

LANGHORNE CREEK – TURNING WATER INTO WINE

By Paul Foster

When your vineyard is flooded and the water is up to the first trellis wire, should you worry. Not if your name is Greg Follett and your vineyards are by the Bremer River in the Langhorne Creek winegrowing region.

Greg and his forebears have farmed land by the Bremer since the 1850s and winter flooding is the way they've irrigated their property for ever. At least, since Frank Potts built weirs and gutters to water his vines at nearby *Bleasdale* in the 1860s. And drought permitting, the locals still do it this way, soaking the subsoil with moisture to carry their vines through the heat of the summer. 'As irrigation techniques go, you'd have to say it works,' Greg says.

It's a mission of Greg's to tell the world why Langhorne Creek is different from other South Australian regions and how much cooler it is than people think. Cooler than the inland valley that's the Barossa and more moderate than next-door McLaren Vale. 'It's proximity to the coast and the winds,' he explains. 'The fronts from the Bight and Southern Ocean and the gentler breezes off Lake Alexandrina. You could say we have the best in air-conditioning. All hours of the day, each day of the year.'

In the past the Folletts settled for selling their grapes to larger companies but since 1987 they've been reserving the best fruit for their own wines and wisely, it seems, as their *Lake Breeze* reds have in recent times enjoyed exceptional Show success.

Nearby neighbours, the Adams, can tell a similar tale. Five generations of the family have grown grapes at Langhorne Creek and these days it's Guy Adams who works their famous Metala vineyard. Over a period of twenty years Guy has expanded their operation to a total of 300ha and while much of their fruit is sold to larger producers, grapes from a dedicated plot at the Metala site are now used for wine that's bottled under their *Brothers in Arms* label.

Brothers in Arms Cabernet Sauvignon 2005

Intense varietal flavour. Beautiful balance and total togetherness. Mint, blackcurrant and chocolate in a deep and complex palate. Rich, smooth middle and ripe-tannin firm finish. Showing the benefit of bottle age. \$39.99

Bleasdale *T&M* Tempranillo Malbec 2008

Exciting, different. Spain's Tempranillo (60% of this blend) and France's Malbec (40%) both boast blue plum and black cherry flavours. Here, in a stylish and savoury midweight wine, these dark-fruit factors shine. Elegant, grippy. \$23.99