

SALIFE

SA's next generation winemakers



Brandy patiently ages in the property's barrel halls.

Distilling a family legacy

Angove Family Winemakers

On a cold winter's night in 1956, the largest flood in Renmark's history breached a levee at St Agnes Distillery – one of Australia's largest brandy makers. That night saw winemaker Tom Angove, the inventor of the wine cask, toil in bitterly cold waters to plug a gap in a sandbag wall, saving the Angove family's winery and distillery in the process.

The infamous Riverland flood is just one of many ups and downs, triumphs and tragedies weathered by multiple generations of the Angove family over 140 years. And it's the current chapter that is proving most transformative, overseen by fifth-generation Angoves: Victoria, Richard and Sophie.

Richard and Victoria are joint managing directors while Sophie works in viticulture, championing the producer's leading organic and sustainability practices.

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In 2025, the St Agnes brand marked its centenary with the release of premium aged spirits. It is a milestone for the only family-owned company that still makes its own brandy in Australia.

Richard was seven when he made his first wine, overseen by his father John Angove. Richard's first jobs included cleaning out the old brandy stills. "I studied winemaking and worked a vintage at Angoves in 2001, and then did my first overseas vintage in Napa Valley," Richard says.

"I worked vintages in the northern and southern hemispheres over several years, before coming back to the family business in sales and marketing."

As a young child, Victoria watched with fascination as her father would return from sales trips. "I remember Dad would come home, and I thought business was all about carrying a briefcase around," Victoria says. "Once I was older, I learned that wine is a very challenging but exciting industry to be in."

Over the past 25 years, Victoria has put her stamp on the export, sales, marketing and public relations side of things. "Each of us had very different career pathways. We were never pushed to follow in Dad's footsteps, but I was always interested," Victoria says. "Dad encouraged us to learn from other mentors within the business, which has been a gift."

Youngest sibling Sophie worked as a teacher before studying environmental science, and then winemaking and viticulture. Since joining the business in 2017, she has helped Angove Family Winemakers become an industry leader in certified organic wine production.

"I love that I can combine viticulture with a natural, environmental approach," Sophie says.

"Healthy soils make strong vines that are more resistant to disease pressure. The organic vineyards have a resilience that carries them through challenging years of heat stress and drought."

As the industry has evolved, the Angoves have been at the forefront. "We've dramatically evolved our offering over time thanks to the amazing team around us and the great mentors we've had along the way," Victoria says.

They also credit the continuity of chief winemaker Tony Ingle and head of sales and marketing Tim Boydell who have been with the company for more than 20 years.

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With the business in its 140th year, the Angoves are working on the next chapter, and particularly the growth of St Agnes' premium brandies. Victoria believes Australian brandy is on the cusp of a renaissance.



Fifth-generation Angoves Sophie, Victoria and Richard have developed their family business into an industry leader in certified organic wine production, while championing the renaissance of premium brandy through St Agnes Distillery.

“The challenge for us is to re-engage with new consumers and show them how extraordinary brandy is as a beautiful, aged spirit,” she says. “Knowing it is made here is something all South Australians can be proud of.”

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