



Food & Wine

MAGAZINE FOR MEMBERS OF THE
INTERNATIONAL WINE & FOOD SOCIETY EUROPE AFRICA

Issue 131

February 2018

**MADEIRA PARTY IN
BALTIMORE**

**LE BEAUJOLAIS
NOUVEAU EST ARRIVÉ**

THE GREAT FIRE OF 2017

**TAILLEVENT: PARIS
VERSUS LONDON**

*Celebrating
85 Years*



**1933
2018**

Chairman's message



We enter 2018, our 85th Anniversary Year, in good shape and with a full programme ahead of us. The London Festival Team, now comprising more than 20 members from many Branches, are working tirelessly to finish the details of that event, and we must thank them for the time and effort they are putting in on behalf of the Zone. There are still one or two places left on the festival, and at individual

dinners, so you have not missed the boat, watch out for announcements and on the website.

You will recall at the last ABRM and AGM in September 2017 we agreed to replace the ABRM with a nominations committee and a Members Forum open to all members. This would allow the Members Forum and AGM to take place on the same occasion with an open discussion, together with a social event, and save members and committee the time and expense that would be incurred if they were separate.

Bristol & Bath and Hereford & Monmouth Branches offered to put the first of these events together and it will be held in Bristol on 23rd to 24th September. Please reserve the dates in your diary. We aim to move these around, so that over time, many branches can participate. We must remember we are Europe Africa Zone and we are pleased that Valencia Branch are looking to organise the event in 2019.

News on our EAZ Executive Committee is that we welcomed Peter Diamond to his first committee meeting in January taking

our numbers up to eleven. Also, Tricia Fletcher and David Chapman have swapped roles. Tricia is now Awards Officer, so send your awards nominations to her, and David is now Company (IWFS EA Ltd) and Committee (ExCo) Secretary. Several members are due to step down at the end of this year so if you are willing to take a turn on committee please talk to any of our committee members. Remember you are always welcome to come and observe what happens at our quarterly meetings, the next one being in Birmingham on Thursday 12th April.

My diary is filling up fast, after two months organising and running our usual, and very busy, CAMRA Beer Festivals in the North West, Chris and I head out to see our family and grandchildren in Sydney prior to joining the APZ Perth Festival and Council Meeting. We are then leading the Irish Delights pre-tour in May followed by the London Festival. We are always pleased to get invites to join branch events, and diary permitting will endeavour to meet up with you. Please let us, and other members know what you are planning, particularly for the 85th Anniversary Celebrations.

Ian Nicol

Chair, EAZ and International Council of Management

Cover photo: *The Reichenbach Falls* (photo by Angela Britland, Merseyside and Mid-Cheshire branch member, see page 33).

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 6,000 in 139 branches worldwide.

The Society, which is an independent non-profit making organisation run by volunteers, is divided into three areas – the Europe Africa Zone, the Asia Pacific Zone, and the Americas.

In André's words,

"The purpose of the Society is to bring together and serve all who believe that a right understanding of good food and wine is an essential part of personal contentment and

health and that an intelligent approach to the pleasures and problems of the table offers far greater rewards than mere satisfaction of appetites."



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

New members are always welcome, please see page 3 for details. Please also visit our website www.iwfs.org or for information about the Society in brief visit our Wikipedia page <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>



Editorial

In the Autumn I attended the Boulestin Restaurant event in London which reminded me how good food can be in the hands of a top brigade and how much nicer it is to be savouring it in the company of others who appreciate it equally. This meal was organised by Peter Diamond who tasked the Chef into deciding what he wanted to cook for us, thereby allowing him extra versatility outside of the constraints of the menu structure, and providing added value to us as members.

My second foray was to the Jeffrey Benson/Bernard Lamb jointly organised competition between Australian and French wines (see write-up). The tasting had us using our eyes, nose, palate and memory, and trying to make sense of the incoming sensory information and subsequently marrying that with the verbal feedback: exactly what a good tasting should encourage, and great fun.

Our members have sent in write-ups of in-depth tastings (Beaujolais, Madeira), with extensive background information on the wines – not only are they very informative, but they also highlight the breadth of expertise and experience that we can call on within the IWFS. We need to make sure that we attract the next generations and develop their passion “for the harmony of solids and liquids” (as per André Simon’s vision) to that matching or outstripping ours! Comparative tasting of English heritage apple juices anyone?

Branch events range from Tudor re-creations (minus the sawdust and manners) to vertical tastings of Haut Brion, via Indian herbs and spices and even a tour to Switzerland for its chocolate and fondues...

Events are not the only thing that has been happening. Behind the scenes members have been organising medals to recognise amazing contributions to the Society and to recognise excellence in restaurants. And others are working tirelessly to organise international festivals or weekend events. Stephanie Shepherds shares her recollections of the Baltic Festival (Letters to the Editor); mine revolve around a post-midnight team in the corridor of a Piccadilly hotel for the 60th anniversary festival trying to finalise table and name badges, when a late night reveller asked me to fix his cravate! All in the pursuit of food and wine...

Nathalie Rosin

Food & Wine

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PUBLICATION DATES

- **April: Food & Wine Online (e-newsletter)**
deadline 31st March; publication mid-April
- **June: Food & Wine**
deadline for copy from contributors 15th May; publication to members 30th June
- **August: Food & Wine Online (e-newsletter)**
deadline for copy from contributors 31st July; publication mid/end August (dependent on summer holidays)
- **October: Food & Wine**
deadline for copy from contributors 15th September; publication to members 31st October

Contributors

Madeira Party in Baltimore

Mannie Berk is founder and president of The Rare Wine Co., one of America's most respected wine merchants based in Brisbane, California. In 2002, he was named Food & Wine's Best Wine Importer. He is a three-time James Beard Award semi-finalist and two-time Wine Advocate Wine Personality of the Year. Mannie is the US or California representative for some of Europe's greatest wine producers, while specialising in past vintages of all the world's greatest wines. Among the estates he represents are (Piemonte) Giacomo Conterno, Bartolo Mascarello, G.B. Burlotto and Giuseppe Mascarello; (Champagne) Jacques Selosse and Philipponnat; (Loire) Domaine Huet; (Rhône) René Rostaing; (Spain) Pingus, Alvaro Palacios and Valdespino Sherry; and (Madeira) Vinhos Barbeito and Pereira D'Oliveira.



Over the past 27 years, he has made The Rare Wine Co. America's finest source for Madeira, and he is personally considered a leading authority on that wine and its rich history.

Andrew Jones is a lawyer by profession and has been a member of the Society for over thirty years. He was one of the original members of the Cayman Islands branch, of which he



was chairman for many years, and has also been a member of New York Branch since 2006. He has served as a director of IWFS Americas (and its predecessor) since 2005 and is currently one of its representatives on the Society's International Council. Andrew started buying vintage Madeira at Christie's in the early 1980s, at a time when

Michael Broadbent was able to source great old wines in quantities which now seem unimaginable. Having built up a substantial collection over the years, he is able to put on tastings for members of the Society.

Beaujolais Nouveau

Ron Barker is currently Chairman of the IWFS Wines Committee. He has been a member of Blackpool & Fylde Coast Branch for 17 years and has been Branch Chairman since 2016. He has served as Chairman of the EAZ, and a member of the International Council of Management. Prior to that, he edited this magazine. Before his involvement with IW&FS he organised and led wine tours around the world, visiting 16 different wine producing countries. He was also a wine judge working with the International Wine Challenge for 13 years and various lifestyle magazines. Outside wine and food, he served as a Magistrate in the Duchy of Lancashire for 35 years and was involved with the management of the Probation Service. In that way he can be said to be a judge of wine and men!



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The Great Fire of 2017



Veedercrest Estates was originally set up by an investment group in the early 1970s, with **Ron Fenolio** as co-principal and now sole owner. Veedercrest was one of the early pioneering wine estates and has garnered many international awards.

Since then it has evolved primarily into a Napa Cabernet Sauvignon winery specialising in single vineyard hillside properties. There are currently seven Cabernet Sauvignons in the line including Mt. Veeder, St. Helena/Glass Mountain, Oakville Bench, Rutherford Bench, and Napa Valley cuvées. Ron states that his passions include food, wine and travel, especially travel to Italy and the Mediterranean countries. He is a member of Marin County Branch in California.

Taillevent: Paris Versus London

Roger Austin joined the Leicester Branch in 1986 and has been a member and twice Chairman ever since. He first tasted Champagne in 1945 aged eleven, as part of the VE celebrations and, since 1961, has collected the labels of his wine bottles together with notes in nine books. He has enthusiastically



arranged Branch visits in England and France.

His particular interest is in the changes in the technology of wine making and the effect that he believes he can perceive in the products and hopes to continue this research for many years.

News from the International Secretariat



Dear EAZ members,

Many of you will now be aware that this is the year of the Society's 85th anniversary and will already be making plans as to how you can mark this occasion. Whether you were aware, or not, I just want to let you know that some help is at hand. Below are some details about the inaugural dinner of the Society along with the resources available to help you create and launch a memorable event.

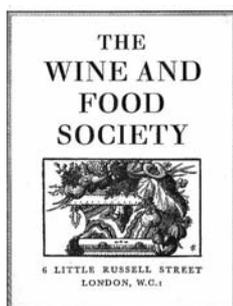
2018: The Society's 85th Anniversary

November 14th, 2018 is the day the Society celebrates its 85th anniversary and will be an opportunity for members around the world to organise a sparkling event – not only to celebrate the history but the now and the future. It is hoped that events will run around all corners of the globe – from Moscow to Manchester, Helsinki to Hong Kong, Valencia to Vancouver. This could also be an opportunity to invite potential new members to get a taste of this great Society and build for the future.

The history

The first meeting of the Society was a lunch, held in the grand surroundings of the Café Royal on Regent Street, in London on 14th November 1933. As recorded in Issue 1, Spring 1934 edition of Wine & Food: "The fare and wines on that occasion

had been selected to make known to the Members some of the most typical dishes of Alsace and some of the best Alsatian wines." André Simon chaired the event and after the loyal toast he welcomed members of the Society and their guests and then made an address. An extract from that speech is here, and remains, I think, the basis of what the Society stands for today:



"One of the aims of our Society is to overcome indifference to the flavour, variety and cooking of food, as well as the ignorance of the merits and charm of wine. Such ignorance and indifference are the cause of dull meals, and dull meals never did anyone any good. We stand for common sense in food and drink. We stand for greater pleasure, profit and economy in the choice of meals. We stand for better health, better tempers and better values through the better understanding and keener appreciation of food and wine, of flavour and vintages, of the harmony of solids and liquids.

We have nothing to sell. We do not compete with anybody. We do not interfere with any of the people who produce, import, handle and supply good food and good wine. On the contrary, we are ready and anxious to help them all, and we hope to receive and to deserve their wholehearted support. We propose to hold luncheons, dinners and tastings for the sole purpose of creating a wider interest in food and wine among a greater number of people, not to show them how much better and cheaper meals can be, but merely, by adding the spice of novelty, to make it worth their while to attend such functions and meet fellow-members who share the same enthusiasm in the art of good living."

MENU

Le Hors d'Oeuvre Alsacien
La Perdrix aux Choux
Le Fromage de Munster
Le Gougloff de Colmar
Compote de Mirabelles

WINES

Dopff's Réserve Riesling 1929
Dopff's Gewürtztraminer 1929
Dopff's Grande Réserve Traminer 1928

The now

Inaugural dinner menu and recipes to assist you in replicating or creating your own celebratory menu are available for you to view/download on the website* (with thanks to the Americas team).





André Simon at a Chicago Branch dinner in the 1960s

85th anniversary logo – this has been created so you can promote your event. It is available in two designs – the “celebrating” design and the “no dates” design to help you reproduce small versions i.e. on dinner place cards; in two colours – IWFS burgundy or black; in various formats for printing either from your computer or in print. The logos are available for members, with branch admin access, on the website*.

Archives – these are now available via the website* for members to view and may again provide inspiration for themes for your events now and in the future. The archives include Society events, Branch events and also an extensive library of press cuttings.

The press cuttings cover the decade from 1935 to 1945 where the work and travels of André Simon clearly attracted the attention of the press around the world. Please do take a look when you have a free moment to gain an insight into the pioneering ground trod by André Simon and how in those early days he successfully established the Society as the leader in the intelligent and healthy understanding and appreciation of wine and food.

The future

Do let us have details about your event whether it replicates the dinner in 1933 or puts a modern twist to it, it will be great to

hear about it. Plus if you have other documents of historical interest for your branch, which you would like to be considered for addition to the archives, then please email me on sec@iwfs.org. We will aim to archive most of the 85th anniversary menus along with the first. They could be an inspiration for future events and maybe even the Society’s Centenary!!!

All the best for 2018 and I look forward to meeting many of you at the London International Festival in May.

Andrea Warren
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* To gain access to these documents sign in on the website as a member, click on the Europe Africa / Resources tab and finally click on the appropriate tab (please note only those with branch admin access will be able to view the logo tab).

A GIFT FOR THE BRANCHES

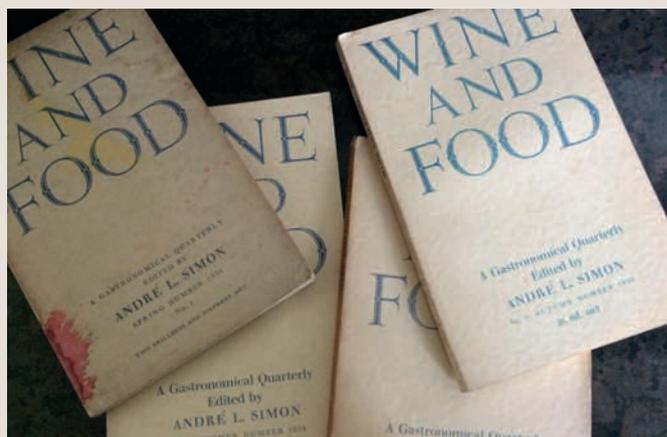
A supply of branded IWFS Drop Savers (three per branch) has recently been purchased to assist you in your events in 2018, with compliments of the International Council of Management (ICM). Many of you may already use them as they certainly do save drops spilling onto the table when pouring wine – but we feel you can never have enough! Plus



these Drop Savers have a unique design to stop the pourer slipping inside the bottle. Watch out for yours to arrive in the coming weeks – they will be posted to the branch contact, as listed on the website. The ICM trust you will find them useful.

HOME FOUND FOR EARLIEST EDITIONS OF WINE & FOOD

I am very pleased to say that copies of the early editions of Wine & Food (from issue 1 to June/July 1970) have been offered to the Society, so we now once again have a complete set of Wine & Food at the offices of the International Secretariat in London. The copies were kindly donated by Robert Arlott, son of the late John Arlott (English journalist, author, cricket commentator for the BBC’s Test Match Special, wine correspondent for The Guardian and author of several wine books). John Arlott was a longstanding member of the Society and as a wine connoisseur enjoyed his membership and meetings with André Simon. Robert Arlott said that his father treasured his collection of Wine & Food and therefore wanted them to go to a home where they could be stored safely in memory of his father and enjoyed by others.





LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Baltic Cruise: No Respite for the Organiser

As the organiser, your experience is always tempered by the need to keep an eye on the whole party, to make sure you don't leave anyone behind, to make sure that no one gets hurt. What do I remember of the Baltic Cruise last summer?...

The rocky path from boat to restaurant in Helsinki: will our guests make it intact – they did. The scowl on the face of the guide in St Petersburg when I apologised profusely to one of our hosts for being over an hour late for lunch – clearly she had no conception of how important lunch is to IWFS and I thought she'd been briefed! The conversation with a Tallinn member about the 'plastic' such as her drivers' licence, her medical records, her voter registration card and more. On my first visit to Tallinn for their Great Weekend I had been astonished to find myself standing by a lone lamp-post in a city park which bore a sign proclaiming 'Wi-fi hotspot'. This was long before such signs became common in London. They really are more 'connected' than we are.

The time taken to restore the Constantine Palace in St Petersburg now used by the city government: did the guide say six months or six years? We only saw part of it. It probably isn't finished. They clearly don't have to deal with English Heritage or anything like it. Equally clearly they are prepared to throw money at anything they consider important: an interesting comment on their politics. They didn't show us the communal flats with their shared kitchens and bathrooms housed in other historic palaces...

Of course I will also remember the art and the architecture. That very particular shade of blue which St Petersburg seems to have patented; the vast and splendid Tsarist palaces, the apotheosis of bling. I found the sheer size of the Hermitage off-putting but will be eternally grateful to Silversea for arranging an early morning tour before the vast complex opened to the main tourist invasion. It was quite startling to come down into the entrance hall and find a seething mass of people; the galleries

had seemed busy but clearly they were destined to become still busier before the day was out. The queue for the ladies redefined the concept: I will never complain about queues for the bathroom in theatres and concert halls again!

In Tallinn the walk through the old town was delightful, despite the crowds and then, just as you thought you'd done enough sightseeing, you mounted some slightly uneven steps, opened a door in an undistinguished wall, and found yourself, magically, in a garden with a large group of very hospitable IWFS members. Leib, the restaurant Tallinn Branch had chosen for lunch, is well worth a visit if you find yourself in the city. Similarly in Helsinki, the Art Deco Kulosaari Kasino has fabulous views over the gulf of Finland, and our traditional Finnish lunch more than lived up to the view, rounding off beautifully a morning spent on yet another boat watching the islands of the Helsinki archipelago slip past, admiring the houses and saunas clinging to the wooded slopes – only just clinging, it seemed in some cases. And Malmö Branch found us probably the best meal of the trip, at a charming restaurant just outside Copenhagen, wonderful food in a historic Danish Inn, such a pity there wasn't more time to explore the building and its location. Well, we'll just have to go back!

Stephanie Shepherd

General Data Protection Regulation

In May 2018 the GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION will come into force for organisations in the European Union that hold information on members and clients. Several provisions may affect the records the IWFS holds at the central headquarters and at branches. Further information and advice will be sent to branches before the implementation date. Advance information is available on line – search 'GDPR'.

Peter McGahey

JOAN CARTWRIGHT

Joan Cartwright (formerly Don) died recently. She was 96 years old and, until two years ago, an active member of the IWFS. She joined the IWFS in the early 1950s when she married her first husband. In her younger days, she was well known throughout the membership and travelled in Europe to many events and vineyards. She was chairman of the Mid-Cheshire Branch before it merged with the Merseyside Branch in the 1980s.

She was always beautifully dressed and a very lively and articulate companion. In the second World War she was an officer in the WRENS and worked with Naval Intelligence at Bletchley Park. Her personality and natural authority made her a most effective chairman of the branch and, when necessary, a force to be reckoned with. Those who knew her well are missing a delightful and valuable friend. Unfortunately many of her contemporaries have died. She was one of the few members left who knew André Simon personally.

Paul Bishop

CLIVE HIRSCHSOHN

It is with great sadness that I have learnt of the death of Clive Hirschsohn this morning (16th February), a member of IWFS for many, many years. John and I got to know Pam and Clive Hirschsohn through the society but I do recall a certain young lady in my class, Lindy Hirschsohn, telling me how much I'd have in common with her parents. My wine and foodie interest had obviously come out in class and she immediately pounced on this tit-bit of information to mention the society. Coincidentally we were, at the time, being introduced to the society and, before long, Pam and Clive took us under their wing and we became firm friends. We lost Pam in the '80s but the annual Pam Hirschsohn ladies lunch bears testament to how important the Hirschsohns were to the society. Clive remained a member after Pam's death and he and Tammy came to the occasional function before he retired from the society some years ago. Our thoughts and prayers are with their families.

Terri Grant
Cape Town Chair

MADEIRA PARTY IN BALTIMORE

by *Mannie Berk and Andrew Jones*

On a 1950 visit to Madeira, Sir Winston Churchill was honoured by the island's British community with a dinner party and, as a special tribute, his hosts opened a rare 1792 vintage Madeira. Madeira's longevity earns it a special place in the realm of wine. No other wine, when a century old, will stay in perfect condition for years in an opened bottle. No other wine can live for 200 years and still offer not only the pleasure of its antiquity, but also the enjoyment of drinking.

The island of Madeira was first settled by Europeans in 1419, and by 1455 a visitor from Venice wrote that Madeira's vineyards were the world's most beautiful. By the 1600s, it had become the most popular wine in Britain's North American colonies.

George Washington's inauguration was toasted with Madeira, as was the signing of the Declaration of Independence and U.S. Constitution. Wealthy families from Boston to New Orleans established extensive collections of Madeira wines. Sadly, Madeira declined in popularity after the Civil War and remained in obscurity until its remarkable comeback started about 15 years ago. While Madeira will never be widely popular – too little is made for that – it is once again becoming recognised as one of the great wines of the world.

How Madeira is made

Madeira is produced from grapes grown on terraces cut into the Island's steep mountainsides. Like Port, Madeira is a "fortified" wine to which brandy has been added but, unlike other fortified wines, Madeira is always subjected to warmth. Inexpensive Madeiras are heated in special vats called estufas but finer Madeiras are aged slowly by the canteiro method. Under canteiro, barrels of Madeira are left in the shippers' lodges to

age naturally, experiencing the wide temperature swings of the seasons.

The best Madeiras are never bottled for sale until they have spent at least seven years in barrel. This is needed to soften the wine's powerful acidity and to develop the aromatic complexity and concentration for which Madeira is famous.

If a Madeira less than 20-years-old is released with a vintage date on the label, it is called a Colheita. If there is no vintage on the label, then expect to see one of the following terms: 10-year-old, 15-year-old, reserve or special reserve.

Once a Madeira has spent at least twenty years in barrel, it qualifies to be sold as a Frasqueira. Until recently, these wines were called Vintage Madeiras, but that term is no longer permitted for new releases.

Only about ten percent of the island's vineyards are dedicated to the most famous grapes, the so-called noble varieties. For a wine to bear one of these grape names on the label, it must contain at least 85% of that variety.

The grape varieties

Madeira's total vineyard area is very small and is dominated by Tinta Negra, a high yielding black grape variety which produces big, loose bunches of thick-skinned berries that tend to taste herbaceous. According to official statistics, in 2010 there were 277 ha (684 acres) of Tinta Negra under cultivation (mainly in Câmara de Lobos in the south and in São Vicente in the north of the Island), responsible for 80-85% of the total wine production. Practically all of this wine is marketed as generic



Madeira but it can also produce great and long-lived wines. In 2016, it finally became possible to sell a Frasqueira Madeira made from Tinta Negra, allowing producers for the first time to release extremely old Tinta Negras from their libraries.

Vintage wine, which must be matured in cask for at least 20 years, is made from white grape varieties and is marketed under their varietal names: Sercial, Terrantez, Verdelho, Bastardo, Bual and Malvasia (named from the driest to the sweetest). The official statistics reflect that (in 2010) only about 3,200 hectolitres of wine, representing less than 10% of the Island's production, was made from these varieties and most of it was not destined to be marketed as vintage wine.

Sercial: this variety has always been relatively scarce. In 2010 there were just 20 ha under cultivation, mainly in the north of the Island at altitudes up to 2,500 feet above sea level. It is a low yielding variety which produces big bunches of medium-sized, thick skinned berries which ripen late and are prone to rot, but resistant to Oidium (a type of powdery mildew). Sercial has very high natural acidity which produces bone dry, intensely aromatic wine. The best Sercial used to come from the Quinta do Jardim da Serra but, like many of Madeira's greatest vineyards, it was dug up in 2003 and redeveloped as a hotel.

Verdelho: before the onslaught of the Phylloxera, Verdelho was the most widely planted variety in Madeira but it was largely replaced by Tinta Negra in the subsequent replanting. By 2010, there were 47 ha of Verdelho, mainly at low altitudes on the north side of the Island. It is a low yielding, early ripening variety. It has high acidity, but also higher sugar levels than Sercial and produces a medium-dry fortified wine. Verdelho is also used make unfortified wine, notably by Barbeito.

Boal (Malvasia Fina): this is a high quality white grape variety, widely grown in Portugal and Australia where it produces fruity perfumed elegant dry white wines. In Madeira, Malvasia Fina is known as Boal and is used to produce fortified wine which is generally sweeter than Verdelho. About 20 ha of Boal are grown in the relatively warmer south side of the Island, particularly around Campanario and Calheta.

Malvasia: this is a generic name given to a large number of distinct grape varieties. Historically, the very best sweet wine, such as the Cossart Gordon Malmsey 1920, was made from Malvasia Candida but it is difficult to grow and only about 4 ha exist in two vineyards on the south side of the Island called Jardim do Mar and the Fajã dos Padres. Most wine marketed as Malvasia or Malmsey is now made from a newly bred grape variety called Malvasia Branca de São Jorge which was introduced in the late 1970s and now occupies about 35 ha of vineyard. It produces high levels of both acidity and sugar and is ideal for making the sweetest styles of Madeira.

Terrantez: once widely planted, Terrantez produced some of Madeira's most famous wines but, because of its extremely low yield and high susceptibility to Oidium, it was largely replaced with Tinta Negra following the destruction caused by Phylloxera. By the 1920s it was commercially extinct. The 1960 vintage included in this tasting appears to have been only the second time that MWC (or any of its constituent companies) had made a vintage Terrantez in the 20th Century. By 2010,



there were four plots of Terrantez on the Island, comprising just 2 ha in total. High levels of both acidity and sugar produce semi-sweet highly aromatic wines.

The shippers

At the end of the nineteenth century there were over 150 wine producers on the island of Madeira, many of whom owned their own vineyards. Today, there are just eight firms left, of which only six are described as 'shippers', meaning that they export wine. These are Justino's Madeira Wines SA, Pereira D'Oliveira (Vinhos) Lda, Vinhos Barbeito (Madeira) Lda, H.M Borges, Sucrs, Lda, Henriques & Henriques-Vinhos S.A. and Madeira Wine Company, S.A. Of these only Henriques & Henriques currently produces wine from its own vineyards. The other firms depend almost entirely upon buying in grapes from a total of about 1,500 independent growers, most of whom cultivate tiny terraced vineyards as a part-time occupation.

Justino's Madeira Wines SA: Until 2008, the firm was known as Vinhos Justino Henriques, Filhos, Lda and its old stenciled bottles bear the initials VJH. The firm was originally established in 1870 and operated as a small and somewhat unsuccessful family business, but the modern firm really dates back to 1994 when it became a subsidiary of La Martiniquaise Group, the second largest spirits group in France. Most of its production is made from Tinta Negra and sold as undated three, five or 10 year old wines or as Colheitas, meaning dated wine having a minimum of five years in cask. A collection of vintage wines (dated from 1933 to 1988) is currently being marketed under the Justino's brand name, although it represents a very small part of the firm's business.

Pereira D'Oliveira (Vinhos) Lda: This is a small family owned business which was established in 1850 and is now run by Luis D'Oliveira and his nephew, Filipe, fifth and sixth generations of the family. The firm has operated from an attractive and atmospheric lodge in the centre of Funchal since 1911 and recently took over the business of its neighbour, Artur de Barros e Sousa. The firm sold all its vineyards in São Martinho for housing development in the 1990s and now buys in all its grapes from around 100 independent growers. About three quarters of these grapes are Tinta Negra used for the production of 'old wines', including their three, five and 10 year old ranges, all of which have undergone estufagem. D'Oliveira's greatest strength is its unique stock of old vintage wine which exists, in part, because the current owners' late father refused to



enter the export market which limited his ability to sell the stock for nearly 40 years. Today, D'Oliveira is still selling the Verdelho 1850, Sercial 1875, Malvasia 1875, Moscatel 1900, Boal 1903 and Sercial 1937.

Vinhos Barbeito (Madeira) Lda: The firm was established in 1948 by the late Mario Barbeito. In 1991, his family decided to sell a 50% interest to Kinishita International Company Ltd, a large family owned wine and spirits distributor based in Japan, which had been handling Barbeito's Japanese exports since the 1960s. Barbeito's general manager and wine maker is Ricardo de Freitas, the founder's grandson. He is a passionate winemaker who has made an important contribution to the industry in many ways.

Ricardo was responsible for introducing a stainless steel estufa with a digitally-controlled heating jacket. He also introduced to Madeira the use of robotic stainless steel lagares (developed by the Symingtons for the production of Port in the Douro) for pressing and fermenting the black Tinta Negra grapes in a way which simulates manual foot treading. Barbeito does not own any vineyards and buys in grapes from up to 140 independent growers, including one farmer who, in 2004, was persuaded by Ricardo to plant an acre of Bastardo, the black grape variety

which had been commercially extinct for the previous 40 years. Ricardo says that he will market a single cask (800 half-litre bottles) blended from the 2007, 2009 and 2010 vintages, either this year or next year.

H.M Borges, Sucrs., Lda: This is a small business which has been owned by the Gonçalves family since 1932, although the firm itself traces its origins back to a business established in 1877 by Henrique Menezes Borges. The firm does not own any vineyards and buys in grapes from around 100 independent growers. Its entire operation is run from a prominent building half way up the Rue 31 de Janeiro in Funchal. About half of the firm's business used to comprise the export of wine in bulk, but bulk sales were banned in 2002. Today, 80% of its production is made from Tinta Negra, most of which is sold as three year old wine but its range includes five, 10 and 15 year old wines. It also produces some dated Colheita wines including one sold under the Tinta Negra varietal name and it is currently marketing three vintage wines including a Boal 1977 which gets a mixed review from Richard Mayson. More than half of Borges' exports go to Sweden.

Henriques & Henriques – Vinhos, SA: The firm was established in 1850 by a member of the Henriques family which then owned a very large acreage of vineyards. By the 1930s it had become a partnership between Joao Belem, Alberto Jardim, Carlos Pereira and Peter Cossart who never joined his own family firm, Cossart Gordon & Co. Family ownership came to an end in 2008 when the business was sold to the La Martiniquaise Group which had previously acquired Justino's. In spite of being under the same ownership, the two firms are still run by their own separate management teams. The general manager and winemaker of Henriques & Henriques is Humberto Jardim, the last descendant of one of the original partners. The firm is unique amongst the Madeira shippers in that it has always owned its own vineyards.

Following the Portuguese Revolution of 1974, it was forced to sell most of its land to the tenants, who promptly re-sold much of it to property developers, but the firm acquired more land on which to build a new 10 ha terraced vineyard. The result is that Henriques & Henriques is still the only producer in Madeira to make wine from its own grapes.



Today, the firm produces a full range of wines. The three and five year old wines are made from Tinta Negra. All the 10 and 15 year old wines are produced from the traditional white grape varieties and it is also marketing both colheita and vintage wines. In addition, it has a remarkable stock of four old wines acquired when the firm was established in 1850 and now known as the "heavenly quartet". It is extraordinary that the firm itself still sells wines which command four figure sums in the auction rooms of London and New York.

Madeira Wine Company, SA: Anyone interested in buying old Madeira at auction needs to have some understanding of the history of the Madeira Wine Company, usually referred to as "the MWC". It is a complicated story which has been played out over the past 100 years. Put simply, the MWC is the result of a series of mergers which began in 1913 when Hinton Welsh & Cunha merged with Henriques & Câmara to form the Madeira Wine Association (which subsequently changed its name to Madeira Wine Company). However, the firm as we know it today really began in 1925 when Blandy's Madeira Lda (founded in 1811), Leacock & Co (founded in 1791) and Viuva Abudarham & Filhos (founded in 1825) merged their respective companies and effectively took over the MWC. Thereafter, a very large number of previously independent firms were acquired including Rutherford & Miles, T.T. da C. Lomelino, Power Drury & Co, Shortridge Lawton & Co, Welsh Bros (Vinhos) Lda, and Cossart Gordon & Co. Following the 1925 merger, the company's headquarters was established in Blandy's Wine Lodge which comprises a fascinating collection of medieval buildings in the centre of Funchal. Today, it is still MWC's headquarters but it also houses a museum which should be on the 'must do list' for every visitor to the Island.

By the time of the Portuguese Revolution in 1974, MWC was jointly owned by the Blandy, Leacock and Miles families, but it still marketed its wines under a vast array of brands representing the original company names. The same wine was often marketed under several different names in different export markets. For example, Welsh Bros. Sercial 1940 and Blandy's Sercial 1940 is the same wine. In 1978 the Blandy family acquired the controlling interest in MWC. Ten years later, they entered into a share swap with the Symington family, as a result of which MWC became a very small part of the Symington Port producing empire. It seems to have been accepted on both sides that MWC benefitted from new management, improved wine making techniques and more effective marketing. Then, in 2011 the Blandy family bought back the company which is once more 90% owned and controlled by them.

The result, today, is that MWC is part of a large diversified family-owned group of companies. It is a major producer of quality wine made under the direction of Francisco Albuquerque, the most highly regarded wine maker in Madeira. Its wines are still marketed under the Blandy, Cossart Gordon, Leacock and Miles brand names. Historically, MWC did not own vineyards but this policy has recently changed and it is now in the process of acquiring land and planting new vineyards. MWC produces a complete range of wines but it is distinguished from its competitors by the fact that a higher proportion of its production is made from the white grape varieties and matured in cask to be sold as vintage wine. It currently offers a large range of vintage wines, including the highly regarded Boal



1920, Sercial 1940 and 1950, Verdelho 1958 and Terrantez 1975, 1976 and 1977. MWC also pioneered the sale of dated Colheita wines, meaning wines made from a single colheita (or harvest in English) which have been matured in cask for at least five years. Many of these wines are sold under the Cossart Gordon brand name.

The tasting

A tasting of Madeira wines was held at the Four Seasons Hotel in Baltimore, Maryland U.S., in October 2017 and was conducted by Mannie Berk. The wines were supplied by his company, The Rare Wine Co., and from the private cellar of Andrew Jones. The tasting was set up to compare two wines made from each of the grape varieties.

1 Vinhos Justino Henriques, Sercial 1940

This wine is believed to have been made by the Companhia Vinicola da Madeira (CVM). The company went out of business in 1984 and all of its stock was sold. This included casks of Malmsey 1933, Verdelho 1934, Sercial 1940, Verdelho 1954 and Boal 1964 bought by Vinhos Justino Henriques (VJH), which was at that time building up the Island's largest bulk wine business. This wine was eventually bottled by VJH and a large quantity was sold under its own name at a series of auctions at Christie's, London commencing in 1996, although a more recent bottling is still available under the Justino's brand name.

All these wines were made in good vintage years. The 1940 vintage has been described as "Generally very fine. Sercial especially good." *** Alex Liddell, *Madeira: The Mid Atlantic Wine* (2nd Edition, 1984), Appendix II.

Ex AJJ's cellar. Purchased at Christie's, London in 1996.

2 Pereira d'Oliveira (Vinhos) Lda, Sercial 1937

"Dark tawny with orange-gold; pungent and characteristic bouquet with hints of fudge, varnish and strong acidity; explosive fullness on palate, big but rounded, with astringent, very long finish, totally dry, with a deliciously lingering fudge flavour." *** Alex Liddell, *Madeira: The Mid Atlantic Wine* (2nd Edition, 2014).

"Very deep mahogany; rich caramelised aromas, oranges and citrus peel, vanilla, a touch burnt around the edges, lovely texture, bitter-sweet with a rather rustic, peaty finish." **/*** Richard Mayson, *Madeira* (2015).

Bottled in 2003. Ex AJJ's cellar. Purchased from Patrick Grubb Selections in 2006. Currently available from The Rare Wine Co. for \$395 per bottle.

3 Pereira d'Oliveira (Vinhos) Lda, Verdelho 1986

During his life, João Pereira acquired a reputation for the quality of his wines, particularly his Verdelhos. This 1986 Verdelho, produced from purchased grapes, continues his tradition of powerful personality, great richness and strong acidity. Supplied by The Rare Wine Co. and currently available at \$129.95 per bottle.

4 Berry Bros. & Rudd, Finest Old Verdelho, Solera 1851

This wine was made by Cossart Gordon & Co. It was last topped up prior to 1953, when the firm joined the Madeira Wine Association, at which point Noel Cossart says that the average age of the constituent wine was at least 50 years. It was sold in cask to Berry Bros. & Rudd, which is the oldest established wine merchant in the world, having carried on business from the same premises in St. James's, London for over 300 years. BB&R bottled it in 1969 and again in 1973 and continued to sell it under its own label until the early 1980s. The retail price was listed at £4.35 per bottle in April 1977. In December 2010, it sold for \$525 per bottle at Zachy's auction in New York. Ex AJJ's cellar. Purchased on at least 5 occasions over the past 30 years.

5 Vinhos Barbeito (Madeira), Lda, Bual 1995

This was only the second vintage wine made by Ricardo Freitas after he took over as winemaker in 1992. The grapes are from a single vineyard in São Vicente, with the vines trained on pergolas so low they could only be harvested by lying on the ground. The vineyard was abandoned in 2006 after the death of its owner. The aging period in barrel had two parts: roughly nine years at very warm temperatures and 11 years at cooler temperatures, to slow down the wine's concentration. Relatively dry for Bual, with excellent acidity, only 670 bottles were produced at the time of bottling in 2016. Supplied by The Rare Wine Co. and currently available at \$150 per bottle.

6 Cossart Gordon & Co, Bual 1895

This vintage is said to be "Generally fine, especially Bual. The first normal vintage since 1873." Noel Cossart, *Madeira: The Island Vineyard* (1984), Appendix II.

"From the renowned Cam do Lobos district. Not very deep coloured; high toned; tangy bouquet; medium sweet; lightish in style and body, elegant, great persistence of flavour"**** (Oct.

1979) Michael Broadbent, *The Great Vintage Wine Book* (1980). Ex AJJ's cellar. Purchased at Christie's, London in 1991 and 2006. Only 92 bottles sold at auction in the forty years between 1970 and 2010.

7 Barbeito 20 Year Old Malvasia Lot 14050

Bottled in 2014, this is the eighth 20-year-old Malvasia made by Ricardo Freitas. A blend of Malvasia grapes from São Jorge, on the north side of the island, with 20% Malvasia Candida from Fajã dos Padres. The latter component makes this wine extraordinary, not only for the terroir, considered Madeira's greatest for Malvasia, but for the Candida sub-variety, which became virtually extinct after Phylloxera in the 1870s. Also unusual about this wine is that the grapes were crushed by foot, an historic practice that has all but disappeared. Like other 20-year-old Malvasias made by Freitas, it is uncompromisingly elegant, with very fresh acidity. Supplied by The Rare Wine Co. and currently available at \$195 per bottle.

8 Vinhos Barbeito (Madeira) Lda, Malvasia 1954

This is one of the very first vintage Madeiras made by Mario Barbeito after he founded his company in 1946. Unknown first bottling, but probably in the late 1970s or early 1980s. Numerous very small bottlings over the next thirty years, until Barbeito's stock was exhausted. A classically rich, wood-aged Malvasia, bursting with butterscotch, chocolate, coffee and figs, but with powerful acidity.

Ex AJJ's cellar. Purchased at Christie's, New York in 2015. Currently available from the Rare Wine Co. for \$495 per bottle.

9 Pereira D'Oliveira (Vinhos) Lda, Terrantez 1971

As noted above, Pereira D'Oliveira has grown over the years through the acquisition of other companies on the island. One of its most significant acquisitions occurred in 2001, when it bought Adegas do Torreão after the death of its founder, Vasco Loja. Torreão was an important partadista, supplying aged wine to the island's biggest shippers. Included in the purchase was several dozen barrels of old Madeira, including this classic 1971 Terrantez.

"High toned aromas, quite delicate in style, barley-sugar sweetness with a typical bitter-sweet twist. A rather lovely wine."**** Richard Mayson, *Madeira* (2014).

Supplied by The Rare Wine Co. and currently available for \$239.95 per bottle.

10 Blandy's Madeira Ltd, Terrantez 1960

Most of the Terrantez vineyards were never replanted after Phylloxera reached Madeira in 1873, with the result that very little wine was made until the new plantings took place in the early 1970s. The Madeira Wine Company (MWC) occasionally made some Terrantez from a vineyard in Funchal which no longer exists. Wines good enough to be matured and sold as vintage were made in 1954 (sold under both the Blandy and Leacock names), 1960 (Blandy) and 1969 (Cossart Gordon). Noel Cossart describes having tasted MWC's stock of six maturing Terrantez vintages in April 1982, the oldest of which was the 1975. He makes no mention of the 1960 wine although it was by then old enough to have been sold as a vintage wine. Mid-mahogany colour; characteristic bitter-sweet fruit; but not as concentrated as might be expected for a wine that spent 32 years in cask.

Ex AJJ's cellar. Purchased directly from MWC in 2001. Never seen at auction.



LE BEAUJOLAIS NOUVEAU EST ARRIVÉ

by *Ron Barker*

Those readers above a certain age and with reasonable memories will remember that in the '70s and '80s many restaurants in the UK ran Beaujolais lunches to mark the arrival of the first bottles of Beaujolais Nouveau in the locality. In those days the wine was released in Beaujolais at one minute passed midnight and, by various methods of transport, the wine was carried to England. So expert did the competitors become that I remember in Liverpool when Beaujolais Breakfasts replaced lunches and we had our first taste before going into the office! The Beaujolais Run meant teams competing to be the first to get the first case of Nouveau from Paris to London. One year it got even more "Eighties" than normal, the winner being a Harrier jet. Bars, restaurants, pubs and off-licences held tastings, sometimes lasting all day, as events spread around the UK.

Sales of Beaujolais Nouveau reached a peak in the late 1980s. It was a huge success based on marketing. But it declined in the 1990s when too many producers jumped on the bandwagon and the quality declined, getting weaker and more acidic. Focusing on Nouveau damaged the reputation of Beaujolais' better-quality products, in the same way Blue Nun did with German wines. Only recently are people starting to return to other Beaujolais, particularly the Crus which are sold under their individual names.

Beaujolais Nouveau Day is marked in France on the third Thursday in November with fireworks, music and festivals. Under French law, the wine is released on the stroke of midnight at 00.01 hours, just weeks after the wine's grapes have been harvested. Parties are held throughout the country and further afield to celebrate the first wine of the season.

On 16th November 2017 28 members and guests of the Liverpool Branch recreated some of the excitement with a Beaujolais Nouveau event in the evening at Restaurant Yuet Ben but enhanced the experience by including ten Beaujolais Cru wines. Since the '70s the laws have changed and 'Health & Safety' officers stand in the way of any public racing. Liverpool Chairman Terry Lim obtained the wines three days early but had to sign undertakings that they could not be used until the Official Beaujolais Nouveau Day.

The wine

Beaujolais Nouveau – that much-ballyhooed cherry-red coloured vintage that's best served chilled – is clearly not for wine snobs. This fresh and fruity red is the result of a quick fermentation process that ends up with a tasty, clean wine that is enjoyed by palates the world over.

The Gamay grapes are handpicked in the Beaujolais region of France. The wine actually originated about a century ago as a cheap and cheerful drink produced by locals to celebrate the end of the harvest season.

Perhaps the most well-known producer of Beaujolais Nouveau is Georges Duboeuf, who is credited as one of the marketing geniuses behind the wine. Selling this young red was viewed by some vintners as a means to clear large quantities of wine at

decent profits, which would create a much-needed cash flow shortly after harvest.

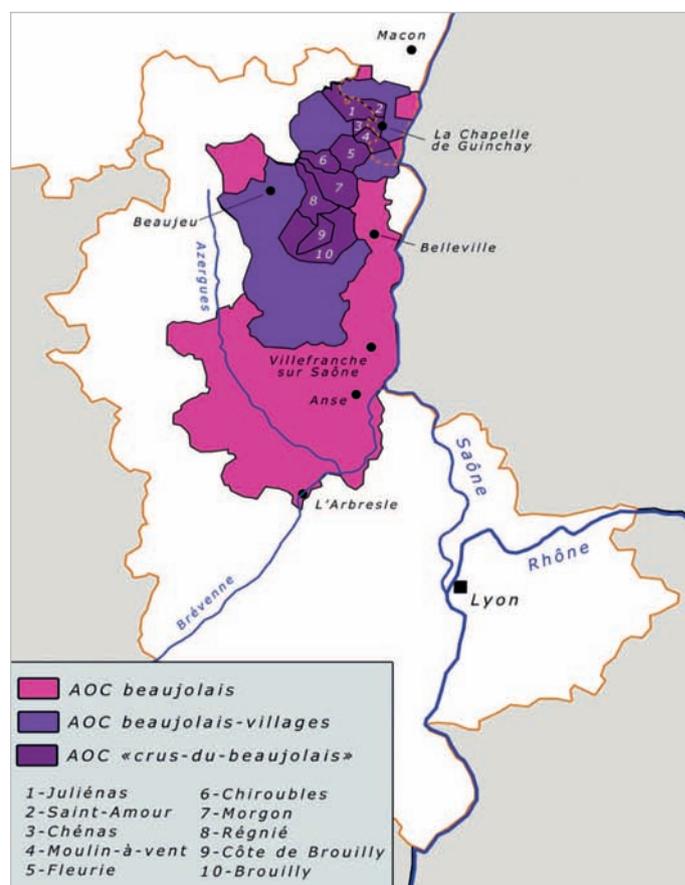
The idea of a race to Paris carrying the first bottles of the new vintage was conceived and this attracted much media attention. By the 1970s, the race became a national event. The races spread to neighbouring countries in Europe in the 1980s, followed by North America and, in the 1990s, to Asia.

The traditional slogan used in ad campaigns and marketing material – Le Beaujolais Nouveau est arrivé (which translates to The new Beaujolais has arrived) was changed in 2005 to It's Beaujolais Nouveau time.

The race

On the 18th November November 1970, at the Hotel Les Maritones in Romanèche-Thorins, Joseph Berkman and Clement Freud were sharing a dinner of 'Coq au Vin'. Owner of eight London restaurants, Berkman also ran his own wine distribution company and wrote a weekly column for The Sunday Times. Clement Freud was Director of the London Playboy Club, a respectable Member of Parliament and wine correspondent for *The Sun*.

As bottle succeeded bottle that night, the germ of an idea took shape. Sometime after midnight, they roared away from Romanèche with several cases of Beaujolais in the back of each car; having challenged each other to be the first to get their cases to London.



That year and the next, the race was a purely private affair between Berkman and Freud. Berkman won both times. Having taken potshots at each other through their respective wine columns, word got around that something interesting was going on, and others rushed to join in: The Beaujolais Run was born.

In 1973 Alan Hall, columnist for The Sunday Times, published an article that threw down the gauntlet to Fleet Street to "Bring Back the Beaujolais" offering a bottle of Champagne for the first to deliver a bottle of the new vintage to his desk. At that time the object of the exercise was speed, and this was brought to an end by the RAF, who later took up the challenge in a Harrier and broke all records!

The tasting

The Liverpool Branch organised a tasting of 12 wines starting with the Nouveau, progressing via a Beaujolais Villages to a tasting of each of the ten Cru which were, in the order of drinking:-

Beaujolais Nouveau: Light and not too serious but with more body than earlier years. A bottle that was opened and not consumed was retasted the next day and had improved!

Drinking: Beaujolais Nouveau 2017 Georges Duboeuf

Beaujolais Villages Fleurie: While Fleurie may not have the power of the well-known crus of Moulin-à-Vent and Morgon, its charming, floral elegance makes just as much of a lasting impression. After these two crus, it is probably the most recognizable. A lighter style of Cru Beaujolais, Fleurie is characterized by blossom-like red fruit and the unmistakable aromas of the flowers of the rose and the violet. Undoubtedly the prettiest of the crus, Fleurie is excellent chilled.

Drinking: La Madone, Duboeuf 2015

Régnié: Elevated in 1988, Régnié is the youngest of the Beaujolais crus, and stylistically, it brings together the fresh fruit of Brouilly with a bit of the body and structure of Morgon. It is supple but lively, with bright raspberry flavours and often a spicy note that makes it distinctive. Lace up your freshest kicks and drink this guy young!

Drinking: Domaine des Buyats 2013

Saint-Amour: This light, easy-drinking cru is the most northerly of the ten, characterized by soft red fruit. Saint-Amour also produces a more serious style of wine, due to variation in soils.

Drinking: Dominique Piron 2015



Brouilly: The largest and most southerly cru of Beaujolais. Light to medium bodied, it is typically lively, fruity and fresh.

Drinking: Château de la Perrière, Duboeuf 2014

Côte de Brouilly: Côte means hillside in French, but the Côte de Brouilly isn't actually a hillside at all – it's an ancient volcano. Vines are grown on the ancient volcano's slopes, where they get more sun and better drainage than the surrounding plains of Brouilly. This creates wines that are a bit riper, more serious, and more agreeable than little brother Brouilly.

Drinking: The Society's Exhibition 2016

Chiroubles: For those who are used to drinking standard Beaujolais or even Beaujolais Nouveau, Chiroubles is a great wine to transition into the world of Cru Beaujolais. This isn't to say that Chiroubles is of lesser quality than the other crus; rather, it speaks to the fact that Chiroubles is the lightest bodied Cru Beaujolais. This is because Chiroubles has the highest elevation in the region and therefore the coolest temperatures, creating delicate red berry fruit and similar violet notes to its neighbour Fleurie. But be forewarned – once you dive into Chiroubles, you'll never want to get out of the Crus Beaujolais pool.

Drinking: Domaine des Pontheux 2014

Juliéna: With a winemaking history that dates back 2000 years to the times of Julius Caesar (from whom the name of the cru comes), Juliéna's character is rooted in the earth. Unfortunately, there aren't very many high-quality producers in Juliéna, and styles of wine can vary quite a bit, but overall, the wines tend to be on the weightier side, with dark red fruit flavours and earthiness.

Drinking: Château des Capitans 2014

Morgon: Second only to Moulin-à-Vent in terms of body and structure, Morgon is another fuller-bodied, more serious cru. Fortunately, it is also the second largest Beaujolais Cru, with a concentration of high-quality producers. While granite – Gamay's favourite soil to dig down into – is prevalent throughout the crus of Beaujolais, Morgon is especially granite-centric, creating concentrated, serious and fairly tannic wines. Morgon is comprised of six named vineyards, the most famous of which is Côte du Py, and all of these wines get better – and much more interesting – with age.

Drinking: Jean-Ernest Descombes, Duboeuf 2013

Moulin-à-Vent: When it comes to body, 'ageability' and tannic structure, Moulin-à-Vent reigns above them all. The soils in Moulin-à-Vent cause the vines to yield fewer but more concentrated berries, creating a style of wine that couldn't be further from the stereotypical fresh, easy-drinking style of Beaujolais lacking in complexity. Moulin-à-Vent is robust and (relatively) tannic, and while by no means are these wines unapproachable when young, they can also age for 10, 20, sometimes even 50 years, bearing similarities to Burgundy and Rhône wines as they get older.

Drinking: Domaine des Rosiers, Duboeuf 2014

Chénas: The rarest cru in Beaujolais. Sometimes quite Burgundian in style, Chénas is a sturdier cru and has a mineral intensity – like its neighbour Moulin-à-Vent – that develops with age. This one was eight years old and had developed Pinot Noir characteristics. The most enjoyable of the crus.

Drinking: Domaine Du P'tit Paradis 2009

THE GREAT FIRE OF 2017: A Perspective

by *Ron Fenolio*

Normally we would be writing a story about another great winemaker, or a history of a historic property or event, or describing a lesser known wine variety or region. But your editors asked that we write about the October 2017 tragedy of this great fire, from a winemaker's perspective.

Historic Properties

From a wine consumer perspective, or from the perspective of a visitor to Napa or Sonoma counties, the question is "how is my favourite winery"? Fortunately for the wine industry as a whole, the damage to the wineries themselves was minimal when compared to damage caused to the entire region. Let's put that in perspective: there are more than 400 wineries in Napa with tasting rooms, and winery permits in Napa exceed 1,000. In Sonoma, there are more than 400 wineries of which about 150 to 200 have tasting rooms and over 1,600 wineries within a one-hour drive of San Francisco. Twenty-two of these wineries were burned or were damaged: less than 2% of the total. Statistically the number may not seem significant but this fact should not diminish the impact that the fires had on the whole industry.

Some historically significant properties were lost, including Signorello, Helena View Johnston and Paradise Ridge. Mayacamas lost its historic tasting room building which dated back to the nineteenth century.

Damage was suffered by Stags Leap, William Hill, St. Jean, Darioush and many others. In some cases the damage was

outbuildings, cosmetic, landscaping or other relatively insignificant damage.

Collateral damage

The real damage is what might be called the "collateral damage". Here the damage was severe and long lasting: 8,500 to 9,000 structures were completely lost. How does one even clean up the toxic waste remaining after a devastating fire? And how long will it take to rebuild?

More significantly, what does one do about housing? Where are the workers going to live if they are able to come back to their jobs? Where will we house the cleanup and construction workers?

Speaking of workers: what does an hourly paid worker do when that person loses a vehicle, home, furniture, belongings, clothing and all the memorabilia of a life? And may not even have a job to return to?

Employer losses were significant: several hotels and a school burned to the ground. Hospitals were vacated. Tourists are staying away... Since the fires, two restaurants in Napa have already closed unable to carry on with little to no business.

Vineyard damage

One little known fact is that the vineyards actually acted as natural firebreaks. There are no trees in the vineyards, and



maintenance keeps underbrush away from the vines and from between their rows. In addition, the vineyards are irrigated so the plants do not burn as easily as the underbrush and forest growth already damaged by five years of drought. In many places, the fires advanced from the oak- and manzanita-forested hills down to the edge of the vineyards, with these becoming a fire line. If one looks east over the vineyards from the Silverado Trail today, one can see that the vineyards survived, but the hills adjacent to and behind the vineyards are totally burned.

So where were the wineries and buildings located that were damaged? Signorello's Winery was on the hillside, above and overlooking their vineyards. The fire roared down through the oak trees and manzanita brush and consumed the buildings in its path. When it got to the vineyards, it was contained. Such containment was evident at places like Chimney Rock and Clos du Val, where the winery buildings were situated among the vineyards and not damaged while the hillsides behind were burned out.

Crop damage

Vines can survive but unpicked grapes are not so lucky. The intense heat of the fire dried up the grapes and made them shrivel. More importantly, it is almost impossible to remove smoke taint. Unfortunately, about 15% of the crop in some areas was not yet picked. Late harvested varieties were most significantly affected, which in Napa means Cabernet Sauvignon.

Even wines in vats can be damaged if the fermentation vats or barrels are open-topped because the smoke will settle on top of the fermenting wine. The vines will be back next year with a new crop, but 2017 will be a year where the crop is going to be small – on top of an already light yield throughout France and Spain. We have seen bulk wine prices increase significantly already, with some European producers recently reporting price increases of 40% to 100%.

Winemaking practices were also affected. Without electricity there is no way to cool the fermenting grapes (the cooling systems are inoperative) and automated fermentation activities such as punch-downs could not be performed. Several wineries have announced they will not produce wines in the 2017 vintage due to crop damage or damage to fermenting juice.

In terms of insurance, winery owners are finding out that if you are an estate winery producing wines from your own fruit, the insurance company will pay for crop losses but not for the losses at the winemaking end. You only get winemaking losses if you have already converted the crop into fermenting juice. So many wineries, even with insurance coverage, will only have a fraction of their losses covered.

Size/impact

It could have been worse, much worse. But it was still devastating, with almost 200,000 acres burned and tens of billions of dollars in damage. It is estimated that the initial clean-up will take up to six months and this does not include the rebuilding process for the 9,000 damaged structures. Before that can start, power lines, water and sewerage pipes will have to be replaced.

How large is 200,000 acres? It would take you an hour and a half of driving at 60 miles per hour to outline that area...

It was estimated that over 20 fires started at about the same time as 75 mph winds were whipping around. Some think that the winds blew down power lines or power transformers, which provided the sparks to start the fires. Forensic experts will be sorting out the causes for some time. There is no evidence that the fires were started deliberately. All told, this was the largest fire in California's history. The damage was horrendous but we are already recovering and with the support of our customers and patrons we will get our people back to work. Come visit us! Napa and Sonoma counties are still in business.



TAILLEVENT: Paris versus London

by Roger Austin



Exterior, London

The brasseries 110 de Taillevent in Paris and now in London are extensions of the parent restaurant Taillevent in Paris named after Guillaume Tirel called 'Taillevent', a fourteenth century master chef to the kings of France and author of the first book on cuisine in French.

Restaurant Taillevent opened in 1946 and gained a third Michelin Star in 1973, retaining two since 2007. In 2001 a second restaurant, 'L'Angle du Faubourg', was opened in the Faubourg St Honoré and was renamed Les 110 de Taillevent in 2012. The London branch opened in Cavendish Square in 2015.

The prefix '110' refers to the 110 bottles within a cellar of 1,100 bottles that can be taken by the glass thanks to a means of preventing wine from oxidising in a partly emptied bottle by a process which fills the empty space with the inert gas argon. Wine has occupied a significant place in the Taillevent history: several wine shops 'Les Caves de Taillevent' have been opened – Paris in 1987, Tokyo in 2005, Lebanon in 2013 and another in Paris in 2006. The whole enterprise was bought in 2011 by the Gardinier brothers who own Château Phélan Ségur, the fifth growth St Estèphe.

Having seen an advertisement in the FT and having heard from my son how argon can preserve opened wine, my wife and I



Interior, London



Exterior, Paris

took the opportunity of dining in Paris on returning from Italy and later in London with the aim of discovering similarities and differences in the two brasseries.

Ambience

Paris is situated on the corner of rue du Faubourg St Honoré with rue de Balzac in a quiet residential location in which cars can park readily. The London entrance is in the busy Cavendish Square at the end of Harley Street in a busy professional and business area where the road traffic only stops for the signals. Both buildings are handsome with much ashlar facing. Paris is smaller and was a private house while London occupies a building that was at one time a bank. Internally, the décor is similar in style but Paris being more compact has a more intimate atmosphere while London which has higher coffered ceilings has a more corporate feel. The tables in Paris have more decorated tops as opposed to the plain London ones. In both the lighting is subdued giving a restful ambience in contrast to the London bustle.

The menu format

This is similar in both and is innovative in that it is designed to simplify and speed up the matching of wine with the food. The hard backed folder opens into three sides with the food menu in the centre in the usual sections of Starters, Mains and



Interior, Paris



Beef Wellington, London

Desserts. On the left and right appropriate wines are listed for each course, with information about each, the less expensive ones on the left and the bigger wines on the right. For diners who wish to explore the wine list this gives helpful prompts without the need to wade through the pages of the wine list.

Cuisine

In Paris we started with melon gazpacho and crab with herring roe and fennel cream, followed by veal sweetbreads with capers, rocket salad and parmesan and magret of duck with a savoury pastille. For dessert we had a chocolate délice. We were also given a cherry tartlet which was slightly over baked.

In London we both selected game paté en croute followed by mushroom tart for Margaret and Welsh beef Wellington for me and then a house dessert St Honoré with Chantilly and Kirsch cream.

In general, the Paris cuisine had more aroma and variety of flavour particularly the savoury pastille. The London was more traditionally English except that the beef Wellington was served as two 'mini' portions, perhaps a French take on an English traditional. The beef and croute were excellent but the coating lacked some flavour.

Wines

The facility of serving expensive wines by the glass in excellent condition is a central part of the Taillevent service. They use the 'Coravin' equipment, invented by Greg Lambrecht, an MIT graduate and medical device inventor. It depends on the

properties of argon which is more inert than nitrogen (which has also been used to replace the air in opened bottles). Argon is also used in the USA to protect the documents of the Declaration of Independence. Medical grade needles are inserted through the cork and argon is pumped in to displace the wine into the glass and also to fill the space and protect against excessive oxygenation – the cork being left in situ. New to us were the round disc labels on the foot of the glasses being clipped round the stem to give the name and vintage of the wine, which somewhat surprisingly added to the gustatory pleasure.

In Paris we drank Louis Roederer 2011 Rosé, Ch Phélan Ségur 2008 and Clos des Justices Sauternes 1989, also owned by the Gardinier brothers, all of which were in excellent condition. The Champagne had a good mousse which continued to work in the glass. The colour was fading somewhat and was drying slightly, probably a reflection on the vintage. The Phélan Ségur was very satisfactory with bigger fruit and body than some St Estèphes and excellent opening and finish. The Sauternes was very firm and sweet without being overly luscious or cloying.

In London we took Billecart-Salmon Rosé NV and again the Phélan Ségur 2008, with Ch Suduiraut 1989. The Champagne worked well in the glass with good fruit and the Phélan Ségur was as it was in Paris. The most fascinating was the Suiduiraut nearly 30 years old. The colour was not greatly dark and the nose showed no signs of over oxidation but the fruit was extraordinary compared to the Ch d'Yquem 1990 that I have, being rather loose with flavours of barley sugar and marmalade. It reminded me rather of Andrew Quady's Essencia made from the Orange Muscat grape. Coincidentally, I have found an overlooked bottle of Ch Suduiraut 2008 in my cellar which will make interesting tasting later. A further interesting point of comparison was that the London measures were 12.5 cl while the Parisian ones were slightly more generous at 14 cl.

Envoi

The London brasserie follows the concept of the slightly senior Parisian but is not a replica being bigger with at least 2-3 times as many covers and probably designed to attract a more corporate clientele, which may be reflected in the cuisine. However as a couple we had our own space and the whole experience was similar to that in Paris as the concept has translated well to London. The bills were also similar, 210 euros and £190.13. The very pleasant waiting staff were all French and at the end we could have been in Paris itself.



Glass labels

SOCIETY AWARDS

Jeffrey Benson and Graham Lovelock



On 25th October, at the AGM dinner of the London Branch, Ian Nicol presented its Chairman **Jeffrey Benson** with the **IWFS Diploma**, which had been awarded by the International Council in recognition of his services to the Society over many years. In addition he was presented with an **EAZ Medal**.

Jeffrey joined the IWFS in January 1968. Under Joe Wilkinson's Chairmanship, in about 1973, Jeffrey was recognised as one of the leading Young Members of that period. At that time, there was no London Branch as such. The Society's headquarters in London had a full time staff and ran events for members visiting or living in the capital. Members involved in the Society at this period are now spread far and wide.

In the late 1970s Jeffrey was instrumental in organising the IWFS Wine School which he ran for some years with Christopher Davenport-Jones in the Society's offices at the Reform Club. To this day, many of the most committed London Branch members, including at least two former Branch Chairmen and a Branch Secretary, can trace their involvement with the Society, and their appreciation of wine, back to the Wine School. Many of his students went on to serve IWFS in their own right, some are still doing so.

The London Branch was separated from the Society Headquarters around 1982, and when Martin Mistlin took over as Events Organiser, Jeffrey was responsible for many events. He served on the London Branch Committee from 2002 to 2008 and took up his current post as Branch Chairman in 2010. He was awarded the André Simon Bronze Medal in 2002.

As Chairman he has been instrumental in revamping the Branch website and introducing on-line reservations and payment for Branch events. London Branch organises some 40 events a year but while there was an effective manual system in place, with which members were familiar, Jeffrey insisted that on-line booking and payment was essential to attract a younger membership. Today 70% of London Branch bookings are made electronically.

In 2013 he arranged for a group of Branch Members to undertake the Wine & Spirit Education Trust Intermediate (level 2) Examination. As an approved course provider and examiner for WSET he was not only able to arrange the course but was on hand to provide advice and guidance in the run up to the exam. The group earned 10 Distinctions and 1 Merit award between them and most went on to study successfully for level 3 the following year.

Jeffrey turns 80 this year. He is keen to expand the Society's membership in London and happy to go out of his way to do so. Jeffrey still has a key role to play in many of these initiatives. In addition to his committee work he continues to write many articles for Food & Wine and run countless very successful and innovative events for the Branch.

On the same evening, Ian Nicol presented **Graham Lovelock** with the **André Simon Bronze medal**. Graham originally trained as an accountant in New Zealand, before coming to the UK. As well as being active in the Livery movement and Treasurer of several other organisations, he has served as Treasurer of London Branch for the last five years, and has been a great supporter of London Branch events. He is also Treasurer for the London 2018 International Festival, and examiner for the Europe Africa Zone Accounts. A lover of fine wines, he has made a massive contribution to the Society at both levels, and this has been universally appreciated.



RESTAURANT AWARD YU at Alderley Edge



Last year the Manchester Branch had enjoyed an outstanding and truly wonderful culinary experience at YU. After that event the committee were inundated with compliments from the members and they decided to recommend the restaurant to the Awards Committee for one of the Society's prestigious honours.

Our Chair Ronnie Costello arranged a return visit on 12th October, which was well supported by the members, in order to make the presentation. Ronnie, and our past Chair Ron Cowley who had been in post at the earlier visit, presented the award to the chef. The owners, brothers Vinny and Victor Yu were delighted and the framed award was immediately hung on the wall near the entrance. This fantastic evening began in such a very special way and everyone toasted the continued success of the owners, chef and staff who all richly deserved this special accolade.

This was to be a six-course wine and food pairing and the restaurant had taken a great deal of thought and preparation to create the right combinations. A crisp glass of Prosecco, La Pieve, Treviso from Italy was served on arrival and then when everyone was seated the canapés arrived – Wagyu Beef Carpaccio with Ponza dressing, Baby Squid, Teryaki glazed Tuna, each one had a different and distinct flavour and all were very tasty.

The next course was Crispy Peking Duck served in a bamboo basket, this was paired with a 2016 Moscatel and Chardonnay

'Goru', Jumilla from Spain. This wine had a slightly sweet taste which complemented the richness of the duck beautifully.

Our third course was Sechuan style spicy King Prawns. The sauce was lightly spiced and so did not overwhelm either the large succulent prawns or the wine, which was a beautiful lightly coloured Villiera 'Jasmine', Fragrant White, Stellenbosch, 2016, from South Africa. At this point after three fantastic courses everyone was excited to know what would be coming next.

The fish course was served next and was an expertly cooked piece of Cod in a Five Spice Burnt Butter with Edamame Beans. One member of my table commented on the colour, texture and taste of the cod and said how well it had been prepared. This was served with Pouilly-Fuissé 'Luquet' Burgundy 2015 from France. This combination was a particular favourite on my table.

The final savoury course was Braised Rib of Wagyu Beef, Five Grain Wheat and Dark Sauce. The beef was so tender, one member commented that it must have been from all of the massaging! Another said it was "beef like I've never tasted before". The dark sauce was rich and went so well with the perfectly cooked meat. The wine accompaniment for this course was Prietc Picudo 'Cumal' Castilla y Leon. This fantastic Spanish red wine beautifully complemented the Wagyu beef.

To finish this myriad of exotic tastes was a sweet and clean dessert, a Mango Parfait with Coconut and Ginger Chia seeds and Pandan Powder. This was an exceptional dessert as the fruit, coconut and ginger refreshed the palate and brought a light sweetness to conclude the fantastic food. A sweet wine was served which was Haut Roquefort Cadillac, a French Bordeaux with lovely honey sugary notes.

I think all had a superb night – the Manchester Branch members were treated to such a fabulous evening of food, wine and exceptional service. I hope the restaurant also enjoyed the evening as they had a very appreciative group to sample the best they have to offer.

Ali Graham



Malmö Branch

WELL DESERVED APPLAUSE AT STURE...



Karim Khouani, whom we visited at the Ambiance over one year ago (October 2016, page 27) where he was awarded one Michelin star, has moved into town and taken over Sture. These classical restaurant premises have been totally refurbished and have now got an elegant modern look. It is very uncommon, but before the inspectors had even had the possibility of visiting the new premises, the Michelin Guide announced that he kept his star. We therefore very much looked forward to visiting him again and to taste the following menu, starting with a Champagne Blanc de Noirs (100% Meunier) and delicious canapés.

- Foie gras, brioche, passion fruit
Pinot Gris 2003, Rolly Gassmann
- Turbot, lettuce, chicken jus
Riesling Grand Cru Rosacker 2013, Domaine Agapé
- Lamb, truffle, jus
*Pinot Noir 2003, Rolly Gassmann and
2013 Schlatter Spätburgunder SW, Martin Wassmer*
- Fromages
Cairanne l'Ebrescade 2012, Marcel Richaud



- Chocolate variations
Banyuls Grand Cru 2007, Dom. Baillaury
- Coffee, petits fours

The sweetness of the mature Pinot Gris 'Selection grains nobles' accompanied a delicious foie gras and another Alsace wine, a typical Riesling Grand Cru was perfect with the fish. It was interesting to compare the lovely Alsace Pinot Noir with the elegant Spätburgunder from Baden, both from maybe the best producers of this variety in the two areas. The powerful Cairanne matched the cheeses and Banyuls is classic combination with chocolate.

The evening was a great success and our appreciation was shown by a warm applause after Karim Khouani's presentation of his culinary philosophy and thoughts behind his menu this evening. But what really made the day was the outstanding performance of the young female staff, from the handshake on arrival to the Good Night when leaving. In all it was a memorable evening.

Rolf Fransson



Malmö Branch

... ODDITIES AT SAV



The previously mentioned restaurant, Ambiance, has been taken over by Sven Jensen and Alex Fohlin and had its name changed to SAV. They have both been working for famous chefs in Copenhagen and southern Sweden and brought their experiences together in the charming old farmhouse. Last time we visited this place it was springtime with a marvellous flowering cherry tree in the yard but now it was winter with a number of open fires giving us a warm welcome. Shortly after opening, the inspectors from the White Guide visited them and placed them in the so-called Master class among many top restaurants in this country. We thought it would be interesting to find out whether we could agree with them or not. So on the day we were served the following spectacular five course meal:

- Oyster, elderberry caper, coriander oil, nasturtium flower
Crémant d'Alsace Extra Brut 2014, Albert Mann
- Sugar beet, trifle, black garlic, poppy
Manitoba, goat butter
2014 Soave Classico Campo Vulcano, I Campo di Flavio Prà

- Celery, spruce shots, unripened currant, hazel nut
Brioche, lardo, charcuterie, pickles
2016 Riesling Cuvée Albert, Albert Mann
- Wild duck, elderberry, pickled pumpkin, black pepper
2014 Ribeira del Duero Milénico dos Mundos, Viñedos Milénico and
2014 La Copa Santa Saint Aunés, Languedoc, Domaine Clavel
- Pear, Jerusalem artichoke, camomile
2010 Rauen Riesling Felsenterasse, Mosel, Weingut Familie Rauen

The extra dry and clean Crémant went well with the oyster and the typical Soave was perfect with the 'green' dish. The elegant nice Alsace Riesling managed to match the lardo dish with all ingredients. The wild duck needed the powerful Duero and the more elegant Languedoc. The Riesling's label was not very informative yet the wine proved to have a sweetness to Auslese level, much appreciated with the dessert.

The somewhat odd ingredients in some of the dishes turned out to be marinated, jammed or sweetened in one way or another and not everyone appreciated the surprising combinations. People sitting at my table were more or less shocked when even the initial dish of fresh oyster had a touch of sweetness coming from the capers. However, most of us were very happy with the food and we all agreed that as a whole we had had a wonderful evening and do hope that the ambitious young chefs shall keep their classification in the new edition of the White Guide when published.

Rolf Fransson



Devonshire Branch

CHEF BURTON RACE AT THE GROSVENOR...

John Burton Race is the resident chef at the Grosvenor Hotel, Torquay producing Michelin Star quality food as confirmed by several of our members who have dined at the hotel recently. The hotel, which is now part of the Richardson Group, has been completely transformed from the embarrassing hotel portrayed in the television series and made us feel very welcome for our October visit.

MENU

Canapés on arrival

To Start

- Scallop (Salad of hand-dived Orkney scallops, curry and raisins)
- Foie Gras (Hot foie gras, boudin noir, vanilla apple, watercress, hazelnut crumb)
- Goat's Cheese (Goat's cheese tortellini, roasted onion consommé, crispy fried shallot rings)

Mains

- Pheasant (Roasted pheasant breast, pumpkin puree, pearl barley, glazed baby onions)
- Brill (Brill, porcini mushroom, figs and Iberico ham)
- Beef Fillet (Devon ruby red fillet of beef, radicchio, sweet cabbage, truffled potato purée, red wine)

Desserts

- Toffee Pudding Cake (Poached Granny Smith apple purée and ice cream, walnut compote)
- Hazelnuts, Chestnuts, Mousse (Grapes, hazelnut meringue)
- Pear, Almond Prune (Sweet pear, prune and Armagnac ice cream, almond cake, orange and almond tulle)

Tea, Coffee, Petit Fours



Scallops at the Grosvenor



Pear dessert at the Grosvenor

Philip and David Redhead kindly worked their magic to provide us with superb wines to accompany our food at the Grosvenor Hotel. They chose Pierre Darcy Champagne on arrival, a silver medal winner in the IWSC 2016 competition. The starters were served with St Clair Sauvignon Blanc from Marlborough in the South Island of New Zealand. The grapes were originally used to make the famous Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc. The wine had intense flavours of ripe pink grapefruit.

The mains were served with Trivento Malbec 2016. This was an award-winning wine from Argentina, plum and raspberry aromas, with notes from the six month ageing in French oak barrels.

...DEVONSHIRE LINNEY...

For our November meeting we met at The Linney, a delightful country Pub on the outskirts of Torquay. Not a gourmet restaurant, but can be relied on to serve good food, well presented and with attentive staff. It is very popular locally, in fact if you want to go for Sunday lunch you will need to book well in advance.

Menu

A glass of NV Brut di Pinot Nero VS, Ruggeri on arrival with nibbles.

Starters

- Chefs Chicken Liver Pate with Toast, or
- Smoked Salmon with Salad Garnish, or
- Creamy Garlic Mushrooms topped with Parmesan Cheese Picpoul de Pinet, Saint-Peyre, Languedoc, France (A zesty, fragrant wine offering plenty of fresh grapefruit and mineral flavours and a distinctive nutty nuance)

Mains

- Freshly Roasted Rack of Lamb, or
 - Creedy Carver Duckling served with Red Wine and Orange Sauce, or
 - Spinach and Mushroom Strudel
- All served with fresh vegetables of the day, roasted and baby new potatoes

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Creedy Carver Duckling at The Linney



Thanking the staff at The Linney

➔ *continued from page 23*

Cabernet Sauvignon Reserva, De Gras, Chile (Deep garnet in colour with hints of purple, has a classic nose of cassis and ripe berry fruit, with hints of spice. On the palate it is full bodied, with a fine structure of ripe tannin and complex concentrated fruit)

Desserts

- Homemade Cheesecake topped with Red Berries and Fruit Berries and Fruit Couli, or
- Homemade Sticky Ginger Pudding with Butterscotch Sauce, or
- A Selection of Local Cheeses to include Sharpham Brie, Cornish Yarg and Beenleigh Blue

Coffee/ Tea with Mint Crisps

...RETURN TO BIANCO

We started the New Year with a visit to Bianco's Restaurant in Torquay which is very local. We have been several times before and the proprietor, Mauro Pettinelli, and his staff always look after us very well. Our visits to this restaurant are always



Pork fillet at Bianco's Restaurant

excellent value for money, and in the past have been over-subscribed, and this year was no exception.

We were greeted with a glass of Prosecco on arrival and then sat down to a choice of Minestrone Soup or mixed Antipasto Plate which was served with Tasari Bianco (Terre Siciliane made from the Catarratto grape). For the main, the choice consisted of Maiale la Romana (fillet of pork pan fried and served in white wine, olive oil, artichokes, garlic and sun blush tomatoes served with vegetables and sauté potatoes) or Spigola a la Herbe (sea bass grilled with white wine, and fresh herbs, served with vegetables and sauté potatoes) or Linguine Al Fritti di Mare (peeled Tiger Prawns, squid, mussels, and clams served with Linguine pasta). These dishes were served with Terre Siciliane Tasari Rosso, a Nero d'Avola and Merlot blend.

Dessert was Tiramisu, orange/lemon sorbet or other ice cream. The wines were selected and provided by the Proprietor.

Michael Swales



Tiramisu at Bianco's Restaurant

Herefordshire and Monmouthshire Branch

WALNUT TREE DELIGHT

A truly excellent lunch was had by our members at the Walnut Tree restaurant in October.

For those who don't know it, the Walnut Tree, remotely situated near Abergavenny, has enjoyed a superb reputation for fine food since the 1960s. It was originally transformed by Franco and Anna Taruschio from a local boozer into a restaurant with some Italianate flavours, regularly featuring in the Good Food Guide's top UK eating places.

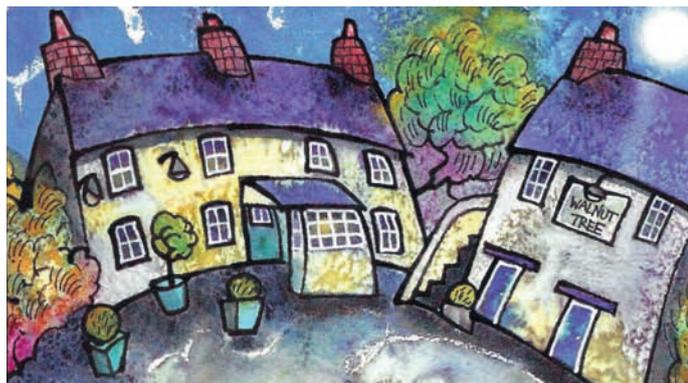
For the past several years this Michelin-starred restaurant has been presided over by the inspirational Chef and food writer Shaun Hill. A former classicist from Exeter University, he drifted into cookery when he was "between jobs", as he put it. Thereafter his career encompassed working at some of the best known places – Robert Carrier's, the Gay Hussar and the Capital Hotel amongst others. In 1994 he and his Finnish wife Anja opened the Merchant House in Ludlow which earned him his first Michelin star. The restaurant, which became something of a legend, put Ludlow on the gastronomic map.

At the Walnut Tree, his dishes are based on beautiful ingredients prepared in a careful and distinctive style and eschewing the precise decorative arrangements so beloved by some fancy restaurateurs. He describes his style, over-modestly, as the "rough side of Michelin". In fact his dishes are beautifully presented.

Thus it was that some 16 of us, including friends from the Bath & Bristol Branch, came to the Walnut Tree with some anticipation. The occasion was a sheer delight. We started with a glass of Prosecco and moved on to the set menu: pork comesqui with black pudding or red mullet with dashi for starters; followed by hake with salted fishcake or partridge with jabron potatoes for mains; ending with somloi (Hungarian trifle) or lemon pudding with pine nut shortbread. A set menu may seem unpretentious, but each of these dishes would have done credit to any à la carte menu. The atmosphere in the restaurant was convivial and the service excellent. The lunch must rank as one of our best in recent times.

The occasion was arranged by IWFS stalwart Jim Muir and gracefully presided over by Branch Chairman Judith Stares.

John Boyd



Rayeesa and chapatis

THE SPICE GIRL

Last November a select group of us, strengthened by friends from Bath and Bristol Branch, visited Rayeesa's Indian kitchen. It's situated in a fifteenth century farmhouse set deep in the Herefordshire countryside.

Rayeesa Asghar-Sandys was brought up in London and worked there before moving to Herefordshire in 2003. Disappointed by the display of Indian food in local supermarkets and its lack of freshness, she vowed to share her love of Indian food with others and to "create a product that people can use to cook amazing curries at home".

Rayeesa made a complete career change when she decided to set up a cookery school as she was previously working as a police officer with the Met. Her sauces are now made commercially under her personal control and are available online and at her home. Her style of cooking follows that of the southern state of Hyderabad, a region known for its rich food and where she grew up as a toddler.

A former contestant in Dragon's Den, she is now a familiar figure, along with her two daughters, at food fairs throughout the country. Her sauces are frozen rather than canned or bottled, which ensures that the freshness of the spices and herbs is retained.

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Chairman Judith Stares trying her hand

➔ *continued from page 25*

During our visit she showed us her top seven spices and she demonstrated how she prepares chicken with spinach, dhal, rice and chapattis. We all had to have a go at rolling chapati dough and cooking it on a hot dry pan. Surprisingly they turned out well!

Finally we all sat down to a lunch of the dishes she had prepared. The unanimous verdict was that her food was superb. We also greatly enjoyed Rayeesa's presentation which was delivered with clarity and charm.

We left loaded with sample packs of her sauces, in complimentary cool-boxes, well equipped for turning turkey leftovers into tasty meals during the Christmas period. It was an educational as well as a convivial occasion – the Branch supplied a welcome aperitif of fizz, plus white or red table wine to complement the meal.

We are now on the lookout for chefs or cooks from other countries and cuisines to add to our repertoire.

John Boyd

XMAS AT THE CASTLE HOUSE HOTEL

Another festive meal at the Castle House Hotel in Hereford was the occasion for the 21st Anniversary Dinner of the Herefordshire and Monmouthshire Branch. This privately owned hotel has been our venue of choice on several occasions, and their high standards of service and attention to detail didn't disappoint.

Thirty-four members and guests gathered for pre-dinner Champagne (Jean de Foigny Premier Cru) and canapés, before enjoying a menu which included amongst several choices Pan Fried Langoustine, Fillet of Beef with wild mushroom and pancetta sausage and Roast Partridge, followed by a choice of desserts, petit fours and mince pies.

In conjunction with the hotel, the accompanying wines received several compliments: Sharpham Estate's Dart Valley Reserve 2016; Weingut Salwey's Spätburgunder Oberrotweiler Käsleberg in Baden, and the dessert wine Adega de Pegões Moscatel de Setúbal. This was greatly enhanced by the

donation of a case of Château Potensac 2001 Médoc. We were delighted to host three couples from Head Office – Ian Nicol, Chairman of our area (Europe & Africa Zone) and his wife Chris; David Chapman, a self-confessed 'wine anorak' who kindly donated the case of claret, and his wife Jane; plus Michael Messent and his wife Marilyn, who have been staunch supporters of our branch for many years.

We also had six of our loyal friends from Bath and Bristol branch, with whom we have a close relationship and are joint hosts for the 2018 West Country weekend of the EAZ later on in the year.

Although we are a relatively small branch we do manage to have a varied and exciting programme, and pride ourselves on providing not only fine dining, but congenial company.

Future plans include a visit to a local gin distillery, and an up-market hog roast, weather permitting. We also have a Brexit lunch in the diary, with food and wine sourced entirely without the EU – but this has followed the political climate and been the subject of several postponements!

There could be interesting times ahead as apparently insect-based protein powder is going to be the next big food trend. We should certainly be able to base something around that...!

Judith Stares
Chairman



Leicestershire Branch 2017 OVERVIEW



Supper at The Martin's Arms

An exciting and varied programme has been much enjoyed over the past year. After supper at the Martin's Arms, Colston Bassett, we were treated to a delicious Spring luncheon at The Olive Branch, Clipston. This was kindly arranged by John Hind. Spanish wines accompanied the meal, commencing with Sherry Fino, Ossian Verdejo 2012, and Castillo y Leon Passadouro Tinto 2013 Douro Valley.

Summer brought a traditional English garden party hosted by Sally and Steven Gazstowicz at their home. The menu was filled with memories of summer picnics. Dressed salmon, coronation chicken, and freshly baked quiches, followed by pavlova, chocolate tart, and local strawberries. All the food was expertly prepared and presented by Sarah Nicholson, one of the committee, and heartfelt thanks were extended for all her work.

Hambleton Hall, Rutland, our nearest Michelin starred restaurant provided a superb lunch at our next meeting which was much enjoyed with thanks to Tony Willis for planning the event (see page 27, October 2017, Food & Wine).

The theme moved to Eastern European cuisine and entertainment at Tarboosh Restaurant, Loughborough, in October. (Tarboosh being the Turkish word for the Fez hat.) The branch experienced a very different evening with traditional Turkish dishes and a belly dancer. 'Belly dancing' is the translation of the French term, danse du ventre or dance of the stomach, which was applied to the dance in the Victorian era and referred to the Egyptian dancers. We were well entertained and may have some new interests to pursue. The music was rather loud making conversation difficult. We were possibly meant to join in with the dancing? Modern Turkish ancestors were nomadic, depending on agriculture and domestic animals for food. Milk and dairy products were important and yoghurt is widely used. We enjoyed a delicious selection of Mezze dishes including houmous, stuffed vine leaves and couscous. The main dishes were cooked on an open grill and the meats were flavoured with oregano, red pepper flakes and allspice. A refreshing mint and parsley salad was a perfect balance to the heat from the chicken dishes. Desserts were less appealing. Sticky baklava pastries were rather cloying and the Turkish

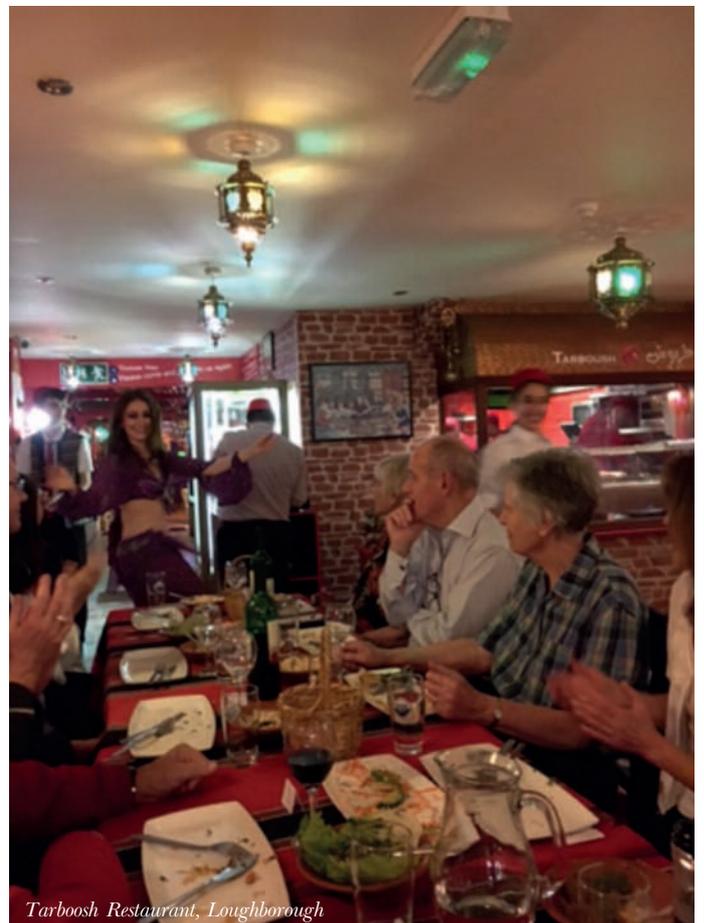


Summer Garden Party

delights too sweet. Overall however, it was good to experience a different culture and cuisine.

The year concluded with a return to John's House, a small but beautifully appointed Michelin starred restaurant in Quorn. A delicious supper was enjoyed by all including red legged partridge, and carrot sorbet as highlights. Their service was attentive and informative. This hidden gem in the Quorn countryside will surely be visited again.

Sue Dennis



Tarboosh Restaurant, Loughborough

London Branch

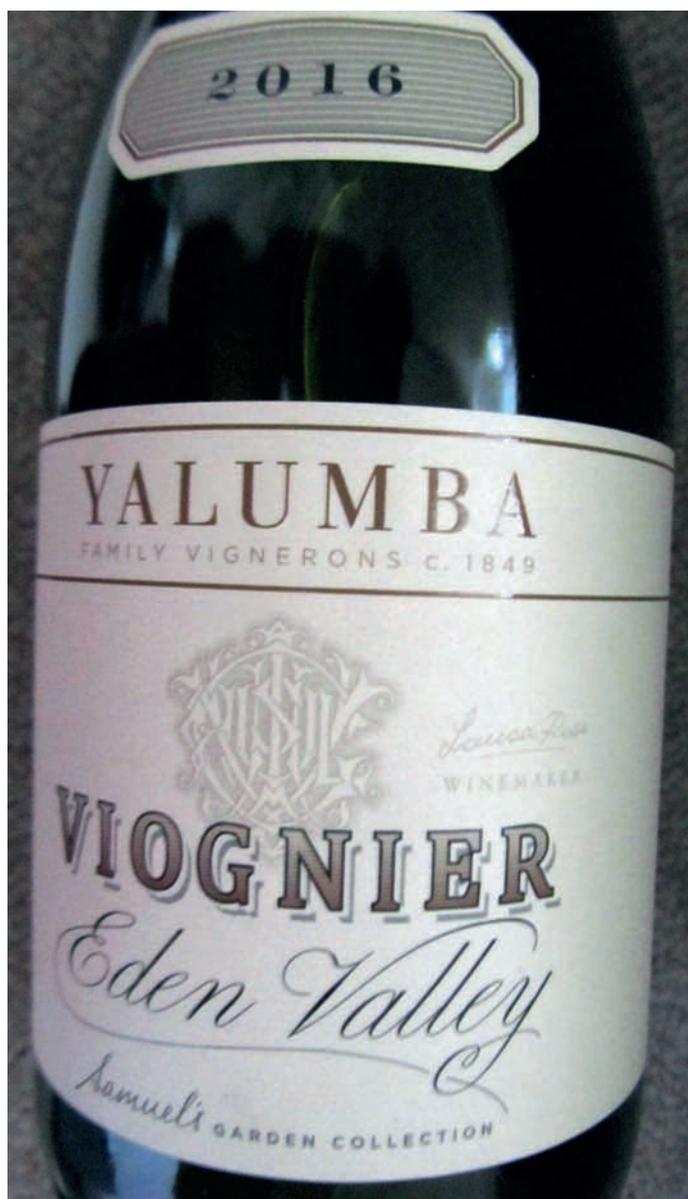
AUSTRALIAN WINES VERSUS FRENCH WINES

On 30th November, at the Naval Club in Mayfair, we had a blind tasting of Australian wines chosen by the organiser, Bernard Lamb, competing against French wines of a similar type and price chosen by Jeffrey Benson. The wines were tasted in pairs, with members voting for which was the better wine and guessing which wine came from which country. The start was inauspicious as Jeffrey and his wines arrived at ten minutes past the starting time, through no fault of his: his minicab had been hit by another vehicle, with inevitable delays. Neither he nor the wines were hurt, fortunately.

Round 1

2015 Naturalys Viognier, Pays d'Oc, Domaine Gerard Bertrand vs 2016 Yalumba Viognier, Eden Valley, both 13%.

Both wines were pale lemon, with excellent big bouquets and very good flavours and lengths. Nine people preferred the Australian, five preferred the French. Nine people thought that the Australian was Australian and five put it as French. Jeffrey thought that the French wine had better acidity.



Round 2

2011 Domaine de L'Eglise Pomerol, 13% vs 2010 Henschke Abbotts Prayer, Adelaide Hills, Merlot/Cabernet Sauvignon, 14.5%.

Left glass: Purple, with a lovely rich bouquet, big flavour, balanced but needing longer for the tannins to soften. Elegant and delicious. It was French.

Right glass: Black-purple. Elderberry bouquet. Even more tannic than its rival, but showed class. It was Australian. They were both excellent wines in structure and potential, but we were drinking them too young. Five people (plus me) preferred the French, nine preferred the Australian. Eight thought that the French wine was French; seven put it as Australian.

Round 3

2013 Châteauneuf du Pape 'Reserve de Château Fortia' vs 2013 Charles Melton Nine Popes, Barossa Valley, Shiraz/Grenache/Mourvèdre, both 14.5%.

Left glass: Purple-red. Good fruity bouquet. Slight sweetness. Lots of fruit. Very good. It was French.

Right glass: Black-purple. Good deep bouquet. Very fruity. Long. Delicious. It was Australian. Nine preferred the Australian; four preferred the French. Ten thought that the French was French; three put it as Australian.

Round 4

2013 Crozes Hermitage 'Terre d'Eclat' Domaine de la Ville Rouge, 13% vs 2014 Tyrell's Wood Duck Dam, Heathcote Shiraz, 14.5%.

Left glass: Purple. Good fruity bouquet and flavour. A little too tannic now. It was French.

Right glass: Purple. Good complex bouquet. Lovely flavour and length. It was Australian. Seven preferred the Australian, six preferred the French. Nine put the French as French; four put it as Australian.

Round 5

2013 Cornas 'La Sabarotte' Domaine Courbis, 13.5% vs 2005 Tim Adams The Aberfeldy, Clare Valley, Shiraz, 14.5%.

Left glass: Black-purple. Big fruity bouquet and an excellent fruity flavour. Delicious and fully ready. It was Australian.

Right glass: Deep black-purple. Big fruity bouquet but very tannic (as Cornas often is). Of course, the tannins would be less noticeable if the red wines were drunk with food. It was French. 13 preferred the Australian and two preferred the French. Eight put the Australian as Australian and five put it as French.

The outcome was therefore five rounds to the Australian wines, none to the French. As shown by the results, it was often not easy to tell which wines were from which country. Where alcohol levels differed, they were not announced until the end, when prices and sources were given. The general opinion was that the wines were excellent and well-chosen, and that the blind-tasting format was very enjoyable. Bernard and Jeffrey may do a similar tasting late next year, South Africa versus France. Brenda Lamb provided a cold supper, with puddings.

Bernard Lamb

London Branch

FORTIFIED WINES AND LIQUEURS

On 16th November, at the Naval Club in Mayfair, a small but experienced group tasted small but high-quality samples of six fortified wines and four liqueurs. One aim was to compare excellent commercial wines with ones made at home by winners of the relevant classes judged by the organiser, Bernard Lamb, at the National Shows. The liqueurs were either commercial or made by him. The tasting of the pairs of wines was done blind, with tasters voting for which they preferred out of the pair and guessing which was the commercial one.

Sweet sherry: one of these was made by winners at the National Show 2017. The other was Lustau East India Solera Sherry, 20% alcohol.

1. Dark amber-gold. Excellent sherry bouquet and flavour. Sweet.

2. Slightly darker amber. Good bouquet and flavour. Big body. Sweeter and longer than 1.

Three people preferred wine 1, five preferred wine 2; one thought wine 1 was commercial and six correctly guessed that 2 was.

Madeira: one of these was made by winners at the National Show 2016. The other was Henriques & Henriques Madeira Malvasia 10 years old, 20% alcohol.

3. Deep amber-brown with slight cloudiness. Good bouquet and flavour; slightly astringent. Sweet.

4. Same colour but a better bouquet. Deep flavour. Good length. A bigger wine than 3, delicious.

Six preferred 3; three preferred 4. One thought that 4 was commercial but six correctly identified 3 as commercial.

Port: one of these was made by winners at the National Show in 2013. The other was Burmester Late Bottled Vintage Port 2001, bottled 2005, 20% alcohol.

5. Black with red edges. Adequate bouquet. Good flavour and length. Sweet.

6. Slightly brownish red. Good bouquet. Delicious flavour. Mature. Sweet.

Five preferred 5; four preferred 6. Three thought that 6 was commercial and five correctly thought that 5 was.



Sweet sherrys, home-made to the left, Lustau to the right



7. **Apricot Brandy:** Gold. Very pleasant bouquet of apricots but also smelling quite strongly of almonds and marzipan. Smooth and harmonious with a lovely flavour. Sweet. This was much liked, with comments such as 'delicious', 'lovely', 'very nice'. One man thought it was commercial but the rest correctly guessed home-made.

8. **Amaretto:** Mid-gold. Lovely rich almond bouquet. Deep and very attractive flavour. Sweet, with a huge length. A bigger body and sweeter than 7. Everyone loved it. Three thought it was commercial and five correctly guessed home-made.

9. **Grande Paris:** This rare and generally unknown liqueur is similar to Grand Marnier. Gold. Fragrant orange – and especially orange-flower – bouquet – wonderful and much enjoyed. Great flavour and length. It was greatly liked, evoking comments such as 'aromatic smell transports me to Spain'; 'great nose'; 'I'd like to dab it on my wrists'. Two thought it was commercial and five correctly put it as home-made.

10. **Triple Sec, Curaçao Liqueur à l'Orange:** Watery pale. Good bouquet of oranges and alcohol. Tastes alcoholic. Powerful. Good flavour, excellent length. Sweet. Nearly everyone correctly guessed that it was commercial. To make it at home would require a high-strength alcohol.

The alcohol, at 40%, really stood out in liqueur 10, while the home-made liqueurs were all 26 to 29% alcohol to simulate

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London Branch

HAUT-BRION VERTICAL TASTING

How fortunate were those of us in London Branch who enjoyed a once-in-a-blue-moon vertical Château Haut-Brion tasting of some of the best vintages between 1989 and 2007, organised courtesy of the careful cellaring of Richard Jackson, and led by our experienced and knowledgeable Chairman Jeffrey Benson.

In the 1855 classification of the red wines of Bordeaux, still the most famous and influential classification, Château Haut-Brion is the only one of the five First Growths outside the Médoc. Its classification is Pessac-Léognan AC, Premier Grand Cru Classé, Cru Classé de Graves.

It has an historic pedigree. Vineyards have been in existence for 2000 years. But back in the 16th century it was the dynamism of Jean de Pontac, Head of the Bordeaux Parliament, who married into the family which owned the property, who was responsible for establishing this particular domaine. He expanded the estate, raised the quality and price of the wine, and was first to put the estate name on the wine. He thereby created an international brand and market.



1996 on left, 1998 on right

The earliest references, the first to a named claret, are in 1660 in the cellar ledger of English King Charles II, and refer to payments to a wine merchant for 169 bottles of 'Hobriono'. Then Samuel Pepys, a devoted wine drinker with an extensive cellar, noted in his diary in 1663: "... I drank a sort of French wine, called Ho Bryan, that hath a good and most particular taste that I never met with."

The American financier Clarence Dillon bought Château Haut-Brion in 1935, after it had fallen on hard times. Anecdotally he was apparently considering buying Cheval Blanc but was put off going there because of miserable cold and wet weather. Instead he chose Château Haut-Brion and got a better bargain. The limited company which owns the estate today is Domaine Clarence Dillon. Prince Robert of Luxembourg is head of the Domaine and Jean-Philippe Delmas is the third generation as manager, administrator and wine maker. He and his predecessors have constantly been innovative. For example, in the 1960s it was the first of the First Growths to introduce stainless steel fermentation vats which increased the reliability of the vinification process. Rootstock and clonal selection research started in 1972, with the long-term objective of lowering yields.

The grape varieties are a combination of Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon, with about ten per cent Cabernet Franc and one per cent Petit Verdot. The exact percentages making up a vintage may vary from year to year. The average age of the vines is 35 years. The soil is mainly gravel with some sand.

Our tasting in October began with the only white of the evening, the 2007. It was a bright lemon-yellow colour. The Sémillon showed through initially in the expressive aromas

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➔ *continued from page 29*

correctly their commercial equivalents. The home-made fortified wines were all about 20%, like the corresponding commercials. The home-made liqueurs were all made with 650 ml 40% Polish Vodka, 260 g of an appropriate liqueur base (sugar, corn maltodextrins, acidity regulator 331, thickener 466) and the appropriate liqueur essence from Top Shelf, Still Spirits, to give about one litre, which was ready the same day! Those cheap New Zealand extracts can be ordered over the internet, e.g., from Hop & Grape, and can also be used with or without alcohol in drinks or desserts.

The extraordinary thing about the fortified wines was how close in style and quality the home-made ones were to the commercials. They were made by experienced and enthusiastic home-wine makers with no professional training. The fact that tasters sometimes preferred the home-made wines, and that the latter could easily be confused with commercials, shows that making good 'Sherry', 'Madeira' and 'Port' does not require professional oenologists or viticulturists, the correct grape varieties, soils, climate, oak barrels, soleras, estufas or lagars, etc.

How can such close approximations to the commercials be made at home, usually in one-gallon glass demijohns? We can get complexity from mixtures of ingredients, and concentration from using dried fruits or large amounts of fresh ones. For example, the late Dr John Harrison's Blackberry and Elderberry Port (for 15 gallons in 1976) was made with 30 lb blackberries; 27 lb elderberries; 8 lb Morello cherries; 4 lb damsons; 1 lb brown sugar to the gallon for sweetening the finished wine. It contained no grape products and was delicious decades later. His 1990 Verdelho-style Madeira (raisins, dried figs, dried apricots, dates, dried bananas, sultanas, plus 4.75 lb of brown sugar to sweeten) involved putting the six gallons on hot plates at 110°F (43°C) for three months. When sweetened further in 2007 to make it Malmsey-style, it was superb. Using a high-alcohol yeast, we can at home get 16% alcohol easily and up to 21% with care and feeding small amounts of sugar late on. We can fortify if needed.

Brenda Lamb provided a cold supper, with puddings.

Bernard Lamb



➤ *continued from page 30*

including flowers, peach and apricot, and then Sauvignon Blanc kicked in. A balanced, complex taste, fruit flavours overlaid with mineral hints, good acidity and length.

Our first red was the **1989**. The earliest harvest since 1893 in a very hot and very dry year, this was an exceptional vintage. This wine is rated as one of the greatest Bordeaux first growths then and since (and for some years before), scoring full marks from wine writers – and from Jean-Philippe Delmas. It has been compared with the legendary 1959. Everything was in harmony: marked tobacco and subtle dark berry fruit among the nuanced aromas, mineral-enhanced fruits on the medium-bodied palate, with length and grip – drinking so well, but this particular bottle “very gracefully just starting to go down the slope” as one of us commented. The auction price would be about £1,400 a bottle (auction estimates exclude VAT).

The **1990** was another stunning wine, a darker red, with denser blackcurrant and other dark berry ripe fruit on the nose and on the palate, elegant with a long finish. It was showing tannins – perhaps it needed a longer decanting period, or it might take another six months to soften out. This would fetch around £600 at auction. Many of us reckoned this the star of the evening.

We tried the next six wines in pairs.

The cork on the **1996** had dried out but was in good condition. The wine had lost most of its fruit on the nose and palate, although this could be this particular bottle or the batch. The cépage was different, with a higher percentage of Merlot than usual, 50%. The auction price would be about £600 a bottle.

1998 was a warm year. August was a very dry month, and the rains arrived in late September. This wine was decanted. The colour evidenced a younger wine than the 1996: a very good wine, better than the 1996. It was more intense and displayed huge tannins, as an enormous wine that would benefit from food such as roast lamb. The auction price would be under £400 a bottle.

August in **1999** was hot and it rained in September. The vintage was large. This wine showed balance and charm but not significant depth; easy drinking, a “good luncheon claret”. The auction price would be about £350 a bottle. **2000** was a very hot summer indeed, with good rain in spring and the early autumn. The sun was out at the right time. This is a superb vintage. A

dark red colour, more purple than the 1999, and with more denseness and length. About £500 a bottle at auction.

2001 was also a hot summer, with autumn rains. This is a good vintage, and as it follows the 2000, some bargain clarets can be picked up. August was hot, but a rainy September watered down the crop. There is still good fruit, although lighter than the 2000, and it is easy drinking now. In **2002** there was rain in July and August, but a dry September saved the harvest. The vintage has the reputation of being a dilute vintage and a smaller crop. However, this wine has a powerful nose, scented berry fruit, and herbaceous overtones. Taste shows good balance, good acidity and smooth integrated tannins. It compares very favourably with the 2001, but may take a little more time to come round fully, although it is already drinking very well.

We finished with the **2007**, another good vintage. This is a serious wine, showing firm tannins and the structure for long ageing, but we found this wine very closed at present. It is anticipated that it will become like the 2002. These last three wines are fetching about £300 a bottle at auction.

The tasting was accompanied by canapés and held in a private area at M Restaurant in Victoria, London SW1, and we were well looked after. We all enormously appreciated the tasting of such wonderful wines worth some thousands of pounds, especially in the context of Richard Jackson’s generosity in providing the wines at such modest cost, and Jeffrey Benson’s expertise in leading it.

Rachel Burnett



2007 vintage

Manchester Branch

DECEMBER WARMTH AT MANCHESTER HOUSE



Manchester House has a new chef, Nathaniel Tofan, who is a protégé of Aiden Byrne. His approach to cooking is based on the great classical cuisine, and he has already put his magical touch to the kitchen. In the planning stages of the event Ronnie and I met James Devereux, Sommelier, and John Clossik, newly-appointed Events Manager, again a promotion within house. We knew we were in capable hands. Nathaniel spoke of his love of cooking and his style which is about taste and flavour whether robust or delicate, sweet or earthy, pungent or aromatic. There is a simplicity in his post-modern cooking style that does away with disguises, complex sauces and elaborate combinations of ingredients, and lets the essential qualities of the food shine through as we discovered. Our lunch was an explosion of flavours and this style of cooking would reflect the words of the great philosopher Anthelme Brillat-Savarin who wrote in *Physiologie du Gout, ou Méditations de Gastronomie Transcendante 1826* "Tell me what you eat and I will tell you what you are".

The snow was falling, we arrived to a warm welcome and were guided to the twelfth floor bar, everyone was in a jolly mood and staff circulated around the room with trays of Billecart-Salmon Réserve Brut NV, supplied complimentary by the restaurant and a perfect start to the event served with canapés. Down to the dining room, three snack canapés:

- Snack 1: Duck heart with watercress, beurre noisette – rich, gamey and peppery with richness from the nut-brown butter.



- Snack 2: Rice cracker, cod roe emulsion, verjus and nasturtium – buttery, sweet and acidic, the rich buttery texture of the emulsion and the nasturtium adding a hint of spice.
- Snack 3: Foie gras, Sauternes and truffle served in a savoury cone – the rich mousse was cut through by the sweetness of the Sauternes. The truffle brought everything together, a great hit of earthy flavour.

We drank Rioja Blanco, Izadi, 2016. Judicious use of subtle oak enhances the rippling flavours of the crisp Viura grape.

Monkfish smoked over pine, Hen-of-the-woods mushroom, goats' curd. This was a delicate and fragrant piece of fish inspired by the season, the use of Douglas fir pine has a rather unique flavour which complemented the dish. A touch of acidity from the pickled onion and the freshness from goats' curd was unique. We drank Soave Pieropan 2016 which is probably one of the most famous producers of fine and elegant Soave – it's consistently excellent.

Our next course was truffle poached chicken breast, vanilla and artichoke purée, with roast salsify. Putting this dish together was a labour of love, brined for twelve hours with lemon, thyme, rosemary and garlic, then air dried for a further twelve hours, and then gently poached with vanilla and truffles resulting in a depth of flavour, sweetness from the artichoke purée and earthiness from the truffle. The choice of wine was Nebbiolo, Matteo Correggia, 2013. A fruity nose of red fruits, cherries and cherry blossom, characteristic of the wine.

Pear tarte Tatin, beurre noisette ice cream. A dish that shone, so many textures and flavours on a plate, buttery, sweet and nutty with a hint of Muscovado. The burnt butter ice cream was certainly a new interpretation of a classic. A wine that stood up to this dish was Sauternes, Château Delmond 2014, rich and intense.

Coffee, petit fours and crisp pastry mince pies followed.

From the compliments received and feedback to the committee, I know that members are looking forward to their next gastronomic experience.

Patrick Trodden
Committee Member



Merseyside and Mid-Cheshire Branch AUTUMN EVENTS...



In September the branch enjoyed a picnic at the home of Paul and Val Bishop in North Wales. The weather was kind to us and the proceedings began with a wine tasting presented by our Chairman and Wine Steward, Paul. The food was served by a local Indian Restaurant, The Asha of Llanwrst, and it was delicious. The menu was: Onion Bhaji and Chicken Pakora, served with salad, mint sauce and mango chutney. This was followed by a selection of dishes: Chicken Achari, Chicken Massala, Prawn Sagwala, Lamb Shatkora, accompanied by Pilau rice and Puri bread. A different style to our annual picnic but enjoyed by all. Jean Whiteman completed the meal with an assiette of desserts and a cheese board, both equally delicious.

In October, 22 members and friends boarded the Eurostar at St Pancras and headed for Switzerland. From Paris we took the TGV to Strasbourg for an overnight stop and sightseeing. The following day we travelled from Strasbourg to Basle, Basle to Interlaken and then Interlaken to Meiringen, our final destination. Meiringen is famous for its associations with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and his creation, Sherlock Holmes. The town is close to the Reichenbach Falls, where the detective fought with his nemesis, Moriarty. We stayed in the Hotel Victoria, a modern establishment close to the railway station, owned and run by Franziste and Simon Anderejji. We dined on a half board basis and the variety and quality of the food was excellent. They were particularly attentive to the requirements of guests with food allergies. We travelled around by train and enjoyed spectacular views from the Rothorn Steam Railway, encountering a snow blizzard on the summit. The highlight was the journey to the Jungfrauoch, the highest mountain station in Europe. The snow-clad views from the top of Europe were breath-taking. After having our fill of Swiss chocolate and fondue, we returned via Basle, where we stayed in the Hotel Gaia, before journeying through Paris to re-join the Eurostar for London. Another triumph for Val Bishop Tours!

On 5th November we visited the Panoramic Restaurant in Liverpool. It was a glorious, sunny day and we were rewarded with spectacular views of the city, the river, the Wirral and the mountains of Wales beyond. After an aperitif of Grahams White Port, we enjoyed the following menu:

- Vodka cured ocean trout served with avocado, rye bread and Bloody Mary sorbet
Oltre Passo Falanghina Botter 2016
- Maple glazed beef short rib, served with caraway beef mustard, potato mousse, carrots and onion seed
Petit Verdot Bodega Ruca Malén Mendoza 2013
- Chocolate tuille, served with chocolate ice cream, lemon and cocoa soil

This venue is one which we will visit again and the only negative was that we were not there for dinner so that we could have enjoyed the fireworks across the Mersey!

Our 2017 programme concluded with a Black-Tie Dinner at the Mill Hotel in Chester. After an apéritif of Fantinel Prosecco in the lounge, we boarded the hotel's cruise barge for dinner cruising the Chester canal.

Menu

- Tender duck breast served on a bed of sweet rocket and accompanied by a plum and cinnamon sauce
Waibaro Sauvignon Blanc – Marlborough
- There was a choice of beef, turkey or salmon served with seasonal vegetables for a main course.
Rare Vineyard's Malbec, Pays d'Oc
- A choice of sweets, which included Christmas pudding, followed by coffee and mints.

The 2018 programme includes a return to the ever popular La Boheme, in Lymm, the 39 Steps in Styal and a first visit to The Crewe Academy – voted the top college restaurant in the UK.

Angela Britland



Merseyside and Mid-Cheshire Branch

... SOUTH AFRICAN TASTING AT LA BOHEME

On 18th January, 42 of our members and friends attended La Boheme in Lymm, one of our favourite restaurants for a wine tasting followed by the dinner. We were particularly encouraged by the number of new members who have joined us this year.

Our Chairman and Wine Steward, Paul Bishop, chose South African wines for the tasting and to accompany the dinner. Out of the members attending it was interesting to note that our non-wine option with the meal attracted sixteen of our members indicating that the food and good companionship were the key criteria.

Tasting

On arrival we enjoyed De Morgenzon non-vintage Brut Chenin Blanc sparkling from the 2014 vintage, though labelled as a non-vintage, fresh and with finesse.

Our second tasting was a Meerlust Pinot Noir 2016 with moderate colour, sweet strawberry and cherry fruit, and a hint of spice on the palate.

The final offering was the Wine Society's Exhibition Pinotage, Stellenbosch 2014, Kanonkop. This rich and spicy full-bodied

red had deep and vibrant colour, typical plum and red-fruit aromas and flavour, with a smooth fleshy palate.

With the meal we had two wines from Painted Wolf Wines whose name is derived from the owners' love for the African wild dog, and their dedication to wildlife preservation. We drank Chenin Blanc 'The den' which was full bodied with tropical flavours of creamy pineapple, melon and vanilla followed by a 'Guillermo' Pinotage from Swartland. Both were well received following a good recommendation from the Wine Society.

Olivier Troalen had prepared a delicious menu starting with Scottish pan fried scallops with French black pudding (the black pudding tasted just as good as the Bury version).

A Gressingham Duck breast served on a bed of roasted vegetables followed accompanied by a Meerlust, a traditionally styled Pinot Noir from Stellenbosch with moderate colour, sweet strawberry and cherry fruit. Crêpe Suzette à la Française with a Grand Marnier sauce and ice cream provided a delicious dessert.

Tim Hodges



Gift of Membership

The gift of a year's IWFS membership to friends or relatives could be the ideal birthday, Christmas or 'thank you' present. When someone purchases such a gift they will receive a certificate, as shown, and an IWFS membership application form to give to the recipient(s).

The cost is the same as current membership rates for the Europe Africa Zone of IWFS which are:

Single	£42.00
Joint	£55.00
Young Single*	£21.00
Young Joint*	£27.50

Some branches have an additional branch membership fee which should be paid locally by the new member(s).

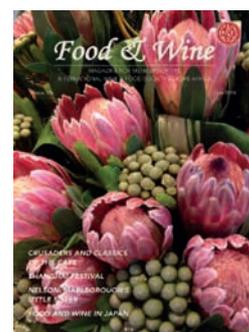


Membership can be redeemed for the calendar year in which the certificate was issued or the following year. If redeemed after 1st November in the year of issue it will cover membership up to the end of the following year.

Anyone wishing to purchase a gift of membership certificate should contact me, preferably by email eazmembership@outlook.com, giving their name, address, IWFS branch (if any), type of membership required and the name(s) of the intended recipient(s) and I will send them the required certificate.

Margaret Chippendale
EAZ Membership Registrar

* Young members, both parties in the case of joint membership, should be under 36 on 1st January in the year the certificate is used.



Northampton Branch

ANNUAL DINNER AT HAMBLETON HALL

We returned yet again to the splendid Hambleton Hall for our annual dinner on 15th October. It has recently been deservedly voted "best luxury hotel in England" and has held its Michelin star for 34 years. One of our members, Betty Meadows, has had a long and close association with Hambleton Hall and its owners Tim and Stefa Hart, and every year she takes enormous trouble to plan the menu for our dinner.

When our founder, André Simon, died in 1970, he left instructions – and some Château Latour – for a dinner to be held at The Savoy on his 100th birthday in 1977 (menu pictured below). Betty and her husband were privileged to attend this function. On the 40th anniversary of this occasion, Betty challenged Chef Aaron Patterson to replicate the original menu with some modern twists.

This he achieved with his normal consummate skill. After a Champagne reception with delicious canapés, we sat down to Beef Consommé with Smoked Bone Marrow and Jacob's Ladder (short rib of beef) served with a Specogna Friulano fresh white wine which also accompanied the next course of poached fillet of sea trout with oyster and cucumber sauce, which was attractive and tasty.

The main course was guinea fowl with violet artichoke, spelt and – a touch of genius this – wild mushroom and foie gras ravioli. Two Pinot Noirs were served with this: Newton Johnston 2015 from South Africa, light and mellow, and Dveri-Pax Modi 2011 from Slovenia, classy with a bit more bite. This was followed by a cheese course of Baron Bigod Brie from Suffolk served with a mystery wine from the house cellars.

Our Secretary, Nigel Kay, and Assistant Secretary Robin Sheppard, then stood and debated what it was that we had been drinking while sommelier, Dominique Baduel, smiled smugly and winced occasionally in the background. They plumped for a Syrah-based Northern Rhône from the early 2000s. Dominique admired their analysis, but had to reveal that we had been drinking a Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2013 Domaine du Pegau with just 10% Syrah but 80% Grenache. Regrettably, none of the rest of us made a more accurate diagnosis, but



admired the systematic approach and bravery exhibited by the Secretary team.

The dessert was peach and raspberry terrine with clotted cream ice served with a Delheim Edelspatz Noble Late Harvest Riesling, Stellenbosch. Aaron Patterson and his team came in to be praised in an address from Flemming Rathsach, whose only negative was that he did not like spelt! Our Chair, Nikki Kidger wound up proceedings and reflected that this had been one of the best ever annual dinners.

John Kelly

A la Reception: Pommery et Grand Dry Reserve NV Champagne	
MENU	VINS
Le Consommé Double de Bœuf et Taux Le Petit Burgondais au Parmesan	
La Quenelle de Truie Saumonée au Fruit de Mer	Beating, Cuvée Exceptionnelle, 1877 (D'Opf et Beau)
Le Blanc de Poitou Fumé au Foie Gras Peter Orlow Les Potages de Terre Croust et Bouche Le Fond d'Artichaut au Riz Capricieux Le Potage au Beurre	Château Blanc Carré 1961
Le Bœuf de la Ferme Cuchet Le Celeri au Beurre	Château Latour 1965
Le Saumon au Filet à l'Anchoï Les Frites Salées Douces	Grandmarnier, Vintage 1966, 1877 (D'Opf)
Le Caviar Saucy Le Potage de Fèves au Guacamole	Pommery et Grand Ance 1965 Cuvée de Réserve 1968
MATRE CHEF DES CUISINES Séverine Pommery, 1868	TOASTS "The Queen" J P Hillieron, Esq, SECRET CHAIRMAN "André Simon, the Founder" J W Trout, Esq, 1868-1877
BANQUETING MANAGER Joseph Bland	



Surrey Hills Branch

IN THE REIGN OF THE TUDORS

Once upon a fine summer's day the three musketeers of Surrey Hills met to decide how best to entertain members in the closing months of 2017. Racking their collective brains they decided to celebrate the old quarter day of Michelmas – a great excuse to cook goose, historically the favoured meat of the season. There was just one snag; 21st century diaries meant that none of them were available on the given day. Undaunted they lighted on the 29th October, close enough they thought, and besides St Jude's Day turned out to be the 28th – the Patron Saint of Lost Causes(!). It seemed auspicious.

History does not relate how, unsatisfied with this departure, they finally decided to hold a Tudor themed lunch, but this they did and thus members of Surrey Hills Branch and friends were invited to 'Castle' Shepherd where the food was resolutely Tudor even if the ambience and the wine were resoundingly 21st century.

Our hostess had decided to use plates and cutlery, rather than trenchers and fingers; and she had flatly declined to take up the fitted carpets and strew the floors with fragrant rushes. She had even – to their annoyance – kennelled the hunting hounds so there was no point in throwing scraps on the floor.

In Tudor times there would not have been wines as we now experience them. But members were well satisfied with the glass of Hambledon Premier Cuvée Brut which greeted them on arrival and the Mondavi Woodbridge Shiraz 2007 which our host had chosen to accompany the meal.

The impeccably researched menu consisted of Vegetable Pottage, followed by a Three-bird Roast served with heritage carrots and roasted parsnips and then dessert, Durham Fluffin and/or Warden Pears. Our three cooks, Diana, Susie and Stephanie, had been surprised by how familiar the dishes





seemed. Certainly any 21st century diner with a taste for the cuisine of Morocco and the Levant would have felt relatively at home at a Tudor table with its penchant for nutmeg, cloves, cinnamon and honey.

Diana had prepared the Vegetable Pottage*, a soup of carrots, celery, onions, cabbage, swedes and peas spiked with cloves and served in a scooped out seeded wholemeal roll which was delicious.

The main course, cooked by Stephanie, was a Three Bird Roast – a boned goose stuffed with chicken and pheasant with a spiced pork and orange farce – accompanied by Heritage purple and yellow carrots and roasted parsnips. No potatoes in Tudor Britain, they arrived from Peru during the 1600s but were viewed with considerable suspicion throughout Europe and did not become widely accepted at all levels of society until the nineteenth century. And no orange carrots, although the carrot itself was known in the tenth century, it would have been yellow

or purple. The orange carrot was not developed until the sixteenth century.

Finally the dessert was Durham Fluffin (prepared by Stephanie) and/or Warden Pears (prepared by Susie Punch). The pears, poached in cider with nutmeg and sugar, were traditionally served on St Jude's Day. Durham Fluffin is made from barley cooked in milk, or milk and water, until it is as smooth as velvet. Nutmeg, sugar or honey, and brandy are added to taste and the resultant dish was served on Christmas Eve to family and visitors alike. The pears were delicious, a worthwhile variation on the more familiar pears in red wine. The Fluffin was an interesting departure; having more the texture of single cream than, say, a custard. It took a lot longer to cook than the recipe suggested: definitely one of those dishes which needed more work in the development kitchen.

Authenticity went out of the window when we came to the tea and coffee! The first coffee house did not appear in Oxford until 1650 and tea became popular during the 1660's.

All in all we had a most enjoyable lunch and were fascinated by the experience and applauded the research that had gone into the meal; I am pretty sure that André Simon would have been delighted that here we were doing something innovative and different. Thanks to the Surrey Hills team.

Helen Mills
President

*Pottage is a vegetable soup thickened with oats. It was widely eaten in the middle ages when ordinary people would not have been able to afford much meat. Although the medieval peasant would have had great difficulty in believing it because vegetables were not highly valued, pottage is very nutritious.

Warden Pears (To Serve 4)

Ingredients

¼ pint (150 ml) strong still cider

½ teaspoon grated nutmeg

2 oz (50 g) butter

4 firm ripe dessert pears

Pre-set the oven to 325°F (170 C) Gas Mark 3

2 oz (50 g) desiccated coconut

Grated rind of 1 orange

2 tablespoons Cointreau (optional)

Cream (lightly whipped or clotted cream)

Method

Put cider in a saucepan with nutmeg, sugar, and 1 oz (25 g) butter. Heat gently until the sugar has dissolved and the butter melted. Bring to the boil and boil for 2 mins.

Peel, halve and core the pears and place in a shallow oven-proof dish, rounded side uppermost.

Pour the cider mixture over the pears, cover and cook in a moderate oven for about 40 mins or until the pears are just tender. (You can add a few sultanas, seedless raisins or chopped dates to the pears before cooking if you wish.)

Melt the remaining butter in a small frying pan, add the desiccated coconut, with the finely grated orange rind and fry gently until golden brown, turning occasionally. Spoon onto a heat-proof plate and leave to cool.

Just before serving, stir the Cointreau into the pears and sprinkle the fried coconut over. Serve hot with lightly whipped or clotted cream.

Extract from *The National Trust Book of Christmas and Festive Day Recipes* by Sara Paston-Williams, published by Penguin Books 1983.

Wessex Branch

HARBOUR HEIGHTS ANNUAL DINNER

The Wessex Branch Annual Dinner, traditionally our only black tie event of the year, was held in October last year at the Harbour Heights Hotel in Sandbanks, Poole. The hotel is well known locally, with outstanding views over Poole Harbour. Its restaurant has been awarded two AA rosettes for the excellent cuisine and has a wine cellar to match. Head chef, French-born Loic Gratadoux, believes in using only the finest, fresh local produce in season whenever possible. The sommelier and general manager Charles Van Wyk has a wealth of experience in the wine trade, having worked in wineries and vineyards in Australia, South Africa and the UK.

Having worked closely with the chef to produce a very attractive menu, we chose a New Zealand theme for the wines. Charles was happy to recommend some excellent wines to match with the food, showcasing some of his favourite wines and producers from that country.

The guests on the night numbered 32 in total, including four members of the Bath & Bristol Branch and one from the Kuala Lumpur Branch, whom we were very pleased to welcome to our group. We gathered in the Hytes Suite for an exceptional

sparkling aperitif from Central Otago, made from a traditional blend of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. This, we learned later, was made by Tony Jordan, the man who built Domaine Chandon in Australia, and was a fresh, well balanced fizz with a fine, creamy mousse and a long finish.

Dinner itself started with a light, creamy goats' cheese mousse, served with slices of heritage beetroot. The accompanying Yealands Estate Sauvignon Blanc was a perfect match, with typical herbaceous and citrus notes. This was followed by a delicious smoked salmon 'cannelloni', slices of smoked salmon rolled into a tube around a salmon filling, served with a subtle orange and vanilla dressing applied with a light hand. The dish was very well complemented by the Pinot Gris from Marlborough, which had delicate floral and citrus flavours with a crisp acidity but a hint of honey in the after taste.

The main course of herb-crusted lamb saddle was probably the highlight of the meal, melt-in-the-mouth tender and full of flavour. It was beautifully presented, as were all the dishes served to us, and the accompanying vegetables were cooked well but simply, to enhance rather than overwhelm the lamb.



The wine selected for this course was a lovely example of a Central Otago Pinot Noir, brimming with red fruit flavours, complemented by silky tannins and a long finish.

The sweet course to follow was an excellent pear Tatin and with it we drank a first-rate dessert wine made from botrytis-affected Sauvignon Blanc grapes. This was a luscious wine, with concentrated flavours of ripe nectarines and honey and a citrus lift: delicious on its own but, as is often the case with dessert wines, a good but not perfect match with the pudding.

To finish the meal, we shared generous platters of assorted cheeses with crackers and grapes accompanied by a glass of yet another Pinot Noir, this time from Martinborough in New Zealand's North Island. Not perhaps as good a wine as the Yealands Estate Pinot Noir with the main course, but still a smooth, flavoursome wine worth lingering over.

We were fortunate to have the assistant sommelier Marek with us who, during the meal, was on hand to say a few words about each wine as it was being served. To complete the list of credits, it must also be said that the service was impeccable throughout the evening.

Coffee or tea and petit-fours were served to end a truly excellent meal, which we all enjoyed immensely. Needless to say, we will be returning to this hotel in the not too distant future.

MENU AND WINES

Reception

Akarua Brut, Bannockburn, Central Otago

Dinner

Goats' Cheese Mousse

Beetroot Ketchup, Marinated Heritage Beetroot

Single Block Sauvignon Blanc 2016, Yealands Estate,

Marlborough



Smoked Salmon Cannelloni
Orange & Vanilla Dressing, Avocado Salsa
Pinot Gris Single Estate 2015, Ara Vineyards, Marlborough

Herb-Crusted Lamb Saddle
Smoked Garlic Mash, Ratatouille, Green Beans, Lamb Jus
Pinot Noir Winemaker Reserve 2015, Gibbston Valley, Yealands Estate, Central Otago

Harbour Heights Pear Tatin
Crispy Pear, Vanilla Ice Cream
'A Sticky End' Noble Sauvignon Blanc 2016, Marisco Vineyards, Marlborough

Sharing Platters of Cheese
'Te Tera' Pinot Noir 2014, Martinborough Vineyard, Martinborough

Tea/Coffee and Petit-Fours

Joan Cardy



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

UK Wessex

15th March 2018

A tasting of eight French wines, followed by a three course dinner at the Miramar Hotel, Bournemouth. For further information please contact our Secretary Joan Cardy on email joan@cardy.info.

UK Bath & Bristol

21st March 2018

Dinner at San Carlo, Corn Street, Bristol. Contact Tony Griffin for further details, email tonygriffin987@gmail.com.

UK Berkshire

23rd March 2018

Our branch AGM will be followed by a tasting of wines from Ellis of Richmond. For further details please contact Julie Graham at julie.graham@brayclose.com.

UK Merseyside & Mid-Cheshire

23rd March 2018

Gourmet dinner at award winning Crewe Academy. Contact Tim Hodges at tim@new-pool.demon.co.uk for further details.

UK Blackpool & Fylde Coast

2nd April 2018 (Easter Monday)

Wine Tasting (French Classics and Alternatives) lead by Ron Barker at Aysgarth Court 7:30 pm. More details from David James, via email at david.r.james@btinternet.com.

AMS NEW YORK (USA)

12th to 14th April 2018

Enjoy a Spring Weekend in the Big Apple – dining in some of the City's best restaurants. The event is now sold out but email sec@iwfs.org if you'd like to go on the waiting list.

UK Berkshire

20th April 2018

Taste the wines from Mahi of New Zealand. Presented by Duncan Ross from Berkmann Wine Cellars. For further details please contact Julie Graham at julie.graham@brayclose.com.

UK London

24th April 2018

Wine tasting, Claret – Modern vs Mature, The Naval Club. For more details email Peter Diamond on peter.diamond@procedoltd.com.

UK Merseyside & Mid-Cheshire

25th April 2018

Dinner at Stannylands Hotel, Wilmslow. For further details contact Tim Hodges at tim@new-pool.demon.co.uk.

UK Herefordshire & Monmouthshire

25th April 2018

Seafood Cookery Demonstration and Lunch from midday, nr Ross on Wye. Contact Peter McGahey via email peter.mcgahay@btinternet.com to make a booking.

UK Bath & Bristol

26th April 2018

Lunch at the Priory Hotel, Bath. Contact Tony Griffin for further details at tonygriffin987@gmail.com.

UK Blackpool & Fylde Coast

30th April 2018

Branch Meal (prepared and cooked by our own members) at Aysgarth Court. The main course will be British Rose Veal and the whole meal will be accompanied by Italian Wines, 7:30 pm. Please email David James at david.r.james@btinternet.com for further details.

UK Bath & Bristol

17th May 2018

Brunch at Stoberry Park, Wells. Contact Tony Griffin for further details at tonygriffin987@gmail.com.

UK Merseyside & Mid-Cheshire

23rd May

Dinner at Ullium, Tattenhall. Contact Tim Hodges at tim@new-pool.demon.co.uk for further details.

UK Manchester

24th May 2018

Black Tie Dinner with Adam Reid at The French, at the Midland Hotel. Email Chris Redman at cdredman@talktalk.net for further details.

UK London

26th May 2018

Members have been invited to take part in an exclusive musical and historical tour of Westminster Abbey in the company of members of the Purcell Club. Email John Nicholas on eaz@iwfs.org for further details or to book your place.

EAZ LONDON (UK)

28th May to 2nd June 2018

The EAZ is hosting the next IWFS international festival in London. If you would like to join one or two events, rather than the whole festival, then please email John Nicholas on eaz@iwfs.org to check availability.

UK Blackpool & Fylde Coast

4th June 2018

Wine Tasting lead by Miles Corish MW at Aysgarth Court 7:30 pm. For further details please contact Ron Barker, email ronbarker@hotmail.co.uk.

UK London

5th June 2018

Lurton Family Collection, Meet the Winemaker dinner. Email Peter Diamond on peter.diamond@procedoltd.com for more details.

UK London

15th June 2018

Human vs Nature, an educational meal and wine pairing that will contrast how winemakers' individual techniques impact the wine being produced. For further details email Peter Diamond on peter.diamond@procedoltd.com.

*Celebrating
85 Years*

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



UK Bath & Bristol

19th June 2018

Vineyard tour, wine tasting and lunch at Aldwick Court Vineyard, nr Bristol. Contact Tony Griffin for further details at tonygriffin987@gmail.com.

UK London

21st June 2018

Wine roads leading to Rome, Enzo's Kitchen, Piccadilly Circus. For further details email Peter Diamond at peter.diamond@procedoltd.com.

UK Manchester

30th June

Lunch at La Popote, Chef Victor Janssen, Marton. Email Chris Redman at cdredman@talktalk.net for details.

UK Blackpool & Fylde Coast

2nd July 2018

Wine Tasting (Wine Society Exhibition Range) lead by David James at Aysgarth Court 7:30 pm. Email David James at david.r.james@btinternet.com for details.

UK Bath & Bristol

14th July 2018

Al Fresco Lunch at The Gables, Yatton. Contact Tony Griffin for further details at tonygriffin987@gmail.com.

UK Bath & Bristol

16th August 2018

Dinner at The Ivy Brasserie, Clifton, Bristol. Contact Tony Griffin at tonygriffin987@gmail.com for further details.

EAZ BRISTOL (UK)

23rd to 24th September 2018

Join the EAZ AGM weekend in England's West Country, with the opportunity to dine at the Lord Mayor's Mansion House. See pages 42-43 for more details or email Janet Bagot on janet_bagot@yahoo.com for a booking form.

AMS QUEBEC (CANADA)

26th to 30th September 2018

This event sold out within hours of being opened for bookings. Please email Stephanie Schmitz if you would like to be placed on the waiting list – see website homepage for the details.

EAZ ZÜRICH (SWITZERLAND)

19th to 21st October 2018

Join us for a Wine and Food Weekend in the Valais region of Switzerland. We'll explore the region's culture and autumnal countryside and have an opportunity to sample gourmet as well as local village food. Contact Kurt Haering to find out more on email: chairman@iwfs-zurich.ch.

Looking further ahead...

APZ AUCKLAND (NEW ZEALAND)

8th to 10th March 2019

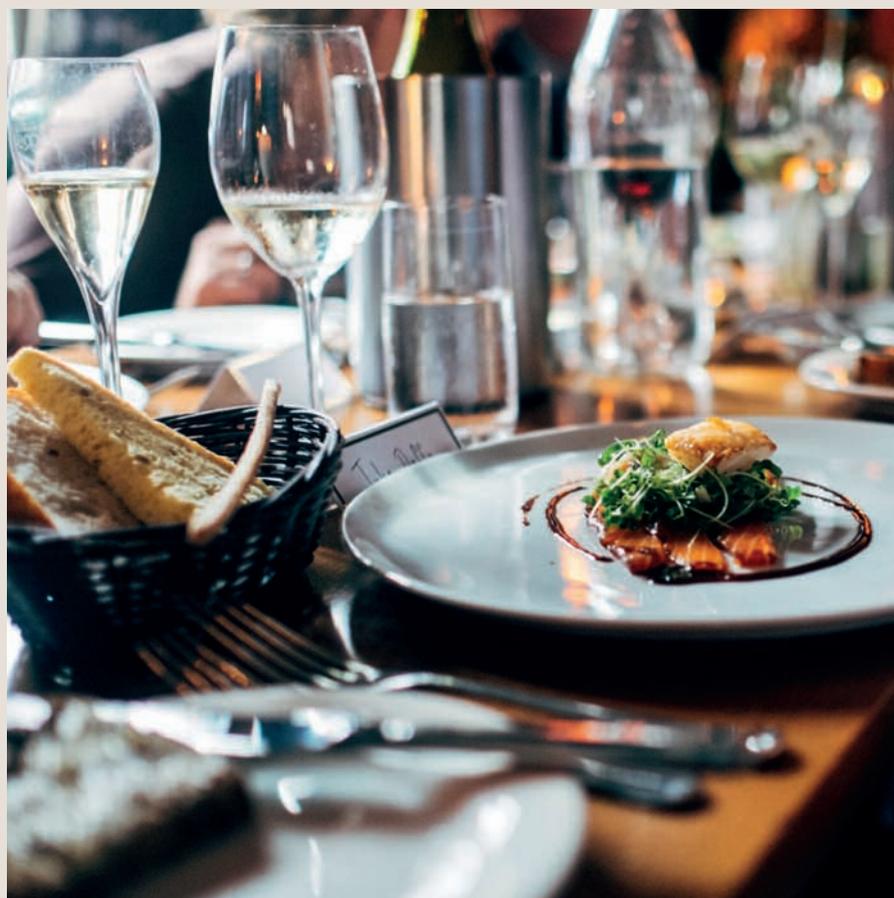
The 2019 APZ AGM Weekend will be held in Auckland, with a pre-tour in the North Island and a post-tour to the fabulous Central Otago wine region in the South Island.

AMS DOURO RIVER CRUISE (PORTUGAL)

9th to 16th June 2019

A wonderful cruise is planned by the Americas along this major river on the Iberian Peninsula designated as a World Heritage Site. A pre-tour in Lisbon is also planned from 6th to 8th June. This event is now sold out but go to the website link: https://www.iwfs.org/assets/upload/images/lisbon/Lisbon_Portugal_Invite_Proof_3.pdf to find out more and to go on the wait list.

If you are interested in joining an event that is full, or reservations closed, then please contact the organiser in case space is available.



EAZ AGM WEEKEND: BRISTOL, BRUNEL AND BEYOND!

22nd and 23rd September 2018

Friends or relatives in Bristol? Children or grandchildren at school or university here? Interested in ships, planes, trains, bridges...? Why not combine a visit with the 2018 EAZ AGM Weekend, which is being organised jointly by the Bath and Bristol Branch and the Herefordshire and Monmouthshire Branch – we intend to extend a warm West and Border Country welcome to you all! We are well aware that however committed you are the AGM on its own is not a great draw, so we have planned a programme which we hope will entice you to Bristol for an enjoyable and interesting weekend. You can participate as much or as little as you like, but we hope to have good representation from our UK branches as well as from some of our European and African ones. All Branch chairmen will shortly receive a personal invitation, but of course any member (whether or not attached to a Branch) is entitled, and welcome, to attend.

Annual General Meeting and Members' Forum, Sunday

AGMs are short business meetings and not the most riveting occasions, but they are necessary to the lawful running of any organisation. The AGM itself will probably be despatched in not much more than half an hour; perhaps more relevant and we hope much more interesting will be the planned Members' Forum, which will directly precede the AGM. This is your opportunity to ask questions, raise concerns and make suggestions – we know that all these are out there so don't miss this opportunity to have your say!

This year we are planning to extend our reach by setting up a webinar (video conferencing) link. This will mean that branches unable to send representatives to the AGM can participate remotely. We shall be sending information to all Branches shortly as to exactly how this works, but in the meantime why not plan a lunch or teatime event at a venue which has the necessary facilities. These are widespread – anywhere that hosts meetings or conferences should be able to provide them.

What else is on offer?

Saturday night: Dinner at The Ivy Clifton Brasserie

The Covent Garden Ivy celebrated its 100th anniversary last year – and is just as popular now as it ever was. There are now around 20 Ivy restaurants and cafés and all have in common their aspiration to be “sophisticated yet approachable, casual yet polished”. There is always a sense of occasion at The Ivy but this will nevertheless be a complete contrast to the formal dinner to be held on the Sunday. The conversion of a former banking hall in the heart of Clifton village has created some beautiful dining spaces; we have reserved one of the private dining rooms for our dinner.

Sunday morning

We have planned two alternative visits:

Aerospace Bristol – A guided tour of this fabulous new Museum, home to Concorde Alpha Foxtrot – the last of the iconic supersonic passenger jets to be built and the last to fly – as well as to examples of all the aircraft developed during a century of aviation history spanning both world wars.

Tyntesfield House – A guided tour of this spectacular Victorian Gothic Revival house lying just to the west of Bristol in the village of Wraxall, North Somerset. The house is a Grade I listed building named after the Tynte baronets, who had owned estates in the area since about 1500. The Gibbs family, who made their money by importing guano (bird droppings used for fertiliser!) bought Tyntes Place in 1843 and transformed it into the masterpiece that it is today. It was acquired by the National Trust in 2002 and both the house and grounds have been beautifully restored.

Sunday evening: Black Tie Dinner at The Mansion House

Still the official residence of the Lord Mayor of Bristol, the Mansion House is an elegant Victorian villa built in the grand manner and containing many items of considerable historic interest. The dinner will be catered by Parsnip Mash, a company



© National Trust Images, Andrew Butler



with a very high reputation for their banqueting services. Weather permitting we should be able to enjoy our champagne and canapés in the conservatory – or even in the lovely garden! The Mansion House is only ten minutes' walk from the hotel, but transport will be available for those who require it. There is plenty of car parking space too.

The programme (timings to be confirmed)

Saturday 22nd September

- 6.30pm Drinks hosted by Bath & Bristol and Herefordshire & Monmouthshire committee members
- 7.30pm Dinner at The Ivy Clifton Brasserie

Sunday 23rd September

- 9.45 – 12.30 Visit to either the Aerospace Museum or Tyntesfield House (NT)
- 1.15 Chairman's Reception and Buffet Lunch (no charge)
- 2.30 – 3.45 – Members' Forum
- 3.45 – AGM
- 4.30 – Tea and biscuits
- 6.15 – Bus shuttle (if required) to Mansion House commences (No charge)
- 6.45 for 7.45 – Black Tie Dinner at the Mansion House, preceded by Champagne Reception and optional tour of the House

Stay for a night – or the weekend – The Avon Gorge Hotel

An iconic Bristol landmark, this grand old hotel overlooking the gorge and Brunel's Clifton Suspension Bridge had been showing its age. However it has recently been taken over by the Malmaison / Hotel du Vin group, and is in the process of a total redesign and refurbishment, to include a new glass-fronted restaurant built out over the gorge, new conference facilities and completely refurbished public spaces, bedrooms and bathrooms. The work, begun last Spring, is due to be completed by April 2018. It's an exciting project and we are looking forward to experiencing the finished product! Prices for standard rooms are as follows:

Saturday: Single occupancy £188-£218; Double or twin £201-£231
Sunday: Single occupancy £118-148; Double or twin £131-£161
 The higher prices are for gorge-facing rooms. Superior rooms may also be available. All prices include breakfast.

Please book directly with the hotel, mentioning IWFS and Allocation Reference 2309WF.

Contact details: T: 0117 4030210; E: rooms@theavongorge.com; W: www.theavongorgehotel.com

How do I book and pay for the visits and dinners?

Costs are as follows:

- Dinner at The Ivy £60 (3 courses and coffee, excluding wine)
- Dinner at The Mansion House £98 (champagne and canapés, three courses and coffee, wines)
- Aerospace Bristol £30 or Tyntesfield £25

Booking forms and payment details (cheque or bank transfer) available from Janet Bagot, Treasurer, Bath & Bristol Branch, phone: 01275 332941 or email: janet_bagot@yahoo.com. If you prefer to book and pay by post please contact Janet and she will send you a booking form.

Cancellation policy

Members will have a 14-day cooling-off period from receipt of their payment during which they can cancel and receive a full refund. After this, payments will not normally be refunded unless a replacement booking is received. In exceptional circumstances any refunds will be at the discretion of the organising committee.

And finally...

Anyone planning a longer stay in Bristol or wanting further information or advice about other places to visit in the area is welcome to contact us! Bristol is a vibrant and fascinating city and there is a great deal to do and see both in the city and in the surrounding countryside. Please get in touch with Leonie Allday, Chairman, Bath & Bristol Branch, phone: 01934 876528, mobile: 07753 662803, email: leonie@the-alldays.org.uk.



The International Wine & Food Society

EUROPE AFRICA ZONE



Final Call!

Thinking that you should have booked for the London Festival, or for one of the pre- or post-tours, or even for one of the individual Festival Events? Now is the time to do it. There are still a few places available but so that we can finalise all the arrangements we will be unable to accept bookings after **31st March 2018**.

The IWFS triennial International Festival will take place in London from Monday 28th May to Friday 1st June. There are still a very few places available for this exciting five-day programme which will take you from historic palaces and livery halls to an exclusive private members' club and a state of the art renowned food producer. Along the way we will sample fine wines, explore a wine producing region which may surprise you, and sample some of the best cuisine the city has to offer. The programme culminates with a Gala Dinner on the Friday when we will be guests of one of the oldest trade guilds of the City of London.

There are also a few places available on the pre- and post-tours:

The **Pre-tour of Champagne** (21st to 25th May) will take guests to some of the most distinguished Champagne producers large and small. Join your luxury table-seated coach in London and sit back and relax. The coach will deliver you to the Hotel de la Paix in Reims and remain with you throughout the tour and return to London. Along the way you will sample at least 28 different Champagnes and enjoy gourmet cuisine with fine wines and many older distinguished vintages. You will also get the opportunity to try your hand at Sabrage – a very different way of opening a Champagne bottle.

The **Post-tour of Sussex and Hampshire Wineries** (4th to 8th June) takes guests to some of the UK's most distinguished and innovative wine producers. This tour too picks up guests in London and transports them by coach throughout. The tour will stay in the Medieval village of Cuckfield, at the Ockendon Manor Hotel. You will dine at the award winning Gravetye Manor Hotel, famous for its gardens as well as its cuisine, and at Ockendon Manor itself.

There will also be a private visit to Parham House, a privately owned Tudor gem, where you will tour the manor house and its gardens and taste wines from two producers who could not be included in the main programme.

These two tours are genuinely all-inclusive; transport and hotels are included within the price.

Staying in London there is limited opportunity to join the **Gourmet London post-festival tour**. A small group of guests will sample some of the finest restaurants in and around London which, tragically, were unable to accommodate the whole Festival party. Among the highlights will be a tour of the famous Berry Bros. wine merchants. In their historic St James's home, you will enjoy lunch matched to some of their fine wines. Outside London at Bray, a visit to the famous Waterside Inn has been arranged. Other restaurants to be visited will be a mixture of the long-established and the relatively new reflecting the eclectic nature of the London restaurant scene.

Details of all these, as well as the process for booking, can be found on the IWFS website at www.iwfs.org/europe-africa/events/london2018. There may also be one place available on the Irish delights tour.

On Saturday 26th May before the main Festival, there are all still a few places available for an exclusive musical and historical tour of **Westminster Abbey** accompanied by the Purcell singers – see the website at www.iwfs.org/europe-africa/events/purcell-tour.

For those of you who are in and around London during the festival there are a very few spaces available for the following individual events during the festival:

- Wine tasting, **André Simon lecture by Oz Clarke** and lunch at the **Merchant Taylors' Livery Hall**.
- The Tuesday night **Dine Around**.
- Wine tasting and lunch at the **Hurlingham Club** (this can be combined with the Dine around).
- Final night's Gala dinner at the **Goldsmiths' Livery Hall**.

The last edition of the EAZ Food & Wine magazine has booking details, see <https://www.iwfs.org/europe-africa/publications/latest-newsletter>. Or contact John Nicholas (on eaz@iwfs.org) for up to date availability and booking details. We hope that you might, even at this late stage, consider joining what we expect to be a memorable festival in London.

Stephanie Shepherd

Chair of the London Festival Committee

Ian Nicol

Chair of IWFS Council and of the Europe Africa Zone