

Owners resurrect 30 year old vines



Symphony Hill winemaker Mike Hayes and Azjure Studio Retreat owners Cathryn Leigh and Ross Bloore with the crushed Pinot Noir grapes, thought to be the oldest in Queensland.

AFTER three years and a lot of work, Azjure Studio Retreat owners Cathryn Leigh and Ross Bloore have resurrected a 28 year old dilapidated vineyard – believed to be Queensland’s oldest Pinot Noir grapes.

This year, the grapes were good enough to be bottled, and last week the owners picked and crushed the vineyard’s first harvest in nearly 30 years.

“It’s very exciting to see the whole process begin and a great relief to have the harvest in,” Ross said.

“We’re looking forward to the whole wine making process.”

Ross and Cathryn gave the grapes to Symphony Hill Wines to be crushed, an appropriate place for them to end up, as it was winemaker Mike Hayes and his father Martin who first planted the grapes 28 years ago. Three very excited faces watched the wine making process begin, as one ton of grapes were crushed and placed into a fermenta bag.

Mike said the grapes were looking very good and he couldn’t wait to try the wine next year, after sitting in French Oak barrels for eight to 10 months.

Ross and Cathryn bought the Azjure Studio Retreat land with

the run down vines at Ballandean three years ago and decided they wanted to try to bring the vineyard back to life.

“It was all overgrown,” Ross said.

“We decided to bring it back because it was historical being Queensland’s oldest pinot noir.”

Ross said the pair did most of the work, which was tough with no previous industry experience.

“We knew it was important to get help from people who knew what they were doing,” he said

“We did what they suggested.

“We’re hoping this is the first vintage of many.”