



## **Minutes of Annual General Meeting of Hawke's Bay Winegrowers' Association Inc.**

**Date:** Tuesday 15 October 2024  
**Time:** 5.30pm  
**Venue:** Hastings Community Arts Centre, 106 Russell Street, Hastings

---

### **Present:**

Sally Duncan Chair, Nick Putt (Craggy Range), Nick & Lisa Buck (Te Mata Estate), Emma Taylor (Springhill Horticulture), Nick Picone (Poulter Family Wine / Sacred Hill), Ollie Powrie (Chateau Garage), Karen Fistonich (Fistonich Family Vineyards), Michelle Richards (Fistonich Family Vineyards), Alwyn Corban (AC Wine), Hugh Crichton (Elephant Hill), Ian and Linda Quinn (TwoTerraces Vineyard), Richard Brown (Tironui), Tony Bish (Bish Wines Ltd), Grant Edmonds (Redmetal Vineyards), MJ Loza (Smith & Sheth), Craig Wilson (Hikumutu), Cairn Coghill (Alchemny Wines), Vince Labat (Te Mata Estate), Emma Lowe (Monowai Estate), Brent Linn (Wairiki Wines), Bridget Wilton (Greatvine Services Ltd), Peter Hurlstone (Pernod Riccard), Ryan Fraser (Paritua), Wim Barendsen (Otawahao Farms), Simon Fell (Trinity Hill Wines), Sue Cranswick, Ali Sundstrum (FFV), Fabian Yukich (NZWG), Carolien Calleweir (Links Winery), Jakub Leuthon (Villa Maria), John & Wendy Buck (Te Mata), Paul King (Terra Cat), Sarah White (HBWG), Fiona Rollings (HBWG)

### **Apologies:**

Amy Hopkinson-Styles (HBWG and Halycon Wines), David Peabody (HBWG and Craggy Range), Mike Henley MW, Oliver Kettle (Paritua), Kate Radburnd (Radburnd Cellars), Steve Smith MW, David Field (Indevin), Peter Holley (Mission Estate), Paul and Beatrix Ham (Alpha Domus), John Loughlin (Askerne Estate Winery Limited)

Sally Duncan, Chair, welcomed everyone, thanked them for attending and thanked both Jade Baker of the Hastings Community Arts Centre and Richard Brimer for hosting the meeting.

### **1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS AGM**

#### **Resolved:**

That the minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 10 October 2023 are a true and correct record.

*Emma Lowe / Bridget Wilton*

### **2. CHAIR REPORT**

Sally Duncan read the 2024 Chair Report:

It is my privilege to present the 2024 Chair's Report on behalf of Hawke's Bay Winegrowers.

This past year has been pivotal with our recognition as a Great Wine Capital, a prestigious accolade that has significantly enhanced our global presence.

GWC status elevates our standing on the international stage and opens doors to exciting opportunities, attracting wine professionals and enthusiasts from around the world.

One of the key advantages of this exclusive membership is the access it provides to a wealth of networks and collaborations with other Great Wine Capitals. This year, we proudly sent Sara Macdonald, Gavin Dalton and Ryan Fraser to Adelaide for knowledge exchange programs. The insights they have brought back are invaluable in strengthening our industry and I encourage everyone to explore their detailed reports.

Additionally, our wines have been prominently featured at the renowned Cité du Vin in Bordeaux further solidifying our reputation as world-class wine producers.

Last year David Peabody Jr. represented us at the Great Wine Capitals Annual General Meeting in Switzerland. This year Toby Buck, who is based in Europe, from Te Mata Estate, is representing us in Verona. These exchanges are invaluable, fostering connections that will continue to drive the growth and success of our region. We eagerly anticipate Toby's insights upon his return.

On the marketing and events front, we've achieved several notable milestones. Taste Hastings won an award at the annual New Zealand Event Awards and our continued support for the Young Winemaker and Young Viticulturist competitions nurtures the future leaders of our industry. The Hawke's Bay Charity Wine Auction also set a record, raising over \$300,000 for Cranford Hospice — our most successful auction to date! Additionally, we hosted the cellar door collective strengthening our regional collaboration.

Our region shone brightly at the inaugural Harvest Hawke's Bay Wine Festival and the Bridge Pa Wine Festival, further establishing Hawke's Bay as a destination for wine lovers.

This year we also launched a modernised website designed to better serve our members and showcase Hawke's Bay wines to a global audience. This marks a significant step forward for our online presence. We continue to expand our social media outreach and I encourage you all to follow us on Instagram and Facebook and to join our wine community groups.

As part of our outreach to wine media and commentators we have had a busy year hosting these important gatekeepers in our region. They left our shores with a better understanding of our region, its world class wines and our talented wine community. International visitors included Oz Clarke from the UK, Japanese sommeliers and Gary Walsh from Australia. Domestically we also hosted Cuisine editor Kelli Brett, John Saker and Jane Skilton MW.

Our People and Environment committee has been hard at work, delivering outstanding events and initiatives. This began with the Chardonnay Technical Workshop in January featuring guest speaker Nick Hoskins, followed by the Red Blend Workshop in June with international speaker Gary Walsh.

The Aotearoa New Zealand Chardonnay Symposium Continues to grow in prominence. In its second year, the week-long ANZCS program featured an incredible lineup of speakers including international experts Jasper Morris MW, Elaine Chukan Brown, Brenna Quigley and Sam Connew.

In line with our international collaboration efforts through the Great Wine Capitals Network, we were delighted to host our guest speaker from South Australia, Robin Shaw, where she shared her global expertise. Additionally, Robin, along with Morven McAulay, delivered an engaging session on storytelling and exceptional visitor experiences.

I would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to Amy Hopkinson-Styles and her dedicated committee for making this event such a success. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with many attendees describing the event as "cool" — a sentiment I wholeheartedly share. I look forward to the next symposium in 2026!

The P&E committee has also been working on strategy to support our independent grower community, to support networking within this important subset of our wine community and collaboration with our independent winemakers.

We can also expect more exciting initiatives from this committee, including the development and implementation of a Te Reo Māori strategy, the review and execution of our Climate Change Policy and a range of regional workshops and leadership initiatives.

The HBVINE group continues its essential work on biodiversity, research vineyard benchmarking and support for independent growers. The last year has seen many initiatives including the Chardonnay yield project, with research projects scoped and conducted with EIT; supporting the Aotearoa Chardonnay Symposium with access to vineyards for microvins; support of the vineyard financial benchmarking programme funded by MPI and continuing the frost risk seminars.

We would like to acknowledge and say a huge thank you to Steve Wheeler for his contribution to the HBVINE group ahead of his retirement, as well as to the wider Hawke's Bay viticulture community.

To secure our long-term sustainability we introduced a new membership fee structure last year. These funds enable us to better serve our members and promote Hawke's Bay wines on the global stage. Brent will provide further details in his report.

I would like to take the opportunity to recognise our family of Sponsors, who have made the commitment to our industry by supporting the work of the Association. To Wineworks, Baywide, Terra Cat and ICIB; we thank you for your vision.

It's been a remarkable year of collaboration and growth for our vibrant wine community. I would like to extend my deepest thanks to all the dedicated individuals on our committees. Your hard work in marketing, sustainability, education, and advocacy has raised the profile of Hawke's Bay wines, and we are truly grateful for your efforts.

Sadly, this year we say goodbye to some long-serving Board members including Ian Quinn and Mike Henley. Ian has been a stalwart on the Board since 2018 and has been instrumental in the HBVINE Group.

Mike has also made significant contributions, first elected as a Board member in 2015 and as Chair for many years. We thank you both enormously for your help, time and support.

On a brighter note, we warmly welcome Oliver Kettle from Paritua and Wim Barendsen to the Board. Ollie joins us as a winery member and is currently Chair of the Marketing Advisory Committee. Wim joins us as a grower representative, he has vineyards in Bridge Pa and is a member of the Independent Grape Growers Committee.

Additionally, Emma Lowe has been re-elected, and Amy Hopkinson-Styles, Bridget Wilton, David Peabody Jr and Peter Hurlstone continue their valuable tenures. Our Board remains strong, passionate and fully committed to the success of our region — thank you for all your hard work as volunteers.

I'd also like to acknowledge Sarah White whose marketing and communications efforts have been instrumental to our success and led the charge for the new website and Fiona Rollings who has kept us on track, has taken us to task and really raised our document presentation levels to dizzy heights.

Finally, I extend my gratitude to Brent, our Executive Officer, for another stellar year. His leadership and dedication have been crucial in advancing our organisation. Just no more European holidays, please!

Reflecting on the past year, it's clear we are on a positive trajectory. From our recognition as a Great Wine Capital to the continued success of the Chardonnay Symposium, we have and continue to lay the foundation for a bright and prosperous future.

Together we will continue to elevate Hawke's Bay's reputation as New Zealand's premier wine region — and one of the finest wine regions in the world.

Thank you all for your ongoing support - and here's to another successful year ahead.

Cheers to Hawke's Bay — A Great Wine Capital.

### 3. EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

Brent Linn spoke to his Executive Officer report:

I am proud to present the operating reports for Hawke's Bay Winegrowers contained on the following pages.

I sincerely believe we are now making real progress on "shifting the dial" on the success pillars your Board has identified as being important for the continuing sustainability and success of our wine region.

We have refined our compelling Hawke's Bay Wine story to focus on our strength through diversity in our premium wine region. We are communicating that story through an enhanced online presence and increased engagement with the gatekeepers and influencers domestically and internationally.

We are building momentum with delivering an increased range of member services across our diverse community. Whether this be the Benchmarking project, Regional Technical Workshops, HBVINE or Cellar Door workshops, all these are predicated on supporting our members to be the best they can be.

Protecting our members interests is an increasing part of HBWG day to day to activities as we all deal with an increasing regulatory environment. The most notable commitment here has been HBWG's appeal on aspects of TANK PC9. I must acknowledge the considerable volunteer time and expertise provided by Emma Taylor and Peter Hurlstone who have led this work.

Our members have signalled the importance of working collectively on these challenges to their sustainability and have funded the majority of the appeal costs to date. They recognise the benefit of having an organisation to coordinate activities while they get on with their business.

Achieving all this requires additional investment.

Our core funding consists of a vote from NZ Wine derived from the wine and grape levies it collects from you. We receive slightly more than 1% of your wine and grape levies which varies depending on vintage and sales. While appreciated, this amount alone isn't enough to support an engaged and proactive HB Wine, telling our unique regional wine story.

This is why we have sought commercial sponsorship from those that share an interest in the success of our industry and introduced a member fee. We are heartened by the support for our member fee initiative and would like to acknowledge the more than 30 members who have contributed circa \$60k to this past year's activities. They have heard the call and responded - now is the time for the rest of our community to join them.

Looking forward

Our work plan for the coming year sees an increase in activities to support our members, some of these I summarise below:

- A strategy for HBVINE is being finalised that will see an enhanced focus on research, best practices and profitability outcomes for our grower network.
- We have an expanded visitor programme with the major focus being hosting 23 sommeliers, media and trade in region late February on the back of the Pinot 25 conference.

- Our online strategy is being reviewed with a heightened focus on telling an engaging narrative about our region and producers.
- Work is underway to develop a medium-term export strategy to support growth and profitability for our wine producers.
- Advocacy on TANK is set to ramp up as we work towards and anticipated Environment court appeal hearing in 2026. The regional Future Development Strategy for urban growth will also require a focus as we seek to protect our grape growing soils.
- We continue our work championing our key varietals with a Chardonnay Technical Workshop in January and a Red Wine Technical Workshop in June.
- The regional Chardonnay collection will be delivered for its fifth consecutive year with V23 Chardonnays providing the opportunity for us to tell our regional story with domestic and international gatekeepers.
- Embedding tangible benefits from our Great Wine Capitals membership through Knowledge exchanges, Cite du Vin showcase and activations are in planning for delivery.

A busy year ahead, but with the support of our members, the commitment of your HBWG team and the careful stewardship by your Board the continuing success of our regions wine industry is ours to make.

#### 4. **PRESENTATION OF ANNUAL ACCOUNTS**

These are presented in draft form pending final review by Oldershaw & Co. The Board considers these to be a fair representation of the affairs of the Association and are asking for members forbearance to accept them in draft form, with the covenant that if the Reviewer establishes that there is a material difference in the final reports then updated reports will be re-submitted to the members at a special general meeting called within 30 days of the review engagement being completed.

The Board has taken a cautionary approach to activities in 2024 to secure the ability for HBWG to be able to continue to undertake the work plan predicted by the strategy and with the knowledge that a significant reduction in NZ Wine funding is coming.

NZ Wine has signalled a 20% reduction in funding for HBWG for the next two years as a consequence of its reduced wine and grape levies. Consequently, HBWG activities for FY24 have been managed to generate reserves (\$30k operating surplus to reserves and \$60k transferred to HBWGCT as a specified donation) to ensure it can continue to do the work to deliver its strategy over the next two years.

**Resolved:**

That the draft accounts be accepted pending final review by Oldershaw & Co.

*Sally Duncan / Peter Hurlstone*

#### 5. **GENERAL BUSINESS**

There was no general business.

#### 6. **MEETING CLOSED**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 6.15pm.

Guests were invited to stay for presentation of Member Awards and Richard Brimer's 40 Vintages Exhibition.

Chairperson.....

Date.....