



## *We say goodbye !*

### Inside this issue:

<i>Look at Varietals</i>	2
<i>Graham Beck and Prince Harry!</i>	2
<i>Spotlight on.....</i>	2
<i>Staying top of technology</i>	3
<i>Why? .....</i>	3
<i>Typical Day</i>	3
<i>Back Page</i>	4

### Special points of interest:

- Bubbly grapes coming to a final halt after starting 18 January.
- Spirit of Robertson's Harvest team remains on a high!
- Valentine's Day celebrated at the cellar.
- First Chardonnay in this week for Water-side and other still wine direction.

It has been a fierce month of harvest preparation and the hard work of hand –picking the whole bunches of chardonnay and Pinot Noir for all of our Cap Classique's . During this time we were honoured having Michael (Mickha) Rodez with us. He is from a grower Champagne house from the village of Ambonnay in Champagne. Their house is a family-run business comprising a 6.5 ha-large vineyard, all of which in Ambonnay.

As planting the Pinot Meunier is not allowed when you want to obtain a Grand Cru Wine classification, our plantations are composed of 55% Pinot Noir and of 45% Chardonnay. Michael says: *"We have been working in a traditional way,*

*nevertheless adding an ecological touch, though we don't like this word. In fact, we speak of "integration" more than of "ecology" as we tend to limit our use of chemicals.*

*Indeed, why should we treat our vineyard against a parasite while it has not been present yet or is not mature enough to be treated? "*

As mentioned before this is where our own Pierre harvested in 2012. It is great to build relationship such as this.

Here you can see Mickha spraying their vineyards at home and in our cellar tasting one of their Champagnes. 100% Pinot Noir Grand Cru from Ambonnay matured in small barrels for 9 months. Merci mon ami - bon voyage! S'il vous plaît nous rendre visite à nouveau!



## *Update on Harvest 2013*

This week sees the end on our Cap Classique harvest - It is one we will remember... For many reasons, but it has been a late one and a short one, actually one of the shortest in many years at Graham Beck Wines. Grapes from Robertson, Stellenbosch, Elgin and

Darling decided this year to all be ready pretty much at the same time...Basically, we picked and pressed non stop for 15 days but thanks to our great organizational skills and logistics, everything went nice and smooth. I realize once again, it is all about the

TEAM! Total of 905 Tons of Chardonnay and 835 Tons of Pinot Noir all destined for our bubbly portfolio, yes , all whole bunch. With the base wines completing fermentation is starts to show what the vintage brings!

## *Look at Varietals: CHARDONNAY*



Pronounced: “Shar-don-nay” It is a green-skinned grape variety used to make white wine. It originated in the Burgundy wine region in France but is now grown wherever wine is produced, from England to New Zealand. For new and developing wine regions, growing Chardonnay is seen as a “rite of passage” and an easy entry into the international wine market. The Chardonnay grape itself is very neutral, with many of

the flavours commonly associated with the grape being derived from such influences as terroir and oak. It is vinified in many different styles, from the lean, crisply mineral wines of Chablis, France to New World styles with oak, and tropical fruit flavours.

Chardonnay is an important component of many sparkling wines around the world,

like Cap Classique and including Champagne. A peak in popularity in the late 1980s but slowly but surely coming back.

From ABC (anything but Chardonnay) to CBA (Chardonnay back again) Nonetheless, it remains one of the most widely-planted grape varieties in the world, with well over 160,000 hectares worldwide, second only to Airen among white wine grapes.

## *Graham Beck Wines to be served at Prince Harry’s Sentebale Gala Dinner*

The Mamohato Centre – named after Prince Seeiso’s mother, Queen ‘Mamohato Bereng Seeiso – will be built on the sacred land of Thaba-Bosiu in Lesotho, known to many as the birthplace of the nation.

We are honoured to be the official Cap Classique sponsor for the Sentebale Gala Dinner, taking place on the 27th of February in Johannesburg.

Sentebale was set up in 2006 by Prince Harry from the British royal family and Prince Seeiso of Lesotho. The charity was founded in memory of the two princes’ late mothers, and helps the most vulnerable children in Lesotho who are affected by HIV/AIDS.

Prince Harry will spend the morning of the 27th in the Maseru district of Lesotho visiting two of Sentebale’s community-based partners which care for children with disabilities and those whom are orphaned. In the evening, the Sentebale Gala Dinner, kindly supported by Investec Asset Management will take place at Summer Place in Johannesburg, to mark the launch of

Sentebale’s major capital fundraising programme to build the first permanent Mamohato Centre for children and young people.

Sentebale is hugely grateful to Investec Asset Management for supporting our event along with the following sponsors: Avios, Graham Beck Wines, Jordan Wine Estate, Legacy Hotels, Summer Place, Vicky Crease.

## *Spotlight on: Benna Smal*



Benna joined Graham Beck Wines in 1997. Benna lives in McGregor and is married with three wonderful girls. He started as a general cellar hand in the days and through the years he has become our Cellar Foreman.

During the years at Graham Beck Benna has attended

many courses including the Cape Wine Academy Certificate Course and lately completing the Junior Leadership and Management module which is equal to NQF level 4. We are extremely proud of this achievement up to date.

The things that bothers Benna: “When you stand and wait for

grapes or something next to happen frustrates me!” What makes Benna happy: “When there is no grapes outside that need to process brings a smile to my face!”

Benna’s hobbies include watching sport on TV (go Stormers) and outings to the seaside with his family.

## *Staying on Top of Technology*

This year we were part of a trial to test new German technology against the whole bunch principle for base wine destined to Cap Classique.

The Hiller Decanter spent 3 weeks at Graham Beck Wines and we trailed and tested it on Chardonnay and Pinot Noir grapes. The DecaFood system achieves high yields without enzyme treatment or with skin contact/enzymation. Shorter or no mash rest times avert undesirable microbiological activity chemical

changes in the must as well as raised phenol levels. For this reason, musts have a sensory, olfactory and analytical quality that far exceeds that of conventionally produced musts. The system can produce musts that even meet champagne quality requirements. The optimised, compact design combined with the control system permits rapid variety changeovers with simultaneous adjustment of all production-related parameters to meet the requirements of the

new variety, including an adjustable yield. Very interesting results and analysis points out it will work great for still wines BUT nothing beats whole bunch pressing for Cap Classique.



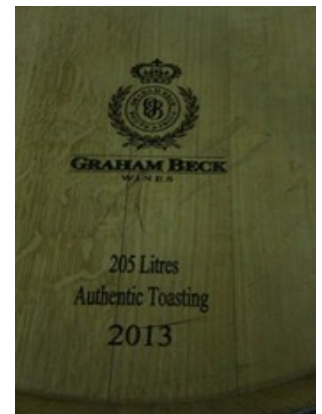
## *Why? Piece Champenoise barrels in bubbly*

Barrel fermentation is important and helps to develop relatively smaller bubbles and adds texture. Time spent in barrel is really only for the fermentation and totals a period of 10 to 12 weeks. Once settled on the less the base Chardonnay will be racked from barrel and will be in Stainless steel tank as an identity for blending.

Over time and during the secondary fermentation in the very own bottle that goes to market, these captured flavours will integrate with the yeasty deposit and develop beautiful creamy texture.

Ultimately the signature of the Graham Beck Blanc de Blancs There are two options for the use of barrels: During ferment-

tation or then maturing base wine or even reserve wine in barrel for a certain period. At Graham Beck we ferment in the Piece Champenoise barrels – so as not to add just matured wine flavours but to bring the brightness of Chardonnay through the fermentation in barrel. Again to respect our house style.



## *A typical harvest day..... when it's a 'little' bit busy!*

When one reflects on serious busy day during harvest it is quiet difficult to 'consume' what all happens in one day.

Let us take our all time busiest day of February for example: We received 183 tons of Pinot Noir. This was not only Madeba Farm grapes but also from two outside producers.

Imagine the logistics involved and that all parcels needed to be kept separately.

This meant that we handled 488 fruit bins on the day - in a straight line these bins will stand for 585 meters, yes, over a half-a-kilometer long. This equates to 28 individual presses on the day (luckily we

have 5 presses) so that took total of 19 hours to complete.

Then we had to settle the juice for approximately 120 000 liters.

Yes, all in a days work just over 13 000 cases of bubbly was made on this hectic day.. A mere 160 000 bottles.





## Graham Beck Harvest 2013 News V

*Should you wish to contribute to this newsletter please forward or send me any interesting story or information you might think we can add to the next one. There is so many wonderful untold stories.....*

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[www.grahambeckwines.com](http://www.grahambeckwines.com)

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**Nothing less .. “and still in search of the perfect bubble”**



**Nothing less** than our utmost best.

That is what drives us at Graham Beck Wines. Our founder, Graham Beck, laid the foundations for this unwavering commitment towards excellence.

His unmitigated passion, visionary approach and meticulous attention to detail continue to inspire us to raise the bar when it comes to delivering the utmost in quality and consistency.

It is this sense of purpose and clarity of intention which guides us in all aspects of our business, reaffirming Graham Beck Wines' status as a world class wine destination.

In consistently building on our reputation as producers of the finest wines, an award-winning supporter of biodiversity as well as a champion of the development of our farming communities, we constantly strive to uphold his legacy.

We are consummate caretakers – of our wines, people, environment, customers and consumers.

**Nothing less will do.**

## *Cuvee Clive and Bond, James Bond!*



It's a line that's almost as famous as the character himself; the famous dry martini, “shaken, not stirred”, served in a champagne goblet to the legendary Bond. James Bond. Agent 007: whose dramatic evolution in his latest adventure,

*Carte Blanche*, sees him supplant his famed martini with Cuvee Clive, the top shelf bubbly from Graham Beck Wines, in the closing scenes of the book. It's not as though the about-face is completely counter to character. Bond has, after all, always favoured the sexier

things; his choice of car, now a Bentley, matching his choice of – other things; and in his choice of drinks at least, he's in good company.

*Carte Blanche* author Jeffrey Deaver chose to go straight for the top of the range, including Cuvee Clive as the bubbly of choice for the “rebooted” Bond – now in his late twenties, and a veteran of war in Afghanistan. Some staunch Bond fans may miss the nuances behind the Cuvee Clive - the impli-

cations of the five years the wine spent fermenting in bottle, its elegant, delicate flavour and mousse, the years spent perfecting the wine – though the name Graham Beck may ring a bell for its following.

Undoubtedly best known for its quality sparkling wines, Graham Beck's still range is amassing awards at a rate of knots, bringing to bear the vision of Graham Joshua Beck as he stood some 20 years ago on Robertson estate.