

Boroondara Stroke Support Group

NEWSLETTER



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A Chance Encounter by Liz Berryman

Some years ago, after my husband Bill suffered from a stroke, we planned a trip to Kangaroo Island in South Australia. Fortunately, Bill had been able to resume driving after a long period of rehabilitation, so this was planned as a driving holiday - something which we both loved to do.

We greatly enjoyed the trip along the Victorian Coast and through the vineyards of McLaren Vale in South Australia and then down the coast and across on the ferry to Kangaroo Island. We had learnt to take life easy, short driving stages and plenty of relaxation with our overnight stops.

Kangaroo Island was fascinating - beautiful coastal scenery and wonderful wild life - seals/ penguins/ birds. However, it was a chance encounter in one of the craft shops on the island which proved to be a highlight of the trip for me. I had been admiring a small pottery vase which was displayed on the counter when I noticed a small booklet which was placed beside the ornament. Immediately the title leapt off the page at me - "THE OTHER SIDE OF STROKE." As I read the first page I realised that this had been written by someone who had suddenly found themselves in the same position as myself - a CARER for their husband who had suffered a severe stroke.

Reading further the story of their stroke experience seemed to parallel our own, with the effect of the stroke being virtually to mirror my husband's loss of the function of the right side of his body.

He also appeared to have had the same determination to pursue his recovery, and had taken up pottery, just as my Bill pursued his painting.

I bought the vase I had admired, plus a copy of the little book which his wife had written, and this shares a special place in our home. I would like to share with you all the poem she wrote which is included in the book, and which reflects so well the way I felt (and I am sure all carers feel) when confronted with the sudden change in our life and relationship.

STROKE. (Written by Fernande Trethewey)

Have you ever seen a fellow
Who is suffering a stroke?
He looks at you with half his face
And seems a different bloke

He has lost the use of his right side
And cannot speak to me
Like an infant now he cries
He is not the man he used to be.

Three times a day we took our dog
Around the town and back
We walked the beach together
Along the sandy track

He made the sauce and pickles
When off to bowls he went
For tea he cooked the spinach
Which I hated but did relent

We've lived together near fifty years
He was always there for me
Now life has changed and suddenly
A "Carer" I must be.

Editors Note: My thanks to Chris Trethewey who is the son of Edmund who suffered the stroke and gave his permission to use the poem written by his mother.

Thanks to our sponsors

Coordinator's Report - Winter 2018 by Juley Thai

Thank heavens the cold chills of Winter are almost over. The heaters have been working over time to keep our members warm during all sorts of programs at the Hub. We welcomed new members and volunteers, who we hope will be with us for a while longer.

There have been reports of email issues of late - so if you are not receiving our emails with monthly program schedules, please contact us to rectify the problem. On another note, it is with a bitter-sweet heart that I inform our members that I will be stepping out of my role as Hub Coordinator on September 12th 2018. I will be following my dreams to work in a hospital, and I will always have a link to the Hub by referring patients in my care.

I will never forget the inspiring stories, friendships and determination of our members. I have huge admiration for the people who have not only overcome stroke but are living life to their fullest. You are truly inspirational, and your stories should be told to anyone experiencing hardship.

Thank you BSSG for welcoming me from day one, and supporting me as your Centre Coordinator at the Boroondara Community Stroke Hub. Through the ups and downs, your trust in me has allowed our centre to grow in numbers and programs offered.

For all future enquiries, direct them to Maria Thommyppillai who is currently at the Centre on Thursdays, or to bcstrokehub@outlook.com. All the best for the future. There are big and exciting things happening at the Stroke Association, about which I will endeavor to keep updated.

Sing for Recovery by Anita Paxton

The Sing for Recovery choir continues to bring comfort to stroke patients and their families in Acute Care and Rehab. at St Vincents, Box Hill Hospital, St. Georges Rehabilitation, Royal Talbot and the Peter James Centre. We are pleased to say, that because of our performances, and the giving out of a personalized "Thinking of You" card and Resource Folder, we have had appreciative calls from stroke survivors and their families who now feel they have a support team with BSSG and can move forward with their recovery.

Our rehearsals are held on Thursday evenings at the Boroondara Community Stroke Hub - 533 High St Kew from 6.30pm - 7.45 pm followed by a delicious supper donated to us from local cafes and bakeries. If you, or anyone you know would like to join us -Please- We would love new members. We are relaxed and very inclusive and have lots of fun. Please ring Anita Paxton - 0400984228 (Vivienne Harkness - is away at present- we wish Vivi a well-deserved holiday)

We would all like to thank Hanford Lam, for his wonderful direction of the choir over many months and thank him for finding us our new talented musical director John Keuneman.

Vivienne's Travels by Vivienne Harkness

I am writing this article for the BSSG newsletter from my hotel in Ballychulish in the magnificent Scottish Highlands. I have had a wonderful trip so far, spending my first six days in England seeing my relatives, then four lovely days in Edinburgh where the weather was warm and sunny. A highlight of my visit was attending the closing ceremony of the Edinburgh Festival - an amazing concert featuring Holst's Selection from the Planets played in synchronisation with an incredible fireworks display staged behind the Edinburgh Castle. It was well worth queuing for over an hour and taking almost as long to walk back to my hotel.

I am now on a fabulous picturesque train tour of the West Highlands and Islands of Scotland, which will include riding on the Jacobite train featured in the Harry Potter film, and in cruise on Loch Ness looking for the monster! There are several Australians on the tour, one of whom comes from Camberwell.

Following this tour I am spending two days in one of my most favourite cities - Barcelona, from where I am cruising the Mediterranean and the Adriatic, finishing up in Venice. After what I hope will be a continuing wonderful time in Europe, I am then spending a night in Singapore before flying to Krabi in Thailand to join my family to celebrate my daughter's 50th birthday. By pure chance an English relative of mine is a veterinarian, who just happens to have an interest in an Elephant Park relatively near Krabi to which our entire Australian family has been invited, where, as well as other activities, we can swim with the elephants. - but I think I will leave that questionable fun experience to the grandchildren!

See you all in October when I look forward to sharing all my photos.



Wines -The French Connection by Peter Hocking

Australians can find French wines a bit intimidating. The labels use all manner of unfamiliar words and terms, such as "A.C."; the most prominent wording is often the geographic area, rather than the name of the maker, and usually they don't even state the grape variety. It can all be just too hard to bother, especially when Aussie wines are so good anyway. But French wines now and then provide a refreshing change and more variety rather than the sameness which can creep into Australian wines; especially now our industry is dominated by three giant corporations.

The French, unlike most of our winemakers, do not try to produce wines from all the main grape varieties at the one place. They tend (and indeed are largely compelled by the A.C. laws) to produce wines from just those varieties that do best in the particular soil and climate of a given area. So, you wouldn't for example go into a Burgundy winery and ask for a nice shiraz (unless you really want to look like an ignoramus).

To me it is hard to challenge this approach of only planting varieties that do best in a particular area. Many Australian wineries however, have tended to create an expectation among our thriving wine tourism industry that you can sample and buy a wide range of types in the one location, thus making a rod for their own backs.

A.C. (or A.O.C.), which stands for Appellation Controlee (or Appellation d'Origine Controlee), is a geographical/quality designation process. For each appellation (the designated geographic name), regulations control the area, grape variety(ies) that can be used, permitted yields, and many other quality criteria.

We may identify three (or four if you consider the Rhone as two) premium red wine areas of France. **Bordeaux** wines use the Cabernet and Merlot grapes; **Burgundy**, or Bourgogne as the French call it, (another source of confusion to the uninitiated) uses Pinot Noir (and sometimes a similar variety; Pinot Meunier); and in the **Rhone Valley**, the Northern Rhone uses Shiraz and the South, blends of Grenache and Shiraz plus a host of rather lesser known varieties. So whatever your favourite grape variety, look for wines from the appropriate area in your wine shop. If you love Cabernet wines and/or blends of Cabernets and Merlot (including Cabernet Sauvignon's lesser known "cousin" Cabernet Franc), look for Bordeaux wines; if Shiraz is your baby, go to the Rhone Valley section; for Pinot Noir lovers, the Burgundy section is your spiritual home.

Another important red wine region in volume of output if not premium quality is the **Languedoc**, where Shiraz, Carignan and Grenache predominate. Although now making a concerted effort to lift quality standards, it has for many years been dominated by cheaper and lesser quality wines, so buying can be a bit of a lottery.

For Australian buyers though, it has the advantage that many producers, in an attempt to be more export friendly, have adopted the "New World"

BSSG Contact Details:
PO Box 2260 Hawthorn, 3122
www.bssg.org.au
President: Vivienne Harkness
40 Melville St Hawthorn
0417 054 511
Editor: Michael Shallard
michael.shallard@gmail.com

practice of stating the grape variety on the label. If the above sounds simple, I have bad news; the French don't do "simple". Under the A.C system, superior appellations typically fit within other less rigorous ones; so the label bears the smallest geographic area permissible; not infrequently the village where the winery is. So, if you look at the better quality end of the Bordeaux section in your wine retailer, for example, you are unlikely to see many labels actually mentioning Bordeaux. You will see terms such as St. Emilion, Medoc or Pauillac; which are smaller geographic entities with higher quality regulations within greater Bordeaux area. Bordeaux has three major regions (plus a number of lesser lights), namely Medoc and Graves (pronounced grarves), where Cabernet Sauvignon predominates; and St. Emilion, dominated by the Merlot grape. Within these regions there are sub regions, of even higher standards such as St Julien, Pauillac and Margaux. Superb quality wines always, but likely to stretch most of our budgets, alas.

Cote de Beaune or Cote de Nuits (Cote means Slope, as in the side of a valley) on a label refers to the two broad sub regions of Burgundy and indicate a higher standard than the simple Burgundy (or Bourgogne) appellation. An even higher quality Burgundy will likely bear the name of the village of origin, for example Volnay or Meursault.

Wines from the Northern Rhone Valley are high quality (with a price to match) and you are unlikely to see "Rhone" on the label; rather there will be the small sub regional name, like Cote Rotie, or Hermitage, or villages such as St Joseph or Cornas. Those of my generation will remember the days Australia had such an inferiority complex about our Shiraz wines we used to say they were made from "Hermitage grapes" (even as recently as 1989 that most iconic of Australian red wines, Grange, was labelled Grange Hermitage, not Grange Shiraz). Obviously, this practice was inspired by the Rhone Valley region of that name. Fortunately, by the time the French clamped down and stopped us labelling our wines Hermitage, we were grown up enough to be proud of our Shiraz.

The Southern Rhone produces very drinker-friendly wines from a blend of grapes, dominated by Grenache and incorporating Shiraz, Mourvedre and/or Cinsaut (the latter two often known in Australia as Mataro and Blue Imperial). The basic quality appellation you will see on labels is Cotes-du-Rhone. A smaller area within this, a higher quality appellation, is Cotes-du-Rhone Villages; while the individual villages Gigondas, Vacqueyras, or Chateauneuf-du-Pape near historic Avignon, represent higher standards still. Chateauneuf-du-Pape, by the way, those with a knowledge of French will realise, means the Pope's new chateau and relates to the 14th Century, when Avignon briefly replaced Rome as the centre of the Roman Catholic Church and the seat of the Papacy. Bottles will typically be embossed with the papal coat of arms, but don't think it is holy water.

The Grenache grape is very much the unsung hero of Australian wines, incidentally. Most Australians would be surprised to know it is the most extensively planted red variety in this country. For too long it has been used largely in the cheap end of the market, such as cask wine. Pleasingly, in recent years its potential in quality wines has been increasingly explored, to some extent inspired by the French Southern Rhone reds. The combination of Grenache and Shiraz with Mourvedre in these wines has become very popular in Australian wines - these are the so called "GSM" blends.

It should be noted the A.C. Regulations specify **minimum** quality standards and many producers aim to produce wine well above the minimum. If we take Cotes-du-Rhone as an example, you can buy brands in Australia as low as under \$10 and some at nearly \$30, with obviously a correlation to relative quality.

For a red drinker dipping a toe for the first time in the waters of French wines, probably the best and most affordable introduction is this Southern Rhone wine label Cotes-du-Rhone. There are plenty of Cotes-du-Rhones available here. They are reasonably priced and very drinker-friendly. I find them ideal to accompany Asian food, which can too easily be overpowered by big Aussie reds. Since the Southern Rhone is one of the warmest climate areas for French wines, they are more likely to appeal to Australians; most of whom are well used to reds from South Australia and the Murray Valley. If you feel like indulging, try a Chateauneuf-du-Pape, but be prepared to pay near \$50 to over \$100.

[To be continued next issue]

Peter Hocking is a wine lover and Francophile, with a preference for reds (hence the rather superficial treatment of whites for which he apologises to white lovers). His views are entirely his own.

The Boroondara Stroke Support Group recently lost two of our long-term members both of whom had been active members in their time with the stroke group. Our deepest sympathy is extended to the families of Neil Davies and Tim Kelly.

Sadly missed by all at BSSG.

Please Note
The Annual General Meeting of the Boroondara Stroke Support Group Incorporated will be held on **Thursday the 15th of November 2017** during the normal meeting at Kew Senior's Centre 533 High Street, Kew commencing at 10.00AM.

Vegetable Rice with Hard-Boiled Eggs

by Liz Berryman

INGREDIENTS

100g brown long grain rice
150g packet frozen spinach
150g leeks
2 carrots
1 turnip
1 small onion
1 tablespoon light olive oil (or rapeseed oil)
Salt and pepper to taste
100 ml vegetable stock
2 eggs
2 tablespoon plain yoghurt
1 tablespoon chopped parsley



METHOD

1. Cook the rice and the spinach as per instructions on pack - leave both to drain.
2. Trim the leeks/thoroughly wash them and cut diagonally into slices.
3. Peel and trim the carrots and turnip. Cut the carrot into diagonal slices and the turnip into sticks.
4. Peel and finely chop onion.
5. Heat oil in saucepan/frying pan. Sauté leek, carrots and turnip for 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.
6. Pour stock over, cover and cook edge tables for further 5-7 minutes
7. Boil eggs in water for 7 minutes until hard.
8. Stir spinach and yoghurt into the vegetables. Gently mix with the rice, and add sprinkle over top.
9. Season with salt and pepper (to taste) and arrange on plate.
10. Rinse the eggs under cold water, shell and halve them and place on top of rice.

Note: this quantity should serve 2-3 people.

Preparation time around 30 minutes.