The romance of the olive

By Chris Friday

Chris Iacono of the Bunna Bunoo Olive Grove at Vacy thinks he may be on another winner with his plans to promote the grove as a wedding ceremony venue.

“The olive branch has been a symbol of peace and serenity for thousands of years so what more fitting place to seal your wedding vows than an olive grove,” he said.

“We have all the facilities and surroundings for a beautiful ceremony among the olive trees.”

Already thousands of visitors enjoy our grove each year and hosting wedding ceremonies would be a great boost to our business and the local economy.”

Bunna Bunoo Olive Grove has rapidly become an institution in the region.

But it was not always the case. When Chris acquired his dream property 12 years ago he had an immediate dilemma, what to do with the 4000 healthy olive trees he had inherited as part of the estate.

For Chris the solution was simple. He and his family set to work to establish the premier olive grove in the region with a range of unique estate produced products.

“The climate of the Paterson River area is much like southern Italy where my family came from so having a go at growing olives seemed like a very natural thing for us to do,” Chris said.

“Our goal was to produce extra virgin oil and traditionally brined whole olives of the highest quality.”

“By using time-proven traditional methods and adding the latest modern techniques we have created Bunna Bunoo products that are now recognised as being the equal of anything produced here or overseas.”

Today Bunna Bunoo produces a wide range of traditional and not so traditional products including extra virgin olive oils, six types of cured olives, balsamic vinegars, tapenade, ducca and even olive soap.

Table olives come from Jumbo Kalamata, Kalamata and Manzanillo trees.

“A special treat and a favourite of many top chefs is our caramelised balsamic vinegar made on site by a precise reduction process to draw out the exquisite flavours,” he said.

Chris credits much of the success of the Grove to his late wife, Irma.

“She was our daily inspiration. "Bunna Bunoo is Irma’s enduring legacy and we intend to build on it in the future,"”

Not content with pleasing thousands of visitors and locals, supplying local markets and some of the country’s top chefs and restaurants Chris and the family have plans to build the attractiveness of the grove even further.

“For some time we have been limited by the size of our grove that can only accommodate a small number of olive trees. By expanding our facilities we will be able to offer more people the delights of the olive and its products.”

In addition Chris is also working on establishing a self-contained farm stay unit so visitors can sample the delights of the Great Southern Black family from Wallarobba and

Zoo winners

Winners of the Dubbo Western Plains Zoo family tickets were the Black family from Wallarobba and Stella Waskerman from Dungog.

Thank you to everyone who entered.

Correction

In the photo published for the Dungog Clarence Town CWA Quillarum in last week’s edition, the incorrect person was named in the photo.

It was Dawn Patterson from Medowie CWA with her quilt that won viewers’ choice.

The Chronicle apologises for the error.