

Dear Members,

I hope 2018 is bringing a bounty of tasty wine for you all.

I have recently taken some time myself to consider the balance and focus of things in my life. At this time, I have decided to step down as President of Sommeliers Australia

I joined the Australian Sommeliers Association (Victorian Chapter) in 1998. I have been on committees since 2002, then President since 2013. During this time, I have witnessed many changes as the industry and its guests have evolved. We, as an association have evolved along with this changing scope of wine and those that enjoy it. It is the work of many committees and Members that have made these changes possible.

In 2008 it was decided to join the State Chapters and become one national organisation. This led to changing the association's name to Sommeliers Australia; representing all states.

As a result, I travelled to a General Assembly of Association de la Sommeliere Internationale (ASI) to put forward that Sommeliers Australia should be a part of this international network of Sommeliers. They voted us in, and we have since been involved in many of this international community's activities, including sending successful candidates to ASI's regional and international competitions. As this relationship with ASI continues to grow, the Australian pedigree of sommeliers will be recognised as the quality force that it is.

I have been privileged to work with so many dedicated people to help build this association. The committees that have been so active for the last few years have lifted this association to its most solid level yet: great initiatives executed very well by those sharing a vision, and striving to 'raise the bar' for this profession.

Sommeliers Australia is a volunteer run, not-for-profit association for the betterment of the Sommelier profession.

It is for it's Members.

It is for you.

There are no barriers for your involvement. It is a time poor life we live. If you can find the time to help make a tasting or conversation happen, talk to a committee member and you can make a contribution.

I thank all Members past and present, who have supported and worked so hard to grow this association. Sommeliers Australia would not be here without your input.

With the momentum of Sommeliers Australia and our eyes on the future, it must be iterated that all we have achieved thus far is the work of many people. I ask you all to maintain the momentum and energy for the incoming President.

Franck Moreau is an impeccable National Vice President and Imbi Knapstein as Administration Officer is an indispensable resource. Your association is in good hands.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Lawler', with a large, stylized initial 'D'.

David Lawler