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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Wine pioneering ‘champions’ applauded by industry**

The outstanding achievements of three icons of the Australian wine industry have been honored at a special awards presentation held in Adelaide.

Each of the icons of wine is a household name and their efforts in the nation’s vineyards, wineries and boardrooms have helped create a vibrant modern industry and brought Australian wines to the attention of consumers around the world.

Glasses were raised high to congratulate John Angove AM (Angaston), Colin Campbell (Rutherglen) and Wolf Blass AM (Adelaide).

“John, Colin and Wolf have been named Life Members of the Australian Wine Industry, an award proudly administered by the Winemakers’ Federation of Australia and presented at the home of another wine icon, Grange Hermitage here at TWE’s Magill Estate,” said Federation President Tony D’Aloisio AM.

“This coveted Life Member Award recognises outstanding leadership and contribution to the nation’s wine industry over and above an individual’s career achievements,” he said.

“In the case of John, Colin and Wolf – they have given in spades!”

#### ***John Angove AM***

Fourth generation descendant John returned to work in the family business in the 1970s after studying science and economics and then a stint in the Australian Wine Centre in London. He became Managing Director in 1983 and Chairman in 2001. John credits his father with being a strong and positive influence on his professional life, allowing him to take the company in a new direction which has included significant development in all aspects of the business, from a domestic distribution business to expanding Angove exports to over 30 countries. John has gone on to serve on numerous industry and research organisations, and he was recognised with a Member of the Order of Australia for his commitment to the industry, the arts and charity work.

“Most recently we have a strong presence in McLaren Vale, with the purchase of old established vineyard land and a cellar door outlet,” Mr Angove said. “The ongoing conversion of our vineyards to organic standard and certification have been significant steps for the company, with Angove Family Winemakers now the largest grower of organic wine grapes in Australia.

“Achieving these things has only been possible thanks to a dedicated and expert team who have many ideas and are committed to bringing them to fruition.”

With a succession plan in place and three adult children Victoria, Richard and Sophie involved in the company, John explains the business is in good hands with the knowledge, experience and youth of the next generation to ensure Angove’s strong and progressive future.

### **Colin Campbell**

Colin is the fourth generation Campbell winemaker. After graduating from Roseworthy, he returned to the family winery and with brother Malcolm oversaw a rapid expansion of the family vineyards and fermentation cellars. This included introducing refrigeration to the winery which pioneered a new age for white wines in the Rutherglen wine region.

Colin's lifelong passion has been to see Rutherglen Muscat recognised worldwide as a unique wine of Australia. He continues to chair the Muscat of Rutherglen Network which he formed, and its classification system is now used Australia wide.

"My young and energetic lecturer at Roseworthy Chris Weeks was an important influence on my career and he helped me see the light! When I returned home, Philip Laffer who was chief winemaker at Lindemans at Corowa at the time was a wonderful mentor", Colin said.

"From there my life in the wine industry has been typically full of challenges, as wine in Australia is not constrained by boundaries or climate and we are assisted by the Aussie spirit of innovation.

"Wine and life are a wonderful combination of the wisdom of age and the exuberance of youth. To the next generation I say never stop asking questions."

### **Wolf Blass AM BKV**

After studying and working in the European wine industry for 13 years, Wolf migrated to the Barossa Valley in 1961 for a three-year contract with Kaiser Stuhl. In 1964 he became Australia's first freelance wine consultant and by 1966 registered Bilyara and produced his first vintage. He established Wolf Blass Wines International in 1973 and the Wolf Blass label was born and exports overseas the following year. Wolf was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia in recognition of his role in developing the nation's wine industry and promoting excellence in winemaking, viticulture and research.

"I played a fundamental role in the 60s producing products like Pear Wines which converted a beer drinking society into a social wine drinking society," Mr Blass said. "I changed the red wine style, and drinkability became the word. Women enjoyed the delicate flavours and matured red wine styles. Blending was the success story."

Of his influencers, Wolf credits Chief Australian wine judge George Fairbrother for teaching him how to win gold medals and trophies, with Wolf Blass Red Wine dominating the 80s, his Wolf Blass Riesling becoming the number 1 seller in the nation ... and let's not forget four Jimmy Watson Trophies.

"Wolf Blass the person did it his way," he said. "I thank Australia for giving me the opportunity to create a wine style and I have responded with great passion."

To the next generation, Wolf encourages young winemakers to be export-orientated and to learn more, be hands-on and get into marketing: "In our industry, don't believe you can make a fast buck in the shortest possible way."

Philip Laffer AM was the inaugural recipient of this award and was inducted in 2014.

**Media Contact:** The 2016 recipients are available for interview. Please contact *Alexia Deegan* – 0400 767 490, [alexia@wfa.org.au](mailto:alexia@wfa.org.au)