

# WINE TASMANIA'S TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

## *Samantha Connew (Chair), Stargazer Wines*

The first case of wine that Sam ever bought was from Tasmania; a dozen bottles of Tamar Ridge Riesling. And her first vintage was in Oregon where, like so many other winemakers, she became captivated by Pinot Noir. So it seems only fitting that after an intervening period of over fifteen years Sam ended up in Tasmania making Pinot Noir, Riesling and Chardonnay. In the interim period, after vintages throughout Australia and in Italy, Spain and in Oregon, Sam spent ten years as the Senior Winemaker at McLaren Vale's Wirra Wirra Vineyards, followed by a couple of years at Tower Estate in the Hunter Valley. Sam's most recent position (prior to making the leap into self employment) was working for the Australian Wine Research Institute. None of this was really on the radar after finishing a law and arts degree in Christchurch, New Zealand which Sam subsidised with part time work at a wonderful wine bar in the Arts Centre. It was here that she discovered wine and food, an epiphany fuelled by overseas travel and then confirmed with further study in winemaking and viticulture at Lincoln University.



Sam is passionate about the Australian wine industry as well as wine; she's actively involved as a wine show judge, and was the youngest judge and first woman to serve as Chair of Judges at the Sydney Royal Wine Show. She has also recently served three years on the advisory board of the Australian Women in Wine Awards.

## *Penny Jones, Bay of Fires Winery*

Hobart-born winemaker Penny Jones graduated as Dux from The University of Adelaide in 2004.

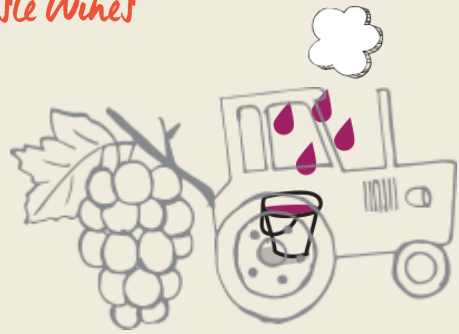
She went on to complete 10 vintages with premium producer Petaluma in the Adelaide Hills, during which time she worked harvest in Oregon in 2007, as well as competed in the inaugural Ningxia Winemakers Challenge, held in China in 2012.

Penny returned to her home state of Tasmania in 2013 to join the Bay of Fires winemaking team. Penny now proudly leads the team as Winemaker/Manager.

Penny became a Len Evans scholar in 2016 and her most recent judging experiences include the Clare Valley Regional Wine Show and the Royal Adelaide Wine Show.

## *Cynthia Semmens, Marion's Vineyard/Beautiful Isle Wines*

Cynthia Semmens has been making wine since she was five years old, after her parents moved from San Francisco to the Tamar Valley in Tasmania in 1980. Her parents, an indefatigable Cypriot and a Californian dreamer, began crafting Marion's Vineyard from an overgrown block of impenetrable bush and rock. It was a natural evolution to work with the vines and Cynthia eventually ended up studying winemaking and wine marketing at Charles Sturt University & the University of Adelaide.



During the early 2000s Cynthia was a winemaker with Constellation & Leasingham Wines before returning to Tasmania to raise a family with her viticulturalist husband Dave Feldheim.

In 2010 Cynthia became the winemaker/manager for her parent's estate - Marion's Vineyard, a role she still has today. In 2013, she and Dave created their Beautiful Isle Wines label utilising fruit from the Estate.

Cynthia joined the Wine Tasmania Technical Committee in 2019.

## *Murray Leake, Tolpuddle*

Commenced working in viticulture in 1998 with Nepenthe Wines, as group viticulturist overseeing Nepenthe vineyards and growers as well a vineyard contract management company that covered the Adelaide Hills, Barossa, and Langhorne Creek regions of South Australia.

In 2007 I took on a role with Australian Vintage Ltd (AVL) as Viticulturist, overseeing grower fruit supply for all premium regions in SA, along with AVL owned vineyards in Adelaide Hills, Barossa, Griffith, Murray Valley, Padthaway, Riverland and Sunraysia, covering approximately 4000ha.

Since 2015 I have been Group Viticulturist with Shaw and Smith Wines overseeing vineyard management of three S+S vineyards in the Adelaide Hills along with winery grower fruit supply. I also oversee the management of our Tolpuddle vineyard in Coal River, Tasmania and our MMAD vineyard in Blewitt Springs, McLaren Vale.

## *Izaak Perkins, Ghost Rock Wines*

Izaak has spent over 10 years working in Tasmanian viticulture. Over seeing the management of Ghost Rock Wines Cradle Coast region vineyard. Striving for a move towards the transition of implementing diversity in the way they grow grapes and incorporating a sustainable organically minded approach to the vines.

## *Ben Pietsch, Brown Family Wine Group*

Ben Pietsch is the Tasmanian Viticulturist for Brown Family Wine Group, managing Tamar Ridge vineyards along with winery grower fruit supply. He brings years of experience in cool climate viticulture ranging from regions such as the Grampians, Yarra Valley and now beautiful Tasmania.

## *Astrid Walters, Boomer Creek Vineyard*

Astrid is manager and co owner at Boomer Creek Vineyard, alongside her parents & husband Max. She also spends time helping out in the winery each season over vintage at Spring Vale Vineyard in Cranbrook.

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PROMOTING THE COOLEST  
WINE REGION ON THE PLANET

