

## Appendix 3

### Selected newspaper articles on regional wineries and tourism

- *Reprinted from a Good Drinking article written by Huon Hooke in The Sydney Morning Herald - Good Living section, , May 9-15 2000, page 16*

#### **It's pouring, Sydney**

#### ***Len Evans hopes the city will soon become a registered winegrowing region.***

Chris Niccol is a winemaker whose life is in limbo. His 77-year-old winery and vineyard on the outskirts of Sydney, Vicary's, is likely to be resumed for the new airport at Badgerys Creek, but he doesn't know for sure.

After a four-year legal battle the land has been bought by the airport authorities and leased back to him, but he could be turfed out at any time and have to start again elsewhere. My edition of the Gregory's Street Directory shows the end of the runway will be just across the road.

"If they'd give me a 20-year lease I'd plant more vines and fix up the existing couple of hectares, but they won't do that," says Niccol, who's given 16 years of his life to the rustic old winery just off the Northern Road at Luddenham, near Penrith.

It's surprising what people in such a parlous situation can do to keep afloat. Vicary's has for many years run a rollicking woolshed dance on Friday and Saturday nights, with bush band, roaring log fires, hearty steaks and, of course, local wines. It also has a Thomas the Tank Engine kids' train ride, a monthly craft market and a golf driving range. And Niccol's latest passion is making kosher wine, which can be bought in Sydney's eastern suburbs under the Levi's Wine label.

The '99 is a sweet, botrytised Late Picked Semillon from Lindsay's vineyard at Young and sells for about \$19. Every step in the winemaking has been supervised by a rabbi and it's been well received by the Jewish community. Look for it in Rose Bay Drive-In, Dover Heights Drive-In, Rose Bay North Cellars and Starks Deli in Hall Street, Bondi Beach.

Niccol still makes a chardonnay from the vines at Luddenham but most of his wine, under both Vicary's and Heron's Wing labels, is from bought-in grapes. There's a lovely soft Heron's Wing Cabernet Shiraz '96 from Forbes grapes (\$16), and watch out for the '98 Heron's Wing Cabernet Merlot, made from a low-yielding vineyard at nearby Mount Hunter. It will be on sale within weeks for about \$18. His Vicary's 75th Anniversary Port (\$17) is pretty good, too.

Vicary's winery crushes about 40 tonnes a year for its own use, but also makes wine for other wineries. Being inside the Sydney phylloxera quarantine area, it gets a fair amount of contract crushing work. The reason is that grapes grown in a phylloxera region (and the entire Sydney basin is classified as such) cannot be taken out of that region because of the risk of spreading the pest.

A winery in, say, the Hunter Valley can only use grapes grown in the Sydney area if those grapes have been crushed, "de-juiced" and the juice filtered first, before being tankered to the Hunter.

This is exactly what Niccol did in 1999 for Len Evans's Evans Wine Company, which is the new lessee of the Camden Park vineyard at Camden. The '99 Camden Park Sydney Chardonnay has been released at \$18. With a snappy, colourful new label, it's a delicate but very attractive, lightly oaked young chardonnay.

The Camden Park vineyard was established in 1976 by Norman Hanckel, a long-time Sydney wine identity who was one of the original Hungerford Hill partners in the early '70S. Hanckel produced wine - a fairly plain chardonnay and rather thin cabernet - for several years and sold grapes to several other wineries, especially the Rothbury Estate.

After Mildara bought Rothbury, access to the fruit passed to the Evans Wine Company, which has a 15-Year lease. The vineyard covers 14.5 hectares at present, all chardonnay, since the soil was too light to produce red wine of any depth. Hanckel planted the original vineyard within sight of one of the first and most historic vineyards in Australia: the Macarthur family's property, Camden Park, first planted to vines in 1817.

Len Evans and a fellow director of the Evans Wine Company, Denis Power, hope that Sydney will soon become a registered winegrowing region with the Geographic Indications Committee.

In order to achieve this, it needs at least 500 hectares of vineyards. With the scattering of small plantings in the greater Sydney area, plus a large new vineyard being planted by the Bradman Corporation at Picton (and managed by the Evans Wine Company), it's only a matter of time.

Evans estimates that within five years the Bradman vineyard will add 150 tonnes of fruit to Camden Park's 150, and the many small vineyards will add up to 200, for a total of 500 tonnes. "When this occurs, it will doubtless be the smallest production of any GI [geographic indication or official region]; says Power.

There is already a newly formed Nepean Hawkesbury Wine and Grapegrowers' Association, which boasts 22 members. Some of the longer-established growers producing wine are Cogno Brothers at Cobbity, Tizzana Winery at Ebenezer, Richmond Estate at Richmond, and Stan Aliprandi's Kirkham Estate at Camden. (In another life, Aliprandi was the colourful founder of San Bernadino winery at Griffith, long ago absorbed into the De Bortoli empire.)

Things are also happening at Tizzana. The vineyard is a mere two hectares and although grapes and wine are bought in from other places, wine output is tiny. But owner Peter Auld has restored a section of the fine old sandstone winery to its original state, with B&B accommodation above and winery below. He's planted four hectares of olive trees. The speciality wine is aleatico, a sweet, pink, lightly fortified drop that was pioneered by the legendary Thomas Fiaschi, Tizzana's founder, in 1887.

With increased capacity, Auld hopes to take on some contract winemaking for the small vineyards cropping up around him. Fiaschi, a flamboyant Italian doctor who practised at Sydney Hospital, donated the bronze Florentine pig that sits outside the hospital in Macquarie Street, and also established Augustine vineyard at Mudgee. He was also a firm believer in the therapeutic benefits of wine and preached about it at length.

Back to Sydney wine. The release of the '99 Camden Park Sydney Chardonnay will attract considerable attention, Evans and Power believing the brand will have a natural appeal to Sydney residents.

"Wine drinkers worldwide display an affinity for local produce; they say. Well, they didn't when Hanckel was trying to sell his Camden Park wine from his shop in Argyle Street, The Rocks, years ago. But then, maybe the time wasn't right, and certainly his packaging lacked the eye-appeal of the new edition.

There's only one other hitch. The Bondi retailer Kemeny's has the Sydney wine trademark registered. It seems ludicrous that anyone can trademark the name of a city, but anyway, Evans and Power are counting on the Sydney GI, when it happens, taking precedence over any trademark.

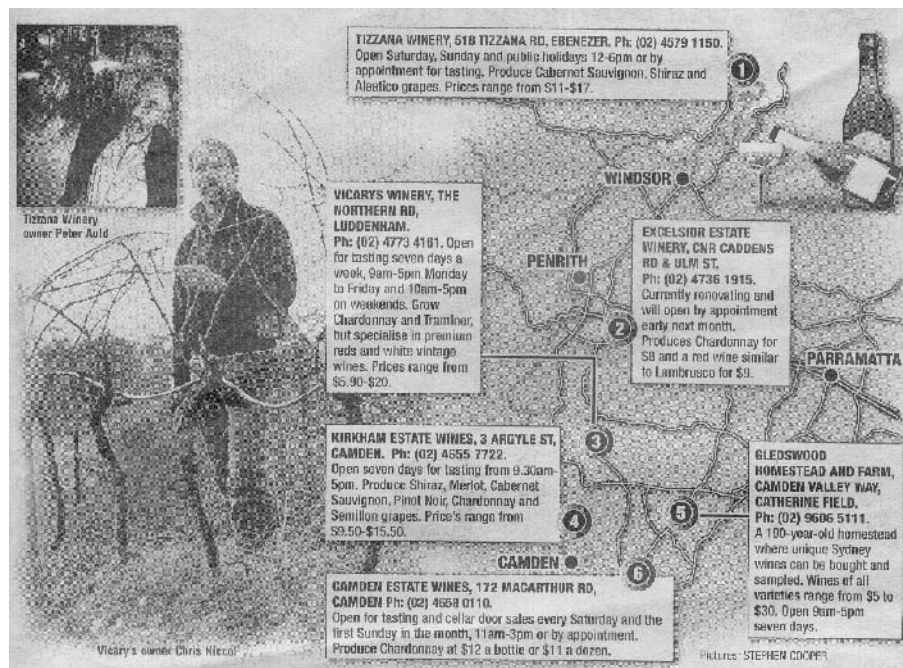


**On hold: Winemaker Chris Niccol, winemaker at Vicary's, awaits the Badgerys Creek airport outcome. Sahlan Hayes**

- Reprinted article written by Mark Scala in *The Daily Telegraph*, Friday, June 23, 2000, page 19

## Chateau Camden

### Wineries take off in city outskirts



VINEYARDS on the city's doorstep are booming, as outer Sydney prepares to become the next wine region of Australia.

Tastings and cellar door sales of everything from kosher wine to white port -created on Sydney outskirts - are drawing people to the place where Australia's wine industry began.

The Sydney resurgence is being led by vineyards along the Hawkesbury and Nepean River, from Ebenezer in the north to Camden in the south.

Wiped out in the early 1900s by a root-destroying mite and squeezed out as Sydney's urban sprawl spread west, the wine industry is making a comeback.

The newly formed Nepean and Hawkesbury Wine and Grape-grower's Association is preparing to lodge an application with the Geographic Indications Committee to officially become a region, reinstating the area as a wine and grape producer.

President of the association and general manager of Sydney's oldest continuous winery, Chris Niccol, says the area already meets the requirements.

An area must be within geographical boundaries, produce 500 tonnes of grapes and contain five major vineyards to become a registered wine growing region.

The designation gives wine makers and their product an identity to market overseas.

Mr Niccol processes 150 tonnes of grapes a year at the Vicary's winery and currently exports to Japan, while the Evans Wine Company which produces 150 tonnes of grapes from its Camden vineyard, exports to the UK and US.

"People always look over the hill rather than what's in their own backyard, but word of mouth gets around and our profile is growing," Mr Niccol said.

"Apart from the price there is a hell of a lot of good country for growing reds, but a lot of that country is prime real estate.

"Economically it wouldn't be viable, but on the river flats or outskirts it is.

"You're close to your market and producing good quality fruit."

With the University of Western Sydney adding viticulture and winemaking classes at Hawkesbury, and vineyards starting at Camden and Pitt Town, wine maker Peter Auld says the industry is on the rise.

Mr Auld has spent the past 30 years restoring the Tizzana winery (built in 1887, but destroyed by fire in 1955) and now produces around 4000 bottles for sale at local restaurants and from the cellar door.

"The Sydney wines I've tasted can hold their heads up high," Mr Auld said.

"The wineries themselves are small compared to the bigger areas, but there seems to be a multitude of people popping up."

Wine Consultant Peter Bourne says there has been a resurgence in the wine industry across Australia.

"Sydney was where it all started," Mr Bourne said.

"Now the chance to recreate that so close to the marketplace and sell from the door is an interesting attraction."

While Mr Bourne says Sydney does not have the ideal climate, viticulture advances over the past 30 years have allowed vines to flourish in more areas.

"It's a hardy plant and the more extreme and marginal the climate, you can end up with some fantastic flavours, although not necessarily the consistency."

NSW makes up almost one-third of the \$2.6 billion Australian wine industry, growing 25 per cent of its grapes and producing 34 per cent of its wine. Since 1995 wine production doubled to reach 266 million litres from NSW's 270 wineries.

Vines brought on the First Fleet were first planted in Parramatta, then Camden in the 1800s, before spreading to the Hunter Valley.



- *Reprinted article written by Lisa Allen in The Australian Financial Review, Thursday, December 17, 1998, page 34*

### **Evans pours \$1m into wine estate**



Mr Len Evans, arguably Australia's best known wine man, is the latest entrepreneur to join the growing throng of property developers keen to tap into the European concept of wine-related rural subdivisions.

Mr Evans, the former head of Rothbury Estates, is spending more than \$1 million establishing a new vineyard at Bradman Corporation's new \$45 million housing estate on the outskirts of Sydney.

The Bradman Corp -a group of former A V Jennings executives led by Mr Peter Brennan - obtained council approval for the 115-lot residential vineyard estate near the historic township of Picton earlier this week.

Bradman approached Mr Evans' Evans Wine Co to take a stake in the sub-division called Nangarin, which is expected to produce annual yields of 300,000 bottles of chardonnay and shiraz.

Mr Dennis Power, Evans Wine Co managing director, said yesterday the group was very attracted to the Sydney wine basin.

"It's quite suitable for grape growing, we are attracted to the idea of small vineyards producing premium wine.

"These are becoming a global trend."

Bradman's estate fronting Barkers Lodge Road is a variation on assorted wine themed housing and tourism projects spreading throughout the country.

But Bradman's 123 ha project has a point of difference because buyers can choose their level of involvement in the estate's winemaking venture.

"The vineyard is a separate offering to the residential lots so home buyers can choose their level of financial involvement in the vines," Mr Brennan said.

One acre or 4,000 sq m housing lots start at \$180,000 rising to \$200,000 at the gateway to the Southern Highlands. The local council will specify building heights, colours and materials so houses blend into the bushscape, and prominent architect Mr Kim Crestani of Order architects is overseeing housing styles and streetscapes.

"We know there's a strong market for small rural lots with a strong rural flavour," Mr Brennan said yesterday.

Some buyers at Nangarin were likely to build upmarket weekenders, although most would probably live on the estate.

“We expect about one-third of the buyers from the Macarthur region,” he said.

Mr Brennan said the estate - pre-marketing starts in April - had already attracted strong inquiries.

Other wine related projects in the offing include the Kelman Estate in the NSW Hunter Valley launched in March, and last week wine maker Mr Andrew Garret teamed up with Leightons to develop a slew of wine-related themed resorts throughout the country. That project is worth \$175 million.

In the Hunter, Byvan's chairman Mr Stewart Ewen has sold 15 of the 80 housing lots since marketing started in March.

- *Reprinted article from The Australian Grapegrower & Winemaker, March 1998, pages 32-33*

### **Establishing a wine region for Sydney not far from the city**

*Back in the days of Australian settlement, four cows and a bull belonging to the First Fleet broke away from where they were tethered at Sydney Cove. They were found some time later roaming along the Nepean River, instinctively attracted to their new home by its soil, climate and water supply. Now a move is on to establish a wine region in this same area, just an hour's drive from Sydney. One man who is determined to see it all happen is local grapegrower and winemaker, Stan Aliprandi, who recently spoke with Sonya Wiley about his vision for the future of the area.*

Stan Aliprandi is on a mission to give Sydney what most of Australia's major cities already have: a wine region within an hour's drive of the CBD.

Aliprandi is owner and winemaker for Kirkham Estate Wines, which he established at Camden, 70km west of Sydney, in 1993. Camden lies on the Nepean River, which flows through a fertile flood plain stretching some 70km from Richmond in the north to Appin in the south.

With much of the land along the river now lying idle, Aliprandi is trying to encourage local property owners to plant vineyards, believing it offers an excellent opportunity to establish a boutique vine and wine producing area.

"The flood plain along the Nepean River is extremely fertile soil," Aliprandi explained. "In our vineyard at Camden, the topsoil is 50 centimetres deep, and it's all alluvial. The soil is so fertile that we have to plant grafted rootlings onto low-vigour rootstocks.

"The river flats along the Nepean can't be developed for housing because every now and again the river floods. So, why not use the land to grow grapes instead and instigate a Sydney wine trail."

With the help of the regional development organisation of Macarthur, which is keen to stimulate agricultural growth in the Camden district, Aliprandi has so far organised three meetings, including a field day, to interest the locals in planting grapes. Two meetings were held in Camden and another in Campbelltown towards the end of 1997, with each meeting drawing around 25 people. Aliprandi has been a major speaker at most of the meetings.

Along with a number of independent landowners, these gatherings have also attracted representatives from the area's already-established wineries - Vicary's Wines, Camden Estate, and Mount Hunter Estate - as well as a beer brewer from Picton who is interested in making sparkling wine. Since attending these initial meetings, two or three landholders have already begun planting vines. A fourth meeting was planned for 11 February, 1998, which was expected to attract the largest gathering so far.





**The Nepean River, as seen from the pump house on the eastern bank servicing Kirkham Estate.**



**The Kirkham Estate vineyard, trained to the Smart Dyson trellis system.**

Aliprandi said moves were already afoot to establish an organisation to represent the region's grape and wine interests, which was likely to be known as the Sydney Grape and Wine Region Association.

### **Predominant role in history**

Thanks to the efforts of John Macarthur, who is better known as the founder of Australia's wool industry, the proposed Sydney wine region has played a predominant role in the history of the Australian wine industry.

John Macarthur arrived in Australia from Britain in 1790 after joining the New South Wales Corps. In the early 1800s, he was granted a substantial parcel of land in the district known as Cowpastures and named it Camden Park.

Between 1809 and 1817, Macarthur was effectively exiled from New South Wales following an altercation with Governor William Bligh. During this time, he lived in Britain with his sons James and William. When he returned to Australia, Macarthur possessed a selection of vine cuttings that he had collected while on an 18-month tour of Europe. He used these cuttings to plant Australia's first commercial vineyard at Camden Park in 1820.

Macarthur produced his first vintage at Camden in 1824. Five years later, he exported 10,000 gallons of wine to England. During the 1830s, vines grown in the Macarthur nursery at Camden were offered for sale. Some of these vines were purchased by growers in the Hunter Valley, Barossa Valley and many other parts of Australia.

During the late 1830s, the Macarthur family brought out six German families to work as vine dressers on their Camden Park property. At the completion of their five-year contracts, these same vine dressers went about setting up their own vineyards in the

district. However, the dreaded phylloxera bug wiped out whatever viticultural development had taken place around Camden in the late 1880s.



**An aerial view of Camden and a section of the Nepean River.**



**Another view of the Kirkham Estate vineyard.**

Despite its pre-eminent role in the foundation of the Australian wine industry, Stan Aliprandi estimates that the Nepean River flood plain today boasts just 55ha of winegrapes, spread between eight to 10 vineyards, and about five crushing facilities. He believes the region's soil, macroclimate, water supply and location would support a great many more vineyards in the area.

"Sydney is virtually the only city in Australia that doesn't have a wine area within an hour's drive of the CBD," he said. "Melbourne has the beautiful Yarra Valley, Adelaide has the historic Barossa Valley and the Adelaide Hills, Perth has the picturesque Swan Valley, and Canberra also has a substantial vineyard area.

"In addition to its proximity to Australia's largest city, the Nepean River flood plain also boasts very fertile soils. They are dark-coloured, very rich and very loamy, and are friable enough that they can be easily worked.

"A lot of people might question the amount of rain the area gets. We average about 25 inches (635mm) a year, whereas Sydney gets more than twice that amount. It would seem the nearby Razorback Range is creating a rain shadow, so this is not an overly wet area, but the Nepean River provides a good supply of water.

"The nights here are quite cold due to the fact that we're at the foothills of the Southern Tablelands. We don't get a lot of humidity, so downy mildew is not a problem. Birds, on the other hand, are a problem, but netting can pretty much take care of them."

With over 20 years' experience as a winemaker, Aliprandi has found that Chardonnay grows especially well on his patch of the Nepean River flood plain.

"I'm also pleased with the Pinot Noir, which is showing good colour," he added. "The Merlot is very rich and fruity, and the Cabernet is coming along as well."

Stan Aliprandi began his career as a winemaker in the Riverina. He later moved to Sydney and began looking for a site to grow quality grapes and make wine.

"I started to search along the Great Western Highway but, like the wandering cows from the First Fleet that strayed from Sydney Cove, I found my way to Camden. So, here I am after planting 9000 vines and five different winegrape varieties, convinced more than ever that I have made the right decision," he said.