

# FLEINTS & FORESHOTS

## It's October 27

Chairman Daniels announces election date after announcing the 2nd Convention "as the best ever"

After announcing that the 2nd Australian Whisky Convention was the best Australia has seen yet, Craig Daniel, Chair of the Malt Whisky Society of Australia, quietly announced to the press that there would be a spill of all positions at the MWSOA with elections to held in Adelaide on Thursday 27th October 2005.



Mr Daniels declined to comment on persistent rumours that he is stand aside from the chairmanship of the MWSOA in order to spend more time on promoting the MWSOA to members, the public and the spirit trade.

He did state that, "the success of this years Convention proves that finally, the Australian whisky market has finally come of age".

F&F also tried to approach current members of the Committee for comment, but Rasmussen, Parker & Rosenberg all declined to make a statement saying that it was too soon after the Convention.

### Ardbeg 10 Takes Trophy, Bowmore 17 Runner Up Bakery Hill best Aussie

After a very tense Trophy Round judging that took place in the picturesque Malt Shovel Brewery, Whisky Show Convener, Paul Rasmussen announced at the Convention's Gala Whisky Dinner that Ardbeg 10 year old was the trophy winning whisky for 2005 with the runner being the Bowmore 17 year old

But it didn't take long before F&F received news from the Island itself, "Dear Graham, we are absolutely chuffed to pieces with this great award Ardbeg 10 received at the Australian Malt Whisky Convention". *Jackie & all the crew*

And for new comer, Bakery Hill there was also the added surprise of being awarded the Maxxium Trophy for Best Australian Whisky to come out of the show.



Winner of the MWSOA's Trophy for best whisky all classes

## Lots of Convention pics inside...



**Australia's 3rd Malt Whisky Convention  
Where will it be? 2007**

# FEINTS & FORE- SHOTS 5

## Musings From The Chair

Well, fellow members another Convention has come and gone and the adrenaline has finally made it's way out of the system and the post Convention lethargy set in.



Just some numbers to start with - we had 66 at the Members and Sponsors' Australian Malt Whisky Showcase and James Squire Beer Tasting on Friday Night, we had 84 delegates at the Convention on Saturday and 122 attendees at the Gala Dinner on Saturday Night. There were 47 people from the trade and media at the Trade Show section of the Great Whisky Exposition and 121 people for the General Admission session which opened at 1.00pm.

The number of delegates (84 over 54) and the numbers at the Gala Dinner (122 over 79) both grew by 35% over the numbers for 2003.

My thanks go out to all those who attended but especially to those who didn't know us beforehand. It must have been a huge leap of faith, but boy am I glad you all took it.

The feedback from members attending has been uniformly and universally favourable. Everyone I've spoken to had a good time and most people were pleased that we hadn't lost the intimate feel of the Inaugural Convention in 2003. Some lamented the cracking pace and felt we should left a bit more time on the programme for socialising, mainly because the people that met each other for the first time had such interesting stories to tell. I must admit that I very much regretted not being able to spare the time to catch up with a lot of our stalwart supporters who attended Canberra 2003 so if I didn't catch up with you over the weekend please accept my apologies.

Thanks must also go to our "Star Turn" in Franz Scheurer the epicurean polymath behind Matching Whisky and Food. He did a great job and his morsel of smoked meat with sour dough bread served with Ardbeg 10 was stunning and inspired and I really liked the whisky cured ocean trout gravlax with the Orkney 14.

I must also acknowledge our other Plenary Speakers in David Baker, Mark Littler and Chuck Hahn. It was great to hear from the 'boutique' end of the industry

in that David's is very much a small (and impeccably run) operation with everything done in the distillery by him with the occasional hand by other family members roped in at bottling time. As a lot of the distillers in our audience are starting out along a path that will look very familiar to David, his thoughts and words of advice must have been very comforting to people like Keith Batt and Cameron Syme who are more or less beginning the same journey.

Mark Littler of Whisky Tasmania gave us the perspective from the opposite end of the scale as the operation he runs as a fully owned subsidiary of Betta-Milk in Burnie dwarves all the other malt distilling operations in Australia. Mark's operation is extremely large and very high tech and I'm sure it's going to be the envy of any and all whisky makers down under once they let the world know exactly what they're doing down there.

Chuck Hahn has been a big supporter ever since approached by Paul Rasmussen near the end of 2004. Besides being a malt fan, Chuck also agreed to lend us his brewery to run the Trophy Round.

Everyone loved the venue and the food - the lamb and rosemary pies met with universal acclaim. And Chuck's plenary on the Sunday morning was excellent - it was educational, informative and enjoyable which sort of encapsulates our Society's overall mission statement when all is said and done.

Given that we didn't exercise any significant editorial control over the Masterclasses, it was great that they really showcased the Scottish industry and we had a real spread of quality malts on display during the tutored tastings on Saturday. Thanks go to Ian McWilliam from Glenfarclas, Michael Urquhart from Gordon & MacPhail and Mark Watt from Duncan Taylor & Co. On the new initiatives' for 2005, I have to extend warm and generous thanks to Jim Kelly from Angove's and Ian McWilliam and John Grant from Glenfarclas for agreeing to provide us with a specially selected and badged "Convention Whisky" and as I've now had the opportunity to taste it on five separate occasions, it has continued to show a complexity and depth worthy of our first foray into putting our name behind a whisky.

Another big value add to the whole programme was the Whisky Auction run in conjunction with the Gala Dinner. This was a highlight with thanks due mainly to Marilyn Middleton of Oddbins Wine Auctions and Executive Committee member Graham Wright in his role as auctioneer.

Thanks must also go to the rest of the Executive Committee with special thanks to Amanda for picking up the website baton and Matthew for taking on the Secretary's role, albeit reluctantly and to Paul Rasmussen for the media liaison and for leading the Whisky Judging Competition team.

All in all, a big success and we're planning for 2007 to be even bigger and better.

**Cheers**  
**Craig Daniels**

## AUSTRALIA'S 2ND MALT WHISKY CONVENTION MALT

*Glenfarclas*

1980 CASK  
STRENGTH

*Glenfarclas 1980 by Craig Daniels 2005*

**Nose:** Initial dry sherry, dry brandy soaked fruit cake, roasted chestnuts, milk toffee, coffee & dark chocolate, cocoa powder, then amontillado sherry and more burnt toffee, dried autumn leaves and a hint of old leather.

Obvious, but restrained spirit, leather and a little wax, green capsicum and some nice dry herbal notes (menthol, mint, thyme). After a while there's even a little bit of peat smoke, woody phenols, tobacco leaf, more leather, cream and roasted nuts.

**Palate:** Medium dry sherry, more amontillado than oloroso, with sour fruit, stewed fruit and a back palate of sour plums and nutty (walnuts/hazelnuts), warming with pepper and citrus; a hint of orange peel.

**Finish:** Long, drying and quite creamy, leather & nuts reprise, creamy & nutty notes hang around. Long with drying sherry, leather and lots of sour nutty notes, a reprise of hazelnut and vanilla. Impressive length on the dry side.

**Overall comment:** Very interesting and robust malt with lots of interesting dry and leathery characters for a Glenfarclas. Drier and less obviously sherried than the usual output, but elegant and classy all the same. Score 88/100

*Now turn to back page  
for order form...*

**Notice of  
MWSOA AGM  
Day & Date :  
Thursday 27th  
October 2005  
Where: Kingston  
Room (upstairs)  
Duke of York  
Hotel,  
82 Currie Street,  
Adelaide  
When: 6.30pm  
Finger food  
provided!**

Feints & Foreshots...The vaguely official organ of the Malt Whisky Society of Australia, the editor is The Big G, contact: graham@theoddwhiskycoy.com.au, and all errors & omissions are expected. Apologies to all authors of the news articles...but we do love your work!

## Members Have Their Say!

### High Praise Indeed!

Dear Craig, Graham, and indeed the whole team....

Despite my best intentions, two very busy weeks have flown by, and I've not yet had the opportunity to sit down at the computer and send off some correspondence. Given that it's late on Friday night and I'm knackered, this won't be a long email :-

Anyway....I just wanted to say thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you, and thank you.

What an absolutely fantastic weekend! An inspired night on the Friday, great plenaries on the Saturday, absolutely SENSATIONAL masterclasses on the

Saturday, a great Gala Dinner, and - of course - the whisky Expo to end all expos. :-) It was just wonderful :)

My one big regret is that there was no formal concluding session or wind up gathering at the end. We, the delegates, were denied an opportunity to express our thanks and gratitude to you all for your amazing efforts, enthusiasm, sacrifices, and hard work. So please accept my thanks on behalf of, well, everyone :-)

Graham, you must forgive me for not spending any real time with you at your stand at the Expo. I guess I was pretty familiar with the Odd Whisky Coy, and I felt it a bit slack to come and raid your bottles at the expense of other patrons who needed to know about you. I recall reading somewhere that you had a new catalogue coming out soon. Any news yet?

Craig, please convey my thanks to Paul, Matthew, Amanda, and everyone else involved with the organising. Needless to say, I had a bloody terrific weekend,

remained amazingly sober for all of it (God bless spittoons), and I have some fond memories in my mind and on my tastebuds! I've also got a nasty Visa bill after racking up way too many bottling purchases! Still, all worth it, and I look forward to seeing the MWSOA go from strength to strength.

Cheers,  
Andrew

Graham:

Thanks for that. The Sydney convention was a credit to everyone who worked to put it together.  
Rod

Dear Graham,

Mate we loved it, it took a bit to get together at our end, but we got there. I think it gave a nice feel to the convention to have a solid stand, but with a welcoming presence from our team.

Slainte! Gilles Merry

Hey Graham,

It was an absolute pleasure being at the Australian Whisky convention over the weekend and I wanted to thank you personally for taking the time and explaining things that I had no idea about. I also want to thank you for the amazing experience and I hope that we get to work closer to achieve great goals within the Whisky market. How did the remainder of Sunday go?

I wanted to do a press release for Bowmore's runner up in the trophy round and wanted to get the trophy send here so that we can take a photo shoot and do some trade advertising. I also wanted to know the exact wording of the award so that I can get the activity started.

Thank you and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Fred Duarte

Suntory Australia  
Assistant Brand Manager  
P: +61 (02) 8345 7336  
fduarte@suntory.com.au

## FEINTS & FORE- SHOTS 5

Dear Graham,

I have arrived safe and well back to Glenfarclas and now busy catching up with some work.

Any way it was a very successful event for Glenfarclas and I must thank you and your colleagues for organising the Convention.

It was a pleasure to meet you and hopefully I will be back to visit you all again in the future.

If I can be of any further assistance please let me know.

Kind Regards

Ian A McWilliam  
Marketing Executive  
Glenfarclas Single Malt Whisky  
Tel: +44(0)1807 500257  
Fax: +44(0)1807 500234  
www.glenfarclas.co.uk



# FEINTS & FORE- SHOTS 5

## Venue

Sitting around a table in a cloistered environment at the pointy end of the Malt Shovel Brewery (thanks to the support of Dr Chuck Hahn and all the Malt Shovel crew) the trophy round judges might have considered themselves in the ideal environment to pass judgement on a quality line up of gold medal-winning whiskies, except for the fact that they were amidst a working brewery with spent grain being shovelled into a trailer and towed away. So what comfort we had from the furniture was more than counterbalanced by the odourous brewery hi-jinks wafting up from the floor below.

In terms of the judging I was thrilled, what better state for the judges to be in than provided everything in a comfortable environment that put them a little on edge. With an all pervasive beery scent everyone had to recalibrate for the background, a trick often used in professional and educational tastings, and one which in the case of whisky removes a preponderance to get trapped in the “malty”, “sweet”, or “cereal” byways of our tasting capabilities.

In my opinion the differences between the whiskies became more obvious in this “extreme tasting” environment and the more idiosyncratic characters were raised to the fore. So to all those who joined the subsequent welcome dinner, if the judges all looked at ease during the trophy round, it would be more than fair to say that they were not.

## Judges

For the first time the trophy round panel had a significant representation from high profile food and spirits writers, including: Franz Scheurer (Australian Gourmet Pages), Matthew Evans (SMH), Pat Nourse (Australian Gourmet Traveller), Amy Wild (Spanton Media) and Willy Simpson (SMH). These judges brought quite a diversity of opinion to the table and a demonstrated tasting ability that greatly enhanced the scope of the panel. Our two Convention delegates picked at random, Steven Harbour and Lorna Scott, greatly enjoyed the opportunity to participate and were zealous in their assessment of the whiskies.

Malt Shovel lent us Rob Freshwater who delivered the brewers’ viewpoint on the products with a warm smile and casual approach, he was most surprised by the variety of tastes across the



*Dr Paul, pleased with the tasting results*

## Australian Malt Whisky Awards 2005: *How was it this easy to pick a clear winner?* *With Paul Rasmussen*

twelve whiskies. The remainder of the panel was composed of whisky tragics (as anointed/self-anointed by Craig Daniels) including myself, Craig Daniels, Peter Johnson and Graham Wright. Many thanks to the judges who had little time for fights or fun as they worked their way through twelve whiskies (four cask strength and four Islays) in less than an hour.

## Supporters

Grateful thanks to all importers, distributors and producers of whisky product who chose to submit whiskies to the Competition, and without whom the Competition would not exist. Whilst there is a cost associated with providing these products gratis and this in many cases is significant, the actual undertaking to provide whiskies for independent evaluation at all should be applauded.

A sure way to avoid risk, like risking a bad review, is to do nothing at all and rely on tasting notes that someone wrote when they knew what was in the bottle, or that someone in the marketing department developed. I am very pleased that most well known whiskies sold in Australia can be subjected to a properly structured blind tasting that may benefit anyone seeking to purchase these products. In my view, the willingness to put something to the test reflects something of the egalitarian Australian character, and I am pleased to be hosting the process in this case.

Be aware that there is much more to the Competition than just a bunch of people sitting down to have a drink, much of which I did not handle directly. All the pouring (12 whiskies x 12 judges) was completed by the Ms Amanda Parker, whose steady hands are amazing (I am now convinced she could hold a grenade with one hand and diffuse it with the other). Amanda deserves much of the credit for the success of the 2005 competition, managing the organisational and logistic requirements of the tastings, when the competition had become too large for one person to manage alone.

The gentlemen behind the bar at Malt Shovel also provided us with friendly assistance to deal with several requirements throughout the trophy round tasting.

## Whiskies

What can I say about the whiskies that I have not already summarised personally in the last report? What I can say is that I am thrilled to be able to present a Trophy winning whisky that consumers can buy for under \$100, the rest I can leave to the consolidated tasting notes compiled from all judges for all 72 whiskies, and of course your personal preferences.

From the judges’ perspective, after completion of the Trophy round it

would be fair to say that there was not one whisky that was below par in the medal round. Each person had a favourite but the Ardbeg 10 was most consistently in the judges top three best whiskies on the table. In second place by some margin were the Bowmore 17, the Bakery Hill CS Peated, and the Laphroaig 10, which were tasted head-to-head for second place.

The best Australian produced whisky was the Bakery Hill CS Peated; although, the Tasmania Distillery French Oak Port CS was not far behind. I think it is a great tribute to the Australian distillers that they can produce such high quality products when the industry is only just re-emerging. In the fullness of time, with perhaps a co-ordinated effort to market internationally, the future for Australian whisky looks very bright. In the meantime I expect investment in barrels to be buoyed by these results.

## In Closing

The Australian Malt Whisky Awards 2003 had some longer term effects that I must admit surprised me. Whilst the results were not generally available in the mainstream media, feedback from whisky distributors indicated to me that the message must have got out to the buying public, since retail sales of the Trophy winner and runners-up increased significantly.

This was pleasing for two reasons: members of the MWSOA and whisky drinkers more broadly could purchase products on the basis of something more than the image associated with a label, or the interpretations of one individual who knew what was in the bottle; and suppliers of the product could directly benefit from the provision of a really great whisky to the public. I expect that the expansion of the Competition in 2005 will only increase the currency of competition results.

With the 2005 competition complete, we are also afforded the opportunity to reflect on how drinking trends may have altered since 2003; the rise of the young cask strength whiskies being the most obvious. So what next, are the palates in Europe already sick of the sweet spirituous whiskies and beginning to dry out, award winning products like the Macallan Fine Oak 18 would tend to suggest so, or are the drier styles just a bid to corner the Asian market? I hope the Competition will remain as a proxy “focus group” to peg these trends as whisky styles and products change.

So how was it this easy to pick a clear winner? It was only easy on the basis of everything that happened before the whiskies and judges hit the table 6 pm August 19 2005.

Dr. J. Paul Rasmussen.

**Full competition list will appear at [www.mwsoa.org.au](http://www.mwsoa.org.au) soon!**

# The Back Page

## *FEINTS & FORE- SHOTS 5*



That's right, you've found the weird ones. Most of them from the strangest place of all...history!

### **1. GRAB A NIPPLE**

Smudge tells us "a friend of mine said that drinking his wife's breast milk cured his hangovers when their baby was born. He tried cow milk after she stopped lactating, but said it didn't work like a woman's breastmilk. Creepy, eh?"

### **2. BURNT TOAST**

"I've never tried it, but I heard eating burnt toast will cure you hang over. Even if it doesn't, the terrible taste will take your mind off it for a while."

There you have it, set yer toasters to 11.

### **3. SALT LICK CITY**

John Darce says, "My cultural anthropologist teacher said that some American Indian tribes used to run until they broke out in a sweat. They would then lick their sweat and spit it out, to get their body rid of the poison." But our friend Bob says, "the American Indians weren't introduced to alcohol until Europeans brought the stuff over." We'll be looking into this one, stay tuned.

### **4. EELY GOOD**

Soakers in the middle ages would down a plate of bitter almonds and dried eel. Pleasing to the palette? Perhaps not. But nutritious enough that it might just work.

### **5. YOODOO VOODOO**

Those spun out Haitian voodoo people recommend sticking thirteen black pins in the cork of the offending bottle. Worth a try. Harder with twist tops.

### **6. EL LEMON**

In Puerto Rico, the local alcos cure hangovers by rubbing half a lemon under their "drinking arm." Not recommended after shaving, ladies. Although Guy Nicholls, from Wiltshire in England reckons it's the way you rub the lemon. Clockwise in the Northern Hemisphere, anticlockwise in the South.

### **7. GET A SOOT FETISH**

In 19th Century England, chimneysweeps swore by the healing properties of a long, warm, soot milkshake. Yum, yum, yum.

### **8. WILD WEST HARE DOO**

Apparently, in the Wild Wild West, whisky-swilling cowboys swore by a stiff cup of rabbit-poo tea. As if that morning breath wasn't bad enough already.

### **9. ASSYRIAN PASTE**

Josh Handest, from North Carolina USA, says that in South Africa you eat Assyrian Paste, "It is apparently made with 1 teaspoon of ground swallow's beak and a teaspoon of myrrh mixed together. (Oh yeah, let me just grab that out of the fridge!). They recommend eating it as quickly as possible and washing it down with a glass of water."

### **10. SHEEP BALLS**

In Outer Mongolia, drunks are said to slurp down a pickled sheep's eye in tomato juice. No wonder they're so bad tempered.

*Bought to you by...*



# AUSTRALIA'S 2ND MALT WHISKY CONVENTION CONVENTION WHISKY ORDER FORM



## 1980 CASK STRENGTH

DISTILLED 01.04.80, BOTTLED 31.01.05, CASK # 3164  
TOTAL NUMBER OF BOTTLES 605  
ABV 48.7%

Specially selected by John Grant and bottled exclusively for The Malt Whisky  
Society of Australia to celebrate the

**SECOND NATIONAL MALT WHISKY CONVENTION**  
**20<sup>TH</sup> – 21<sup>ST</sup> AUGUST 2005**

Number of Bottles	Delegates Price A\$175.00	Total \$ *
	\$	+\$15 p&p = \$

Method of Payment    Visa     Bankcard     MasterCard     Cash     Cheque

Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry Date...../.....    Card No.    . . . . .

All payments to be made direct to

Angoves Pty Ltd                      Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make cheques payable to Angoves Pty Ltd**

For Delivery within Australia \*

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
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**\* Please add \$15.00 per bottle for packing and certified post**  
**NB : Product available until 28 September 2005 or whilst stocks last**



**When completed post form to:**  
**"Convention Whisky" c/- Angoves Pty Ltd,**  
**P.O. Box 400 Hampton Park VIC 3976**



**OR Fax 03 9768 3973 or via e-mail to jim.kelly@angoves.com.au**

