

# *Food & Wine*



December 2014

**The Journal of The International Wine & Food Society Europe & Africa Committee**

**Free to European & African Zone Members - one per address - Issue 121**

**Cork, the true bottle closure**

**The William Heptinstall Memorial Fund**

**From MasterChef to Mallorca**

©Bruce Lawrence





## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

### Dear Members

Well the year seems to have raced by, and I will have managed to visit 9 of our branches by year end. Lively discussion on each occasion, accompanied by good camaraderie, and well deserved award presentations, emphasised what we are about. Where I will visit next year is less certain since so few branches show their events on their branch page of the website. I earlier this year issued a Chairman's challenge for all branches to have at least one branch event open to neighbouring branches, but it is not easy to see this happening, if events are not advertised. The good news is following much comment on the complexity and unfriendliness of the website, Council have commissioned some work to resolve this, and we should hear about this in the New Year. Meanwhile Val Ramsay is still offering to get your branch events page up and running on the website. Contact [val.ramsay@live.com](mailto:val.ramsay@live.com).

The main item which has occupied your committee this year is Incorporation, and the vote in favour by 97% at the September AGM has set the clock ticking to implementation on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015. Michael Mes-sent our Vice Chairman explains elsewhere.

Membership is holding this year. We are possibly 1% down on this time last year but your efforts to recruit appear to be showing results. Each branch signing up just one more member by year end would be terrific and it's a good time to join, with new members getting 13-14months membership for the price of 12. Earlier in the year I mentioned our treasurer John Nicholas was reviewing how we could get our current account less in the red. Inflation, particularly postage and publishing, has hit us consistently over many years to the extent that the committee has this year agreed to introduce a 5-6% rise in subscriptions for 2015. eg. £42 single, £55 joint membership. Committee agreed to review this regularly so we are not forced into making a large rise as happened a few years ago. Unused contingency from Festivals, Events and the Society continues to support our annual expenditure.

We have had two members volunteer to come along to the EAC Committee and observe us, with a view to joining. If others wonder how they could contribute then they are welcome to do the same. Whereas the Committee has four face to face meetings per year the Subcommittees do more business by email communications, with perhaps one face to face meeting per year. We have published in this magazine the makeup of the committees and highlighted where we have vacancies. No qualifications are usually necessary just a willingness to join discussion, give ideas, and help.

Branches are having significant anniversaries with St James's 20<sup>th</sup> at the Ritz in October, and Merseyside and Mid Cheshire's 80th at the Chester Grosvenor in December (the same venue as their inaugural dinner). We send them our best wishes. We have also realised that we have no central record of Branch inaugurations. This information appears to be held within branches and we would like to collect it together centrally. Again if you email a short history to Val she will put it on your branch 'Overview' page.

Well there seems a lot going on at present. I look forward to seeing many of you at our annual Dinner at the Innholders Hall, in November - should be a great occasion. To the rest of our members I and the Committee send our Season's Greetings and Best Wishes for the New Year.

**Ian Nicol**

The Society was formed on 20th October 1933 in London by wine writer André L Simon and bibliophile A. J. Symons. Within a month there were 230 members. Today there are over 6,660 in 133 branches worldwide.

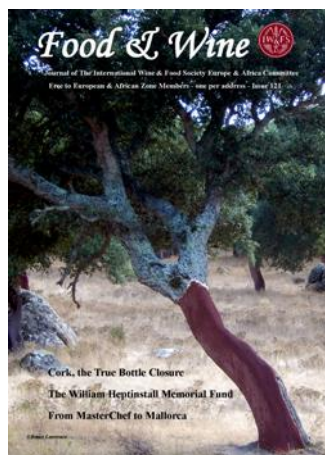
The Society, which is an independent non profit making organisation run by volunteers, is divided into three areas – the European & African Zone, the Asian Pacific Zone and The Americas.

In André's words,

*"The purpose of the Society is to bring together and serve all who believe that a right understanding of good food and wine is an essential part of personal contentment and health and that an intelligent approach to the pleasures and problems of the table offers far greater rewards than mere satisfaction of appetites."*

In the over indulgent society of the 21st century we endeavour to examine some of the excesses of the western diet and to persuade consumers of the need for quality rather than quantity in the food and drink they consume. To this end we support suppliers of quality produce worldwide.

New members are always welcome, please see page three for details.



## Food & Wine

Designed In House by  
The International Wine  
& Food Society  
European & African Region

Editor Pam Brunning  
Brunsdon Farm  
Heath Ride  
Wokingham  
Berkshire  
RG40 3QJ  
Tel +44 (0)118 9733287  
E mail  
editor@sidpam.waitrose.com

Printed by  
All Things Print  
Judds Farmhouse  
97, London Road  
Stanway, Colchester  
Essex CO3 0NY  
www.AllThingsPrint.co.uk

The Society welcomes  
application for Membership

For information please contact  
Katie Wilkins  
EAC Membership Registrar  
14 Highbury, Jesmond,  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE2 3DX, UK  
+44 (0) 191 239 9630  
E mail  
eacmembership@talktalk.net

Food & Wine Magazine is  
published by the European &  
African Committee of the  
International Wine & Food  
Society. All rights reserved.  
Reproduction in whole or part is  
strictly forbidden without prior  
written consent.

The views expressed by  
contributors are not necessarily  
those of the IW&FS

For extra copies please contact  
the Editor

## Editorial

Well, the end of another year and much water has passed under the bridge. From the reports in here branches have been doing a lot of things and holding many varied events, thank you for all your interesting reports.

I am afraid we have some reports on the state of the Society in this issue which some may find boring but it is things that the members must know to appreciate the workings of the Society and how hard everyone works to hold the Society together. The main thing you as members can do to help us to keep going is to recruit more members.

We have a report on Structure and Membership and a piece telling you where your membership money goes by our hard working treasurer John Nicholas. On a lighter note we have a report on a young chef in Mallorca and a look at the cork industry. John Valentine tells us of the life of a Heptinstall winner and Bernard Lamb looks at Alcohol, Friend and Foe.

I had a last minute upset when I realised that I still had half a page to fill on the letters page. Why won't anyone send me letters, does sitting down writing an email or sending a letter require so much effort or are some of our members so intoxicated that they don't have the ability to put pen to paper. I have never known any publication where people have been so reluctant to send in letters. Good old Wikipedia came up trumps and I have filled it up with a photo of asparagus in line with the letter I did receive.

I leave wishing you all a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Best wishes

*Pam*

# CONTENTS

Chairman's Column	2	From MasterChef to Mallorca	14 - 15
Editorial	3	Cork, the true bottle closure.	16—17
Secretariat News	5	THE SOCIETY'S AWARDS	18 - 19
Letters	6	Alcohols, friends and foes	20—21
IWFS Europe Africa Ltd	7	Manchester Branch Visit to Jersey	22—24
Structure and Membership	8 - 9	Report of an IWFS Tour 1949	25
The William Heptinstall Memorial Fund	10 - 11	Around the Branches	26 - 35
Membership Subscriptions	12 - 13	Rich, Rare & Red	36



**John W Valentine** joined the Society through the London Branch in 1987 and in 2001 became a member of the St James's branch.

Following three years as Treasurer of the 1993 International Festival in London, he received a Bronze medal. He joined the EAC and became Chairman and Events Coordinator. The purpose of this role is to ensure that Members within our Region are provided with an ongoing choice of events to attend, coordinated across Branches and countries. He became secretary/treasurer to Council and received a Silver medal in 2000. In 2009 he was awarded a gold medal and since the inception of the new Society website he has been working tirelessly coordinating with the other two zones and perfecting the EAC section.



**Jan Edwards** is a former BBC local radio presenter, who has lived on Mallorca since 2004. A freelance writer, she contributes regular articles – including restaurant reviews – to the island's lifestyle magazine abcMallorca, for which she has been freelance assistant editor since December 2010. Her articles have been published in the UK in The Telegraph (weekly expat edition of The Daily Telegraph), Living Spain, The Business Travel News, and other publications. Jan is passionate about Mallorca's gastronomy and has eaten in all five restaurants with Michelin-starred cuisine. She presents a weekly 'What's on in Mallorca' update on Talk Radio Europe, and blogs about her country *finca* home on [www.livinginruralmallorca.com](http://www.livinginruralmallorca.com)



**Dr Bernard Lamb** has made wines and beers with cultivated yeasts for 45 years and is a member of the United Kingdom Vineyards Association. He has a DSc in fungal genetics and did research and teaching in genetics at Imperial College London for 40 years. His books include applied genetics, wine and beer judging, standards of English, and how to use the Queen's English. He is an IWFS member.



**David Chapman** is a retired lawyer, a Commandeur of the Commanderie de Bordeaux à Manchester (since 1994) and an Officier of the L'Ordre des Coteaux de Champagne which he joined in 2005. He has been a member of the International Wine & Food Society Manchester Branch since 1987 and was a member of its committee for many years, twice serving as Chairman. He has led branch trips to the Champagne Region, to the Douro Valley and to Jersey. He is also the Hon. President of the Manchester Wine Society, a wine tasting group of which he has been a member for over 30 years



## Dear Members

The location of the 51<sup>st</sup> IWFS Annual General Meeting (AGM) was Chicago, Illinois on September 20<sup>th</sup> 2014. I was fortunate to fly out and take part in this event and also the fantastic dining experiences, as the event dovetailed with the 2014 Fall meeting of the Board of Governors of the Americas (BGA) and the meeting of the International Council of Management (ICM). What a wonderful city and not that windy either (although now reading "Devil in the White City" I have learnt how it really earned that name – thank you to Cathy Kuhlman for the heads up on this read).

The AGM went off smoothly and the Special Resolution was passed with a resounding majority in favour. While the legal structure of the organization has now changed (which has taken a tremendous amount of work going on behind the scenes led by Andrew Jones of the Cayman Islands & New York City branches) the day-to-day running of the Society and your branch will remain unchanged and therefore, like driving over the equator, you may not even notice it has happened. Michael Messent, of the Wessex branch and Secretary of the ICM, has covered the main aspects of this Special Resolution in a separate note on page ?? should you wish to find out more. A copy of the AGM minutes are on the website under link <http://www.iwfs.org/secretariat/society-papers/annual-general-meetings>.

The meeting of the ICM covered the many issues to maintain the international values and cohesion of the organization. A key change in the board of Directors was made with Yvonne Wallis, of the Melbourne branch in the Asia Pacific Zone (APZ), stepping aside after completing her two years as the Society's global Chair and Dave Felton, of the Pasadena & Los Angeles branches in the Americas, was voted in unanimously to take on this role.

The dinners arranged in Chicago were all very different and upon reflection I think cleverly represented the key elements of the Society; **tradition** was the focus of the first meal held at The Chicago Club, chartered in 1829; **education** was the next element with the Scholarship Dinner at Kendall College and with whom the Chicago branch has worked and supported their students for a number of years; **history** was taken in at the Gala Dinner in Art Deco surroundings of The Casino Club and then the final night led the way for **innovation** with dinner at El Ideas where we enjoyed the cutting edge cuisine of Phillip Foss and his team. The trip was organized impeccably by John Danza, his fellow Chicago branch members and also not forgetting his wife Jan – and huge thanks go to them all.

As I type, the next Society monograph is with the printers. This has been produced under the leadership of Yvonne Wallis with the assistance of Tony Levien, previous APZ Chair, who successfully commissioned Bob Campbell MW to be the author. Bob is also our New Zealand consultant for our Vintage Card and has been for many years.

"Reflections through a wine glass, Some Contemporary issues explored" comprises eight short essays on a variety of wine topics – designed to be a light read that can be dipped in and out of in a busy schedule. One major change is that this edition is in full colour to hopefully entice more people to open up and read. Bob has chosen modern issues that he has encountered during his esteemed career and through his own personal enjoyment of wine – providing, we trust, an interesting, entertaining and informed insight into each.

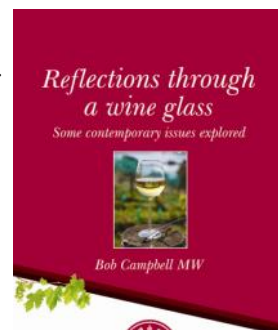
Readers are taken stage by stage from the vine to the glass, what makes a good wine, looking at other ways to enhance the enjoyment of wine and finally ways to develop their interest further covering topics such as the dilemmas you face when keeping a cellar, experiences of being a wine judge and then embarking on the Master of Wine course....

Arrangements will be made for each member household to receive a complimentary copy of this new and exciting publication – whether it be through the post or handed to you at a future Society event. Either way you should have your copy before the end of the year. This will also be made available for you to download from the website should a digital version be a more convenient way for you to enjoy this monograph. We hope you find it a welcome benefit of your membership.

Quantity	Non-members price	Members' price	Members' Price per card
12	£26.76	£24.00	£2.00
25	£53.00	£47.75	£1.91
50	£101.00	£91.00	£1.82
75	£147.00	£132.00	£1.76
100	£191.00	£172.00	£1.72

The **2014 Vintage Cards** now available to purchase from the IS. Special prices are available for members and they are the perfect gift to include in your seasonal message to family, friends or colleagues.

**2014 Vintage Cards** Prices include postage and packing



MW Bob Campbell tasting a glass of '76 d'Yquem at the Chateau

One final note I would like to thank Yvonne Wallis for all her inspiration and fresh ideas, during her time as Chair, leading the Society forward. It was great to be part of her team over the last two years. I now look forward to working with Dave Felton who has now taken over at the helm.

Santé

Andrea Warren  
International Secretariat



# Readers Letter



Dear Editor

## Does anyone know that post-asparagus pong?

A few minutes after eating asparagus, my wife and I get a strong, coarse, asparagus-like smell in our urine. The effect lasts for several hours. When we have cautiously mentioned this to other people, they usually say that they have never noticed it. After the picnic interval at Glyndebourne in summer, the Gents' toilet reeks of asparagus to me, but no one else comments on it.

It is possible that Brenda and I have a different metabolism from most others, but that is not the answer. I found a paper (Lisonet *al.*, *British Medical Journal* 1980, **281**:1676-78) by an Israeli group who had done the relevant experiments. Urine was taken from a man who had eaten 450 g of canned asparagus, with 12 two-fold dilutions being made with water. Everyone could detect the smell in undiluted urine held under their nose. 279 people could not detect the smell beyond dilution 6 but 30 could detect the smell in dilutions 7 (1 in 128 dilution) to 12 (1 in 4096 dilution). When the percentage of the population able to detect the smell at a particular dilution was plotted against the dilution number, there were two clear peaks, one at dilution 4 (called 'non-smellers' by the experimenters) and one at dilution 8 ('smellers').

It was found that the ability to secrete into the urine the characteristic pungent odour from eaten asparagus was universal, but people could be grouped into the majority of those only able to smell it at high concentrations, and the minority of about 10% who are hypersensitive to the smell. Brenda and I must be in that latter category.

The ability to detect the smell easily was unrelated to sex, or being used to eating asparagus, or whether the Jewish subjects were of Ashkenazi, Yemenite or Moroccan origin, and was unrelated to the ability to smell acetone. Can you detect that post-asparagus pong?

**Bernard Lamb**



# **IWFS EUROPE AFRICA LTD- 1<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY 2015**

The 51st Annual General Meeting of the Society took place in Chicago on 20th September 2014. The main business before the meeting was to consider changes which had been proposed by the Council of Management. The effect of these changes was to alter the legal structure of the Society - to dissolve the area committees in the three zones, and to create in their place three companies. The proposals were explained in detail in a statement which formed part of the formal notice of meeting which was sent to all members in July.

In the event there was overwhelming support for the proposal by those who voted in person and by proxy. As a result, the Council of Management and the three area committees are working on the implementation of the plan. This will mean some changes, the main ones being:-

All members of the Society who are branch members or independent members within the Europe and Africa Zone (EAZ) will cease to be members of IWFS Ltd and will become members of IWFS Europe Africa Limited (IWFS EAL) with effect from 1st January 2015.

The Europe and Africa Committee ("EAC") of IWFS Limited will be dissolved at the end of the year (although all its current members will become the Executive Committee of IWFS EAL).

However, while the legal structure changes, and this will have a bearing on how members of the International Council and the zone committees operate, there should be very little change as far as individual members are concerned. For example:-

The name of the Society remains the same and IWFS Ltd will continue as the worldwide custodian of the name, trademarks and other assets.

The Society will continue to be supported by an administrator (Andrea Warren).

Grapevine will continue to be circulated to all members of each of the zones.

Vintage cards and monographs will still be produced.

The website will remain as a single Society website (and hopefully will be improved and enhanced during the coming year).

The Council of Management of IWFS Ltd. will continue and two members of the EAZ Executive Committee will be nominated to serve upon it.

Members of all three zones will be still be able to attend Festivals and Branch events worldwide.

The EAZ Food & Wine Journal will continue.

Branch members and their committees will continue to have the benefit of Public Liability Insurance.

There is no change to the branch structure or the manner in which branches run themselves.

There will continue to be an annual meeting of representatives from the branches and an Annual General Meeting of the new Company which all members will be entitled to attend in person or by proxy.

The EAZ Executive Committee will continue to run festivals and promote events.

There are also some advantages arising out of these changes:-

There will be improved legal protection for the Officers and members of the Executive Committee and the assets of IWFS EAL.

In the longer term it should help keep costs down.

Michael Messent  
Vice Chairman of the EAC



# Structure and Membership of IWFS Ltd from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015

The Society has always been headed by six Directors, made up of three from Americas, two from Europe Africa, and one from Asia Pacific, reflecting the size of the membership in each zone.

These same people form the Council of Management, which meets formally three times each year and at the Society's AGM.

Each zone has an alternate, in case one of its Council members can't attend a meeting.

The Society President is an Honorary Member of the Society, but not a member of Council.

The present makeup of Council following the handing over of the Council Chair, from Yvonne Wallis to Dave Felton on completion of her two year tenure in September 2014, is as follows:

Council Chair	Dave Felton	Pasadena Branch	Americas Zone Representative
Council Secretary	Michael Messent	Wessex Branch	Europe Africa Zone Representative
Council Treasurer	Dwight Catherwood	Los Angeles Branch	Americas Zone Representative
Council Member	Andrew Jones	Cayman Islands Branch	Americas Zone Representative
Council Member	Ian Nicol	Blackpool & Fylde Branch	Europe Africa Zone Representative
Council Member	Yvonne Wallis	Victoria Branch	Asia Pacific Zone Representative
Alternate	Brian Findlay	Niagara Branch	Americas
Alternate	John Nicholas	Zurich Branch	Europe Africa
Alternate	Erik Lehnacker	Victoria Branch	Asia Pacific

The Honorary President is presently Sid Cross, Vancouver Branch.

From 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015 these 10 people will be the only members of IWFS Ltd as all other members will have been transferred to the area companies. This will make the holding of a Society AGM very simple and inexpensive as we no longer have to print and mail out documentation to 6,000 members all around the world. An annual report on the activities of this company will be included in Zones' company magazines and there will be quarterly updates in Grapevine.

## **Charitable Status – The Delaware Foundation**

At the EAZ ABRM in June the Committee was asked to consider applying for charitable status. Having looked into this, it is very difficult to think we can persuade the Charity Commissioners that imbibing good vintage wine and partaking in fine dining is a charitable activity. The accounting and reporting requirements are also onerous.

The Americas do have a charitable foundation set up, called the Delaware Foundation, through which they channel monies raised for the purpose of scholarships and educational support, particularly to young people, entering the Catering and Hospitality Business. Donations and Legacies from members also boost this fund, which gets favourable tax status in the USA.

The nearest the EAZ gets to this, is when local branches fundraise to help local students or colleges, and also in helping to administer the William Heptinstall Award. This award, set up by his widow assists a young chef each year to broaden their work experience. We in the EAZ have considerable knowledge of the production of, and the matching of food and wine. We need to consider whether we wish to set up a charitable trust to support the education of younger people and have a trust to which legacies can be directed. Comments from members would be welcomed.

## **International Wine & Food Foundation of America (California Foundation)**

Many of you will be aware that some years ago a considerable sum of Society money was diverted into a charitable foundation called the International Wine & Food Foundation of America in the USA. This foundation was set up with very strict conditions on how the money could be used, primarily on the publishing of food and wine books. It has been little used in the past, however more recently money has been applied for and approved for publishing Society monographs.

The present Trustees are Bob Gutenstein (President), Jim Paras (Secretary), Alec Murray and Dave Felton are the other two Directors. Application has been made through the California courts to widen the conditions of use, since in this digital age, book publishing is very limited. Indications are that an agreement will be made to widen the funds use to general educational purposes. As the fund is presently worth about \$300,000 a great opportunity exists, although every application will be thoroughly judged on its merit, accuracy and detail.

*Ian Nicol*



## **Europe & Africa Committee EAC**

Chair	Ian Nicol	Blackpool & Fylde
Vice Chair	Michael Messent	Wessex
Secretary	Chris Redman	Manchester
Treasurer	John Nicholas	Zurich
Membership	Katie Wilkins	Northern Dales
Events Co-ordinator	Stephanie Shepherd	London
Webmaster	Andrew Brodie	London
Magazine Editor	Pam Brunning	Capital
Awards	David Chapman	Manchester
Africa	Hilton Kuck	Capetown
Northern Europe?	<i>vacancy</i>	
New Branches?	<i>vacancy</i>	
Observer	Tricia Fletcher	Manchester
Observer	Margaret Chippendale	Manchester

This is the EAC layout of committee members and sub committees. If you have any skills to offer the committee in any of the vacancies on this page please contact Ian Nicol  
ian\_nicol@hotmail.com

## **EAC Subcommittees**

### **PR/MARKETING**

Chair	Stephanie Shepherd
Member	Ron Barker
Member	Kurt Haerling
Member	Pille Heido
Member	<i>vacancy</i>

### **FINANCE**

Chair	John Nicholas
Examiner	Graham Lovelock
Accountant	<i>vacancy</i>

### **E-COMMUNICATIONS**

Chair	Ian Nicol
Webmaster	Andrew Brodie
Membership	Katie Wilkins
Branch Support	Val Ramsay
Social Media	<i>vacancy</i>

### **AWARDS**

Chair	David Chapman
Member	John Legg
Member	Ron Barker
Member	<i>vacancy</i>

### **NEW BRANCHES**

Chair	<i>vacancy</i>
Member	<i>vacancy</i>
Member	<i>vacancy</i>

### **PUBLICATIONS**

Chair	Pam Brunning
Assist Editor	<i>vacancy</i>
e-newsletter	<i>vacancy</i>

### **FESTIVALS/EVENTS**

Chair	Stephanie Shepherd
London Festival	FOC
North West	<i>vacancy</i>
NE/Midlands	<i>vacancy</i>
South West	<i>vacancy</i>
South East	<i>vacancy</i>



## *The William Heptinstall Memorial Fund as explained by John Valentine*

**W**illiam Heptinstall was one of the first chefs to write full length books on the art of cookery. He travelled extensively during his career, and realized the benefits of this experience on his skills and achievements. After he died in 1971 his niece, using the royalties from his books, set up a charitable trust to help future young chefs benefit from similar experiences. For more than 40 years the trust, aided by the Cooks Livery Company and the International Wine & Food Society, has made this award. Many of our previous winners have gone on to establish highly successful careers in the hospitality industry around the world.

**William Heptinstall** From its foundation the administration of the Heptinstall Award was undertaken at cost by the IWFS. In 2002 the trustees set up a corporate trustee, with the individual trustees at that time becoming the original directors, and in 2008 the trustee took over the full administration of the Award. Today the trustee directors are volunteers drawn from members of the EAZ (Chris Bonsall, Jenny Rodgers & John Valentine) and from the Royal Academy of Culinary Arts (Brian Turner & John Williams).

The Award, presently at £3,500, has maintained its real value in comparison with the RPI over the years. We have been impressed, in almost every year, by the quality of the majority of candidates. Some candidates have been encouraged to return within a year or two, once they have developed further so as to benefit more fully from the Award, given that maturity, self-confidence, communication skills and independence are key requirements along with the ability to perform in the kitchen.

Earlier Award Winners have acquitted themselves well in the culinary world. Eighteen of the twenty-six awards claimed through 2001 are active as chef-patrons, senior chefs or executives in the hotel or catering industry. For winners between 1980 and 2001 seventeen of the twenty awards are in such positions.

While the quality of applicants remains high, the major challenge faced by the Fund is to attract sufficient applicants each year to compete for the Award. The ability to attract applicants is limited by the need to control administration costs while maintaining a valuable and worthwhile Award.

Experienced young chefs are accustomed to cooking under competitive conditions, but are often much less comfortable in writing down their ambitions and then being interviewed about them. However, the undoubted life changing experiences enjoyed by our winners encourages us to continue to seek creative ways to continue to provide this benefit on a sustainable basis.

In recent years we have replaced mass mailings of letters, flyers and posters to chefs, hotels and catering colleges by selected personalised mailings. We have set up a website where young chefs can read about the Award, review the experiences of previous winners, and then download or register for an application form. In the last few years we have added a Facebook account for the Award and, most recently, used Twitter to raise awareness of the Award and attract applicants.

Verbatim comments from Award Winners include:

"I always knew that my trip would be tough; nothing in this life is easy. But I didn't quite anticipate how hard it would actually be!! Overall my trip was a great learning curve, not only in the kitchen, I learnt a lot about myself when I was away. I will be recommending young chefs in the trade to seriously think about working abroad, I had a great time, and it will benefit my career a tremendous amount."

"This was a real journey, one that was not only long and hard but also very rewarding and educational. I had a life-changing experience and when you enjoy yourself as much as I did, you forget about the cost. Don't look at your report as a downside to the reward, think of it as a bonus – you get to relive the whole experience and look back and share with others for years to come. And remember that this Award has the potential to be a life-changing experience; it can change you and make you grow as a person and a young professional, realising what a great thing the Award is for people that want it to help change them and their lives."

"What I want from the industry has evolved. Has the direction I want to take changed? What do I want to do next? My time spent abroad has been a real eye opener and help to give me a lot of direction in answering these questions. My time abroad has given me the confidence and the opportunity to do what I want next in my career."



“I can honestly say that my time in New York was one of the greatest highlights of my career so far. The people I’ve met, the things I’ve seen and done and the places I’ve worked have all played a part in me becoming a more mature cook and an enriched individual. None of this would have been possible without me being given the William Heptinstall Award, so I would like to thank all those involved and urge young people within our industry to work as hard as they can and to grasp opportunity firmly. It will make them all better cooks and, most importantly, better people.”

“I can’t quite believe the adventure I have had - it was the BEST time! I met so many wonderful people and made some friends for life. I’ve learnt lots about cooking but even more so about myself. Winning the award has without doubt changed my life, the amount of doors it’s lead to opening is ridiculous. It’s been life changing, you get out what you put in - especially in our industry! I can’t begin to thank the judges for giving me the opportunity, I really did take it with both hands, and hope I can convey in it just how much I enjoyed it.”

“In summary I got out far more out of my journey than I would have ever expected. You can take a step back and look at the operation as a whole, analyze how people work, relate that to yourself and see if you can improve on what they do if you were in their shoes. You get more time to hone in your skills and have your *mis en place* as perfect as perfect can be.”

We hope that reading these comments helps you appreciate just how much this Award can bring life changing experiences to young chefs at a key stage in their careers. If so you can help us by spreading the word locally and by helping hoteliers and chefs to encourage their talented young staff to apply for the Award.

Here are some FAQs we use to explain the Award to potential applicants:

**What is the William Heptinstall Award?**

It’s a fantastic award, given each year, to help a young chef gain overseas experience and improve his or her career prospects. The winner gets £3,500 to *stage* at one or more of the top restaurants in the world, while having fun and enjoying the cuisine of the area too!

**What do I have to do to stand a chance of winning?**

You have to complete and return a one page application form by the end of March 2015, together with a short note telling us what you want to do, why you want to do it, and how you will record the experience. You’ll also need a brief reference from your present employer or teacher.

**Do I have to cook for the trustees?**

No, if invited, just attend a short interview in London (probably in May 2015) to talk about yourself, your interests and ambitions, where you would like to go – and why. Then join us for lunch at a top London restaurant afterwards!

**Do I have to be British to apply?**

No, so long as you are presently working and resident in the UK, aged between 20 and 26 you are eligible to apply.

**Am I ready to apply?**

Do you want to lift your career to the next step? Do you crave overseas experience? Are you ready to handle the sort of life changing experience that our recent winners have enjoyed? Check out their reports on our website. They’re full of good advice too.

**Do you plan the *stage(s)* for me?**

You are free to handle all your own arrangements, but usually your employer and our trustees are willing to help, give advice, and perhaps assist in opening some doors. We’ll provide £3,000 in time for your trip and afterwards top up with another £500 once we’ve accepted your report.

**Is there a time limit on completing the *stage(s)*?**

Normally we would expect your trip to start within two years of the award, although we’d be looking for a rough outline of your travel plans by the end of October 2015.

**How should I record the experience?**

A camera is a great way to record your experiences, together with a note book or laptop. Some winners have written a blog during their *stages(s)* and we would post a link from our website. Any of these sorts of things will make it easier for you to pull your report together afterwards. We’d expect to receive the report within three months of your return.

Please spread the word and help us to continue to give these young people a step up in their careers and their personal development.

# Membership Subscriptions

You may have heard that membership subscriptions to be paid to the Society are to increase for 2015. I want to explain why this has been necessary. However, firstly I want to assure you that this was not caused by the changes, to be implemented on 1 January 2015, to the Governance structure of the Society through incorporation of each of the zones.

Not many years ago, membership subscriptions paid to the Society covered the operating costs of the Europe Africa Zone, but with costs increasing and membership numbers declining, albeit slowly, I found on becoming Treasurer that this was no longer the case. This deficit was disguised by one-off rebates from the Society as its financing requirements were reassessed. This reassessment is now complete and though we should benefit from a further small rebate in 2015, the Europe Africa Committee (EAC) decided to begin to address the structural deficit.

Membership subscriptions paid to the Society have not increased for 10 years, during which time general inflation has exceeded 35%, whilst the benefits of membership have been maintained. The last increase, in 2005, was 33%, as subscriptions had not increased during the previous 10 years. The EAC decided that such a significant increase was not warranted this time. However we will need to carefully monitor our financial position and we cannot rule out that further, relatively small, increases may be necessary in due course.

The increases in membership subscriptions paid to the Society are 5% with small adjustments to avoid the use of odd numbers of pence. The changes are as follows:

Joint membership                    **£55.00**, an increase of £3.00

Single membership                **£42.00**, an increase of £2.00

Young joint membership        **£27.50**, an increase of £1.50

Young single membership      **£21.00**, an increase of £1.00

The partner/spouse of Life members will continue to pay £12.00

Some branches levy higher subscriptions than those paid to the Society. Each branch will determine whether or not to increase the overall branch subscription or whether to absorb the increase within its overall finances.

Your Committee is determined that costs are kept at the lowest possible level and thus minimize the need to further increase subscriptions. However we hope that you understand the need to keep the finances of the Europe Africa Zone in good order.

## The Benefits of Membership – Insurance

Many members may not appreciate that one of the benefits of membership of the Society is the insurance protection which organizers of events who are members of the Society receive.

The Society maintains a Public Liability Insurance policy to protect the Society, including its members acting on behalf of the Society, for example as organizers, against loss from actions by third parties. Third parties may include members and members' guests as attendees at an event. Specifically, the insured include IWFS Ltd (and from 1 January 2015 the Regional companies), members of Council, the Regional committees, the branches and individual members whilst acting on behalf of the Society, a region or branch.

If an individual member were to incur personal liability whilst acting on behalf of the Society, then that individual would have a right to recover the costs of the action against the Society and through that membership from the insurers.

As an example, if a person were to suffer personal injury whilst attending an event organized by the Society, a region or branch, then that person may have a claim for negligence against the Society and the individual members who organized the event. The injured person cannot claim directly from the insurer. However the injured person benefits from the insurance policy because it ensures that the Society can meet its obligations to pay compensation.

One area of concern for your Committee is that in some branches, partners/spouses and others regularly attend events and may also organize or assist in organizing events. If a third party were injured and made a claim against the Society and/or the individuals responsible for the negligent organization which caused the injury, then those individuals, who are not registered as members, may not be covered by the insurance policy and would therefore be personally liable for any compensation to be paid.

Not just for this potential risk, but in order to benefit from full membership of the Society, we would like to encourage those who are regular guests, of the Society to join the Society.

Each Region also has insurance under a Directors and Officers insurance policy to indemnify specified nominated persons who act on your behalf.

Event cancellation insurance can also be arranged through the Society. If you consider that the event you are organizing is of such a size that your branch would incur a substantial loss if it had to be cancelled and you think you might benefit from such insurance, please contact me by email at [johnsnicholas@aol.com](mailto:johnsnicholas@aol.com).

**John Nicholas**

**Treasurer, Europe Africa Zone.**



## A New Challenge for European Winemakers? By Chris Graham



First seen in the Ahr valley in Germany in 2013 and a real problem in 2014, the Asian Fruit fly, *Drosophila suzukii*, has the potential to become a major challenge for the wine industry across Europe.

Of course, Europe has always had its own fruit fly, *Drosophila melanogaster*, which lays its eggs in rotten fruit, but the appearance of the Asian variety has changed the game completely. The Asian variety lays its eggs in the skin of ripening red fruits which means that all fruit in the vineyard is at risk. Attack by the fruit fly results in bunches of grapes within which separate, single, berries are rotten. Traditionally, bunches which have suffered from noble or other types of rot, have groups of berries

which can be excised in one cutting operation in the vineyard. However there is not yet any satisfactory method of selecting which berries need to be cut out of the bunch damaged by the Asian fruit fly. The only effective way to do this currently is manually and individually, making the vendage very labour-intensive. The damaged berries must be removed or the winemaker risks having unacceptably high levels of volatile acetic acid in their wine.

The upside is that vines with white skinned fruit are much less affected leaving winemakers using traditional grapes such as Reisling, which are also later ripening, with much less of a problem.

The Asian fruit fly produces 13 generations in one year and a single pair can generate more than 1 million individuals after only 5 generations. The number at the end of the year is in the billions! The fly attacks red fruit with soft flesh - fruit such as apples which have a firm or hard flesh do not suffer. In 2014 this pest has badly affected the cherry crop in southern Germany and grapes in the Pfalz, Alsace and the Ahr valley. It has also been seen in the North of Italy where some growers are reported not to have picked a single grape good enough to vinify. One can only imagine the economic consequences of such a situation!

Growers in the Ahr valley picked their red grapes including Spätburgunder (Pinot Noir), Frühburgunder and Pinot Gris grapes early in 2014 to avoid as much damage as possible. This has resulted in wines which, whilst having excellent minerality, are of a lighter style than those normally produced in this region.

So what can be done? There are pesticides but these have their own problems: the main chemical, SpinTor, is sprayed twice with 6 days between applications, BUT you cannot pick the grapes until day 14, potentially leaving the crop exposed towards the end of the period. There is an organic alternative made from a plant, but this is so strong that it kills all the insects, both good and bad, so is not an acceptable treatment.

Where mosquitos have been spreading malaria in confined areas, on an island for example, then genetic engineering has been used to create infertile males. Introducing these into the population leads to the species dying out. However this method cannot be used in Europe as the number of genetically engineered individuals required would be enormous and there would always be the potential for re-infestation by fertile flies from other locations.

*Drosophila suzukii* thrives in climates which are moist, so in years which are dry, such as 2011 in the Ahr valley, the problem might be manageable. It remains to be seen if new methods to control the pest can be found or whether the climate will allow wine growers to manage this new challenge effectively.



# From MasterChef to Mallorca

## by Jan Edwards

Television viewers in more than 40 countries watch a local version of the phenomenally successful franchised cooking contest *MasterChef*. First screened on the BBC in 1990, it was re-formatted in 2005 and the spin-off series *MasterChef: The Professionals* was launched in 2008 for ambitious working chefs brave enough to expose themselves to mass scrutiny.

Birmingham-born Claire Hutchings was one of these. The petite blonde was one of the three finalists – and the only female – in the fourth series, in 2011. Aged 22, she was also one of the youngest contestants. Claire graced British TV screens for six weeks, revealing an outstanding technical ability and almost military-precision organizational skills – but the judges and the public were most impressed by her innovative combinations of ingredients. Viewers warmed to her twinkly smile and surprising cuisine. Fan mail – including a marriage proposal – flooded in. Although she didn't win the title, new doors – and a new country – opened to the talented young chef as a result of taking part.

Claire had been helping in the kitchen at home since she was young, and her love of cooking grew from the age of 13. At 16, she was working in the Michelin-starred Simpson's in her home city. She went on to get a first-class degree in Culinary Arts Management at Birmingham's College of Food & Tourism.

"I was in the middle of my dissertation when I got distracted by MasterChef. When the credits rolled I saw they were looking for future contestants. I thought, why not? I filled in the application form and didn't think about it again. Three months later I had a phone call – while shopping in Waitrose – and it was MasterChef. I was dumbfounded!" Several telephone and face-to-face interviews followed, and she had to submit recipes and photographs of some dishes, before the three-month screening of the series began.

Michel Roux Jr of Le Gavroche in London was one of the professional chef judges. "He and Greg Wallace were very welcoming and made us feel at ease and, when they needed to, put us under pressure." Claire so impressed Michel Roux Jr that he asked for the recipe for her bitter chocolate sorbet.





“One of the two best things was cooking for so many Michelin-starred chefs during the series. It was daunting, but for any chef to be able to do that is incredible. The other was going to El Celler de Can Roca in Girona, where we finalists actually ran the service. Unfortunately we didn’t get to eat there!” After the filming ended, there was a two-month wait until the series was screened – during which time she and the other contestants were not allowed to talk about it. Once the series had aired, Claire ran some pop-up restaurants: “I didn’t think I was ready to have my own place – it’s a huge commitment . . . and I didn’t have the money for it,” she says. “Pop-ups enabled me to showcase my food and travel around the country. I even went to France, doing a couple of days in the Dordogne region, which was incredible.” Her longest-running pop-up restaurant was four months, in Weymouth, and was full five nights a week. “If I hadn’t been known from MasterChef, nobody would have come.” Claire had forged a good bond with Michel Roux Jr during filming and kept in touch with him after the show. When she decided that she really wanted to be part of a team again in a kitchen, she contacted the chef for his advice. “I

wanted to experience another culture and he suggested I contact Fernando Pérez Arellano, who creates Michelin-starred cuisine at his restaurant Zaranda on the island of Mallorca.” As a young chef, the Spaniard had worked at Le Gavroche, and made a good impression on Roux Jr.

In February 2013, Claire flew to Mallorca to meet her future boss. At that time, there wasn’t even a kitchen, as Arellano was in the process of relocating Zaranda to the brand new 5-star Castell Son Claret hotel, which was not yet completed. She had to be content with seeing the plans for the kitchen and restaurant and being enthused by Arellano. “The big selling point for me was arriving at the gates and seeing the hotel. How could I not come? It’s absolutely beautiful,” she says.

At the time Claire couldn’t speak a word of Spanish, so moving to Mallorca was quite daunting. In April 2013, a day after finishing a pop-up restaurant, she packed all her personal possessions into her car and drove down to Mallorca, to take up her new role as assistant to Arellano.

Claire loves the variety of her job; as well as helping her boss with recipe development, she does some of the kitchen administration (making good use of her degree), and has also cooked outside Zaranda. “I travel a lot with Fernando for private dining events around Mallorca and we’ve also been to Germany for events. From an early stage I have always been disciplined in my work and that is imperative working alongside this chef, as everything has to be exact and there is no room for error!”

Like many rural 5-star hotels on Mallorca, Castell Son Claret closes for the winter, which means Zaranda is also closed. During her well-earned break, Claire is back in the UK and, as she did last winter, has arranged some pop-up restaurants throughout December. Her experience over the past two years has taught her a lot about Mallorcan produce and, like Arellano, she uses it to create innovative dishes using new gastronomic techniques. Diners can expect some flavours of Mallorca on her pop-ups’ set menus, ranging from 5-8 courses, with matched wines.

Dishes she’s offering include a starter of salt-baked celeriac with crispy chicken skin, hazelnuts, tarragon cress and chicken jus, and a pre-dessert palate-cleanser of white chocolate and pepper panna cotta with basil fluid gel and strawberry and red Mallorcan wine sorbet.

Claire will return to Zaranda early in 2015. But where does she see herself in five years’ time? “I would like to have my own event business on Mallorca. I would eventually like to bring to Mallorca what I do with my events in the UK,” she says. “I see myself settling here as this island has had such an impact on me. I have travelled a lot but no other place has ever made this impression on me before.”

*Claire Hutchings will be cooking at pop-up restaurants throughout December, including at Catton Hall in South Derbyshire and a new supper club in Harborne, Birmingham. Details can be found on the website [www.claire-hutchings.co.uk](http://www.claire-hutchings.co.uk)*







## Cork, the true bottle closure by Pam Brunning

**D**o you still feel an accomplishment when you pull a cork from a bottle? Do you love the sound as a Champagne cork goes pop.

Pliny the elder gave cork oak, *Quercus Suber*, a mention in his *Naturalis historia*. He and his brethren used cork for their sandals and cork was in wine bottle stoppers found in amphorae at Pompeii. A cork oak can live for more than two hundred years.

In Portugal 108,000 hectares of cork oaks are instrumental in stopping the area from turning into a dust-bowl. Each tree supports 100 species and it is the only place where the rare short toed eagle will live and the extremely rare Iberian lynx, the most critically threatened feline in the world, will consider living. It is a living breathing ecosystem and effective carbon sink.

Men from 16 to 70 can be found deep in the oak forests between June and August striking the huge twisted trees with axes that prise the juicy bark from the trees. Once the trees are about 25-years old, experts use an ancient procedure, which maintains the integrity and health of the tree, to strip the cork from the trunk every nine-years. Usually five people are required to harvest the tree's bark, using small axes. The process requires training due to the skill required to harvest bark without harming the tree. If the tree is harvested correctly, it can live for about 200 years. From the base right up to the first branches the bark is prised away from the red nude tree underneath. The trunk is slashed vertically on a prominent feature. Simultaneously, with a twist of the axe, the cork is separated from the tree. The cork is carefully extracted so that it does not break. The bigger the board is, the more valuable it will be. After harvesting, the boards are stacked in the forest or near the plant. They stay exposed to open air, sun and rain. The stacking of the bark follows strict rules with the resting period lasting around 6 months. The trees are numbered and not touched again for nine years after stripping. Cork is the only tree bark that doesn't contain lengthwise fibres which is why you can chop into it with an axe and return nine years later to have another go.

The European cork industry produces 300,000 tonnes of cork a year, with a value of €1.5 billion and employing 30,000 people. Wine corks represent 15% of cork usage by weight but 66% of revenues.



One cubic inch of cork consists of approximately 100 million completely enclosed air cells each measuring 1/1000" in diameter. Because of this construction, cork is comfortable on the feet, very quiet, fire retardant, and has a very high insulation value. Cork floors provide dramatic acoustical benefits by absorbing sound waves and cushioning footsteps. The air cells also make cork spring back quickly if it has been dented, which makes it very resilient to impact.

Quercus Saper is susceptible to *Phytophthora ramorum* the oomycete plant pathogen known to cause the disease Sudden oak death (SOD). The disease kills oak and other species of tree and has had devastating effects on the oak populations in California and Oregon as well as also being present in Europe. Symptoms include bleeding cankers on the tree's trunk and dieback of the foliage, in many cases eventually leading to the death of the tree.

Wine corks can be made of either a single piece of cork, or composed of particles, as in champagne corks; corks made of granular particles are called "agglomerated corks"

Natural cork closures were used for about 80% of the 20 billion bottles of wine produced each year. After a decline in use as wine-stoppers due to the increase in the use of cheaper synthetic alternatives, cork wine-stoppers are making a comeback and currently represent approximately 60% of wine-stoppers today.



### **High-speed air-gap flash image of a champagne bottle being uncorked**

Because of the cellular structure of cork, it is easily compressed upon insertion into a bottle and will expand to form a tight seal. The interior diameter of the neck of glass bottles tends to be inconsistent, making this ability to seal through variable contraction and expansion an important attribute. However, unavoidable natural flaws, channels, and cracks in the bark make the cork itself highly inconsistent. In a 2005 study 45% of corks showed gas leakage during pressure testing both from the sides of the cork as well as through the cork body itself.

Since the mid-1990s, a number of wine brands have switched to alternative wine closures such as synthetic plastic stoppers, screw caps, or other closures. In some countries, screw caps are often seen as a cheap alternative destined only for the low grade wines; however, in Australia, for example, much of the non-sparkling wine production now uses these caps as a cork alternative, although some have recently switched back to cork citing issues using screw caps. These alternatives to real cork have their own properties, some advantageous and others controversial. For example, while screwtops are generally considered to offer a trichloroanisole (TCA) free seal, it is possible to find TCA contamination in a screw cap bottle. Additionally, they reduce the oxygen transfer rate to almost zero, which can lead to reductive qualities in the wine. TCA is one of the primary causes of cork taint in wine. However, in recent years major cork producers (Amorim, Álvaro Coelho & Irmãos, Ganau, Cork Supply Group, and Oeneo) have developed methods that remove most TCA from natural wine corks. Natural cork stoppers are important because they allow oxygen to interact with wine for proper aging, and are best suited for wines purchased with the intent to age.

The study "Analysis of the life cycle of Cork, Aluminum and Plastic Wine Closures," commissioned by cork manufacturer Amorim and made public in December 2008, concluded that cork is the most environmentally responsible stopper, in a one-year life cycle analysis comparison with the plastic stoppers and aluminium screw caps.

So it looks as though cork is going to be around for a long time to provide bottle closures.

# THE SOCIETY'S AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS AND HOW TO BESTOW THEM

By David Chapman



## BACKGROUND

There are a wide range of fine awards you can bestow on your fellow members and those who have given you good service: notably Gold Medals, Silver Medals and Bronze Medals, Long Service Medallions, Diplomas, and Restaurant Awards.

All these awards derive from the IWFS International Council of Management (the Council) which, in order to minimize delays, delegates to its Zone Committees the administration of all save the two highest awards. The Europe & Africa Zone Committee (EAC) devolves handling of awards to a small sub-committee appointed annually composed of the EAC Chairman, an Awards Officer and one other member.

A summary of Council's current guidelines relating to the issuing and presentation of these awards is set out below. Nominations for personal awards should explain how the nominee meets the criteria.

### AWARDS DETERMINED AND RECORDED BY EAC.

Long Service Medallion: for membership without specific achievement.

This is an IWFS Dress Medallion engraved "Long Service Award" on the reverse, awarded to recognise a minimum of 25 years uninterrupted membership of the IWFS coupled with a commendable attendance record at events. Written nominations to be submitted by a Branch officer to the EAC Awards Officer bearing at least 3 supporting members' signatures.

Long Service Diploma and Medallion: for active personal service.

A personalised IWFS Diploma and Dress Medallion engraved "Long Service Award" on the reverse, awarded to recognise at least 10 years service as an active Branch Committee member or Event Organiser. Written nominations to be submitted by a Branch Officer, or any member of the EAC, to the EAC Awards Officer bearing at least 5 supporting Members' signatures from one or more Branches.

Long Service Diplomas: for donating ancillary services.

A personalised IWFS Diploma, awarded to recognise a minimum of 10 years benevolent provision of ancillary services in furtherance or support of the aims and or activities of The Society at any level by any person being or not being a Member of the IWFS such as a catering college principal, hotelier, wine merchant, or director of tourism. Written nominations to be submitted by a Branch Officer to the EAC Awards Officer bearing at least 5 supporting Members' signatures from any one or more of the Branches having benefited.

Diploma: for a singular personal service.

A personalised IWFS Diploma, awarded to recognise significant achievement resulting from sustained contributions, often involving intensive activity over a two or three year period. This award would recognise, for example, the contribution of the principal members involved in planning and managing a Regional or International Festival, where perhaps the Chairman of the Festival Committee had been awarded a Bronze or Silver Medal. Written nominations to be submitted by a Branch Officer to the EAC Awards Officer bearing at least 5 supporting Members' signatures from any one or more of the Branches having benefited.

Restaurant Certificate: for outstanding value, service and cuisine.

A personalised IWFS Certificate for a restaurant or catering company to display in recognition of an outstanding event or series of events arranged for Members of The Society, naming the chef and the manager or proprietor where appropriate. Nominations set out in the application form available on request from the EAC Awards Officer, or downloaded from the EAC website to be completed and submitted by a Branch or Society Officer. In every instance a ceremonial occasion should be found for the presentation of these Awards to be made by an Officer of the Branch or a member of the EAC. Local press contacts should also be notified if possible.

### AWARDS DETERMINED BY EAC AND RECORDED BY COUNCIL.

The André Simon Bronze Medal: for meritorious personal service.

One of only three IWFS medals bearing André Simon's portrait, with the Society's crest on the reverse, awarded to recognise a Member's meritorious service, defined as a very significant achievement, or series of significant achievements which clearly advanced the aims of the IWFS at Branch, inter-Branch, or Regional level. Written nominations enclosing a comprehensive statement of facts must be submitted by a Branch Officer bearing the signatures of at least 10 supporting Members, or by any member of the EAC, to the EAC Awards Officer. In every instance a ceremonial occasion should be found for the presentation of a bronze medal to be made by a member of the EAC or a member of Council.





## **AWARDS DETERMINED AND RECORDED BY COUNCIL.**

The power to determine the award of The Society's two highest honours is the exclusive prerogative of The Society's Council of Management.

### The André Simon Silver Medal: for distinguished international personal service.

The Silver Medal is awarded to recognise a Member's distinguished service, or very significant contribution, to The Society at large at the international level. Written nominations, enclosing a comprehensive statement of facts and sent to The Society's Executive Director for the attention of Council, will be considered from any current member of Council or Chairman of a Zone Committee. Similar written nominations will also be considered from the General Membership when sent to their respective Zone Committee for forwarding to Council bearing the signatures of at least 10 supporting Members.

In every instance a ceremonial occasion should be found for the presentation of this top award to be made by a member of Council or Chairman of the relevant Zone Committee.

### The André Simon Gold Medal: for paramount international personal service.

The Gold Medal is the highest honour The Society can bestow and is awarded to recognise a Member's exceptional and outstanding services to The Society at large at the international level. Written nominations, enclosing a comprehensive statement of facts and sent to The Society's Executive Director for the attention of Council, will be considered from any current member of Council or Chairman of a Zone Committee. Similar written nominations will also be considered from the General Membership when sent to their respective Zone Committee for forwarding to Council bearing the signatures of at least 15 supporting Members and providing the nominee is already the holder of an Andre Simon Silver Medal. In every instance a ceremonial occasion should be found for the presentation of this top award to be made by a member of Council or Chairman of the relevant Zone Committee.

## **A SUMMARY OF THE COUNCIL'S 30/09/1995 GUIDELINES FOR THE ISSUING OF AWARDS.**

### Personal Awards

(1) Awards will always be given for merit and must never be awarded as an inducement or in lieu of some other compensation.

(2) All proposals for Awards, and discussion about them, should as far as possible, be confidential, particularly from the person/s nominated for the Award, until publication is officially authorised.

(3) Awards will not be lightly given, and should remain rare marks of The Society's respect.

(4) There should be minimum delay between receipt of a properly made proposal and its grant.

(5) Awards should be "visible", i.e. those to Members: medals and medallions should be worn so as to be seen by fellow Members; those to suppliers: framed certificates should be publicly displayed.

(6) Awards should be treated as very important. A ceremonial occasion should be found for each presentation, and publicised both within The Society, and, if appropriate, outside it.

(7) No Award shall be made to a Member who is not in good standing with The Society.

(8) Honours bestowed in the name of The Society will, if properly used, spur Members to greater efforts on its behalf. Those awarded to people outside The Society will add to the credibility of the concepts enshrined in our objectives, that we exist, not just for our own benefit, but to encourage higher gastronomic standards everywhere.

### Restaurant Awards.

The following special guidelines shall apply to Restaurant Awards:

(1) Each Award must be given for a Branch or Society Event, or series of Events, or a Tour.

(2) The authority giving the Award must be satisfied, (a) that it is justified, and (b) that the Award was not offered as an inducement.

(3) The recommendation for an Award must in no way be publicised prior to its grant.

(4) Nominations should only be considered on the majority recommendation of a Branch, Committee, Festival Committee, or Tour Leader/s.

(5) The Award, though made to the establishment, is personal to the Chef and Manager or Proprietor who are to be named on the Certificate.

(6) Normally a Restaurant Award will be delivered via the nearest Branch which, it is hoped, will arrange for some sort of ceremonial presentation to be made.

(7) Restaurant Awards, more than any, can suffer from delays which Zone Committees should minimise.

(8) Each issuing committee has the responsibility for ensuring that these guidelines are respected.

(9) Each issuing Committee is free to make its own rules as to what information it requires in determining whether or not a Restaurant Award is to be made as requested.

### All Awards.

An Honours Roll containing a complete listing of all recipients of Andre Simon medals shall be maintained by the International Secretariat as part of the Archives of the Society. All correspondence to the IWFS European & African Awards Committee should be sent directly to the AWARDS OFFICER whose full contact details can be found in the EAC Committee section of the [www.iwfs.org/eac](http://www.iwfs.org/eac) Members-only Zone.

# Alcohols, friends and foes

*By Dr Bernard Lamb*

## (i) Introduction and health

In moderate quantities, alcohol is a good friend: it improves our mood, sociability and health. In excess, alcohol is a foe: it can make people aggressive and incoherent, and can cause accidents and ill health. If overdone for a long time, alcohol can cause fatty liver, then cirrhosis of the liver and other complications. It is wrong, however, to have legislation which punishes responsible alcohol consumers for the misdeeds of those with inadequate self-control. I have been to many IWFS functions and have never seen anyone get drunk there.

Alcohol was an enticing foe for footballer George Best, who had a long history of excessive drinking. According to the *Sunday Telegraph Magazine* (23/9/2001), he was rushed to hospital in London in 2000 after 10 days of drinking with very little food. He spent six weeks in hospital and was told that his liver was so badly damaged that even one more alcoholic drink might kill him. It didn't. After further binges and hospital admissions, he had Antabuse pellets implanted into his stomach. These are sometimes given to alcoholics to make them feel extremely ill if they drink alcohol, but having them implanted in the stomach is extreme. In 2002, George Best had a successful liver transplant on the NHS, but that was controversial as his need was self-inflicted. He died in 2005, aged 59, due to complications from the immunosuppressive drugs needed after his transplant. This unrepentant drinker often said that "I spent a lot of money on booze, birds and fast cars - the rest I just squandered."

An expert on alcohol and health, Professor Corder (author of *The Red Wine Diet*, 2007, Avery Publishing Group), told us this in 2009 at the Royal Society of Medicine. Drinking wine with food is safer than on its own. In France, the highest levels of heart disease are those where the main drinks are beer or white wine, as in Alsace, and those with the lowest levels (and best longevity) are red wine areas such as the Midi and South West France. For people who have had a heart attack or stroke, alcohol decreases the chance of another attack. Blood vessel linings were healthiest with red wines and red wine extracts, with red grape juice much less effective. White wines and rosés had no effect. The beneficial effects were due to flavonoids, especially procyanidins, extracted by alcohol from grape pips during long fermentations. Wines from the Tannat grape, such as Madiran, were best. He recommended drinking half a bottle a day of red wine (11 to 12% alcohol good, 15% not so good). Eating dark chocolate was also beneficial.

Jockey Terry Biddlecombe became dehydrated from sweating to make the weight for a big race. It weakened him so much that he was almost unconscious on passing the winning post. What did the course doctor prescribe? A pint of Guinness (beer) and a tablespoon of salt! Wine and beer are good for you in providing water, alcohol, minerals and vitamins.

## (ii) Four types of alcohol

By alcohol, we normally mean ethyl alcohol, the concentration of which is given on labels as alcohol percentage by volume (abv). Four main types of alcohol are produced from fermentation. Methyl alcohol ( $\text{CH}_3\text{OH}$ , methanol, wood alcohol) can cause blindness and is poisonous. It is produced in fermentation but at less than 0.3%, so does little harm. At atmospheric pressure it boils at  $65^\circ$ , so methyl alcohol comes off first during distillation, being concentrated in the first condensates which should be discarded or treated. Illegal distillers who do not understand the science of distillation often poison people by using the first distillates.

Ethyl alcohol ( $\text{C}_2\text{H}_5\text{OH}$ , ethanol) is colourless, slightly sweet, mixes freely with water, and is usually found at concentrations of 7 to 15% abv in unfortified wine, 2 to 9% in beer, and higher levels in distilled spirits and liqueurs. Its boiling point is  $78^\circ$ , so it distils off after methyl alcohol but before most of the water. From a fermentation giving 10% abv, a pot still can give 25%, which can be redistilled to about 75%. A very tall column still can produce 90% abv. The distillations carry over various flavour compounds, with barrel ageing (whisky, bourbon) adding more flavours, or 'botanicals' such as juniper and herbs can be used to flavour gin and liqueurs. Barrel ageing is usually done with high alcoholic strength liquor, with dilution to about 40% abv before bottling.

There are many higher alcohols, e.g., propyl, butyl, amyl, with variations such as n-propyl alcohol and iso-propyl alcohol. Their total quantities are less than 0.3% but they are important in wine and beer aromas and flavours, and especially in distilled drinks where they are concentrated. Their boiling points range from  $82$  to  $138^\circ$  or more. Congeners consist of higher alcohols, ketones, aldehydes and esters, and are very important in low concentrations for flavours and odours in wine and spirits. Fusel oils are unpleasant, potentially toxic, headache-causing long-chain hydrocarbon molecules which should be removed in the 'tails' distillation fraction. They make up about 0.015 to 0.05% of a wine.

Glycerol (glycerine,  $\text{HOCH}_2\text{CHOH.CH}_2\text{OH}$ ), used to soften icing, is an alcohol, with three alcohol groups, but does not make one drunk. It is a viscous, oily liquid with 70% of the sweetness of glucose. It is produced in fermentation at levels of 2 to 15 grams per litre in wine, with more in red wines than whites because of higher fermentation temperatures for reds. Botrytised sweet wines have more glycerol from the mould infection of the grapes. It contributes body and - at those concentrations - slight sweetness even in dry wines, as does ethyl alcohol, although acidity can mask it. Even fully dry wines have 1 to 2% of sugars.

Alcohols combine with acids to form esters, many of which are volatile, giving flavours and smells. Ethyl acetate is an ester in wine which at low levels is pleasant and fruity, but at higher levels gives too much 'volatile acidity', a bit vinegary. Fermentation produces small quantities of various organic acids such as acetic acid, lactic acid, butyric acid and succinic acid. Like tartaric and malic acids from the grapes, they all form esters with alcohols, generally increasing in concentration as wines age.



**Double distillation in coconut arrack production in Sri Lanka.**



### (iii) Alcohol and calories

There are moves to list the calorie content of alcoholic drinks on the bottles and cans, because of concerns about obesity. The calorific content of dry wines is largely due to alcohol, plus a little from acids, glycerol, tannins, pigments and other ingredients. Beer contains various dextrans which contribute body, some sweetness and some calories. Distilled spirits are dry unless sweetened, and liqueurs can be very sweet.

Ethyl alcohol provides 7.1 kilocalories per gram (g) and has a specific gravity of 0.789 g/ml (millilitre) at 25°C. A kilocalorie (kcal) is 1,000 calories. A small glass, 100 ml, of a dry wine of 10% abv therefore provides only 56 kcals from the alcohol, and few extra calories from other ingredients. A very large glass, 250 ml (one third of a bottle), of a dry wine of 13% alcohol would provide 182 kcals. One gram of sugar provides 3.9 kcals, so 100 ml of a sweet wine with 4.5 g of sugar in 100 ml and 10% alcohol would contain 18 kcals from sugar and 56 kcals from alcohol, a total of 74 kcals. A teaspoon (4.2 g) of sugar provides 16 kcals.

If people are put off drinking wine and beer by worries about calories, just consider the calorie content of alternative drinks, where high levels of acidity may disguise high levels of sugars. The fizzy soft drink 7UP has 10.6 g of sugar in 100 ml, with masking by citric acid -41 kcal. 100 ml of other liquids have about these numbers of kcals: Coca-Cola, (10.5 g sugar) 42 kcal; mango juice, 22; white grape juice, 25; red grape juice, 28; single cream, 188; double cream, 445. A typical jam has about 244 kcals/100 g and honey has about 307 kcal/100 g. Costa Coffee's large red berry cooler has more than 460 kcals, equal to 23 teaspoons of sugar, four times the WHO daily sugar limit. A Burger King Triple Whopper has 2,040 kcals, more than a woman's recommended daily allowance.

### (iv) Alcohol and police tests

The liver and kidneys are important for detoxifying the blood, and have different efficiencies in processing alcohol in different individuals. How many alcoholic drinks take someone over the legal limit depends on body size, sex, metabolism, health, the time over which the drinks are taken, and on any food eaten. On average, one gets rid of the alcohol from one glass of wine in an hour, mainly by detoxification but also by breathing it out and excretion in the urine.

In the UK, the legal limits for drivers are: breath, 35 micrograms alcohol in 100 ml breath; blood, 80 milligrams alcohol in 100 ml blood; urine, 107 milligrams alcohol in 100 ml in the second sample. The bladder may already contain alcohol-free urine when the person starts drinking, so the police demand two specimens within one hour, discarding the first one. In the USA, blood alcohol is calculated as 2,100 times that in the breath, or as 1.33 times that in the urine.

At a National Guild of Wine and Beer Judges' weekend, a police officer member brought along a police breath-alcohol meter, to test volunteers after the celebratory Saturday night dinner, when we had consumed a fair amount of alcohol. The tests were for interest, not prosecution - we were staying the night. Most judges scored between 30 and 38 units, near the legal limit. When I scored only 6, the policeman said, "You've not had much of an evening, then," but I had had a similar amount of wine. Alcohol seems to pass through me more quickly than through most others.

### (v) Alcohol metabolism and flushing

More than 80% of the alcohol is oxidised by the enzyme alcohol dehydrogenase, mainly in the liver. The acetaldehyde produced is further oxidised to acetate by two aldehyde dehydrogenase enzymes. Strangely, the liver alcohol dehydrogenase enzyme of 90% of Orientals is about 100 times more active than that of most Caucasians, but about half of Orientals lack aldehyde dehydrogenase-2 in their mitochondria (the cell's organelles for energy production). Even small amounts of alcohol cause intense red flushing of the face and chest in affected individuals, from the acetaldehyde. Virtually all Caucasians have an active form of this enzyme, although some 5 to 10% have the flushing reaction.

At Imperial College, Jennifer Cummins and I found the following frequencies of flushing in different racial groups in response to small amounts of alcohol: Blacks, 0%; Orientals (Chinese, Japanese), 47%; other Asians (Indians, Pakistanis, Sri Lankans), 0.5%; Caucasians, 32% for females, 7% for males. The difference between the Caucasian Asians and Oriental Asians was dramatic. Some individuals - especially Chinese and Japanese - have extremely low tolerance of alcohol.

Most of this information is taken from *Human Diversity: Its Nature, Causes, Extent and Effects on People*, by B. C. Lamb (World Scientific/Imperial College Press), due out in 2015.

**The flushing reaction in a charming Oriental lady; normal and after one glass of white wine.**



# MANCHESTER BRANCH VISIT TO JERSEY

By David Chapman



On a sunny Friday morning in October, 24 members of the Manchester Branch boarded a flight to the island of Jersey for a weekend stay hoping for the nice weather to last. Flight bang on time; coach awaiting to transfer us to The Club Hotel & Spa in St. Helier which was to be our home for the weekend. There was just time to check-in before we went to the Bohemia restaurant where we were to have lunch. The restaurant had for some time a Michelin star but this was lost when the chef, Shaun Rankin, left to open his own restaurant, Omer, also in St. Helier. The head chef is now Steve Smith, a Yorkshireman. He has the knack of bringing Michelin stars to each of the restaurants in which he has been installed as Head Chef, the first of which was at the age of 24. He has earned this accolade suc-

cessively at Holbeck Ghyll, Guellers, Seaham Hall and then the Burlington Restaurant in the Devonshire Arms at Bolton Abbey. Not content with those, he now has a star at Bohemia as well as a score of 6 in the Good Food Guide 2015.

An apéritif of Taltarni Brut N.V. from Victoria (Australia) helped to relax us all after the journey. This was served with a very pleasing canapé of a small serving of shredded belly pork with a layer of stewed apple within it. This was



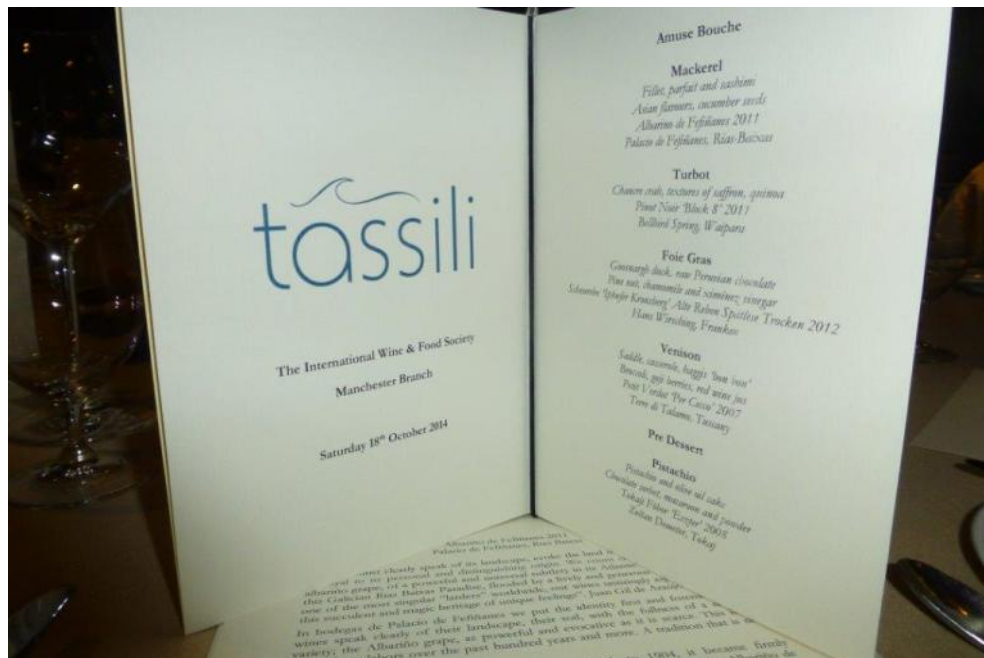
both pretty to see and lovely to taste (in contrast to my rather rustic description of it). The French maître d' hotel, Dimitri, escorted us through for lunch in a glazed private area of the main restaurant. This meant that we weren't cut off from the bustle beyond but our animated conversation didn't intrude on the meals of other customers. It was to be a lunch which show-cased the sea fish for which Jersey is famous. But first came some delicious freshly-baked and still warm bread rolls. The starter was some small pieces of "fresh as a daisy" mackerel delicately cooked and served with some paper-thin slices of cucumber rolled into tubes and placed end down on the dish, some sea herbs and a smear of horseradish. The final decoration was some brightly-coloured edible flowers. The whole dish was beautifully arranged and all the tastes and textures worked really well together.

Our chosen wine, "Petit Bourgeois" 2012, was a Sauvignon

Blanc from one of the top Sancerre growers, Henri Bourgeois, but made from vines grown outside the appellation (permitted geographic area). Its acidity and fragrance made it an ideal accompaniment to the dish. Conversations at table focussed on the great enjoyment of the first course. For the main course, chef had chosen to oven roast some turbot, the "Queen of the Sea". This was decorated with four mussels placed so as to mimic the four corners of a square and some thin slivers of pink cauliflower. The sauce, Vadouvan, was a stranger to us all. The restaurant staff described it as "curry" and, indeed, it had a gently spicy flavour. Internet research revealed that it includes fenugreek, cumin, cardamom and turmeric. The wine was a 2012 Bush Vine Chenin Blanc from The Winery of Good Hope in Stellenbosch. Although this was enjoyed, it seemed to lack the lees-aging which the like Chardonnay enjoys and was consequentially lighter on the palate than had been anticipated. Dessert, beautifully poached pear with dulce de leche and finished with some crushed hazelnuts, was delicious and well received by us all. Service was immaculate throughout and chef came out to receive our thanks and praise even though the kitchen was still busy with other guests.

The afternoon and evening was free time. Those who still felt the need, ate at some of the myriad of nice restaurants in the nearby town centre and some even ate again at Bohemia. Saturday was a free day and members variously took coach trips round the island, hired cars and self-drove to explore its beauty, used the excellent local public buses as part of walking some of the sign-posted trails or indulged in retail therapy.





On Saturday evening 22 of us had an appointment with chef Richard Allen at Restaurant Tassili, the Michelin star restaurant at the Grand Jersey Hotel on the sea front. Any recommendation from Michel Roux Jr is one to be taken seriously. So when the culinary master put Richard Allen forward for the role of Head Chef at The Grand Jersey Hotel they duly offered him the position and he has been there since 2007 earning many other accolades. In a private reception room, with some wonderfully tasty and innovative canapés, we were served Quartz Reef, Méthode Traditionnelle Brut N.V. made with Pinot Noir and Chardonnay at

Bendigo Station in the Cromwell Basin of New Zealand's South Island. Restaurant Manager (and sommelier), Shaun Corrigan, directed us to take our seats for dinner in the restaurant of which we had the exclusive use. The freshly baked bread rolls swiftly followed and then Chef provided as an amuse bouche a truffle risotto with a cep foam; this had very intense flavours and was much enjoyed.

Our five course tasting menu began with Mackerel three ways - fillet, parfait and sashimi, with Asian flavours and cucumber seeds. The accompanying wine flight began with Albarino de Fefiñanes 2011, Palacio de Fefiñanes, Rias-Baixas. Victoria Moore, writing in the Daily Telegraph, noted that, "You can smell salty sea air in the cellar of Palacio de Fefiñanes, a 16th-century palace built from solid blocks of granite. The winery, founded in 1904, claims to be the oldest in the DO, and its female winemaker Cristina Mantilla, who's been there more than 20 years, makes my favourite straight albariño – one that dances like light through leaves." The wine went perfectly with the dish. Then chef served some Turbot with Chancre crab, textures of saffron, and a bed of quinoa. The pleasure of this dish was slightly dulled when it appeared that there had been a shortfall in the number of cooked servings of the turbot and the additions were in haste slightly under-cooked.

The chosen wine, Pinot Noir 'Block 8' 2011, Bellbird Spring, Waipara (also in South Island, New Zealand) led to some serious discussion. Some of the party believed it should be "white with fish" but the majority thought it was a good match with the dish. Everyone enjoyed it, even one lady who claimed not to like red wines. The third course was Foie Gras dusted with raw Peruvian chocolate and accompanied by Goosnargh duck, pine nuts, chamomile and Ximénez vinegar. Unlikely though it sounds, the bitterness of the chocolate worked really well with the rich sweetness of the liver. The wine choice was even more controversial. We were served with Scheurebe "Iphofer Kronsberg" Alte Reben Spätlese Trocken 2012, Hans Wirsching, Franken. As the word "trocken" indicated, the wine was very dry and the majority view (influenced, no doubt, by the usual practice of serving a rich - if not a sweet - wine with foie gras) was against the choice. Your correspondent disagreed.



Venison was the star of the main course. It came as venison saddle and casseroled with a haggis 'bon bon' broccoli, goji berries and a red wine jus. The saddle was cooked pink to perfection and was very tender. This was a very good dish. The wine match brought no discord and was greatly enjoyed. It is not often that an estate makes a wine of 100% Petit Verdot, a grape better known as the 3-5% addition to Bordeaux blends "to add a bit of seasoning", as the Bordelaise saying goes. It was Petit Verdot 'Per Cecco' 2007 Terre di Talamo, Tuscany. At seven years of age (of which the first two were in oak barrels) the wine showed itself to be rich and concentrated with gentle spicy tannins not hiding the black fruit and chocolate notes. Perfect with the venison. ➡➡

Dessert was a picture on a plate. A piece of pistachio and olive oil cake was accompanied by chocolate sorbet and a macaroon and powder. Plates were readily left clean. The selected wine was Tokaji Föbor 'Eszter' 2008, Zoltan Demeter, Tokaj. Hungary has long been famed for its sweet wines and this example showed its botrytis influence and coped as beautifully with the chocolate as one has come to expect from the sweet Tokaji wines.

It might be said that to eat meals of this standard on two successive days was over-doing it but Manchester Branch members are not averse to hardship and were ready for action after breakfast on Sunday. Our coach took us to La Mare Wine Estate and Distillery in the north part of the island for a pre-arranged private visit. Set in the peaceful grounds of a traditional 18th century granite farmhouse, La Mare Wine Estate is a working 25 acre domain of which 8.5 acres are devoted to vines, making high quality wines, ciders and spirits, along with hand-made preserves, fudge, chocolates and Jersey Black Butter. We were honoured to be welcome by the production manager and wine-maker, Daniel de Carteret who took us first into the vineyard to explain about the varieties grown and the methods of cultivation, then into the chai (a posh French word for that building in which the grapes are turned into wine). He explained how the grapes were sorted, pressed and fermented and about the blending process. Our attention was directed to the oak barrels in which the top-of-the-range wines were ageing. Then



we moved into the distillery where we learned all the secrets of the way in which the cider from the estate's apple orchards is converted into apple brandy. A new development is the use of surplus Jersey Royal potatoes to make La Mare Royal Vodka and La Mare Royal Gin - the latter infused with seven classic botanicals and the delicate addition of local elderflower from the estate. We learned how the bought-in soft fruits are used to make fruit spirits - mental note, don't add the sugar until the process has ended (if added at the beginning it adversely affects the transfer of the fruit flavours and colours to the spirit). Then to a tasting of three wines starting with a pink sparkling wine and moving on to a still white wine and finally the rosé. Members were both interested and impressed by the examples shown to us.



After all this learning and the exercise involved in our visit, everyone was ready for lunch. La Mare has a restaurant beautifully designed with picture windows over-looking the vineyards. There we were well received for our pre-arranged meal consisting of a selection of platters; one with smoked fish and prawns, another with rare sirloin of beef, farmhouse and Serrano hams and a third platter with ham hock terrine, mature Cheddar cheese and French brie. All of these were suitably accompanied by appropriate relishes. If they weren't thought to be enough, we were also served some homemade Quiches Lorraine and caramelised onion and goat's cheese tarts and a selection of salads as well as crusty

bread and Jersey butter. All-in-all this was a most interesting visit much enjoyed by all those attending. The estate shop was visited for gifts to take home before we left.

The rest of the day was free time but in the evening most of the party tested out other St. Helier restaurants before we flew home after breakfast the next day. The weekend was regarded as a great success - how much this was attributable to the unbroken sunshine with October day-time temperatures of 21C remains the unanswered question.



# Report of an IWFS Tour - in 1949!

## By Michael Messent

A fascinating diary has recently passed to me by the widow of an early member of the Society, Donald Young. After spending many years in Canada, he returned to the UK and joined the Berkshire branch of the Society in about 1977. He died in 2002 aged 96. His widow, being aware of my connection with the Society, thought that Donald's diary of a Society visit made to France in September 1947 might be of interest to members. It is a tiny notebook, quite hard to read and tantalisingly short of comment on the wines, but some of the highlights are as follows:-

"Thursday 15 September. Tea and cakes at the Society's rooms at 4pm. Met Andre Simon Afterwards by bus and we arrived at the White Cliffs Hotel, Dover at 8.30pm. Dinner at 9pm. Cantaloupe melon, roast duck and ice cream with grapes.

Friday 16 September. Lunch at Boulogne. Sweet melon, fish pie in a lovely pastry, steak and shoe string potatoes. Bus broke down ten miles short of Abbeville, but arrived at 7pm at Grand Hotel Amiens. Dinner at 8.30pm. Pea soup, cold fish and a nice sauce, beef and potatoes and vin ordinaire. There were mild grumbles from a few of the party at this English style meal.

Sunday 18 September. 9.30am to Epernay to visit the cellars. Lunch at the Cafe du Theatre. Sausages on cabbage and carrots with boiled potatoes. Camembert cheese to follow. On the way back we went to see the room where the Peace Treaty was signed. Dinner at the hotel at 8.30pm. Tomato consommé, hot pate and truffles, chicken with a champagne sauce and fruit salad.

Monday 19 September. At 5pm a champagne tasting of the 43's, 45's, 46's and 47's in a lovely office overlooking the formal gardens. Dinner at 9pm. The best yet. Cream of chicken soup, ham omelette, duck with oranges and baked Alaska. Gorgeous.

Tuesday 20 September. Arrived at Colmar at dusk after a long pull over the Col where we had to walk while the bus cooled down. Dinner at the Maison de Tete, a 17th century inn, where the food was truly the best yet. Consommé, trout in a lovely sauce, pheasant, cheese and a baked Alaska.

Wednesday 21 September. Visited the offices of the Syndicate of Wine Growers where Andre gave us a tasting of Traminers of 43, and 47. Then to Riquewihr, where the Mayor, Mr Hugell and two pretty girls in local costume awaited us. Explored the village and then to a cellar to try the Riesling and Traminer. Then to Ribeauville for a reception at the Hotel de Ville. Had an 1865 Tokay, and Rieslings and Traminers of 43, 47 and 48. Lunch at the Hotel Belle Vue in Colmar at 4pm. Then back to the Syndicate's cellar and some Tokay from 43. Supper of luscious pate and truffles and ham and a lovely ice cream covered with whipped cream.

Friday 23 September. Lady Balcon's birthday [wife of the film director, Sir Michael Balcon]. Lunch of sausage and potatoes, chicken stuffed with tomatoes and cheese. Birthday party dinner at 8.30pm. Soup, rissoles portuguese, tournedos garni and string beans, savoie cheeses. Pommery 41 with dinner. Kirsch with coffee.

Saturday 24 September. To Aix-les-Bains. Lovely dinner. Pate and truffles, quenelle of pike with a crayfish sauce, roast chicken and green salad (with more oil than vinegar), gruyere cheese and fruit topped with chilled whipped cream and fresh raspberries. A good vin rouge and some Moulin a Vent 45.

Sunday 25 September. Arrived at Macon at 12. Visit to Pouilly for a tasting and then lunch at the Hotel Europe. Arrived Beaune at 5.30. Dinner at 8, a potato soup, sole in a nice sauce, roast beef and cheese.

Next day visited the hospital, built in 1443 then to Chateau Vougeot where we were shown around. At 3.30, after lunch, to Thomas Basson to taste three types of Chambertin 1947. Then to Corton where we tried the 1947, said to be the best since 1865, to be drunk about 1952. But quite good already.

Tuesday 27 September. Visit to the wine museum then tasting in the cellars of M.Latour. Gevrey Chambertin from 1947, Corton 1923 and Romanee 1904.

After lunch at 3pm we tried Meursault Charmes 1947, best yet. Then to Montrachet to watch wine pressing, dinner at 8.30pm with Lady Balcon and Jill Balcon (daughter), Mr Pocock and Mr Blower. I supplied a Corton 1937 at 300 francs. Given a cigar by Mr Pocock and had a large cointreau. Bed at 11 as we are moving on again tomorrow.

Wednesday 28 September to Avalon where we stopped at Hotel Etoile for lunch at 2pm. Eel in gruyere sauce, ham in a piquant sauce and Mirabelle tart. Then to see Chablis vineyards at 3.30, then to Auxerre. Very hot in a very small room. Mr Pocock lent me the use of his bathroom. Dinner at 8.30. Escargot, veal, cheese, fruit cup and ice cream with cream.

Thursday 29 September. At Sens before 12 and in Paris by 5pm. Dinner not a success, afterwards walk with Pocock and Abbot up Champs Elysee. I stuck to brandy and Perrier water. Back at 12.30am. Up early the next morning and taken by Pocock to see the sights of Paris. Was offered filthy postcards as we contemplated the Notre Dame. I said no thanks, I am a medical student, and the man laughed. Lunch in the Place Odeon. Partridge with lattice chips and a Loire white wine then back to hotel at 2.30pm to say goodbye to all my friends then to Le Bourget and a nice meal of cold pork and salad before the flight."

Times change

## around the branches - Manchester



### Dinner at The White Hart

After such a wonderful spell of hot weather, it was disappointing to arrive at The White Hart in the pouring rain, so instead of admiring the widespread view, we all ran for cover as fast as we could.

Inside, a cool glass of *castellblanch cava* awaited us as our aperitif, very refreshing. When we sat at our tables, the amuse-bouche of chicken and sweet corn soup was served. The soup was more like a foam, and had a lovely smoky flavour. The first course, of roast foie gras with sauce gribiche was delicious, and cooked to perfection. The richness was counterbalanced by the citrus notes in the *Moko black, sauvignon blanc, Marlborough, New Zealand*.

Before the main course, there was a mini serving of tomato tartare with chopped olives and goats curd.

The main course was pan fried sea bream with red pepper and fennel. I think this is a very under-rated fish, so it was good to have it. Since some of our members like to have a red wine, even with fish, there was a choice of either *Berticot sauvignon blanc, Côtes de Duras, France, or le Sabounet Rhône France*. Both of these wines were pronounced excellent.

We had another mini course of blackberry cheesecake, very small, but very rich.

The dessert was a hot passion fruit soufflé, with a small portion of banana ice cream. To my mind, this was a masterpiece, as the soufflés were evenly risen, very hot, and all served at once, and the ice cream was a wonderful contrast. With this, we had *Chateau Martillac, Loupiac Bordeaux*.

As you can see, we had good food, excellent wines and good company, which shows us what the IW&FS is all about.

**Valerie Hall**

## around the branches - Surrey Hills



### Starters And Puds

I am not going to give the rationale behind this event *again!* On the last day in August twenty of us met in Kip and Susie Punches' delightful garden to partake of three Starters and three puds. Stephanie's Canapes were Bottarga, you'll find the recipe in the September Food & Wine, (Avgotaraho) as well as Croutes: Aubergine with Yoghurt and Pomegranate. The other starters were my Salmon with Elderflower Sauce and Susie's Filet of Beef with Salsa Verde. For Puds we had my Raspberry and Rum Trifle, Bernard Lamb's Quality of Mercy Gooseberry Fool and then Stephanie's Pineapple Carpaccio. We welcomed everybody with Champagne Piper-Heidsieck Brut NV and for

the meal there was Haute Cotes de Beaune AOC Domaine Chevrot 2010 and Savigny-les-Beaune AOC Domaine Julien Jacob 2006. The sweet wine was Encantado Reserva Late harvest Muscat, Limari Valley, Chile 2011. Coffee and tea followed. We were blessed with a gloriously sunny day and thanks go to our chefs Bernard, Susie and Stephanie and to Alan Shepherd who organised the wines, not forgetting all Kip's hard work in the garden and setting it all up with Susie...

**Helen Mills, Chairman**



# around the branches - Manchester



## Puccinis, Chorley Road, Swinton

Puccinis, Chorley Road, Swinton on the outskirts of Manchester has recently been described in the press as "A Hidden Gem". It was certainly a great joy and pleasure for members of Manchester, Cheshire and Liverpool to come together for a truly memorable gastronomic evening.

Our hosts for the evening Michele Puccini and Daniele Dalle Mulle, Sales Director - Zonin UK Ltd., great friends whom I have had the pleasure of working with for over a combined half a century. They have a great passion for their subject and have inspired many in the field of Culinary Arts.

Good food is one of life's simple pleasures. A cliché but true all the same. The kitchen is headed by Christopher, and his twin brother Nicholas operates front of house under the watchful eye of father Michele. The kitchen is renowned for the sourcing of local produce and weekly food deliveries from Italy.

Our salivary glands were in over-drive on entering the restaurant. In any ranking of Britain's most deliciously fragranced restaurants there could be no disputing Puccinis right to the top spot. As for the cooking, all that need be said - and try and forgive the lurch into pretentious gastro - speak is "WOW" not a single dish fails to entice. Unfussy cooking yet utterly delicious.

We started the gastronomic journey with an introduction from Daniele with a little history and background to the wines. Our first wine was: Prosecco Doc Special Cuvee, a dazzling aperitif, pale straw- colour; with a delicate perlage, an intense bouquet, fruity and aromatic with hints of wisteria

flowers and Renal apples. A well balanced and appealing wine with the delicate almond note that is typical of the Glera grape. We shared dishes of; olives, roasted peppers and bruschetta followed by Mozzarella, tomato, avocado and basil salad, grilled asparagus, Parma ham and sweet melon you could distinctly taste every dish, every herb and spice.

Daniele chose Tenuta CA' Bolani Traminer for the next course. A well balanced wine made from 100% Traminer grapes. To the eye a light golden colour with a floral bouquet, with hints of acacia, wild flowers and honey. Delicately dry, fruity and appealing. An excellent choice with the pork meatballs with a liberal sprinkling of Parmesan, fragrant ribs, fantastically crisp on the outside while the ribs retained an almost gooey texture within - delicious. Followed by fillet of sea bass baked and topped with diced tomato, finely chopped shallots and torn basil. A subtle dish and there was cause to marvel.

The next wine was drunk in copious amounts, a wine that I am sure that our founder would have taken one sip closed his eyes and thought of every beautiful thing before him! The wine was Valpolicella Ripasso. Ripasso is a traditional technique that promotes a second fermentation through the wine's contact with warmed dried grape skins from which Amarone has been pressed. This practice increases slightly the alcoholic content 13% vol. A wine with an intense and deep ruby red colour. A remarkably complex bouquet, with vinous tones and well defined scents of cherries against a tenuous background of chocolate. This was a serious wine and was very much enjoyed by members.

The food to match the wine was medallions of fillet steak Al Pepe and breast of Cheshire chicken with a light spicy sauce, served with a timbale of wild rice, wilted buttered spinach with a hint of freshly grated nutmeg, glazed carrots and noisette potatoes. This course was electric: a little French, a pinch of British and a whole load of hefty Italian flavours.

Our last wine of the evening was: Vin Santo del Chianti Classico. This was a gem made from Trebbiano toscano and Malvasia del Chianti grapes with a high alcohol level of 15.5% vol. Vinification takes place in small Tuscan barrels holding between 100 - 200 litres and is triggered by the inoculation of the so-called "madre" ("mother") - colonies of different types of yeast deriving from previous vinifications - into the must from grapes that have been partially dried on racks. Italy is known for many unique and delicious wines. The name Vin Santo literally translates to Saint Wine. There are many theories on the origin of the name, whatever the true story, this is a wine with a long history that dates back to at least the middle ages. Amber in colour with scents of nuts, toffee and raisins. The wine has a thick viscous texture on the palate in addition to the raisin and toffee notes, there is a crisp acidity which balances the wine exquisitely.

The Pastry Chef excelled with all time favourites: Italian trifle, profiteroles with lashings of chocolate sauce and Amaretto and vanilla ice-cream, followed by bowls fruit coffee and sweetmeats,

Daniele's last words; taken from

(Ernest Hemingway. Death in the Afternoon)

"Wine is the most civilised thing of the world that has been brought to the greatest perfection, and it offers a greater range for enjoyment and appreciation than, possibly, any other purely sensory thing."

**Patrick Trodden**

# around the branches - Leicester



## Joint Meeting Leicester and Northampton.

Timothy Kidger of the Northampton Division arranged a joint meeting with the Leicester Chapter on Wednesday the 27<sup>th</sup> of August at Roade House restaurant and hotel in Roade near Northampton. Ten members from Leicester were able to attend. After chatting in the garden we met for aperitifs in the comfortable lounge bar and introduced ourselves whilst drinking Undurraga, a sparkling Chardonnay/Pinot Noir from Chile. Delicious canapés of whipped goat's cheese with sun dried tomatoes complemented the wine. We selected different coloured discs with numbers to find our places at one of the three tables. The system cleverly ensured that the Leicester members mixed with Northampton members and husbands and wives were on different tables.

The first course was beautifully presented - marinated Swedish salt herring with mustard and dill sauce, salad leaves and rye bread. We drank a rather dry but excellent Chilean Riesling Apaltagua 2012. This was followed with roast breast of guinea fowl, leg meat confit, thyme and potato gratin with a cider and calvados sauce and summer vegetables, a most elaborate dish designed to show off the skill of the chef – each element superb. Another wine from Apaltagua, a Pinot Noir 2012 was an excellent choice to accompany the guinea fowl and another example of an excellent new world wine.

We could choose our dessert from a wide selection. Lemon Posset, Panna Cotta with roasted figs, Gooseberry custard tart with a gooseberry and ginger beer sorbet, a sorbet selection of exotic fruits or homemade ice creams including chocolate and whisky – then coffee or tea. The service was efficient but rather slow but this didn't matter as the conversation flowed easily. Time sped by and pre ordered taxis had to wait before we finally left about 4pm after a very good meeting and promises to arrange another joint meeting next year.

## Summer Event

On Thursday, the 26<sup>th</sup> of June Roger Austin arranged for us to have dinner at 34 Windsor Street Burbage near Hinckley. 34 has recently been opened and has a very pleasant ambience. We were welcomed with a glass of Lunetta Spumante Rose before moving into a room at the back of the restaurant with a long table where we were seated very comfortably.

We began with an amuse bouche of cold creamy cauliflower soup. For starters we could choose between a poached crab mouse or a duck liver parfait with orange and dandelion served on a piece of slate. Tiny bread rolls were delicious. We drank a white Borsao Macabeo which complemented the dishes perfectly.

Mains were pan fried cod with purple broccoli, radish and black olives or barbecued duck with rhubarb, earth baked potato and tamarind. We were all served with chips and vegetables. We drank a red wine, Bet-tises Rousses.

Puddings were a beautiful orange and thyme marshmallow with white chocolate or chocolate cremeux with lavender. We enjoyed home made petit fours with our coffee. The chef came to talk to us and told us how the food and wine were sourced.

It was interesting to try a new restaurant discovered by Roger and the journey on a pleasant evening was no problem.

## Autumn Event

On Tuesday October 7<sup>th</sup> we enjoyed a special meal at the Marquis of Exeter, 52 Main Street Lyddington Rutland. John and Mary Hind liaised with Brian Baker, Chef Proprietor, and arranged the event for us. Brian Baker devised a special meal to match food with wines. He chose wines from less obvious and unusual areas of developing wine production.

Each wine was presented by Marcus Welford of Hallgarten Druitt and Novum wines. We were welcomed with canapés and a glass of sparkling Goring Brut from Sussex. The wine was made from 34% Chardonnay, 34% Pinot Meunier and 35% Pinot Noir. Dermot Sugrue, wine maker, formerly worked at Nyetimber before moving to the Goring estate. It combined a youthful purity of fruit with subtle, toasty, nutty notes.

We moved to a long table in a room at right angles to the main dining room and were served with a delicious rabbit and beetroot salad. We drank a wine from Macedonia 2013 made from 100% Malagousia, a grape I'd never heard of, which won several prestigious awards in 2014. It was an aromatic wine with jasmine and exotic fruit flavours perfectly complimenting the salad.

The main course was a risotto with grilled steak of lamb which some of our members found rather tough. The accompanying Lebanese red wine was Reserve du Couvent, Château Ksara, Bekaa Valley 2011. It was made from 55% Syrah, 25% Cabernet Franc and 20% Cabernet Sauvignon. I thought it compared well with claret but some of our members knowledgeable in wine disagreed. It made an interesting change from Château Musa.

Unusually for our branch we tasted a pudding wine, Moscatel de Setubal NV Adega de Pegoes from Portugal. It was a dark brown delicious wine but I found it difficult to detect the muscat grape. We all enjoyed the puff pastry pillows with poached plums and almond cream.

It was a very good evening with a great opportunity to taste unusual wines whilst enjoying excellent food.

**Mary Jewell**



# around the branches - Merseyside and Mid Cheshire

## A Great British Picnic



The Merseyside and Mid-Cheshire Summer picnic was held at North Wales home of Val and Paul Bishop attended by 53 members and guests. Despite a few light squalls, it was a huge success and as members of the Clwyd Wine and Food Society had been invited, it afforded an opportunity for like minded folk to mingle and discuss the interesting variety of food and UK wines.

The picnic commenced with an interesting starter of Scottish, Loch Fyne Gravad-lax. The salmon is filleted in Cairndow, rinsed in natural mountain spring water and hence given the unique flavour. The fish was accompanied by blinis, rocket and goats cheese filled sweet peppers.

The local Dolwen Farm Shop provided a spit roasted

Welsh Lamb from their own flock and the proprietor and daughter served the meal. This was served with locally sourced baked potatoes and ratatouille which had been made by Veronica. The meal was enhanced by fresh horseradish sauce and mint sauce - made also by Veronica.

There were a variety of sweets all based on British strawberries and included, Eton Mess by Sue, Strawberry Ginger Cheesecake and fresh strawberries by Jean and Strawberry and Kiwi fruit Pavlovas by Jane.

Irish cheeses were sourced by Paul and Val, from the Chester Cheese Shop and included

Cooleeney - a soft natural rind cheese made by Breda Maher in Co. Tipperary, hailed as the 'Irish Camembert' and has a mushroom flavour.

Cashel Blue - made by Loius Grubb, Co. Tipperary. The cheese is Ireland's first Cows Milk Blue cheese. Firm with a softer runny edge. Rich and creamy with a pronounced blue tang.

Gubbeen - A cheese from Co. Cork. Semi soft surface ripening cheese. Smooth and creamy with hints of toffee with dense and supple texture.

Val made Baileys flavoured chocolate truffles to follow and they were enjoyed with coffee/tea.

### Wines

These were six English and one Welsh.

The preliminary tasting began with Glyndwr white from Glamorgan. This is a fresh, lightly acidic with pronounced floral nose and flavour and makes a good aperitif or accompaniment for shell fish.

The second was Wroxeter Roman Vineyard white 2011 made with Madeleine Angevin grapes. This had lots of fruit and a really good long finish. Perfectly balanced. This was a particularly good year for the wine.

Third was Chapel Down Baccus 2011. A well known wine with excellent balance and flavour. This was one of several wines served during the Jubilee Celebrations.

Forth was Chapel Down Pinot Blanc 2011. This was a typical Pinot Blanc with a melon and citrus flavour - well balanced and quite long for a grape which frequently produced undistinguished wine.

Fifth wine was Chapel Down Pinot Reserve 2007. A very distinctive Champagne style wine made in the traditional way. This was served on the Royal Yacht for the Jubilee Celebrations and goes particularly well with smoked fish. It was served with the Gravadlax.

Sixth wine was Chapel Down Pinot Rose non vintage sparkler with excellent fruit and a fine mousse. In many ways more drinkable on its own than the Pinot Reserve and would make an excellent aperitif.

Finally with the lamb, Bolney Lychgate Red. An interesting and very well made red wine using Rondo and Dornfelder reminiscent of a Loire Cabernet Franc. This went beautifully with the food and surprised many members with its quality. This was the last available case of the 2011 wine!

In conclusion, a very satisfying and interesting wine tasting.

**Val Bishop**



# around the branches - Merseyside and Mid Cheshire



## The Last of the Summer Wine.

The delightful Pennine village of Holmfirth is associated, by many, with the long running BBC television series, "The Last of the Summer Wine". However, did you know that Holmfirth boasts a vineyard to add to its many attractions?

The Holmfirth Vineyard was established in 2007 and the winemaking team is headed by multi-award winning Martin Fawke. The seven acres of vineyard produces a number of award-winning wines: fruity reds; off dry rosés and lightly aromatic and floral whites. The grapes come from carefully selected modern varieties that have been specially developed to thrive in northern latitudes. An example of which is the Solaris vine, developed in the Czech Republic in 1978.

The MidCheshire Branch visited this vineyard in September and enjoyed an interesting tour of the winery. We had a very informative and entertaining guide, Mark, and we learnt about the winemaking process and tasted three wines from the range.

We tasted 2 white wines from the new vintage which had just been bottled. The Solaris was light and citrus with quite a long dry herbaceous finish.

The second wine was Sylvaner blended with small amounts of other grapes. This had potential but was not ready to drink.

The third was a rosé based on Rondo grapes which had a real bite and great potential but like the second, was not really ready to drink.

The fourth wine which some of us took home was the 'yellow jersey' Sylvaner Solaris blend made for the Tour d'France visit. This was excellent, just off dry, limey with a long complex finish. The taste remained in the mouth for several minutes after a few mouthfuls. This was the 2011.

Since 2011 the vineyard has been catering for breakfast, lunch and afternoon tea. After our tour and tasting we had an excellent three course lunch with paired wines.

### The Menu.

Home Pickled Brisket with Blue Cheese Beignets, Road Hazelnuts and Pickled Onions

Roast Fillet of Cod with Goats Cheese Mash, Black Pudding Bon Bons and Balsamic Reduction

Homemade Bakewell Tart

Tea/Coffee

The wines with the meal were French. With the main course a very light Pinot Noir from Mercurey. The Aperitif was a blended Pinot Griot sparkler.

Everyone enjoyed the meal and both the brisket and, particularly, the cod were dishes worthy of note. Many found the Bakewell Tart disappointing but I must add that the gluten free alternative, in the form of a home-made flapjack, was delicious.

Despite the difficulties with thick fog as we ascended and descended Holme Moss, everyone agreed that it was an interesting visit, a very good lunch and an excellent addition to our programme.

All the wines are sold from the vineyard and in the restaurant. Annual production is still only 10,000 bottles

which includes all varieties. The catering and rooms are open all the year round and they cater for a large number of visitors.

**Angela Britland Wine notes: Paul Bishop**



## around the branches—St James's



### St James's Branch 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner 27th October 2014

St James's Branch were delighted to celebrate their 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with a lavish black tie dinner at The Ritz, which was also the venue for the 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner. 56 members and guests, including Michael and Marilyn Messent and John and Joan Nicholas representing the EAC, attended. We were also delighted Michael and Daphne Broadbent had been persuaded by Chairman Ari Sofianos to attend.

With the delicious canapés of cornets of smoked salmon muscovite, brioche pizza with truffle and grilled fillet of beef with ginger and spring onion we enjoyed a slightly ageing Heidsieck Monopole Gold Top Brut

2007 in The Burlington Room and then moved downstairs to The Music Room to enjoy Executive Chef, John Williams's faultless cooking and his team's excellent service. Thanks to John, we were able to bring our own wines, which certainly added to the experience.

The perfect starter of Langoustine, Cauliflower and Spiced Apple was accompanied by Saint Aubin 1er Cru Derrière Edouard Blanc Domaine Herbert Lamy 2006 which, though yellow and mellow, had excellent length and was a perfect match with the dish. This was followed by Ballotine of Sole, Pumpkin Purée, Shellfish Velouté which was delicious, though to some slightly spoilt by not being served warm enough. It was enjoyed with a Savigny-Les-Beaune Blanc, Domaine Simon Bizeet Fils 2011, whose freshness and lively acidity made it for many the wine of the night. It was a fine and elegant wine which was quite simply delicious.

The main course was a succulent Fillet of Lamb, Artichoke, Olive and Basil Scented Jus accompanied by two red wines from the Languedoc, namely Coteaux du Languedoc Domaine de Montcalmès 2009 just shading it from the Coteaux du Languedoc Mas Julien 2009. These wines from the Terraces du Larzac were perhaps unusual choices but they had been tried and tested at the test meal along with others and came out on top. They did indeed serve to enhance the dish with the first wine having more of a cherry flavour than the second which showed more liquorice. There was also more to be had if you caught the eye of the efficient sommeliers.

The meal concluded with Hazelnut Semi-Freddo with Caramel and Chocolate, Vanilla Ice Cream presented with exquisite flair and imagination. This harmonised well with Maury Solera 1928 cask no 890 (made from oxidised old Grenache), which managed to do the difficult job of accompanying a chocolate based pudding.

Our old friend and former member, Gregory Bowden, spoke of the wines with his usual calm and knowledgeable enthusiasm, despite the attention of two Masters of Wine in attendance. We were pleased to see Gregory coming out of retirement to perform his much missed role of speaking about the wines and delighted to see his wife, Mickey, our former secretary.

The evening concluded with a toast to the Branch from Michael Messent on behalf of the EAC and a toast to our one and only indefatigable Chairman, Ari Sofianos, from Chris Bonsall on behalf of all the members. Hopefully, we can look forward to our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with great confidence.

**Chris Bonsall**





## Klosters Gastronomic Weekend

Friday 19 to Sunday 21 September 2014

The Zürich branch organised a Gourmet Weekend in Klosters for 34 IWFS members – 22 from the Zürich branch itself, but with 10 travelling from the UK and 2 from the Palm Beach branch in Florida.

On Friday evening, after checking into the Hotel Alpina and a tour of the Nutli-Hüschi (the local museum), the group assembled at the Walserhof where the Dietrich family had drawn up a gourmet menu matched with wines from the Bündner region. Kurt Haering, Chairman of the Zürich branch, welcomed the assembled group. The menu began with a chestnut soup followed by capuns<sup>1</sup> with trout which were delightfully matched with respectively a Pinot Blanc and a Chardonnay from different vineyards in Fläsch. This was followed by veal with pumpkin matched with a Pinot Noir Reserve from Peter Wegelin in Malans, which was introduced by one of the Wegelin team. Finally a wonderful 5 piece dessert was matched with a Flétri Riesling Sylvaner from the Obrecht's vineyard in Jenins.



On Saturday morning, the Group found its way by Vereinaabus to the Vereina mountain hut where members enjoyed a hike or simply the fresh mountain air before a traditional Prättigauer lunch of dried meats, cheese and salads accompanied by the Berghaus's very well matched house wines. Hans Peter Kocher, President of the Klosters Cultural Society, joined us for lunch and gave the group some fascinating insights into the history of the Prättigau. In the evening, the Group dined at the Alpina, where an Apéro was followed by a wonderful menu put together by the Alpina team. A goose liver crème brûlée was matched with a German Riesling Spätlese, followed by an Austrian Veltliner with the traditional Prättigauer wedding soup. Herbert Moser, brand ambassador for Abadia Retuerta, a vineyard in the Duero region of Spain, kindly sponsored and introduced a full bodied Tempranillo, Pago Negralado, to match the chef's Waygu beef presented three ways and the Alpina's famous cheese buffet, which lived up to expectations. Finally Rätö Conzett of the Alpina Hotel kindly provided an Italian Moscato to accompany the dessert. All in all a wonderful international collection of wines chosen to match the delightful menu and acting as a contrast to the fine Bündner wines the previous evening and those to follow on Sunday. David Chapman, a guest from Manchester, gave an excellent overview of the wines at both dinners contrasting favourably the local Bündner wines with those from further afield and remarking on the excellent matching with both the Walserhof and the Hotel Alpina menus.



In the Torkel of the Gasthaus zur Traube

On Sunday, the Group headed down the valley to Jenins for a wine tasting of Bündner wines at the Weingut zur Sonne led superbly by Christian Obrecht, who impressed everyone with his enthusiasm and knowledge of the Bündner wines. This was followed by lunch in the Torkel of the Gasthaus zur Traube where the Steinkeller family provided an autumn menu. A salad with a variety of mushrooms, accompanied by the Obrecht's Schiller Rosé, was followed by Rehgeschnetzeltes<sup>2</sup> with traditional Spätzli<sup>3</sup>, red cabbage and chestnuts matched with the Obrecht's Merlot. This was followed by a delightful dessert of marinated damsons and cinnamon flavoured ice cream served with a Pinot Spirito, a port-like wine also from the Obrechts.

The Society and all participants would like to thank all those in Klosters and Jenins who contributed to the success of the event and in particular the organisers of the event, Klosters residents John and Joan Nicholas.

### Notes

1 Capuns: sometimes referred to not as a dish, but a philosophy! Such is the claim of the inhabitants of Surselva, where the spinach beet wraps come from. But this is where unanimity stops. Each family has its own recipe, fills the leaves with sausage, mushrooms or dried meat, with or without bread, with crisped mint or peppermint, and serves the wraps with cheese or with cream.

2 Rehgeschnetzeltes: venison stew made from roe deer- testament that the hunting season is in full swing was the sight of a hunter cycling along the mountain trail near our mountain hut with a deer strapped to his back!

3 Spätzli: a sort of a cross between a tiny dumpling and pasta- made of a batter of flour, eggs and water or milk cooked briefly in boiling water and then tossed in butter.





## Helsinki go Truffle Hunting

The activities of the Helsinki Branch are still shadowed by the regrettable loss of meeting premises. Since "Martha's Kitchen" – a training kitchen and meeting rooms of the Finnish ladies' organization "The Marthas" was sold a few years ago, our Branch has been looking for a suitable, not too expensive substitute. There are several training kitchens in the city, but they have all one thing in common – the rent is too high for us. The other wine clubs in Helsinki usually meet in school classrooms that are empty for the weekends, and their wine tastings are possible while they bring their own glasses, but cooking of whole meals is seldom possible. Our recent meeting room is the training kitchen of a school slightly outside the City, and it would otherwise be satisfactory, but its limitation is its small size – only a few people have space for cooking simultaneously, and only about 20 people can sit by the dinner tables. Besides, the building being a school for children, the managers are not very happy when they see us tasting wines.

The IWFS Helsinki Branch's traditional summer trip took some 20 members to Karjaa, Birgitta and Armas Rahola's residence. We started with a wine tasting, followed by different wild fungi pastries with a rich salad. Thereafter we took a bus to Fiskars, where the first ironworks in Finland was established in the year 1649. (Read the whole story about Fiskars online at the address <http://www.fiskarsvillage.fi/en/culture/history>). This lively industrial village from the 1700's, is now occupied by artists and artisans, who tempt thousands of tourists to the vil-

lage every year. A few good restaurants feed the visitors. We visited an Organic Food Fair first, tasting and buying local farmers' products, and finished the day with a good dinner in the village center.

In October, several members of the Branch participated in a private wine & truffle tour to Croatia and Slovenia, and brought back truffles in their luggage. On the 11<sup>th</sup> of October, a dinner was arranged, using these truffles. The menu of the dinner was:

Crostines with paté of truffles, two kinds  
Mushroom salad à l'Alba  
Tagliatelle with truffles  
Brie cheese flavoured with truffles  
Chocolate truffles

### Wines:

Verrochio Prosecco Brut, Glera DOC Prosecco  
Enrico Serafino Gavi del Comune di Gavi 2013, DOCG Cortese di Gavi  
Ca' De' Medici Lambrusco Scuro, DOC Reggiano  
Villa Rajna Pinot Nero 2012, IGT Provincia di Pavia  
St. John Commandaria, Mavro

*Jaakko Rahola*



### GASTRO BISTRO IN LIMHAMN

Mattias Gustafsson and Anders Törnqvist have been running Bistro Stella now for a couple of years under the motto "A bistro with ambition, without being pretentious". I don't know really how to read that, but fact is that they have not only maintained an impressive performance since the start but also gone to a more elegant cooking with smaller and lighter dishes. On our visit this year Mattias was seconded by Filip Niemi in the kitchen and we got an amuse bouche, a Marenne oyster with a spicy cucumber shot, together with a fruity Ch Feuillet 2013, a Petite Arvine from Valle d'Aosta, and the following five course meal

#### ***Seared scallop with celeriac puree, pork and apple***

Cava Imum Brut nature reserve 2012, Emendis

#### ***Pan fried zander, shiitake, thyme and citrus beurre blanc***

Riesling Grand cru Rosacker 2010, Domaine Agapé

#### ***Lamb entrecôte, puy lentils, gremolata crumbs, pickled red onion and red wine jus***

Barbaresco Cèvanin 2008, Rivetto

Lirac Le classique 2012, Domaine Jonsier

#### ***Cheeses***

Mamuthone 2011, Cannaou di Sardegna, Giuseppe Sedilesu

#### ***Crema Catalana***

Malvasiadelles Lipardi Passito 2011, Caravaglio



A more common way to start our dinner would have been to serve the cava with the amuse bouche but it proved that both wines went perfectly with each dish. The now maturing Riesling from the good 2010 vintage had the citrus tones to match the scallop and the beurre blanc. The two wines with the meat, the spicy Lirac with herbs and the fruity full-bodied Nebbiolo lifted the tastes of the well composed dish. To finish we had a powerful Sardinian Cannaou with three Spanish cheeses and the semi-sweet Passito from Sicily with the dessert. Interesting and good choices!

As the team has not only the ambition but also the ability to provide a memorable experience for their guests, our members as well as locals and others shall certainly find their way back to Stella.

*Rolf Fransson Photo: Pierre Mens*







## End of season dinner at the Snapphane

Thirty members and guests, among others a former member of the now closed Copenhagen branch and the founder of the Estonian branch, were full of expectations when visiting the latest restaurant recently opened by the Vollmer brothers. It is named *Snapphane* (a member of the pro-Danish guerilla organization acting against Sweden in the 17<sup>th</sup> century in this part of the country) with the older brother Ebbe Vollmer as head chef. The place is smartly decorated with an open kitchen right in the middle and the idea is to follow the trend to serve medium-sized portions at moderate prices. That gives the guests the possibility to drop in for just one or two dishes and a



glass or two of wine. We, however, went as usual all in starting with a welcoming glass of an elegant Champagne NV by Joseph Perrier and were then served

*Amuse bouche: Donut with mushroom and truffle covered by porcini powder*  
LangheNebbiolo 2011, Rivetto



*Mussels and broccoli*

GrünerVeltliner Spies 2012, Kurt Angerer

*Salted cod, burnt marine algae and egg foam*

Pouilly Fuissé 2013, Dom. du Roure de Paulin

*Chanterelle, porcini and trumpet mushrooms, egg yolk and fried onion*

2010 Lander Jenkins Chardonnay, Rutherford Ranch Winery

*Leg of lamb with 3 x pumpkins*

GigondasCru tradition 2012, Dom. Du Gour de Chaulé



*Pear cooked with red currants, milk pudding and sorrel*

Gewürztraminer 2012, Marcel Deiss



The fruity Nebbiolo matched the filling in the donut and the citrus tones in the GrünerVeltliner worked nicely with vegetables and mussels. The cod had been baked at low temperature and the almost melting content coped well with the balanced Pouilly-Fuissé. The mushroom dish was delicious and combined with the fat tastes from the egg yolk it found it's equivalent in the buttery American chardonnay. The rather small leg of lamb had been cooked at low temperature for about three hours and the tender result was perfect with the elegant Gigondas. The Gewürztraminer was spicy with lychee tones and some residual sugar, in all matching the lovely dessert.

Our high expectations for this event were no doubt met this evening and we can only congratulate Ebbe and the rest of the talented staff to the result of their efforts. Our appreciation was shown through applause on finishing the dinner with coffee and delicious pastries.



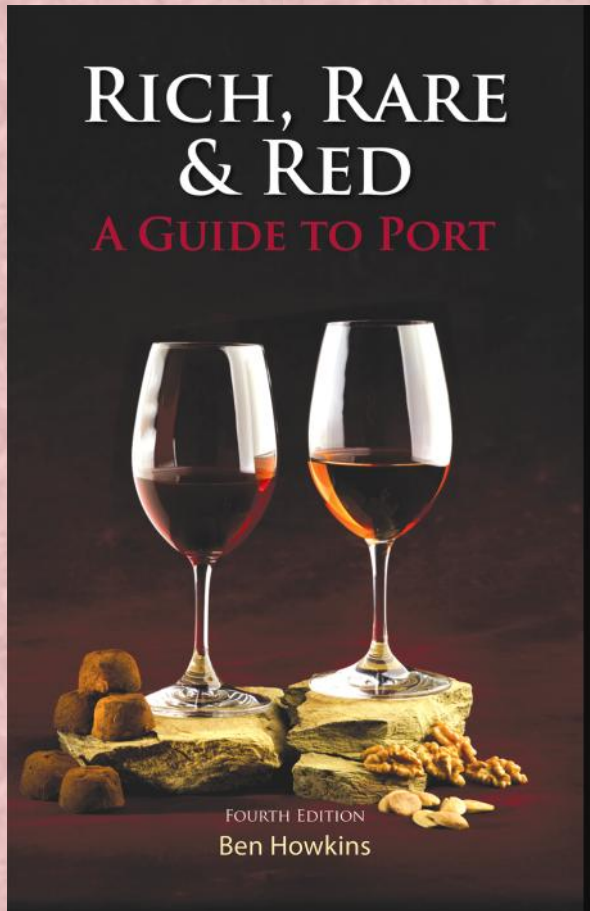
**Rolf Fransson**

***Photos: Pierre Mens and Birgitta Buxrud***



# Rich, Rare & Red

by Ben Howkins



England's authority on port wine for more than 20 years, Ben Howkins, provides the fourth edition of his best selling book on the subject. Long recognised as the one essential reference on port, this book is required reading for the Wine & Spirit Education Trust and other certification programs. It offers a concise history of port and the port trade as it has developed over the last 300 years, describing the all-important features of the soil and climate of the Douro Valley, the species of vine, the cycle of work in the vineyards and the wine 'lodges' where it matures before being shipped to its worldwide markets.

Written in an anecdotal style, *Rich, Rare & Red* conveys a wealth of valuable, up-to-date information of interest to the lover of wine, food and travel.

## The Author

Ben Howkins was awarded the Vintner's Scholarship in 1963, the youngest person to achieve this award. His experience in Europe's vineyards and working with many leading vintners inspired his commitment to educate others to the enjoyment of wine. He is a member of the Confreria do Vinho do Porto and the Vintners' Company, and is wine advisor at Waddesdon, to Lord Rothschild, co-owner of Chateau Lafite Rothschild.

Review from previous edition:

*'When it comes to port, I'm happy to let Ben Howkins be my guide. He is the very man the growers grow for and the shippers ship for.'*

– **Hugh Johnson**

