

Taunda - Downunder Reunion 2005

The venue for this year's reunion was Tanunda in the Barossa valley, a wine growing area with beautiful unmatched scenery. Adelaide weather threw out a welcome mat in the form of their annual rain fall falling in one day with floods and rivers with broken banks. We did experience some cool windy weather on arrival but things improved greatly as time progressed and by Sunday afternoon one would have thought we were in a heat wave at the farewell BBQ lunch with shade being most sought after.

Accommodation was varied ranging from caravan to caravan park cabins to motel and resort. No complaints were heard so one must believe all was well. The caravan park seemed to be the most popular though a fair walking distance from the venues. By all accounts heard we had around 120 souls to house, feed, water and entertain.

Friday night was our meet and greet party at the Barossa Motor Motel with the usual Admin functions carried out, so fully paid up and badged we sat down to a great feast of food and entertainment whilst mingling with friends old and new. Winston Kaye was our MC with some selected music to our tastes and a welcoming introduction from Tony Iles thrown in with great merriment and jokes. Mike Day (Vindi 1939) a diarist, read out his writing from 60 years ago, what a wonderful man. Later we were entertained by David Partridge's impersonation of the great comedian Tommy Cooper with fez, magic tricks and jokes galore, an act that brought the curtain down. That was a great introduction for what was to come with traditional Vindi camaraderie in full swing. It would be noticed at this time the enormous work put in by members of the South Australian Vindicatrix Branch with displays, souvenirs, table decorations and raffles galore.

Saturday morning for some was quite a drag to get up and out of bed after the night before, for a coach tour of the Barossa Valley and wine tasting. The scenery stupendous and the wine delicious, the hosts at the various places visited were very friendly and very knowledgeable of their industry, making this tour most enjoyable.

Saturday night was our formal night with Vindi lads handsomely dressed in full uniform of Vindi badged jacket and tie and ladies dressed to the nines – a sight to behold. The venue for this occasion was in the Weintel Resort with a three piece band and Frank Sinatra (Winston Kay) in full voice. The Vindi table presentations was second to none with much time and effort put in and much spoken about, well done SA. During speech time we were advised of the 2006 reunion to be hosted by NSW and a \$500 cheque presented to Terry Hales from SA as a start up fund. Umina Beach near Gosford and only 1hr from Sydney has been selected but more of that at a later time. We dined we danced we drank and we talked the night away, a night that went by in a flash. Much merriment was had during more raffles with John Mears picking up three prizes and would add this writer picking up a bottle of Para Port, South Australia you did us proud, thank you.

To top this all Vindi lads were presented with gifts including a special “Vindicatrix Reunion 2005” labelled bottle of Cabernet Sauvignon wine produced by Stephen John Wines of Clare yet to be tasted but am sure a winner.

Sunday was a morning to do as you please and prepare for a BBQ lunch and farewells. A well attended function in the gardens of the Weintel Resort, with boisterous singing of all attending and some energetic conducting by Colin Rodgers of traditional English standards. With Jerusalem and the Pomp and Circumstance March rating well and ending with Auld Lang Syne. Thank you South Australia for great and memorable Downunder Reunion 2005.