

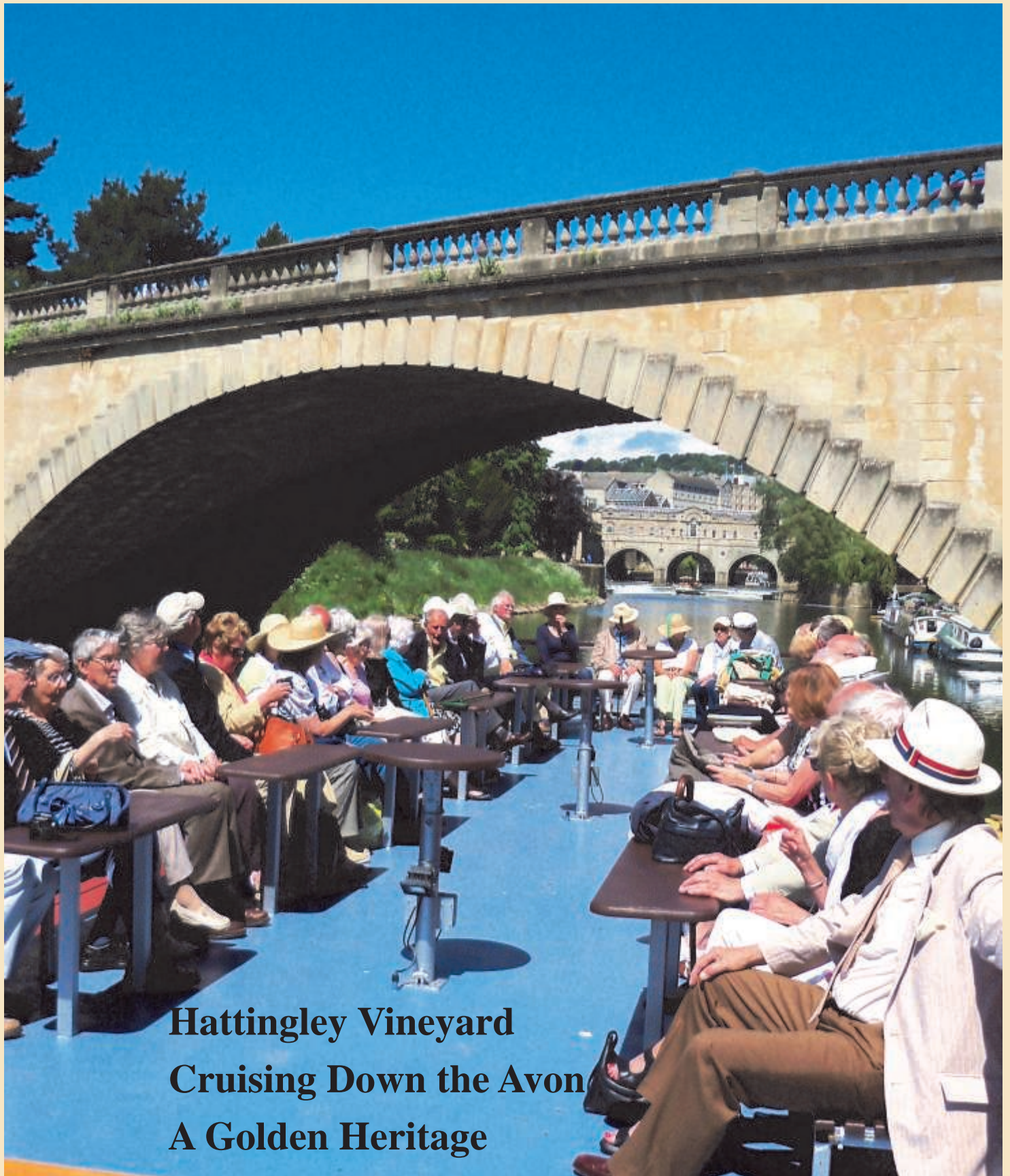
# *Food & Wine*



September 2013

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

Free to European & African Region Members - one per address - Issue 116



**Hattingley Vineyard  
Cruising Down the Avon  
A Golden Heritage**



# CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

*Dear Members,*

The contributions to branches (which I mentioned in earlier messages) were paid direct to their bank accounts at the end of June. They were well received and it will be interesting to learn how the funds are used over the next few months. In early July the Annual Branch Representatives Meeting was held in London which was a departure from the practice over recent years when the meeting has been incorporated in events held round the country. The attendance this time was disappointing but as no points were raised by branches it may be that your hard working committee is getting more right than wrong.

After the ABRM the committee held its third meeting of 2013. Our representatives on Council had just returned from its meeting in Kuala Lumpur and told us of some changes in the relationship of the Zones with IW&FS Ltd. that had been discussed. In part the subject has arisen due to inflexible banking restrictions in other countries. You may be sure that you will be kept up to date as matters progress.

In late June the first edition of the Society's Grapevine was distributed, mainly direct to members' email addresses. This publication will be issued every quarter and is intended to provide international coverage to members worldwide. Our excellent Food & Wine will continue to concentrate on European and African matters for our members based therein.

June also saw the wine tasting and cruise on the Avon at Bath. It was fully subscribed, Mimi Avery provided interesting wines, we had a good lunch and it was a lovely day. The boat was available for 3 hours and by the time coffee had been served our time was up and not much had been seen of the Avon, a point which was made to me by several members as they left. In October we have 2/3 days in Norfolk which are fully booked. That's swiftly followed in November by the John Avery Memorial Dinner and the Society's 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday Luncheon. A few places may be available at the Dinner and at a second luncheon venue.

Earlier this year I invited you to try to introduce new members and while I do not suggest that made any difference I am delighted to report that nine of our branches show increased numbers compared to 2012. For balance I must acknowledge that other branches are showing reductions but you still have four months to recruit fresh blood please.

*Best wishes,  
John Legg*

## Stop Press

Our embryonic branch in Latvia recently held an Australian wine and gastronomic dinner when the guests of honour were the Australian Ambassador to the Baltic States and Scandinavia and his wife. Also present was Leonid Gelibterman (pictured at the event) who is Chairman of our Moscow Branch and has done much to assist Ilia Aizikovitch towards establishing an IW&FS presence in Latvia.

*John Legg*



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 Region, the Asian Pacific Zone and the Board of Governors of the Americas.

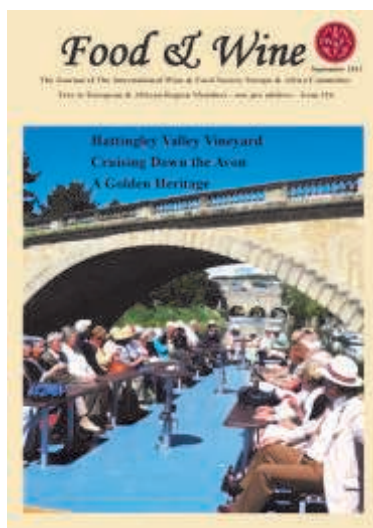
In André's words,

*"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.





## Editorial

Have you been accosted, when entering a supermarket, by people begging for contributions to 'The Food Bank'?

It is estimated that there are now more than 350,000 poor people in the UK reliant on food banks, 350,000 people who have never been taught how to make the most of the produce available in this country today. If they had been brought up in the last war there would be no need for food banks, survival was the name of the game. Recently the Bishop of Oxford tried living on a £1 a day and spoke of existing on porridge and lentil stew, what rubbish. It is an experiment I have been contemplating for a long time. There is no reason why two people could not live very well on £14 a week. A bag of strong flour from Lidl at 79p, plus a knob of fresh yeast from Morrisons for 25p and you have four large loaves to start. A trip to the town market on a Saturday afternoon at about 4 o'clock, when the stallholders want to get off to the pub, can result in some incredible fruit and veg bargains. A large chicken for around £4 can yield eight meals when bulked with pasta or rice and vegetables and you still have the carcass for soup. It is not poverty that is causing the proliferation of food banks, it is ignorance and idleness. Education should be the government's top priority, not giving people free food to make them grow idler. I feel an interesting experiment coming soon, living on a £1 a day. Oh dear, no wine for a week, maybe I can even save a few pennies for a glass or two. Watch this space.

News was released today that Waitrose has bought the 'Good Food Guide' for 'an undisclosed sum'; does this mean the end of this completely independent restaurant guide? Waitrose promote chefs that feature in their publications so there must be a conflict of interest here, only time will tell.

Once again we have a very mixed bag of articles. Hartingley Vineyard in Hampshire is releasing their first cuvée in September and Josh Foster, their Marketing Manager, tells us of the years of work to reach this momentous occasion, (see page 9 for details of a visit). Being that time of year we look at mushrooms and fungi. My correspondent in Mallorca has sent a piece on the orange harvest on the island and she also went on a 'Gastronomic Safari' in June, at one of the island's top hotels. It sounds a fascinating evening, eight well known chefs, some from as far away as Munich, united their skills to produce a multi course menu served around the hotel, the participants often watching some of the dishes being plated as they collected them from the kitchen. It sounds a mad idea but it seemed to work, maybe something an enterprising London branch member could organise in London, there is plenty of talent to choose from.

Jeffery Benson has sent a very interesting article on The History of De-Luxe Champagne and also discusses its investment value.

Ron Barker has recreated the glorious day we had on the Avon in Bath, telling of the interesting selection of wines provided by Mimi Avery and EAC member Ian Nicol recounts some of the highlights of the Kuala Lumpur festival.

Thank you to all those that have sent in branch reports. There are some branches that are conspicuous by their absence these days. If you haven't sent a report recently make sure you let us know all about your 80th Anniversary celebrations in the December issue.

With the anniversary in mind I hope you enjoy the festivities and I look forward to seeing some of you in London in November.

*Happy 80th to you all,  
Pam Brunning*

## Food & Wine

Designed In House by  
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& Food Society  
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Printed by  
All Things Print  
Judds Farmhouse  
97, London Road  
Stanway, Colchester  
Essex CO3 0NY  
www.AllThingsPrint.co.uk

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International Wine & Food  
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**Josh Foster** is Marketing and Events Executive at Hattingley Valley Vineyard. His remit is to build on the recent positive press coverage Hattingley Valley has received as well as develop the tours, entertainment and events side of the business. A recent Marketing graduate from Oxford Brookes University, Josh brings a diverse set of communication skills to the role and is well equipped to lend a fresh dimension to the on-going brand and design development aspects of the entire company.



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



**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.



**Chris Graham** received a birthday gift of a row of vines which sparked his latent interest in wine. Since retiring from the IT industry he has developed contacts in vineyards across the UK, France, Germany, Italy and Chile. As Joint Secretary of the Berkshire Branch of the IWFS, for whom he writes regular articles, he has made many contacts in the wine trade in the UK. He has written one book and spends much time looking after a 1934 3-wheeler and a 1949 4-wheeler Morgan.



## Dear Members

As I type, the temperatures are still wonderfully warm in London, baby Prince George has arrived and the tourists are out in force (they could be making up for staying away last year during the Olympics). Despite the extraordinary summer we are having, the activities of the International Secretariat are still at their busiest but it is very exciting too, as changes are being made to provide more for members.

July is the time when the key documents produced for members have to be worked on and finalized in time for the autumn. The "new" Vintage Card is well underway and we hope that you will welcome the new changes (see letter page 7). As a result your new 2014 membership card will comprise a four-drop card (rather than three – and we have checked it can still be stored in your wallet, purse or pocket). We are also investigating the possibility of having this information available to all members electronically so those who prefer to travel lighter can have it to hand on their mobile, iPad or notebook. We hope to have more details about this in time for the next issue.

The new Card will be available in October and can be ordered from me at the IS should you wish to purchase copies to include in with your seasonal messages to friends, family and colleagues.

Other changes are also afoot with the annual mailing of the Report & Accounts and the Directory of Branch Contacts. Council has reviewed these and decided to combine both documents and produce a full colour A4 brochure which will not only provide you with a summary of the financial position of the IWFS and contact details for all branches around the world but there will also be some other useful news for you – **"Dates for the Diary" and something of interest** - a wine article by a leading wine writer. **Bob Campbell MW is our chosen author for this issue and he has written an article entitled "The Rise and Rise of Kiwi Pinot Noir" which we hope you will enjoy.**



I recently attended a Council Meeting in Kuala Lumpur and was invited to stay on by the APZ/Kuala Lumpur branch to enjoy the Regional Festival which followed. The organization by Jeremy Diamond and his team at the KL branch was impeccable with a comprehensive itinerary giving us a wonderful introduction to Malaysian hospitality and also the city of KL which of course had to include a visit to the famous Petronas Towers which tower over this vibrant city. The friendly atmosphere among the members made it so enjoyable. One of the highlights of the trip was the signature dish at the Dancing Fish restaurant which was simply that, fish, fresh from the tank and deep fried. However when served it is poised, curved and upright on the plate. So light and delicious with a glass of 2011 Akos Lageder Gewurztraminer, Sud Tyrol, Alto Adige. When next in KL this is a must visit and definitely a dish to order.

Some of you may recall that back in June 2012 the IWFS had been approached for any details of its involvement with the Oxford-Cambridge Varsity Blind Tasting match that began back in 1953 as they were planning to produce an authorized history of the event to celebrate its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. As it transpired the IWFS was involved from those early days and as I mentioned the late Hon President John Avery was even a member of the Oxford team. After some searching through old issues of the Food & Wine journals these events were reported in the "proceedings" and details provided to the publishers. I am pleased to say that the book **"Reds, Whites & Varsity Blues, 60 Years of the Oxford & Cambridge Blind Wine Tasting Competition"** is due to be released in September this year. Included within the book is a page on the IWFS, as well as a brief biography on Andre Simon and a contribution from Hugh Johnson OBE titled 'Working with Andre'. In addition, the first branches of the Wine and Food Society at Oxford and Cambridge are chronicled (both launched in 1951) ... with society entries throughout the early part of the book which correspond to blind-tasting competitors fondly remembering specific events.

Copies can be ordered direct from Pol Roger - [www.polroger.co.uk/the-varsity-blind-wine-tasting-book](http://www.polroger.co.uk/the-varsity-blind-wine-tasting-book)

Email [varsitybook@polroger.co.uk](mailto:varsitybook@polroger.co.uk). The price per copy, 256 pages, is £35.00 (inc p&p, UK only; postage rates for overseas addresses on application). Royalties will be held in trust for the benefit of the university blind wine-tasting teams.

Our featured wine consultant is Nicolas Belfrage MW, our expert on Italy.



Nicolas Belfrage MW has spent half a lifetime in the Italian wine business, writing four books and countless articles on all aspects of the subject. He has been involved commercially in wine since the late 1960s as buyer for various specialist wine merchants (The Grapevine, The Market, Winecellars) of which he was also a Director. In the mid-1990s he started up Vinexus Ltd. from his Tuscany home. He has been a Master of Wine since 1980.

**"One wine I have been impressed with recently is Secco-Bertani 2010 from the House of Bertani in Valpolicella. This is a historic wine brought up to date by modern technology but otherwise made as it was a century ago, based on fully ripe Corvina and other Valpolicella grapes and aged in barrels of local woods like Acacia and Cherry. Despite being technically dry it has a rich but balanced ripeness with velvety tannins and lively acidity. It could be called 'Valpolicella' but they prefer to keep the emphasis on the original name because it is so different both from what Valpolicella used to be (slightly sweet) and from what it has become today (light and simple). It would go well**

**with game, many meats, sauces, hard cheeses."** NB

*Best wishes  
Andrea*

## Hugo Dunn-Meynell 5th April 1926 - 6th February 2013



Hugo Arthur Dunn-Meynell, who has died aged 86, was a longtime member of the Society, writer, and lover of food and wine.

Hugo was born in 1926, the son of a feather merchant in the City of London. After his call-up to the navy he served on minesweepers in the Mediterranean and was involved in the liberation of Singapore, Hong Kong and Borneo.

After training for the law, in 1957 he joined the advertising agency Osborne-Peacock as manager of the television department. He produced more than 100 early commercials, many of which were transmitted live. In 1967 he left to found his own creative firm, Dunn-Meynell, Keefe, which later merged with his old employers and finally became Lonsdale Advertising International, in which he served as company Chairman.

However he will be best remembered for his contributions to gastronomy. At a dinner in the 1940s he met André L. Simon, founder of the Wine & Food Society and, inspired by his enthusiasm, joined the Society of which he remained a member for over 60 years, for 40 of those on its Council. He was a long standing member of the London Branch and staged numerous events, as well as being involved in the organisation of the **Society's festivals, tours and the international conventions.**

On his retirement from advertising in 1978 he became Chairman of the International Wine & Food Society, succeeding Joe Wilkerson, at a time when his son Crispin was Secretary. He took on the role enthusiastically, raising the profile of the Society, visiting branches worldwide and encouraging the formation of new branches, whilst maintaining the commitment to the highest standards as the cornerstone of its expansion.

In 1983 he was persuaded to take over as the Society's Executive Director, a position he held until 1998, the longest serving Secretary of the Society. This was a period of significant challenge for the IWFS. The burgeoning interest in eating and drinking had given rise to many competitors, and the Society was in danger of fragmentation. He masterminded the decentralisation of the governance into area committees, the overhaul of the management structure and a move of offices to a prestigious Mayfair address, without interrupting the services it gave to its members. From 1992 to 2000 he was Editor of the Society's Journal *Food and Wine*, for which he also wrote numerous articles.

On his retirement from managing the Society, he received a bar to its gold medal for his services to gastronomy, the only person in over 70 years to be given that accolade. He never lost his love of good food and wine and remained an active member and taking every opportunity to raise the profile of the IWFS.

He was a sought-after broadcaster and public speaker, a Grand Officier of the Chevaliers du Tastevin, Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Innholders, a member of the Circle of Wine Writers, and in 1984 he founded the Guild of Food Writers, now one of the largest associations of specialist authors and journalists in the world. In 2005 he gave the prestigious Saintsbury Oration. In 1979 he produced *A Wine Record*, with Norman Riley, which went to seven editions. In 1980 he married the American writer and photographer Alice Woolledge Salmon, with whom he published the **Society's Menu Book.**

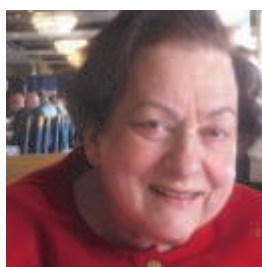
With his trademark monocle, kindness, and Edwardian charm, deeply rooted in this ancestral Catholic faith, Hugo will be remembered as a promoter of the Society and gastronomy, but this was allied to a fine business brain, strong work ethic, and forward thinking approach.

He is survived by his first wife, Nadine, his four children: Ambrose, Catalina, Crispin and Nicholas, his second wife, Alice, and three grandchildren.

*Crispin Hugo and Ambrose Arthur Dunn-Meynell*

*Photograph: Kenneth Worsley*

## Tua Rahola 1940 - 2013



Tua Rahola, who has died aged 72, was with her husband Jaakko, the founder of the Helsinki Branch which was formed on her birthday June 6th in 1987. She was an eager and skilful cook, who liked to test new recipes, and participated eagerly in all activities of the Helsinki Branch.

By profession, Tua was a physicist, specialized in radiation protection, the field in which she had been working since she graduated from Helsinki University in 1966. After research studies on radiation at various institutes of the University, including following the caesium content of the Laplanders, Tua became Laboratory Manager at the Finnish Centre for Radiation and Nuclear Safety in 2000. She had a wide professional circle of colleagues, not only in the Nordic countries, but elsewhere in Western Europe and Russia. She retired officially in 2007 but continued as Scientific Secretary of the International Radiation Protection Association, organising its third European Meeting in Helsinki in 2010.

Tua has been described by her colleagues as a top-class specialist and, at the same time, a wise, warm-spirited mother figure to whom many could confide concerns of both business and other matters when necessary. She commanded great respect and was not reticent in letting her colleagues know if she did not agree with the way a project was proceeding!

Always practical by nature once, during a business visit to Iceland, when colleagues purchased thick, warm Icelandic cardigans for themselves, Tua instead purchased the yarn to knit such a cardigan herself.

**The family was extremely important for Tua and she greatly enjoyed babysitting her daughter's three sons. Her grandchildren's home education was always based on two rules. 'All food served must be tasted, but not necessarily liked and everything that you put on your plate, must be eaten'.**

*"Tua was unflappable - as she had to be, liable as she was to be called on in emergencies such as Chernobyl. I was rash enough, one day, when I knew she and I were both in Oxford, to invite her to lunch at a well-known riverside pub. It was packed when we arrived as were several other eating places we tried. In near despair, I headed for the Marston road because I recalled a pub, somewhere in the sticks, where the food was passable and booking not essential. Mercifully, my memory did not play me false, and I gradually calmed down. Tua didn't bat an eyelid and ate with gusto, though gastronomically she must have felt let down.*

*Now that she is gone, I can only hope that Europe's nuclear establishments remain in safe hands ..." Roger Owen.*

*John W Valentine*

## The Society's 80th Anniversary Events - November 2013



The luncheon at "Roux at the Landau" on the 13<sup>th</sup> November 2013 has proved so popular that the venue was soon filled to comfortable capacity and some of you were advised that you were being put on a waiting list. We now have such a long list of those wishing to attend that we have arranged a parallel lunch, "Roux at Parliament Square". The aim is that the two will be run along the same lines and to the same standards.

Albert and Michel Roux take an equal interest in this venue and all the preparations will be under their control. It is located in the heart of Westminster at the Grade II listed building of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors, and it is a stylish restaurant popular with London's politicians, socialites and lovers of good food. With period features and modern furniture, the dining room is a light-filled and tastefully decorated area. Chef Steve Groves was the winner of BBC's 'Masterchef: The Professionals' in 2009 and worked at Le Gavroche, The Ledbury and The Greenhouse before he was appointed head chef here last February. The aperitif will be served at the charming, more traditionally furnished Pembury Bar.

Albert has advised that it would be a mistake to require the two head chefs to cook the same meal as they are two different individuals with their own style and specialities. Similarly the wines may differ to reflect the food that is being served, but both venues will offer the same high standard. Dave Felton, Chairman of the BGA, will chair this lunch while Yvonne Wallis will chair the Landau lunch. Of course everyone will have the chance to meet together beforehand at the In&Out Club for the Society AGM.

The dining room at "Roux at Parliament Square" has a capacity of 40 so we are already half full and applications are continuing to arrive. We will be advertising the event in the other Zone Journals and on the website so we are confident that it will be a lively and successful event. If you wish to book contact John Nicholas email: johnsnicholas@aol.com Tel. (00) 41 79 753 68 81. for details.

We acknowledge that you may wish to cancel and receive a full refund, but otherwise you will be placed on the list for attending the lunch at 'Roux at Parliament Square', London, SW1P 3AD on 13th November 2013.

*Michael Messent*

## Readers Letter



*Dear Editor,*

Ian Roe's letter about the IWFS Membership Card incorporating, of course, the Vintage Card as settled each year by the IWFS's Wines Committee, which comprises a number of distinguished Masters of Wine and utilises information drawn from many well-known consultants, each of which is an expert in their chosen areas, arrived in time to be considered by the Wines Committee at its annual meeting in May.

The Committee has in fact been contemplating some changes to the Vintage Card for some time, having recently been satisfied that the Card could be expanded yet remain in its present credit card size to enable it to be carried conveniently by members. Indeed the Committee is mindful that by far the greater majority of the IWFS's members reside in the Americas and do indeed still enjoy laying down and drinking wines from the great wine regions of France.

I am thus pleased to advise that the new Membership or Vintage Card, which will be available towards the end of this year, will show a number of changes, which we hope will be welcomed by members and users alike. There will be new areas, new headings and new symbols to make it more readable. Mr Roe will be pleased to see new entries for Germany Mosel and Rhine, Austria Red, South West France and English Sparkling Wine to name but a few for Europe together with, for example, Clare Valley and Tasmania in Australia and Martinborough in New Zealand.

It should be noted that when the Vintage Card started in 1935 it was designed to show ratings for the classic wine areas at that time but other areas have naturally been added over the years once the Committee was satisfied there was enough consistency in the new areas for them to be classified in the same way as those currently assessed. Indeed the Vintage Card originally only showed Port, Claret, Burgundy, White Burgundy, Rhenish, Sauternes and Champagne!

The Committee acknowledges that when Mr Roe receives his new Membership Card he and, of course, others may not be completely satisfied, but it will be noted that changes have been made and space exists for further changes and future expansion for this is very much in the mind of the present Committee. The Card is, after all, a constant process of evolution not revolution.

*Yours sincerely,*

*Chris Bonsall., Chairman of the Wines Committee.*



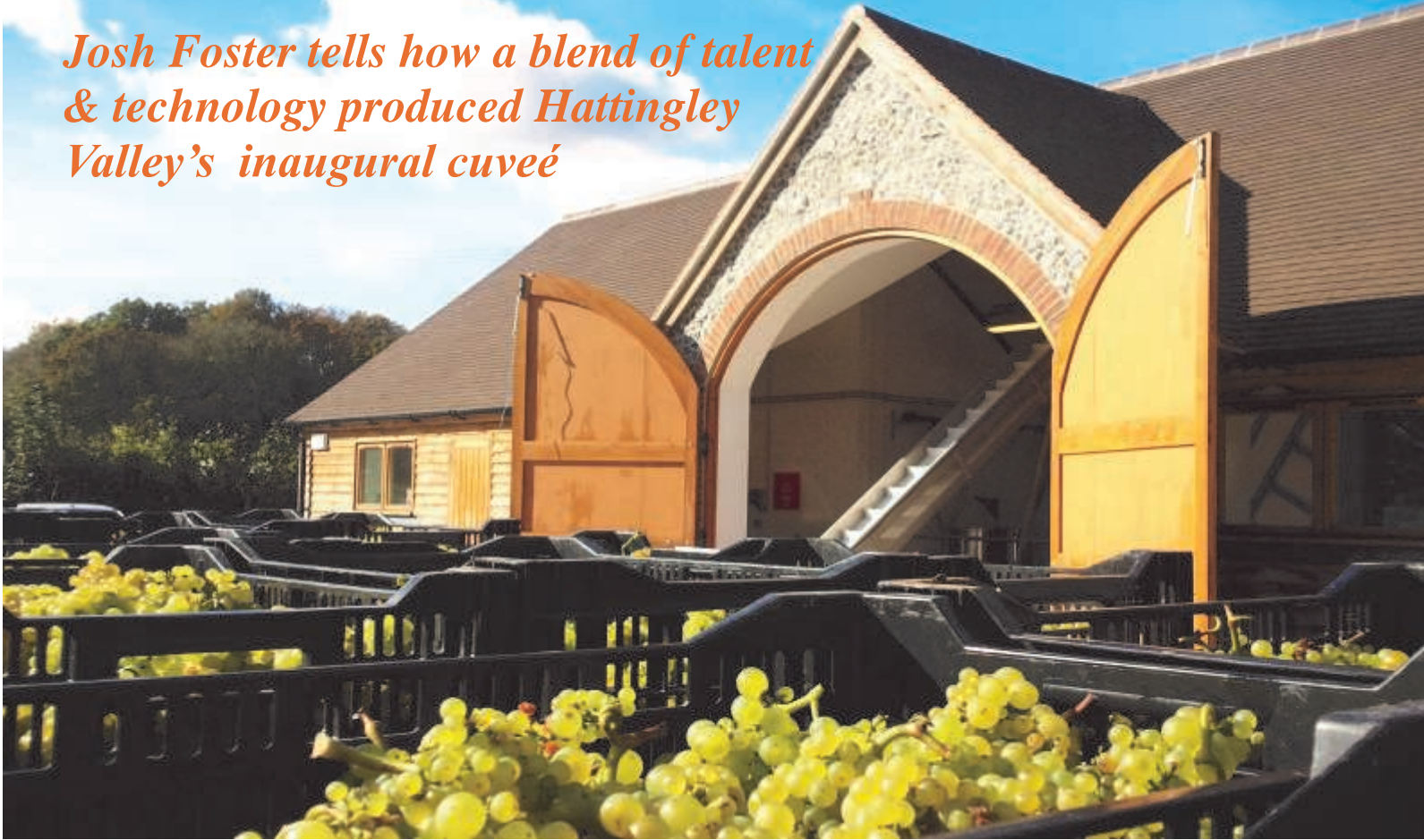


# HATTINGLEY VALLEY

*Premium English sparkling wine.*

[www.hattingleyvalley.co.uk](http://www.hattingleyvalley.co.uk)

*Josh Foster tells how a blend of talent  
& technology produced Hattingley  
Valley's inaugural cuveé*



**H**attingley Valley is one of the newer producers in the industry with our first vintage being released on general sale in September of this year. Our vineyard is situated on the chalky bedrock of East Hampshire, a county which is fast becoming renowned for producing high quality, exceptional wines.

The brainchild behind this project is Simon Robinson, who recently decided to concentrate on his rapidly growing wine enterprise after 30 years working in the City. Simon was looking for ways to diversify his farm enterprise and realised it might be possible to make his passion a reality after listening to a radio programme over a decade ago. It turned out that the land and conditions of his site in East Hampshire were suitable for growing high quality grapes and, following a number of feasibility studies and soil tests, the decision was taken to establish a vineyard to make premium English Sparkling Wine.

Established in 2008, Hattingley Valley planted its first 7.3 hectare south-facing site with Chardonnay, Pinot Meunier and Pinot Noir. In 2009 a nursery was planted with a further 3,000 vines of different grape varieties and rootstocks including Pinot Gris and Chenin Blanc to discover what works best on the site. With continued expansion, we now have over 35,000 vines across two well-situated sites in East Hampshire, a terroir similar to that of Epernay. Under the watchful eye of Vineyard Manager, Jim Bowerman, the vines are nurtured throughout the growing year with an environmentally-sensitive approach to viticulture ensuring optimum ripeness, yield and quality of



fruit. The latest tunnel spray technology is utilised thereby recycling over 70% of the spray used and reducing spray drift to a minimum. All the vineyard processes: pruning, bud-rubbing and canopy management are carefully balanced to achieve the very best vine and fruit quality.

Emma Rice leads our highly talented winemaking team at Hattingley Valley. An **early graduate of Plumpton College's BSc** in Viticulture and Oenology, she worked in many aspects of the wine trade before becoming a winemaker. Initially starting in

wine retail and the London trade, Emma moved into wine publishing and became editor of **Hugh Johnson's *Pocket Wine Book***. Upon deciding to get more hands-on, she worked in several wineries around the world including in New Zealand, Australia and California before setting up her analysis and consultancy business in the UK; this business is now based at Hattingley Valley. With Jacob Leadley on board as Associate Winemaker, we have one of the most exciting winemaking teams in the country.

Hattingley Valley also boasts one of the finest eco-friendly, custom-built wineries in the UK. Design and construction was driven by Emma and Simon, with a view to ensuring it could deliver the best possible results. Completed in 2010 and equipped with the latest technology and equipment from continental Europe, it has sophisticated waste disposal facilities and was the first UK winery to adopt solar power.

**At Hattingley Valley we use the "traditional method" for making our bubbly.** A key element of our style is the subtle use of oak barrels to ferment and age a small proportion of the base wines each year, as well as ageing on lees in stainless steel tanks. This helps to soften the wines before they go into bottles for the second fermentation.

Our inaugural wine, the 2010 Classic Cuvée, is to be released for general sale on 31<sup>st</sup> August at our Charity Open Day (for more details please visit our website). This wine is a carefully selected blend of classic varieties, it was partially fermented in oak barrels and spent 18 months on lees after second fermentation in bottle. The result is an elegant wine with finesse and a characteristic toasty flavour.



Future wine releases due for next year include a Blanc de Blancs and a Rosé. For more information on release dates, events and much more please sign up to our newsletter - <http://www.hattingleyvalley.co.uk/newsletter.htm>



**Capital Branch is visiting Hattingley Valley on the 11th September to sample the 2010 cuvée. Those interested in joining us - subject to places being available - please contact the Editor - [sidpam@waitrose.com](mailto:sidpam@waitrose.com) or Tel 0118 9733287 immediately.**



# EAC Awayday to Bath Cruising Down the Avon on a Sunny Afternoon

Text &  
Tasting Notes  
By  
Ron Barker

In the last 5 years the EAC has helped organise 3 river cruises on English Rivers. In 2009 we started in London and sailed down to the Thames barrier. During the Merseyside Festival in 2011 we cruised the River Dee from Chester and this year chose the River Avon; starting in the wonderful city of Bath.

Perhaps the most surprising statistic is that on each occasion we were favoured with excellent sunny weather. For the first two events we concentrated on Sherry mainly because I am one of the few people left who believe that quality sherry as served in Jerez is both an excellent aperitif and extraordinary good value for money. We served food, tapas style, to try with the wines.

This year we tried to do something different. We invited Mimi Avery, daughter of our late Hon President, to conduct a wine tasting on the boat and followed this with a buffet luncheon as the boat cruised along the River Avon.

Fifty members including a sizable contingent from the local branch, Bath & Bristol, boarded the boat at 11:45 am. The top deck was open to the elements but in view of the sunny weather members enjoyed the views whilst the boat approached the Bath weir and then turned around to head out of town and down river.

The first surprise was that, with the possible exception of her mother, nobody recognised our wine speaker. Mimi had shaved her head to raise money for charity. After introductions had been made we were ushered below for the tasting. Some members objected to leaving the sunny deck but with "health and safety" in mind the organisers decided it was time to go below. Members were seated at 6 round tables and although it was a little cosy it did mean that, when the audi-

ence was quiet, everyone could hear the speaker.

Mimi had not been asked to select wines to a specific theme so she chose ones that illustrated her father's interests and passions. When he took over the family firm from his father Ronald he played a major role in bringing new world wines to the attention of the growing numbers of wine drinkers in the UK. As a result, of the 6 wines she showed at the tasting four were from the southern hemisphere and one was from California. It is always difficult to compare objectively wines from different grapes and different countries, especially without food, but my favourite was a Tasmanian Riesling and I did not enjoy the Californian Zinfandel.

**Your Editor discusses the architecture of  
Bath with Marilyn Messent**





**Mimi Avery**

The sixth wine in the tasting took us back to Europe. Avery's were the first British wine merchant to make a fuss about Pomerol and, in 1948, the first to import Chateau Petrus. Although all the tasting wines were donated by Avery's, their generosity did not extend to Petrus (3 bottles of the 2000 vintage from Hugh Johnson's cellar recently sold for £6,600) but the Avery's Pioneer Range Pomerol 2006 was made by Christian Moueix, a past decanter Man of the Year and winemaker at Petrus for over 35 years. Although it would have benefited from a few more years in bottle it was a generous and appropriate ending to an enjoyable tasting filled with anecdotes about her father from Mimi who was only occasionally corrected by her mother Sarah.

Following the tasting we stayed in place to enjoy the cold buffet which was both flavoursome and substantial. To accompany it we drank (not tasted) two of the classic "House" Burgundies. The 2010 Avery's White Burgundy is made by Nicolas Potel. The Avery's Red Burgundy 2008 does not disclose its maker but it is sourced from vines over 60 years old. Both hit the spot but would improve even further if allowed to develop for another couple of years.

My wife and I had driven down from Liverpool for the cruise so it was a pleasant surprise to find that the boat was called "Penny Lane" and the catering company responsible for the buffet was called "Strawberry Fields"; clearly the Beatles influence got everywhere!

Unfortunately by the time we had finished eating and drinking the boat had completed its cruise so most of us missed the views of the countryside. When the event was planned the organisers could not have expected such superb sunshine and if it had been raining (in line with a normal UK summer day), eating and drinking below decks would have been an excellent way to spend lunchtime. Perhaps if either the tasting or the luncheon could have occurred whilst the boat was stationary it would have allowed time for enjoying the scenery but then the length of the event would have had to be extended which may have deterred those who travelled the furthest. In any event it is interesting to note that tickets for the more expensive 2/3 day event in Norfolk and the 5 day Festival in Santorini sold quicker than those for this AwayDay.

In any event the organisers, the caterers and Avery's are to be congratulated and I hope the EAC are able to organise more river trips and tastings.

**Heads down for a serious tasting**



### **Tasting Wine Notes**

#### **Avery's Pioneer Range Riesling Tasmania 2009 (£10.99)**

The Pioneer Range was launched to highlight the types of wine that initially excited John Avery about the New World. The Riesling is made by Tamar Ridge which John started importing in 1999

#### **Avery's Invivo Sauvignon Blanc 2012 (£10.99)**

Invivo has won many medals for Sauvignon Blanc. This is made from grapes grown in Marlborough's Wairau and Awatere Valleys. Avery's Project Winemaker Chardonnay Adelaide Hills 2010 (£9.99)

Hugh Cuthbertson is the winemaker selected to produce a lightly oaked Chardonnay near the centre of Adelaide.

#### **Avery's Pioneer Range Pinotage (£7.99)**

John started importing wines from South Africa in the late 1970s

#### **The Red Shiner Old Vine Zinfandel 2010 (£9.99)**

The Zinfandel is partly made from vineyards planted in 1888

#### **Avery's Pioneer Range Pomerol 2006 (£19.99)**

In 1948 Avery's were the first UK merchant to import Chateau Petrus from Pomerol. This Pioneer Pomerol is made by Christian Moueix, Decanter Man of the Year 2009 and the winemaker at Petrus for 35 years. It is predominantly merlot with a splash of Cabernet franc to give added spice.

### **Lunch Wines**

#### **Avery's White Burgundy 2010 (£11.99)**

The white Burgundy is made by Nicolas Potel from vineyards around Chassagne Montrachet, Meursault and St. Romain.

#### **Avery's White Burgundy 2010 (£11.99)**

The approachable Red Burgundy is sourced from vines over 60 years old



# Mushrooms

## *Your Editor Investigates the Lore and the Logic*

**M**any of us, at some time in our life, have been given a mushroom growing kit for a birthday or Christmas present. I remember ours arrived on Fathers day one year. It was a foot long log that, we were told, was the home to some small pieces of mycelium-infected dowling. We were promised that, if we kept it in a damp, cool place in a deserted part of the garden, in about a years time we would be the proud owners of a beautiful crop of shiitake mushrooms and it would fruit for at least four or five years. Ten years on, the log is rotting well and nary a sign of a shiitake, or any other type of fungi.

**Mankind's use of mushrooms extends back to Paleolithic times.** Few people realize how significant mushrooms have been in affecting the course of human evolution. Mushrooms have played key roles in ancient Greece, India and Central America for centuries'.

The word  
"Bemushroomed" has  
evolved to reflect the  
devout mushroom  
lover's state of mind



Historical records reveal that mushrooms have been used for less than benign purposes. Claudius II and Pope Clement VII were both killed by enemies who poisoned them with deadly Amanitas. Buddha died, according to legend, from a mushroom that grew underground. Buddha was given the mushroom by a peasant who believed it to be a delicacy. In ancient verse, that mushroom was linked to the phrase "pig's foot" but has never been identified. Truffles grow underground and pigs are used to find them but no deadly poisonous species are known.

Even the ancient Aztecs considered the edible fungus to be the food of the gods. Early records concern wild mushrooms, but there are stories of mushrooms being cultivated in Asia as far back as the early Middle Ages. Mushrooms were already on the menu in Roman times and in ancient Egypt they were so prized that only the pharaohs were allowed to eat them.

The study of mushrooms is called mycology, which comes from mykes, which is ancient Greek for mushroom. The earlier 15th-century form of the word was musseroun, muscheron and was adapted from the French mousseron, which is generally connected with mousse, moss. One of the most important reference books on mycology was written in the seventeenth century, when Elias Fries (1794-1878) wrote his standard work on the biology of 2,770 species.

The cultivation of mushrooms can be traced back to the 1600 in Europe, a French melon grower in the mid-seventeenth century discovered white mushrooms on the manure he used to fertilise his melon fields. He was the first to cultivate these new fungi, which quickly gained the name champignon de Paris, or Parisian mushroom. In the beginning, the mushrooms were served exclusively in the better restaurants of Paris as a luxury appetiser. They were grown in the cool, damp catacombs of Paris, which provided them with an ideal climate. However, when the Paris metro was built cultivation was moved to natural limestone quarries just outside Paris. Mushroom farming spread throughout Europe and The Netherlands discovered the delights of the plump white mushroom in the early 1800s, although it was not until the twentieth century that they started to be grown in the marl pits of

Limburg. Today at the "De Locht Farmstead" there is even an Asparagus & Mushroom Museum which explains how compost is made and shows the production of mushrooms in caves and modern cells, as well as the tinning process. By 1731 the French method of cultivation had been **transferred to England due to Miller's publication of "The Gardener's Manual"** and the German translation of this book was published in 1769.

In 1754, Lundberg, a Swede, described the constructions of sheds in which mushrooms could be cultivated the whole year round and in Russia cultivation also began in the middle of the 18th century. In 1780, an article of a famous Russian horticulturist and agronomist A.T. Bolotov was published in the economical shop magazine, **it was called "Something about Mushrooms"**.

In the US cultivation began in 1896 in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania. The mushrooms were grown as a side crop to flower production, maturing in the dark spaces underneath potting tables. As demand grew, special mushroom houses needed to be created to control the particular conditions needed for production. With these growing houses, mushroom production and popularity was well on its way.

Even with these advances, mushrooms were still not as commonly available as they are today. Cultivation was still limited by the temperature and humidity, they were planted in the autumn and harvested in winter and spring. Fresh mushrooms were, therefore, hard to come by in the summer. Mushroom cultivation grew steadily until the end of the 19th century when two Frenchmen Constantin and Matroushot discovered they were able to make mushrooms propagate by spores. A method they kept secret until, in 1902, an American researcher Fergusson published full details of spore propagation and mycelium growth. In 1905, Douggarou, an American, **obtained mycelium from a mushroom cap's tissue**. This was a great breakthrough as up until this time production had been very patchy due to disease and lack of typing of varieties.

Now companies began to engage in industrial mycelium production and growers could buy disease free mycelium of a particular strain so they knew what type of mushroom their planting would produce. ➡



Today more than ever, mushrooms are the subject of intense study. Researchers at top universities around the world are investigating their medicinal properties. They are a natural source of B vitamins and minerals, with an 80g serving counting as one of your 5-a-day. They are a natural source of selenium which is part of the **body's antioxidant defence system and are naturally low in calories and fat** and are a good source of vitamin B5 which works in the body to help release energy from the food we eat. They are also a natural source of folic acid.

At present the world production of cultivated mushrooms has achieved almost 4 million tons a year. In a recent survey sales of mushrooms reached an all-time high in the UK with consumers spending more than £365 million last year, the equivalent to £14 per household.

**Quickly climbing the UK's list of 10 best-selling vegetables**, they now rank third after potatoes and tomatoes with roughly 118,000 tonnes of mushrooms having been sold in the last year. A **supermarket spokesperson stated that, "The mushroom sector is thriving with consumers spending almost £1m a day.**

Dr Christian Jessen, the nutrition expert and TV presenter, said: **"Mushrooms are an excellent source of B vitamins which are needed for a healthy diet. They are especially good for anyone trying to lose weight given they are exceptionally low in calories and fat."**

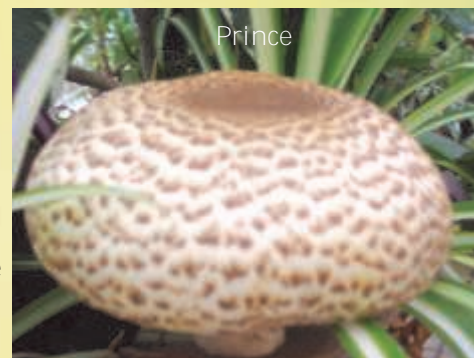
Despite button and closed cup mushrooms dominating the market, we are now enjoying an ever widening range of fungi. Most supermarkets now carry at least half a dozen varieties from white buttons and chestnut through to shiitake and oyster mushrooms.



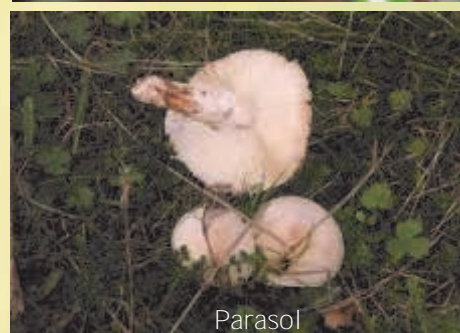
Borough Market

Foraging for fungi is all the rage and in September and October we regularly harvest two varieties from the rotting piles of grass mowings under the trees in our garden. The Prince (*agaricus augustus*) is delicious, not unlike a cultivated mushroom in appearance it has a strong almond smell when cut. The other is the Parasol (*Macrolepiota procera*) mushroom with its scaly cap and white gills it has the very distinctive shape of a ladies parasol when fully mature.

If you are interested in trying more exotic varieties of fungi, and you have not got an expert on hand to guide you, stick to buying from a large market such as Borough Market, in London, they often have a wide range. Growing your own is becoming increasingly popular. Thompson & Morgan and several other companies sell mushroom growing kits which I am told are much more reliable today than when we tried. At [potseed.co.uk](http://potseed.co.uk) you can even buy manita muscaria, commonly known as the fly agaric or fly Amanita, a psychoactive basidiomycete fungus. It is now primarily famed for its hallucinogenic properties, with its main psychoactive constituent being the compound muscimol. It was used as an intoxicant and entheogen by the peoples of Siberia and has a religious significance in these cultures. So if you are looking to fly high this may be the one for you.



Prince



Parasol



**"Falling in love is like eating mushrooms, you never know if it's the real thing until it's too late."**

*Bill Balance*



# Collectanea - Solina

## Vegetative state

Sir - I was intrigued to read (report June 4) that vegetarians apparently live longer.

Whether this is true, or life just seems longer, is difficult to say.

*Robert Mizen, Holt Wiltshire - letter seen in The Daily Telegraph.*



## "Vegetarian - that's an old Indian word meaning 'lousy hunter'"

*Andy Rooney*

## Grumpy Old Gourmet meets an ally

"I hate the way men dress today. At the theatre it's all anoraks and shorts. At dinner I see beautifully dressed women with men like tramps, wearing trainers, jeans and T-shirts. If I were a woman I'd say, 'Are you taking me out looking like that, toe rag?'"

*Rod Stewart, quoted in the Sunday Express*

## French Food Crisis

According to French MP Daniel Fasqueile many restaurants are damaging the countries reputation for good food by taking short cuts with their cooking.

One survey found that a third of places routinely reheat frozen or prepared meals.

Fasqueile has proposed a law that would restrict the title of 'restaurant' to eateries that prepare their food from scratch.

The French already have a law that bans bakeries that don't use their own dough from calling themselves 'boulangerie'. Maybe a policy we should follow in the UK.



## Good News for Cork Growers

The cork may be making a come back. The popularity of screw caps has grown in recent years due partly to the ease with which a bottle can be resealed.

Now with the Helix design, unveiled at Vinexpo, the Bordeaux wine fair, both bottle and cork have a thread enabling the cork to be screwed out and back in without a cork screw. The makers also claim the corks have shown no sign of taint after 26 months.



## Waste Not Want Not.

The average household throws away 338kg (over 745lbs) of food every year, that is 6.5kg (14.3 lbs) every week! Amongst 2,000 adults, surveyed by the manufacturers of 'Sininkrator', an insink waste chopper, said the top ten most common meals to throw away were, roast dinners, Chinese takeaway, pasta bake, curry and rice, and also fish and chips. The study showed that six out of ten families regularly fail to clear everything on their plate, throwing leftovers into the waste bin. Over 60% of Brits. admitted they don't always eat everything on their plate, one in three saying they leave food because they put too much on their plates. The study found that 46% worry about the amount they throw away with 56% worrying about the cost and 55% admit they always cook too much food for the family.



## Spirit of the Age

Two of the Royal Navy's toasts have been changed to reflect the number of females now at sea. On Saturdays sailors will no longer raise their glasses to, "our wives and sweethearts," which elicited the response, "may they never meet". They will now toast "our families". Tuesday's toast will change from, "our men", to "our sailors" but Wednesday toast to, "ourselves", will remain the same.



## Oysters & Liver top of Yuck List

Of 2,011 adults questioned almost half - 47% - said they would not eat oysters, 46% disliked liver, closely followed by anchovies at 45%. The poll, conducted for Save the Children (?), found the top ten most hated foods also included tofu, disliked by 42%, black pudding 39%, and 37% turned up their noses at sushi. Completing the list were, blue cheese 34%, olives 33%, liquorice 28%, and marzipan 26%. Only 5% said they would eat anything.

## A Bad Month for Heston

In 2007 Little Chef, in a bid to stem falling sales took Heston Blumenthal aboard to revamp the food in ten of its restaurants, He put dishes like braised ox cheek on the menus' but Little Chef directors said



the experiment had failed, "The problem is that no one wants his food," said a spokesman.

# A GOLDEN HERITAGE

## *by Jan Edwards*



An orange grove in Sóller valley

**B**linking in the bright sunlight, after emerging from the long and dimly lit Sóller road tunnel, motorists are greeted by a roadside sign announcing their arrival in the ‘Valley of Oranges’. **The sign is hardly necessary: for a large part of the year it’s impossible to miss the profusion of citrus fruit trees – laden with oranges or lemons – growing in Mallorca’s Sóller Valley.** Given the importance of citrus fruit to the local economy, it’s not surprising that this area is also known as the ‘Valley of Gold’.

In the handsome town of Sóller and nearby Port de Sóller, every bar, café and restaurant takes advantage of the delicious oranges grown on more than 120,000 trees in the vicinity. Visit **in the first two weeks of June and you’ll even find a fiesta dedicated to oranges – the *Fira de La Taronja* – where the fruit is the star of the festivities and dishes are specially created for the *fira* by local restaurants.** Oranges (and lemons) have brought fame and fortune to Sóller.

The history of citrus cultivation here goes back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century, when it was introduced by the Arabs, who were in occupation. They recognised that this sheltered valley in the west of Mallorca offered the perfect growing conditions for citrus trees: water in abundance and, being

less than 200 metres above sea level, temperatures that don’t fall below freezing point (which would kill the trees). These conditions are due to the protective Tramuntana mountains (a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2011) that almost surround the valley.

The late 18<sup>th</sup> century French Revolution prompted many people to flee France, and Mallorca provided a refuge. The exiles sailed into Port de Sóller and it wasn’t long before they were sending shipments of the delicious oranges they’d discovered here back to France – which became an important market for Sóller’s citrus fruit. In 1860, serious pest damage decimated the orange plantations and many local people were forced to leave the island to find work, travelling to France or Latin America. Others stayed to re-stock their plantations.

When the islanders eventually returned to Sóller, their new wealth enabled them to build impressive properties, which reflected the architecture of the countries where they’d been working. There are Colonial influences in some of the grand urban mansions but, most evident, is the legacy of time spent in France: Sóller has more Art Nouveau (*Modernismo*, in Spanish) architectural style than anywhere else on Mallorca. To this day, the town still has something of a French feel about it.



The reason that Sóller's oranges were shipped from the nearby port was the mountain range, which effectively isolated the valley from the rest of the island: the only overland route was a twisting dirt track over the vertiginous Coll de Sóller mountain. This changed in April 1912, when a narrow-gauge railway service started between Sóller's new Art Nouveau railway station and Palma – funded by the citizens of the valley town. It had taken five years to construct the 27-kilometre track, which involved excavating 13 tunnels through the mountains.

Competition from Israel and southern Spain eventually reduced the export market for Sóller's oranges, causing a downturn in the area's economy. But fortunes began to change again in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century – thanks to Franz Kraus, who had moved to Sóller from his native Germany.

In 1994 Kraus founded *Sa Fàbrica de Gelats* – which produces high-quality artisan ice creams and sorbets, using local milk, cream and fruit (and no artificial colours or flavours). Over the course of a year, they make around 120 varieties, of which some 20-35 (depending on the season) are citrus-flavoured and made with freshly squeezed juice from the Sóller Valley's own bounty. The company employs 22 people and, in season, they produce up to 6,000 litres of ice cream/sorbets a day. No visit to Sóller is complete without visiting their premises to try a few flavours; their natural orange ice cream – something not often found – is particularly good.



Orange ice cream from Sa Fàbrica de Gelats

"I used to work for a chocolate company in Germany," Kraus tells me. "I wanted to change my life, and moved to Mallorca. I love Sóller but when I came here there wasn't any good ice cream on the island – only industrially produced types. I decided to use my experience of the confectionery business to change this."

He was also inspired by stories of the traditional 'snow men' who, between the 16<sup>th</sup> century and 1927, had the gruelling task of collecting ice and snow from the high mountain peaks to be stored in special snow houses until spring, when it was carried down to the valleys and delivered to butchers, fish merchants, restaurants and private homes. Records show there were more than 40 of these snow houses in Mallorca's mountains.

Kraus has more than 300 citrus trees on his own property and, understanding the challenges faced by a farmer trying to sell his harvest and calculate his potential earnings, decided to take action. In 1996 – his ice cream business established – Kraus started *Fet a Sóller* (Mallorcan for Made in Sóller), as a means of marketing and selling the organic citrus fruit harvested in the valley. *Fet a Sóller* now directly employs 25 local people, with more than a hundred farmers and producers indirectly 'employed'. The citrus farmer benefits from year-round fixed prices, so he knows what he can earn: "And that's important," says Kraus. "His speciality is growing, not selling. When a farmer earns money from his citrus trees he'll grow more." Around 500,000 kilos of oranges a year are now harvested.



*Fet a Sóller* launched its online store in 2003 and now sells their products to some 17 European countries, including England, Germany, Holland and France. The range includes more than just unwaxed organic oranges, lemons, grapefruit and tangerines. The fruit is used by local artisan manufacturers of gourmet products such as marmalades, chutneys and flavoured vinegars – some of them *Fet a Sóller*-branded. Other products include high-quality olive oils, charcuterie, flavoured *flor de sal*, and the orange liqueur **Angel d’Or, invented by local orange farmer Miquel Capó. The *Fet a Sóller* brand is one sought out by Mallorca’s resident gourmets, as well as visitors seeking something special to take home from the island.**

*Fet a Sóller* works closely with local producers, such as *Estel Nou* – a not-for-profit organisation employing people with disabilities, which manufactures jams and preserves under the *Fet a Sóller* brand. **“It provides disabled people here with work and an income – they are treated like able-bodied people,” Kraus explains.**

There are some 15 different types of oranges grown in the Sóller valley, each with its own characteristics. They include Navelina, Navel, Valencia and Canoneta (the latter only found in this area). **“Another is Peret, harvested in summer,” says Kraus. “You can put it in your house and if there’s no humidity you may be able to keep it for 3-4 months.” Because of the different types, there are oranges to be harvested from November through to July.**

The oranges are organic and unwaxed; **because they’re not treated with fungicide they have a shorter shelf-life (3-6 weeks) than a supermarket orange which, Kraus suggests, “could already be up to three months old.”** *Fet a Sóller* has become the supplier of natural vitamin C to northern Europe: you can order a 10kg box of Sóller oranges (choosing from the types available at the time) and have them delivered to your home – **whether it’s in Paris or Peterborough, Copenhagen or Cologne – within five days.**

The Sóller Valley is again thriving, with tourism also playing its part. Since 1997, motorists have been able to reach the town through the three-kilometre toll tunnel, as an alternative to the somewhat unnerving now-asphalted snaking mountain pass. The lovingly maintained old wooden train that once carried oranges from Sóller to Palma now carries camera-toting day-trippers. **‘Red Lightning’ may not live up to its name in colour or speed (the 27km journey takes an hour), but it offers a taste of nostalgia and some spectacular mountain scenery on its journey to the heart of the ‘Valley of Oranges’.**

[www.fetasoller.com](http://www.fetasoller.com)  
'Photos courtesy of Fet a Sóller'



© “FOMENTO DEL TURISMO DE MALLORCA” Picture by Eduard Miralles







Ross Hutchison is a private chef based on Mallorca, where he caters for clients in villas and on yachts. He previously ran a successful catering business in New York and has cooked on luxurious yachts and in private villas around the world. He's passionate about Mediterranean produce.

[www.privatechefmallorca.com](http://www.privatechefmallorca.com)



## Orange and Dark Chocolate Semifreddo

***This recipe contains raw eggs.***

Prep time: 45 minutes plus freezing time

Yield: 8 servings

### Ingredients:

4 eggs, separated

70g caster sugar

500 ml cold double cream

5 large oranges (ideally from Sóller)

200g 70% cocoa chocolate

Pinch of sea salt



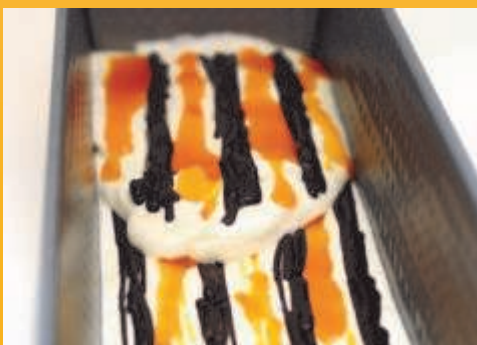
### Method:

Remove and reserve zest from one orange. Shave (with peeler) and set aside 50 grams of chocolate for garnish. Melt remaining chocolate in bain-marie and set aside to cool. Juice the 5 oranges and strain into a small saucepan over medium-high heat. Add 20g of the caster sugar, bring to a boil, and reduce until syrup is formed. Let cool.

Pour double cream into a mixing bowl and refrigerate. Separate the egg whites and the yolks into two mixing bowls. To yolks add remaining 50g of sugar and beat on high speed with an electric hand mixer for 5 minutes until thickened and pale yellow. This step is important as it will provide the richness and body to your finished dessert. Add the orange zest and stir to combine.

Whip cream until thick and fluffy but not stiff: just shy of soft peaks. Clean beaters and whip egg whites with a pinch of sea salt until soft peaks are formed. Make the semifreddo base: into the whipped egg yolks fold the whipped cream and the whipped egg whites until just combined and no streaks are present.

Cover the bottom of a standard loaf tin with one centimetre depth of this prepared base, then drizzle with some of the cooled chocolate and orange syrup. (Be sure to reserve a few tablespoons of the orange syrup for final dish decoration). Repeat, alternating base mix and chocolate/orange, and end with a coat of the base mixture. Freeze for at least four hours, or overnight for best results. To remove from the tin, run warm water over the bottom and sides of the tin until the semifreddo has loosened. Carefully turn out, cut vertical slices, and decorate with shaved chocolate and a drizzle of the reserved orange syrup. Eat immediately and enjoy!



# The History of De-Luxe Champagne

Jeffrey Benson explains about vintage Champagne and its investment value

**D**e-Luxe champagnes are the prestige brands of the champagne houses - the crème de la crème. They represent, at least in theory, the absolute summit of what the region can produce. In principle they are made from the best cuvees from the best vineyards, from the finest quality vintages, and are wines, which have been carefully aged after blending so that they have a depth and complexity of maturity as well as all the breed and distinction of the original cuvee. Most of them are marketed in fancy bottles, often copies, like Dom Perignon, of an eighteenth century shape. Naturally they are highly priced. Dom Perignon, Louis Roederer Cristal, Perrier Jouet Belle Epoque, and Taittinger Comtes de Champagne, Blanc de Blancs, four of the best known. This makes them double the price of **the same firm's ordinary vintage blends and trebles their non-vintage**. As such a question immediately poses itself. Are they worth it? Today when almost every house - not just the most respected - now offers a luxury cuvee, and all at equally inflated prices, are we entitled to curve a slightly cynical eyebrow above all this fuss and activity.

With two exceptions the de luxe cuvee is a recent phenomenon. A hundred years ago Alexander 11, Tsar of all the Russia's, commanded that the champagne he served to his guests should be presented in clear bottles so that, even when wrapped in a linen cloth for serving, it should be clearly identifiable as his own personal selection, unique to the imperial court, Louis Roederer was his supplier; Cristal was born. Until the Revolution 40 years later Cristal, then a sweet wine, was exclusively produced for the Tsar and his successors.

The real pioneer in the concept of prestige champagne was Moet et Chandon. In 1930 Moet purchased the unused brand name of Dom Perignon from Mercier - it was to purchase Mercier itself 40 years later - and in 1937 it launched the first de-luxe cuvee under this name in an elegant reproduction of the sort of bottle the firm itself had used prior to the French Revolution. Today it is the brand leader. What should you expect from a de luxe champagne? The short answer is: what you get (or should get) from a vintage as opposed to a non-vintage, only more so. Class, complexity, depth and elegance, and maturity without age. If, by definition, all vintage champagne like all vintage port is very good wine, i.e. the wine is only produced with a vintage label if that vintage and that blend thereof has been especially successful, then, even more decidedly, a de luxe champagne should invariably be a stunning product. Sadly it isn't. Like all too many vintage champagnes the wines are frequently marketed too young.

If a quality non vintage should be - I'm not talking about what the legal requirements stipulate - a wine of at least three years of age by the time it reaches the consumer, then a vintage wine six or seven, and the deluxe wines should be, if not older, at least wines of greater ageing potential. Well-made champagne can easily take ten or even fifteen years bottle age.

Champagne is the most versatile of all wines as it the perfect aperitif, goes well with fish and also can be drunk throughout the rest of the meal, pairing well with meat such as lamb and with cheese and dessert.

In short a drink for any time - to celebrate or commiserate, one can always find a reason to drink champagne. De-luxe champagne has also been a wise investment for many years, with Krug 1985 for example gaining almost 25% return

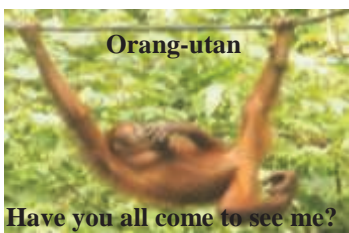
It is undeniable that the best wines have proved sound investments over the past few years. The fine wine market had an exceptionally buoyant number of years from 2005 – 2010.

If you are buying wine, do not invest more than you can afford to lose. Wine has proved to be a resilient asset over the long term, but recent events have shown that wine prices do go down as well as up. Wine should only represent a small part of your overall investment portfolio.

And above all, be advised by established professionals at all times as there have been a number of fraudulent wine investment schemes over the past few years.







# APZ Regional Festival – Kuala Lumpur

## Ian Nicol files his report.



One of the things the IWFS is good at is organising Festivals, and this Festival in Kuala Lumpur was no exception. On the first night 106 members attended the Opening Dinner at the Shangri-la Hotel, many of whom were local members, who came out to welcome overseas guests. Jeremy Diamond, Festival Chairman, gave the welcome speech followed by Yvonne Wallis, who made presentations of Charters to new branches, as the Asia Pacific Region rapidly expands.



During the meal a local Dance Company put on entertainment of Chinese 'Face Changing Masks' and dances with audience participation helped maintain appetites for the sumptuous meal and wine.

Malaysia has two land masses, the peninsular between Thailand in the north and Singapore in the south, and Sarawak and Sabah in north and eastern Borneo. Originally a fusion of Thai, Indonesian and Sumatran people, over the centuries Indian and Chinese have joined also, and the result is a fantastic mixture of cultures, religions, and food, all harmoniously coexisting. Sadly no local wine -except for rice wine - as the climate is around 30 deg. year round with seasons of high humidity.

Our first day gave us a tour of the Capital Kuala Lumpur, a huge and prosperous Metropolis with its roots going back to colonial days and beyond to different civilisations. A trip to the top of the 'Petronas Towers' gave views of the modern and historic city. Lunch at the 'Dancing Fish' (see picture page 5) was a delight, and the tour buses returned in time for changing for the Evening Dinner at the award winning 'Sage Restaurant' at The Gardens Hotel. Here the Head Chef created his famed Western style meal with Asian influences, which turned out to be a highlight of the festival and worthy of any restaurant award.

Each day between 80 – 90 members set off in three coaches and our second full day took us to 'Putrajaya', a complete modern city set up to be the New Administrative Capital and ease the overcrowding and traffic congestion in KL. Sadly, like Canberra and Brasilia, people have been reluctant to move away from the bustling and vibrant city life. Chinese style lunch at the Marriott Hotel featured 'Crab 3 ways' and chef's signature 'Three Layered Rice', before returning via the city giving sight of the Shah Alam Mosque –one of the biggest in Asia- for an evening of free time.

Once outside the city good motorway links took us on Day 3 to Malaka, with visits to the 'Stadthuts', the 'Royal Press', 'Baba Nyonya Heritage Museum' and 'Cheng Noon Temple'. Here the party bumped into the Governor of the State showing the Head Buddhist Holy Man around-complete with body guards- but he was keen to have his photograph taken with IWFS members. Full after a 'Nyonya Style' lunch with coaches returned the party to KL just in time to dress for the Final Black Tie Dinner at the Westin Ballroom. As the guests savoured a 'Trio of Lobster amongst other delights, there was relief that between courses we were entertained by a duo singing, and Kalsom Diamond was persuaded with others to sing also. By the end of the dinner all bar Ron were on their feet dancing the night away.

Lunch on day 4 was a time to reflect on the successes of the festival over a Hawker style buffet lunch, then say goodbye to friends new and old before departing for post tours to Cameron Highlands, Penang or Borneo, or heading home.

Congratulations to the KL Festival Committee for a memorable festival.



Mayor/Governor (in tie) saying hello to members



Duck soup with dumpling



Seafood special



Crab and prawn special



Prawn Satay



Lamb Chops Malaysian style





## A Gastronomic Safari by Jan Edwards

L-R: Martin Fauster, Otto Koch, Christian Jürgens, Thomas Kammeier, Thomas Kahl (Es Fum, Mallorca), Marc Fosh (Simply Fosh, Palma de Mallorca), Eckart Witzigmann, and Iker González



**Zarenfrühstück” Czar’s breakfast**



**Thomas Kammeier yellow tail amberjack with warm marinated green asparagus, medlar, orange and Sancho pepper.**



**Thomas Kahl's young chicken breast with Far Eastern flavours and baked prawn sushi**

It was a rare opportunity: an invitation to attend an extraordinary dinner created by eight outstanding chefs – five of them famous for Michelin-starred cuisine. That’s how I find myself attending the 3<sup>rd</sup> Safari Culinario, held at Mallorca’s St Regis Mardavall hotel, in mid-June. It’s one of the top events on the island’s gastronomic calendar and, this year, some 200 people – of several different nationalities – paid 199€ each for this dinner-with-a-difference.

Only two of the eight chefs this year were based on the island: Austrian-born Thomas Kahl (whose Michelin-starred cuisine is served in the hotel’s Es Fum restaurant) and Marc Fosh, who owns three restaurants and a catering company in Palma de Mallorca. Marc was the first (and, so far, only) British chef in Spain to have had his cuisine recognised with a star, in a previous position on the island.

Five of the other six chefs flew in from Germany: Martin Fauster (Gourmet Restaurant Königshof, Munich); Christian Jürgens (Überfahrt, Rottach-Egern); Thomas Kammeier (Hugos, Berlin); Otto Koch (Restaurant 181 Business & First, Munich), and Austrian chef Eckart Witzigmann, – named ‘Chef of the Century’ by the *Gault Millau* guide. Iker González, from the Hotel Maria Cristina in San Sebastian, completed the team of culinary supremos.

The evening began in the hotel’s landscaped gardens, where guests mingled as they sipped champagne, to the accompaniment of a saxophonist. All eyes though were on the extraordinary array of exquisite tapas and canapés, created by Kahl and his hotel brigade, and displayed under cover on a huge buffet display unit on the terrace. After a welcome from the hotel director, who introduced the chefs to the guests, the feasting – and the ‘safari’ – began.

We’d been given a small booklet about the chefs, a postcard-sized map of our route through the hotel, and the menu of dishes (each created by a different chef). Having seen the treats awaiting us, we tried just a few of the tempting appetisers, before starting our safari – during which each course would be plated as required and served in a different location. First stop was Marc Fosh’s parfait of foie gras with orange blossom jelly, mango purée, spices and crispy chocolate bread. I wondered what the atmosphere had been like in the kitchen that afternoon, with so many talented chefs preparing their dishes.

“I believe it was a little tense,” Fosh replied, as he squeezed dots of mango purée from a plastic bottle onto plates in front of us. Fosh himself is one of the most laidback chefs I’ve ever met and doubtless took such a challenge in his stride.



The following course was Iker González's peach gazpacho with tuna tataki, which he served in one of the hotel's private dining rooms. From there, we entered the kitchen: like many people, I'm interesting in going 'behind the scenes' of a restaurant. After passing the already busy pot wash area, we arrived at the first pass, where Thomas Kammeier served his yellow tail amberjack, with warm marinated green asparagus, medlar, orange and Sancho pepper. There was always a short wait as the chef put the finishing flourishes to each plate as it was served, but it meant there was time to appreciate the precision, ask questions, and take photos.

Guests didn't have to eat standing up, although many chose to for the earlier courses. Others found a table in the dining room or on the spacious terrace of the main restaurant Aqua. Although there was no waiter service, members of the team swiftly removed used cutlery and crockery.

Eckart Witzigmann probably created the most excitement. German and Austrian guests, in particular, photographed the 'Chef of the Century', as he carefully composed his dish of Söller red prawns, tomatoes, watermelon and basil. It was a true taste of Mallorca. Next was Martin Fauster's perfectly balanced sea bass with avocado, green almonds and oil of elderberry flowers. Christian Jürgens' dish of "Zarenfrühstück" (Czar's breakfast) was a composition of caviar, on a silky crème fraîche and beetroot base, served deceptively simply in caviar tins, piled high on ice. His cuisine has two Michelin stars and 19 Gault Millau points.

Thomas Kahl and his brigade prepared saddle of Aragon lamb with artichokes, kohlrabi and chanterelles, and young chicken breast with Far Eastern flavours and baked prawn sushi – both presented on the Aqua terrace. They also prepared an unusual Mahon cheese sorbet with Jabugo ham, pineapple and olive oil. There were plenty of sweet treats too: Kahl and his team had prepared another spectacular buffet – this time of desserts and sweets (lollipops, chocolates and fruit jellies).

The slowest-moving queue of the evening was for Otto Koch's dessert: a chocolate female torso (think Gaultier perfume bottle) filled with coconut parfait, flamed with rum and served with summer berries. It was sheer entertainment to watch each individual dish being prepared – and Koch played to that!

When we eventually left for our one-hour drive home, a lively band was playing under the stars on the terrace, and the drinks were still flowing. The price for the Safari Culinario included champagne from Moët & Chandon, Freixenet cava, wines from six of Mallorca's top bodegas, Belvedere vodka, Gin Mare, and the Mallorcan liqueur Hierbas de Túnel – seemingly with no limit.

This extraordinary gastronomic event is one I hope to enjoy again next year. It's one of several good reasons for gourmets to visit Mallorca . . .



**Kahl's Mahon cheese sorbet with Jabugo ham, pineapple and olive oil**



**Some of Kahl's lollipops**



**Otto Koch's showpiece dessert**



**A sweet treat to end the meal**



**Eckart Witzigmann at the pass named "Chef of the Century" by the Gault Millau guide**





## @ Bray



Having visited Heston's flagship The Fat Duck in its heyday, when it had just been declared 'The Best Restaurant in the World', we decided a return to Bray to try his pub would be an interesting experience.

Once again the opportunity arose as the result of a gift of a dining

voucher for a birthday present. Well what do you give a man who has everything.

We have a soft spot for the wonderful Hinds Head Hotel as it was many years ago. Prince Philip held his stag party there and it was a favourite venue for Young Farmers Christmas and New Year celebrations. We would take over the upstairs gallery dining room and feel very grand until, as the evening wore on, the trip down the steep stairs to the dance floor became extremely perilous. The waitresses were always curious about the wine bottles, as soon as they were emptied they disappeared. At the end of the evening when the bill arrived they were brought out from under the table to be counted, just to make sure there were the right number on the bill!



Heston's head chef Kevin Love has a team of 28 in the kitchen and from the number of different faces around the restaurant as many in front of house. Our voucher entitled us to the set lunch menu at £21.50 for three courses plus a special cocktail - 'Heston's Grapefruit tea', Heston's earl grey & lemon gin, Earl Grey Syrup, Basil & Grapefruit, which would have cost us £10.50 and one of their famous Scotch Eggs as amuse bouche. These were on the menu at £3.75 each. I found it disappointing, too much sausage meat relative to egg and the mustard mayonnaise served with them was much too strong. The cocktail had a high proportion of gin in the mix, it was so overpowering that all other flavours in it were lost. We ordered a bottle of Casa Lapostol Merlot 2011 from the list at £27 which was too young, as anticipated, but none the less delicious.

The puff pastry of my starter of a small wild mushroom tart could have been crisper and the strong fillings predominant flavour was vinegar. The garnish of baby white onion added nothing to the dish. A Brûlée of Chicken Liver Parfait was weird, the caramel being very dark with a slight burnt flavour overpowered the smooth rich parfait but when tasted on its own it was over salted.

Our main course of chicken thighs with clams and spinach was perfectly cooked, the clams were tender and the chicken moist and juicy, served with a plentiful, very flavoursome sauce. There was a side dish was of French beans and carrots which were tossed in butter and herbs and appropriately seasoned and the ever present pub grub, chips.

Dessert was 'whipped chocolate with vanilla ice cream and raspberry'. A very thin disc of chocolate supported a tiny round of short biscuit topped with a teaspoon of vanilla ice cream but no raspberry. If it had been my ice cream the family would have complained that I had been mean with the vanilla beans.

The restaurant was very busy for a Wednesday lunch and service was slow, we arrived at 12.50pm and left at 3.10 pm. We declined coffee and were offered a soft chocolate fudge with the bill which totalled £119.81. Our voucher was for £79, we paid £40.81 for wine and service.

An interesting experience but potentially a very expensive one for, what was basically a pub lunch with little subtlety of flavour to the dishes. At least when we were at the old Hinds Head Hotel hiding our empties the table had a cloth on it!



# Restaurant Award



## Northern Dales Branch Restaurant Award for The Black Bull, Frosterley, Co.Durham

The Black Bull is a country inn, located in an unassuming village in North East England. Its character, the welcoming and courteous approach of its dedicated owners, together with the exceptional quality of the food and professional service offered the Branch a memorable dining experience, which merited the Society's Restaurant Award.

On 1<sup>st</sup> August, members revisited to present the Award for the dinner they had enjoyed so much on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2012.

Having appreciated the excellent cuisine on several occasions, the Branch took the opportunity of a more casual event, appropriate to a sultry summer evening to experience their renowned pizzas, cooked to order in their built-in pizza oven.

President, Wendy Edmunds, presented the Award to Chef, Will Davis, who was thrilled to accept it on behalf of all the staff of the family run establishment, all of whom, he claimed, had contributed to the success of the restaurant.

The presentation was followed by our meal of superb pizzas with individual choices of toppings on outstanding dough bases, prepared and cooked to perfection by Charlie Scott, the Front of House manager and Chef, Robert Irwin.

Will is about to embark on a well deserved ten month sabbatical. We wish him a successful international trip and look forward to his return.

*Eileen Leatherland*



## Wine words -

### No 1 - Let the wine do the talking by Prof. Alan F. Harrison



**Y**ou can almost hear the chatter from the four IWFS glasses! The March article covered our founder's thoughts on wine generally. The June article began with his wine words, in particular – balance. Other writers were brought in to contrast André Simon and to develop the topic of balance. We now look at the broader topic of describing wine beginning, once more, with our founder.

To appreciate wine “.. one must drink good wine, not necessarily great wines, but sound and honest wine, with sufficient concentration to memorise its colour, bouquet or fragrance, and flavour: in other words one must cultivate a ‘palate memory’. Just as it is always a pleasure to recognise the features or the voice of a friend, there is a very real satisfaction in recognising a wine which one has tasted and enjoyed before.”

If we hope to memorise the colour, bouquet or fragrance, and flavour of a wine which has been tasted and appreciated, let the wine do the talking. That, of course, means learning its language. In 1948, André Simon said “Wine is a friend, wine is a joy ..” When we engage with the voice of a friend, the words we use are common to us both. When we are on friendly terms with wine, we can listen to it more easily and develop the special words within our interaction.

Therefore, make wine your friend and it will be even more enjoyable. As your palate memory develops, the easier it becomes to add more wine words to your vocabulary. Wine words exist to point you to those appropriate to appreciation, and developing your palate memory is part of it.. As fluency progresses, your ability to communicate with those around you is enhanced. André Simon certainly knew his stuff! *Palate memory* was innovative in 1953. Much more recently, the term *mouth-feel* has entered the wine vocabulary and we can deal with that in another article.

Already, perhaps even at the basic level in some cases, you are able to find the words you want, when you want them, and are able to communicate with like-minded IWFS members who may be going through or who have been through the same process. However, it wasn't André Simon's suggestion to let the wine do the talking. By now, you are familiar with the name Michael Broadbent. In the preface to his *Pocket Guide to Winetasting* (1978), and in the context of giving talks, he writes “one learns from the wine itself. Indeed, I usually preface my remarks by saying that the wine is doing all the talking and I am merely trying to translate.”

In his “Foreword to new edition” (2003), Michael Broadbent comments “.. the more one tastes, the more one learns, understands, and appreciates – leading to deeper enjoyment.” The last paragraph of the foreword says the purpose of the book “.. is to awaken the interest of newcomers and to encourage even the hard-nosed professionals to think more carefully about the words they use. ... Above all, ... , I aim to encourage those teetering on the brink to plunge into the unfathomable depths of wine.”

We have the opportunity to listen to Michael in London on 13th November and details are on p 38 of the June issue of *Food & Wine*. After his lecture, we can share our interpretations of what the wine tells us at the Society's 80th anniversary lunches.

The extended article, with links, can be found at <http://www.gastron-omy.com/iwfs-let-wine-talk/>



## Chris & Julie Graham - Berkshire Branch Members found some Pleasant Surprises while touring France in their Morgan.



We both love France but we had not spent much time there in the last few years until this summer and, contrary to some reports from friends, we found that there are still surprises to be discovered and good value to be had in food & wine. Our trips took us to the areas around Redon in South Brittany, Brest and Ploumanac'h in North Brittany and the northern part of the Cotentin Peninsula.

I am pleased to report that the lunchtime “Formule” at around €12 is still alive and can readily be found with 3 courses or two plus a drink. The Moulin de Celac at Questembert delivered exceptional quality in this regard. Run by two brothers who gave up factory jobs to start their own business they have, in a year, built up a steady trade – essential to book, especially if you want a table on the terrace overlooking the old mill pond.

I have always considered Crêpes to be something of a “snack” option, not a real meal you understand, but the Crêperie An Ty Coz takes crêpes to a different level. Its reputation is high in the area but the location in a small hameau at the end of a very bumpy and narrow road on the Presqu'île Plougastel-Daoulas (the peninsula opposite Brest) can make it hard to find. However it is worth the effort! An amazing menu fills galettes with everything imaginable: I chose smoked salmon and St Jacques wrapped in a delicious sauce. Each combination is swiftly and deliciously served. You can stay here too in one of their nearby Gîtes and there are lots of footpaths around the coastline.

Something which is beginning to appear on many restaurant menus is the Café Gourmand. This is an espresso coffee served with a selection of miniature tasters of 5 or 6 desserts. Typical offerings are tarte citron, mousse au chocolat, chocolat moelleux, crème brûlée but they can, and do, include many different flavours. Apparently this started in about 2010 and one restaurant where we had this in Cherbourg had only been offering it for the last year. Alain Roux's opinion is that this is a “fashion” and is a way of restaurants getting you to take both coffee AND dessert. Even if this is true, it is a great way to end a meal.

One evening we were eating in the restaurant of the Hotel Des Rochers, our excellent hotel in Ploumanac'h on the Côte d'Armor, when the gentleman on the next table was served his main course: Ormeau. His eyes were positively gleaming at the prospect of consuming what, at first glance looked distinctly unappetising. A discussion elicited the fact that he had been a fisherman and that Ormeau, or Abalone, was his absolute favourite dish. We then had a lesson on how they were harvested. We had arrived on the 15<sup>th</sup> June, the day after the season had finished but it was still on the menu the following evening - I had to try it! Well everything in life is an experience and the Sea Ear was “interesting” but not something I am going to seek out again very quickly!

On the wine side we noticed that the array of Rosés in the range €3.50 to €5.00 available in the Super Marchés was very much more extensive than in the past and the ones we tried were very drinkable (being on holiday does help). The tax regime in France helps with pricing and there were good reds from the Bordeaux region at around €7.00. Our favourite bar or café tipple in the early evening is the Kir Petillant, that is Kir made with sparkling white wine rather than champagne. This can often be had at not much more than a plain Kir and excites the palate rather better. A good alternative is a Kir made with cider, such as a Kir Breton.

We experienced good service everywhere but especially at the Maison de l'Océan, a seafood restaurant in a lesser street in the old docks in Brest. This is clearly a well-known place filled as it was at lunchtime with a mix of business people and locals. I felt distinctly underdressed in my shorts. The seafood platters were fresh and delicious – a very good experience.

The only regret is that we were unable to bring home any wine from Brittany – the Morgan does not have a square inch (or centimetre) of space, so we just brought home our memories instead.





# around the branches - London



Anthony Hamilton-Russell

## Red Burgundies versus New World Pinot Noirs

This event took place at the Naval Club on 29th May. The idea was to compare, without prejudice, the attractiveness of red Burgundies with that of New World Pinot Noirs, and to see if people could tell the different types of wine apart. The wines were served blind in pairs, each pair consisting of one of each type of wine, with members voting after each pair for which was the better wine and which one was the Burgundy. Not everyone voted each time. The pairings were done mainly on age.

The Burgundies were chosen by Jeffrey Benson, a man with many years in the wine trade, and the New World wines were selected by the organiser, Bernard Lamb, an experienced amateur wine-maker and taster.

Round 1. 2010 Domaine Drouhin Oregon Pinot Noir, Willamette Valley, USA, beat 2011 Aloxe Corton, Domaine Nicolas Rossignol, by 9 votes to 7, with 6 putting the New World wine (NWw) as Burgundy and 10 putting the Burgundy as Burgundy.

Round 2. 2009 Hamilton Russell Pinot Noir, Hemel-en-Aarde, South Africa, beat 2009 Santenay 1er Cru 'La Combe', Domaine Rene Lequin Colin, by 10-7, with 10 putting the NWw as Burgundy and 6 putting the Burgundy as Burgundy.

Round 3. 2007 Leyda Lot 21 Pinot Noir, Leyda Valley, Chile, beat 2009 Givry 'Le Preference du Roi Henri IV', Remoissenet, by 10-4, with 7 putting the NWw as Burgundy and 10 putting the Burgundy as Burgundy.

Round 4. 2010 Urlar Pinot Noir, Gladstone, New Zealand, beat 1995 Beaune 1er Cru 'Cuvee Prestige', Domaine Denis Philibert, by 10-6, with 3 putting the NWw as Burgundy and 14 putting the Burgundy as Burgundy.

Round 5. 1992 Gevrey Chambertin, Domaine Rossignol Trapet, beat 2010 Quartz Reef, Bendigo, Central Otago, New Zealand, by 13-3, with one brave man putting the NWw as Burgundy and 16 getting the Burgundy right, with the colour a very obvious clue.

The final result was thus a massive win for the New World Pinot Noirs, beating the red Burgundies by 4 rounds to 1. The participants really enjoyed the format of the evening and the very good wines. The target price was an average of £20 a bottle, but the 1995 Beaune 1er Cru 'Cuvee Prestige', Domaine Denis Philibert, and especially the 1992 Gevrey Chambertin, Domaine Rossignol Trapet (the only winning Burgundy) would cost much more than that if bought today.

Quite a number of guesses as to which of a pair was the Burgundy were wrong, even the majority in round 2. Overall, more guesses were right than wrong, by 56 to 27, but that goes down to a more equal 26 to 23 if one discounts the last two rounds, where the vintage and colour differences made guessing pretty easy.

In the previous white Burgundies versus New World Chardonnays event, won by the New World wines by 3½ rounds to 2½, there was a clear trend in all rounds: compared to the New World Chardonnays, the Burgundies were less generous, more noticeably acidic, and less ready. The New World ones were more opulent, seeming fatter. This time there was no consistent trend. For example, in rounds 1 and 2, the Burgundy was the bigger wine, but in round 3, the New World one was bigger. Although the 2010 Quartz Reef lost heavily to the 1992 Gevrey Chambertin, it was also a lovely wine.

Brenda Lamb provided a well-received light meal afterwards.

*Bernard Lamb*

## A Return to Pied à Terre in May

Beautifully matched wines & food added to the unrivalled hospitality at Pied à Terre. We were able to persuade Maitre'd Mathieu Germond, and chef Marcus Eaves to devise a Loire themed dinner at this IWFS (and Michelin) award winning London restaurant.

We were honoured with their private room, and had sufficient members wishing to attend that we were forced to hold two events on consecutive evenings!

Mathieu duly set about digging deep in his cellar and with his unrivalled knowledge of wine he provided a stream of interesting wines to match Marcus's choice of Loire area dishes. The menu was beautifully balanced and a splendid showing for these regional wines, all of which were very good including the rare and unusual fizz we sipped while gathering over canapés.

Although we hopped back & forth along the Loire, we of course had to finish with Mathieu's home wine. Mathieu gave us all a map of the region as he told us about each wine and explained how they matched the food.

Marcus's Menu and preparation of each dish was simply outstanding. We gave both of them and their team a heartfelt thank you after this display of excellence. We were very much welcomed, being IWFS members, who really do appreciate such endeavour.

*Andrew Brodie*

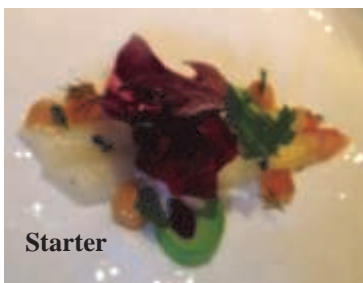
## Menu

Loire Valley White Asparagus with Crab Mayonnaise,  
Wild Garlic Panna cotta and Iberico Ham  
2011 Pouilly-Fumé, domaine des Berthiers, J.C. Dagueneau

Roasted Skate Wing with Sauteed Baby Artichokes,  
Buttered Shellfish and a Ragout of White Beans  
2011 Touraine Amboise, Bel Air, domaine des granges typhaine

Slow Cooked Loin of Pork with Choucroute, Chicory,  
Walnut Purée, Granny Smith Apple and Cider Sauce  
1998 Bourgueil 'Beauvais' Rouge, P.J. Druet

Frozen Raspberry Mousse with Lemon Thyme Gel,  
Natural Yoghurt and Fromage Frais Sorbet  
2010 Vouvray, demi-sec, Domaine Gaudron



Starter



Fish



Main Course



Dessert



Wafers

# around the branches - Capital



## Shaun Dickens @ The Boathouse, Henley-on-Thames

This new restaurant, housed in an old boathouse, is in a beautiful spot on the Thames in the heart of Henley.

Shaun started his career in the 2 Michelin starred Le Manoir aux Quat' Saisons before moving to New York to work at Per se, a 3 Michelin starred restaurant ranked 6th best restaurant in the world. He returned to England in 2009 and joined L'Ortolan in Shinfield for two years before moving to Fallowfields as head chef and farm manager.

The Boathouse is Shaun's first restaurant and to quote his website, "he will showcase the skills and passion he has developed in the charming, stylish and elegant setting of Henley-on-Thames. The restaurant offers a wonderful lunch and dinner menu with a wide selection of modern interpretations of British classics and of course in the summer the terrace provides a **stunning vista of the river**". After sampling these delights with members at a branch lunch in May I can say it is all true.

A fruity Jeio Bisol, Prosecco Brut was served with canapés which included Montgomery cheese melts and salmon tartar on crisp salmon skins.

Poached Lemon sole with crispy capers, quinoa and celery was beautifully presented, the fish being well seasoned and cooked to perfection. The quinoa gave the dish a nutty flavour and the tangy crisp capers gave good change of texture and prepared the palate for the wine which, as described, was "finished with mouth watering acidity".

The main course of braised lamb belly with broad beans, ratte potato and wild garlic was also beautifully presented. The belly served with a delicious sauce was superbly tender with excellent flavour, the baby broad beans had their skins removed and the wild garlic complimented the dish by cutting the richness skilfully. The Californian Zinfandel was lovely, soft and fruity and matched the dish well.

Dessert of Basil Baked Alaska, poached strawberries, white chocolate wafer speckled with pistachio was well perfected. The basil sorbet was just the right texture under its cloak of soft meringue. The poached strawberries were also accompanied by a strawberry sorbet. The white chocolate wafer gave a superb texture change to the dish.

The whole meal was perfectly seasoned, not an experience often found in restaurants these days with many chefs having a salt phobia. It was a point Raymond Blanc made at the opening night party. Obviously the art of seasoning was something Shaun learnt at Le Manoir.

Coffee was accompanied by various petit fours including a very astringent lemon jelly and baby macaroons.

Under the very professional eye of Rhys Griffiths, Front of House Manager, service was smooth and polished with no hitches and not too much intrusion. We had iced juggled water on the table. The inclusive cost was a very reasonable £40 per head.

Members agreed that the meal was worth a Society Restaurant Award, it was granted and we look forward to our return for the presentation in mid August.

*Pam Brunning, Chairman.*

## Capital Branch 80th Anniversary Celebrations Sunday October 20th 2013

### Black tie Dinner at Audleys Wood Hotel, Alton Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG25 2JT

Capital Branch are pleased to announce that they are organising their 80th Anniversary Dinner to coincide with the very day, 80 years ago, when André and A. J. Symons sat down for dinner at Lord & Lady Swaythling's home in Kensington Court, London and A.J. said, "Why not have a Society to educate people in wine and food?"

Our celebrations are to be held at one of Julia Hands 'Hand Picked Hotels'. Audleys Wood is the former home of the Simonds family, who owned H&G Simonds Brewery in Reading. Julia owns a group of 19 exclusive hotels around the country and, in line with the Society's ethos, promotes a very high standard of cuisine throughout the group to the extent that she has set up her own chefs academe.

Chef Adam Fargin joined the hotel in August 2011 to launch The Simonds Room restaurant. Adam is not new to challenges in his career, featuring in many competitions such as a Finalist in BBC's Master Chef the Professionals, Winner of the Jacquard Rising Stars Trophy and the Rouission Dessert Competition.

Adam has worked along side some of the great chefs such as; John Campbell, Mark Edwards, Phil Howard, Bret Graham and Michael Caines. A great supporter of local produce he sources all his own local supplies and is a big supporter of Hampshire Fayre.

Details have yet to be finalised but we will meet at 7pm for an aperitif and then enjoy a very special meal, devised by Adam, with wines, followed by coffee and petit fours.

Being a Sunday night we have been offered very special rates for B&B, so come and celebrate with Capital.

**If interested and you do not already receive Capital's details email Pam - [sidpam@waitrose.com](mailto:sidpam@waitrose.com) or telephone 0118 9733287 to be put on the mailing list and put the date in your diaries.**



## around the branches - Manchester



### Wine Tasting & Supper at Bowden Club

You know that Spring has arrived when you receive the notice of an IW&FS Wine Tasting event at Bowden Club, or to give it its full title, Bowden Cricket, Hockey and Squash Club.

This year we were fortunate to have a tasting presented by David Connor of Sporting Wines. David has always had an appreciation of wine and made an early retirement career change. His interest in wines, especially those from Australia, developed into an enjoyable business. On his wine tasting and buying trips he has the final choice of the red wines and his wife, of the white wines, a mutually compatible partnership.

The wines we tasted were from the Perth and Margaret River Area. They were:

Bellermine Riesling 2011 – A pleasant sharp wine with good acidity, some sweetness and traditional Riesling undertones.

Harewood Estate Sauvignon Semillon 2010 – A Gold Medal winner in Perth. A dry wine with exotic fruit flavours of Melon, Mango and Lycees.

Harewood Estate Unwooded Chardonnay 2010 – A pale wine with good length, a full mouthful and a good quaffing wine

Harewood Estate Chardonnay 2010 – An oaked wine – golden in colour with buttery vanilla flavour with plenty of fruit and length.

Bellarmino Pinot Noir 2008 – this was a wine for food, well structured with long tannins and good acidity.

Mount Trio Shiraz 2008 – A warm nose and a peppery spicy taste with a hint of tobacco. It had good length and would go well with Lamb Rogan Gosh.

Harewood Estate Shiraz 2006 – A Rhone style wine with good gentle velvety red fruits and a hint of spiciness. Elegant and together. Ready for drinking.

Harewood Estate Shiraz Cabernet 2006 – This was a good chewy wine with long tannins and some spice – noticeably the men preferred this wine.

Zarephath Cabernet Sauvignon 2003 – a good deep colour with good balanced tannins and acidity. Some softness indicated it would need drinking now.

Harewood Estate Cabernet Sauvignon 2008 – This was a Bordeaux style of wine with a mature grip on the palate. At 14.5% it would go well with food.

Moombaki Bordeaux Blend 2005 – **translated means “Where the Moon meets the Sky”**. The C. Sauv, C. Franc and Malbec hadn’t really blended.

Mount Trio Cabernet Sauvignon 2009 – A wine with good balance and length and soft tannins. – **this was in the evening’s top 3 wines.**

Supper supplied by Gastronomy Delicatessen of Hale followed.

To say Sausage and Mash with green vegetables, Cheese and Puddings does not do it credit.

The Sausages were sourced from a local Goostrey farmer who makes the Gloucester Old Spot pork sausages to order. (He has won awards for the Best Pork sausages in Cheshire) – they were the best sausages I have ever eaten. They were accompanied by Butter Bean mash with Olive Oil and Orange Zest, and Broccoli and Green beans – Delicious.

Gastronomy has a passion for Cheeses and sourcing UK cheeses. They presented us with, Snowden Blue, Macclesfield White Cheshire and an Isle of Mull Cheddar accompanied by Fig and Almond cake – a well balanced trio.

Lemon sponge and a Lemon Cheese Cake followed – and were enjoyed by those who had a good appetite.

The wines served with Supper were Harewood Estate Sauvignon Semillon and Harewood Estate Shiraz.

**This interesting tasting by an enthusiastic presenter made many of us put Perth and Margaret River on our list of “must visit” places.**

The 37 members who attended thanked David of Sporting Wines and Annabel from Gastronomy most appreciatively in the traditional manner.

*Tricia Fletcher*



# around the branches - Merseyside and Mid-Cheshire



## Dinner at the Fishpool Restaurant.

In July our members and friends enjoyed an excellent evening at The Fishpool Inn, in Delamere, Cheshire. Formerly a quaint country pub, the Fishpool has recently undergone a dramatic and sympathetic twelve month multi-million pound renovation and reopened in February of this year.

On arrival we were served with Wildwood Zinfandel Rosé from the USA. Our Wine Steward, Mike Saville, described it as having a lovely fruity taste, which appeared sweet at first but on a second tasting went dry at the back of the throat. A good aperitif was the verdict.

**The first course was warm Crottin of Delamere Goat's Cheese**, with heritage tomato chutney, pistachio nuts and zingy citrus dressing. Very impressive and very enjoyable was the general opinion. To accompany this Paul Bishop had chosen Neygerede Estate Pinot Grigio 2011 from Hungary, a very satisfying dry wine, with a taste very close to those from Northern Italy.

The main course was roasted fillet of Scottish salmon, with shaved fennel and celeriac slaw, sautéed potatoes, blushed San Marzano tomatoes, candied walnuts, blue cheese mayonnaise and Wirral watercress, it was a very interesting combination of flavours and members particularly liked the contrast of the walnuts with the mayonnaise. Continuing the Hungarian wine theme, Paul had chosen a Chapel Hill pinot noir 2011. This wine had lots of red fruit flavours, particularly cherry, but it balanced the salmon well, and was light enough to be served with fish. Dessert was a delightful Cheshire rhubarb fool, with fraises de bois and stem ginger sable biscuits., followed by coffee.

I noted the following comments about the meal; "very impressive", "an absolute delight"; "fantastic service"; "one of the best meals we have had recently"; and "a place to return to..." which I am sure we will!



## A Wisp of Steam

Nostalgia was the theme of Merseyside and Mid Cheshire celebration of Midsummer with a journey back in time on the East Lancs. Railway. We travelled back, some 75 years, to the days when only the well to do could enjoy the delights of lunch in a Pullman Dining Car.

As we steamed through the Lancashire countryside north of Bury, calling at Heywood, Ramsbottom and Rawtenstall, we enjoyed a well cooked and beautifully presented, Lancastrian Lunch. The menu was as follows, Salmon Mayonnaise, followed by Roast Leg of Lamb, with seasonal vegetables, finishing with Apple and Blackberry Pie, tea, coffee and mints. Drinks were not included but the train carried a decent selection of wines, spirits and soft drinks.

It was an experience enjoyed by all and one that we would hope to repeat in the not too distant future.

*Angela Britland, Photography Tim Hodges.*





## around the branches - Malmö



Mats Vollmer



### Rare meat at Vollmers!

The Vollmer brothers have never disappointed us and this time was no exception. Normally Ebbe and Mats work together but on this occasion the younger brother Mats was in charge for our dinner with Ebbe only assisting, as they have just opened up a new restaurant for 160 persons serving tapas and steaks in two locations that **needed Ebbe's time and attention. We were 30 members filling up the original place** and were served a delicious meal, including a main not very often seen on menus in this latitude. We started with a glass of crispy 2011 Chablis, Dom. Garnier & Fils, with citrus and mineral, accompanied by two amuses bouches, followed by

*Beetroot, black currant, celeriac, browned butter*

2011 Pouilly-Fuissé, Dom. du Roure de Paulin

*Soup of white asparagus with garniture*

2007 Muscat Moenchreben de Rorschwihr, Rolly Gassmann

*Haddock, citronette, spinach*

2008 Riesling Grand cru Kirchberg de Ribeauvillé

*Rabbit, roasted fresh almonds, rosemary meat juice, Serrano ham*

2010 Savigny-Lavières Premier cru, Dom. Tollot-Beaut

2011 Gigondas Le Lieu-dit, Dom. des Bosquets

*Rhubarbs with condensed milk*

2010 Coteaux de Layon Tri de Vendange, Dom. de Landreau

The acidity in the Burgundy matched the beetroot and the berries and the slightly oaked tones matched the browned butter. The top class Muscat went perfectly with the asparagus and the excellent Riesling with citrus and mineral hints with the fish. The red burgundy might have had a bit too much oak for the rabbit while the elegant Gigondas matched the meat as well as the rosemary and ham. We had a pre-dessert and to finish the botrytis character in the Loire wine was a perfect companion to the rhubarb.

This was our final dinner for the spring season and the Vollmer brothers once again confirmed that they are no doubt one of our top restaurants and we look forward to visiting both the original and their new restaurant in the future.

Buffet in style!

We have a tradition to try and conclude the season by arranging a catering buffet in members home but this year Gun and Kai Karyd generously welcomed us to their premises Fridhemsborg, bought in 2007 and completely restored. The result is impressive, as is the building which in fact is the biggest villa in Malmö built in 1916 as a private residence but today used for offices, conferences, events etc. After a short introduction we were invited to a guided tour through the building and to finish off we had a delicious buffet together

with a generous 'Recommended Daily Allowance' of interesting wines. Many thanks to Gun,

Kai and their daughter Pia Lotta for enabling a splendid Sunday afternoon!



Rolf Fransson, Photo: Pierre Mens

## Merseyside and Mid-Cheshire

**Merseyside & Mid-Cheshire will offer a 'Toast to the 80th Anniversary of the IWFS', during their Christmas Party, which will be held at the Alderley Edge Hotel on 6th December 2013 to which all are welcome providing there are places available.**

**They are holding thier 80th Anniversary Celebration of the Branch on 14th December 2014 at the prestigious Arley Hall in Cheshire.**



# around the branches - Manchester



Always taste before you buy.

## Bury Market Revisited

In May, by popular demand, we organised a return trip to Bury Market as numbers are limited on each visit. Eighteen members including 2 friends from Cape Town enjoyed this tour. The first tour of the Market in June 2012 was descriptively and comprehensively written up by David Chapman and appeared in the September 2012 edition of Food & Wine.

This year the welcome from the officials and Stall Holders was just as warm and friendly and they were delighted to see us again. It was a busy day for the Market Manager, Andrew Heyes and Market Administrator, Yasmin Ullah as they had the Mayor, Local Councillors and the MP for Bury North also visiting. Our group were introduced to the local dignitaries and officials who were pleased and impressed that the IW&FS were having a repeat visit and that we were joined by our South African friends.

**The NHS had a "Healthy Food and Eating" Campaign and stall** so we were introduced and given free advice, recipes and samples – an informative and educational start to our day.

After coffee, biscuits and pastries at Katsouris Delicatessen

where George Katsouris told us about his business, his ideas and love of good food we were split into 2 groups with Andrew and Yasmin escorting each group.

In the Market Offices we were given a history and explanation of workings of the market which was recorded in its Charter granted in 1440.

**We visited and tasted products from various stalls. The Cheeses from "Cheese Plus" a family business now run by son Graham Hill, various cooked sausages from W & M Butchers (Wayne and Martin), Hot Black Puddings from both the local rival Black Pudding makers – Chadwick's Black Pudding Stall and The Bury Black Pudding Stall, a new variety of green tomatoes from Willis's family fruit and vegetable stall, a hummus dip and an avocado dip on home made breads from a new Eastern European based Deli stall.** By this time we were wondering if we would be able to eat our lunch.

A walk through various non food stalls and the indoor market brought us to the newest and most prestigious part of the market – **the Meat & Fish Hall. Here at Hayton's Fish stall we met Martin Hayton** who succeeded his father in the business. He is a font of information about fish and he supplies many local restaurants.

Having completed the official tour we made our way to Ditto Bistro – **Diane and Tom Driscoll's town centre restaurant.**

The Market menu they devised for us was,

**A "Bury Egg" - a Quail's egg, wrapped in black pudding, coated in breadcrumbs and served on a crisp salad with a mustard dressing.**

Baked Salmon fillet with a Parmesan herb crust with garden new potatoes and creamed leeks.

A selection of market cheeses – including Lancashire Cheese, served with Grapes, celery, and fresh bread.

The accompanying wines were the house wines, a New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc and a simple French red.

**Looking around the tables in was obvious that despite the "tastings" at various market stalls, our members had enjoyed Chef Tom's tasty lunch.**

The party then split up to return home by car or the Metro. Many via the Market to purchase the fresh, high quality foods they had seen and sampled on their tour. Overall Bury Market and its ease of access made a good impression, it is really worth the journey.

*Tricia Fletcher*

## THE 39 STEPS

We were lucky to have a sunny evening for our visit to The 39 Steps at Styal, Cheshire, so the glass of Prosecco (Zellina Prosecco Extra Brut, Italy) was just the right choice for our aperitif. Cool and delicious, and a good start to the evening. When we sat down to our first course of British asparagus with a soft-poached egg and hollandaise sauce, we were all amazed that the kitchen could produce so many perfectly poached eggs at the same time! The asparagus was at it's best, and the right time of the year to have it.

The main course was Grilled breast of Goosnargh duck (served pink), with an ox tongue croquet and a redcurrant and marsala reduction. The crunchiness of the croquet was very good with the duck, and the reduction had a beautiful flavour. A Croze Hermitage, Les Meysonniers Chapoutier 2009 couldn't have been better chosen. Altogether a tasty and satisfying combination.

The Assiette of desserts was also a credit to the kitchen. A mini raspberry and passion fruit soufflé was piping hot, the brownie was crunchy, and a mini apple pie with the vanilla ice cream cooled it down, Tea or coffee finished off a very enjoyable meal.

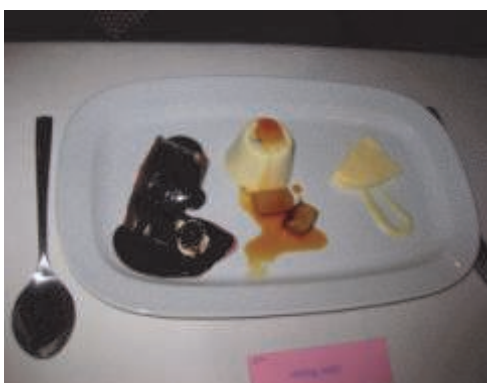
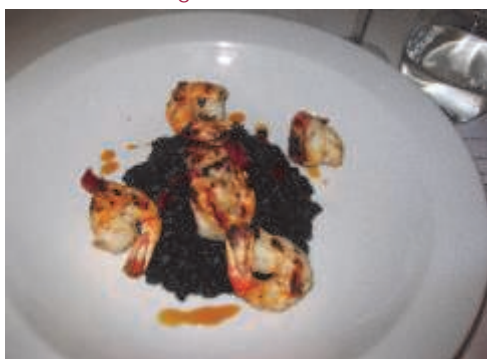
*Valerie Hall*





# around the branches - Leicester

## The Lighthouse Dishes



## Spring and Summer Events

In April John and Eileen Nisbet arranged for us to have lunch at the Lighthouse, the new name for Firenze, a well thought of restaurant in Kibworth Beauchamp. The Lighthouse has the same owners – Sarah is still front of house and her husband Lino Pol, the Italian chef. The décor has changed slightly with pictures of Seagulls instead of views of Florence and they plan to put more emphasis on sea food. The Lighthouse does not now open at lunchtime whereas Firenze did and the Nisbets arranged for it to open specially for us.

We were welcomed with a glass of Picpoul, which I very much enjoyed, it was a change from the ubiquitous Prosecco. Instead of a starter we had a selection of nibbles served in little bowls. We charged portions of melba toast, which tended to break off in the bowls, with hummus, chicken liver paté and taramasalata. Whitebait, smoked salmon on rye bread and tomato bruschetta completed the spread. It was a good way to circulate and see everyone before sitting down.

For the main course we chose between Tiger Prawns with squid ink spelt risotto, fillet of Sea Bass or Saddle of Lamb with spinach and garlic. The lamb was stuffed with a mousse of chicken and cooked sous vide – superb. Excellent vegetables were fennel, broccoli, carrots and new potatoes.

For pudding we were presented with a selection including panna cotta, black forest gâteau and semifreddo on one plate. The cheese selection with walnut bread may have been the better option.

We drank Muscadet and Sangiovese and paid £42.50.

Tony Willis organized a dinner at The Joiners, Bruntingthorpe, Leicestershire in May. The Joiners is a delightful village gastropub awarded a Michelin Bib Gourmand in 2012. The aperitif was a sparkling Pinot Grigio Rosé, Vetriano. For the starter we chose between Melon, Elderberry jelly and a Champagne sorbet or Scallops with Clonakilty Black Pudding and Garlic Mash. For mains we had Monk Fish wrapped in Parma Ham or Braised Lamb Shank with Spring Onion Champ and glazed carrots. Puds were the house specialty - delicious Raspberry Soufflé or Apple Tart Tatin. We ended the meal with coffee or tea and excellent petit fours and paid £49.

We drank Colombard – Ugni Blanc and Château Moulin de Mallet 2010.

My husband Geoffrey and I hosted a Summer Supper at home at the end of June. We wanted to try some more expensive wines with a cold buffet of turkey, roast sirloin and roast gammon with various salads and warm Jersey Royal potatoes. Lucy Cufflin, a local caterer, provided the canapés. We enjoyed smoked salmon and cream cheese roulades, prawn and horseradish in pastry baskets, charcuterie on pumpernickel and devils on horseback [bacon and prunes]. I ordered too many of these but the Champagne - Grande Reserve Cuvee Brut from Satchells of Burnham Market at £19.99 was much appreciated on a warm sunny evening.

John Hind introduced the wines. We enjoyed a white Burgundy – Bourgogne les Setilles Olivier Leflaive 2010 from Corney and Barrow at £14.25 and a Bordeaux, Château la Tour de By - Medoc 2005 – Cru Bourgeois Superieur from Tanners which complemented the beef and the Stilton, Cambozola and Vignotte cheeses sourced from Waitrose. Strawberries were at their best and went well with cream and meringues. We sampled a sweet wine – Muscat de Beaumes de Venise 2009, Domaines des Bernadins also from Satchells at £17 but I was not very impressed It didn't taste of Muscat to me and was rather dry on the tongue.

**I was very surprised to find that the food cost £18 more than the wines. Members don't**

drink so much as in times gone by and three kilos of Sirloin cost £28. In spite of this 23 members enjoyed a very happy evening and after paying £25 a head we made a slight profit for the club finances.

*Mary Jewell*

## Manchester Branch 80th Anniversary Celebration Dinner

**Thursday 31st October 2013.**

**At The Alderley Edge Hotel, Macclesfield Road, Alderley Edge, Cheshire, SK9 7BJ**

**Tel: 01625 583 033 [www.alderleyedgehotel.com](http://www.alderleyedgehotel.com)**

Meal and all Wines: £60-00 - IW&FS members. £65-00 - Guests.

Meal and Aperitif only: £55-00 – IW&FS members. £60-00 - Guests.

We look forward to welcoming and celebrating this occasion with our fellow members.

For further details please contact our Hon. Sec. Valerie Hall

3, The Nook, Manchester Road, Greenfield, Oldham, OL3 5EG Tel: 01457 876 734 Email: [ednavalerie.hall@mypostoffice.co.uk](mailto:ednavalerie.hall@mypostoffice.co.uk)

The Hotel is offering special Bed and Breakfast rates for those who wish to stay. Please contact the Hotel to make a booking.

## around the branches - Berkshire



### Sicilian Wine & Food

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



There is no doubt that the Berkshire Branch fully subscribes to this André Simon ideal and the Members meeting in May which explored Sicilian produce in both categories delivered above and beyond expectations.

The excellent wines were presented by our member Chris Gutch, after a recent visit to the island, with help from John Farren and good support from Azienda Agricola COS based in Vittoria, Ragusa, Sicily. The matching food was selected & prepared by our own Charlotte Turner who served us a menu worthy of an Etoile Michelin - or maybe two!

**COS was founded by three University friends by buying one of the family's old vineyards and they harvested their first grapes in 1980. They are mainly bio-dynamic but without embracing the fringe aspects of that "religion". They are also unusual in using 400 litre clay Amphorae, called Pithos, imported from Spain, for both fermentation and ageing. About 20% of their wine is made in this way. Otherwise they use 9500 litre thermostatically controlled glazed concrete tanks for fermentation and either concrete or oak Foudres for ageing.**

This event was an appropriate occasion to taste some of the food whilst sampling the wines and Charlotte delivered bread with olive oil/balsamic vinegar and olives on the table with a fava bean shot – warm liquidised young broad bean soup, Arancini – bolognese rice balls, Trepanese pasta and Octopus carpaccio. A medley of delicious flavours and textures which worked very well with the wines.

Of course wines from Sicily mean, in the main, local grape varieties or local names and this tasting was no exception. The aperitif was made by Murgo from Nerello Mascalese. This is like making champagne from Pinot Noir and consequently has a slight pinkish tinge. There was some residual sugar but it had a distinctive and satisfying flavour. We then tasted two COS whites together made from Grecanico (identical to Garganega) and with 50% Inzolia in the first (COS Rami). Soft and understated, the Pithos Bianco with saline notes would be good with raw fish.



**COS make red wines from Frappato and Nero d'Avola, both single ce-pages and blends. Their midrange COS Nero di Lupo 2009 (Nero d'Avola) was absolutely excellent. Towards the top of their range COS Contrada (Nero d'Avola) was rich, with an almost Amarone-like concentration and price to match! They are also starting to make wines with International varieties and their COS Maldafrica 2009 using Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Frappato, was fresh with good length and full flavours.**

The main course was delicious roast mutton with oven roasted **Mediterranean vegetables and the evening's delights were completed** with pistachio tarte, cannoli, mandorle parfait and amaretto strawberries. Members had the opportunity to re-taste some of the evening's wines with these two courses.

Thanks to our Members Charlotte Turner and Chris Gutch for ensuring that the evening matched André Simon's Vision and for making it such a memorable occasion.



## around the branches - Surrey Hills

### Sizzling Summer!

Well we didn't expect it but it happened and Surrey Hills had their Garden Party in Helen's garden under parasols chasing the shade. We had smoked duck appetisers with Cranberry Sauce followed by Smoked Salmon with Dill sauce, Pam Brunning's delicious home cured cooked ham with mayonnaise and a selection of Helen's salads. The Cheeses were followed by Helen's Meringue Gelato Ice Cream with raspberries and chocolate sauce, (Nigellisma) and Susie Punch's poached peaches a la Raymond Blanc.

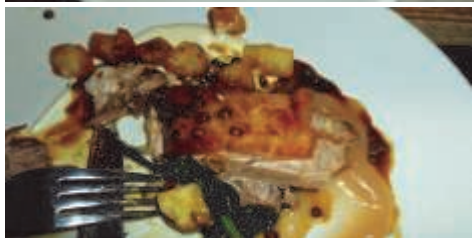
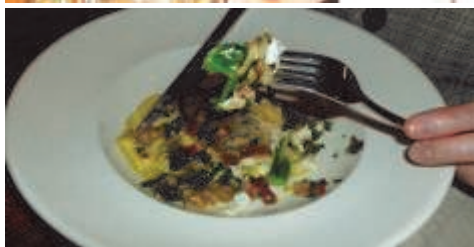
We started with a glass of Prosecco and throughout the meal we drank Trentino Pinot Grigio 2012 and Campo Viejo Rioja Tempranillo 2011, finishing with Helen's 1996 Morello Cherry Brandy.

*Helen Mills Chairman*





## around the branches - Herefordshire & Monmouthshire



### The Felin Fach Griffin

This fellowship of foodies made the journey to The Felin Fach Griffin in May, where long-time members John and Sheilah Lovatt had invited us to sample the delights of their 'local'.

Would that we were all so lucky with our 'local'..... The Felin Fach, near Hay-on-Wye, between the Black Mountains and the Brecon Beacons, must have been one of the first new-wave gastro-pubs in Wales when it opened some 12 years ago. Now described as 'A Dining Pub with rooms' it was Pub of the Year in 2012 and has an enviable reputation as part of the boutique EatDrinkSleep chain.

Not that any of our 22-strong gathering elected to indulge in the Sleep experience – although with some members of the Bath and Bristol Branch joining us for the occasion it could have been justified.

Instead we all relished the bespoke lunch menu on offer, accompanied by welcome drinks, selected by John, which went on to serve as table wines for the meal.

The Malbec Durou 2011 was described as 'supple, mellow, elegant and harmonious' – a description none of us quarrelled with. The Marsanne 2010 from Yves Cullern in the Rhone Valley was judged equally appropriate, especially by those who chose the Cornish hake fillet to follow. This was garnished with Mustard Pomme Puree, Cockles, Pancetta and Wild Garlic Butter. Definitely a yum yum experience.

A majority of diners chose the Confit Pork Belly with Apple, Cauliflower, Saute Potato and Mustard Lentils as main course, and any veggies enjoyed Potato Gnocchi with Butternut Squash, Mousserons, Wild Garlic and Parmesan. All imaginatively prepared and served (absolutely no irony here.....)

With substantial starters on offer, including a sturdy chicken and smoked bacon terrine, and oak roast salmon fishcake with ruby chard, only serious appetites could face pudding or cheese, but just for info and because the restaurant deserves to be noted, there was warm date sponge with treacle sauce and walnuts; rhubarb with clotted cream and Oat crumble; or Duckett's Caerphilly with Chutney, bread and biscuits.

Please remember that Wales is described as 'Scotland without the midges' – there are certainly no flies on the Felin Fach, who were the first restaurant in the country to have a certified organic kitchen garden. Worth moving to enjoy unique local like this!

*Judith Stares*

## around the branches - Devonshire

### Black Tie Dinner at Gorton's Restaurant, Tavistock

Peter Gorton was chef/patron at the Horn of Plenty, near the Devon/Cornwall border, between 2000 and 2010. In 2011 he opened his own restaurant in nearby Tavistock and on May 14 this was the venue for a Devonshire Branch black tie dinner.

Branch members braved a cold, wet and windy evening that ruled out serving the aperitif wines in the courtyard, one wall of which was formerly part of Tavistock Abbey and dates back to the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The pre-dinner drinks consisted of a blind tasting of one Old World and one New World Sauvignon Blanc. Most of the guests correctly guessed which was which and preferred the 2012 Dog Point from New Zealand to the more expensive 2010 Château de Tracy Pouilly-Fumé.

We started with a demitasse of asparagus soup with poached quails' eggs and herb oil, and this was followed by roasted wood pigeon with lightly-spiced aubergine, pea pancake and red wine sauce. Each course was accompanied by a different wine. Kumeu River Estate Chardonnay, 2010 from near Auckland, New Zealand, was served with the asparagus soup, while with the wood pigeon we drank 2009 Schug Pinot Noir from Carneros, California.

Smoked salmon terrine with sautéed scallops and sauce vierge was accompanied by a 2010 Hugel Pinot Gris "Jubilee", and this was followed by loin of wild hart venison, with potato knish, a tangle of greens and port sauce, served with 2010 Wirra Wirra Church Block Cabernet-Shiraz-Merlot from Australia's McLaren Vale.

There followed a "pudding wine pause", in deference to the dictum of former chairman Michael Broadbent MW that "pudding wines don't go with puddings." The wine in question was a 2011 Tamar Ridge Botrytis Riesling from Tasmania. A splendid assiette of desserts followed: warm chocolate tart, rhubarb parfait and ginger sponge pudding. The meal was rounded off with Henriques & Henriques 10-year-old Malmsey Madeira.

Branch Treasurer Phil Redhead commented that, "the food was exemplary." The guest of honour was Council member Michael Messent, who used part of his speech to publicize the events in London to commemorate the Society's 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in November.

*Philip Clark*



**Devonshire Branch Chairman John Slater (left) with Council**



Peter Gorton



Roasted wood pigeon



Assiette of desserts

# around the branches - Northern Dales



## Northern Dales entertained by Chef James Burton

On a glorious summer's evening in beautiful Northumberland sixteen members of the Northern Dales branch enjoyed an excellent dinner prepared especially for us by James Burton, who was one of the 2012 Master chef: the Professionals, finalists. James has worked in a number of London restaurants and is now back in his native Northumberland, running Vallum Cooking in Hexham. He is passionate about using local, seasonal produce and is now also a director of Hexham Farmers Market which he believes should only be selling what can be made locally, and in season. He grows most of his own produce and many of the leaves, vegetables and herbs we ate came from his own garden, or from his grandmother's farm.

Glen and Ros Wilson hosted the event at their lovely home and we enjoyed our aperitif in the garden accompanied by James's fascinating canapés - brawn with soused veg, quail eggs with mushroom & dandelion salt, crispy pig's ears with nasturtium tartare, and wild garlic and bone marrow croquettes with rhubarb ketchup. My personal favourite was the quail egg, but I was told by those that had the crispy pig's ears (which I somehow missed!) that they were delicious. The Trilogy Cuvée Rosé NV, one of Jacob Creek's premium sparkling wines, was perfect for a warm summer's evening. Its aromatic nose and fresh, lively palate complemented the canapés beautifully.

Our first course was Fresh curds, baby beetroot and chard leaves, served on a slate tile, and with this we drank Waimea Estate Sauvignon Blanc 2012 from Nelson, west of Marlborough. This wine had an intensely fruity nose and was quite lovely - full bodied and elegant and an ideal complement to the food. We learnt from James that there were two curds in this course, one left in the whey and one drained, and the baby beetroot was slightly pickled. The result was delicate, interesting, and a great combination of textures and flavours.

The main course was Roe haunch, roast onion, pearl barley and kale, with a red wine sauce and caramelised shallots. James had shot, skinned and butchered the deer himself. The venison was served pink and was some of the best I have ever tasted - very tender, full of flavour and absolutely delicious. The caramelised shallots in particular were a lovely accompaniment. The main course wine was a Côtes-du-Rhône Saint-Esprit 2011 from Delas-Frères and had hints of spice and pepper on both the nose and the palate. The Grenache and Syrah grapes combined to provide a good strong wine which held up well against the venison. I'm old fashioned – I like my red wines with a little more age – and, though I think this was a very nice wine for drinking now, I think a few more years would add to its depth and character.

And so to the dessert – Set verbena cream with hazelnut cake and strawberries. This was very refreshing, smooth and delicate and was served with Brown Brothers Orange Muscat & Flora 2012 - deliciously sweet and fruity and it has long been one of my favourite dessert wines. And, to complete the evening, we had some of Ros's delicious home made chocolates with coffee.

James was helped throughout the evening by a friend/colleague, Catherine Barraclough, who is herself a chef with a particular interest in baking. So we can all feel an event focussed on baking coming on!

James talked about his Masterchef experience which he had thoroughly enjoyed. He told us how different the pressures of the final round of the competition, in particular, are to the real world of a professional kitchen, where each chef would have his own role rather than being expected to do everything, including plating up. He answered questions at the end of the evening, one of which was how long he had hung the roe deer. The answer surprised us as it was only a few days due to the current rules on meat storage and chilling which he believes detrimentally affect the tenderness and flavour. Whatever he'd done – it worked.

We all agreed it had been a fascinating, educational and hugely enjoyable evening. Our President, Wendy, thanked everyone involved for creating such a super event, and we all came away feeling we'd learnt something, and also with great admiration for a very talented and passionate young chef.

*Katie Wilkins  
Northern Dales*



## around the branches - London



### The Finest Sweet Wines of The Loire Back to 1945

Jeffery Benson was the organiser of this most interesting tasting on 2<sup>nd</sup> July, with all the wines except the first coming from his cellar. Turkey, cheeses and salad were provided. Some people arrived late, not noticing that this event was at the Hilton Doubletree Southampton Row, instead of at the usual Hilton Doubletree Victoria.

The wines were all 100% Chenin Blanc. In the Vouvray and Layon areas, the sweetness enhanced by noble rot (*Botrytis cinerea* fungus) is usually balanced by high acidity, giving very long-lived wines from great years. We tasted wines from 1996 back to 1945, mainly from excellent years. Huet and Bredif are amongst the best makers of Vouvray, where the wines can be sparkling, dry, demi-sec or sweet (moelleux).

Moulin Touchais, owned by the Touchais family since 1870, with the estate dating back to 1787, is on the Côteau du Layon, with 35 ha under vine. They are also ne-goçiants. Some years they get botrytis, sometimes not, and the sweet wines typically have about 80 g/l residual sugar. The high acidity is ensured by picking 20% of the crop early, about 80 days after flowering, and the high sugar by late-harvesting the other 80%. Unusually, they have about a million bottles stored in their cellars, with sweet wines back to the 1800s.

**The wines were: 1996 Vouvray 'Les Haut' Moelleux, Domaine Huet (provided by André Nogueira); 1985 Vouvray Moelleux, Domaine Marc Bredif; 1989 Vouvray 'Clos du Bourg' Moelleux, Domaine Huet, then Moulin Touchais 1986, 1985, 1983, 1961, 1959 and 1945 'Grande Année'. The only disappointment was the much anticipated 1945, which was pale gold, with a good bouquet but a poor flavour, with all sweetness gone and just acidity remaining. Jeffrey said that because of the vintage, a bottle would fetch about £600 at auction. The cork was satisfactory, as was the ullage, but the wine seemed long past its best.**

Of the Vouvrais, the 1996 was rich, medium bodied, with a huge backbone of acidity; it was already very good and would improve, lasting 30 or more years. It had the baked apples bouquet which can be typical of Chenin Blanc. The 1985 did not have much botrytis, and was overshadowed by the brilliant 1989, when botrytis was rampant. The 1989 was deep gold with a rich botrytis/barley sugar/caramel nose, a luscious sweetness, and was very much liked by all.

The Moulin Touchais wines, apart from the 1945, were all excellent, with the 1961 a bit lighter and less attractive than the others, from not such a good year, and now a bit past its best. 1986, 1985, 1983 and 1959 were all very good hot years, giving lots of sugar and body. Those wines were all extremely fine and enjoyable, gold coloured, with bouquets of honey, noble rot, barley sugar and sometimes marmalade. They all had great length, big bodies and delicious flavours. For me, the 1985 and 1959 were marginally the best of these four excellent wines. It was the 1959 which first attracted a lot of public attention when released at about £5 a bottle, and now fetches about more than £100 a bottle. It had no signs of drying out, being lively, sweet but not cloying, with a **superb length, balance, bouquet and flavour. It is one of the world's truly great wines.** This was a superb tasting, thank you, Jeffrey.

*Bernard Lamb*

### Sake evening at Abeno

We had a very interesting introduction to Sake from Mr Hiroyuki Ito & Mr Masafumi Ando from the London office of Takara Shuzo Limited, a Kyoto-based brewer established in 1925. They told us about how Sake is made, and the different forms of rice and qualities that can be found, including a sparkling one!

After the tasting and talk, we had a menu designed especially for us by the executive chef, Elize Nakatani-Brown, served with both Sake and wine. All agreed it was a very successful event

*Andrew Brodie*



# Rhubarb

## An EAC Luxury 'Best of British' Break in Yorkshire

*to coincide with the  
Wakefield Rhubarb Festival  
Tuesday 18th - Friday 21st February 2014*



**Rudding Park Hotel**

We will be staying at the luxurious Rudding Park Hotel, recently voted the best hotel in the UK. It is located in extensive grounds just outside Harrogate, and includes two golf courses, as well as a spa, gym and the award-winning Clocktower restaurant. Our rooms will be available from 2.00pm on Tuesday 18th February, leaving us free to enjoy the facilities of the Hotel until 6.30pm, when we will meet for a reception and gala dinner.

The next morning, after a superb breakfast at the Hotel, we will leave for Oldroyd's forced rhubarb sheds (one of Rick Stein's Food Hero food producers), for a private tour. Janet Oldroyd-Hulme, the High Priestess of Rhubarb will take us back to 2700BC and trace rhubarb's interesting history through to the present day. We will enter the Secret World of the Rhubarb Triangle, view a crop growing in the dark sheds, and discuss present day growing techniques. Then we return to Harrogate for a short amount of free time before making our way to Betty's world-renowned tea shop for a relaxed private afternoon tea.

Some of us might not be all that hungry after tea at Betty's, so we have not arranged a formal dinner that evening. Instead you will be free to dine in the Hotel restaurant at your convenience, with the option of either three courses from the resident's menu, or two courses from the à la carte. Drinks will be at your own expense.





After breakfast on Thursday morning we will take a pleasant drive across the North York Moors for a tour of the renowned Shepherd's Purse Creamery near Thirsk, followed by a tutored cheese tasting at the nearby Star Inn at Harome. This will be led by Judy Bell, the founder of Shepherd's Purse. The cheeses will be paired with local Ampleforth ciders and liquers, and accompanied by a light lunch. (A glass of wine will be available as an alternative for those who do not like cider).

In the afternoon we will pay a visit to Ampleforth itself, where there will be an opportunity to learn about beer and ciders brewed in the monastic tradition, tour the Abbey independently, or just to relax in the café if you prefer. Then we return to the Star Inn for dinner. This is ranked among the best restaurants in the North of England, and has recently been featured on the BBC's 'Best of British' TV series. Chef Andrew Pern will have prepared a special menu for us, featuring seasonal local produce, which will be accompanied by a tasting of matched wines, chosen and presented by the well-known local wine merchant Andrew Firth.

The event will end formally on Friday morning after breakfast at Rudding Park, and we will be asked to vacate our rooms by 11.00am. However, you may like to consider visiting some of the Rhubarb Festival events in Wakefield on the way home. You will be able to find details later in the year via [www.experiencewakefield.co.uk](http://www.experiencewakefield.co.uk).

We have been advised that the accessibility of the various venues is quite variable. Oldroyds report that the tour itself is accessible but unfortunately their toilets are not. The private room, where we will take tea, at Bettys is on the first floor (15 steps) and there is no lift. Due to the age of the building it proved impossible to install one during their recent revamp. Other venues do not report any access issues.

The price per person for the whole event, including local coach transport, meals and wine as described above, and three nights accommodation at Rudding Park, will be £635 per person for double occupancy or £790 for single. Expressions of interest will be welcome immediately to help us gauge the level of support: please email [johnsnicholas@aol.com](mailto:johnsnicholas@aol.com).



Formal Registration should be sent to John Nicholas as soon as possible after 1st September, and preferably by the end of September, accompanied by a deposit of £320 per head for dual occupancy, and £395 per head for a single occupancy room. The balance of £315 and £395 respectively must be paid by 1st December, or the booking may be cancelled. We regret that, owing to the terms imposed by the various providers, refunds will not generally be possible after 12th October.

#### **To Register --**

Please email the EAC Treasurer John Nicholas at [johnsnicholas@aol.com](mailto:johnsnicholas@aol.com) stating:

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

**The full names of others in your party.**

We would prefer payment by electronic transfer in GBP

**Bank: NatWest Branch - Norwich City Office**

**Sort Code: 60-15-31**

**Account Number: 68005652**

**Account Name: IWFS-EAC**

**IBAN: GB 33 NWBK 6015 3168 0056 52 BIC: NWBK GB2**

**Please include the reference: EAC Yorkshire Feb 2014 and ensure that your name will be attached to the payment.**

If you wish to pay by credit card please contact John by email or telephone: **(00) 41 79 753 68 81.**

**Payments by credit card will incur a 3% surcharge.**

If you prefer to register by post, or, having registered by email wish to pay by cheque, please send the information above and 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

#### **Cancellation Policy:**

Members may cancel and receive a full refund until 12th October. After that no refunds will be possible unless the places are resold. You are advised to have full insurance to cover cancellation.





# **Rhubarb**

An EAC Luxury 'Best of British'  
Break in Yorkshire

*to coincide with the*

*Wakefield Rhubarb Festival*

*Tuesday 18th - Friday 21st February 2014*

## **Yorkshire in February**

might seem to be an unlikely choice, but this event is going to be something really special, arranged as it is to coincide with Wakefield's annual forced rhubarb celebration, and featuring seasonal local foods.

## **'Yorkshire Forced Rhubarb'**

is internationally renowned, and ranked alongside Champagne and Parma Ham as one of Europe's Protected Foods.

But don't think that this break is all about rhubarb;  
there is plenty more.

See pages 38 & 39 for details.