

Dear reader,

When I turned 70 in August 2008, I made two decisions that took effect from the start of that year. First, that I should stop judging at the many capital city and regional wine shows at which I had served over the preceding 30 or so years. Second, that I should begin to future-proof the *Wine Companion*, and for the first time seek help in completing the tasting process.

The 2009 *Halliday Wine Companion* released that year contained 5778 full tasting notes, 169 new wineries and 1661 winery profiles in its 768 pages. So, I inveigled Ben Edwards to come on board with his qualifications as a senior wine show judge and, at the time, head of the Australian Sommeliers Association. To say I was pleased is an understatement, and Ben stayed true for five years before moving to Victoria's Alpine Valleys with his wife to run a luxury retreat. Campbell Mattinson – and Tyson Stelzer for sparkling wines – joined the band after that, with yet more swelling of the ranks over the following years, and there were six of us behind the new 2021 edition.

Now, not before time, I am retiring from my responsibilities of coordinating the 2022 *Companion*, although I will still be contributing tasting notes – just relatively few compared to my previous workload. I will also continue to produce articles, and I'm very happy that my joint venture with Hardie Grant will continue as the umbrella over all aspects of the website, book, magazine and future wine books.

All this hasn't come out of thin air. One key that had to be found was someone who could step into my shoes. My view was there was only one person with the organisational skills, broad cross-industry knowledge, tasting skills and appetite for the unrelenting work required: Tyson Stelzer. I am therefore pleased to announce Tyson is our new chief editor for *Halliday Wine Companion*.

Tyson has developed the brilliant idea of dividing the tastings geographically, with each member of the tasting panel now responsible for given regions where they already have special insight. The tasting team is also gaining two new members and all of these exciting developments, which will continue to be shared with you, have my unqualified support.

After almost 40 years of helming the *Companion*, I am looking forward to seeing this next stage in its evolution unfold as we enter this new era.

Yours sincerely,



James Halliday

Read more about Tyson Stelzer and the full tasting team [here](#).