

Food & Wine



March 2015

The Wines of Zimbabwe

Olive Oil

Audleys Wood Hotel

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

Free to European & African Zone Members - one per address - Issue 122



CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Dear Members

Welcome to 2015 and the brave new world of Europe Africa Ltd. I hope it was painless for you as your membership was transferred on 1st Jan from IWFS Ltd to IWFS Europe Africa Ltd. Your data and information remains on the same secure database within our website. It may be difficult to get used to at first, but our acronyms and terminology are changing slightly.

The Company is known as IWFS Europe Africa Ltd (EAL), company no.90929374 in England and Wales. (Registered Office: The Pavilion, Botleigh Grange Business Park, Hedge End, Southampton SO30 2AF) Our region is known as Europe Africa Zone (EAZ) and covers UK, Ireland, Mainland Europe, Scandinavia, Baltic States, Moscow, Africa and Dubai.

Your Executive Committee is the Europe Africa Committee (EAC) and comprises the same elected officers as before January 2015.

We are presently going through all our documents and webpages making any appropriate amendments, and giving us an opportunity for an early spring clean. If you spot anything which needs changing please let us know. Our Secretary, Chris Redman, has a new letterhead, with company information on it, for official letters. If Branches want to use it, please request a copy from Chris. John Nicholas our treasurer has also changed our bank account to one which makes no charges. When paying for subscriptions or events please follow the instructions given by the membership secretary or event organiser. Our AGM/ABRM will be on 5th June in Stratford, details elsewhere in this issue. We are still working on your suggestions from last year to advertise and attract new members. This year I would like one of the topics covered to be 'events that you would like to see organised'.

Now for some good news, following my appeal in the last issue, two members have confirmed they would like to join the EAC, three members have offered to help Stephanie form an Events committee, one member has offered to Chair a New branches committee, and one member has offered to assist with the publishing. There are plenty more vacancies as shown in the last issue, so don't hesitate to ask for details, or volunteer. The more we have, makes life easier for the team.

We are also optimistic that a number of new branches will be formed this year, likely in Champagne, and Dublin, whereas our Chair of Moscow branch is working on Hungary and Armenia and a couple who have signed as independents in Croatia are looking to form a branch there. Also a group of young people are looking to form a branch of their own age group.

My Chairman's theme for this year is to 'be proud of our society and let people know who we are, and what we do'. More in the next issue.

Ian Nicol

EAC Chairman

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.

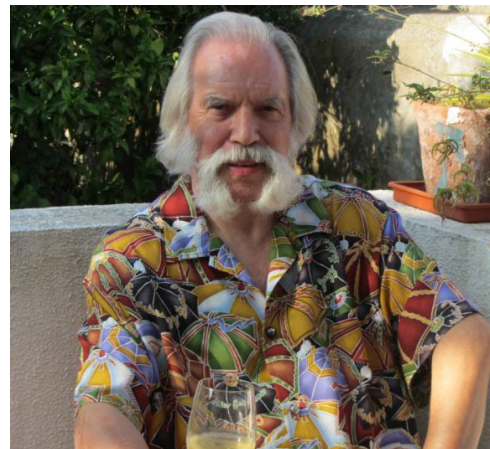
In André's words,

"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.

For more information go to http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Wine_and_Food_Society



Food & Wine

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

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Judds Farmhouse
97, London Road
Stanway, Colchester
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The Society welcomes
application for Membership

For information please contact
Katie Wilkins
EAC Membership Registrar
14 Highbury, Jesmond,
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE2 3DX, UK
E mail
eazmembership@outlook .com

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For extra copies please contact
the Editor

Editorial

Well it is editorial time again. I hope you like the cover photo of a Zimbabwean witch doctor. I felt I had to use it as Jeffery had written me a fascinating account of grape growing in Zimbabwe. He tells me he met Mugabe several times but unfortunately there was no one around with a camera. He also has written an in-depth study of olive oil, a very interesting account of the subject.

I am very grateful to Jeffery for his contribution or we would have been very short on articles this time. Fortunately the branches came up trumps and I was able to maintain the number of pages to the usual amount but at one stage it looked as if we were going to be a very thin copy this time.

Other regulars who helped out were Katie Wilkins with a piece on Edward VII eating habits and Bernard Lamb with a piece on the wines of Vietnam and Laos. Carole Goldberg wrote an interesting article on the wines she has drunk over the years and how much she has enjoyed them.

So I am once again able to put together what I hope is an interesting magazine but if things slow down as much as they have this last time, next time and I don't get the submissions it will be a much thinner publication. There must be more of you out there capable of putting some words together and writing something interesting about food and wine, I am appealing to you for some more copy.

A big thank you to all who have contributed to 'around the branches' with out those we would be in a sorry state.

I leave you with a plea for more copy for the next issue.

Regards
Pam Brunning

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The Wines of Zimbabwe & Olive Oil

Jeffrey Benson has been in the wine trade for 35 years. He meets producers worldwide as a buyer and wine maker, conveying his knowledge through his lectures and consultancy work. He was involved in the formation of 'Wines of Canada' and was the only non-North American judge to join their tasting panel at a three day event evaluating over 200 wines to determine medal winners.

For twelve years, Jeffrey ran the annual evening wine school for the Society. He continues to lecture and adjudicate the Wine and Spirit Education Trust examinations and has written and contributed to seven books and many articles on food, wine and travel.

www.jeffreybenson.net

My Life in Wine



Carole Goldberg joined the London Branch in 1975 and managed their Quarterly Programme of Events for 11 years from 2002 to the end of 2013 when she gave it up saying that she and her other half David now looked forward to a life not dominated by copy and print dates!!!

She is still active on the London Branch Committee and organises a wide range of events for the Branch whilst maintaining her alcohol intake by selflessly testing wines to put into these events to ensure they're fit for members to imbibe".



Edward VII – gourmet or gourmand?

Katie Wilkins joined IWFS (London Branch) in the early 1990s when she lived in Surrey. In 2005 she became the Membership Registrar for the EAC and has very much enjoyed the contact this has given her with all the Europe and Africa branches. She worked in IT for over 30 years and took early retirement in 2006 and moved to Newcastle upon Tyne. She is standing down as Membership Registrar this year.



Wines of Vietnam and Laos

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.

Dear Members

Benefits - With the new year now upon us, I am pleased to advise that the benefits available globally to IWFS members have been renewed and updated and I would encourage you to take a look at what is on offer on the IWFS website. The benefits have been selected specifically to have a food and wine focus. There are a variety of benefits on offer allowing you to enjoy and learn about the pleasures of food and wine whether it be by experiencing them first hand or maybe by simply finding out more by reading, from home, one of the specialist publications available to you.

If you are planning to travel you maybe interested to know that, as well as their tours to the more traditional wine regions, Arblaster & Clarke have added some new and exciting tours which are on offer to IWFS members. A couple of highlights are a gourmet tour to Scotland, taking in the Whiskies of Speyside and Skye (*Price £2550 per person from 16th – 20th September 2015* plus they have just re-introduced their Gourmet Ireland tour (*Price £2450 per person from 7th – 13th September 2015*) – *IWFS members receive a 5% discount on these prices*. Other tours on offer include “Champagne Weekends”, “Champagne & Chablis by coach” and “Classic Rhone, North to South”. Full details can be found on the dedicated page for IWFS members on their website: <http://www.winetours.co.uk/international-wine-food-society> as well as on the IWFS website (details below).

Champagne continues to be a focus of benefits for IWFS members whether you wish to experience some of the best hospitality of the region at Les Crayeres or subscribe to The Champagne Warrior newsletter keeping you up-to-date on the latest news of this classic tittle. Plus if you are in London then make sure you drop in at The Ritz London. Forget afternoon tea! Why not book lunch or dinner at The Ritz Restaurant and you can enjoy a glass of champagne, with their compliments. Don't forget your membership card.

An increasing number of you are finding The In & Out Club a great place to stay when you are visiting London. This centrally located London club is still home to the office of the International Secretariat where members can enjoy the Affiliate rate for accommodation. So please let me know if you would like to stay and I can provide a letter of introduction and hopefully get the chance to say “hello”.

Decanter Magazine have also kindly continued to offer special prices to members for 2015. You will not find lower prices elsewhere so we would encourage you to take advantage of this offer, for printed copies, and keep up-to-date with news and views in the world of wine.

Decanter

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Direct Debit Offer

Pay just £34.99 every 12 months by Direct Debit - Saving 42% on the full price of £60.70

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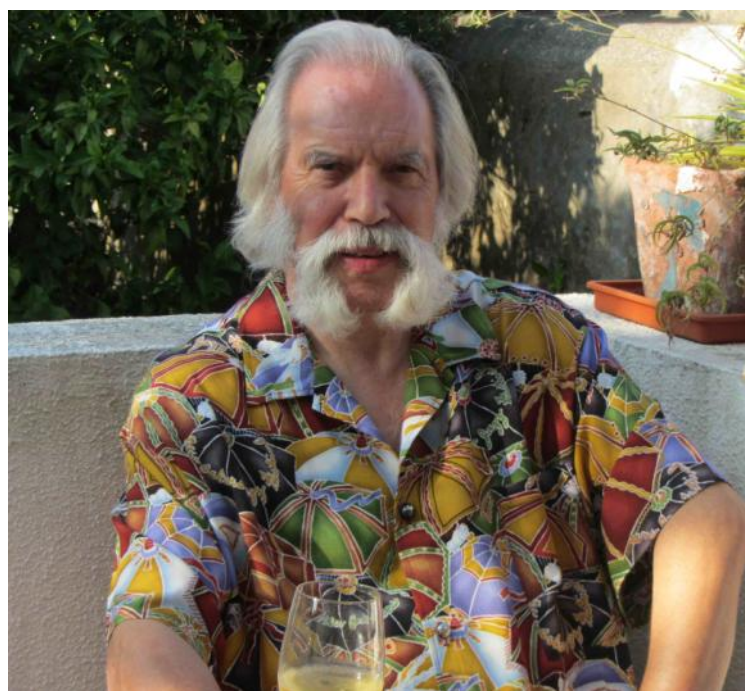
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Or online at: www.magazinesdirect.com

For full details of these offers to members please visit the IWFS website: <http://www.iwfs.org/secretariat/iwfs-merchandise/benefits-for-members>

Vintage Card Wine Consultant - Our featured wine consultant this issue is Jim Budd who assists us with assessments for wines from the traditional Loire region in France. Jim is a recognised expert in the wines from the Loire so we are extremely lucky to have him as part of the team.

Being born in the great vintage of 1947 Jim Budd was probably predestined to love Loire wines. He started writing about wine in 1988 after teaching for a number of years just off the Old Kent Road in South London. For 20 years he travelled widely visiting the world's vineyards, which was a great privilege. Then in 2008 he decided to stop travelling so much and concentrate on his first love: the Loire. He spends at least three months a year in the Loire, where he has a house with friends that they bought 28 years ago.

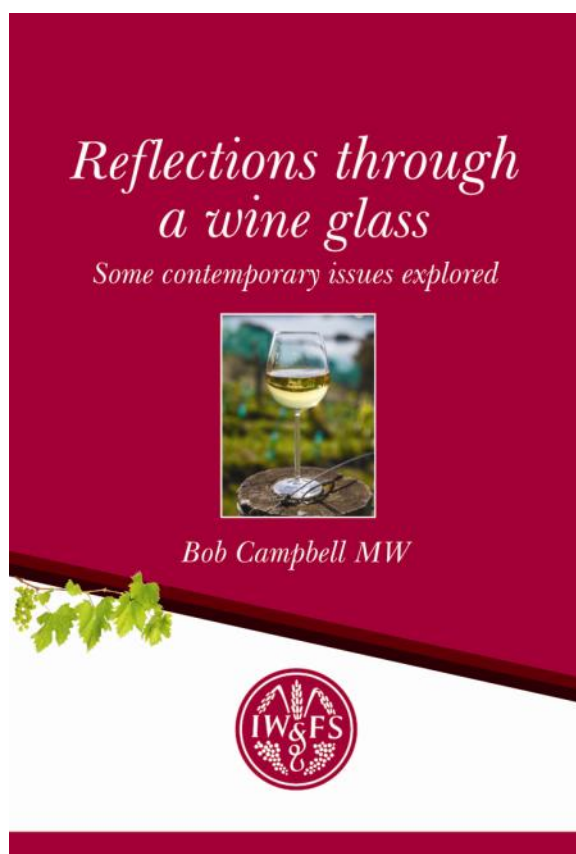


As well as writing for Decanter and other magazines, he has edited Circle Update, the Circle of Wine Writers' newsletter since 1991. Jim has three blogs: Jim's Loire, investdrinks (drinks investment scams) and Les 5 du Vin - shared with four other journalists. He is the regional chair for the Loire at the Decanter World Wine Awards. Jim is also a keen photographer. He prefers to be discreet and keep a low profile.

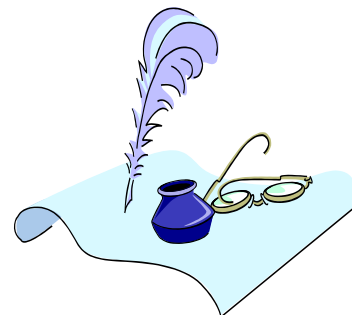
His most memorable recent Loire wine was a stunningly good 2002 Saumur Blanc from Château de Villeneuve. It was served as an apéritif to enjoy its complexity to its full.

New monograph – you should already have your copy of “Reflections through a Wine Glass....” to hand and I hope you have enjoyed the read. If you would like to gift a copy to friends or family looking to learn more about some of the interesting facets of the world of wine then please note that additional copies are available from the IS for £10 per copy (inc p&p).

Last note -I was sad to hear of the passing of Tony Levien in November last year. Tony, from New Zealand, was a great supporter of the IWFS and was past Chairman of the Asia Pacific zone and also a member of the International Council of Management. We send our condolences to his widow Di who many of you may have met.



Readers Letter



Dear Editor,

I can remember research into the post asparagus urine smell taking place well before Bernard Lambs mentioned 1980, possibly in my student days ending in the late 60's. From my memory those who could not smell asparagus in their urine could not also smell the scent of Freesias.

It is only recently that I have lost the ability to "smell out" which tea has the sugar. Was I alone in this useful ability?

Kitty Johnston

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY



EAZ AWAYDAY 11TH SEPTEMBER 2015 – HUSH HEATH VINEYARD, KENT

Join us at Hush Heath Vineyard for an opportunity to sample their Award Winning Wines and Ciders and enjoy a tour of the vineyard and orchards, followed by a buffet lunch at the winery.

Full details in the next issue of F&W.



THE WINES OF ZIMBABWE

By Jeffrey Benson Chairman of London
Branch

History

The Pioneers around 1890 first brought vines to Rhodesia (as it was then called). Rex Southey- a grower from Concession and grandson of a Pioneer farmer, recalls old vines growing around his grandfather's homestead which regularly produced bunches of grapes. However it was not until the late 1950's and early 1960's that vine growing was undertaken seriously and commercially, when a few determined men like Rene Paynter, who at his farm Arlington in Umwinsdale New Salisbury, introduced a great variety of vines with which to experiment in order to find out which varieties would grow successfully on his farm.

He did prove that the vine would grow and flourish and thereby encouraged others to plant vines. He eventually produced wine, which was commercially marketed in 1963.

A white wine called St. Christopher and a light red under the label Rosa Maria.

At the same time in other areas, there were others growing vines and producing wines like Dr Rossi of Odzi, Mr Tapson of Ruspade. However, these early wines never really succeeded due to the preponderance of the Isabella grape, the flavour of which was not acceptable to the wine-consuming public. This unacceptance was exacipated when, in the early 60's, African Distillers started to produce three wines which were made from grape must brought up from South Africa and sold under the brand names: Golden Eagle, Rein-gold, and Vin Rochelle.

In 1965, being a British colony, the then Rhodesian government declared "Unilateral Declaration of independence", this was unacceptable to the British who asked other countries to impose sanctions against their former colony, this resulted in many farmers whose main business was growing tobacco visualising a bleak future deciding to diversify into other crops. Some took to vine growing with the knowledge that vines could be successful due to the early experimental work done by people such as Rene Paynter.

It was at this stage that David Hughes, then distiller and wine production manager of African Distillers, helped to pioneer the beginning of what is today the foundation of the Zimbabwean wine industry. He was instrumental in importing vines for distribution to farmers throughout the country.

In 1965 he imported 6,000 vines: clairette blanche, white french, pinotage, steen and red muscadel. These were distributed to the Eastern Districts, Hippo Valley, Marandellas and the Mazoe Valley.

The tobacco market did not collapse as was envisaged and many growers subsequently gave up vine growing as it clashed with their other farming activities. However, some of these early planters carried on with grim determination, battling against the elements, disease and the very high capital costs involved in establishing a vineyard.

Industry

Developments were taking place in Matabeleland, where a group of farmers in Essex vale found this area to be ideally suited for vine growing. With ideal soil and its low summer rainfall, this minimised the problems brought about by rain during the ripening and harvesting, and lack of winter rain, which could be induced through irrigation

In Bulawayo, Monis Wineries (now owned by Cairns) established a winery, which expanded to such an extent that it has become a leading winery in the country. They also encouraged and assisted farmers by obtaining and distributing the best vines to them, guaranteeing to take their crop at realistic prices that would ensure their continuity in viniculture. African Distillers acquired vineyards near Odzi and have actively assisted local farmers to establish vineyards, contracting to take their grapes in the same way

In 1980, Zimbabwe gained independence and with it the integration of the wine industry which was controlled by three wineries.:



Producers Profile

African Distillers (AFDIS)

Started in 1944 then known as P.J.Joubert (Bulawayo) Ltd changing its name in 1946 to African Distillers (Rhodesia) Ltd. Its initial activities centred around, the distribution of imported spirits, liquors and wine. Having acquired its own distillery in Mutare in 1946, they started production on their own range of spirits moving to its present hundred acre headquarters at Stapleford in 1974 with distribution centres at Bulawayo, Harare, Kweke, Masvingo, Mutare and Victoria Falls.

They have three wholly owned wine estates:

Worringham Vineyards purchased in 1970, situated in the hills of Esigodoni New Bulawayo with forty five hectares under vine growing: chenin blanc, sauvignon, semillon, merlot, pinotage, cabernet sauvignon on a shale, slate and granite soil.

Green Valley Vineyards purchased in 1975, located in the foothills of the Eastern Highlands twenty-five kilometres from Mutare. This two hundred a fifty-hectare estate has fifty-five hectares under vine growing: chardonnay, cabernet sauvignon, merlot, clairette blanche, colombard, and ruby cabernet on a sandy loam soil.

Bertrams Vineyards purchased in 1980, located just outside Gweru with forty hectares under vine growing: sauvignon, colombard, chenin blanc, pinotage, merlot, cabernet sauvignon, crouchen, muscat d'alexandrie on a deep red loam soil.

The wines produced under the Stapleford labels are of the highest quality under the supervision of New Zealand wine consultant, Clive Hartnell

Cairns Wineries

Originally known as Monis Wineries, it was owned by the Baoceas family who were importers of Portuguese and Italian wines.

In 1977 Cairns Holdings acquired full control of Monis Wineries and as production increased, it was decided to build a new winery in Marondera, an area described as; "The heart of Zimbabwean wine" under the direction of Australian wine maker Stuart Blackwell.

In 1980 Cairns acquired the Mateppe Estate and Ian Sieg took over as winemaker

During the late 80's, new warehouses were built, and new bottling lines were installed at their Mikuyu winery in Marondera.

Today, Cairns have around two hundred hectares under vine growing; chardonnay, chenin blanc, semillon, sauvignon, merlot, pinot noir, shiraz, gamay, cabernet sauvignon, colombard, and pinot blanc, under the supervision of the talented wine maker Sam Pfidayi. The wines from their Mikuyu vineyards are of excellent quality

Meadows Estates

Originally hacked out of the virgin bush in 1899 by a young Englishman, Harold Henry Dunelle Christian. The Simleit family, distinguished vintners, then owned the Meadows Estate for three generations, but it was not until 1986 that it was transformed into one of Zimbabwe's most northerly vineyards located in beautiful surroundings east of Harare producing very fine chardonnay, buckentraube, chenin blanc, gewurztraminer and colombard.

In 1955, David Simleit a man of immense vision, energy and the leading light in Zimbabwe's wine export programme sold the Meadows Estate vineyards to Cairns to concentrate on the family wholesale and retail wine business of Phillips Cellars in Harare, an Aladdin's cave of vinous gems from around the world, with vintages going back more than fifty years. In addition he runs a most successful wine tasting club.



My Life In Wine

Carole Goldberg Takes a Vinous Journey Down Memory Lane.

Nine years ago the late Hugo Dunn-Meynell, past IWFS International Chairman and Editor of Food and Wine, led a most unconventional event. The first of its kind for the London Branch, it linked the most significant events in his life to wines drunk at that time. What made this so different was the wine details were secondary to his anecdotes.

In memory of Hugo I attempted to follow the same amusing style showing wines linked to key liquid milestones in my own vinous life.

We kicked off with a toast to Hugo in **Mateus Rosé**. This was significant as, at his second son Crispin's birth, he admitted he was so strapped for cash he had to toast the new baby in Mateus Rosé. We then started on my life in wine.

First wine I ever drank. This was Palwin No 4 – a Kosher sweet sacramental wine that's absolutely revolting and much like alcoholic cough medicine. *Orthodox Jews actually drank this with their food 40 - 50 years ago* - honestly, I jest not!!! Unwilling to inflict it on people I chose **2011 Baron Herzog Chenin Blanc** – a wine redolent of peaches and nectarines and only 11%.

First Champagne. At the US Embassy, Paris in my gap year. My American boyfriend's father worked at the Embassy and I was invited to celebrate the Moon Landings there in July 1969. I stayed overnight at their house and was asked what time I wanted a breakfast alarm call. In those days I was young, innocent (ho, ho!) and naively ignorant of differences between UK and USA English, so replied "Knock me up at 8.30am can you please?" Needless to say he declined! Recalled with **NV Veuve Monsigny Brut Champagne - £9.95 from Aldi (£11.95 regular price)**.

First Châteauneuf-du-Pape. Whilst at the Sorbonne in 1972, I had by then progressed to dating a very sophisticated 35 year-old Parisien who considered my taste in wine execrable – super-market Beaujolais and cheap student Bulls Blood. He decided to give me and my flat-mate weekly wine tasting lessons. Trouble was Alison spoke no French and Victor spoke little English so unsurprisingly she was bored and just knocked back the wine. I still have the label from the first one and it was 1967. Celebrated with 2 wines – **2013 Châteauneuf-du-Pape Blanc, Château Mont-Redon and 2000 Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Domaine de la Jeunesse, Aimé Sabon**. The white was delicious, fresh, fruity with good weight and classy though the red had mixed reviews. It was drinkable but whilst some said it was OK but disappointing others felt it had definitely passed its prime.

First dinner I cooked David - March 1975. I met David early January 1975 but didn't really fancy him at the time! However on closer inspection he greatly improved and I thought he was rather gorgeous. By end-February we were an "item" and I decided to show off my culinary skills by cooking pigeon breasts in red wine. The cooking wine was Côtes-du-Rhône and whilst cooking, I kept testing the wine as one naturally would of course. Unfortunately by the time dinner was ready, I was distinctly below par - the modern terminology is "*ratso*" - and whilst he tucked in I snored away on his sofa! Nonetheless by the time you read this we'll have just celebrated our 39th Anniversary so I must have got *something* right. Recalled with **2013 Laudon Côtes-du-Rhône Villages Blanc, Château Courac** (£9.95 The Wine Society); a lovely full-flavoured white Rhône with depth and freshness and just bursting with fruit.



Beaujolais, Andouillettes and Hugo. I joined the IWFS in August 1975 and in November 1976 went to Crispin's 'Beaujolais and Bangers'. However the event turned into a nightmare for me. Whilst living in France I learned to my detriment that tripe rapidly made me extremely ill but didn't realise that Andouillettes were actually tripe sausages. Having then spent the rest of the post event supper in the ladies' loos, Hugo took pity on me and drove me home, taking care to thrust a very large bottle of very cold water on me with instructions to call an emergency stop if the tripe threatened again as this was a brand new Lancia and he didn't

want the leather seats ruined! Recalled with fondness for Hugo's self sacrifice but *NOT* the tripe, by **2013 Brouilly Pisse-Vieille, Durand**. A lovely big full fruity Beaujolais, ½ bottles only, The Wine Society.

1977 First Very Fine Wine Tasting. I tasted several 1er Cru Bordeaux for the first time at an event led by Dr Chris Davenport-Jones. When Chris told us one wine was corked and to pour it away, I thought what a dreadful waste of very expensive wine and drank it. Chris was absolutely horrified exclaiming painfully "Carole, how on earth *COULD* you drink that? It's corked." At that time I was a raw recruit - obviously with a palate used to Bulls Blood and cooking Côtes-du-Rhône – and thought it was near nectar! However about 2 years later, I poured away a wine as undrinkable. Chris called for silence, broke into applause and congratulated me. YAY FOLKS I HAD ARRIVED!! Celebrated with **1985 Château Mouton-Rothschild**. Immaculate condition and an excellent cork. Well mature with orange brick rim and a nose of farmyard, cedar, spice, meat and leather. Palate echoed nose and was delicious and classy although being very finicky, a little short on the finish. From Four Walls Wine.

1979 - Serge Hochar and Chateau Musar. Chateau Musar had just been "discovered" and Liz Berry MW arranged a blind tasting of 9 top Bordeaux growths plus Musar. I chose Latour as Musar. Serge was more interested in why people chose the wrong wine than those who guessed right. I explained this was my first taste of Musar so I selected the classiest wine. When asked what was wrong with his Musar I blurted that it smelled pungent and reminded me of the elephant house at The London Zoo! "Ah" replied Serge "but now you've smelled and tasted it you'll never forget my Musar again!" A memorial to an untimely end to 35 years of very dear friendship with **1982 Chateau Musar**. Brick red and looked as though it would be dead but was wonderful. A meaty nose, soft tannins with superb body and massive fruit. Fabulous length. A complete and classy wine still with plenty of life. Voted the best of the evening; 9.85/10 for me. From Four Walls Wine.



Early 1980's, Cyril Ray, Michael Broadbent MW and Echézeaux. I met the late Cyril Ray, cellar-master at the Café Royal at a tasting he led of Dr Barolet wines. He became my early mentor and taught me to appreciate good Burgundy. Could this be because I was slim, had long blonde hair I could sit on and was wearing a micro-mini kilt at the time???? The original was used as a prop at the event. Through him I loved Echézeaux and bought at his recommendation. A couple of years later Christies had a small parcel in auction and I bought it. However it didn't taste like Echézeaux and 3 bottles were decidedly awful. I took a bottle to Michael Broadbent's office where it was tested. It was as awful as the other 3 but Michael tried to convince me it was fine. Though quaking before the Grand Master, I stood my ground and Michael refunded us. Michael became a mentor and working with him from 2005 to arrange tastings was exacting but so instructive and rewarding. Recalled with **2007 Echézeaux, Domaine Faiveley**. Beautiful rich intense colour, still very youthful and plummy at rim. Glorious pinot noir nose; superb palate with smoothness, depth, rich fruit and body. Well balanced, well knit, this is a wine with everything but would be better in 2-3 years. From Four Walls Wine.



2002 John Avery and Pichon Lalande. Elected to the LB Committee I was advised "treat John with kid gloves and don't upset him". I was petrified to open my mouth (yes, moi!) John said, "Listen, if we're going to work together there's things we must get straight. The name's John, not this Mr Avery nonsense and you're allowed to disagree with me." John gave a star performance at my Pichon-Lalande vertical just before he died, over-ran by an hour but held us all entranced saying "Forget dinner, I'm enjoying myself too much with the wines". Sadly through a supplier mix up 1988 Pichon Lalande wasn't delivered in time and instead of a Réserve de La Comtesse substitute, I accidentally took **1993 Chateau Musar**. John wouldn't have minded being toasted in this – he loved good wine! Mellow and supple showing signs of age but massive earthy fruit with excellent body and length and a classic pungent Musar nose of spices, nuts, meat and leather. An outstanding wine with years left.



Edward VII – gourmet or gourmand?

By Katie Wilkins



Our present queen is said to have very simple tastes in food. State banquets and official functions aside, she otherwise enjoys uncomplicated cuisine and I'm pretty sure that, even if her circumstances allowed her to become a member of IWFS, it's not something that would interest her. And her great great-grandmother, Queen Victoria, other than developing a liking for ostrich eggs and, according to Tom Parker Bowles, liking a good curry, didn't show any particular interest in food.

But things don't always run in families and our present queen's great-grandfather, Edward VII, is legendary for the amount he could eat. So would we have welcomed him to IWFS had it been around before he died? Here is a brief glimpse of Edward's lifestyle; the information comes from Philip Magnus's book, 'Edward VII', from 'Edward VII and His Circle' by Virginia Cowles, and from 'Bertie' by Jane Ridley.

He never tired of caviar but also relished plain English fare, and ate roast beef and Yorkshire pudding at lunch on Sundays as a change from richer food. His dinner seldom consisted of less than twelve courses, and he adored rich and elaborate dishes. He was especially fond of grouse, partridge or pheasant stuffed with snipe or woodcock, with the latter stuffed also with truffles and the whole garnished with a rich sauce; and he loved ortolans, small Egyptian birds which were cooked in brandy. Another favourite dish was Cotelettes de bécassines à la Souvaroff, named after an aristocratic Russian gourmet, which consisted of snipe, boned and halved, stuffed with foie gras and forcemeat, shaped into little cutlets and grilled in a pig's caul. They were exceedingly rich in flavour.

A young apprentice chef wrote of his first day at Windsor Castle; "I expected that, as lunch and dinner were meals of about eight or ten courses, breakfast would be a very light meal indeed. I found, instead, the spits packed with chops, cutlets, steaks, bloaters, sausages, chickens and woodcock. In other parts of the kitchen, cooks trimmed rashers of streaky bacon a quarter of an inch thick for grilling, and prepared egg dishes.... I asked how many different dishes were served at breakfast and was told five. Any servant could have the same number of courses at breakfast and quite a few of them managed it."

King Edward was not well in the early months of 1910, the year he died, and travelled to Biarritz to rest. On the evening before he left he gave a dinner, and was seen to do full justice to turtle soup, salmon steak, grilled chicken, saddle of mutton, several snipe stuffed with foie gras, asparagus, a fruit dish, an enormous iced concoction and a savoury.

Although he ate a Continental breakfast when abroad, he liked an English breakfast of haddock, poached eggs, bacon, chicken and woodcock before a day's shooting or racing. Lunch and dinner were meals that stretched from ten to fourteen courses, and tea was an elaborate affair with every sort of scone or crumpet, tart and roll and cake. Besides this, snacks consisting of lobster salads and cold chicken were often served at 11am to appease the King's hunger, and even after dinner a plate of sandwiches, and sometimes quail or a cutlet, was sent to the Royal apartments.

I do find myself wondering if there was something wrong with him – an appetite on this scale is abnormal, surely. Can any of our members comment?

He was affectionately known as 'Tum Tum' by his courtiers, and the fashion for leaving the bottom button of a waistcoat undone is said to have come from him as his expanding waistline required it. Before his coronation his waist measured 48 inches, and it was around 54 inches by the time he died. On top of this, he smoked 12 large cigars and 20 cigarettes a day.

I enjoy good food and wine but find myself feeling queasy at the thought of this overwhelming excess and I'm amazed that he lived until he was nearly 70.

So was he gourmet or gourmand? A bit of both, I think, as quality and quantity were both important to him. But would we have welcomed him to the IWFS? No, I don't think we would – he'd have completely changed the way we need to think about costing events!

Audleys Wood Hotel



Audleys Wood Hotel is one of a small chain of exclusive hotels run by Julia Hands. Known as Hand-picked hotels Audleys Wood is one of 20 hotels in the group which ranges from small country houses to large mansions. The hotels are prestigious houses that have a history, Audleys Wood was the home of the Simonds family that owned the Reading brewery hence the name of their prestigious restaurant The Simonds Room. All Handpicked chefs are specially trained in a school run by the hotel to achieve the highest standards in the kitchen and it shows in any of the groups hotels.

We were invited to Audleys Wood for a tasting dinner put on by their new Belgium chef Damvan Stefanov. Damvan had worked at other Handpicked Hotels before he came to Audleys Wood. We started with canapés with the house Champagne before sitting down in the prestigious Simonds Room, an oak panelled room hung with tapestries. The starter was a terrine of suckling pig served with piccalilli, shimeji mushrooms and finely shredded crackling. The terrine was a lovely flavour and went well with the piccalilli but the crackling was very hard and one had to watch your teeth. This was served with a glass of Tilia Chardonnay which was bright and crisp with a background of toasty fruit flavours.

The first fish course was Cornish crab and it was delicious crab, the best flavoured crab I have tasted for a long time. Unfortunately the black bean sauce served with it totally overwhelmed the crab and the caviar accompaniment. The next fish course was Stone Bass on a bed of tapioca with capers, romanesco and raisins. The tapioca was obviously cooked in a fish stock of good flavour and was nutty and good. This was served with a glass of A2O Albarino, Rias Baixas a bone dry richly textured wine that was reminiscent of a white Burgundy.

The main course was guinea fowl with truffle, figs, pancetta with lemon and leeks. The guinea fowl breast was layered with truffle and cut into triangles served on a bed of leeks. A delicious combination of flavours served with a meat jus. With this we were served a glass of Huia Pinot Noir with intense dark cherry flavours and silkiness.

Then came a predessert of poached pear and Roquefort ice cream. The poached pear was fine but the ice cream was revolting, a funny texture with a horrible flavour. With this was served a glass of Warres Otime 10 year old tawny port. This was delicious, smooth silky texture with a subtle oak balanced by fresh acidity. The dessert made up for the Roquefort ice cream, it was a chocolate and hazelnut financier with olive oil curd ice cream with praline crunchy and was delicious.

Coffee and a selection of petit fours followed.

It was a suitable end to a extremely interesting evening. We stayed the night in one of the extremely comfortable bedrooms and found the facilities very luxurious. Audleys Wood is maintained to a very high standard as are all the Handpicked Hotels with their owners Guy and Julia Hands keeping a close eye on their investment. The last I heard they had a £98 million overdraft to facilitate the running of the chain.

The chain is very reliable and has hotels all over the country and they are willing to do deals so it would be useful for branches to look them up and use them for events.

AN IN DEPTH STUDY OF OLIVE OIL AND ITS NUTRITIONAL VALUE

by Jeffrey Benson

Studies carried out over the past three decades show that the mortality rate caused by cardiovascular diseases in Italy were less than the rate in other western countries.

The reason for these differences seemed to lie in the diet especially the quality of fat intake such as cereals, vegetables, fruits, a lot of fish and little meat, and in particular organic olive oil as the main culinary fat.

From a chemical point of view, the components of olive oil tend to be divided in saponifiable fraction (those transforming in soap when it is treated with an alkaline hydroxide) and another insaponifiable fraction.

The first fraction, which constitutes 97-99% of the total olive oil, is made up by triglycerides, a small portion of free fatty acid responsible for the acidity degree of the olive oil

The second fraction is composed of different substances with a heterogeneous composition called secondary compounds of the olive oil.

Although the proportion of these compounds is minor (1-3%) they are very important from a nutritional point of view, quality and stability of the olive oil. In fact due to its high specificity, the secondary compounds are used as quality criteria.

SAPONIFIABLE FRACTION

The most important fatty acid is OLEIC ACID, with an unsaturated nature and which constitutes 55-83% of the content in fatty acids

The following saturated fatty acids are composed entirely between 13 and 21%. The most representative acid is Palmitic acid while the less representative is Stearic acid

Finally the polyunsaturated fats are fatty acids that appear less frequently; mainly Linoleic acid whose proportion ranges between 4 and 22%, the least appearing is Linolenic acid.

The content of fatty acids of olive oil varies significantly depending on the olive varietal grown, the most health giving is the CASALIVA grown around Lake Garda in Northern Italy.

Other factors that can modify qualitatively the fatty content of olive oil are the latitude, agronomic and climatic conditions, again these factors are significant to the high quality of the olives grown on cool high slopes such as Lake Garda

INSAPONIFIABLE FRACTION

Biological studies have recently highlighted the nutritional and beneficial health values due to its antioxidant, hypolipemic or antiatherogenic activity

HYDROCARBONS

Hydrocarbons set up the 32-50% of the insaponifiable fraction.

The main hydrocarbon in olive oil is Squalene, intermediate product for the biosynthesis of cholesterol and precursor of other molecules such as phytosterol.

Its presence in the olive oil can be up to 750 mg per 100, a quantity that is larger than other seed oils.

The B-Carotene is another hydrocarbon present in olive oil, together with the chlorophyll is responsible for the yellowish green colour of extra virgin olive oil. It is a pigment that acts in the photosynthesis and protects the plant from oxidation, but its interest from a nutritional point of view lies in its activity as PROVITAMIN A.

TOCOPHEROLS

Tocopherols give stability to the olive oil and play a beneficial role to one's health due to its antioxidant activity

The most important tocopherol is the ALA TOCOPHEROL which is 95% of the total and it has the most important activity as VITAMIN E. The concentration of tocopherol in olive oil depends on several factors such as the varietal of olive, the degree of ripeness and the harvest date, again the perfect combination is achieved on the higher slopes of northern Italy around Lake Garda where the 'Casaliva' varietal flourishes in the cooler climate.

PHYTOSTEROLS

They are compounds of the Squalene which have a structural function since they are constituent of the vegetal cellular membranes.

The components are related to the quality of the olive oil, but physiologically they are important because of their biological action against cholesterol particularly with organically grown olives.

The most abundant phytosterol is B-Sisterol that represents 90-95% of the total sterols



Phenolic compounds such as Coumaric acid

PHENOLIC COMPOUNDS

They are compounds that are characteristic of green aromatic plants whose basic unit is phenol.

More than 8,000 vegetal phenols are known; among them are Gallic, Coumaric, Caffeic and Cinnamic acids

NUTRITIONAL BENEFITS OF ORGANIC HS OLIVE OIL

Olive oil consumption will give us a great caloric contribution due to its great composition on triglycerides, which is approx 900 Kcal per 100g

The fatty acid that composes these triglycerides will be OLEIC acid which will be translated in the creation of more resistant membranes to oxidation, a reduction in the fraction of LDL (Low Density Lipoprotein) and an increase in the fraction of HDL (High Density Lipoprotein) with positive cardiovascular advantages that this implies. This fatty acid will be the precursor of the essential fatty acids W-3 and W-6 indispensable in our organism

TOCOPHEROL

In a physiological level, tocopherol will have an ante oxidant activity since this compound is able to neutralise the free radicals in the body.

This activity is also produced on the lipids of the organism preventing Peroxidation of the cellular membranes.

B-CAROTENE

This compound has a great relevance in a vascular level because it prevents the oxidation of the molecules of LDL, the most important cause of the cardiovascular pathologies.

Furthermore, this molecule has an activity as pro-vitamin A, which once absorbed will become retinol in our organism. It has influence on our vision and the creation of epithelial tissues.

PHYTOSTEROLS

Phytosterols have a great importance at a physiological level thanks to its lipid lowering capacity.

Its activity is to compete at the intestinal level with the dietetic cholesterol reducing its absorption.

POLIPHENOL

In these molecules there is an important antioxidant power.

Also they have an anti-inflammatory effect due to its intervention in the production of Interleukins and Prostaglandins, two molecules responsible for the inflammatory process

CONCLUSION

There is now conclusive evidence that high quality (HS) organic extra virgin olive oil, particularly from olives grown in the Garda region of Northern Italy has numerous health benefits due to:

Unsaturated fats (Oleic)

B-Carotene

Phytosterols such as B-sisterol.





Wines of Vietnam and Laos – and spring rolls by Bernard Lamb

In a week in Vietnam this year, the only Vietnamese wines I found were Dalat Red and Dalat white, from the Dalat region, both 12% alcohol and costing about 189,000 dongs (£6) a bottle in restaurants. The Dang Dalat Red is made from Cardinal grapes and mulberries. The white is from Cardinal grapes and Chardonnay, which is curious as the Cardinal grape is red skinned, a 1939 Californian cross grown as a table grape in many countries. It was pioneered for wine in northern Vietnam by Allied Domecq.

A wine list's descriptions of them are curious. The white is: 'Transparent liquid with straw yellow, specially gentle of fermented fruit, soft and smooth after-use acrid and sour.' The red is: 'Dark red, light fragrance of fermented fruit (sounds like a glimpse of cherry, a glimpse of sour fruits). It has light, harmonious sour and acrid.' They both tasted quite pleasant, dry, especially the fruity red, although one bottle of it tasted tired.

The food in Vietnam was superb. We had many different spring rolls, and our party all agreed that the best ones were those we made ourselves in a master class from award-winning chef Mrs Pham Anh Tuyet in her house. We went with her first to see her shop in the morning market for really fresh ingredients which we had to chop extremely finely. Our rolls contained pork, kohlrabi, cat's ear (dried black mushroom), onion, wheat vermicelli, black pepper and beaten egg, with 23 cm diameter rice paper circles for wrapping. The rolls were deep fried at 180°C for 10 minutes, then served hot with a dip of fish sauce and rice vinegar containing chopped red

chilli and garlic. Delicious!

In Laos, I found no national grape wines but tasted two rice products. The Lao language for rice wine is pronounced 'Lao Lao', but with different tones for the two words. The one made from fermented sticky brown rice was 15% alcohol, darkish brown, medium sweet, with a good body. It was enjoyable. The label shows the pounding of the rice. The one from white rice was distilled, a dangerously high for the stomach 60% alcohol, water-white, dry, and tasted very spiritry, with some rice smell and flavour. One glass of it was interesting but enough. What I found outside a bar in Laos was an amusing and very pithy notice: 'Drink treble. See double. Act single'! Was that a warning or an inducement?

In Cambodia, I found no national wines in restaurants. On departure, I saw some potentially interesting Cambodian flavoured palm wines in the airport Duty Free, but did not buy them as I would not get them through two later security checks.



Patrick Troddens Greek Masterclass

Last summer I had the privilege of attending a Greek Masterclass at the famous Ammos Taverna positioned on the breath-taking Marathonas beach in Aegina. Stella Kalamara the Chef proprietor welcomed us with open arms into her kitchen. I was accompanied by two foodies from Dorset, Theresa and Gwen who have a passion for Greek food and wine, and entertained us with amusing stories, it was a joy to work alongside them, an inspirational experience and a great learning curve.

Stella began cooking as a young girl inspired by her mother and grandmother. In Aegina Stella is a culinary star, in her introduction she tells us that Greek cooking is about love of your ingredients, about taste and flavour, whether robust or delicate, sweet or earthy, pungent or aromatic. The ingredients used in her kitchen are sourced locally, her style of cooking lets the essential qualities of the food shine through in every dish that she prepares.

Aegina produces the finest Greek olive oil served in abundance at the table and used in copious amounts in salad dressings, baking and cooking, chips cooked in olive oil are at a different level of gastronomy.

The first dish is a firm favourite and simple to prepare:

Mushrooms a la Grecque.

200g button mushrooms
125ml water
125ml olive oil
finely grated zest and juice of a lemon
12 peppercorns crushed
teaspoon coriander seeds
a good pinch of salt
2 cloves of garlic - roughly chopped
teaspoon cumin
a good sprinkling of thyme

Place all ingredients into a saucepan, bring to the boil and simmer gently for 10 minutes. Allow to cool in the liquid, preferably overnight and serve with the delicious dressing.

You can experiment with the style of cooking using peppers, fennel, courgettes, shallots and cauliflower.

Stella loves cooking fish and demonstrated to us her favourite method of cooking based on classical dishes of the world.

Towards the end of cooking she adds a good measure of Greece's potent, liquorice - tinged aperitif Ouzo. We also had a glass to savour and appreciate, how refreshing it was.



Prawns with Ouzo and herbs:

450g large prawns
25g flour seasoned with a dash of salt and pepper
tablespoon olive oil
25g butter
juice of a lemon
tablespoon chopped parsley
a good measure of Ouzo

In a large heavy-based frying pan add the olive oil and butter, when hot add the prawns that have been rolled through the seasoned flour. Cook until lightly coloured and turn over, pour over the Ouzo, transfer the pan to a hot oven for 5 minutes. Just before serving liberally scatter over the chopped parsley.

Any fish can be cooked this way, it is simplicity itself.

The next dish a family favourite that Stella cooks every day.

Inman Aubergine

6 small aubergines
Deep-fry in olive oil at 170°C for 10 minutes turning over once.

Filling

500g minced lamb
tablespoon of olive oil
200g chopped onion
500g plum or vine tomatoes-roughly chopped
3 cloves garlic -roughly chopped
125ml tomato juice
125ml water
salt and pepper to taste
teaspoon caster sugar
tablespoon chopped parsley

In a large heavy-based saucepan, add the olive oil, when hot add the minced lamb and seal. Add the chopped onions and cook for 5 minutes, then add the chopped tomatoes and garlic. Add the tomato juice and water, season with salt and pepper to taste. Bring to the boil and simmer gently for 20 minutes stirring from time to time. Finally add the sugar and taste.

Cut the cooled aubergines in half lengthwise, place in a roony dish and pour over the sauce. Bake in a moderate oven for 10 minutes. Let rest for 20 minutes before serving.

If liked you can add a little grated Feta cheese and a light dusting of breadcrumbs before baking.



Happy cooking!

around the branches - Zurich



Thai Food Feast

It has become an annual tradition that the Zurich Branch of the International Wine & Food Society holds a culinary event to taste cuisines from other countries or continents. This year Thai Food was on the programme, initiated and organized by our members Magy and Urs Dietler.

Nearly 20 members joined the event, which took place in the most renowned Thai restaurant in Zurich, the Ban Song Thai next to the Cathedral in the old part of town. The staff are all Thai with the exception of the host, Ruedi Rickli, who has run the establishment for about 20 years. During that time, high standards and quality have secured the restaurant an excellent reputation. All the staff are very friendly and take pride in good service and explanations of the dishes.

The food is spicy, but has been slightly moderated for the sensitive palates of Zurich locals. On the other hand, all the other spices of the Orient find their way into the dishes, Thailand being in the middle of an area influenced by cuisines from their neighbours such as China, Indochina, Malaysia and Indonesia. In my travels I have noted that Thais normally drink tea, water or beer with their meals, but as a wine- appreciating society we accompanied our meal with wines, which we thought matched very well. Ruedi Rickli explained all the dishes to us in detail; perhaps tempting some of us to either prepare Thai food ourselves or to increase our knowledge of the cuisine by a return visit to the restaurant or indeed the country itself. Very popular in Thailand are the many street restaurants, where the freshest ingredients are used to prepare instant meals.

Due to the fact that the restaurant is small and very busy, we could not meet the chefs, but the results were outstanding and most memorable.

Menu

Starters

- Prawn Sate with peanut sauce / *Sate gung*
- Marinated chicken with Isan sauce / *Gai yang nam chim chaew*
- Green papaya salad / *Som Tam*
- Rice fritters with coconut milk and Kaffir lime leaves / *Khao pan*
- Vegetable fritters with Taro / *Phak thod*

Soup

Coconut soup with shrimps / *Ron gung*

Main Dishes

- Panaeng Curry with beef / *Panaeng Nua*
- Prawns with morning glory and garlic / *Phad gung kratiem*
- Green Curry with chicken / *Gaeng khiao wan gai*
- Stir-fried mixed vegetables and rice noodles / *Phad phak ruam*
- Red Snapper with tamarind sauce / *Pla sam rod*

Steamed rice / *Khao plao*

Dessert

Thai pineapple on mango sauce and coconut-Pandan ice cream / *Saparot cap crem mamuan lae Ice cream maprao-bai toi*

Wines

- Gewürztraminer Viñas del vero (2013, Somontano, Spain)
- Pinot Noir Nobler Blauer (2013, Nadine Saxer, Neftenbach, Switzerland)

More info about Thai food: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Thai_dishes



around the branches - London

A Splendid Tasting of Miscellaneous Red Wines

In a spirit of optimism, our host Christopher Davenport-Jones had purchased these wines at auction with a view to creating two tastings of which this was the second. The Tasting was held at his home in Stockwell and was followed by an informal supper. The wines tasted were:

1962 Ch Beard, St Emilion Grand Cru, a Dutch-bottled curiosity, relatively humble compared with the others, and put in first in case it turned out to be undrinkable. The cork was floppy and loose, but not leaking. Fortunately, we agreed that the wine tasted fine, likeable and retaining some fruit. It was a good opening gambit, without being fantastic.

1985 Ch Musar, an iconic wine, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cinsault and Carignan blend, known to many of us. The colour was typically pale, its nose was spicy, full and rounded, the palate smooth and spicy, with integrated tannins and a huge scented finish. It was tasted in tribute to the late Serge Hochar, news of whose untimely death, in an accident at his 75th Birthday celebrations, had recently reached us.

1978 Vega-Sicilia Valbuena, from a barren, bleak, rocky and arid area near Ribera del Duero in central Spain. Valbuena wine is made from younger grapes. It used to be an unfashionable area, but now it has become recognised as one of the best wine making regions in Spain. This estate is described by Berry Bros & Rudd as 'the most prestigious in Spain' (new owners took over in 1982). This vintage is mainly Tempranillo, matured in barrels for at least 5 years. It had, not unexpectedly passed its peak, but was still drinkable.

Three excellent Clarets followed next:

1983 Ch Batailley, Pauillac 5ème cru classé, a reliable château. Mainly Cabernet Sauvignon, and some Merlot. The wine had a lovely colour, with a slight orange tinge at the edge, an elegant bouquet and taste, overall it was charming and well balanced, although not quite such a good vintage as the 1982.

1983 Ch. Haut Bailley Graves Léognan. Mainly Cabernet Sauvignon with some Merlot. Gravelly, pebbly soil. At this date, there were a large proportion of vines over 20 years old, with up to 20% being over 50 years old. A gentle easygoing Graves, which was very pleasurable to taste.

1983 Ch. d'Issan, Margaux, 3ème cru classé, from this fairy tale romantic moated chateau. The wine has enjoyed a renaissance with massive investment from 1980 onwards. 1983 Margaux are often rated more highly than the 1982s. Some thought the nose musty and mushroomy. However the taste was better, and one member even liked this the best of the three Clarets.

1982 Ch Lascombes, Margaux, 2ème cru classé, one of the great vintages. This is the largest of the Margaux properties. The wine is very well known. The colour was lighter than anticipated, but the nose was still showing some fruit and spice, followed through in the flavour. It was definitely a winner.

1970 Ch Belgrave This was not château-bottled. The nose and taste were disappointing, although it was drinkable. A few of us thought there was some life left although others felt it was definitely past it, oxidised rather than maderised.

1928 Ch Segonzac, Blaye Michael Broadbent had described this wine as fragrant. David Peppercorn had said that it was spicy and attractive but for early drinking. There was no expectation that this wine should be drinkable from this year. However, what a fantastic chance for us to taste history - it was light in colour, but alive and well, although of course past its sophisticated best. A good end to the tasting.

The evening ended with a tasty supper which was accompanied with a delightful 1998 Ch Fonrogue from St Emilion.

Our grateful thanks to Christopher for his willingness to share this eclectic selection with us, an excellent opportunity for us to try these older wines which are not easily available.

Those who participated in this unique tasting felt very lucky to have attended it. Christopher and his wife Marigold deserve praise and our grateful thanks for both the wines and their hosting.

The Branch is very privileged to have members who are prepared and able to host events of this standard. Oh that there were more!

Rachel Burnett

John Miles

Alan Shepherd

The cosmic universe of biodynamic wines / Bio-dyna-cosmis wines.

The profession of biologist helps me not only learn how to observe, but also elevates the imagination. With experience, this happens automatically –you establish a phenomenon and try to understand its essence. But making sense does not always work. For example, I do not always understand the physical meaning of the actions and rituals of biodynamic wine producers, but it is an excellent opportunity to dream up and to compare the facts.

Can biodynamic wines be outstanding?

This is how matters stand. When the grapevine is growing under the care of human, it does not expend its energy for self-protection. Consequently, as soon as the grapevine is left on its own, its hidden resources start to awaken. A vine has a developed hormonal system. With the aid of long roots, the diverse set of trace elements extracts from the soil. Reaction to changing external conditions occurs in a matter of minutes. With the help of hormones plants synchronize all vital processes in the vineyard – it tells its neighbors about the beginning of blossoming or warns about the pest attack to give members of the “grape-house cooperative” the time to prepare. In addition, there is a multi-level protection system against pests. The consequences of attacks record in the memory of the vine, in its tissues. Therefore, the next attack will be repulsed almost instantly - this is how a real immune system works.

Organic farmers and biodynamic wine producers help grapevines to cope with pests, but the way they do it sometimes makes people smile. In capacity of medicine for grape diseases you can see some exotic and unusual things. For example, those ones, originated in the cow's horn which was dug in the ground in the vernal equinox, or remedy made of yarrow leaf wrapped in cow's mesentery. Wow!

But we should not forget the fact that every substance on Earth has its own wave characteristics. And let's think about an ultra low dilution, when just one molecule of an active ingredient puts in milliards of molecules of water, and there still is a curative effect. And compost heaps! Great battles break out there!

To control weeds, row spacing is put with the plants, which actively extract some agents that stunt the growth of their neighbors.

And there is a great variety of tricks like that. But if you want to use them, you should have an extensive knowledge and suitable conditions on the vineyard. You should not force the sprinter to participate in the marathon, because they have different types of metabolism.

The high grade is to take into account the influence of the planets and primarily the Moon. All actions on the vineyard and in the winery are coupled with the lunar cycle. But it really works!

Probably, one of the most uncommon wineries, which live in conformity with the laws of the Universe, is the French Domaine Viret. The building of this winery was constructed in compliance with golden ratio parameters and according to the canons of the Pyramids. On the vineyard and in its sub foundation there are six-ton stone columns – they work as aerials for receiving information from the cosmos. Even the analogues of Georgian Kvevrisin wineries are made accurate to dimensions which are divisible by the numbers of golden ratio. Such a cosmic, fabulous universe! There even exists the registered trade mark which accentuates this special way of farming - Cosmoculture®.

I have familiarized with production of that “cosmic” winery on the stated meeting of the International Wine and Food Society Moscow Branch.



around the branches - Moscow

That time our meeting was held in the amazing place– on the island of toxicological safety, in the “Ecotochka” cafe in Moscow.

Composition of natural food and biodynamic wines is awesome! Just imagine the spelt (it is the sort of wild wheat) cooked with the rabbit meat served up with the sour cream sauce (it was an idea of our Chairman Leonid Gelibterman), accompanied by astonishingly complex and multifarious white Viognier(+Clairette, Roussane, Maursanne) - Domaine Viret, Coudeed’or, AOC Cote du Rhone, 2012. The yield on the vineyard does not exceed 30 hectoliters per hectare. Fermentation carries out in oaks, and the aging occurs on the cold sludge. There quantity of sulfur is minimal, and filtration is only nominal. It is that rare case when a white wine is desirable to be opened in advance, it needs time to show itself in all its glory. During the evening it was transforming and changing flavors, all that was missing were to meditate!

Another blend Domaine Viret Renaissance, 2011 was served with “byoriki” (meat dumplings), which are the national dish of the Russian Kalmyk people, who were tribesmen of Genghis Khan. Natural meat aromas ran into light animal odors of wine. Unexpectedly soft tannins were perfect complement to the delicate texture of the dish.

Sulfur is a separate topic

Excluding classical additives in the process of wine production, the sulfur gets into the skin of grapes from the vineyard with soil elements during the decomposition of proteins, or after oak treatment. So, the sulfur compounds are always contained in wine, and there is only a question of quantity. Biodynamic wine contains 2-4 times less sulfur than the other wines. Sometimes biodynamic wine producers do not use it at all. But protection from microbial contaminations and oxidation is still necessary, so the question of whether it is possible to make quality wine using biodynamic methods remains.

And we have just to enjoy rare finds. And it was precisely what happened!

Aemop: Irina Godunova, Deputy Chairman of IWFS Moscow Branch

Photo: Kvevri, byoriki

around the branches - Merseyside & Mid-Cheshire

La Boheme Restaurant in Lymm

January saw the return of our members and friends to La Boheme Restaurant in Lymm and we were treated to an expertly presented cookery demonstration by the chef/proprietor, Olivier. Olivier has owned the very popular French Restaurant for many years and the establishment has gained in popularity to the extent that to be assured of a table, one has to book well in advance.

The cookery demonstration was presented as described.

There were three starter courses, three main courses and three sweets and post the demonstration, members could order whatever selection they preferred and were in the main restaurant and served with their delicious selections.

Starters - Poele De Pigeon Au Chou Vert /Gratin De Fruits De Mer

Mains - Feuillette D'Epaule D'Agneau /Mille Feuille Poisson Sauce Anette & Citron

Sweets - Tarte Au Amande Et Poires/ Mousse Au Chocolat Blanc & Framboise

“The family owned restaurant is lead by Olivier Troalen, the head chef, with his wife Adele, ably supported by an experienced team with a strong French influence in both the kitchen and the front of house.

La Boheme presents a traditional French cuisine in an elegant and classically designed restaurant with a friendly and attentive service.

“Olivier has a passion to create and produce exquisite cuisine using fresh ingredients and all dishes are meticulously presented with delicious flavours and tailored accompaniments.”

The evening was a great success and as a minimum corkage was applied, members supplied their own wines and looking around the assembled diners, “A Good time was had by all”

Members and friends from our branch and also from Manchester, had a thoroughly enjoyable evening and appreciated all the preparation which had been done by the restaurant. La Boheme can be recommended to anyone seeking an excellent meal in a restful and pleasant environment with professional staff.

Val Brookfield-Bishop



Sweet Wines from Four Hemispheres

At the Naval Club on 11th December, we had 7 examples from the Northern Hemisphere, 4 from the Southern Hemisphere, 7 from the Eastern Hemisphere and 4 from the Western Hemisphere. While we all recognise where the equator is, the position of the Greenwich meridian is less obvious. For example, some Loire wine regions are in the Eastern Hemisphere and some are in the Western Hemisphere, as are the English wine regions. The organiser's quality scores are out of 10.

Wehlener Sonnenuhr, Riesling Spätlese 1983, C. Prüm-Erben, Mosel-Saar-Ruwer. N,E. (i.e., northern and eastern hemispheres). Lovely gold colour. Good noble rot bouquet, with slight Riesling 'petrol'. Medium sweet; medium body. Keeping well and not dried out. 8/10. From a famous Mosel vineyard; the great Prüm estate at Wehlen was split between seven children in 1911, including J. J. Prüm.

Tokay Pinot Gris Grand Cru Kloeckelberger 1983, Koeberle-Kreyer at Rodern, Alsace. N,E. Paler, lemon-gold. Adequate bouquet and taste. Disappointing for a Grand Cru from a good year. 6/10. Northern Haut-Rhin.

Recioto della Valpolicella Classico 1978, Quintarelli Guiseppe, Veneto, 14+4% (i.e., 14% alcohol and 4% potential alcohol if fermented out). N,E. Lots of sediment. Brown/red/black. Quite a good bouquet with dried fruit predominant. Better in the mouth – a big wine, complex, lots of fruit (blackberry) and tannins; very long. Keeping beautifully. Replacement cost would be more than £400. 9/10. From a famous maker of Amarone and Recioto. Ripe grapes dried indoors, then long fermentation and years of ageing in large casks. Probably Corvina, Rondinella and Molinara grapes.

Les 3 Demoiselles, Coteaux de L'Aubance 1997, Domaine Richou, Loire, 12.5%. N,W. Lovely gold colour. Rich noble rot bouquet. Beautiful flavour, with some pineapple and other tropical fruits. Well balanced, sweet, very long. Delicious. This wine, from a not well-known appellation, was much liked. 10/10. Chenin Blanc vines up to 90 years old. Only made in the best years.

Château Rieussec 1^{er} Grand Cru Classé Sauternes 2005, 14%. N,W. Attractive mid-gold colour and big legs. Lovely rich noble rot barley sugar nose. Big body. Very sweet, almost too sweet now. Should improve. Big flavour and length. 9/10 now. Yquem's eastern neighbour. 90 ha; 90% Sémillon, 8% Sauvignon Blanc, 2% Muscadelle.

Vin de Constance 2000, Klein Constantia, South Africa, 14%. S,E. Deep gold-amber. Excellent huge noble rot bouquet. Big body; very sweet; almost balanced. Very long with the acidity giving a clean finish. 9.5/10, suffering a little from comparison with the Loire wine. The 2008 Klein Constantia tasted recently at the Klein Constantia dinner at the IoD seemed slightly better than the 2000, but was not up against other great sweet wines that evening. Late-picked Muscat à Petits Grains; replanted in 1982.

Late Harvest Gewurztraminer 1985, Matua Valley, New Zealand, 14.2%. S,E. A Margaret Harvey import when New Zealand sweet wines were banned here by EU rules. Dark gold-amber. Moderate Gewurztraminer bouquet (lychees, Turkish delight). Good acidity; medium sweet, medium body. Clean finish. 8.5/10. North of Auckland; founded 1974.

Tokay Pinot Gris Sélection de Grains Nobles, Altenbourg "Le Tri" 2000, Albert Mann, Alsace, 12.4%. N,E. Golden amber. Legs. Big rich caramel bouquet. Big body. Very sweet. Very complex and long. Rich and lovely. 10/10. Sélection de Grains Nobles wines are rare and expensive, with individual over-ripe grape harvesting.

Pinot Noir Tardio 2010, Saury's, Patagonia, Argentina, 16%. S,W. An oddity, a late harvest Pinot Noir from a winery which Diana and Antony Paterson-Fox had visited. Bought in East Sheen. Red, with brown edges and big legs. Quite a good bouquet. Medium body. Sweet. Interesting and quite good. Some length. 8/10.

Rutherglen Liqueur Muscat, Stanton & Killeen (before 1990), Victoria, Australia, 19.5%. S,E. Brown-amber but breaking up, with lots of dark bits in it. Big luscious Muscat bouquet. A huge wine, sweet but balanced. Very long. Not spirity. A great after-dinner wine. 10/10. Muscat Blanc à Petits Grains grapes. Alcohol is added to stop fermentation, then the wine is aged in a kind of solera system in hot sheds, with some oxidation and evaporation.

"Religious" liqueur. N,W. Gold. Big legs. A strong, good herbal bouquet. Lots of body. Sweet and delicious. 9/10. Made by the organiser in East Sheen in June 2014 from Polish vodka (40% alcohol), Top Shelf 'Dictine' (they can't call it Benedictine) essence from New Zealand and 'Red liqueur base' (sugar, maltodextrin, thickener, acidity regulator), giving about 31% final alcohol. The Amaretto extract gives an even finer liqueur.

Brenda Lamb provided the cold supper, including puddings.

Bernard Lamb

around the branches - Surrey Hills



Italian Lunch

Alan and Stephanie welcomed sixteen of us to their home on November last year with a glass of Villa Vincente Prosecco Brut DOC. Stephanie was our amazing chef and gave us a starter of Risotto alle Mele (Apple with Gorgonzola) from Valentina Harris' book - Risotto. Alan masterminded the wines and with the Risotto we had A-Mono Italia, Fiono Greco 2013 an Aromatic white wine. For the main course she produced Faraona (guinea fowl) arrosto con la salsa peverada; this came from Tessa Kiros' book Venetia - Chicken liver and soft salami all in one pan. It was accompanied by Zucca e funghi al forno - roast pumpkin with mushrooms – and Mista di verdure Cotta, Swiss Chard, Green Beans and Broccoli steamed in Olive Oil and Lemon Juice. Alan said that the Guinea Fowl was crying out for Chianti but not too oaky or tannic so it was Poggiotondo Chianti DOCS 2013, with Merlot and Sangiovese grapes.

Stephanie said that she wanted something light for dessert and found it in "The Silver Spoon" published in 1950 and translated into English in 2005, it is apparently *the* cookbook to give Italian Brides consisting of 1200 pages! . She chose Spumone d'Arancia e Grand Marnier. The Orange Mousse with the Grand Marnier is frozen and served with orange segments and candied orange peel. Alan found that the Italian sweet wines were too sweet and cloying to match the orange so as he had some late harvest Muscat from Chile remaining from Starters and Puds he served that and it proved to be the perfect match. Coffee and tea completed our delicious and delectable meal

I cannot find adequate words to thank the Shepherd team. It was such an excellent event. I'd like to finish by quoting Stephanie:- "The nice thing about cooking for IWFS is that everyone is so appreciative. They are a pleasure to cook for. I highly recommend it"

Helen Mills, Chairman

around the branches - London

Christmas Dinner at the Reform Club

London Branch counts John Barker OBE as one of our members and he arranged for us to have our Christmas dinner in this most famous place, founded in 1836, and haunt of politicians then and now.

Andrew Brodie helped things along by donating Champagne to drink while we gathered and swapped news. Members enjoyed a fine dinner in convivial surroundings!

Andrew Brodie



around the branches - Cape Town

Pam Hirschsohn Ladies Lunch Tintswalo Atlantic, Hout Bay 12 November 2014

Special guests: Tyrrel and Anette Myburgh of Joostenberg Wines



Every year the ladies lunch, held in honour of its founder, the late Pam Hirschsohn, is held either in a member's home catered by a small band of marvellous members or in a restaurant to give them a break so they can enjoy the pampering. This year was such a year and what more perfect a location to feel pampered than Tintswalo Lodge, hugging the coastline at the cusp of Chapman's Peak Drive.

The breathtaking view of the bay, the majestic cliffs towering above and the understated ranch-style lodge blending into the fynbos combine to fill one with a mixture of calm wellbeing and excitement. This feeling immediately called for a glass of bubbly on arrival and the MAN Family Wines MCC did the trick. Man, oh man, the golden bubbles exactly reflected the mood, despite the weather. Threatening to live up

to its name as the Cape of Storms, the rain mercifully stayed away. The odd stray ray of sunshine bursting through the ominous cloud cover provided a dramatic backdrop to a day of impressive wines, delicious food and sparkling company.

But let's start with our guests. Tyrrel, owner cum cellar master of Joostenberg is the 5th generation Myburgh to own and live on this historic estate in the heart of the winelands. Anette, Tyrrel's wife, is equally involved in the work and winemaking at Joostenberg and vineyards are how they met. While doing a Master's in plant pathology, Anette needed a block of vineyard for her research into *botrytis cinerea* and 'cute vineyard owners' was her chief criterion for vineyard selection. Tyrrel fitted the bill and the rest is history. She netted her degree, cute husband and the two of them have taken Joostenberg to new heights. Driven by a passion for environmentally friendly organic farming practices, Joostenberg was granted full organic certification in 2012. Having studied philosophy at university before turning to winemaking, Tyrrel waxed philosophical about the challenges of organic farming and the early damage wrought by rogue pests and weeds until nature found its balance and the land flourished. So too, the wines which are delicious and pleasing on both palate and wallet. Brothers Philip and Tyrrel Myburgh are also part of another wine initiative with José Condé of Stark-Condé Wines



called MAN Vintners and then there's a very special Chenin block in Agter-Paarl called Tormentosa Wines and guess where the name comes from and I quote: "*Cabo Tormentoso*" (translated as "Stormy Cape" or "Cape of Storms") is the original name for the Cape of Good Hope given to it by the Portuguese explorer Bartholomieu Dias who first rounded the Cape in 1488. Ha! The weather, as did the food, suited this wine perfectly!



And here goes... Jeantelle van Staden, executive chef, delivered five star delights which partnered the wines in a symphony of flavour – not a dull note! Here's the menu with the chosen wines. **Canapés**

Confit Duck Bon Bon with Black Cherry Relish; Spiced Butternut and Bluerock Parcel with Pear Chutney

MAN Family Wines MCC

~? ~

Starters

Cured Salmon Carpaccio and Kataifi Prawn served with Beetroot relish, Garlic Smear, Petit Leaf salad and Sesame Glaze

Tormentoso Old Vine Chenin Blanc 2013

~? ~

Refresher

Raspberry and Vanilla Sherbet

~? ~

Main Course

Duo of Lamb: Braised Lamb Shank Pastry and Pistachio crusted Lamb Lollipops served with Exotic Mushroom Veloute, Zucchini Fritters, Potato Fondants and Orange Plum Jus

Joostenberg Syrah 2012

OR

Seared Kabeljou served with Chive New Potatoes, Caponata, Basil Squid with Truffled Béarnaise Gratin

Joostenberg Fairhead 2011 (their flagship white)

~? ~

Dessert

Chocolate Pine nut Praline Torte, Lemon Passion Tart with Blueberry Frozen Yogurt and Cinnamon Apple Macaroon

Joostenberg Noble Late Harvest 2007

A stone from the rocks below was placed at each setting with our names on it and we were told to make a wish and throw them into the sea! What fun! Each lady also received a wine gift takeaway lest they get thirsty on the drive home and Pam Hirschsohn's *Treasury of Recipes* was presented to the Myburghs for their vinous generosity. A fun-filled fabulous day drew to a close in the late afternoon. Until next year.....

Terri Grant

Organising Committee



around the branches - Leicester

Cheltenham in November

Twelve of us enjoyed a very good three days in Cheltenham arranged by Chairman Sally Moore. We travelled there independently and met in the bar at the Queens Hotel now owned by the Mercure group. Sally and her husband Graham welcomed us and we enjoyed tea with excellent fruit and lemon drizzle cakes.

We changed for dinner at Purslane, 16 Rodney Road. It is a small restaurant with battle ship grey walls and colourful pictures. The chef, Gareth Fulford, has moved from the Kingham Plough. We were faced with a rather elaborate menu with five starters to choose from and five main courses – each dish had a long string of ingredients. I chose mallard breast, crisp leg, damsons, liver parfait and bulgar wheat - all good but it was difficult to detect the different elements. Next I enjoyed suckling pig with roast parsnips and black pudding. The starters included two fish dishes and there were three in the main course selection. We chose from four puddings. My husband enjoyed an apple pudding with a cinnamon doughnut and toffee apple ice cream. The pannacotta with roasted plums and gingerbread ice cream was also popular. I chose a selection of local cheeses surprisingly no more expensive than the puddings. We didn't have bread because it was £3 extra per person!

We drank Picpoul de Pinet, Domaine St Peyre Languedoc 2013 and Pinot Noir Almerly Pays d'Oc 2012. We waited a long time before the starters arrived in spite of the fact that we had been asked to pre order our food but after that the other dishes arrived fairly promptly. Coffee, tea and mints sent us happily to bed.

On Wednesday the 5th we journeyed to Wallsworth Hall near Twigworth, a very interesting museum devoted to exhibits expressing Nature In Art. Returning to Cheltenham we had time for shopping enjoying the architecture and the lovely tree lined promenade.

Our dinner in the Le Champignon Sauvage was superb. David Matthias, the chef and his wife Helen, front of house, have run the restaurant for over 25 years and Helen who welcomed us still seemed young. We sat at a long table with a very pleasant ambience. The service was very good. Canapés were served at the table whilst we drank Montagny Premier Cru Louis Latour 2010. It had good fruit on the nose with citrus hints and full fruit on the palate. Then we enjoyed an amuse bouche of honey roasted swede velouté with thyme foam served in a tiny glass.

We chose from a list of five **starters**.

Scallops with confit chicken wings, baby parsnips and woodruff.

Miso glazed hake, chrysanthemum and seaweed dashi, sesame and sea vegetables.

Pressed terrine of pheasant and wild rabbit, quince, quince and crab apple jelly.

Pigeon breast, pigeon pastilla, cherries, pistachios, cherry and rose hip puree.

Dexter beef tatare and corned beef, wasabi mayonnaise, with pickled shimeji mushrooms.

My dish of scallops was perfect, all the distinctive flavours blended very well together.

Main Courses: Pave of Zander, hand rolled strozzapreti, roasted lettuce and chestnut.

Megrim sole poached in beurre noisette, roasted cauliflower cream and cauliflower.

Partridge, pumpkin purée, pickled butternut squash, black pudding and chocolate ganache.

Cinderford lamb, caramelized dandelion, baby turnips and honey mustard seeds.

Winchcombe venison, pickled blueberries, honey braised salsify with milk crumbs.

My venison was delicious and unlike the meal at Purslane I could easily distinguish the different elements and although the menu seemed equally elaborate the structures were great and the flavours amazing. We drank Gigondas Dom Saint Gayan, Meffre 2010. It showed plums and red fruit on the palate with good balanced tannins – perfect for the venison.

We had an exciting pre dessert – vanilla pannacotta with roasted plum purée and foam.

Desserts: Duck egg custard cream, rhubarb and hibiscus, strawberry sorbet.

Chocolate delice, milk ice cream, beurre noisette and butterscotch.

Mango, Thai spiced cream, Thai green curry sorbet.

Frozen Bergamot parfait, orange jelly, liquorice cream.

Vanilla cheesecake, salted chicory root mousse, bitter chocolate sorbet.

My chocolate delice looked and tasted beautiful and was complemented by Elysium, Quady, California. It showed a full aromatic Black Muscat nose with the flavour following through.

John Hind chose the wines at Purslane and Champignon and provided the tasting notes.

Coffee and petit fours completed one of the best and most memorable meals I have ever eaten. The restaurant fully deserves its Michelin two stars.

Thursday November 6th. We enjoyed a walk to the Wilson Museum and Art Gallery, the recently refurbished and extended Cheltenham Art Gallery now called after Dr Wilson, the Antarctic explorer who perished with Scott. There was a small gallery devoted to him. Being Leicester people we enjoyed seeing the Arts and Crafts period furniture some designed by the architect Ernest Gimson, who grew up in Leicester.

Sally had arranged for us to have lunch in The Daffodil an intriguing venue in a former Art Deco cinema with twin sweeping staircases leading from the restaurant to the former upper circle now the bar. Daffodils were etched into glass panels and there were two massive old projectors and large posters of 30's and 40's films. We sat together at a large table. The twice baked Gloucester soufflé and the cod and salmon fish cakes were popular starters. Mains: Most of us chose the grilled rib eye steak with a peppercorn sauce and chips but a steamed fillet of sea bass with mussels was also good. They excelled with the puds - a glazed lemon tart with a winter fruit compote and a sticky toffee pudding with vanilla ice cream.

We went happily home after a most enjoyable three days admirably arranged by Sally and Graham.

Mary Jewell



around the branches - Herefordshire & Monmouthshire



February Lunch

We are lucky to have many fine dining opportunities in family owned small and medium sized gastro-pubs and country restaurants in our nearby villages. As our first event for 2015 we selected the **Millrace at Walford** – close to Ross on Wye. Our branch has established, over several years, a regular programme of informal lunches where members and guests select from the daily menu rather than have a set meal. It is a formula we continue to refine and in February the **Millrace** created a special menu for us with a choice of 3 dishes in each of the 3 courses. We each made our choices in advance and were delighted not only with the food but with the attentive service from the moment we arrived on a freezing morning to a welcoming log fire and a glass of Prosecco. You can see from the pictures how much the food was appreciated.

The menu that was created for us :

To Start

Millrace Cured Salmon with Salmon Pâté, Root Vegetable Salad and Thyme Crackers

Winter Salad with Perl Las, Hazelnuts and Poached Quince

Guinea Fowl and Black Pudding Terrine with Watercress and Mustard, Homemade

Soda Bread

The Main

Roast Sirloin of Beef with Hot Homemade Horseradish

Pan Roast Fillet of Stonebass with Salsa Verde, Crushed Potatoes

Braised Pressed Belly Pork with Creamed Potatoes, Cider and Sage Gravy Roast Beets and Carrots

To Follow

Bramley and Russet Apple Crumble with Custard

Lemon and Blood Orange Tart

Crème Brûlée with Shortbread

The recommended wines : Oliver Leflaive Bourgogne Blanc Les Setilles, Cote De Beaune, France

& Bodega Ruca Malen Malbec, Argentina

Peter Mcgahey

around the branches - St James's



The Dysart Petersham

On 2nd June 2014 the St James's Branch held a dinner at The Dysart Petersham, which turned out to be our best discovery of the year. Formerly The Dysart Arms, it is located in the smart Petersham area of Richmond, faces south over Richmond Park and in recent years has gradually transformed from a 'pub that does food' to a 'restaurant with a bar'. This has much to do with the current chef, Kenneth Culhane, winner of the prestigious Roux scholarship in 2010, as well as the enthusiasm of the restaurant's owners. Kenneth is passionate about ingredients and has his own garden where he grows many of the

vegetables and herbs used in the menu; he also makes his own bread, which is to die for!

Barry Taylor, the Restaurant Manager, closed the restaurant to the general public for the night to make sure he and his staff could give us their full attention. We started with a glass of champagne in the garden, accompanied by delicious canapés, before we sat down for a four-course dinner with matching wines. Every dish was beautifully balanced and perfectly matched by the accompanying wine, and the service was professional and very friendly. All in all, it was a most enjoyable evening, and everyone present agreed that this restaurant deserved an Award for Excellence. Following approval of our nomination by the Society's Award Committee, we had an equally impressive Branch dinner on 12th January this year, with the wines all coming from the prestigious Capezzana Estate in Tuscany, at the end of which we presented the chef and the Manager with the Award Certificate. In conclusion, The Dysart Petersham is one of the best kept secrets in London

Ari Sofianos .

30th Anniversary Dinner In Bournemouth (By the Sea)

On the evening of Sunday 19 October 2014, 34 attendees gathered in black tie attire for a Champagne reception at The Carlton Hotel on Bournemouth's panoramic East Cliff, at the commencement of this special evening to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Wessex Branch. The 29 members and 5 guests, which included Wendy Levitt and Paul Seeburger from The IWFS Zurich Branch, were soon mingling and happily chatting whilst enjoying a Moët et Chandon 2004 Vintage. Aptly themed French music was playing in the background.

The organisers of this event were Wessex Branch Members, Geoff and Clare James, who had enthusiastically planned the evening for some considerable time. They had selected a Bordeaux theme in terms of cuisine and accompanying wines (with the exception of the Champagne reception, of course!). With the Carlton Hotel's Head Chef, Richard Allsop at the helm, a fabulous five course menu was created. Geoff, whose main passion is undoubtedly wine, took pleasure in selecting wines to match each course. He really did not mind going to Bordeaux in the capacity of wine taster/selector either!

Great attention had been paid to details emphasising the Branch's 30 year association with the IWFS. The four tables were labelled I, W, F and S; the menus were rolled into scrolls secured with cord the colour of the IWFS logo; and balloons imprinted with "30" were attached to each table to give a party atmosphere.

Before dinner was served Wessex Branch Chairman, David Packer, said a few introductory words and also remarked that the Wessex Branch's very first meeting took place at this exact same venue, the Carlton Hotel in Bournemouth, thirty years previously in 1984! Equally remarkably, two of the Branch's founder members were present both at that first meeting and also at this annual dinner, some thirty years later – namely, Michael Messent (ex-Chairman) and Frank Myerscough.

Geoff James then gave a brief introduction to the wines, and drew attention to the meticulous wine notes he had provided on each table.

At the end of the meal all agreed that we had tasted some outstanding wines. As most IWFS members would, no doubt, agree, the perfect dinner scenario would be when the wines and food are ideally paired, to give maximum enjoyment of both. There will almost always be differencing opinions in this regard. It was generally felt that the Chateau Lafont Menaut 2012 was an extremely good pairing with the first course and likewise for the Segla 2006 with the second course. There was a difference of opinion with regard to the pairing of Les Carmes Haut Brion with the main course. Some felt the wine and the sweet red cabbage did not complement each other. However, all agreed that this wine was a great example of a medium aged Bordeaux, even though 1997 was not hailed as a great vintage. The Pont Leveque worked extremely well with the Ducru Beaucaillou 1990. It is notoriously challenging to pair desserts with dessert wines, however it was felt that the Chateau Closiot 2005 was an exception and paired surprisingly well with the prune and almond tart.

The evening was hugely successful with excellent service, cuisine and wines to match and, judging by the noise levels at least, everyone had a most enjoyable time.

Towards 11pm, a few people started to leave for home. However, there were a few 'party people' that decided to enjoy the French music and take to the dance-floor!

Suffice it to say that a good time was had by all.

around the branches - Devonshire

The Arundell Arms

On a beautiful September Sunday morning, 27 members of the Devonshire Branch set off by coach to The Arundell Arms - a delightful Country Hotel at Lifton, amidst the rolling Devonshire scenery.

This hotel has a long reputation for award winning food and did not disappoint on this occasion.....

We arrived to be welcomed with a glass of perfectly chilled Aldridge Brut N.V. Sparkling wine, accompanied by mouth watering canapes - all very welcome and refreshing after our journey.

The first course was a choice of Cornish Lobster with a mango puree, spinach and pea shoots or Game soup with herb dumplings, root vegetables and Madeira accompanied, and complimented by Picpoul de Pinet, 2013 a zesty fragrant wine that particularly suited the Lobster.

This was followed by a choice of either Fillet of Aylesbury Duck (cooked pink) and served with a compote of damsons, baby vegetables, and a sweet wine sauce, or alternatively Pan Fried Fillet of Turbot with curried mussels, samphire, crab and chorizo beignet - both choices were perfectly cooked and much enjoyed by all the members. Members now had the opportunity of continuing with the Picpoul de Pinet or a full bodied rich red - the Rio Alto Merlot 2013 which partnered the duck perfectly.

We wondered if the pudding could possibly match up to the previous courses, but we were delighted with the selection, either a Trio of Apple Desserts, comprising a Panacotta, a Crumble, and a Sorbet or a Hot Dark Chocolate Fondant with pineapple carpaccio and honeycomb ice cream; with English Farmhouse Cheeses offered for those with a more savoury tooth.

The whole meal was rounded off with either tea or coffee and petit fours
This exceptional Sunday Lunch was well worth the journey... we have visited this delightful hotel many times and will certainly do so again.

Sue Slater.



around the branches - Oslo

Oysters and Champagne Eve

In January/February of every year, The Oslo Branch organizes its annual Oysters and Champagne Evening. It is during the winter months that these "seafood delicacies" are at their best. This year, we had two different types of oysters from France, as well as two types from the western coast of Norway.

This year we were almost 30 guests, and we started in the kitchen of our "regular location" with a selection of finger food, which our chefs from "KjellToresMat" had cooked for us. Here to we were served a cooled pink champagne, André Clouet Brut Rosé, as we had the pleasure of watching the chefs open nearly 600 oysters. It was a wonderful start to a culinary evening. We then moved into our regular adjacent restaurant facilities, where we were served two types of Norwegian oyster, sizemedium and xl, along with the French Finede Claire and Tsarskaya.; all accompanied by a Blanc de Blanc champagne Pierre Peters Cuvee, Grand Cruand Marcellin Beaufort 1er Cru Brut Réserve.

It is hard to say that the one champagne is better than another, or that some oysters are better than others, since it is a matter of taste. However, I think Tsarskaya is preferred by those who like a more robust and "heavy" oyster. Finede Claire and Norwegian oyster are a smaller types with less contents, but perhaps more delicate in both appearance and taste. Among the champagnes Beaufort 1er Cru appeared to receive the most praise amongst the guests.

After quite a number of oysters and, much champagne had been served, we were introduced to Norwegian stored hams from the producer Tind; a local Norwegian supplier. Here to, one of the members had very kindly brought along a couple of cheeses from Switzerland: a very ripe and creamy Vacherin, as well as a tasty Gruyère and Appenzeller; both very delicious cheeses. There to was served a chilled LoSangde Pais 2013, a delightful wine from Mar-cillac, Southwest France.

The evening was topped off with coffee, a biscotti chocolate cake and luke warm applecake.
This year's Oyster and Champagne eve politely ended at 11 pm.

Olav Martens



around the branches - Zurich



West meets East at the Gala Dinner in the Fischerzunft

Zurich Branch members and guests enjoyed a very special high-class event to conclude 2014. They gathered at the renowned Fischerzunft (fishermen's guildhouse) in historic Schaffhausen where the owner-chef André Jaeger has been awarded 19 Gault Millau points for a continuous 20-year period. Maintaining such a high standard is the result of total dedication to the highest standards of gourmet cuisine. As André Jaeger spent many years in the Far East, his innovative cuisine combines the best of many worlds. Of course, the wine selection and service also match these highest of standards.

The evening started with a tour through historic Schaffhausen, which was led by a true historian. Architecture as well as culinary habits from times gone by were explained in lively detail and accompanied by tastings of local specialities and wine.

After the excursion the group went back to the hotel, which was decorated and illuminated in fairy tale fashion for the Christmas season. So, everything was perfect for this unforgettable evening with friends, food and wine.

The reception was opened with a special sparkling wine created from local grapes under the supervision of Chef Jaeger and some unusual, but tasty amuse bouches. Then the dinner with the title 'Menu of Emotions' was served with the following courses and wines:

Ebi shinsho with a jelly of dashi, wakame seaweed, crispy coriander with sesame

2007 Sauvignon blanc, The Pepper Tree, Virgin Earth, South Africa

Loin of black cod, steamed Cantonese style

2008 Herdade Dos Grous Branco, Douro, Portugal

Stewed Duck Leg, tea smoked breast, gravy with tangerines and Maracaibo chocolate, bone marrow, Brussels sprouts, steamed gnocchi Parisienne

2001 Finca Valpiedra Reserva Magnum, Rioja, Spain

Mousse of Saint Agure Cheese, Port wine figs

2010 Gewürztraminer Kritt, Marc Kreydenweiss, Alsace, France

Millefeuille of khaki, Bolivia bitter chocolate, Chestnut cream, crisp with amaranth cereal, caramel ice cream

2011 Essencia Riesling Sylvaner, Weingut Zahner, Truttiker

Chef Jaeger and the sommelier lead the group through all the dishes and wines and were even prepared to share the secrets of preparation of the outstanding combinations of ingredients.

dients.

The evening ended with a relaxed digestif in the old fashioned bar and a sound sleep in the hotel with great comfort and a view onto the silently passing River Rhine.

Kurt Haering

around the branches - Manchester

Aiden Byrne at Manchester House. Pre- Christmas Lunch. Saturday 5th December 2014

It was with great expectations that Manchester IWFS members and thirty guests met, for the second year running, for their pre-Christmas lunch at Manchester House. Last year's meal was so wonderful that this year's event began with a presentation to Aiden Byrne, head chef, with an EAZ certificate to mark that event.

We were served the aperitif and canapés at the end of the open plan kitchen where the chefs were very busy preparing our lunch. This set the scene, along with Christmas decorations of huge wreaths and many lights, for the main event.

The very tasty canapés were Chicken liver and foie gras parfait, fig jam and cured duck ham, followed by an oxtail doughnut with bone marrow emulsion. The aperitif of Prosecco, No 8 Valporetto AOC Brut, was light, pleasant and clean with some subtlety which complemented the canapés

The meal began with a small glass which had warm turnip soup in the bottom and a cold chestnut foam on top, this was served with goats butter brioche. This stimulated our taste buds and prepared us for a rice cracker with cepes, sea weed and smoked anchovies giving a slightly salty taste. Unusually for some of us these beginning dishes were served with Junmai Daiginjo, Saki, Japan, this was an interesting concept but received a mixed reception, but it was agreed it complemented the dishes perfectly.

The two middle courses did not disappoint. The first was scallops and razor clams served on a bed of parsley pearl barley and parmesan. The scallops "Queen of the Ocean" were amazing and many members thought this was the star dish served with Catena Chardonnay, Mendoza, Argentina 2012. This was a favourite wine of some diners and a good example of Argentinean Chardonnay, not complex but complementary to the dish.

A glass of Villa Belvedere Ripasso, Veneto, Italy. 2011. accompanied the second middle course which was Goosnargh duck breast, blackcurrant sauce and cep mushrooms. The duck was perfectly cooked and beautifully balanced by the blackcurrants and mushrooms. The Ripasso was considered by most to be the most attractive wine which matched the duck to perfection.

The end dish or dessert was a feast for the eyes in both colour and texture. It was Lapsang Souchong pannacotta, frozen white miso and plums served four ways with walnut wafers. The range of tastes which ensued on eating were a delight and much enjoyed and were complemented by Quady Winery Essencia Orange Muscat, Fresno, USA, 2010 which was a typical example of Muscat, not complex, but enjoyed by most.

The meal was very well received and put everyone in a seasonal mood. It is hoped that we might make a return visit next Christmas to sample the wonderful delights of Manchester House.

Anne and John Hodgkinson.



around the branches - Leicester

Annual visit to Hambleton

Tony Willis, our treasurer, arranged a luncheon for us on Tuesday the 25th of November at Hambleton Hall. This has become an annual event for our branch in the last few years. We have always enjoyed a lunch as the cost is much less and no one has to stay the night to ensure the booking. Aaron Patterson and Graeme Matheson suggested the menu at a cost of £60.

We assembled in the lovely drawing room at noon appreciating the roaring fire and the beautiful, massive flower arrangement on a centre table. We were served with an aperitif – NV Varichon & Clerk Blanc de Blanc Method Traditionelle and some delightful original can-

apés. Our numbers had been limited to twenty by the hotel and so I was surprised to find us seated in the main dining room at a single large oval table.

We started with a Terrine of Beetroot with Horseradish Sorbet. Beetroot seems to be the fashionable thing at the moment but it was rather overpowering in a terrine. - however it looked superb on the plate. We could choose from a Warm Salad of Sea Trout with Confit Egg Yolk, Smoked Bacon, Caramelised Onions, Artichoke Puree and New Potatoes or Blade of Beef with Spiced Lentils, Caramelised Onions and Carrot Puree. Everyone was happy with the trout. I chose the beef which had been shredded and reassembled into the fashionable tower but it was spoilt by being over salted.

The piece de resistance was a wonderful Apple Crumble Souffle, perfectly produced for so many of us and tasting delightful. Very good coffee or tea followed with excellent petit fours. As always we enjoyed the ambience of the dining room, the impeccable friendly service, the napery, glasses, the elegance but perhaps the food was a trifle disappointing.

We drank two very good French wines – 2012 St Veran Vignes Domaine Thomas and a 2009 Cotes Du Rhone – Nicholas Boiron. They had been carefully chosen by Tony, one of the wine experts in our branch. We left for home about 4pm after a very pleasant afternoon.

A January Event to Cheer the Leicester Branch.

Sally Moore, our Chairman, arranged a Dinner at the Lighthouse, Kibworth Beauchamp on Tuesday the 27th of January. We arrived on a very cold evening and were welcomed by Sarah Poli, the ebullient wife of the chef Lino, and warmed by a cocktail of Prosecco, cranberry juice and sloe gin, an excellent combination. We were served with substantial canapés – prawns with Marie Rose sauce on spoons, tomato and mozzarella on skewers, chicken liver pate on toast and juniper cured salmon on rye bread.

When sitting down two more nibbles arrived, whitebait with lemon mayonnaise and bowls of houmous with melba toast.

We drank plentiful supplies of two Italian wines a white Grechetto and a red Sangiovese. We chose between two main courses, a fillet of sole stuffed with salmon mousse covered with a delicious white dill butter sauce or a fillet of venison with haggis en croute with roast parsnips. Both courses were simply served

with no pureed vegetable or balsamic vinegar piped round the plate to decorate it and no towers from which to unearth minute quantities of vegetables – a nice old fashioned change. Instead we had tureens of broccoli, carrots and new potatoes.

There was a choice of Dessert or Cheese. Dessert was a plate of three Lighthouse Puddings – pannacotta with mulled berry compote, dark chocolate torte and cranberry semifreddo. The selection of British cheeses was served with chutney, walnut bread and oat cakes. Coffee with biscotti completed a very good meal for £45 including service.

Mary Jewell



around the branches - London

A Tasting of Fine and Rare Tawny Port

On Tuesday 2 December we were treated to a fascinating tasting of Tawny Ports presented by our Chairman, Jeffrey Benson at the Doubletree Hilton Hotel, Victoria. Unlike Vintage Port, which spends years developing in bottle and then needs to be decanted, Tawny Ports with an indication of age spend their time developing in oak casks, throwing their sediment, and so do not require decanting. These are the finest of all Tawny Ports, being exceptionally complex and concentrated. The stated age is the average age of the blend.

Jeffrey produced eight stunning wines for us. The evening commenced with a c.1920/1930 Delaforce Special White Port, which amazed us all with its vibrancy and freshness, followed by a Gould Campbell 10 year old, a Delaforce "Curious and Ancient" Limited Release 20 year old, and a Robertsons Imperial 20 year old (bottled 1989). We then enjoyed four different ages of Taylor's Tawny - 10 year old, 20 year old, 30 year old, and 40 year old, all bottled in 1979 - a century's worth of amber delight, with sensations of caramel, walnuts, honey and orange, each glass getting richer and more concentrated than its predecessor.

The tasting was accompanied by a selection of Cheese, Salad and French bread.

This was a hugely enjoyable evening, and a timely reminder of just how delicious Tawny Ports can be. I am quite certain that all those who attended would be more than delighted if some age-indicated Tawny Port were to turn up in their Christmas stocking.

Michael Daiches

THE ULTIMATE TASTING

To celebrate the 80th birthday of the IWFS - and particularly of The London Branch where it all started back in 1934 - the London Branch is holding a very special wine tasting event. We have called it The Ultimate Tasting and you will understand why when you see the fabulous line-up of wines we have, including a pre-phyloxera Madeira.

The wines tonight have been chosen by our Chairman, Jeffrey Benson, and come from his own cellar and has magnanimously supplied these at a very advantageous historic cost.

1982 Le Montrachet Grand Cru, Bouchard Pere

1961 Chateau Lynch Moussas, 4eme Pauillac, Berry Bros

1959 Gevrey Chambertin, Doudet Naudin

1959 Chambertin Grand Cru. Galand-Londot

1949 Nuits St Georges, Patriache Pere et fils

1947 Chateauneuf du Pape, Coron Pere

1976 Armsheimer Adelberg Trockenbeerenauslese

1943 Chateau Caillou 'Tete de Cuvee' 2eme Sauternes

1795 Terrantez Madeira

Thursday 17th October 2014



Jeffrey Benson

around the branches - Berkshire



A Winter Warmer - Rhone wines

Every so often an opportunity arises which allows our members to taste mature wines to which they would not normally have access. On this occasion Steve Adams, who has attended meetings as a guest in the past, offered to present Rhone wines from his own cellar to the Branch, focussing mainly on the 2001 and 2003 vintages. Steve has been buying “en primeur” for some years and these vintages are approaching, or at, their peak now.

The tasting included wines from both the North and the South of the Rhone but with an emphasis on Chateaufort-du-Pape. Members enjoy a sparkling wine as an aperitif to



Steve Adams

get the evening started and we sourced a Saint-Peray Mousseux from Domaine du Biguet imported by Yapp Brothers. Made from 100% Marsanne, this may be the only sparkling wine AOC in the Rhone and proved to be very lively with a good balance and light nutty flavours. Steve included a 2002 white Chateaufort-du-Pape, vieilles vignes, from Chateau Beaucastel, made from 80% Roussanne, 15% Grenache Blanc and 5% other varieties. Whilst 2002 was a troubled vintage, this wine proved to be rich and very powerful and shows what can be achieved by a good winemaker in a bad year. Canapés made by Charlotte from flatbread pieces topped with sour cream, smoked salmon and balsamic pearls, a new product to most of us, induced a flood of flavours in the mouth – excellent!

The reds started with the Crozes Hermitage Domaine de Thalabert, 1998, which was also our supper wine, and Chateaufort-du-Pape Les Cèdres, 2001 from Paul Jaboulet Aîné, both good years and scored well by members.

Next up was the Chateaufort-du-Pape, Bosquet Des Papes, Chante Le Merle from 2001 scoring a little higher. However the 2003 Cornas from Eric & Joel Durand was described as “a luscious wine”, “not an intellectual wine” and “defines hedonism” to score between 8.5 and 9 out of 10. There were no scores below 7.

Interestingly the scoring for the next wine, the Chateaufort-du-Pape, Pierres Dorees, 2003 from Patrick Lesec ranged from 5 to 10 making an average impossible to determine! Not many wines achieve scores of 10. In 2003, the vines shut down for 6 weeks due to the heat and didn’t photosynthesise in this period. It then rained in September and those growers who had waited went on to have one of their latest harvests, picking well into October. Even so the vines only produced 30% of their normal crop.

Finally members scored the Chateaufort-du-Pape, Domaine De La Janasse, Chaupin from 2001 as a 9, with no score below 7. Described as “a bit good”, this wine is just coming to its maturity.

Charlotte presented us with a supper to match this outstanding flight of mature Rhone wines comprising Tartiflette, made with Reblochon for an authentic texture and flavour, accompanied by dressed green salad and finishing, appropriately enough, with Charlotte Russe.

Our thanks go to Steve – maybe it is time for you to join? – and to Charlotte for a memorable evening.

Chris Graham

around the branches - Manchester

AGM & Dinner on 22nd January 2015

This event was held at the Alderley Edge Hotel in Cheshire. 58 members were present for the occasion which was held in the Laurent Perrier Suite.

The aperitif wine, an excellent Champagne from Canard Duchene, started the evening off in fine style. A non-vintage Champagne, it had an excellent mousse, with good fruit, a well balanced acidity and finish. The fact that the wine had bottle age was much appreciated.

We then proceeded into the main room for the meeting and dinner. The AGM meeting lasted about 20 minutes, and then dinner was served.

The first course was Goosnargh duck, served three ways with mulled blackberries and pain d’épices crumb. The duck was beautifully cooked and the accompaniments complemented it. The wine, Domaines Schlumberger 2007 Pinot Gris (Spiegel) grand cru from Alsace was fabulous. It tasted slightly off dry, with excellent fruit of apricots and oranges. Well balanced and a long finish.

The main course was slow cooked saddle of lamb with tomato jam and basil potato cake. The lamb was tender and succulent and was well received by everybody. This was accompanied by Bodegas Eguia 2009 Rioja Reserve red wine, this wine received mixed reviews, in retrospect, maybe a better quality wine would have been an improvement, however some members did enjoy it.

The dessert was rum roasted pineapple, drunken raisin, and hazelnut parfait with ginger crumble biscuit. The flavours combined together well to make a very tasty experience. The wine, a Vouvray moelleux 2011 Bourillion Dorleans with its orange overtones, complemented the dish perfectly. It was a change to have a sweet wine from somewhere other than Bordeaux.

We followed this with freshly ground coffee and petit fours.

We have had many good meals at the Alderley Edge Hotel and this one proves that they have not lost their touch. Their head chef, Shaun Sutton is to be congratulated for producing a fine dining experience for us, having only taken over from Chris Holland at Christmas.

Bob Lloyd

around the branches - APZ Taipei Taiwan

APZ -AGM Weekend in Taipei, Taiwan 14th-16th Nov 2014

The Asia Pacific Zone rotate their AGM each year, in countries and cities, where they have branches. 2014 was the turn of Taipei Branch to host the event. As my wife and I visit our son and his family, in Sydney, each November, we managed to stopover for the event en route home. Around 100 international members joined 30 local branch members for part or all of the festivities.

Taiwan is staunchly proud of its culture and cuisine. The welcome dinner was held in the Chin Chin Garden Restaurant where local dishes were served to the accompaniment of energetic Lion Dancers and ancient Chinese music. Our special chef explained the fusion of Chinese, Japanese and Western food that had been prepared. Our hosts at the table explained the music and dance, making us feel very welcome.

Next day a visit to the Palace Museum enabled viewing of centuries old treasures hidden away for many years from Communist and Japanese invaders by Chiang Kai-shek. Many rooms laden with ancient porcelain, gold ornaments, costumes and armoury, kept us busy for the morning. Of particular note was the precious jade on display and the famous 'Jadeite Cabbage' and 'Meat Shaped Stone'. Normally jade of a pure colour is most precious, but here, in the Qing Dynasty, a master carver had taken a piece of jade, white at one end and green at the other, with many cracks and fissures, and created a very lifelike Chinese cabbage, with two insects in its leaves. A variable brown piece of banded jasper was carved to resemble a piece of pork. These are now seen as two of the museum's most revered pieces. (for more information see http://aiw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201310170086) At lunch in Silks Restaurant in the Palace grounds, we were treated to these two items recreated as two of the courses. (the insects fortunately were represented by shrimps).

Taipei is famous for its Oolong Tea, grown in the high mountain areas. Bacteria in the humid climate causes the leaves to ferment slightly, before they are dried, giving the tea

its distinctive taste. A tutored tea tasting demonstrated the range of flavours achieved by brewing the tea for varying times.

The Black Tie Gala Dinner, held in the Grand Ballroom of the Regent Hotel featured International/Contemporary cuisine and live jazz music. With their Branch Banner proudly displayed, the evening continued with the presentation of Charters and Banners to new branches by Zone Chair Yvonne Wallis, and A S Bronze medals to Taipei President P Q Chen, and Eddie Hu for reinvigorating Taipei Branch and Tony Narisawa of Kuala Lumpur Branch. The tables were then turned when Society Chair Dave Felton and EAZ Chair Ian Nicol stepped up to make a surprise presentation to Yvonne. For her devoted efforts to bring in new branches, and for serving as Society Chair for the previous two years, Yvonne was awarded the A S Gold Medal, the first woman to hold this award.

Sunday saw a short AGM followed by a tutored wine tasting -a masked tasting of some of the best GSM Rhone wines along with new world equivalents. The challenge to spot and name the new and old world wines- was taken on by all, but it was a young Taipei branch member who got most correct.

Ian Nicol

The ABRM on 5th June 2015



The ABRM this year will be held on 5th June, 10.30 am for 11.00 am, at the Grosvenor House Hotel, Stratford upon Avon. This is the annual opportunity for Branch Chairmen and Representatives to meet members of the EAZ Committee and discuss regional activities during the past year and the future direction of the Region. A formal invitation to each Branch will be sent out in due course, this is just to let you get the date into your diaries. We have also arranged lunch at the Grosvenor after the ABRM meeting.

We have arranged for a limited number of tickets for the performance at the RSC Theatre in Stratford on the evening of the 4th and for a pre-performance dinner at the RSC Riverside restaurant. The play is Othello, and the lead role will be taken by Hugh Quarshie. The performance will start at 7.15 pm and we are expected to take our places for dinner at 5.00 pm.

Theatre tickets are available on a first come first served basis. If you would like to join us please email the EAZ

Treasurer, John Nicholas (johnsnicholas@aol.com) first to check availability.

The cost of the whole package; theatre ticket, dinner and lunch on the following day after the ABRM meeting is £165.00 for members, £170.00 for non-members.

If you can't join us at the theatre the cost of the post ABRM lunch will be £60.00 for members, £65.00 for non-members. Attendance at the ABRM itself is, of course, free.

Please Note: Cancellations after 31st March 2015 will be subject to a 30% deduction, as by then we will have had to pay for the theatre tickets or return them.

If you would like to stay at the Grosvenor Hotel, their B&B rates are: Standard Single Room £85.00 per room; Standard Double Room £95.00 per room; Executive Single Room £100.00 per room, Executive Double Room £110.00 per room. Please book your accommodation direct with the hotel mentioning IWFS when you do so. The telephone number is: **01789 269213** and their address is:

Grosvenor Hotel, Warwick Road, Stratford upon Avon CV37 6YT

Payment should be made via John Nicholas either by Bank Transfer, details of our **new** bank account are given below, or by cheque. If you wish to pay by credit card please contact John either by email or telephone: (00) 41 79 753 68 81. Payments by credit card will incur a 3% surcharge. Please let John know:

Your full name, address, phone number and the name of your Branch

The event or events you wish to book

The full names of others in your party

NEW Bank Details (HSBC) for electronic Bank Transfers:

Account Number: 41699075 Sort Code: 40-47-07 Account Name: IWFS Europe Africa Ltd

Reference: Stratford

The IBAN and BIC/Swift for payments from overseas are as follows:

IBAN: GB48MIDL40470741699075

SWIFT Code: MIDLGB22

If you prefer to book by post, please send the same information with your cheque to the address below:

Mr. J. S. Nicholas (for IWFS EAC) c/o Mrs G S Moore, 2 Stevenson Close, East Hanney, Oxfordshire OX12 0FF