

# CHARLES MELTON

Newsletter Autumn 2018



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## Autumn 2018

Hi Folks,

The magpies have quietened, having raised their brood... They've stopped being the morning alarm clock and the carollers of evensong over the autumn coloured vineyards... Post harvest calmness is in the air...Relax...

My dear mother always said "Self praise is no recommendation". This always springs to mind as I sit down to extol the virtues of a new release. I have seen someone describe one of their own wines as the greatest wine made in Australia. Really? I am certain they were misquoted, as I know them as a person of humility and passion. Self-belief is a very positive thing in life but critiques are best left to others. What is best? I admit to still being at odds with the wine show culture. It seems such a judgemental procedure on something as unique and personal as wine. Proclaiming one only wine as 'the best' in a line-up of 200 or more wines seems to leave out almost all of that which makes wine such an enjoyable beverage... the history of the district, the commitment of the team involved in making it, the story of the founding family amongst many influences. Does 18.5 points increase the value of these things over a 17.5 point wine? Dunno!... but I do know it is not the *raison d'être* behind what we do.

A long preamble, I know, to get to the new release of Rose of Virginia, and given my earlier sentiment I am mindful of not gushing too much. If you enjoyed the 2017 then you will find the 2018 a perfect follow-on. Also in this newsletter is the next release in the Domaine Sophie Claire range. In 2017 the (generally most welcome!!) moisture allowed some botrytis infection in the tiny block that makes the Riesling and Sophie ended up with a delicious sweet wine in the true Spatlese style. As you can imagine by the time we picked the botrytis infected fruit there wasn't a lot of juice left so the total production was 50 dozen and then we take out museum stock!

By the time you receive this newsletter we will be well into our Mailbox Members Masterclass Tasting Series, with only Perth and Adelaide left. The ones we have completed have been a great success due both to having an interesting and occasionally secretive line-up of wines to look at and of course the great bunch of people who attend the tasting, and the very relaxed lunch afterwards. And finally the 10 year museum release wines are available now.

The 2008's are deeply rich wines and will be superb at the dinner table now but still have a decade or two left in them. A short decant of maybe 15 minutes will be good but mostly to separate the crust that they have thrown.

PS If you want a magnum of Popes, Voices or Grains, we are down to single digit numbers left of each.

The dinner information for the second half of the year will be out in a timely manner to enable you to save the date for a great night and some fine wine.

We hope to see or hear from you sometime this year. Ein prosit!

*Charlie, Virginia & team*



## New Releases



### 2018 Rose of Virginia

Pitch perfect colour. Bright cerise? Undoubtedly distinctly Rose of Virginia hue. Vibrant and youthful. The nose this year has a lovely mix of musk, quite apparent, and a balancing herb note. Cameron, whom some of you may have met in cellar door, says fig, and I get what he means. The palate has just the right balance of weight, texture, zip and tannin. A lovely drink. So far we've had it with zucchini flowers, some creamy cheeses and some superb Thai dishes. And the other unique feature of the 2018; it is 100% estate grown and made. So it is 100% Charles Melton from the dirt up.

### 2017 Sweet Little Thing

Delicate pale lime green colour. Lovely rich fruity marmalade nose with orange peel & hints of lemon zest. Some botrytis character evident, but not overpowering. Slightly reminiscent of some German styles. Luscious sweet entry into the mouth, baked apples & toffee, crème brulee perhaps. Rich & unctuous. Served chilled but not icy cold.



### 2008 Nine Popes

Deepish colour, red now, rather than it's youthful crimson/purple but not brown. The initial impact upon first smell is not fruit but definitely sweetness. Fruit derived recognisably but now a cedar/smoky sweetness. Mocha coffee perhaps? The palate has a creamy density as you would expect from the vintage conditions in 2008. Tongue coating richness balanced by now softening tannins. Still very much in shape for another twenty years, no hint of degradation or fraying. A big rich mouthful of wine but not overly alcoholic or cloying.

### 2008 Voices of Angels

Some of you may have heard of Will Nairn of Peel Estate in the West. One of the industry's gentleman. Will, has for some decades been organising the Shiraz equivalent of The Cape Mentelle Cabernet tasting and the Cullen Chardonnay tasting, where twenty examples from around the country and the world are tasted totally blind. Some forty or fifty souls, a mix of industry and consumers get a look at a fascinating selection. The key thing is the wines are all looked at at six years old.

I was honoured in 2014 to be the guest speaker and of course the vintage was 2008. Included in the line up were all the heavyweights, Grange, Hill of Grace, Guigal etc. A consensus vote is taken post tasting (and before a glorious lunch) and the 2008 Voices of Angels was in the top trio of most favoured wines. As you do in these sorts of tastings you tend to not try and pick your wine but rather look at the ones you least prefer and hope that yours isn't one of them!! I had the Voices down on my notes as one of the best balanced and most appealing aromatically of the group. Phew!!

4 years down the track nothing has changed. The 2008 Voices is a bright cedar sweet wine that is nether light or heavy. It yet again shows the traits of the unique vineyard site in giving you a complex mouthful of wine, but now adding some real interest to the bouquet.



### 2008 Grains of Paradise

A sweeter wine across the board. Less subtle than the Voices? Perhaps, but more traditionally rich in the classic Barossa style. Especially on the palate where the combination of sweet Barossa Shiraz and spicy earth flavours combine. Still fresh a decade down the track, and with sweet licorice and spice flavours following right through to the finish.



**2016**  
**Pretty Little Thing Eden Valley**  
**Adelaide Hills Riesling**

An interesting regional blend, perfectly sensible, but why so uncommon? Garbed in a floral pink label, it sends the message this wine isn't for real, just for fun. It's crisp, crunchy, fresh and distinctly minerally. 'Leave me alone' is its inward cry. 11.8% alc.

**RRP \$25 / 2029 / Charles Melton ★★★★★**  
**charlesmeltonwines.com.au**

HALLIDAY 2016  
94  
POINTS  
WINE COMPANION



**DOMAINE SOPHIE CLAIRE**  
**Sweet Little Thing**  
**Adelaide Hills**  
**Riesling 2017**

A friendly and enticing medium sweet riesling of baked apple, lemon and spice. It's well crafted, with a very clean precision and a delightful balance between medium sweetness, juicy fruit sweetness and lovely fine acid balance. 11.5%

**91** \$29.00

**CHARLES MELTON**  
**Voice of Angels**  
**Shiraz 2015**

A cool site on the boundary of Eden Valley and Adelaide Hills creates a bright shiraz of tangy acidity and bright dark berry fruits, with firm, grainy tannin structure supported by dark chocolate oak and acid poise that promises potential in the cellar.

**92** \$76.00

## Annual Dinners

Our annual dinner series will commence in Canberra with the other cities following...

- |           |                          |
|-----------|--------------------------|
| Canberra  | Thursday 12th September  |
| Brisbane  | Wednesday 26th September |
| Sydney    | Wednesday 10th October   |
| Melbourne | Wednesday 24th October   |
| Adelaide  | Wednesday 30th October   |
| Perth     | Thursday 8th November    |

We are currently organising some exciting high end venues and as soon as we have each one organised, we will let everyone know.

## Verandah Dining

*Just a note to let everyone know the Verandah Dining space will be closed for its winter recess from the 1st June. We will reopen on Saturday the 1st September.*