
ULTIMATE WINERY EXPERIENCES AUSTRALIA



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AUSTRALIA ANNUAL MEMBER
MEETING 2026

ORANGE, NSW

Business Events Case Study

ABOUT THE EVENT

The Ultimate Winery Experiences Australia Annual Members Meeting brought together 38 attendees representing 22 winery members from across Australia, alongside the UWEA team, Board and special guests, for three days of connection, learning and experience development in Orange.

The program was designed to deliver more than a traditional annual meeting. The aim was to create an engaging and enjoyable experience that provided genuine value for members, while bringing the national UWEA collective together in one of Australia's leading cool-climate wine regions.

Members travelled from Western Australia, Tasmania, South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales, making the gathering a truly national event and providing valuable opportunities to reconnect with existing members, meet new faces and share experiences from across the collective.



Location:	Orange, New South Wales
Host Wineries	Printhie Wines and Swinging Bridge
Business Event Name:	Ultimate Winery Experiences Australia 2026 Member Member
Type of Business Event:	Meeting
Date:	5 - 7 August 2026
Host Organisation:	Ultimate Winery Experiences Australia
Number of delegates:	29 members representing 22 wineries, plus the UWEA team, Board and special guests
Attendee Origin:	Winery regions in Western Australia, Tasmania, South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales

WELCOME TO ORANGE

The first evening began with a relaxed welcome dinner at The Gladstone, a classic pub in Orange. With the fire roaring and local wines flowing, it provided an informal setting for members to reconnect and welcome new members to the group.

The evening featured a generous Thai feast accompanied by local wines, including selections from Swinging Bridge and Printhie Wines, setting the scene for the days ahead.

PRINTHIE WINES – A DAY OF LEARNING AND CONNECTION

Printhie Wines became the home of the group for the second day, with members welcomed under perfect blue winter skies.

The day began with a Kitchen Garden Tour hosted by owners Emily and Ed Swift, providing an insight into the produce grown on the estate and Printhie's approach to sustainability. Members heard about the use of recycled materials across the property, including the creative repurposing of the family's former cubby house as a chicken coop.

The tour also highlighted the relationship between the kitchen garden and Printhie Dining, with chefs designing menus around seasonal produce and continuing to experiment with what grows successfully in the Orange region.

The event then moved into Printhie's cellar door for the formal proceedings of the Annual Members Meeting. It provided an opportunity to reflect on the year's achievements, plan the year ahead and participate in professional learning and development.



SUNSET OVER THE VINES

Following the meeting, members headed outdoors for an afternoon of clay-pigeon shooting over the vines.

With expert instruction from the local gun club, members had the opportunity to try their hand at the activity, creating plenty of healthy competition and conversation.

As the sun began to set over Orange, the group gathered on the deck to enjoy Swift Sparkling and a selection of bites from the kitchen, including freshly shucked oysters from Printhie's oyster tank.



DINNER AT PRINTHIE

The evening continued in the Printhie Dining Room with an informal dinner centred around great food, wine and conversation.

Members were invited to bring a special bottle from their own winery to share, creating an opportunity to taste wines from across the UWEA collective while hearing the stories behind them.

Printhie Winemaker Drew Tuckwell also shared insights into his approach to producing sparkling wine in Orange. Drew was a finalist in the 2026 Halliday Wine Companion Winemaker of the Year awards, providing another opportunity for members to learn from one of the region's winemaking leaders.

Brothers Ed and Dave Swift shared more of the Printhie Wines story, including their individual journeys back into the family business.

The evening provided a fitting conclusion to a full day, with members from across Australia sharing food, wine, stories and conversation.



EXPLORING ORANGE AND MOUNT CANOBOLAS

The third day began with a scenic drive through Orange and up to the summit of Mount Canobolas. Travelling in two mini-buses, members were hosted by Ed Swift and Tom Ward, who shared their local knowledge and insights into the region along the way.

At the summit, the group was rewarded with spectacular winter views across the region. A glass of sparkling provided the perfect accompaniment before the group began the journey back down the mountain.

The next stop was Swinging Bridge, where Tom Ward, Rhys Baker and the team welcomed the group with much-needed hot coffees and pastries.

The focus then shifted from exploring Orange to developing new ideas for wine tourism with a series of workshops held in Swinging Bridge's cellar door.



VINEYARD LUNCH AT SWINGING BRIDGE

The final experience of the meeting was an outdoor vineyard lunch at Swinging Bridge.

Despite the winter temperatures, the decision to embrace an outdoor lunch was rewarded with glorious sunshine. Members settled in overlooking the vineyards to enjoy a relaxed afternoon of food and Swinging Bridge wines, with a bonfire providing warmth and atmosphere.

Importantly, the lunch also created valuable unstructured time for members to connect.

With wineries represented from across the country, these informal conversations provided an opportunity to share experiences, discuss common challenges and opportunities, and strengthen relationships across the UWEA collective.



CHALLENGES AND TRIUMPHS

Bringing members together in Orange from across Australia initially presented a logistical challenge, with attendees travelling from regional parts of Western Australia, Tasmania, South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales. We prioritised making it easy for everyone to reach another regional destination when planning the event.

It quickly became clear that Sydney provided the ideal connection point, with regular Qantas flights between Sydney and Orange making the journey straightforward for interstate members. The next challenge was communicating the travel options clearly so everyone could plan their journey with confidence.

With clear information provided ahead of the event, the travel arrangements proved seamless. Even members travelling from Margaret River in WA and Northern Tasmania made it to and from Orange easily and on time, demonstrating that regional destinations can be highly accessible for national events with the right connections and communication.

We were also spoilt for accommodation choices, with plenty of quality options to choose from.



THE VERDICT

The UWEA Annual Members Meeting in Orange demonstrated the value of bringing a national organisation together in a regional setting.

Across three days, the program combined strategic business content, industry insights, hands-on experience development, local food and wine, and memorable activities among the vineyards.

From the Kitchen Garden Tour and behind-the-scenes insights at Printhie Wines to the Experience Development Workshop at Swinging Bridge, the program gave members opportunities to learn, share ideas and experience the type of thoughtful, engaging tourism experiences that UWEA promotes.

Most importantly, the meeting created space for members from across Australia to reconnect, build relationships and share the experiences and challenges of operating in wine tourism – reinforcing the value of a national collective while celebrating the people, places, wine and hospitality that bring it to life.

FROM ULTIMATE WINERY EXPERIENCES AUSTRALIA

“The success of our Annual Members Meeting was a wonderful reflection of the hospitality, professionalism and generosity of Printhie Wines, Swinging Bridge and the Orange region. Both wineries embraced the program wholeheartedly and created exceptional experiences for our members, from the food and wine to the activities, local insights and thoughtful touches throughout the three days. Orange provided the perfect setting, and the teams at Printhie and Swinging Bridge made the entire event feel effortless. Their contribution was instrumental in delivering a memorable and genuinely valuable experience for our national membership.”

Sarah Myers, Executive Officer, Ultimate Winery Experiences Australia

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