



## **Australian Vine Improvement Association Inc.**

### **Message from AVIA Acting Chair, Jan 28, 2014.**

Late on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2013, the AVIA Chair, Kym Ludvigsen passed away as a result of an accident in his vineyard at Ararat. It is a tragic loss of one of the Australian wine industry's strongest advocates for his wonderfully closely knit family and for AVIA at a very important stage of its evolution.

Kym had been instrumental in progressing new developments for germplasm management in Australia. His efforts led to the formation of the Australian Standard for Grapevine Propagation and the establishment of the Germplasm Working Group just 3 weeks before he died.

Out of this, we hope to see the adoption of the recommendations of the 'Review of Grapevine Collections in Australia' (GWR 1112) - a workable germplasm of reference vines which will give the wine, table grape and dried fruits industries correct varietal identification, high status material with a traceable source. Also it is hoped that support for a revised grapevine variety and clonal register to be regularly updated and germplasm-related research and development will continue.

AVIA members met on 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2013 to decide on AVIA's future. It was decided to hand over the management of the Dareton Collection for the next 12 months to VAMVVIA and to keep AVIA going as a national organisation, building on the opportunities that it presents, provide representation on national industry committees, particularly the national Grapevine Germplasm Working Group and continue to administrate current international grapevine supply agreements.

AVIA will look at options for a new Board structure, terms of reference and membership options. In the interim I have accepted the role of Acting Chair and look forward to building AVIA up to a strong position for vine improvement in Australia.

**Prue Henschke**