



# Feints and Foreshots



## WELCOME TO

Feints and Foreshots #37

### THE MWSOA BESPOKE MALT BOTTLING

Finally it's here - the MWSOA bespoke bottling. Read all about it !

**P. 3 - 4**

### CHOCOLATE AND MALT TASTING EVENT

How successful was pairing chocolate and whisky? Find out what two of our intrepid tasters thought.

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### MEMBERSHIP FORM

Why not give one to a friend?

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### BESPOKE BOTTLING FORM

Ensure you don't miss out!

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## FEINTS AND FORESHOTS

*March 2012 Edition*

Welcome to another edition of Feints and Foreshots. In this edition we review the Chocolate and Whisky pairing night, which was a great success. It certainly proved, to our delight, that the complexities of Malts -can be matched with more than merely cheeses, or even dinners. Chocolate, as you can read on page 7 to 9, proved an intriguing match for several malts. So intriguing, that we had more than one opinion captured for your perusal. Read more about how Ardbeg 10 yr old matched with an artisanal lemon chocolate, and Glenlivet with orange chocolate.

Also included in this edition is some very exciting news - the bespoke bottling we've been forecasting for nearly a year is finally a reality, and exclusive to MWSOA members. The pick of the barrels from Old Hobart Distillery, Chairperson Craig Daniels talks on pages 4 and 5 about the adventure of finding and selecting the bottling.

Also included are order forms for the bottling, and - just in case you're reading this and not yet a member - a membership form so you can take advantage of this and many other MWSOA benefits. Or why not gift one to a lucky friend or relative? Until next edition, enjoy your own Malt-pairing experiments!

Nic Lowrey  
Editor, Feints and Foreshots. .

### MWSOA MEMBERSHIP INVITATION

#### Benefits of Membership

- \* Priority booking for the National Malt Whisky Convention & discounts on entry fees and extended access to Earlybird rates.
- \* Invitations to Members-Only Whisky Events, Social Events, Seminars and Dinners
- \* Advance notice of all Society Events & networking Functions.
- \* Regular Newsletter with advice on whisky launches and functions
- \* Members-only access to special Society bottlings.
- \* Membership Certificate (suitable for framing)



# Feints and Foreshots

## **2012/13 MWSOA Gift Membership Form**

### **Membership Fee – \$35**

*Membership Renewal Notice may be forwarded by mail to Gift Membership Recipient on or after 1 October 2013*

Date of Application: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Gift Membership Purchaser details:**

(We need these details if we need to clarify any of the recipient details)

Title (Mr/Mrs/Ms/Dr): \_\_\_\_\_ Surname: \_\_\_\_\_ Given Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Special Occasion (Birthday, Christmas, Friendship, other): \_\_\_\_\_

### **Gift Membership Recipient details:**

Title (Mr/Mrs/Ms/Dr): \_\_\_\_\_ Surname: \_\_\_\_\_ Given Name: \_\_\_\_\_

o Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

\*o Post Address: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

\*o Landline Ph Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Number: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Payment Options** (unfortunately, we don't have credit card facilities).

Please tick the relevant box and post the Gift Membership Application with payment or separately for the third option.

Cheque for \$35 (made payable to Malt Whisky Society of Australia Incorporated)

OR

Money Order for \$35 (made payable to Malt Whisky Society of Australia Incorporated)

OR

Direct Deposit of \$35 to the Society account (details below):

**Institution: Community CPS Australia Limited - Waymouth St, Adelaide**

**BSB #: 805-022,**

**Account #: 03211746**

**Account Name: Malt Whisky Society of Australia Inc**

**Lodgment Reference:** MWS-GMA-first letter of first name plus first three letters of surname of gift membership recipient, for example John Citizen would be MWS-GMA-JCIT.

\* Required information for communication and posting of membership Certificate

PO Box 206 Glen Osmond SA 5064 <http://www.mwsoa.org.au> ABN: 52 737 954 706



# Feints and Foreshots

## Musings from the Chair

By MWSOA Chairperson Craig Daniels

February 2012

### **The Bespoke Bottling – the back-story or just exactly how hard is it to secure some exclusive whisky for the Society?**

One of the really solid directions that came out of the Membership Survey (opened April 2010 and results published August 2010) was that Members were strongly in favour of the MWSOA sourcing a single cask single malt for distribution to members.

Of course, I never knew how hard this task would be until I assumed personal responsibility for making it happen and I started to come up against policies and practices that mystified even an ex-bureaucrat like me: rules that seemed unnecessarily restrictive and arbitrary, but I guess in everyone's contractual world there are rules, but it came as a great relief to find someone who makes or holds quality stock and is willing to negotiate on a couple of critical issues and is affable and amenable to my proposition.

I believe I hinted in the e-mail sent in early February that getting whiskies from the UK proved quite difficult and the same attitude was occasionally evident in Australia. Most of the bigger players aren't willing to split casks and for us to take the full outturn of a hogshead at natural cask strength would involve buying about 200-230 700ml bottles and with shipping and other costs we'd be up for about \$24,000 and we just don't have the reserves to cover that outlay, let alone run the risk that we couldn't sell our full allocation. I also felt very uncomfortable about any regulatory/tax/excise hurdles we might face when importing our first genuine Bespoke Bottling, so I decided to concentrate on local producers.

I'll be upfront and say I didn't contact all of them because I was aware from previous discussions that they probably wouldn't be interested and I perfectly understand that small producers in Australia don't want to split casks and I believe them when they say they are selling all their stock and don't have any inventory pressure to accommodate a mini-customer, with particular needs. However influential the MWSOA is, it is not the marketing division of the individual companies that comprise the Australian malt whisky distilling industry.

Suffice to say, some were willing to bottle a cask, but weren't willing to give us a spread of casks to sample and given that we have some proven palates on the committee there wasn't any way we were going to buy anywhere between 150 and 250 bottles unless we get to try a few samples and exercise our own judgement and quality control.

So to cut a long story short, we were left with very few options as we only found one local producer who was willing to meet our trio/template of conditions – provision of cask samples (5-6), provision of the malt at natural cask strength and allowing us to specify a limited allocation (8 dozen) from the selected cask.

Our Local Hero is Casey Overeem of Old Hobart Distillery and he's the newest kid on the block, having learnt his trade at the foot of the Godfather/Grandfather of the Australian Malt Whisky Renaissance in Bill Lark.

Of course Casey's whiskies had to meet our selection criteria and score an average across the tasting panel of above 84.5/100. This is the Silver Medal level in the MWSOA's Malt Whisky Awards.



# Feints and Foreshots

The tasting panel of Aaron Baxter, Ian Schmidt, Roger Gillard and Craig Daniels first met on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2011 and tasted 6 blind samples including 3 cask samples from Old Hobart Distillery. On the 14th November three of the original panel reconvened and tried all of the six Old Hobart Distillery Samples against each other.

Of the 6 cask samples we received from Casey, two of them met the criteria with Cask #004 the highest scoring with an average of 85.7. Cask #002 which Casey chose to bottle as his first release at 43% was also a beauty, averaging 85.0. While people might think that 84.5 is setting the bar quite low, I can provide some context; since 2009 there have only been eight Australian single malt whiskies that have scored 84.5 or above in the Malt Whisky Awards the Society has conducted. This is not to say that there aren't better scoring Australian malt whiskies out there, but we've never had them supplied as cask samples to assess them under competition conditions to consider for a Society endorsed bottling.

## **Tasting Notes:**

### **Overeem Single Malt Whisky Cask #004 Sherry Cask Matured – Natural Cask Strength -61.5%**

**Colour:** Dark honey/amber with old gold highlights

**Nose:** Light caramel and honey, honeycomb chocolate (violet crumble), mixed fruits (stewed apricots/peaches), dusty oak or polished teak, some waxy character (waxed cardboard fruit boxes), candle-wax, some light floral characters (freesias & gardenias). The wood and the floral notes get a bit more forward and going back after a few minutes, there's some distinctive smoked sultana and smoked honey/honeycomb and roasted almonds.

**Palate:** Forward alcohol, spirit bite, woody tannins, mixed citrus peel (lemon, orange), nice syrupy mouth-feel, some citrus bitters, a little spearmint and thyme, some herb bitters.

**Finish:** Long and robust, quite a surprising nutty reprise, more of the smoked sultana along with some citrus bitters.

**Comment:** The nose is impeccably behaved and the only hint of the youth is immediately on the front palate and that's also when the first real hint of the proof kicks in. It's robust rather than rough – the quality of both the distilling and the wood is exemplary.

I hope people won't be put off by the high proof as we wanted to provide members with the opportunity to try the whisky that we chose in the same conditions that we tasted it; and given that the cask sample won't be exactly the same as the whisky in the bottle, it will be the closest that we humans can make it.

Our next Bespoke Bottling will be a single malt scotch and I'll go and visit a few bottlers when I'm in Scotland later in the year and see if the personal touch improves my luck.



# Feints and Foreshots

## INAUGURAL BESPOKE MALT WHISKY ORDER FORM

**Member's Only Price**  
**Postage, Packaging and Insurance**  
**Total**  
**AUD\$120.00**  
**AUD\$15.00\***  
**AUD\$135.00\***

Method of Payment    Direct Deposit    Cheque    }    Money Order    }

**For direct deposit the account details are:**

Institution: Community CPS Australia Limited - Waymouth St, Adelaide

BSB #: 805-022,

Account #: 03211746

Account Name: Malt Whisky Society of Australia Inc

**Lodgment Reference:** MWS-BB2012--first letter of first name plus first three letters of surname, for example John Citizen would be MWS-BB2012-JCIT.

For Direct Deposit use the details above and post the form or scan and e-mail to the delivery addresses at the foot of the form. For the other options attach payment to order form and post to the mailing address below.

All payments to be made to Malt Whisky Society of Australia Inc. **Please make cheques or money orders payable to Malt Whisky Society of Australia Inc.**

\* For Delivery within Australia Only

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Membership #: \_\_\_\_\_

Delivery Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Suburb: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

**For Direct Deposit, please post completed hardcopy or forward electronically to addresses below.**

**For other payment options, please send completed form with enclosed payment to:**

**"Bespoke Bottling"- Malt Whisky Society of Australia Incorporated**

**P.O. Box 206 Glen Osmond SA 5064**

**or via e-mail to [chair@mwsa.org.au](mailto:chair@mwsa.org.au)**

### The Singular overeem

single malt whisky

natural Cask Strength

Distilled APRIL 2007,

Bottled January 2012,

Sherry cask matured

Cask # 004

Total Number of Bottles 96

ABV 61.5%

Selected by and Bottled Exclusively for the members of the Malt Whisky Society of Australia

Limit of 1 bottle per member



# Feints and Foreshots

## FEINTS AND FORESHOTS

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Craig Daniels

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### *MWSOA Calendar of events for 2012 (more updates in later editions)*

- 31<sup>st</sup> May 2012 - Whisky and Cheese night with local foodie legend Kris Lloyd of Woodside Cheesewrights and culinary luminary Derrick Casey, Head of Operations for Le Cordon Bleu - Venue will be in Adelaide but TBA.
- 1<sup>st</sup> July 2012 - MWSOA 2012 Malt Whisky Awards Judging day - if you want to be a judge and think your palate's up to blind judging whiskies, drop the Chairman an e-mail. Venue - Rob Roy Hotel, Halifax Street Adelaide.
- 4<sup>th</sup> August 2012 - MWSOA Malt Whisky Awards - Gala Dinner with presentation of awards. It's our biggest event of the year and we regularly get 80-90 people coming along. If you're a member and anywhere near Adelaide then this is our premier event. Venue - Rob Roy Hotel, Halifax Street, Adelaide.
- 30<sup>th</sup> August 2012 - Gathering of the Clans - Once off opportunity to celebrate the 5th Anniversary of the passing of Michael Jackson (of Beer & Whisky fame). We'll be tasting malts from MJ's favourite distilleries and it will be a great chance for all the members of the different clubs in Adelaide to get together.
- 1<sup>st</sup> November 2012 - Whisky & Chocolate Night - after the excellent effort in 2011, we're revisiting Steven Ter Horst's selection of four chocolates for four different whiskies than last year. It has the potential to be mind-blowing as there were some stunning combinatons in 2011, by general acclimation.



# Feints and Foreshots

## Whisky and Chocolate Tasting Report by Chairperson Craig Daniels

### **Background**

At the same time we decided to run a Whisky and Cheese night we also decided to try to pair or match Whisky and Chocolate using the services of a local chocolatier, Steven Ter Horst. We are lucky to have chocolate makers of international standard and renown and Steven well and truly belongs in that company. For this exercise, we decided to give samples of the 4 selected whiskies to Steven and he was tasked with coming up with matches from his range for the 4 whiskies and Aaron carted 4 x 50mls around to Steven's shop

I would normally write notes on the whiskies but this time I didn't taste and score the 4 whiskies without the chocolate or before the chocolate, so I don't know if my scores are affected by the synergies in the matches or not.

I usually score the Glenlivet 18 43% around 82-84 depending on the batch but this one would've scored 86. In fact all of them would've scored between 86 and 88, which is probably about right for the Laphroaig but maybe a little low for the Ardbeg and the Glenfarclas. As a group of whiskies though, they were of a consistently high quality and I'm proud of the selection.

### **On the Night**

It was agreed at the commencement of proceedings between the chocolatier and the maltsters to taste the chocolate before we put any malt in our mouths.

Out of all the pairings I thought the Glenlivet 18 with the Orange chocolate and the Ardbeg 10 with the lemon chocolate were the most successful. . I don't normally find too much citrus in the Glenlivet but in this tasting the lemon, lime and oranges were quite forward. I know the citrus and coriander in Ardbeg 10 goes well with lime as I've enjoyed fresh oysters with lime and wasabi dressing with Ardbeg 10 and that combination works really well. I suspect the lemon chocolate might be a bit too much on its own but the tar and ashes in the Ardbeg really played to the sharp, tangy strengths of the chocolate.

I think one of the factors that made the citrus flavoured chocolates work the best for me was both the textural and flavour consistencies throughout the chocolate.

I think the vanilla bean ganache would've worked better with the Laphroaig without the coconut and I would've preferred the Dutch spices toned down a smidgen in the German marzipan and Dutch spice ganache matched with the Glenfarclas 1980. The *speculaaskruiden* spice mix probably needed adjustment with more cardamom and ginger and less nutmeg and mace to work better with the dried fruit and Christmas cake of the whisky. It was a good match just not as exemplary as #1 and #4.

### **Rankings in preference order**

- #1 - Glenlivet 18yo matched with Orange Chocolate
- #2 - Ardbeg 10yo matched with Lemon Chocolate
- #3 - Laphroaig Quarter Cask NAS matched with Vanilla bean ganache coated in coconut
- #4 - Glenfarclas 1980 24yo matched with German Marzipan & Dutch spice ganache.



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## MELBOURNE EVENT

### Alternative Views

I was so excited about the impact on me of this evening that I really wanted to gather the thoughts of other attendees so I sent out a request for feedback.

Following are thoughts from several attendees.

Fellow member **John Roberts** (or **JR** as he prefers to be known) was kind enough to lend me his notes, so you can get another perspective and as you'll see we disagreed about the best match, but this is quite normal and I'm really only a novice in this matching game and JR is a gourmet and epicurean from way back.

### The Whiskies – dominant characters in nose and palate:

Glenlivet 18 – vanilla/tropical fruit

Glenfarclas 1980 – rich sherry/ Christmas cake

Laphroaig Quarter Cask – Salt/tar/smoke & lime rind (first time noted)

Ardbeg 10 - Iodine/smoke/citrus

### The Chocolate & Malt Matches

#1 The Orange Chocolate; the chocolate wasn't sweet and really accentuates the citrus (especially orange) in the Glenlivet 18.

#2 The German Marzipan with Dutch spice ganache – Almond/cloves/cinnamon/star anise/cardamom pod – compliments the Christmas cake characteristics of the malt.

#3 Vanilla Bean ganache with coconut coating – the chocolate is pleasant but the malt lags well after the chocolate and I'm not sure it needs the coconut.

#4 The Lemon Chocolate – great chocky – I don't normally think of lemon and chocolate mixing but this one works well. It's a better match than #3

JR also was a tad more adventurous than me and tasted them in reverse order where the whisky is sipped before the chocolate is nibbled and the only one that survived this exercise intact was the Ardbeg/lemon chocolate, where the lemon had sufficient presence to survive the Ardbeg. The others (in his words) were less successful.

Fellow Committee member and event organizer **Aaron Baxter** offered the following thoughts:

"The line up of whiskies was of exceptional quality. They provided a great variety of flavour profiles to match to the line up of Steven Ter Horst's Chocolates. I especially enjoyed the opportunity to try the Glenfarclas MWSOA 1980 24yo bottling for the first time. It is truly a superb whisky.

The chocolates were absolutely delicious. I'm not really a fan of the chocolate orange combination in general but Steven's chocolate orange was fantastic. With the spiced marzipan chocolate I once again came up against a flavour I'm not really fond of which is marzipan but I found that the spice and chocolate really tamed the marzipan flavour to a point that I could enjoy.

I found that the two best matches of the night were the Glenlivet 18 with the chocolate orange and the Ardbeg 10 with the lemon chocolate. Both chocolates really brought out the citrus characteristics of their respective whiskies. The Glenfarclas MWSOA bottling matched with the spiced marzipan chocolate was an interesting combination. Something fairly strong in flavour would be needed to go up against a whisky such as this but I think the spice probably cut through the whisky a little too much and perhaps hid some of the more interesting flavours in the whisky.

Laphroaig matched with a vanilla and coconut chocolate was quite good but the chocolate really needed to still be in the mouth when the whisky was sipped or the more subtle flavours wouldn't have time to mingle. I can't wait for the next chocolate and whisky matching!





# Feints and Foreshots

**Ian Schmidt** thought that both the whiskies and the chocolates were (in his words) bloody beautiful and he ranked that the matches

#1 The Laphroaig and coconut chocolate worked extremely well.

#2 The Ardbeg and lemon also had excellent synergy

#3 The Glenlivet and orange chocolate worked well together

#4 The Glenfarclas - I found no synergy of chocolate and whisky was present with the Glenfarclas. That whisky was just too good and overwhelmed the marzipan chocolate.

I'll leave the last report to new member **Dieter Wakelin** who offered the following thoughts: "Being a big fan of fudge with my whisky I was very intrigued to see what a chocolatier would choose to complement their whisky. Steven Ter Horst provided a very interesting insight into his thinking when choosing chocolates to go with whisky. The highlight of the evening for me was the pairing of the Glenlivet 18 and the orange chocolate. A close second for me was the pairing of Ardbeg 10 with a lemon flavoured chocolate. On the down side I got too caught up in the evening and failed to take tasting notes, so next time must remember to take notes! As this was my first outing with the MWSOA, I was not sure what to expect. However it was a great night with some spirited discussion about the combination of whisky and chocolate, which inevitably moved on to a discussion of our favourite whiskies alone. It was a great evening and I am looking forward to many more such evenings in the future."

As you can tell if you look at the rankings most of us agreed about #1 and #4, but feelings were more divided over #2 and #3, but that's life and this is very much a matter of personal taste.

Thanks to Steven for some inspired matches and to Aaron for organizing the night and doing the legwork. I thought the whole exercise a wonderful experience and I'd urge people to try the citrus inspired chocolates alongside different whiskies at home. Steven's advice to nibble the chocolate before you taste the whisky is well worth taking.

Steven's website is at <http://www.steventerhorst.com.au/>