

Tanunda 19/2/17

## **The Barons of Barossa declare the 2017 vintage**

It rained on our parade, but didn't dampen spirits, as we declared the 2017 vintage on Sunday morning.

As is traditional, Pastor David Gogoll blessed the grapes in a short service at Tabor Church, Tanunda. The Barons marched to the quicker-than-usual beat of the Tanunda Town Band as their procession pushed on through the rain. Kaitlyn and Charlotte Viergever proudly carried the Barons' banner in honour of their late grandfather and past Grand Master Gerald Viergever.

At the rotunda, an appreciative crowd gathered for the announcement of the 2017 award winners. Andrew Quin and Steve Schiller were named Winemaker of Year and Vigneron of the Year respectively.

Andrew is the Chief Winemaker at Hentley Farm. He has twice been named a finalist of The Wine Society Young Winemaker of the Year and won trophies at the Barossa Wine Show in 2011, 2013 and 2015. Andrew also won the James Halliday Wine Companion Winery of the Year in 2015.

Steve is a fifth-generation farmer from Gomersal and a 2014 graduate of the Barossa Grape & Wine Association's (BGWA) Next Crop leadership program. He went on to facilitate the BGWA's 2015/16 Mentoring Circle for young vignerons and is a well-respected, positive and entrepreneurial role model for other growers.

Bob Taplin received the BGWA Grower Services to the Industry award for his valuable involvement in agricultural and grower organisations. He served on the Barossa Winegrape Growers' Council for more than 20 years, and was a founding member of the BGWA.

Baron Louisa Rose provided a "crystal ball" outlook for vintage 2017, which due to its late start, is being compared with vintages of 10 years ago. The vintage is likely to be finished around Easter.

Louisa was joined by Margaret Lehmann, to unveil a memorial plaque honouring the late Peter Lehmann AM, a founding member of the Barons. The plaque will be laid in the footpath at Keil Garden.

Andrew and Steve were invited to crush the “first grapes” using a beautifully restored hand press and the public were invited to taste the “first juice”.