

## 2011–2012 Newsletter

It's been a busy year at Stonecroft. It was great to host a Hawke's Bay Boutique Winemakers 'Meet the Maker's' event in February and to see lots of visitors become acquainted or reacquainted with our cellar door. We are wondering how we might make better use of The Old Winery Building and our picnic area; your suggestions would be welcome.

There was a good turnout for the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Cranford Hospice Charity Auction in June, and we donated a Late Harvest Gewürztraminer which went down well. Over the winter months we attended a few different tastings around the North Island. We hope to make a visit the South Island in the near future. Our cellar door opened earlier than usual this summer for the Rugby World Cup, which will be in full swing by the time of publication of this brochure, and we are looking forward to another vintage sale at Labour Weekend.

2011 was a tricky vintage in Hawke's Bay. Luckily for Stonecroft, one lot of rain arrived after the whites had been picked, but before the final ripening period for the reds and a second after we had taken in the remaining fruit. Although yields were low, fruit quality was great. We were able to achieve a good amount of botrytis in our Gewürztraminer, which is not always possible in a dryer year. The slower ripening period was also good for developing complexity in our Syrah. So far we have only released the Sauvignon Blanc and a Late Harvest Gewürztraminer from this vintage.

The wines we are releasing now are mainly from the exceptional 2009 and 2010 vintages and include a couple of interesting ones. As well as a 2010 Zinfandel, we also have a Fortified Zinfandel from the 2009 vintage. This is a pretty unique wine, which we will be selling from the cellar door only (the dumpy port bottle doesn't fit in our boxes!). The 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon which we held back last year has now had a good amount of bottle age and will be a great one to cellar. We also have a few bottles of the Late Harvest Gewürztraminer which we kept back from the Charity Auction. 2011 was a perfect season for a late harvest Gewurz and this wine is a stunner.

On the organic front, we are now officially 'in conversion'. We had some sheep keeping down the weeds in the Roy's Hill vineyard this year and are continuing to build up the soil health with compost and seaweed extracts.

Andria and Dermot