

Sunday, November 5, 2023  
Melbourne Cup Sweep

Nadine Cresswell-Myatt

There's a smug couple in Sunbury, and deservedly so. Graeme and Dianne Lofts should bask in the glow of their success after hosting the event that stopped the nation and one that drew Wine Guild Victoria members from far and wide. Some participants arrived by car, but several of us travelled by train from Southern Cross Station to Sunbury Railway Station, as the Lofts' lavish home was only a short walk from Sunbury Station. We were met with a glass of sparkling and tantalising views of their inviting pool glittering in the sunshine. The Lofts have a marvellous home for entertaining with a large undercover outdoor area set out with tables and chairs and decorated with racing bunting for the occasion. There were even separate toilets for the fillies and mares.

Di's catering was incredible. She had obviously taken to her task of providing for various dietary allowances, with the usual thought and dedication she puts into everything she does. There were even vegetarian sausages (good ones!) and gluten-free wraps. Her recipe for those Russian-style salads should be provided post haste. Then there were her legendary pavs, each decorated with mountains of lush cream (including a lactose-free one) and mountains of fresh fruit—a sight to behold.

In drawing contestants' names out of a hat to match with horse names and numbers, Don Hyatt proved to be the perfect Emcee and his wife Robyn handled her role as assistant with aplomb. This couple could have a second career working as game show hosts. There were prizes of wine for the first four placegetters and special prizes for those who drew the horse that finished last. The value of the four major prizes was more than \$450.00 and included a Bottle of House of Arras Grand Vintage 2014 and a Bottle of Bollinger Special Cuveé. These will shortly land in the cellars of the lucky winners and last-place getters.

But we were all winners that day with perfect weather, charming hosts and a wonderful catch-up with our friends from the Wine Guild. And I'm sure I speak on behalf of everyone who attended in thanking Di and Graeme for their warm hospitality, and Robyn and Don for their amazing organisational skills. Together, they forged a remarkable occasion.

. . . . . and a short note from Judy Scott

*Thanks to Graeme and Dianne Lofts for inviting us to their home in Sunbury for lunch and the Melbourne Cup Sweep Draw.*

*Bright sunshine in their spacious outdoor area was enjoyed by all who attended. Many old friends were reunited, whilst newer members had the opportunity to mix with newfound friends. The food was delicious, thanks to Dianne and ample wine was sampled.*

*Many thanks, once again to Graeme and Dianne*