

A visit to Newman's Horseradish Farm

What do Horseradish and Wine have in common? A lot apparently if they are Newman's Horseradish and Rusticana Wines.

They share a home at Langhorne Creek although the vines have only been in the ground since the late 1990s the horseradish has been growing there since 1985. *Armoracia rusticana* is the botanical name for horseradish.

Since early last century Newman's Horseradish has been available in South Australia.

The Original Red Label Horseradish is one of South Australia's food icons. In 1947 the business was purchased by the Meakins family from Fred Newman.

In their first year of ownership the Meakins tried marketing the product under their own name but the loyalty to the Newman's name was so strong that they had to purchase it as well even though the product had not altered.

Production continued at Tea Tree Gully until 1985 when Brian Meakins bought land at Langhorne Creek. The property on the banks of the Bremer River offered the deep black alluvial loam needed for the Horseradish. A factory for processing was completed in 1992 and it can produce 1000 jars an hour.

Using the original recipe, Brian and Anne Meakins and their staff carry out all stages of production with 30 tonnes of the root being harvested each year. It is planted in early October using the tops from the last harvest as it is best if treated as an annual.

It takes about nine months to reach maturity and then is harvested progressively in autumn and winter.

Garden Club members enjoyed trying the various mustards, dips, oils and wines available while gazing out at the rural views from the upstairs tasting room. Sales were brisk.

Oasis Garden and Function Centre

Afternoon tea was enjoyed at the Oasis Garden and Function Centre in a cosy room with views out to the palms, ferns and hibiscus on Gilligan's Island.

The scones with jam and cream, washed down with a choice of designer coffees and teas were accompanied by comfortable conversations and a reluctance to leave the very welcoming venue.

Christine and Michael Steinert have resided in Belvidere for over 30 years whilst raising their family. They previously successfully owned and operated a local bakery in Strathalbyn. After many years of hard work the gardens and purpose built function centre at Belvidere has come to fruition.

The tropical oasis containing several hundred palms and under storey ferns has been created on the sandy soil of formerly heavily farmed land.

The garden survives on bore and rain water and has reached maturity with the plants beginning to self-seed and local wildlife moving in. Grape mark is used as mulch adding a dark contrast to the green of the foliage and although it has no nutritional value it suppresses weeds.

The pond with its fish and frogs is covered with water lilies in summer and adds an element of tropical charm to the extensive garden which also features roses and colourful ground cover perennials.

Words by Norma Keily: Photos by Janet Jones



Brian Meakins tells members the Newman's Horseradish story.

