

Best's celebrating Tribute to Trevor Mast

GREAT WESTERN- Best's Winery in Great Western has not one, but three reasons to celebrate.

Its 2011 Bin 1 Shiraz has been announced winner of not only the prestigious Jimmy Watson Memorial Trophy but the Best Victorian Wine Trophy and the inaugural Trevor Mast Trophy for Best Shiraz in show at the Royal Melbourne Wine Show.

In its 51st year the Jimmy Watson accolade is awarded to the best young red wine in show.

Viv Thomson, patriarch of Best's Wines said the win was unbelievable.

"To have one wine win three trophies is just amazing," he said.

"We treat all three with equal importance, but winning the Trevor Mast Trophy was personally very emotional and more than fitting.

"Trevor made wine here from 1975 to 1988 and is a legend of our region and the Australian wine industry."

The 2011 Bin 1 Shiraz was announced winner at a dinner at ZINC restaurant in Melbourne on October 25.

Since then business has been booming, with an overwhelming amount of orders flooding in and keeping Best's busy.

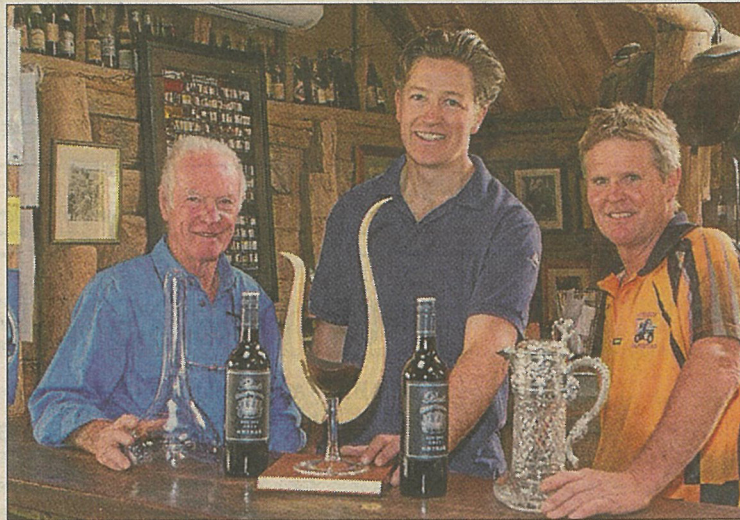
Mr Thomson said the combined effort of his owner son Ben Thomson and winemaker Justin Purser made the wine what it is.

He said the judges must have seen something in the win they usually don't.

"The 2011 season was the worst vintage due to the amount of rain we had," he said.

"Combined with mildew, rot and disease it made it a very unusual season.

"There must have been a character - because of the colder



Viv Thomson (left) and Ben Thomson (right) with winemaker Justin Purser.

than average weather that we don't normally see due to our climate - that the judges saw."

He said he hoped the win introduced more people to Great Western Shiraz.

"It's wonderful to see show judges and wine consumers embracing the medium bodied, fragrant style of shiraz from Great Western," he said.

The Jimmy Watson as it is affectionately known is named after the much-loved Carlton wine merchant and wine bar owner who had a passion for table wines.

"Every winery in Australia wants to win the Jimmy Watson," Mr Thomson said.

It is the first time a Victorian wine has won the award since 1997.

And the first time a wine from Great Western has won since the 1964 Seppelt Great Western Shiraz won in 1965.

When it comes to design the Trevor Mast trophy is most

striking.

Its unique wooden design pays tribute to Trevor Mast's interest in wood and stands out among the other two awards which are made of glass.

Only appointed as Winemaker last year, Justin Purser said the winning wine was a great way for him to discover the individual charms of various Great Western vineyards.

"My goal was to make a blend that expresses the spicy, fruit flavours that Shiraz from the area is so renowned for yet also retain the elegance of the wine," he said.

"The wine tells the story of the 2011 vintage and delivers elegant flavours and aromas yet it has a backbone of soft fruit, fragrant spices and fine tannins.

"I am looking forward to seeing how it evolves over the next decade and beyond."

REGION- As Best's Winery in Great Western celebrated its triple treat at this year's Royal Melbourne Wine Show Viv Thomson took time out to pay tribute to the man one of the awards was in honour of, Trevor Mast.

Born in Warrnambool, Mast worked in the regions of South Australia and Victoria before heading overseas.

Between 1970 and 1973 he studied winemaking and viticulture at Geisenheim University in Germany.

Mast had a wealth of local and overseas experience having worked in Germany, Hungary, Portugal, France and South Africa before settling for over a decade in Great Western.

Best's Wines 2011 Bin 1 Shiraz was awarded the inaugural Trevor Mast Trophy for Best Shiraz in show, a new award named in honour of the late, great Grampians winemaker.

Mr Thomson said the award was more than fitting and personally very emotional.

"He worked with us for twelve years, we were friends and mates," he said.

"He had a great reputation, a great name in the industry.

"For it to be the first one and for it to come back to where Trevor dedicated several years of life working is more than fitting."

Viv Thomson said his cool climate experience was unmatched due to his experiences of working in Europe.

"Upon returning to Australia he joined Seppelt's for a short period before he joined us at Best's," Mr Thomson said.

"With Trevor, his enthusiasm was contagious, his passion for wine only just controllable."

Mr Thomson said Trevor put Australian Shiraz on the world map about 20 years ago.

"Trevor became a member of our local Winemakers Association and I guess this was the start of his involvement in the greater wine industry," he said.

In 1987 along with business partner



The Trevor Mast Trophy.

Ian Menzies he purchased Langi Ghiran.

"He left our employment to develop Mt Langi Ghiran and develop he did, Langi Ghiran is now a household name in the wine world of Australia and many places around the world," he said.

"Mount Langi developed cult status due to Trevor's dynamic and charismatic personality and his talent with shiraz in a cool climate."

In 2003 Trevor was made a legend of the Victorian Wine and Food Industry and in 2008 received a Distinguished Services Award.

A group of donors got together and put money towards the Trevor Mast Trophy for Best Shiraz in show which is a unique design, made of wood.

Mr Thomson said it was also important not to forget the impact of, and the work his wife Sandy did by Trevor's side.

"Sandy was instrumental from very early on and she and their four daughters were a very big part of his life," he said.

Trevor Mast retired in 2006 and passed away earlier this year, he was 63.