



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
NEWCASTLE  
AUSTRALIA

# Vines, Wine & Identity

## Project partners newsletter

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## Welcome

It has been a challenging end to 2015 for grape growers in Pokolbin with hail in mid-December destroying as much as a third of this year's crop in some vineyards. With this in mind, in addition to warm greetings for the festive season, the project team extends wishes for ideal weather conditions for the remainder of the growth season across the Hunter region.

As the calendar year draws to a close, the Vines, Wine & Identity project has matured well, as explained here.

Follow project research and join the conversation on Twitter at [#VinesWineIdentity](https://twitter.com/VinesWineIdentity).

### FAMILY HISTORY

Academic historians increasingly recognise the role played by family historians in providing intelligence about people and places in Australia. In her recent book *Fractured Families: Life on the margins in colonial New South Wales* (UNSW Press, 2015), Tanya Evans paid tribute to the tireless searching and documenting of family lives undertaken by descendants of colonial Australians.

For Vines, Wine & Identity, work by Pauline Tyrrell is invaluable. As well as being interviewed for the

project, Pauline has provided access to the *Journal of the Hungerford & Associated Families Society*, published since 1999, which contains material on Pokolbin wine families from the colonial era. This complements research by Jack Sullivan of the Paterson Historical Society on colonial wine families in that district.

Jim Fitz-Gerald from Kelman Estate has also been instrumental in locating colonial Hunter wine sites such as Kirkton, the property of William and Catherine Kelman. The image below is the grave site of Kelman and Busby family members.



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## DIGITAL HISTORY

Digital history is revolutionising how historians research, document and analyse the past. Digital history is defined as “an approach to examining and representing the past that works with new communication technologies of the computer, the Internet network, and software systems” (W. G. Thomas III, 2008 in Toni Weller, ‘Introduction’, *History in the Digital Age*, 2012: p. 3). The application of computer technologies, the Internet, software programs and web tools for our project is as follows:

- Digital audio-video recording of oral history interviews
- Narrowcasting of extracts of these interviews online via YouTube
- Sharing transcripts of interviews online
- Digital scanning of archival documents to be made available online
- Creation of online reference material that is readily edited and updated
- Interactive digital mapping of key historic vineyard and winery sites
- Hyperlinking of each of the formats listed above
- Searchability of online reference material using keywords

These applications are being combined to create a key output – *Hunter Wine: A digital history*. This will draw on exemplars such as *A History of Aboriginal Sydney* ([historyofaboriginalsydney.edu.au](http://historyofaboriginalsydney.edu.au)) and will be hosted by the University of Newcastle. Faculty of Education and Arts’ Research Communication Officer Jessie Reid is integral to achieving this.

Jessie is working with the project team to determine how best to design the presentation of content. Our aim is to go live with a trial version of *Hunter Wine* by 31 March 2016 and continue to add content and refine the site during 2016.

## GERMAN MIGRANTS

Vines, Wine & Identity entails the first sustained study of the skilled vinedressers and other wine industry workers who migrated from pre-unification Germany from the 1840s.

A student has been funded by University of Newcastle’s (UON) Faculty of Education & Arts Intern Program to array details of these Hunter Valley assisted migrants in a database. The student, Christine Lawrie, is enrolled in History Honours and has been a very welcome, if temporary addition, to the project team.

Another development is that as a result of a public event at which Julie McIntyre gave a presentation earlier this year, UON Professor Robin Callister has introduced Julie to the site at which her German vinedresser ancestor, Richard Weismantel established a substantial vineyard near Gloucester.

The vineyard supplied the Weismantels’ Buckett’s Way wine shop until the early 20th century. This image below is from Evelyn Boyce, *A History of the Weismantel Family* (1986) and shows the vineyard at Johnson’s Creek. Professor Callister’s father was interviewed to collect his memories of what remained of the vineyard and wine shop during his childhood.

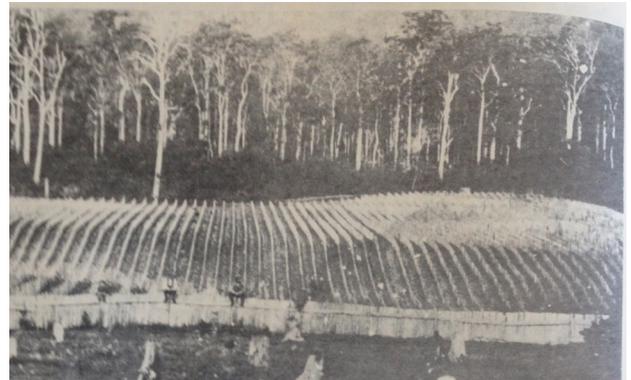


Image: Richard’s vineyard at Johnson’s Creek.

## FIRST VINTAGE AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE

On 29 October, as a climax to NSW Wine Week, a reception was held at which His Excellency the Governor’s Official Secretary Michael Miller RFD welcomed the executive and members of the NSW Wine Industry Association (NSWWIA) to Government House, Macquarie Street, Sydney.

Mr Miller made a presentation about Julie McIntyre’s book *First Vintage: Wine in colonial New South Wales* (UNSW Press, 2012), copies of which were distributed to NSWWIA members. Mr Miller made particular mention of his interest in the account of Bennelong’s attention to wine during diplomatic encounters with the first Governor of New South Wales, Arthur Phillip.

Guests at the reception included the inaugural Chairman of the Hunter Valley Wine and Tourism Alliance – the previous Minister for Tourism – George Souris and project partner investigator, Brian McGuigan.



Image from left to right: Brian McGuigan, Vassy Souris, George Souris, Julie McIntyre and Richard Hilder

## IRRAWANG AND INACCESSIBLE HERITAGE SITES

James King had a central role in mid-19th century Hunter Valley history. The pottery, vineyard and winery at his property near Raymond Terrace were the focus of colonial production from the 1840s until his sudden death during a visit to his Scottish homeland in the 1850s. As the first president of the Hunter River Vineyard Association and correspondent of prominent European scientists of the period, King gave vigorous attention to transforming the Lower Hunter into a successful agricultural and manufacturing region, with particular attention to wine.

As King's property did not continue to produce wine grapes into the 20th century – and was remote from the main clusters of vineyards in the valley – its location fell out of memory. In September this year, Julie McIntyre visited the site as a result of connections between Newcastle History Professor Lyndall Ryan and an original member of a University of Sydney archaeological dig at Irrawang in the 1970s.

Irrawang has an important place in Australian archaeology due to its role as a pottery site. Much of the excavation that took place under the supervision of Judy Birmingham of University of Sydney focused on the site's pottery with some attention to the former winery.

Archaeologist Anne Bickford, who had been a student on the Irrawang dig in the 1970s, organised the field trip with Sydney Water's Yvonne Kaiserglass – who made contact with Hunter Water Catchment Management Officer John Simpson to allow and supervise access to the site.

The former Irrawang property is now owned by Hunter Water as part of the Grahamstown Dam catchment. The original property is bisected by the Pacific Highway just north of Raymond Terrace. The pottery site is on the eastern side of the highway between the roadway and the dam wall. The field team located the pottery site in encroaching bush and attempted to pinpoint where the Irrawang vineyards were planted.



In the aerial image above the yellow circle indicates the location of the former Irrawang homestead and winery to the left of the highway, and the former pottery to the right.

Unfortunately it is not possible to access the former Irrawang winery and homestead site to photograph it as it is bounded by the former Grahamstown spillway and the highway.

Anne Bickford reported that remnants of the winery and homestead were extant at the site in the 1970s but this is no longer the case.



*Image left to right: Anne Bickford and John Simpson at the former Irrawang pottery site.*

You can find out more on Julie McIntyre's blog *The World in a Wine Glass* ([juliemcintyrewinehistory.wordpress.com](http://juliemcintyrewinehistory.wordpress.com)) in her post 'Finding Irrawang'.

Meanwhile, mapping the location of properties such as Irrawang that are not open to the public, or accessible on tourist routes, raises questions about how to represent these sites on *Hunter Wine: A digital history*. These questions will be addressed as the digital history is produced in 2016.

Other private sites of significant heritage value include (formerly Lindeman's) Cawarra and (Kelman's) Kirkton. In discussion with the current owners of both sites about the ethical challenges of drawing public attention to private homes and land, it was agreed that tourists could best be directed to public sites related to the colonial wine figures associated with them. For example, Henry Lindeman's grave at St Anne's Church, Gresford, and the small museum to the Kelman and Busby families at Kelman Estate.



*Image: Hunter Water's John Simpson estimating the possible location of the earliest Irrawang vineyard from an 1830s sketch of the property.*

## Highlight

### PROFESSOR JOHN GERMOV

**Lead Investigator on the Vines, Wine & Identity project Professor John Germov brings intellectual gusto and a sociologist's palate to solving wicked health problems.**

What influences whether we lead a healthy or unhealthy lifestyle? What affects the choices we make about what we eat and drink? These are the kinds of questions that fascinate the sociologist in Professor John Germov.



'Personal preference of course plays a part in all these matters. Yet, there are distinct social patterns in how and what we eat. For example, personal preference can't explain "national" cuisines. Think of India and curry, Japan and sushi. There are always larger forces at work – social, cultural, economic and historical.'

Investigating these forces – what John refers to collectively as the "social appetite" – has resulted in his large body of research on the sociology of food and nutrition. He's examined the social determinants of food consumption and production, including the influence of gender and class on eating habits; the relationships between food, identity and body image; the public health impact of fast food and the rise of the 'slow food' movement; and how the Australian diet has changed.

This has been possible due to a ground-breaking interdisciplinary collaboration with a Dietitian scholar, which led to an international book for which he and

his colleague are widely known – *A Sociology of Food and Nutrition: The Social Appetite*.

'Broadly you could say this work contradicts the old adage "You are what you eat". I've found the inverse to be true: what you eat tends to be strongly influenced by the conditions in which you live and work.'

After indulging his sociological passion for food for many years, John found himself developing an intellectual predilection for wine – a logical progression, he claims. 'I joke with my colleagues that since I was already studying food, it was natural to match this with a study of wine. And we are in the Hunter Valley after all.'

John collaborated with Michael Patrick Allen in 2010 on an article for the *Journal of Sociology* titled 'Judging taste and creating value. The cultural consecration of Australian wines',

With his newly-formed interest in wine research and after collaborating extensively with historian Dr Julie McIntyre, John formed the Wine Studies Research Network ([newcastle.edu.au/research/wine](http://newcastle.edu.au/research/wine)) at Newcastle – an interdisciplinary cluster of scholars from the humanities and social sciences.

John and Julie also co-authored a chapter for *Eat History: Food and Drink in Australia and Beyond* (2013, Cambridge Scholars Press) titled 'Drinking History: Enjoying Wine in Early Colonial New South Wales'.

John's abiding interest in the social origins of health has led him also to investigate the darker side of drinking. Funded by an ARC Linkage grant and in partnership with University Colleges Australia and state health departments, he recently conducted a large study with several colleagues investigating the uses and abuses of alcohol by students on university campuses, with a focus on uncovering the effectiveness of harm minimisation strategies. While the study uncovered a concerning 'culture of intoxication', it also found that students use a variety of measures to minimise potential harms to themselves and others.

This project stands at the intersection of what John calls his 'curiosity-driven research for the sake of understanding' and his growing engagement with 'intervention research to make a difference'. It also combines his interest in the sociology of food and drink with his other long-standing research interest in the social determinants of health.

In this field John has been prolific, and he is known especially for his book *Second Opinion: An Introduction to Health Sociology (5th edn)*, which was recently published in a Canadian edition. He has produced 19 books to date with prestigious publishers such as Oxford University Press, Melbourne University Press, Allen & Unwin, and Pearson; including his introductory text, *Public Sociology: An Introduction to Australian Society*, which has shaped the way sociology is taught and studied in Australia.

