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R A C A N E W S

MAY 2020



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER ROYAL AUTOMOBILE CLUB OF AUSTRALIA



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

The Board and Management hope that this message finds you all well and managing as we all traverse the difficulties created by COVID-19.

ANZAC DAY

Anzac Day is an important day in the lives of us all, a day when the Club traditionally provides a safe place for veterans to meet after their annual March to share memories and friendships. This year was different but no less important than any other year.

It is especially important to our Imperial Services Club and Defence members, and all of us, as we stop to honour and remember the many Australians, ex-servicemen and women, who suffered much and lost their lives to provide us all with the freedom and standard of living that we all enjoy today, commencing on 25 April 1915 when the Anzacs set out to capture the Gallipoli peninsula in order to open the Dardanelles to the allied navies. Lest we forget.

OUR CLUB

Since our last communication, as Government directives and initiatives have become clearer, management have worked efficiently and expeditiously to obtain the benefit of all rebates and deferrals which have become available, including payroll tax relief, insurance premiums rebates and other general expenses reductions.

The Club has also applied for JobKeeper payments to assist its loyal and dedicated employees, after having taken reasonable measures to mitigate the harsh financial impact on all Clubs and businesses of the necessary isolation of members and shutdown of most services. Those payments will ensure an income for our employees for the month of April and thereafter for the relief period approved by the Federal Government.

Management have retained sufficient resources to ensure that the Club premises are secured, maintained and cleaned and end of year financial statements are completed in a timely manner, and the Club is well positioned to open as soon as circumstances permit. Subject to contractor resources being available, the Club will attempt to bring forward any repairs, maintenance and other remediation activities that close the Club for a short time during January in each year.

The net result of management initiatives is that any deficit for this trading year has been materially improved from the earlier forecast of \$700,000 in the March letter to members and should come in around \$400,000 before depreciation.

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CONTINUED MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT

Clubs NSW have today advised that unless Clubs can progressively commence to provide services to their members in the short term that up to 40% of Clubs and RSLs in NSW may close their doors permanently, a very unfortunate loss of facilities enjoyed by many in our community across the State. We are fortunate that the Club is not only in a financial position to survive COVID-19 but also retain a strong balance sheet after resumption of business, albeit slightly weakened by the unforeseen revenue losses.

Given the circumstances, the Board has resolved:

- to roll over any current unused minimum spend of members into the FY 2021;
- subscriptions and minimum spend for FY 2021 will be separated into two instalments;
- the first instalment for subscriptions for FY2021, at the FY2020 rate, will be sent out in May 2020, without any minimum spend; and
- to send out minimum spend (either the full \$500 or pro rata amount depending on opening date) and pass on any increase in subscriptions, if required, when the club resumes normal business and management and the Board properly access the financial position post COVID-19.

This compromise will provide the necessary cash reserves for the Club to continue to operate without overdraft for extended periods, and defer any call on members for funds which cannot immediately be applied by members to enjoy the facilities of the Club.

We thank all members for their messages of support and understanding and continuing patience, which have been greatly appreciated by the Board and management who look forward to welcoming you all back to the Club as soon as practically possible. In the meantime stay safe, happy and well.

Best regards,

Michael Callanan
President
Royal Automobile Club of Australia
Incorporating the Imperial Service Club Limited

SIR STIRLING MOSS

17 September 1929
- 12 April 2020

You may have noticed, as you soaked up the atmosphere in the Members Bar, a signed photograph of Sir Stirling Moss which was generously donated by our esteemed member Mr Alan Hunt. The photograph was taken at the Warwick Farm track in 1963 and the other person in the photograph is Graham Hill.



Stirling Moss and Graham Hill in the Clerk of the Course's SP250 at Warwick Farm Circuit, Australia February 1963

Sir Stirling's passion was cars and he was universally respected by motoring enthusiasts. Among his many accomplishments he was appointed OBE in the 1959 new year's honours list, and named BBC sports personality of the year in 1961, he was knighted in 2000.

Sir Stirling leaves a legacy not easily forgotten. Known as "Mr Motoring Racing" he was one of the sports earliest celebrities and often labelled as one of the best motor car racers.

Vale and Rest in Peace Sir Stirling Moss.



MOTORING

The Motoring Group will be holding a Fluid Friday style meeting online over the next few months until the lockdowns ease. If any member is interested in receiving an invite, please notify Stephen Wells at motoring@raca.com.au

For any further information please contact Stephen Wells via motoring@raca.com.au or <https://www.facebook.com/RACAMEG>



CORKS 'N' FORKS

Dear Members – I trust you're all well.

As I tucked into my fabulous RACA takeaway angus beef pie the other night, I was thinking about our Corks 'n' Forks trips away over the last few years, the 'characters' we've met, and some of the great wines they made. Many of their wines somehow made their way into Corks 'n' Forkers' cellars, and I've been drinking some of mine during lockdown.

So what I thought I'd do this month is reflect on some of the unique and more popular wineries we visited. There's been many, however I decided to concentrate on some small family owned wineries whose wines are different, not expensive and provide great value.

Barossa Valley 2015

This was our first trip away, 2 of the standouts being Tscharke Wines and Cirillo Wines. The Tscharke family was one of the Barossa's original Lutheran settlers, and 6th generation Damien Tscharke is the current winemaker. I opened a bottle of his 2012 Montepulciano the other night.

Another recent lockdown opening in the Jones household was a 2007 'Ancestor 1850 Vine' Grenache made by Marco Cirillo at his small winery in Light Pass. Marco's father bought the vineyard after WW2, unaware at the time that it contained the oldest surviving and still producing Grenache and Semillon parcels in the world.

Rutherglen – 2016

My pick from a top field of wineries was Chambers Rosewood, owned and operated by the Chambers family in the same spot since 1858. It's like a vinous Aladdin's cave. I've never seen so many different bottles on a tasting bench before or since. Their Rosewood Rare Muscat with viscosity akin to sump oil is a Corks 'n' Forks treasure.

Yarra Valley/Mornington Peninsula – 2017

Who'll ever forget Syd Bradford from his 'Thick as Thieves' winery in Healesville? We arrived there at 10am and left early in the afternoon. He's a one man band who produces excellent interesting wines, many of which Corks 'n' Forkers acquired after a long tasting accompanied by some very good cheese and Elvis Presley. I opened a bottle of his 2015 Nebbiolo as part of my lockdown strategy.

Clare Valley – 2018

My pick again from a top field is Mitchell Wines, owned and operated by the Mitchell family at Sevenhill. It's the only place I know where one of the current release wines is from the 2010 vintage - the 2010 'McNicol' Riesling – a wonderful isolation wine.

Orange Wombats - 2017

'Orange Wombats' was the theme for one of Corks 'n' Forks tastings in 2017, so called because we tasted and compared wines from the 'Angullong' winery in Orange and the 'Wombat Crossing' vineyard in the Hunter Valley. Angullong is owned by Ben Crossing and Wombat Crossing by Ian Napier, both members of the Club. I have both of their Chardonnays in my lockdown selection.

Let's all hope the Club can reopen soon so that Corks 'n' Forks can resume its vinous activities.

Committee member details are:

Avril Fortuin - avituin1@gmail.com, Brent Halligan - info@legalmigrationservices.com,

Roger Butler - LAW@colebutler.com.au, and myself – mogigi.grj@bigpond.com

WINE OF THE MONTH SUPPLIED BY OATLEY'S FINE WINE MERCHANTS



ARGENTO CLASSIC PINOT GRIGIO 2019

This refreshing Pinot Grigio offers delicate floral aromas and is light and clean to taste. White stone fruit flavours are complemented by mineral and slate notes typical of fruit from high altitude, cool climate vineyards. The wine finishes with bright, crisp acidity.



ARGENTO CLASSIC MALBEC 2018

This superb Malbec is deep dark violet in colour and offers powerful aromas of blackstone fruit and notes of chocolate. Blackberry and black currant fruit flavours with a touch of sweet spice lead into a long lingering finish with ripe velvety tannins.



WILDFLOWER SAUVIGNON BLANC 2019

Just like the region's flora, this wine is distinctively Western Australian - complex flavours and a gentle refreshing acidity from the cooling ocean breezes, mild summers and reliable springs of Margaret River. Juicy and vibrant in flavour yet pale in colour, this wine displays fresh herbal notes and citrus fruits.



WILDFLOWER SHIRAZ 2018

Just like the region's flora, this wine is distinctively Western Australian - sourced from Margaret River and Frankland River this Shiraz is flavourful and vibrant displaying characters of wild cherries and delicious plums, with lingering, refined silky tannins.



LADIES COMMITTEE

On behalf of the Ladies Committee, we want all our RACA Family to know that we are thinking of them all through these unprecedented times.

We miss coming into the Club and seeing each other at our Luncheons and we look forward to the day when the Club re-opens and we can see everyone again.

We are sending out love and support to all our fellow members, the Board and the Staff through these difficult times.

Please stay safe, happy and healthy and we look forward to seeing you all again soon.

Yours sincerely,
Mrs. Margaret Dawes-Smith OAM
President of the Ladies Committee.

THE BOARD & CEO WELCOME THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS

Mr Matthew Van der Saag
Mr Patrick Massarani
Mr Christopher Beasley
Mr Ken Jacobs
Mrs Louise Jacobs

Mr Mark Feeney
Mr Graham Chegwidan
Mr Michael Coombs
Mr Sean Callahan
Mr David Jones