



THE TALE OF SARAH+SPARKY

Sarah met Sparky in 1987, while both were studying winemaking at Roseworthy College. Sparky had abandoned a successful photography career for the chance to inherit his father's vineyard and drink as much wine as he liked. His enthusiasm for studying waned somewhat after he met the beautiful, sporty, artistic, and clever Sarah (whose car numberplate is, appropriately, "HAVNFUN"), but he still managed to win prizes and trophies every year, including the award for the student most likely to contribute to the Australian Wine Industry, and an overseas trip to France and the US to present his thesis on canopy management.

After four years Sparky finally persuaded Sarah to marry him, and the two started work as winemakers with Sarah's parents at Fox Creek in 1994. There they introduced their Marquis Vineyard Watering Program and continued to refine Sparky's viticulture research in the quest for "wines that make people go WOW." The day after Fox Creek received its winery license, their Fox Creek Shiraz took the top award at the McLaren Vale Wine Show (the Bushing). Since that first early success, they have gone on to win the Bushing award two more times, and be crowned Australian White Winemakers and Australian Boutique Winemakers of the Year. They formed their own company, making wines for Henry's Drive, Parson's Flat, Shirvington and Their joint venture Marquis Philips. They were was a runaway success, prompting Robert Parker to call their wines the "greatest red wine values in existence."

In March 2006, Sarah and Sparky branched out entirely on their own to create Mollydooker – the Aussie term for left hander – and promptly ran out of money before they could label the wines. Miraculously by some miracle, a local businessman wandered in the winery door one day and was inspired by their story to leave Sparky a cheque for enough to tide them through the next few months.

And then the Wine Advocate found Mollydooker. The Boxer was named Best Value Red Wine in the World, Two Left Feet was ranked second, Maitre D' fourth, and Violinist was crowned the Best Value White Wine in the World. The wines sold out in 19 days. Eighteen months after their near disaster, Sarah and Sparky were able to buy an estate winery with 114 acres of vineyards on the magical Seaview Ridge in McLaren Vale, and move the Mollydooker headquarters there.

Sparky and Sarah's phenomenal success (5 Wine Advocate 99 point wines, 2 Wine Spectator Top 10 Wines) stems from following their passions, and working from the heart. Both are dedicated to making wines that people love, with unwavering commitment to excellence and attention to detail. Sparky still spends the last few months before harvest under the gum trees in the vineyard squashing grapes and tasting the juice, working out exactly how much water the vines will need over the next few days. Sarah indulges her artistic flair with Mollydooker's label designs, ranging from the quirky Lefty series and Party labels (featuring their kids Luke and Holly), to the romantic Carnival of Love and Enchanted Path, as well as the luxurious elegance of Velvet Glove.

Sarah and Sparky have never forgotten how they were helped when they were in need. They started three Mollydooker Houses in Cambodia to school and feed needy children and their families, and they also support several other humanitarian causes in Australia and the USA.