



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 2023

MILESTONE MOUNT GAMBIER REGIONAL WINEGROWERS ASSOCIATION CELEBRATED

Long- standing contributor to the wine industry in the Mount Gambier region, Sandy Haig, has been recognised as the Patron of the Mount Gambier Regional Wine Growers Association after planting the first vines in the early 1980's.



At its most recent meeting the Mount Gambier Regional Grape Growers Association Committee unanimously agreed to invite Sandy Haig to become an Honorary Life Member, coinciding with the Association's 21 years of existence.

Commencing in 2001, a hand full of Mount Gambier Growers formed the kernel of the region's grape growing identity, which in 2010 was formally registered as a geographical indication (GI) area for growing exceptional grapes, in particular Pinot Noir and Chardonnay.

The first commercial plantings occurred in 1982 in a vineyard established by Sandy and Helen Haig immediately south of the city of Mount Gambier.

Former President Terry Strickland, commented

“Sandy is **the** pioneer for growing wine grapes in the Mount Gambier region and established the first Cellar Door on Square Mile Road outside Mount Gambier. His research with numerous contacts in the region led to his viticulture and wine making adventures”.

Now just over 21 years later the Association is looking forward to celebrating the region's achievements over the coming twelve months with planned activities and events. The honouring of Sandy's contribution to the industry through Patronage, marks the start of the celebrations of an exciting limelight on the vines and wines of Mount Gambier.

Sandy was delighted to be recognised as a pioneer within the Mount Gambier Wine group and reminisced about the trepidation of giving vines a chance amongst the other enterprises of the time. Terry further commented, “He has influenced us through his support and mentorship. Sandy is knowledgeable, generous and always ready to let us know what he thinks”.

The Association presented Sandy's Family with an engraved cheeseboard commissioned by local artist Clint Maynard



MGRWA President David Gryn, with members of Mr Haig's Family and MGRWA Treasurer Paul Chiesa

Photos credit Amanda Lengyel Photography

The key element of the Mount Gambier region is the small but passionate group of growers who saw the potential of the region and who have been prepared to take a risk and put in the effort to realise the dream.

Mount Gambier Wines will be commemorating throughout 2023 with further details to be released to the public soon.

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Additional information please contact Peta Baverstock on 041261931, MGRWA Executive Officer