whisky in 300 cc water every two hours" was being administered to the patients. By: Danish Khan December 24, 2004

NEW LEASE OF LIFE FOR TULLIBARDINE

Clear heads mix drinks

TULLIBARDINE whisky distillery, which was restored to life last year after being moth-balled for a decade, has added a beer-brewing operation to the business to help finance the crucial 10-year maturation gap before its first new malts are produced in 2014.

The beer, which the Perthshire company claims is the first whisky ale to be produced by a distillery, is the latest addition to the arsenal of non-whisky Tullibardine-related plans and products devised by the four-man consortium of entrepreneurs which bought the operation in 2003.

Backed by Barclays, the quartet acquired Tullibardine for an undisclosed sum from Jim Beam Brands, now Whyte & Mackay, which had decommissioned the place in 1993 because of overcapacity.

Founders Doug Ross and Michael Beamish came up with the plan to buy the distillery in 1999 after meeting on a golf course, and later brought in Glasgow accountant Alastair Russell and Alan Williamson for their business acumen.

The beer and other Tullibardine plans - which include a £10m combined whisky-retail-tourism complex on the grounds of the old distillery in the village of Blackford, off the busy A9 - comprise the consortium's unique solution to the problem of making a small whisky-producing business work in an industry dominated by a handful of powerful global players.

Speaking at the Tullibardine visitors' centre, he said no new funding was required to launch the beer and that Ross declined to say how much of the £10m was to be used by the distillery and the recently-opened project was "within budget".

"We are a small, privately-owned distillery, which is recognised for the high quality of our products and the differentiated way we compete in an increasingly competitive market," said Tullibardine's Ross, "Differentiating ourselves is absolutely essential. That's why we won't be producing our first new malt until 2014, in time for Ryder Cup at Gleneagles. It takes 10



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years to make a respectable whisky.

"As soon as we compromise any aspect of the quality, we're up against major companies which we cannot compete against. The middle market is being squeezed and there is no future for us there."

Meanwhile, Ross, a former United Distillers employee, said he expects Tullibardine to be the most-visited distillery in Scotland within the year, with more than seven million cars a year, around 20,000 per day, driving past the site. Mark Smith, The Glasgow Herald Jan 2005

A MALT MANIACS MUSINGS

A few selected words from Johannes about the Malt Maniacs "shit list", scores included...

- 14 Loch Dhu 10yo (40%, OB, 20cl, Bottled ± 1999)**
I prefer the 20cl bottle because there's less to hate.
- 11 Loch Dhu 10yo (40%, OB, 70cl, Bottled ± 2000)**
Aqua Crematoria. Only malt I ever threw down the sink.
- 54 Tobermory 10yo (40%, OB, Bottled ± 2002)**
Is this the best they can do after 10 years?
- 55 Bowmore NAS 'Darkest' (43%, OB, Bottled ± 1999)**
FWP Alert!!! Excuse my French...
- 57 Deanston 12yo (40%, OB, Bottled ± 2000)**
Newsflash: Underachiever discovers middle of road.
- 57 Kinclaith 20yo (46%, Cadenhead's, Bottled 1990's)**
Ever wondered why they closed down Kinclaith?
- 56 Allt-A-Bhainne 16yo 1985/2001 (50%, DL OMC)**
An odd blend of toothpaste and cheap white wine.
- 59 Aberfeldy 13yo 1978/1992 (43%, Master of Malt)**
Even at this tender age it seems bored & tired.
- 59 Glentromie 12yo (40%, OB, Speyside Distillery)**
A small disaster in your glass from Speyside.
- 59 Isle of Jura 10yo (43%, OB, Bottled ± 1994)**
Is this what distilled cod oil tastes like?
- 58 Auchentoshan 10yo (40%, OB, Bottled ± 2000)**
Light as the wind, gone in 60 seconds.

And then to those closing in on perfection...

- 96 Ardbeg 25yo 1975/2000 (50%, Douglas Laing OMC, 702 Bottles)**
- 95 Ardbeg 29yo 1973/2002 (51.4%, Douglas Laing Platinum, 137 Bottles)**
- 95 Bowmore 1965 (50%, OB, Bottled 1980's, Italy)**
- 95 Port Ellen 21yo 1982/2004 (50%, OMC, DL 414, 420 bottles, Full sherry)**
- 95 Saint Magdalene 19yo 1979/1998 (63.8%, UD Rare Malts)**
- 94 Ardbeg 1976/2002 'Feis Ile' (55.6%, OB, Bottled for 2002 Islay Festival)**

THE PROGRAMME SO FAR

Saturday 20 August 2005 Whisky Convention

- 9:30am - Opening Speech
- 9:45am - Major Sponsor address & Trophy Presentation
- 10:00am - First Plenary
- 10:40am - Morning Tea
- 11:00am - Masterclasses 1, 2 & 3
- 12:15pm - Lunch
- 1:15pm - Masterclasses 1, 2 & 3
- 2:30pm - Afternoon Tea
- 3:00pm - Masterclasses 1, 2 & 3
- 4:30pm - Closing Plenary

Saturday 20 August 2005 Gala Dinner Ballroom

- (7.30pm-11.30pm) - 190 seated (cabaret style)
- 7.30pm - Opening Address
 - 7.35pm - Gala Dinner Sponsor Presentation
 - 7.50pm - Whisky One Entrée
 - 8.50pm - Whisky Two - Main Course
 - 9.00pm - Whisky Auction (14 lots, mainly collector malts, many bottled 1970's and 1980's)
 - 9.50pm - Whisky Three - Dessert
 - 10.30pm - Acknowledgements

Sunday 21 August 2005 - National Premium Whisky Expo

- (8.30am-4.30pm) -
Approx peak 450 cocktail style with 16 - 18 exhibitors)
- 8.30am - Exhibitor Set up
 - 10:15am - Delegates, Hospitality and Retail Trade Presentations by 4 Major Sponsors
 - 12.15pm - Official Public Opening
 - 4.30pm - Last Pour
 - 5.00pm Room Clearance & Pack up

Further programmatic details and costs will be forthcoming shortly.

Cheers,

The Team At...

For the MWSOA Committee
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The Team! But who are the others?



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