



MyWhiskyJourneys Newsletter

LAUNCH OF THE MWJ WEBSITE and TASMANIAN WHISKY WEEK 2018

Issue 1



Launch of the MyWhiskyJourneys Website

We believe the MyWhiskyJourneys website (www.mywhiskyjourneys.com) will be a unique contribution to the world of whisky wisdom because not only will we talk about some wonderful whiskies and distilleries, we shall actually offer for sale from our collections those very whiskies. We shall not try and compete with the handful of excellent websites which impart so much valuable information about the world of whisky – and, in particular, Scotch whisky – right across the board. Rather, we shall concentrate on those distilleries and brands which are represented in our collections because of their quality or historical significance, or both. Nor shall we try and emulate those first-class whisky internet businesses which offer a huge range of products from the outrageously scarce to the sublimely mundane. We shall be offering only those items which we actually own and which you can immediately buy. As soon as an item goes, the entry will be removed so that readers do not go through the frustration of being taken to a website in search of a particular product only to find it is "out of stock"!

The MWJ website was launched at Ratho Farm (www.rathofarm.com) near Bothwell in Tasmania on the opening Sunday of Tasmanian Whisky Week (www.taswhiskyweek.com) in August 2018. A small but distinguished group of whisky enthusiasts had recklessly thrown themselves at the mercy of **Greg Ramsay's** relentless hospitality and, by the Sunday evening, were in a state of delirious over self-indulgence., some of them having started the endurance test on the preceding Friday! The extent to which they realised that they were unwitting participants in what may become a milestone in Tasmanian whisky lore was unclear, but the website was duly and formally launched over a splendid Ratho Farm roast dinner and a short, if enlightening presentation by MWJ Director, Philip Morrice.

Whether any of the witnesses have yet to visit the website remains unknown. However, the objective of a suitably low-key launch during TWW Mk II was achieved and Greg had always said that Ratho Farm would be an appropriately neutral but yet whisky-associated venue at which to do it

Tasmanian Whisky Week August 2018

TWW 2018 required the full participation of both MWJ Directors and was every bit as good as its predecessor. The two outstanding events for us were “The Founders’ Night” (www.taswhiskyweek.com/events/founders-night) on the Friday and the Showcase (www.taswhiskyweek.com/events/tasmanian-spirits-showcase) on the Saturday. Both – in their very different ways – conveyed the bonhomie and the excellence of the Tasmanian whisky distilling enterprise. Although the latter has become a little more corporate with the emergence of Australian Whisky Holdings (www.australianwhiskyholdings.com) (now the effective owners of Lark, Overeem and Nant) and substantial off-island investors in some of the other distilleries, the sense of community continues undiminished.

The great thing about The Founders’ Night, held at the water front Glass House restaurant (www.theglass.house) was that it wasn’t choreographed by some fee-charging professional refugee from the television industry but by a true whisky gentleman in the person of **Mark Nicholson**, who combined his public speaking skills with his deep knowledge of Tasmanian whisky. He competently gave due exposure to some of the young, new distillers but rightly gave prominence to the Founders. After all, the former will probably be with us for a long time to come, the latter may not, as retirement, in the fullness of time, inevitably beckons.

Bill Lark, **Patrick Maguire** ([Sullivans Cove www.sullivanscove.com](http://www.sullivanscove.com)) and **Mark Littler** ([Hellyers Road www.hellyersroaddistillery.com.au](http://www.hellyersroaddistillery.com.au)) were all there in person with great stories to tell and **Casey Overeem** by pre-recorded video link in a one-on-one interview with his

daughter Jane. The Founders were all witty, earnest and honest in equal amounts and remain an admirable back-bone of the industry on which others are now building. And with each of them there was a whisky from “their” distillery and an appropriate food accompaniment.

The evening was also notable for the way in which the North and the South were harmoniously brought together. This was also evident at the Tasmanian Spirits Showcase in the atrium of the splendid Henry Jones Art Hotel (www.henryjones.com) and nearly all of the distillers were there, including Neville Latimer, the Chairman of Hellyers Road, with sleeves rolled up and acting as hosts at their individual tables and pouring generously of their product to a large gathering of whisky enthusiasts, each equipped for the occasion with a TWW logoed Cradle Glass (www.mywhiskyjourneys.com/products/cradle-glass).

Full marks to the organisers who had worked tirelessly to make TWW II another great success.

Having said that, TWW probably has to reflect on whether it wishes to remain purely Tasmanian in nature, rather like the Islay Whisky Festival (Fèis Ìle) (www.islayfestival.com), which has become world-famous although it is restricted to the distilleries on the island (and neighbouring Jura), or become more like one of the wider international whisky events being held across the globe which embrace whiskies from all over Scotland and beyond. Perhaps the answer lies somewhere between the two whereby the Tasmanian Whisky Week is open to whisky distilleries from elsewhere in Australia and, possibly, New Zealand and therefore retains its Tasmanian origins but has a wider appeal. On the other hand, does the TWW want to get serious money behind it and invite the big global players, such as Diageo, William Grant and Brown-Forman, to take up positions, through their Australian subsidiaries, within their main events? And would they come, without in so doing somehow diluting to an unacceptable extent the Tasmanian nature of the Week? We are not advocating any particular route be followed, but the options are enticing and worthy of further examination.

This might be a task best suited for the Tasmanian Whisky Producers Association (www.twpa.org.au), although they no doubt have other priorities, not least getting their website up-to-date which seems not to have been attended to since 2015 and does not even contain a list of all its current members. But that's another story.



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+61 408 664 021
info@mywhiskyjourneys.com

Find us on the Web:
www.mywhiskyjourneys.com